

Australia. Sandy has family in Australia and I am sure it will not be too long before he and his wife have settled into their new life. At the moment I don't think Sandy is intending to continue in greenkeeping but I am sure he will make a success of whatever he decides to do – maybe he has won the lottery and won't be doing anything! Best wishes for the future go to Sandy and his wife from all their friends in Scotland.

In December of last year I asked all trophy holders to make arrangements to return them to me as they were required for engraving and valuation but I am still waiting to hear from some of you. Please make arrangements as soon as possible.

John Crawford

East

Welcome to this month's news. I hope as I am writing this that spring is not all that far away because we do not want a repeat of last year so everybody get those fingers and anything else crossed for a good start to this season. I hope everyone from the East Section enjoyed their trip to the BTME which was even better than last year which takes some beating! Congratulations go to everyone at HQ who organised it and anyone else who assisted in the show, it just keeps getting better. If you haven't been before try and make it in 1998 as it shouldn't be missed. The karaoke on the Wednesday night at the Majestic Hotel was absolutely fabulous. This was something that everyone that attended really enjoyed, or so I have been told. The Scottish lads were in good voice so roll on next year! Tom Brannan, of Souters of Stirling, said the word of the week at BTME 97 especially on Thursday should be "vintage"! I don't know why!

There is only one member on the move that I know of. Paul Hares is moving from Newbattle GC to Melville GC and Driving Range to be Assistant to the Head Greenkeeper Steven Halladay. Good luck Paul on your new appointment.

Events to be held in the Region during 1997 are as follows:- February 27 – West Section Games Night, Claremont Bowling Club; March 4 – Scottish Region Conference, Isle of Skye Hotel, Perth; April 12 – West Section Course Visit – Loch Lomond GC; April 1 – Region v Secretaries Match, Lundin Links; April 23 – West Section Spring Meeting, Eastwood GC; April 29 – East Section Spring Meeting – Winterfield GC; May 15 – North Section Spring Meeting, Duff House GC; July 17-20 – The Open, Royal Troon; August 4-6 – BIGGA National Tournament, Cooden Beach; September 4 – East Section W Woods Comp, Kingsknowe GC; September 17-18 – Hayter Challenge Tournament, Ganton GC; September 25 – North Section Autumn Meeting, Wordlyth GC; October 7 – West Section Autumn Meeting, Hilton Park; October 13-17 – BIGGA Management Courses, Scotland.

In February a Swanston GC select (with-out yours truly) played against Ratho Park GC at 5-a-side football. By the reports I have had it was a good game with Ratho running out victors on the night by 2 goals. A re-match will take place very soon. We (Swanston) have a game arranged against Heart of Midlothian FC groundstaff who are so far unbeaten so we shall have to play to top form to get a result against them. I wonder if Laudrup, Gascoigne or Rozenal are available that night! If any other team would like a game give me a call, we are waiting. By the time you read this you will have received a letter about a five-a-side tournament we are hoping to organise, so all clubs get a team together and enter into the Section 5-a-side competition. It will be played at the new Pitz Centre at Sighthill so come on, support your Section and have a good time into the bargain. I would like to thank Elliott and Edna Small on behalf of the Section for organising the Scottish BTME trip again this year. Once again everything was great, just one or two problems but these were sorted out so thanks once again to you both for doing such a great job for the region.

Finally, if you are attending a Section event this year take your camera with you as I am needing a few pictures from our members, not just of presentations but of people enjoying themselves along with anything of interest on your own course that we could put in the magazine.

Chris Yeaman

NORTH REGION

Bob Lupton
Tel: 01782 750539

Sheffield

On behalf of the Sheffield Section I would like to thank everyone at BIGGA for the excellent job that was done in the organisation and presentation of the BTME 1997 which I know was thoroughly enjoyed by a good number of our section members.

Ron Graham has recently been given retired membership of the Association. Enjoy your retirement Ron.

Our last winter lecture will be held on April 3 at Rotherham GC and will be given by Mr D. Godfrey and Mr M. Franklin from Boughton Loam Ltd at 2.30pm.

New members this month include:- Ben Paling – Sherwood Forest GC, Andrew Fisher – Rother Valley GC, David Cakley – Brough GC, Stewart Barlow – Austerfield GC, Jonathan Haywood – Waterton Park GC, Carl Wilson – Ashby Decoy GC and Steven Rydiard – Hallows GC.
Ron Ullathorne

Cleveland

Firstly, I would like to welcome our new members, Cliff Addison and six members of his staff at Drainage and Construction Contractors of Yarm-on-Tees, Cleveland. They



recently constructed a golf course for farmer Fred Sturrock, of High Thorston Grange, Hartlepool, a new 18 hole course of which 9 holes are now in play. All the course drainage, greens, tees and bunker construction was carried out by Addisons, under the course architect, Jonathan Gaunt. Addisons have a large investment in equipment and machinery and can cope with any golf course project. They now have a new adaption for tracked JCB 360, a power tilt which is ideal for shaping tees, bunkers or mounds from a static position thus reducing the risk of soil compaction.

News from clubs in the area, at last Bedale GC are to get a new shed for their machinery. Head Greenkeeper, Ian Pemberton, informed me that they are also building a new bunker at the 12th and a new winter tee on the 1st. Middlesbrough Golf Club have made a culvert at the 7th hole and have landscaped and turfed 1500 square yards. They have also built a new 9th tee and removed sand from all the bunkers to reshape and refill them with new sand.

Chris Fiddell is improving following his motorcycle accident 12 months ago and he hopes to be returning to work at Billingham GC soon. We wish him well.

The Christmas Competition was held at Wynyard Hall GC near Billingham, Cleveland and was won by Tony Cheesborough, of Wearside Sunderland GC.

Our annual meeting was held on January 16, at Darlington GC. Bob Lawton stepped down as Golf Organiser and he was replaced by Paul Kellett. The annual reports were read and thanks go in particular to Gary Munro and Ian Holloran who work very hard for the Section and the North Region. Also George Malcolm was elected back onto the Committee and is to be our Northern Area Representative.

The Spring Tournament will be held at Bedale GC on Thursday, May 8, at 9.30am. It is also the Hayter Qualifier. If any local courses would like to be used for demonstrations eg chainsaw, tractor driving, brush cutting, sprayer training etc please contact Gary Munro. Please keep up-to-date with COSHH and also job risk assessments.

I am sorry to report that our old friend Bill Burt, retired from SISIS, is in poor health and is in hospital. Our sincere best wishes Bill for a speedy recovery.

Finally many thanks to all those who have helped our Section during the course of the last year.
Bruce Burnell

North East

Two new courses have been chosen for the Spring and Autumn Competitions. We shall be at South Shields on April 17 and then at Boldon in September.

The Section has purchased two videos – Golf Green Reconstruction and Golf Course Ecology. Should anyone like to borrow one please contact me, the only charge will be for postage.

By now all members will have received a questionnaire from the Section. Could you please fill it in and return it to me at 19 Southside, Maften, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE20 0RL.

Finally I would like to welcome David Simpson, Course Manager at Tyneside GC, to the Section.
Jimmy Richardson

Northern

Spring is nearly with us and I am sure everybody hopes that it won't be a poor one like last year. A bad spring and a dry summer don't really go together for good green-keeping conditions!

The BTME at Harrogate was again a splendid exhibition and one that BIGGA should be proud of organising. May I thank Ian Thompson, of Wetherby GC, and Telford Jarvis, of Scarcroft GC, for helping me on the Northern Region stand.

Not many people have booked for the golfing events this year. I hope everyone is aware that if they have not submitted their deposit at least one week before the event they will not be allowed to play, so be warned all you hangers on!

Here are this year's golfing events:- Hayter Qualifier – Wakefield GC, Wednesday April 23 at 10.30am; Presidents Day – South Leeds GC, Wednesday June 25 at 1pm; Roses Match – Halifax GC, Wednesday August 13 at 1pm; Invitation Day – Skipton GC, Wednesday September 3 at 1.00 pm; Autumn Tour – Bridlington Links GC, Wednesday October 8 at 10.30am; Winter Golf – Scarcroft GC, Wednesday December 10 at 10.30am. Numbers at most of the above venues are to be limited.

Any member with any news or information to put into the magazine please contact me on 01484 519829. Bits and pieces are always useful for the column.
Simon Heppenstall

North Wales

So far I have had only a relatively small response for the "Little and Large" show due to be held at the Welsh Horticultural College, on Thursday, March 27. I know it is early days yet but if you wish to know what Boughton Loam has to say on grasses, top dressings and rootzones please contact me on 0151 336 6675 in the evening to reserve your place.

I am pleased to be able to report that after a great deal of detective work, and an early morning raid on a home in the Abergele District, the Richard Campey Trophy has been found in perfect condition.

May I remind you that our Spring Competition will be on Wednesday, April 30, at Frodsham GC. We will be playing for the Hi-Speed Rose Bowl and the Richard Campey Trophy. Entry forms for Frodsham should be with you by the beginning of April. To ensure the viability of the Section we have had to make a small increase to the entry

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Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

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COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

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fees for subsequent competitions. The members' fee will be £13 and guests will be £18 which I am sure you will agree is still extremely good value when you consider the whole package of golf, excellent food and prizes.

Brian Anderson, our Past Chairman, has written the following message:- "To all members of the North Wales Section - I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your loyal and very much appreciated support over the last four years. I have enjoyed being Chairman and have had the opportunity to make many new friends. I would like to wish you all the very best for 1997 and thank you again for your support and to welcome and congratulate Pat Valentine as your new Section Chairman.

"Thank you to all the committee members past and present and to all the trade who have given us their whole hearted support without question, along with the golf clubs. It is because of this tremendous support that our Section is so financially viable and may you continue with your support for 1997 as we lose the membership money.

"So once again thanks to the following traders for all they have done for us:- Phil Davies, Mommersteeg International; Terry Adamson, GEM; Dave Morgan and Mike Whitehouse, Rigby Taylor; Paul Walker, Walker Engineering (Ransomes); John Osman, Osman Machinery (John Deere); Andy Jones, Major Owen (Toro); Andrew Cornes, Acorn Equipment; Julie Hargreave, Ki Chem; Paul Shaw, Course Care; Tony Cundell and Richard Campey, Campey Machinery; David Robinson, Strike (Top Hat); Nick Grey, Martin Bros.

"Also thank you to all the following golf clubs for their support:- Abergele & Pensarn GC, Bull Bay GC, Chirk GC, Chester GC, Nefyn GC, Pwllheli GC, Porthmadog GC, Llangollen GC and Prestatyn GC."

Finally a welcome to three new members, Stephen Jenkins, of Eaton GC; Robert Green, of Aberdovey GC, and Nick Bower who has transferred from the North West Section.

Trevor Johnston

North West

Once again another BTME is over. They seem to come around so quickly but at least this year we escaped the snow ploughs (remember BTME 1995!). As usual it was an excellent show and a great opportunity to meet old friends and new. Let's hope the show continues at Harrogate for many years to come.

I'm sure you will all join me in congratulating Jim McDonald, Head Greenkeeper at Royal Lytham GC, for being awarded the MBE for his services. Jim will be retiring in 1999 after many years in the profession and after being involved in preparing courses for the Open on no fewer than five occasions. I feel his award is a very fitting award for a lifetime of dedication to greenkeeping.

Around the Green



Well done Jim.

The "Mere Seminar" will be on March 18, at Mere G & CC, and by now you will all have received your fixture lists with events for the year plus application forms for the seminar. The seminar is based on problems we have all had during the last two years with drought conditions. The first speaker is Graeme Francis, from Toro Irrigation, who will be advising you on how to get the best from your irrigation system plus advise on the legalities of procuring your own bore hole. Derek Green will cover the construction of bunkers. Derek has already starred in the BIGGA video on bunker construction which appears to be an everlasting job and one which needs to be done properly as Derek will show you.

The afternoon will be covered by Guy Longshaw and Paul Hartley, from Symbio. They will introduce you to the biological approach to fine turf management and how to work with nature. This management claims to reduce thatch and resistance to disease. Please try to come along and bring your Chairman of Green and Secretary - we never stop learning!

On Wednesday April 16 the North West play North Wales, at Hill Valley GC, for the GEM Trophy and I require a team of 16. If you are available and feel you want to be part of the winning team contact me on 0151 724 5412. Bert Cross

MIDLAND REGION

Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507
East Midlands



I hope you all enjoyed this year's BTME at Harrogate, the show really does get bigger every year. Again we were all treated to a first class show, seminar programme and social evening and it was great to see more and more section members there. On the Sunday evening we provided our own entertainment by taking part in a football match which was unfortunately lost by the narrowest of margins 6-5. The team included Richard Barker, Dave Leatherland, Adie Porter, Gavin Robson, Dave Sankey and myself with the star player being Dave Leatherland the scorer of two of the team's goals. Unfortunately all of us woke the following morning feeling very stiff with Dave Leatherland nursing a swollen ankle. Hopefully we can perform better at next year's match.

The Section has purchased a scoreboard for all golf events so we will all have to try to get some respectable scores as they will be all on show from now on! Thanks go to Pete Forshaw and Brian Jenkinson, Centre Manager at Ramsdale Park, for their work in putting the board together.

Brooksby College has arranged two lecture evenings and all members are welcome to attend these lectures. They include a talk from David Bibble on "Dealing with Stress" on Thursday April 17 and on Thursday April 24 the weather is the subject of Dave Mut-ton's talk. Both talks begin at 7pm. For further details contact Paul Greene at the College.

Finally, I would like to wish a speedy recovery for Martin Smith, James Robson and Gary Thurman after recent operations and a get well soon to Chris James. We all hope it won't affect your golf for the next season.

Antony Bindley

BB & O

Warren Farm College launched its winter lecture programme back in January. This was an evening with Jack MacMillan. The evening proved to be a great success with over 70 people in attendance. The various subjects which Jack touched upon were relevant to every one of us and it was nice to know that we all share the same problems. The next lecture is planned for March 19 and this will be a talk by Martin Jones, of The Oxfordshire, on the presentation of a championship course. Thanks to Warren Farm for putting on these evenings, I'm sure they are going to be a great success.

As a new golfing season approaches my thoughts go back to last Spring. The weather was very unkind for those of us in the Midland Region with frosty conditions into May! I hope this Spring/Summer is kinder so that our courses can fully recover. As yet there are no firm dates for any of the golfing events since venues have to be secured. At present we are putting together the fixture card for the forthcoming season, these will be posted along with the entry forms for the Spring Tournament.

Last season finished on a high note with two very well attended golf days so I am optimistic about the coming season. If everybody sets out to play in at least one event they will be contributing greatly to the success of the Section.

Before I sign off I would like to thank Mark Chesman for his contribution at committee level over the past few seasons. Lindsay Anderson

Midland

For the members who attended the BTME I hope you had a good time and like me were suitably impressed with the whole exhibition. It is now the main highlight of the greenkeeping calendar and expands every year which is of great credit to BIGGA and

the support they receive from the various companies. The obvious attraction on the Miracle stand seemed to be a great success and the signed photographs will hang on many greenkeepers messroom walls for a long time.

As I mentioned in the last report I will now give you the dates for the forthcoming tournaments:- Thursday April 24 - Harbourn GC; Monday July 7 - Worcestershire G & CC; Thursday October 2 - North Worcestershire GC. The Christmas Tournament will be played at Druids Heath GC on Monday December 8 when the AGM will also be held.

The Spring Tournament will also be the qualifying round for the Hayter Challenge. It was discussed at our last committee meeting what we could do for the non-golfers as regards education so there will be a short letter which you should have received prior to this report telling you about the trips we have arranged to championship courses. I would be grateful if you would fill in the slip or give me a ring. It is very important to us as a committee that we can offer events to both non-golfers and golfers alike. If you personally have any ideas on this subject please give me a call.

On a very serious note I would like to offer the Section's condolences to the family and friends of Steven Pike who passed away early in January. Steven was Head Greenkeeper at Trentham Park GC.

At a time when most of us are gearing ourselves for the on-coming season there is one notable person who is looking forward to his retirement. Peter Richmond has given vast amounts of time to greenkeeping and to this Section, he has served as Treasurer for many years and has performed splendidly. He has been one of the most respected golf greenkeeping mechanics in the business. He will be a great loss to Walmley GC and to the greenkeeping industry. On behalf of the Midlands Section I would like to wish you all the best in your future retirement.

Finally I would like to welcome the following new members:- Steven Blakeman, Paul Tildesley, Joseph Wood, Wayne Oseman, Richard Cosby, Nigel Paskin, Paul Chillington, Michael Gresswell, Ian Ravenhall, J Mason, Robin Wilcox, Shane Wilton, Keith Hawith, Michael Wyatt, Barry Wood, John Ganley, Jon Reid, Tim Hendy and Steven Golder. Jon Wood

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Gordon Child
Tel: 01803 844056

South West

As is tradition during the month of January many of the South West greenkeepers joined the coach to Harrogate for the BTME



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and a very enjoyable time was had by all. Thanks are due to Gordon and Marion Child for their usual excellent organisation of this three day excursion which must be the bargain of the year. Being one of the more itinerant greenkeepers I especially enjoy the opportunity of meeting old friends and catching up on what has been happening in our own very close knit community while some of the more athletic greenkeepers took the chance of enjoying the Harrogate night life! This included among other things the karaoke in which I am glad to say the South West area didn't let the side down and gave an uplifting rendition of "Puff the Magic Dragon" but the less said about that the better! The show itself and the speakers just keep on improving year in and year out and the whole event was topped by the banquet which all agreed was brilliant. The food, the precision like service of the Majestic Hotel staff and then the hilarious Bobby Davro made it a night to remember. I am sure that once again we will have a full coach for next year. Before finishing may I on behalf of the South West Region give our congratulations to Gordon Child on being elected Vice Chairman of the Association for this year.

Marc Haring

Devon and Cornwall

It is with great regret that I have to inform members of the death of Steve Pike. Steve was at Tiverton GC before moving on to Trentham Park GC, Stoke-on-Trent. Our thoughts are with Stephen's family at this time of need.

The Section's first meeting of the year was sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and held at Fingle Glen GC, on Wednesday, January 15. The day started with golfing members playing a Stableford competition over 9 holes. Our non-golfing members were treated to an excellent workshop on irrigation maintenance and equipment which was presented by Ocmis Irrigation with some of the golfing members joining in the last part of the workshop before lunch.

After lunch members were invited to enter the Barenbrug grass identification competition. The lucky winner drawn from the hat by John Bradley, of Barenbrug, was Tony Gooch who walked away with Barenbrug's goodies.

John Bradley then presented the golfing prizes to the winners of the 9 hole Barenbrug golf competition:- 1. Tony Gooch, 20 pts; 2. Brian Ridgeway, 20 pts.

To conclude a superb day Ocmis Irrigation presented an afternoon seminar on irrigation design and installation. This provided members with some good healthy debating points.

The Section would like to thank Roger Davey and Keith Ford, of Ocmis, for their excellent educational presentation. Our thanks must go to the day's sponsor Barenbrug for without it this meeting would not have taken place and our thanks also go to Bill Pile and his crew who kept the rain off (this must be a first) and for having the course in excellent condition. Finally, thank you to Fingle Glen and all their staff who made our day run so smoothly.

January was also the month when members from all over the Section join the Region's annual trip to the BTME in Harrogate. This year was no exception as the Region's trip was fully booked, a fitting tribute to Gordon and Marion Child on their last BTME trip as organisers. On behalf of all the Sections within the Region I would like to thank you both for all your efforts.

The long journey home gave me the chance to remember the first BTME and seminar programme which was held many years ago. That year the seminar programme was held in the Royal Baths across from the Exhibition Centre and the BTME covered just one and a half halls of the Exhibition Centre. Now we have four halls

fully booked. Congratulations must go the Board of Management and all the staff at Aldwark for the continued success and growth of BTME week.

Our last meeting of the winter programme will be held at Honiton GC, on Thursday, March 20. The day will start as always with golfing members competing for the Supaturf Trophy (Head Greenkeepers) and the Rhone Poulenc Trophy (Assistants). This will also be the Section's qualifier for the Hayter Regional Final and as always golfing members will have a guided tour of the course and sheds.

Westurf is now just around the corner and hopefully the weather will improve before then with this being Gordon and Marion's last Westurf in charge. What better way to thank them for all their efforts over the last ten years than all of you turning up to make the day unforgettable.

Remember the date – April 30 at Long Ashton GC, Bristol.
Richard Whyman

South Coast

On January 15 we had an afternoon trip to Roffeys at Bournemouth. David Roffey showed us around the complex and we were shown all the various materials which go to make up our top dressings, root zone mixes and horticultural composts. We then moved on to the sterilising plant and were shown how the various materials are mixed and finally the bagging of the various dressings. The afternoon finished with tea and biscuits and a general chat about the various products. I would like to thank Roffeys for allowing us to look over their premises and in particular David for giving us the guided tour. It was a shame that only 10 people turned up.

Our Spring Tournament this year will be held at Broadstone GC, on Monday, April 28. This will consist of a full days golf and it will also be the qualifier for the 1997 Hayter Tournament. The Regional Final will be held at Burnham and Berrow GC, on June 11. All those wishing to play should forward their names, address and their current handicap and a cheque for £16 to:- Mark Webb, 12 Lime Road, Arelsford, Hants, SO24 9LD. The closing date for entries is April 18. Would all the winners of last years tournament please ensure they are returned on or before the day of the tournament.

Another reminder for Westurf 97 to be held at Long Ashton GC, on April 30. We would like to see as many of you there as possible. This will be Gordon and Marion's last Westurf, all the more reason for a large attendance. Let's give them our support and thanks for what they have done for Westurf over the years. I am told there are some new stands and a free prize draw, if it's quite a substantial prize then who knows, you could be jetting off to the Bahamas, Bermuda or even sunny Blackpool!

Once again the BTME was a resounding success. All records were broken yet again and I found that on quite a lot of the stands I could not get to talk to the representatives as they were so busy which has got to be good news. The seminars were of a very high calibre and the sound was very good. The only criticism was that it was difficult to see the screen. However I am sure that the organisers have this in hand for next year. Congratulations must go to all those who had a hand in the organisation of the BTME. I say this every year – "It was the best yet!" At the AGM Gordon Child was made a Life Member of the Association and I am sure Gordon will make an excellent Chairman in 1998. There can be no-one more deserving of this honour.

It was nice to see that there was a good representation from the South Coast at the BTME. Thirteen members travelled on the Regional "Bargain of the Year" coach! The journey went quite smoothly with no major hiccups! The driver of the coach from

Southampton to Bristol did get a little confused around Bristol. I must admit I did get a bit worried when I found we were going back out of Bristol the way we came in! Still we made the connection at Gordano which was the main thing. Several members also made their own way to the BTME and during the course of the four days I did bump in to most of them.

Lastly I would like to say thank you to Gordon and Marion for organising the trip and also for all the hard work they have done over the years. Gordon and Marion are going to be a hard act to follow.
Ken Lodge

South Wales

Our latest evening lecture was presented by Mark De Ath, the National Amenity Manager for Headland Agrochemicals. Entitled "Chemicals for the Management of Turf" Mark's presentation covered many topics but was primarily based on the management of soil and the effects on its pH (percentage hydrogen). Fifteen hardy soles braved the typical winter conditions to attend an excellent lecture packed with valuable information. Our thanks to both Headland Agrochemicals and Mark for what was a thoroughly worthwhile evening.

I won't dwell for too long on the subject of the BTME for I'm sure that it will be covered in much greater detail within the pages of this magazine but I must say that another successful BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition has passed us by, bigger, better, more exhibitors and more visitors than ever before – what can one say!

The show goes from strength to strength as does the regional trip. Well done again to Marion and Gordon Child for their excellent organisation of the trip and many thanks!

If any member would like to borrow a book from the BIGGA library, forms can be obtained from myself or BIGGA Headquarters.

Ian Walker has recently been appointed the new Head Greenkeeper at Carmarthen GC. Ian, a Scot with a handicap of 9, joined from the Stonehaven GC in Aberdeen. We wish him well and look forward to seeing him at forthcoming Section events.
Peter Lacey

SOUTH EAST REGION

Derek Farrington

Tel: 01903 260956

Surrey

A proposal was put forward at the December AGM that the golf meetings should have an educational element attached to them. Not all golf venues are suitable for educational purposes but the spring meeting at Dukes Dean GC, on May 12, would appear to be ideal. The spring meeting was chosen because it is also the Hayter qualifier and we usually have a good turn out.

Following 27 holes of golf Jack MacMillan has kindly agreed to attend for the evening meal and talk to us on his chosen subject so please come along and support this event.

On another subject entirely I hear that the Drift GC has been taken over by the largest golf company in the world, Club Corporation of America. The Drift is now a member along with 240 clubs throughout the world with associations in the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Ireland, India and now England which the Drift are very excited about since they are the first English club to be acquired by CCA. Good luck to the Club and the staff, especially to Paul and his team who I understand are very happy with the new management.
Mike Kirkham

Essex

The new Essex Section got underway with a meeting at the White Horse Pub, Chelms-

ford when 45 greenkeepers and trade members aired their views and formed a committee as follows:- President – David Wells; Chairman – Carl Crocher; Secretary – Andy Sheehan; Treasurer – Richard Pride; Handicap Secretary – Mick Fance; Scribe – David Wells; Education – Martin Forrester; Committee Member – Reg Hooper.

Golf days have been arranged on April 22 at Chigwell GC (Hayter Qualifier), June 16 at Five Lakes G & CC, August 9, at The Warren GC and October 2 at Stock Brook Manor GC. The AGM will be held at Orsett GC in December.

Evening lectures will be held at Writtle College in the main building, room L60 at 7.30 pm. Please make a note of the following dates in your diary – March 18, May 14 and September 25. Details of each meeting will be announced later. Liquid refreshments will be available in the students bar after 8pm.

A meeting was held at Writtle College, on February 3, when members were invited to sit on an advisory panel to the College to discuss educational and training provision. These meetings will be held on a regular basis.

Urgent – more assessors (D32/33) are required for our area for the success of future greenkeeping. Contact Martin on 01245 603131 if you are interested. You should have received your questionnaire by now. It is important from all our points of view you spend a few minutes to fill it in so the committee know what members want. As a bonus your form will be entered into a free draw which will be drawn at our meeting on March 18. If you haven't received your questionnaire yet please contact Martin on the above number.

We wish Alan Sharpe and Doug Smith good luck in their new jobs and congratulate Andy Turbine and Adrian Kersey on their promotions at Ernest Doe. Finally our best wishes for the future are sent to Richard Pride who was recently married.

If you have any news for the Essex section phone me on 01702 522202.

David Wells

Sussex

Harrogate is over for another year. It may only last five days but the memories will last a lot longer. The Conference, Seminars and Exhibition were terrific and so well organised. To gather so many greenkeepers from Europe and beyond just shows it's getting BIGGA and better every year!

Congratulations to Dave Ansell on his presentation on Downland Conservation. It not only took a lot of hard work to prepare but also a lot of guts to get up and present it so well. But that's not all – the highlight of his week came on Wednesday night when a stunned audience watched Dave giving his all at karaoke night singing "Give me all your lovin'" Great stuff Dave, but don't give up the day job!

Now news of a forthcoming event. An inter-county golf challenge is to be held at Princes Golf Club, Sandwich, on 27 March. This event is the idea of Chris Allen. He approached Bill Howie, at Princes, for permission to play there and has also arranged sponsorship from John Deere and Sisis. Teams will be made up of eleven players from each county with the best 10 Stableford cards to count from each team. Derek Farrington, our Regional Representative, is coordinating between the counties involved in this event.

The Sussex team for this year will be selected by George Barr but it is the intention of the committee to make either the summer or autumn competition into a qualifier for next year's challenge.

To finish can I remind members that articles have to be in one month before the magazine is printed so I need any items you want included in plenty of time so that I can mention them in my write up.
Colin Cathie



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THE PRIZES

THE WINNER of the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping will receive the following:



FOR THE CLUB

The golf club of the winning Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper will win a world renowned Toro Greensmaster 3000 triple greens mower (pictured above), the winner's trophy to display for a year and a plaque to display in the club house.

FOR THE WINNING COURSE MANAGER/ HEAD GREENKEEPER

The individual winner will win a two week trip to the United States, visiting the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference and Show, as well as a trip to visit the Toro Company's Headquarters in Minneapolis and its factory in Riverside, California.

FOR THE TEAM

Each member of the winning Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper's team will receive a set of BIGGA waterproofs.

FOR THE REGIONAL WINNERS

Each regional winning Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper will receive £100 for themselves and a plaque to display in their club house.



Budding author needs help in 'exposing' tyrannical golfers

I am currently Head Greenkeeper at Whitby GC and am compiling a book called *Golfers Through a Greenkeeper's Eyes*. It is a satirical look at our golfing fraternity and the people we have to deal with on a daily basis.

Having sent the finished article to a couple of agents the reply was more or less the same – it isn't long enough to be a book and is more of a booklet. As I explained to these people I'm a greenkeeper not a writer and, although there was much encouragement, it was strongly recommended that I "fill out" the aforementioned literature with some humorous drawings. Seeing as how my ability to draw cartoons is even less favourable than my ability to write I was wondering if there are any, like minded, greenkeepers out there who would like to partake in a joint venture.

I must, however, forewarn any budding Schultzs that this book/booklet is a scathing and bitter attack on our beloved golfing associates, albeit very "tongue in cheek" and should we not make a million in the first publication we may end up huddled carrying on some building site or other remembering the days when we used to cut grass for a living!

I'm convinced that this request will be greeted with open arms as a chance to put our side of the story in a light hearted and jovial manner and should anyone want to take up this metaphorical gauntlet I would only be too willing to send a few descriptive paragraphs so a visual likeness could be sketched.

I thank you.

Ian Lavelle
Head Greenkeeper
Whitby GC

Thanks for support

I write to thank the BIGGA members, staff and my many friends in the industry for the letters, cards and messages I received during my recent bereavement.

The support given has been a great comfort to me during a very sad time.

I would also like to send my best wishes for the future to my successor as Association Guardian, Walter Woods, and to Neil Thomas and all at BIGGA during this 10th anniversary year.

Bill Lawson

Green card system could be made to work in the UK

I would like the chance to reply to David Roy's article "Employers and Intruders", February issue.

I too have endured two inclement years with very dry summers, the worst winter of snow for 15 years in 1995/96 (eg first snowfall November 5, '95 disappearing on April 12, '96), frost down to 15cm and windchill factors below -30° 1996/97. I consequently can fully follow your articles and sympathise.

You are totally correct when you refer to the green card system. This applies to Denmark, Sweden and, I believe, Germany and Norway. Our requirements work on a points system covering etiquette, rules and how to play.

All the new members have to pass tests on: bunker shots, chip shots, fairway shots, etc which are conducted with an existing low handicap player or the club professional. These new members start with a handicap of, wait for it, 55! for both men and women. They must play nine holes to this handicap on the nine hole par 3 course before they are allowed to move on to the main 18 hole par 72 course. This is a popular system with our new golfers and improves the etiquette on the course ie pitch marks, divots etc.

However this only accounts for

the new members and I still have the "old brigade" who neither like change or improvements especially when it interferes with their daily routine.

I quote: "What's wrong with the greens? They're worse now you've made all these holes in them!" These greens have 635 mg per litre of phosphates – I could actually legally sell it for fertiliser!

Or: "I've been playing here for 25 years and never seen it closed when the frost comes out." We have had 10cm of frost moving up coupled with 6mm of rain. This led to a cocktail when walked upon almost like roundup on your feet... "of course we can see that but the grass is 25 years old so it must be able to cope." This is actually 25 years of over fertilisation, over watering and a lack of root system. Enough said.

The worst day has to be the men's day with the hard core of 20 members who incidentally do not have green cards, who leave the course with pepper pot greens and bunker size divots. Of course there's nothing you can teach them.

On numerous occasions we have tried to hold information evenings to educate the membership on greenkeeping techniques and forthcoming disruptive operations.

Strangely enough the aforementioned seem to develop a rare strength of Indian 'flu on that day but are fit to tee off at 8am the next morning.

My quarterly article in the club magazine is appreciated by the majority and it is to those the information is aimed. I do believe the green card system will work, although it will take a long time to see the results.

Maybe the British would benefit from this system, improving course quality and lower our greenkeeper's stress levels.

Thanks for another brilliant Harrogate Show.

Chris Haspell
Course Manager
Falster GC
Denmark

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APPLIED SEED TECHNOLOGY



Great Hadham's Green Recovery

When David Dollimore took over at Great Hadham GC on the Herts/Essex border, greens were worn and weeds were starting to get a foothold.

His problems increased when a late April herbicide was followed by unusually severe frosts. Attempts to re-turf and then re-seed were also thwarted, this time by drought.

It was then that he spotted a Fortiva advert and, after consulting Kings Horticulture, decided to give it a go.

"We added the Fortiva treated pure bent mixture to a top dressing, chitting the seed over a weekend, just 12 days later, it was up and running," he recalls.

"Normally I'd expect grass to take 21 days to establish, but within a fortnight it had bedded in. This was an incredible recovery, the best I've seen in 15 years.

"Fortiva treated seed is certainly worth it," he says. "Now I'll rarely consider anything else on the greens."

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Removing guesswork from spraying system selection

Matching the correct equipment to the needs of their course is of vital importance. This month we look at spray tanks.

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

The above is a common business adage often used to make managers aware of the need to seek out all the available information before deciding on a course of action.

It is therefore vitally important, when considering the purchase of a replacement or additional spraying system, to be aware of the many options available so that whatever choice is made, the decision will have been reached on knowledge rather than 'experience' or guesswork.

To help you decide which combination of application equipment best matches your particular needs this guide reviews the different tank options. At the same time as deciding the choice of equipment, don't forget the skill levels of your staff who will ultimately use the



equipment; much of the new equipment available will require extra training on its use.

The first consideration will be tank size in relation to the size and nature of the course.

What is the intended function of the sprayer and the likely intensity of use? There is little point in selecting a 1500 litre trailer sprayer if the course is small with narrow fairways and steep sided greens and tees. Conversely, a tractor mounted 300 litre sprayer would be a waste of money if it is the only machine available for spraying a large course with "motorway" fairways.

The second consideration is the materials from which the tank is constructed (see table). Common tank-construction materials

include moulded plastics, fibreglass, heavy-gauge steel and stainless steel. Whatever the material, the overriding consideration must be that it should resist corrosion from the materials applied.

New tanks introduced into the

Amenity market have been designed to minimise leftover spray mix, tanks such as these reduce chemical waste and disposal problems. Some manufacturers have also introduced a built-in sump that also helps with disposal. The tank must also have a drain plug at its lowest point, preferably operated by a valve located on the top of the tank.

Finally, the tanks should be clearly marked with graduated level indicator or have a sight gauge (visible from the operator's position) to provide the operator with a constant visual of the tank levels.

Fig. 1 Amenity sprayers: Tank materials and their characteristics

Consideration	Polypropylene	Fibreglass	Stainless Steel
Corrosion-proof	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repairable	Kits for some	Kit with resin	Welding
Weight	Light	Medium	Heavy
Sizes	100-1,500 ltrs	100-1,500 ltrs	300-1,500 ltrs
Level visibility	Good	Poor	None: Sight gauge required
Cost	Low	Medium	High
Comments	Not easy to repair Select UV resistant materials Easy to mount May stain after time	Can break or crack under impact Mounting is difficult Inside may flake due to effect of corrosive materials	Strong and durable Very heavy Most expensive Difficult to repair

PRESENTING THE POWERFUL NEW REELMASTER SERIES.



Compact and bijou

Hugh Tilley looks at the range of compact tractor which now faces the prospective customer and speaks with the people who use them.

With an excellent power to weight ratio and both hydraulics and power take-off, compact tractors are ideal for many essential operations. Equipped with turf or low pressure tyres, most have four wheel drive making them very sure footed and able to be used for both tractive and hydraulic lift and pto work.

Recent changes have altered the marketing of several makes of compact tractor, notably Shibaura and Iseki.

Marketing agreements have been made for Iseki with Jacobsen – in place of Massey Ferguson and for Shibaura with Ransomes. The recent Ransomes announcement simply states that that company will be bringing in a range of seven tractors – from 18 to 45hp in corporate style and colours.

For trailer work compact tractors offer greater capacity and load hauling ability than turf maintenance vehicles (TMV) such as the Cushman, while the virtual standardisation of their hydraulic lift (category I) and pto means that they offer exceptional flexibility to use with other makes or models. Actually several speeds may be offered for the pto – so it will pay to check what speed your machinery

REAL WORLD TEST COMPACT TRACTORS GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

requires, remembering that forward speed and engine speed will co-relate.

Furthermore front end loaders are available so that most can be used for lifting and loading in a way that no TMV can. Some models are better for loader work than others, in particular for the output of the hydraulic pump

and the strengths of their construction.

Experience suggests that on many courses the compact tractor is also used as a run-around. Cabs, once scoffed as "soft", are becoming more popular and widespread although there are still those who say that their tractors are mainly used in fine weather

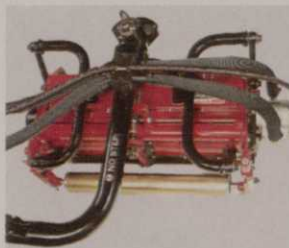
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(ie for mowing rough or fairway) so a cab is superfluous. ROPS, or Roll Over Protection, or frames are a minimum legal requirement.

Few smaller tractors have air conditioning, but most with cabs do have heating.

Most manufacturers offer a range of transmissions, and usually these include a hydrostatic drive which may be more ideal for loader work. There are many variations in transmission ratios and many models will offer a 'shuttle' gear which gives fast and easy direction changes. Deep aeration – such as with a Verti-drain is a frequent requirement, and places several specific requirements on the tractor, typically, sufficient low ratio or creeper gears, and enough front weight, but the latest developments in deep aerators with higher gearing mean that specific "creep" ratios may not be needed. Where there is limited turning space such as at the edges of greens or tees a good turning circle or easy to operate gear shift may be another essential requirement – however beware of the dangers of scuffing.

Because hydrostatics is such an integral part of most compact tractors the majority also use it for power steering – from the manufacturing point of view hydrostatic steering is more flexible as there is no need for mechanical connection from steering wheel to drag link. From the operators point of view there is less effort needed and little kick back – but some maintenance may be needed. Hydrostatic steering can be abused.

John Deere Tractors at Puckrup Hall Golf Club, at Tewkesbury

This 18 hole course is about five years old, mainly flat but with considerable tree planting and the Head Greenkeeper is Trevor Williams. He used past experience to suggest the club buy John Deere tractors from Frank Sutton at Raglan, and now with five years use he is totally satisfied with the choice. Trevor's past experience has included Ford, Kubota and others.

The club has three John Deere tractors, a 38hp JD 1070 now with 1727 hours on its clock and two 33hp JD 955s – clocking 905 and 1986 hours respectively. JD 1070s are no longer available. The higher hour 955 is equipped with a front end loader and a mid-mounted mower thus it has a considerable work load. The 1070 is mostly used for verti-draining and for operating a five gang mechanical mower set on fairways, as well as for trailer work.

One of the first comments that First Assistant Peter Rack, made was that all three tractors always start – first time, every time, without heaters. Another of his likes was the roominess of the operator platform (particularly on the 1070) with all the controls to hand. Access was particularly good he commented. None of the tractors have a specific driver – any of the five greenkeeping staff are expected to be able to operate any machine. Oil changes and similar routine servicing is carried out by in-house, as is some larger scale work, however none of the JDs have needed anything other than routine work – the only non-usual item on the service sheet has been with one of the 955s which needed a new hydraulic pipe as the old chafed through – this was covered by warranty. The club is meticulous over its servicing and oil changes, preferring to undertake them early rather than leaving them past their due date.

Trevor said his policy was to get the right sized tractor for its use, he commented that expecting a smaller tractor, for instance, to operate the verti-drain was asking for problems, with steering and control as well as by



Keith Weston, Course Manager, Kenilworth GC and their Iseki 537

demanding too much from the hydraulics and power output. All three tractors have 4WD but this is seldom needed on the Puckrup Hall course. Hydraulic lift has proved to be more than adequate in terms of lift capacity.

The lower hour JD 955 has a three gang wrap-around fairway mower fitted and this has made it effectively a one use machine – Trevor said that he would expect this to last for at least ten years, whereas he is looking to replace the other two machines within the next two years. The criteria for replacement is "before the value drops" – or more exactly while the tractor is in good order, clean and with a good resale potential.

Mounting and demounting the loader is exceptionally easy and quick and it was demonstrated to Greenkeeper International, and although this demo was on concrete it demonstrated the 70A loader to be one of the best systems ever, and one which looked particularly stable without needing extra stands or the removal of pins or stands. Peter commented that not only was the loader quick to fit but it was also a very fast loader to use, with quick acting hydraulics and the hydrostatic transmission which made for rapid forward/reverse operation. Fitting the 60 in. mid-mounted deck was little more difficult, Trevor estimated it as a four minute job. In this form the tractor is used to cut between the 15,000 trees planted on the course – a considerable task, and one which demands some dexterity.

Certainly Trevor was confident that the John Deeres had been his best choice and he foresaw replacement as being from the same supplier.

Iseki Tractors at Kenilworth Golf Club

Kenilworth Golf Club is an old established club which has used a wide variety of makes of tractor in the past, nor has it tied itself to any particular dealer. The two Iseki tractors currently on the course – an 18 hole private park-



Puckrup Hall Head Greenkeeper Trevor Williams, left and First Assistant Peter Rack with their John Deere 1070

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