

as Regional Chairman, keeping me right and making sure I was informed of meetings and section events so I could attend.

I know I leave the Region in good hands with the Regional Chairman, Bert Cross, and Bob leaves the Region to the new Regional Administrator, Douglas Bell.

I must thank everybody for the support they have given me over the years and I am sure that Bert will receive the same support.

Once again, may I take this opportunity to wish the members and officials all the best for the future.

**Ian Holoran**  
**Past Northern Regional Chairman**

## Competition is a winner

In response to the article in Greenkeeper International, page 34, January issue, I thought I would spend a few moments trying to clarify the situation. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending upon one's viewpoint, I am able to report that I have not had a single response to my comment made in the November issue, other than yours.

It was indeed English Nature who were keen to point out the number of non-golfing sceptics who still perceive golf as being of relatively minor importance in the wider conservation framework. Keith, however, in playing golf and more recently in judging the competition, has a very different viewpoint and is keen to point out that golf is an important land use which can have particular environmental benefits. These points were highlighted at all of the Clubs which he and I visited.

I have always stated that the BIGGA Golf Environmental Competition was to comprise of more than just one winner and several losers. I have indeed worked hard through last year to ensure that this is the case. Sure, the winner gets £5,000 and the regional winners £250 but that's not the end

of it. All those entering received either a letter of support with recommendations relating to their individual way forward or one or two site visits which allowed me to talk at length about their management programme. Seminars and articles have also contributed to elevating the publicity of those Clubs showing a positive commitment to environmental management.

I see the Competition as a step up to the newly formed "Committed to Green" programme being initiated through the European Golf Association Ecology Unit. The scoring of the Competition was indeed based on the main target areas that the technical working panel, including STRI, agreed. These include nature conservation, landscape cultural heritage, turfgrass management, water resource management, waste management, energy efficiency and communication, including public awareness.

A further extremely important benefit of the Competition is to demonstrate that golf courses by acting in a positive environmental manner are aware of their environmental responsibilities and it is hoped that continual recognition will gradually filter through to the wider public and to those that criticise the sport often without appropriate foundation.

Most Greenkeepers that have spoken to me or have heard me talking at seminars will be fully aware that I appreciate their conservation interests. Indeed, a significant part of greenkeeping is related to the pleasure of seeing birds of prey, foxes and other wildlife passing over the course. The focus must now turn to educating the membership and the Committee Managers if greater strides are to be made.

Finally, while every golf course realises they may not win one of the major prizes, I trust that everyone will agree that by entering we are giving greater focus and credibility to the fact that golf courses are not just a selfish use of the landscape.

**R.S Taylor**  
**Ecologist, STRI Ltd**

**While on the subject of The Environment Competition, keep your eyes peeled for our new logo (left), which will be used everytime we have news or an update for you, regarding the competition. Entry forms are available from BIGGA, at the usual address.**

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

We've now made it even easier for you to receive your copy of Greenkeeper International.

You can now pay your membership subscription by Direct Debit, and spread your payments over 10 months.

## Direct Debit.

For more details call Janet Adamson now on 01347 838581

### SHOULDN'T YOU BE TRAINING WITH THE STRI?

#### "Train with the Experts"

##### GOLF - THE CUTTING EDGE

February 23-25.....at STRI Bingley

A new golf initiative for Golf Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers. This 3 day course will keep you ahead with all the very latest techniques in golf course management. (CPD15)

##### TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT AND CONSTRUCTION FOR GOLF

March 2-6.....at STRI Bingley

A 5 day course for all Greenkeepers and Trade Personnel covering all aspects of management and construction of turf on golf courses. (CPD15)

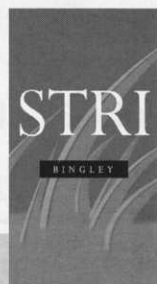
All STRI courses are Basis registered and award CPD points with attendance certificate.

Contact Gayle Padgett at STRI and book your place today.

STRI, St Ives Estate, Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 1AU

TEL: 01274 565131

FAX: 01274 561891



THE SPORTS TURF RESEARCH INSTITUTE

AD REF 580

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

If you still haven't renewed your membership subscription, you could miss out on the next issue of Greenkeeper International.

And the next one.

And the next.

**Don't miss out.**

If your membership is due, call Janet Adamson now on 01347 838581



# The path of leased resistance

**A Guide to profitable options for acquiring new golf course equipment**

Ask any young blood and he will tell you about those first tingling charges of adrenalin – they come as standard equipment with any new sports car – and how rapidly they evaporate. The harsh reality is that adrenalin plummets just as soon as the realisation hits; that fistfuls of hard-earned cash have flown from the pocket quicker than you can shake a stick. Called depreciation, it's very, very painful, especially where boy-racers and their motor cars are concerned.

Thankfully, depreciation of golf course machinery is quite unlike that prevalent in the motor trade. One obvious reason is that turf care machinery earns its keep, rather than being a mere status symbol, so there's no free-falling without a parachute. Another reason, taking a tractor as a prime example, we have a vehicle that has a long, useful life, with relatively low maintenance costs, thus it's most unlikely to dive in value as the result of fashion-freak body styling.

Nothing, it seems, causes the collective mind of a golf club committee to focus quite like competition. Not competition of the games variety, but that which beckons from just over the hill. A rash of new proprietor-owned golf clubs, built in the past decade or so, has caused many an old-guard committee man to ponder the vexatious question of how to keep his club competitive.

Playing quality and value for money are the yardsticks by which a nomad player measures his rounds – new courses or old – and each time the golfer opens his wallet both will be held for comparison.

No longer immune from today's fast-moving business arena, those in golf club management increasingly find it necessary to investigate alternative ways of financing, rather than paying cash, for their equipment. The good news is that

they are finding the right answers.

There are many good reasons for financing, the most obvious being that the true value of working equipment comes from its use, not its ownership. Add to this the increase in immediate cash-flow; by freeing capital for more profitable uses, the freedom from 'hidden costs' and the bonus of keeping the golf course in peak condition – it's hardly surprising that more and more 'savvy' committees are opting for the practical option of leasing.

One popular form of lease financing is a package unique in the turf care market and tailored specifically for the golf course industry. Devised by Ransomes in association with Farming & Agri-cultural Finance Ltd (FAF), the flexible finance option is known simply as Select 123.

Because this type of financing allows a wider flexibility of options – to become the owner, to trade in the equipment at an agreed and guaranteed buyback price, or simply to walk away from the agreement – it allows the golf club to make the final decision.

There are three flexible plans available, so whether your club is considering a new compact tractor, a professional greens mower, or one of a range of aeration products, Select 123 offers the purchasing solution. The three options are:

- a) Your club can make a final 'balloon' payment to become the owner of the machine.
- b) Take full advantage of the guaranteed residual value by either:
  - i) Trading in as part exchange for a new machine.
  - ii) Handing the equipment back and walking away from the agreement.
- c) Extend the final 'balloon' payment over an agreed further term.

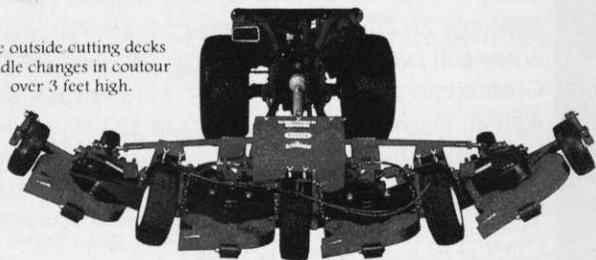
To illustrate, here are some typical examples:

## The Articulator

LasTec

### INCREDIBLE FOR WHAT THEY DO

The outside cutting decks handle changes in contour over 3 feet high.



Articulators from LasTec offering the highest quality finish cut of any rotary mower at any price

- Precise length •
  - Better grass distribution •
  - Better wet grass cutting •
  - Better lift • Less Compaction •
- And of course, No Scalping

**STRONGER • LIGHTER • TOUGHER • BETTER**

**EVEN BETTER FOR WHAT THEY ARE**

## Marlwood Limited

Court Lodge Farm, Forge Lane, East Farleigh

Maidstone, Kent, ME15 0HQ, England.

Tel: (01622) 728718 • Fax (01622) 728720



	Eg 1	Eg 2	Eg 3
Description	GA30 Aerator	Fairway 305	3-Wheel Cushman
RRP	£13,410	£29,065	£11,479
Cost (assumes 10% discount/part exchange)	£12,069	£26,159	£10,331
Term	4yrs	4yrs	4yrs
Profile to customer	1+3	1+3	1+3
Payments per annum	£3,067	£6,322	£2,649
Balloon payment/ Guaranteed buy back	£1,743	£5,523	£3,089

Still not convinced? Consider these further benefits:

#### Farewell to obsolescence

Access to state-of-the-art equipment, especially grass-cutting machinery, provides a cushion against technological obsolescence. Though certainly not in the same league as computers, which seemingly become obsolete on the shelves, most golf machinery manufacturers quite rightly seek to improve and upgrade their models, year after year. It makes sense, therefore, to plan against any uncertainties by transferring the risk to the lessor.

#### Matching revenue to payment

By matching payments with the income a club generates over a complete year, working capital will be released, rather than being tied up.

#### Say farewell to botching

Nothing is more irritating than 'making do' with machinery that is ill-equipped for a job. At best it's inconvenient, at worst it can be downright dangerous. Spreading the load by financing equipment will give you the proper tools to do the job.

#### Machinery that is in peak condition

Ransomes and FAF want you to keep your equipment in tip-top order. With their finance option, they will ensure the machinery is serviced by an approved dealer on a regular basis.

#### How you can sway the decision - in your favour!

No one knows better than you what new machinery is needed, or which ageing piece needs replacing, though to smooth the go-ahead for capital improvements it will pay you to doff your salesman's hat. While it's bad to whinge about not having the right equipment, (it will, be assured, get you nowhere), it helps enormously if you are seen as the guy who makes the most of

what he has; one who does a good job and solves problems.

Unless your Green Chairman is an absolute no-hoper, you will gain Brownie points by aiming his attention to each little area of improvement taking place on the course - moreover those that need extra application - while, of course, explaining the reason and thinking behind what you would like to undertake, if only...

Choosing the right moment for discussion is important, which might well come during those times when your Green Chairman is making his inspection. Even better, if you can play a few holes with him this will provide you with a great opportunity to draw comparisons, perhaps by calling upon experiences shared with a colleague at 'the course down the road.'

Every chairman worth his salt wants to see a well-conditioned golf course. Simply by carrying out a little homework beforehand you can present him with a well-considered case. Of course, it is your job to keep him informed so that he may report to his committee, so make lists, but don't try to baffle him with science.

Prepare a plausible presentation and ensure that you include specifications so that you may talk in precise terms about the improvements that proposed new machinery will offer. You should include all the benefits that will come from upgrading, for example the increase in the speed of greens or fairways cutting, improved turf conditioning and a reduction in running costs. This latter item, increasingly, is a vitally important factor. Let him know how much you want to retain a competitive edge. He'll thank you for it.

Finally, enlist the help of your dealer and get him on your side. Developing a sound relationship will never hurt your cause.



# A Cut above

**Tim Kirk of T. Kirk Forestry -  
ATB Landbase Registered Instructor**

Portable hand-held chainsaws are widely accepted as being potentially dangerous machines which need to be handled with utmost care.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced Guidance Note GS48 which is aimed at people who either use chainsaws at work or who employ others to do the work.

The Guidance Note is concerned with the minimum levels of training and competence required by chain-saw users. It states that operators should be adequately trained and that by obtaining a relevant certificate of competence or national competence award (NVQ/SVQ) recognised by industry will show that adequate training has been received.

This applies to employers, employees and the self-employed.

There are several regulations within the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 which place legal duties on employers and the self-employed in relation to the use of chainsaws at work.

Chainsaw operators should have a reliable and mature attitude to their work. They should have a reasonable degree of both physical and mental fitness. People with disabilities need not necessarily be excluded from work with chainsaws, however, medical advice should be obtained about their suitability.

There are many hazards when using a chainsaw, the most obvious are contact with the moving chain, being struck by falling timber and incorrect manual handling techniques.

Most accidents occur due to lack of knowledge and failure to provide

adequate personal protective clothing (PPE).

Training is very important in the control of accidents - it should be of the highest quality and normally carried out by specialist instructors or organised training courses.

Although most courses contain



small amounts of theoretical classroom work the majority of the course is devoted to practical supervised instruction.

In the next issue we will look at the requirements of PPE and the different routes to certification in the safe operation of chainsaws.

For further information on training courses and consultancy contact Agenda Training Ltd - Jean John Tel: 01282 831973 or Tim Kirk - T. Kirk Forestry Tel: 01484 685114.

**Ken Richardson announces the launch of three new competitions...**

# Take up the challenge

Thanks to the continuing support of Ransomes, we were, once again, able to give an increased number of delegates a true Learning Experience.

The National Education Conference and Workshops started the week off on a high note with some very high quality presentations and intellectually stimulating subjects. The use of a new liquid crystal projector and high quality slide projector ensured that all conference presentations could be seen and should ensure a better quality of video. Despite the problems that we had rearranging some early seminar session, due to a problem obtaining slides, the BTME Seminars gave all attendees something to ponder, with a record number attending the talk by Mr Ortiz Patino. With the Seminars returning to the Royal Hall, there was space for all those who wanted to attend and it was gratifying to see over 100 delegates still in the Hall at the end of the last session. Thank you to all those who presented papers at the Conference and Seminars and to those who organised and ran the three workshops. We are thinking about the programme for 1999, already, and if anyone can suggest speakers or topics that they would like to hear then please contact me as soon as possible. Written tran-

scriptions and videos of all Conference and seminar sessions are available from BIGGA HQ.

Three major competitions were launched at Harrogate, the TORO Student of the Year, the TORO Excellence in Greenkeeping and the BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition, in association with Amazone Ground Care and Rhône Poulenc Amenity. All registered training providers will be sent copies of the Student of the Year leaflet and entry forms in the near future. So make sure that your college submits an entry.



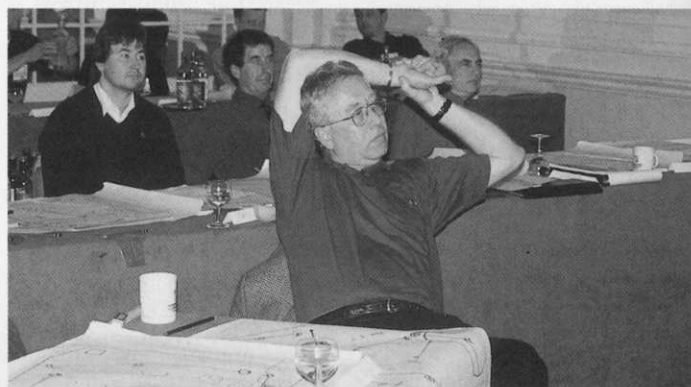
Remember, the winning student wins the TORO Scholarship, including an eight week study tour to the USA and the winner's lecturer wins a trip to the GCSAA show, which will be held in Florida, in 1999. Leaflets for the Golf Environment and Greenkeeping Excellence Competitions were available at BTME and will be sent to all golf clubs and head greenkeeper/course managers during February and March. Judging for the Greenkeeping Excellence Competition has been changed and courses will be judged by a panel of judges comprising respected, retired greenkeepers, chaired by Walter Woods. Additionally, the Competition is open to Master Greenkeepers and/or winners of the previous Miracle/Zeneca/ICI competition.

The last local supervisory management course of the 1997/98 season will take place at the Courtyard Hotel in Bradford, on 16 and 17 February. There are still plenty of places left for anyone who wishes to attend.

The Refund of Education/Training Expenses Scheme started in January 1998. Application forms for a refund of fees can be obtained from BIGGA HQ.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Chris Carpenter and Andy Campbell on becoming the tenth and eleventh Master Greenkeepers in the United Kingdom, which added to the five Master Green-

keepers in the USA gives us a total of sixteen. The next Master Greenkeeper examination will take place on 28 and 29 March. Anyone wishing to sit the examination should contact me or Sami as soon as possible. Full details of the Master Greenkeeper Scheme can be obtained from BIGGA HQ.



**Top:** Billy McMillan thinks our sign which could do with a bit of levelling itself! **Above:** Concentrating hard during the golf course design workshop. **Below:** Our two latest Master Greenkeepers pictured here receiving their plaques from Chairman, Pat Murphy



I use **RiteFeed** because



**The results were better than my expectations**

Jim Smith, Ardeer GC

**Jim McConnell, Head Greenkeeper at Banbridge GC, County Armagh addresses the problem of thatch...**

# Thatch of the day

The reason for choosing this subject is because of the problems it can create in a situation where a course has a number of small greens (e.g. those around 250 to 300 sq. metres).

With the growing volume of traffic on our golf courses these days one must be constantly aware of the ever increasing volume of problems that may present themselves. If the management programme is not correct, consistent, and on-going then we may find our playing surfaces in trouble.

If greens are small they will obviously limit the number of pin-positions, thus during periods of extremely wet weather, and heavy play these greens will compact much more quickly. When compaction is severe this will reduce the supply of oxygen to the plant, therefore, no oxygen will pass into the soil for respiration but also no carbon dioxide will be capable of getting out. The result here is that grasses will choke in their own waste.

When this situation occurs the playing surface becomes soft and very susceptible to damage instead of remaining firm and true. The sward becomes poor, thin, and open to fungal attack, instead of remaining dense, healthy and resilient. The recuperative capacity is greatly reduced, therefore the sward will deteriorate even further where *Poa annua* is the predominant species.

If this situation occurs immediate action must be taken in the form of a very intensive aeration programme which of course must be on-going. This intensive aeration programme should be along the following lines;

- ensure good drainage is in

place e.g. that no surface water from slopes around greens is finding its way onto the green or greens;

- hollow-tine once a year at least if the thatch problem is a serious one;

- ensure material used for top dressing is consistent e.g. that sand is free draining, low in silt content, and of even particle size;

- verti-cut once every two weeks during the growing season;
- pencil-tine as often as need be during the playing season especially if play is heavy;

- ensure that mower units are cutting clean to prevent any infection entering the grass plant;
- feed only as and when necessary.

- water only when absolutely necessary ie, just before wilting point.

- ensure the soil profile is getting plenty of air throughout the playing season.

- all the above recommendations must be carried out as and when climatic conditions dictate.

Drainage is a vital aspect of good turf management, not only from the view point of keeping golf courses open through wet periods but also in enhancing free movement of water through the soil profile all year round. This will keep nutrients in circulation and increase the effectiveness of summer irrigation. Aeration relieves compaction and improves water penetration into and through the soil. It also restores the air/water/soil particle ratio and hence improves conditions for root extension. Although root growth peaks spring and autumn, aeration through the rest of the year is equally important to encourage new root.

## Cast aside your cares



**Levington Turfclear® the double action worm control and fungicide for clean and healthy turf. Banishes casting worms and Fusarium Patch from all playing surfaces in one cost-saving operation.**

- Contains the most effective worm-cast control agent available.
- Systemic fungicidal action without risk of damage to fine turf.
- Unaffected by rain or irrigation.
- Original flowable formulation now available in 800ml and 5L packs to suit all needs.
- Turfclear WDG provides convenient, pre-measured, water soluble sachets of water-dispersable granules to increase user safety and ensure accurate dosing.

**ALTOGETHER AN UNBEATABLE COMBINATION**



**If you would like to know more please call our Technical Services Manager on 01473 203143 or contact your local Area Sales Manager:**

**South - Chris Briggs**

**Tel: 0378 603103 (mobile) or 01273 675966**

**Midlands and Wales - Roger Moore**

**Tel: 0378 603052 (mobile) or 01832 710076**

**N. England, Scotland & N.I. - Richard Walton**

**Tel: 0378 603091 (mobile)**

**Always read the label : Use pesticides safely.**

TURFCLEAR contains carbendazim. TURFCLEAR and THE LEVINGTON DIFFERENCE are registered Trade Marks of Levington Horticulture Ltd. © Levington Horticulture Ltd 1997

**AD  
REF  
102**



# A very fine vintage

It is the oldest cliché in the book to say that BTME was the best ever. It's been said every year since the first show was held but perhaps, even in some illustrious company, BTME '98 might come to be regarded as a very fine vintage indeed.

Let's look at the evidence. Well, more people attended the show than ever before; the Learning Experience, in association with Ransomes produced a range of topics and quality of speaker to rival anything which will be heard anywhere this year; the changes to previous year's the marquee to replace Hall D was a resounding success and assisted the flow of the show; the aforementioned Hall D was unrecognisable when it transformed itself into a stunning star lit lounge to host the traditional Thursday night banquet allowing 650 guest to enjoy a fine meal and watch an excellent cabaret.

Among the witnesses to speak in

support of the week and the work of the Association was Michael Bonallack, Secretary of the R&A who, during the Chairman's Lunch, recalled BIGGA's early days.

"There were many sceptics who said the Association wouldn't last... look at it now. There were many people who said the Show was a mistake... look at it now and there people who said the magazine wouldn't last... but look at it now," said Mr Bonallack, who presented the Golden and Silver key plaques in place of Viscount Whitelaw who unfortunately had to miss the week due to ill health.

Another to be impressed by the quality of the Show as Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderrama Golf Club, who spoke on preparations for last year's Ryder Cup on the Seminar Programme. He expressed a desire to return to Harrogate to give another paper at some future date.

The success of the show is due to



Chairman Pat Murphy does the honours at the opening ceremony

a number of factors which ever year combine to make the third week in January special for so many people. The excellent support from members who travel to Harrogate in droves, the support from the trade

who ensure that visitors are met by friendly and familiar faces when they venture into the halls and an education programme which is second to none.

Roll on BTME '99!

## dive dive dive permeate

**turfgrass wetting  
agent**

penetrates deeper  
*unique dynamic  
infiltration technology*

**permeate** penetrates through thatch and water repellent soil layers to infiltrate the root zone optimising water penetration to critical depths.

**permeate** can be used as a **single lasting application** for long lasting results or as a **managed programme throughout the year.**

**permeate** is fully compatible with Alleviate tenside hydrophobe technology for the treatment of dry patch and water repellent soils.

*Developed and manufactured by:*  
Service Chemicals plc, 17 Lanchester Way, Royal Oak  
Industrial Estate, Daventry, Northants, NN11 5PH.  
Tel: 01327 704444; Fax: 01327 871154

email: [servicechm@aol.com](mailto:servicechm@aol.com)  
web pages: <http://members.aol.com/servchemuk>

**unsurpassed  
technology**

**SERVICE  
CHEMICALS**



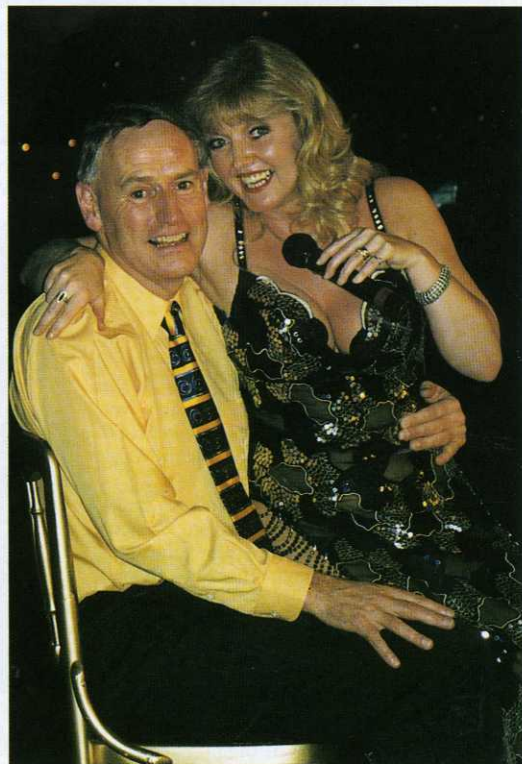
**Clockwise from far left:**

Lee Hurst entertains the 650 guests at the Gala Banquet.

Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderamma Golf Club gave an enlightening paper on preparations for last year's Ryder Cup, and then selected the winning number in BIGGA's membership draw.

In cabaret, Neil Thomas and his new friend Linda Nolan captivate the audience

Michael Bonallack receives a token of the Association's appreciation for attending the Chairman's Luncheon and presenting Golden and Silver Key Awards



# ADVERTISING\*

Never mind the soft sell!  
When your pitch or green looks absolutely superb - as it will with a TIS turf irrigation and maintenance system - you may feel an irresistible urge to shout about it! Begin your campaign by calling TIS on **01477 500255** today.

**\*Advertising.**  
Telling the world, shouting from the rooftops, that your turf irrigation and maintenance system is simply the best!



Turf Irrigation Services (Sandbach) Limited.  
Brookvale, Love Lane, Betchton, Sandbach, CW11 0TS.

AD  
REF  
475



BIGGA's Buy a Brick Campaign to raise money for the Association's new Headquarters was given a superb launch during Harrogate week.

A major boost had been given right at the start of the campaign when the Golden and Silver Key supporters decided to allocate a total of £44,000 of Education and Development Fund money towards the furnishing and equipping of the new building's Training Room. This room will host many of the Association's workshops and training course and will also be available to Golden and Silver Key supporters should they wish to host a training event in the York area.

Three Sections donated money to the Fund at the Conference Dinner. The North of Scotland gave £1000, the East Midland £750 and Sussex £500 and Iain Macleod, David Leatherland and Ray Day presented a cheque for the total amount to Chairman Pat Murphy. Two day's later Ivor Scoones, presented Pat with a cheque for £1000 on behalf of the South West and South Wales Region.

Another day later and another generous donation this time by Jaime Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderrama Golf Club. During the Education Conference and throughout the Show Gold, Silver and Bronze Brick badges were selling like hot cakes thanks to the Board of Management members.

The campaign will end at BIGGA's annual golf day in June when the raffle tickets bought in conjunction with the badges will be pulled for an array of magnificent prizes.



Ivor Scoones hands over the South West and South Wales Region's donation



The BIGGA Building Fund gets another boost from Iain Macleod, Ray Day and David Leatherland



The Golden and Silver Key supporters who agreed to donate a total of £44,000 to equip and furnish the training room in BIGGA's new headquarters with Michael Bonallack and Pat Murphy

\*\*\* MISSION FOR THE 1990'S - ROOT OUT ALL COLONIES OF DRY PATCH - SEARCH AND DESTROY \*\*\*

# alleviate

tenside hydrophobe technology

whilst wetting agents treat the symptoms, **alleviate** uses innovative tenside hydrophobe technology to attack and treat the cause of DRY PATCH

**alleviate** breaks down the hydrophobic barrier coating the surface of soil particles, allowing water to penetrate the rootzone

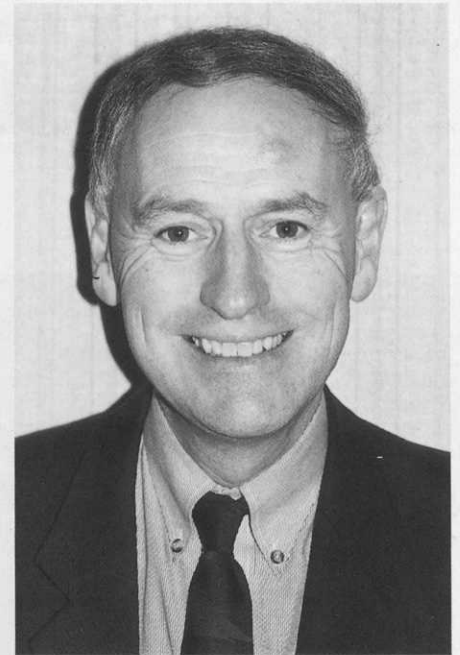
unsurpassed technology

**SERVICE CHEMICALS**

Developed and manufactured by:  
Service Chemicals plc, 17 Lanchester Way, Royal Oak Industrial Estate, Daventry, Northants, NN11 5PH.  
Tel: 01327 704444; Fax: 01327 871154  
email: [servicechm@aol.com](mailto:servicechm@aol.com)  
web pages: <http://members.aol.com/servchemuk>



**BIGGA's Executive Director,  
Neil Thomas reflects on BTME '98...**



# Days to remember

## **Sunday, January 18**

Another year has rushed by and I'm heading for Harrogate and the BTME. It's all of twelve minutes from home (the real reason why the exhibition is held in Harrogate!). As I drive in it has been raining through the night and morning and it is very mild for the time of year. No danger of that white stuff this year. 3.30pm and preparations for conference registration have begun. Ken and Sami are in control. Many members already booked into the Majestic - they clearly like it there. I welcome our international guests and an informal dinner is followed for many by a late night at the bar.

## **Monday, January 19**

First job is to switch on the TV for the weather forecast. I don't believe it! Dr Peter Hayes gets the conference underway in his usual efficient manner. At the outset one is impressed by the quality of the speakers and particularly how well our members present themselves, beneficiaries no doubt of BIGGA's public speaking courses. The presentation of Master Greenkeeper Certificates to Andy Campbell and Chris Carpenter is a highlight - 16 Master Greenkeepers now since the inception of the certification scheme in 1990. Food and accommodation are again excellent in the Majestic and I'm feeling quite relaxed until the Chairman pointedly directs my attention through the window to the arrival of the white stuff. Heavy snow showers follow but it will all be gone before Tuesday, won't it? And so it proved... Conference dinner is very enjoyable with a return visit from David Kendal - 'the banker from York' as our after dinner speaker. Excellent delivery - our international visitors kept pace and laughed with the rest of us. Good to welcome Andrew Sunaway as our guest from Ransomes. I have to mention Peter Wilson's unavoidable absence on 'business in the city'. What can this be? Now we all know.

Some members retire from the bar at 6.30am!

## **Tuesday, January 20**

Conference continues apace along with the three fully subscribed workshops. Comments would indicate that the Conference is the best yet. Noted that many members are now wearing BIGGA's 'brick' badge - the Headquarters building project is already very much to the fore. The exhibition is looking good and Amanda is in charge. Short Board of Management meeting to elect Chairman and Vice-Chairman and then off to beer and burritos (no - I didn't know what they were either!) gathering for the exhibitors. The fifth Hayter Dinner in the George Hotel follows superbly organised as usual by Kim Macfie and Barbara Garton. I really enjoy this dinner as I have nothing to say or do! Meanwhile the Past Chairmans' dinner takes place in the Majestic - a lively affair by all accounts - I can't decide whether to book a referee or comedian for this event next year!

## **Wednesday, January 21**

This is it. Hall A is buzzing long before 9.00am when the Chairman cuts the ribbon. Queues are forming (half way up the hill to the Majestic at one stage) and a great atmosphere. The marquee in use for the first time meets with warm approval. Off to the Majestic for the Chairman's Luncheon. We are sorry that our President, Viscount Whitelaw, has been unwell and cannot join us but delighted to welcome the Secretary of the R&A, Michael Bonallack to make the Golden and Silver Key Company presentations. He speaks of the R&A's longstanding relationship with BIGGA and his pleasure at BIGGA's progress. Prepare for AGM. This goes smoothly with a sense that everything is in good order when Cecil George rises with his inevitable and inimitable questions. Most staff are then off to the Ritefeed Race Night but I find myself in a FEGGA Board meeting which ends just before midnight - what a way to enjoy yourself! Enough for one day!

## **Thursday, January 22**

Early start. 7.30am meeting of BTME Steering Committee. Well supported and everyone seems well pleased with the Show even if brains are not fully functioning at this time of the morning. I'm able to savour the atmosphere in the halls for a couple of hours before the FEGGA AGM. This is well attended and the progress of FEGGA in twelve months is there for all to see. In mid afternoon I check on preparations for the banquet which this year is being held in the International Centre. The nightclub setting is quite stunning. One can sense the growing anticipation for the big social event of BTME. At 6.30pm I attend the Chairman's pre-banquet reception for our VIP guests and make an early departure to check the banquet arrangements. All is under control and soon the 650 guests begin to gather in the reception area. I meet with Lee Hurst to check details for his appearance - he is very friendly and easy going. Any worries about the catering are soon put to rest - it is excellent. The Chairman says a few words and then at 10.00pm I introduce Lee Hurst and the cabaret is underway. Very funny and well received.

After Lee we look forward to Linda Nolan - a return visit after the 1995 Show by popular demand. And we are not disappointed. She is highly professional. Now I have often wondered what it is like to be picked on at an event of this magnitude. Now I know. I had been set up. Suddenly Linda is at my side and I am whisked away to the stage. It's now or never. One choice is to die a death in front of all and sundry, the other is to get on with it. I wisely choose the latter and surrounded by her curvaceous charms I ham my way through the 'ding-a-ling' song. This can, I assure you, prove quite daunting given the natural level of eye contact with Linda sitting on your lap. I return weak-kneed to my chair. I am overwhelmed with congratulations from

members - this simply hasn't happened in ten years so I determine to enjoy it. A great night and certainly one I'll never forget!

## **Friday, January 23**

Tired but happy seems to sum up the mood of all present in the halls. Those who arrived on Sunday evening are still with it - just. Stamina is a prime requirement for the week. It's been a great Show and a good start to the year for members and exhibitors alike. The Show closes at 1.30pm and the evacuation of personnel and equipment goes smoothly. One Board member tells me that he wishes it could carry on - I think I know what he meant. Thanks to everyone who contributed to and supported the event and particularly to the exhibitors without whom there would be no BTME.



## **And finally...**

Once again an abiding memory is of the audience at the banquet linking arms and singing with Linda Nolan "we'll meet again don't know where don't know when". But we do, don't we? It will be in Harrogate from 18th-22nd January 1999. Be seeing you.

I use  
**RiteFeed**  
because



**It's the right feed  
for my course**  
Chris Yeaman, Swanston GC

Ad Ref 212



# products Hot

Rolawn's ryegrass free, Olympic Turf will be available from late Spring '98 onwards.

The volume of customer requests for the turf encouraged Rolawn to bring it back into production after an absence of five years.

Olympic turf, suitable for areas where a ryegrass mix is not desirable but a top class appearance and hard wearing turf is needed for tees.

The new Olympic mixture has been sown from Chewings Fescue (Bargreen), Slender Creeping Red Fescue (Barcrown), Smooth Meadow grass (Limousine), Brown top Bent (Herriott).

"We are delighted to be able to give our customers the choice once again, between having the ryegrass free Olympic turf or our hard wearing Medallion turf for areas requiring a general purpose hard wearing turf," said Terry Ryan, Rolawn's Sales & Marketing Director.

non polluting mower - it's the mower for the 21st Century," said Terry Herlihy, Jacobsen Product Manager. "The Greens King Electric is a product that's good for the operator, good for the golf course and good for the environment."

Aware of the increasing regulations on noise and air pollution in Europe and around the world, the Greens King Electric is powered by a 48-volt battery system. Unlike an internal combustion engine, the unit's electric battery system releases no harmful emissions.

In addition the absence of hydraulic components makes it impossible to have any hydraulic fluid leakage's, which can burn turf grass and harm soil.

Without a combustion engine, the Greens King Electric is virtually silent, perfect for any course with residential properties on it. Greenkeepers can be assured no neighbours will be disturbed by early morning mowing.

Created for golf course use world-wide, the new Greens One of a number of convenience features on the Greens King electric is the continuous information panel, which indicates battery charge levels and mower functions.

The new Jacobsen LF135 Turbo boasts the exceptional quality of cut and all the features that have made the LF-

128 the world's most popular fairway mower - plus extra power for the toughest wet or hilly conditions.

The Jacobsen LF135 Turbo features a 35-horsepower, fuel efficient, turbo-charged Kubota diesel engine.



A new generation of versatile John Deere compact tractors was launched at BTME '98, with the introduction of the 20hp 4100 Gear model.

This is a direct replacement for the less powerful 18.5hp model 670, and features a new Yanmar 'clean & silent' three-cylinder diesel engine with lower exhaust and emission levels, very narrow overall width for true compact performance, and a high standard specification.

This includes shift-on-the-move engagement of mechanical front wheel drive and an eight forward, four reverse speed transmission plus diff lock and hydrostatic power steering.

Further big tractor features include long life oil cooled disc brakes plus shiftable mid and rear mounted ptos, which can be operated either separately or together to allow versatile, multi-implement operation. There is also a new 410 front mounted loader with joystick control for materials handling and heavy lifting jobs.

An industry first, John Deere's new fairway conditioner was featured on the company's stand at BTME '98.

Recently launched as an optional attachment for the established John Deere 3215A and 3235A fairway mowers, it incorporates a contra-rotating grass tender conditioner, which is gear-driven rather than using the more conventional belt drive.

This enables the attachment to provide a better, cleaner finish by

grooming, recutting and dispersing grass clippings more evenly, particularly in wet conditions, without leaving unsightly clumps of grass on the fairway.

In operation, the grass clippings are effectively thrown back into the cylinder at least three times, giving an extremely fine cut, before being dispersed across the surface of the turf. A gear driven brush keeps the rear roller clean, and helps produce a more consistent height of cut.

"This is an ideal attachment for greenkeepers who need to cut a lot of grass early in the morning when there's dew on the ground and conditions are generally damp," says Graham Williams, Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division Manager.

"The gear-driven brush is more suited than a conventional belt drive to the faster speeds used on fairways."

Toro gave its 'new generation triplex mower' a public world debut at BTME with UK greenkeepers the first to see a prototype with its wraps off.

Chief among the golf mower's innovative features is that its three cutting units can be moved hydraulically to the left and right to increase overhang up to 22in,



Jacobsen Textron's newest product offering, the Greens King Electric greens mower, (above) is the company's response to environmental concerns and customer demand.

"Jacobsen is one of only two companies offering a totally electric,

