

The Articulator[®]

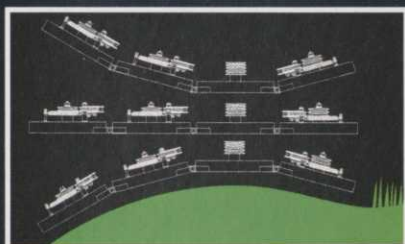
"Quality rotary mowers for a world that isn't flat"



96" low HP requirement



High output 124" precise height of cut



Four 25" articulating cutting decks duplicate the cut quality of four individual push mowers



Deck will fit a wide range of out front tractor units



Powerful 38hp diesel 96" cut. Height of cut from seat.

FREE DEMONSTRATION

Call for a free demonstration in your area NOW!

Scotland: Double A Trading: Sandy 01382 330556

North/Midlands: MGM: Dean 0116 289 2595

Wales: Major Owen: Andy 01766 770261

South West: PJ Flegg: Paul 01404 815666

South East: Marlwood Ltd: Keith 01622 728718

Low cost finance

Low maintenance costs

Minimum arisings

Solve your leaf problem with a mulching kit

Contours your turf instead of scalping

Bring fairway presentation to your semi-rough/rough

Marlwood Limited

Court Lodge Farm, Forge Lane, East Farleigh, Maidstone, Kent ME15 0HQ
Tel: 01622 728718 Fax: 01622 728720

AD
REF
501

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

Finally, if you have not received your entry form for this year's Spring Tournament to be held at Beeston Fields GC on May 13, could you please give me a ring and I will gladly send you a entry form. Please remember if you wish to play in any Section golf your form must be returned to the Secretary before the closing date. Also to all those attending the day, may I thank you for your support and wish you a most enjoyable day.

Antony Bindley

Midland

Well it's that time of year again, everybody still has the hangover from BTME and the season is almost on us. BTME always gets better every year, I am sure you will agree. For those of you who went to the show you will be aware of the launch of the grand raffle to raise money for the building fund for the new offices at HQ for those of you who are not aware of this raffle then you will be interested in this next information. I have now got tickets which are available to buy and you can then be entered into the prize draw which will take place on the June 22 at the

Annual Golf Day. When buying a ticket you will also receive a badge depending on the value of your ticket purchased, the prices are as follows: £1 per ticket, £5 = 1 bronze badge, £25 = silver badge, £50 = gold badge.

By the time you are reading this report you should all have received your fixture cards and applications forms, if there are any problems please contact me on 01384 292396.

On behalf of the Midland section and his friends at Little Aston Golf Club I would like to wish Alan Borraston a speedy recovery from his recent ill health. Alan is always a keen member of the Section and is known to a great number of the members. Get well soon Alan.

I would like to finish by introducing a long list of new members to our section: Martin Sowerby, Nicholas Bird, Jason Cunningham, Colin Foxhaff, Simon Finch, John Miklausie, Darren Yates, Paul Freeman, Graeme Couchman, Ian Beech, Steven Edwards, Barry North, Anthony Duffy, David Bevan, Paul Quinn and Anthony Weekes.

Jonathan Wood

East of England

Not much to report this month apart from the Section does now have a computer/printer and your secretary will hopefully get to grips with it, so you may see some changes in the format of your notices.

The Section is looking for trade members to sponsor the postage for communications for the section so anybody interested please contact Graeme MacDonald.

The Midland Region is to set up a Greenkeeper Support Group. Anybody who wants to talk to a fellow greenkeeper with any problems contact 0116 2739189.

The fixture list for 1998 is as follows: April 8, Burghley Park - PGM and Barenbrug Seeds; May 5, Lincoln GC (Torksey) Purdeys and RiteFeed Qualifier; June 11,

Tyston Park - Rigby Taylor; June 24, Stoke Poges - RiteFeed Regional Final; July 15, Northshore - Burdens Groundcare; August 20, Oundle - EOE v E Midlands - Toro Shield; September 15, Toft GC - EOE v Secretaries Association, Chandlers Cup; October 26, Belton Woods GC - Fieldcare Texas Scramble, AGM

The Section has a Smith Corona Word Processor/typewriter for sale if any members are interest please contact Graeme MacDonald 01636 626564.

Graeme MacDonald

B B & O

The first golf event of the season takes place at Reading Golf Club on Thursday 16th April, hopefully everybody received their invitation (if not please inform asap). The tournament is also the Ritefeed Qualifier for the Regional Final. Fortunately for us the Regional Final is to be played at Stoke Poges which is just down the road. This means anybody qualifying will not have to travel hundreds of miles to participate. This actually means that the old excuse of teams in the past about being "too tired" after travelling will no longer apply, so hopefully the B B & O can seriously compete for the major honours at last!

I mentioned briefly, last month, that The Oxfordshire was looking for some volunteers to assist with bunker maintenance during the week of May 14-17 at the Benson & Hedges. At present we have a list of volunteers organised but David assures me that

At your wit's end with troublesome decoders?



**It's time to fit Tonick replacements
- there's a 5 year warranty including lightning**

Tonick  **Watering**

Removing the irritation from irrigation

2, Prince William Close - Worthing - West Sussex - BN14 0AZ
Telephone: **01903 262393** Facsimile: **01903 694500**

The perfect mix!



**The MASCOT
Turf Care Range**

Pesticides

Herbicides

Fertilizers

Top Dressings
& Composts

Grass Seeds

White lining
materials
& equipment

Tools

Golf Course
equipment

FREE 0800 424 919

**Rigby
Taylor**

your perfect partners

Creating grass seed mixtures to meet successfully the diverse demands put upon today's turf and grassed areas has become a highly technical science.

As the UK's leading independent supplier of grass seed, Rigby Taylor is able to formulate and develop mixtures using only top quality seeds chosen from the very best available on the market.

And because they are part of the well known and respected range of Mascot Turf Care products, you can be sure these Mascot mixtures offer a performance that's perfect for every occasion.

Whether you are a greenkeeper, groundsman, landscape contractor or responsible for amenity areas you can rely on the expertise of Rigby Taylor to provide the specialist knowledge you need and a grass seed mixture that's exactly right for the job.

Also available with
FORTIVA
- for extra growth
performance and faster
grass establishment

they could accommodate a few more helpers. If you would like the opportunity to assist in setting up a course for a prestigious PGA European Tour event then please contact myself asap.

Remember we are holding our Summer Competition there in August so this would go some way to thanking them.

Also, Chris Kennedy is looking for volunteers to rake bunkers during the Volvo PGA at Wentworth, this will be run similar to the scheme at The Open where you are allocated a group to follow. Imagine walking inside the ropes alongside Woosie or Sevel!

I recently attended a Regional Board meeting at Northampton along with our Chairman R. Clark. The main thing to come out of the meeting was the proposal to set up a Greenkeepers Support Line. This will give Greenkeepers in our Section the opportunity to discuss in the strictest confidence any problems which are causing them sleepless nights. Working with mother natures brings its own stresses as we all know, so I'm sure this line will be busy. The scheme will run for a 6 month spell at which point it will be assessed, with the possibility of it becoming permanent. The number to phone is 0116 2739189.

Lindsay Anderson 01491 578147



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

London

At Hadley Wood GC, a massive earth moving operation began back on September 10, 1997, in order to create a new irrigation reservoir. The existing lake had 9,000 cubic metres of silt removed and a further 27,000 cubic metres of soil was dug to extend the lake area, giving approximately five million gallons of water when full.

The new reservoir area threatened to alter the natural flow of the feeder stream, so a by-pass ditch was dug to divert the watercourse around the lake and rejoin downstream. The diggers moved out at the end of October and the Green staff had hardly time to draw breath before the Irrigation Contractors had rolled in to install a full greens, tee, approach and fairway sprinkler system. Due to the hard soil conditions, a chain trencher had to be used throughout the installation, which meant an extra arduous task for the Greenkeepers of removing the excess soil from the trench lines. The Contractors finished

at the end of February and Course Manager, Craig Handyside, is, and I quote, "dead chuffed" with the result. He would like to thank his Deputy, Rob Washbrook, and all the rest of the staff for the work done and help given, but most of all for preserving his sanity during all the upheaval.

At Northwood GC, the second phase of a tee renovation programme has been completed which involved four tees being remodelled. Construction work was carried out by Course Manager, Colin Fairley, and his staff with final levelling and turfing by Steve Pask using Inturf. Work continues with the renovation of ten existing bunkers. Colin has now been at Northwood for twenty eight months with wife Jeannie and young son Calum, having previously been in charge of a new course in Holland.

A new bore-hole has been drilled at Finchley Golf Club under the eagle eye of David Montgomerie, who estimates he will be able to extract up to 10 cubic metres per hour. Simultaneously a further ten bunkers are being constructed by Contractors C J Collins.

Date for your Diary - The RiteFeed Classic will be held at Highgate GC on Tuesday, April 21, 1999

Peter Hopkinson

East Anglia

On February 10 five members of our Section were invited to Eastern College near Norfolk. We were asked to give some advice on setting up college courses at NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in amenity horticulture. Steve Millard and myself managed to arrive without mishap but on meeting Roger Plummer, David Childs and Ernie Hart we discovered that Ernie had managed to direct Roger and David down roads where as Roger explained you might meet a stagecoach or the odd Highway man was in hiding.

We were met by Paul Metcalf and had a chat about NVQ course and how the college was working towards certification with City & Guilds. Bryan Clarke then took us all on a tour of the college grounds and showed the group the new facilities that were going to be in place in the autumn of this year. Another meeting is due to be held late in March and I will report on further developments later in the year.

On Thursday, February 26, Collier Turf Care put on their annual seminar at the Hotel Norwich, as usual John and Andrew and the team made the day go very well and the displays and presentations were of a very high standard.

The presentations were given by Justin Smith - ASE Solutech Ltd on "Soil and soil water movement" followed by Stuart Ashworth - Amenity Technology Ltd on "Nutrients cycling in the soil system" these concluded the morning lectures. In the afternoon Dr Tim Lodge, Agronomist with the STRI in East Anglia, spoke on "Irrigation strategies for fine turf". I found the presentations very informative and very poignant as this area of the British Isles has the lowest amount of rainfall in the country, and also managing irrigation systems along with fertiliser application is so important to us all. Once again all my thanks to Collier Turf Care for an excellent day hope to see you all next year.

Ian Willett

Essex

With our membership now reaching 185 we would like to take this opportunity to give a warm welcome to the following new members:

Dean Ricci, Gosfield Lakes; David Gibbons, Langdon Hills; Terence Blowers, Burnham on Crouch; Graham Saunders, Orsett; Stuart Jenkins, Romford; David Bush, Stoke By Nayland; Neil Cordery; Gordon Hadley; Thomas Baird and Eric Mead, Ilford Golf Club.

Once again the main playing season is upon us with our first golf competition, the South East Regional Qualifier, to be held at Burnham on Crouch GC on April 22. For further information contact Richard Pride on 01268 752281.

A note for all committee members the next meeting is to take place on April 14 at 2 pm at Bentley GC.

If anyone has any news from around the section please contact me on 01702 522202.

Wishing you successful green-keeping and good golfing.

Dave Wells



**South West
and South Wales**
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01363 82777

South West

A beautiful spring like day greeted 42 greenkeepers for the Lawson Trophy at an immaculate Bath GC at the end of February. The course was in amazingly good condition thanks to Guy Woods and his crew and, even more amazing, Michael Fawcett did not win. That particular honour went to our Chairman, Chris Sealey, after taking the course apart with his own particular brand of power golf and coming in with a very impressive 39

points. 2nd went to J Bryne on the back nine with 35 points and third was Nick Wilson showing a welcome return to form. Nearest the pin was Nick Perkins and not a Mr M. Mouse as some wit had put down. The nearest the pin competition raised a splendid £50 for the golf clubs charity; research into Parkinson's Disease. A special mention must be made of Phil Greenway who also managed a superb 39 points but being a trade member was not allowed to receive a prize. Sorry about that Phil but thanks for coming anyway.

Huge thanks to George Sinker, from Lawson Products, our sponsors for the day, for providing all the prizes. Thanks also to all at Bath GC, including Paul Ware the Secretary, Wendy and Peter for the food and David behind the bar for such a great day which was rounded off with a scary talk from Duncan Stewart, of Envirogreen.

Paul Jenkins, from Lilybrook GC, is at the moment obtaining details of a fire safety course to be run by Gloucestershire Fire Service and so if anybody is interested then please give me a ring. We are also running a First Aid course in the very near future, I do not know exactly when but contact me on 01380 828380 if you will be needing to save any lives and I will get you down for that one.

The Section has now received a batch of badges for the Buy a BrickFund for the new HQ, so all donations of a fiver receive a badge and free entry into the grand raffle in which prizes include a night out with Janet Adamson and Sami Collins or something like that. So please all donations are gratefully received. Please contact Peter Baymon about that one.

Coming up we have the RiteFeed Classic at Isle of Wedmore on April 21 and then Westurf on the 29th at Long Ashton. This is Paula's first Westurf and it promises to be a very good one so please, please come along and bring all your colleagues, Greens Chairmen, committee members, Ladies Captain etc etc with you and hopefully we will see you there.

Marc Haring

South Coast

Our Quiz Night was held at Bramshaw Golf Club on February 4. Unfortunately it was not very well attended. We managed to muster three teams. Not very good. I would like to say thank you to the people who did turn up. They were Fred Deamon and his team from Alton, Tony Gadds team and Adrian Wiltshires team from Bramshaw Golf

Club. Yours truly was the Quiz Master. It was an enjoyable evening, but would have been a lot better with more support.

Our Seminar was held at Sparsholt College on Feb 26. We had quite a good attendance. However, the numbers were down on last year. Tony Gadd, our chairman, started the proceedings by welcoming us all. He thanked the sponsors and the college for their support. He then handed over to our Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries, our Chair Person for the day. Our first speaker was our National Chairman, Gordon Child. Gordon kindly stepped in for Allen Mitchell who has been ill for the last couple of months. Gordon gave us a talk on his career in greenkeeping spanning over 50 years. He mentioned some of the great golfers Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Arnold Palmer and his idol, Sam Snead. Some of the courses he had worked on, his first, Royal Birkdale St Georges Hill, Moor Park and his last course Churston. You could listen to Gordon all day. Our next speaker was Janet Adamson our BIGGA Membership Secretary. Her talk was an update on BIGGA. This proved to be very interesting and opened the gates for lots of questions and discussions. After coffee we had our students presentation. James Braithwaite is the Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Long Ashton GC. James' talk was about how BIGGA had affected his career in greenkeeping. He is also a Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year. A lot of his talk was about his trip to the USA. He then went on to talk about his present post at Long Ashton. After lunch we had a very well presented talk on fertilisers from David Truby, of Scotts Fertilisers. David covered just about everything from NPK various forms of Nitrogen, Slow Release, Trace elements to very beneficial to our young students at the seminar.

Finally, Robert Brewer, Course Manager and General Manager at St Mellion Golf Club, gave a talk about managing his club. Robert started his career as a greenkeeper. He then progressed right to the top of the tree. He covered a lot of the skills that he puts into practice in managing such a large complex. One point Robert did mention was that all greenkeepers who wish to go all the way, have all the facilities available to them, ie NVQ's, Master Greenkeeper and the management courses that are available from BIGGA.

Tony Gadd once again thanked Sparsholt College for continued support. The sponsors for the day, namely, Huxleys Grass Machinery, Driving Force Leisure, ISS Aquaturf, Gem Professional and Winchester Garden Machinery for all of their support. He then thanked all of the speakers for taking time out to make it such a successful day. Tony then went on to thank Paula for taking on the task of chairing the seminar. Last but not least our thanks to Gordon Child our National Chairman who conned me into buying Jim Arthur's book on Practical Greenkeeping. No, seriously it is a good book. It is as it says Practical Greenkeeping. It should be on everyone's bookshelf for all to read.

This is the last call for the 10th Westurf. Paula mentioned this at the seminar. A lot of things are on offer: Competitions, BIGGA hospitality tent, free glass of wine with a slice of anniversary cake and a panel of experts to solve all your problems. There is also a competition for members of the trade and a demonstration area. As I said before it will be a fine sunny day. Bring along your Club Captains, Committee Members, Secretaries and Club Proprietors. Make it a good day out for everyone. See you all on April 29 at Long Aston.

Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

The Section's first meeting of the year was sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and held at Bude & North Cornwall GC on Wednesday, February 4. The day started with golfing members competing in a St Andrews foursome format for the Barenbrug cup, our non golfing members were treated to an excellent workshop on Business Management for Greenkeeping which was presented by Robert Brewer, Course Manager and Golf Director at St Mellion International.

After an excellent lunch John Bardley, on behalf of Barenbrug, presented the morning's golfing prizes to the winners of the Barenbrug golf competition. John then gave a short presentation on Barenbrug.

Results: 1. Kevin Yeoman, Dartmouth, & Craig Earnshaw, Dartmouth, 39pts on back 9. 2. Shaun Getson, St Mellion, & Andy Parker, CREDITON, 39pts on back 9

3. Tony Gooch, Torrington, & Peter Bond, Sidmouth, 39pts
To conclude the superb day

WANTED

GREENKEEPERS, SECRETARIES AND CHAIRMEN OF THE GREEN!

COMPETITIONS

DEMONSTRATIONS

CATERING

BAR



29TH APRIL, 1998

LONG ASHTON GOLF CLUB 10AM - 4PM

MEET THE EXPERTS

Company	Speakers	Subject	Yes/No
Symbio	Jason Hoolahan & Stella Inglethorpe	Biotechnology in sportsturf	
Astara	Dr Brian Clifford	Diseases and pests	
Scotts	Chris Briggs	Fertilisers	
Supaturf	John Mullins	Water Management	
EBA	David Bracey	Bowling green maintenance	
STRI	Peter Winter	Any relevant subject	
Terralift	Rex Kimberley	Organic Products	
Breton Precast	Lee Weir	Above ground fuel storage	
BIGGA	Ken Richardson	Education, Training etc	
Books available	Jim Arthur	Golf Course Maintenance	

To allow our experts to schedule their day, please send your name, club details and seminars you are interested in, with your completed form to: Paula Humphries, Truants Cottage, Zeal Monachorum, CREDITON, Devon EX17 6DF

TRADE EXHIBITION


WESTURF '98 - BE THERE!


NEW

SITESAFE


MODULAR SYSTEMS

...make all the difference to secure storage & accommodation units.






GARAGE




PAVILION



WORKSHOP

For further information please contact:

Irvine Weston on Tel: 01427 752058 or
Cleveland Sitesafe Ltd. Park Farm,
Dunsdale, Guisborough,
Cleveland. TS14 6RQ.
Tel: 01642 475009 or Fax: 01642 471036.



AD
REF
56



Enter this year's Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and you could be the winner of a world renowned Toro Greensmaster Triple Greens Mower for your club.

The individual winner will also receive an all expenses paid trip to the GCSAA Conference and Show, in Orlando, and visit the Toro factories in California and Minneapolis.

There is still time for nominations to reach BIGGA Headquarters by the closing date of May 1, 1998.

Head Greenkeepers, Course Managers in Great Britain are eligible, except, of course, Ian McMillan, from Hankley Common, the winner in 1997.

I wish to nominate:

Name

Golf Club

Address

Address

Tel

Tel

Nominated by:

Name

Address

Position

Please send your nomination to: British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF. (To arrive no later than May 1, 1998).

Entry forms and full details will be sent to nominees by return. You may photocopy this form.



TORO.

Robert Brewer, Course Manager and Golf Director at St Mellion International presented our afternoon seminar on Business Management for Greenkeeping.

The Section would like to thank Robert for his excellent educational presentation, also our thanks must go to the day's sponsor, Barenbrug, for without them this meeting would not have taken place, also to my crew of Jason, Polly and Greg who always work so hard to present the course at its best, last but not least our thanks must go to Bude & North Cornwall for allowing the Section use of their facilities and all their staff who made our day run so smoothly.

April has arrived at last and those dark winter nights are starting to fade in our minds with our thoughts turning to presenting our courses in the best possible condition during the season ahead. What better way to help you achieve your goal than to visit Westurf on April 29 at Long Ashton Golf Club, Bristol where you will be able to see all the latest products and technology at your local turf care show.

Remember the Date April 29 at Long Ashton, Bristol.

Richard Whyman

Northern
Ireland

North East

BIGGA would like to congratulate Emmet Curran, formerly of Foyle International, on his recent move to Downpatrick GC. We wish Emmet the very best in his new position. We would also like to wish Mickey O'Neil, of Fort William GC, a speedy recovery after his recent operation, I know Mickey will be looking forward to enjoying a game of golf.

Our North East Section would like to thank everyone who attended our recent social event held at Allen Park GC Centre. Many travelled a fair distance to attend that night. We all enjoyed a great night's entertainment of chipping competitions, a quiz and a talk by the evening's sponsor Maxi Crop.

The Chipping competition was won by Paul Lapplin of Royal Portrush (famous at last Paul) and the table quiz was won by Emmet Curran, John People and John Shields. Thanks also to Allen Park for

the use of their facilities and Martin Laverty for setting the questions for the quiz. At least we think we mean thanks.

Our Section will be holding a Golf Day on April 16 at Green Acres GC. This is an ideal opportunity for members to get involved in the game and get a handicap to enable them to take part in competitions you may even be eligible to play in the RiteFeed Classic at Malone GC. Anyone wishing further information please contact our secretary, Mark Farrell on 01849 429001.

Finally Greenmount College is keeping up its excellent tradition of Greenkeeper training by purchasing a new Kubota 2150 compact tractor and six Allett mowers. "We are committed to the highest possible standards of training in our industry, these new machines represent a substantial investment in that training" said Neil McLoughlin, a College Lecturer.

Eamonn Farrell

South East

I'll begin by welcoming the new members to the South East Section who are, Terry Crawford, Course Manager, Clandeboye GC, Richard Capes and James McCreedy, Bangor GC.

Further to our first meeting the proposed agenda is as follows:

March/April Jacobsen Work Shop Day, May/June Golf Days, July The RiteFeed Classic open to all BIGGA members, with the final at Gleneagles, August BBQ exact dates for our agenda are to be confirmed so I'll keep you posted. Members will be notified of Golf Days.

In case anyone didn't know, our Section meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at a different location throughout County Down and Armagh in order to make each meeting accessible to all members.

Finally, I would like to thank Janet Adamson once again for her help in establishing the Northern Ireland Region and wish her every success in her new job.

Jonathan McCabe

InFlo XL

Inflo XL, turf wetting agent spreads the concept of water penetration further and further. Its low rate of use means cost effective coverage of large areas, whilst its unique properties provide incredibly effective water movement.

Water drop

Inflo XL's ability to reduce the surface tension of water, is up to 25 times better than conventional wetters, and its non-scorch formulation means no need to water in.

Conventional wetting agent



The word is spreading

- Low rate of use (1 litre per hectare) allows you to treat more area for less.
- Inflo XL's unique chemistry spreads water up to 25 times further than other wetters.
- Non-scorch, not essential to irrigate after application.
- Large areas : Cost effective treatment of fairways & sportsgrounds.
- Small areas : Efficient water management with minimal product usage.

For further information contact
Headland Amenity Products
Telephone: 01799 530 146
Fax: 01799 530 229



Headland Agrochemicals Ltd
Norfolk House,
Great Chesterford Court,
Great Chesterford,
Essex CB10 1PF.

The



Ever increasing standards are being set for the dress of greens staff as more clubs realise that presentation is all important. However, while smart pullovers with the club crest look neat they cannot be called protective clothing nor are they ideal for working outside. In contrast, polycotton boilersuits or jacket and trousers probably do meet this criteria and are easy to launder, furthermore, they are readily available in many colours and designs. However, protective clothing can, and should, be construed more widely than this and considered as a head to toe concept.

Precisely what protection is necessary depends largely upon the particular job and the circumstances. The most basic protection is against the dirt and grass of day to day working, but perhaps most greenkeepers will think more readily of wet weather gear. Chemical protection is another dimension, and specialist wear, but one which probably brings up images of hot clammy suits (it needn't), while anyone employed with a chain saw will need a different form of protection. Strimming, hedgetrimming and brushcutting are other tasks which require the operator to wear specialised gear, while workshop work should require protective footwear at least.

Nor can dust masks and respirators be forgotten as there are many times when they should be employed, just think of strimming edges when the weather is very dry, or perhaps filling a sprayer, both tasks which will need a specific type of protection.



protection racket

Hugh Tilley examines the world of protective clothing for the golf course

Those who suffer from chapped hands or dermatitis from handling chemicals, including fertiliser, should consider gloves, or perhaps if working with machinery, mitts.

These instances highlight the requirements for protective clothing which is suited to the task. In the past scant regard has been placed on protective clothing, however, changed perceptions as well as the advent of health and safety legislation means that it must now be regarded seriously.

But there is more to protective clothing than safety, modern protective clothing adds a look of professionalism, and by keeping the wearer comfortable should add to productivity.

Protective clothing is available from a wide variety of outlets, but generally those closely associated with specific activities, ie suppliers of chemicals and fertilisers to golf clubs usually have chemical and weather protective suits, while the best place to locate protective clothing for chain saws and brushcutters will be at a dealer specialising in such machinery. Furthermore the supplier, should be the best person to advise on the most suitable form of protection. Wearing inappropriate protection is as foolhardy, dangerous and even as illegal as wearing nothing at all. However, there are specialist suppliers who may also offer a mail order facility - and these should also be available to advice with authority.

Normal everyday protective clothing such as boilersuits and work boots are also available from country stores. Head gear has not in the past received much attention, however, the last year has

seen protective hats specifically designed to protect against flying golf balls. In the past one of the problems with headgear has been "image" - macho man's image. Builders' or jockeys' hard hats have not seemed appropriate course wear, and woolly bobble or soft baseball hats don't do much for a club's image - nor do they offer any protection against ball strike.

For tasks such as chainsawing, brush-cutting and strimming a hard hat which combines visor and ear defenders is likely to be ideal, although both ear and eye protection can be provided by separate units, and this may be a more flexible approach and allow goggles or visor and ear defenders to be used for other tasks.

There is much to be said for protective items such as masks, goggles, ear defenders and even hats to be considered as "personal property" and specific to an individual. That way the wearer can be made responsible for them - for their being available, worn and in good condition - and it prevents excuses such as condition or loss being used for not wearing them. In addition with many of these items there are often strong personal preferences, for instance one greenkeeper may prefer a polycarbonate and/or acetate visor for strimming while another may prefer a mesh one or even goggles. Goggles tend to steam up, although this is easy to remedy by cleaning them thoroughly. Both these and plastic visors are made of relatively soft material so are easily scratched.

Boots must be considered as personal wear, this is seldom a problem, particularly as expensive

chainsaw boots are only likely to be needed by one or two people in the team - those who have received training on the use of the saw. Normal protective footwear is not expensive - and it is VAT zero rated. Gum boots may be ideal for keeping the wet out, but they also keep it in, and promote hot sweaty feet. Nor will these rubber boots provide a high level of protection against other hazards - like dropping a drawbar on your foot - or putting a fork into it - unless they are a special protective model. Clubs which make an allowance for protective clothing may find it pays to provide the occasional tin of waterproofing wax or oil for wax jackets and boots.

Greenkeepers who pay for their own protective clothing should be able to claim a tax allowance for this. Most protective clothing is also zero rated for VAT, and both of these financial incentives should promote higher levels of wear.

The most frequently considered protective wear are waterproofs. Again there are many personal preferences, from all-in-one's to jacket and leggings, not forgetting long coats. Cost is as variable as the style. Experience suggests that some are much better value for money than others. The more obvious factors are length of life and initial cost, however, this is far from the whole story, and perhaps more important is comfort and wearability.

Most people will know all about the need for the garment to "breathe" - to allow perspiration out while not letting rain in. Hood or hat again may be down to personal preference, for myself I prefer a sou'wester to a builtin hood - and a towel round the neck of the jack-

et if it is really inclement. And again my own preference is for button round leggings, but these don't give protection to your bottom. Some jackets are designed to fit over the back of a seat which keeps it dry - while you are on it. Riding style coats are also designed for this - however long coats are not really suitable for wearing on machinery. If it is raining hard and you have to dismount regularly the seat will get wet anyway - so it is easier to pin a weighted plastic bag over the seat and lift it aside when you mount, or some people may prefer an all-in-one waterproof boiler suit - then you can ignore the puddle on the seat.

Other areas in which not all weatherproof suits are equal are in the cuffs - storm cuffs with press stud or Velcro are the norm and allow the cuff to be loose or tight according to the weather and job, but bottoms of trousers may or may not be wide enough to pull over boots - and seal there - drain pipes are designed to channel water. Nor can all suits be donned or doffed without taking the boots off. This can be most annoying, which is

why so many greenkeepers keep them on during their lunch break - not conducive to a relaxing break and it steams up the mess room. The usual colour for weather proof gear is green, olive or khaki, but there may be an argument in favour of brighter colours so that the greenkeeper is more conspicuous. Another problem area with some waterproofs is that while they normally come in a range of sizes this normally relates to girth, and while high street outfitters have realised that humans vary in height and girth many pro-



The protection racket

protective wear suppliers have not. So if your proportions do not match the supplier's "norm" you may have a problem - usually with cuffs covering your hands or up at your elbows. If you have this problem it may be worth trying a yacht chandler - you'll probably get a bright yellow suit but you will keep dry.

Water and chemical proof suits are mandatory for handling chemicals and come in various styles, many are disposable - ideal, except that they are probably more easily torn, which defeats their whole purpose. The commonest complaint is that they are hot and clammy - but if the spraying vehicle has a closed cab with air filtration there is no need to wear them inside it in fact they should not be worn inside because you then bring in any contamination - to a closed compartment. Sprayers should have a locker specifically for contaminated clothing.

Chemical handling will require waterproof gloves, and these need

to be long enough to cover the wrist and seal with the jacket cuff.

If your chemical supplier does not have gloves which are large, comfortable or strong enough, try an agricultural dealer specialising in dairy supply. Grip can be a problem with rubber gloves, but most designs have special grip areas moulded in. Turning the gloves inside out may be possible and this will allow left and right handed gloves to be interchanged - and it may save having to throw away one good glove.

Mitts - particularly woollen ones, are also likely to be reversible. These won't do for chemical work, but are ideal for machine operation where thumb and forefinger are needed to work throttle or screw adjustments. Forestry mitts have the forefinger separate as well as the thumb. A whole range of working gloves are available to suit all types of task, nor are these expensive - especially when viewed against the misery caused by chapped and raw hands. The

greatest problem is that inexpensive gloves seldom fit very well, few match your actual hand width and finger length which is likely to reduce their life considerably. If

you need substantial leather gloves for hedge work, etc., and cannot find what you need locally try a supplier of welding goods - they usually have a great range of substantial gloves. If grip is necessary - for instance when raking, consider a knitted pvc coated or kevlar design similar to those used by yachtsmen. Lightweight latex gloves can often be worn inside a more substantial leather or leather/canvas glove to give weatherproofing with resilience to damage.

Dust masks and respirators, while both coming under the banner of breathing protection, are totally different in

concept, thus it is vital to recognise what you are trying to be protected against.

There should be very few instances when a full respirator to protect against noxious fumes is needed on a golf course. If such gases are present then specialist advice should be taken. For normal chemicals the greatest risk is of splashes and spray mist and this should not need a full respirator - read the label on the can. However, there are plenty of occasions on the golf course when a dust mask is indicated. For most situations an inexpensive disposable mask will be adequate, the dust is the nuisance and not normally toxic. Every greenkeepers shed should have a supply of these masks, few actually have. Some people will find more expensive face masks more comfortable to use. Particularly comfortable

may be one of the powered respirators, but these are expensive. They use a small fan powered by a battery pack which pumps air through a filter to the face. The slight pressure induced around the face keeps dust out.

Comfort in use is one of the most important criteria in selecting any protective wear, on the basis that if it is not comfortable it won't be used. Another important point to consider, particularly with clothing that is used around machinery is that it should be close fitting and not have flaps, pockets or belts which can get caught. Pockets which catch on levers or door handles are dangerous. Velcro is a wonderful invention to keep pocket flaps shut - and it works well on cuffs.

For the wearer there may be other reasons to prefer protective clothing, for instance it is likely to be neater and easier to launder or clean. It may also avoid a need to have to think of what to wear to work. There are a whole host of standards relating to protective clothing. Protective clothing is seldom expensive but this is no reason not to look after it. Special lockers to hold it are a worthwhile investment, and a good maxim is that if you look after your protective clothing, it will look after you.

