

# Sales Demonstrator/Instructor

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In line with our policy of continued growth in the Groundscare industry, John Deere Limited are looking for a Sales Demonstration Instructor for the U.K. and Eire.

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The salary and fringe benefits are those to be expected of a large, multi-national corporation and include a Company vehicle, free life assurance, contributory pension scheme, etc.

Applications may be obtained from:



Mrs. G. Bailey, Personnel Administrator, John Deere Limited,  
Langar, Nottingham NH13 9HT Tel: 01949 863230

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## Northern Territory Manager

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Applicants should have a good knowledge of turf culture and be committed to the sale of organic and environmental products to a distributor network, golf courses, local authorities and other professional users.

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Please write in the first instance with c.v. to:  
The Managing Director, Farmura Ltd., Stone Hill,  
Egerton, Ashford, Kent. TN27 9DU.  
Tel: 01233 756241

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Please apply in writing with a C.V. to P.F. Smith at T.H. White Ltd, Knockdown, Tetbury, Glos. GL8 8QY



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## RICHINGS PARK GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

require a

## QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

Applicants must be fully experienced in all aspects of modern greenkeeping and have a thorough knowledge of greens machinery and maintenance.

Applicants will preferably hold PA1 and PA2 Spraying certificates.

Apply in confidence with a full CV to :-

Course Manager, Richings Park Golf & Country Club,  
North Park, Iver, Bucks, SL0 9DL

## WILDERNESSE CLUB

Require a mechanic to set up and run a fully equipped workshop.  
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Please apply in writing to:-  
Mr H Morgan, Course Manager, Wildernesse Club  
Park Lane, Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0JE

## ELLESMERE GOLF CLUB

Has a vacancy for an  
**ASSISTANT  
GREENKEEPER**

Must be experienced. NVQ Level 2 or equivalent.  
PA1A, PA2 and PA6 preferred.  
Apply in writing with full CV to;

The Secretary, Alan Chapman, Ellesmere GC, Old Clough Lane,  
Worsley, Manchester, M27 7HZ. Tel: 0161 7990554

## LEE PARK GOLF CLUB LTD

require a

## SECRETARY/MANAGER

Knowledge of golf essential.  
Salary negotiable.

Applications in writing with full CV to:

The Honorary Secretary, LEE PARK GOLF CLUB LTD.  
Childwall Valley Road, Liverpool L27 3YA

## EPSOM GOLF CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1889

An established 18 Hole Downland course requires an  
**ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER**

The candidate must be experienced to NVQ Level 2 or  
equivalent (PA1a, PA2 and PA6 preferred).  
A thorough knowledge of machinery maintenance would be an advantage.  
Salary - BIGGA rates apply. No accommodation available.

Please apply in writing with CV to: The secretary, Epsom Golf Club,  
Longdown Lane South, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 4JR by May 30, 1998

## FIVE LAKES HOTEL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

## ASSISTANT COURSE MANAGER

An excellent opportunity has arisen for an ambitious greenkeeper at this prestigious 36 hole golf complex, host to PGA European Tours Pre-Qualifying School and Hippo Tour. The successful applicant will be qualified to at least NVQ level 3 or equivalent, possess PA1, PA2 and PA6a spraying certificates and have a minimum of 5 years experience. They will be responsible for the daily running of both golf courses and will need to demonstrate an ability to lead, motivate and organise staff. A knowledge of irrigation systems, machinery and sand-based constructed greens would be an advantage.

Applications in writing with full CV to: Karen Mulvagh, Personnel Manager,  
Five Lakes Hotel Golf and Country Club, Colchester Rd, Tolleshunt Knights, Maldon,  
Essex. CM9 8HX. Tel: 01621 868888.

The closing date for applications is May 20, 1998.

## CANONS COURT GOLF COURSE

requires a

## HEAD GREENKEEPER

Experienced in all aspects of Greenkeeping, with the ability to  
work on own initiative and advise owners on the future  
development and improvement of this popular 9 hole course.

Apply in writing together with CV and salary expectation to:  
Alan Webb, General Manager, Canons Court, Bradley Green,  
Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire. GL12 7PN

MAESTEG GOLF CLUB INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF

## COURSE MANAGER

Experience in all aspects of modern course management would  
be an advantage, together with all relevant qualifications.  
The successful applicant will be required to work alongside an established  
team, possess the ability to lead and motivate staff, organise and control  
work programmes and set realistic working budgets.  
This superb 18 hole mountain course offers the type of challenge which  
would suit a dedicated and innovative worker.  
Salary and conditions are negotiable, accommodation is not provided.  
Applications in writing by 31st May 1998 with C.V. to:-

The Secretary, Maesteg Golf Club, Mount Pleasant,  
Neath Road, Maesteg CF34 9PR

## TADMARTON HEATH GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for an

## ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Age range 20-30 years.  
The ideal candidate must be enthusiastic and mechanically minded.  
PA1, PA2 and PA6 preferred.

Applications in writing with current C.V.

To: Brian Owen, Course Manager, Tadmarton Heath Golf Club,  
Wigginton, Banbury, Oxon. OX15 5HL



## South Bucks District Council

### ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Farnham Park & The Lanes Golf Courses

# ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Salary - Local Grade 4 £15,093 - £16,797  
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The above are an 18 and 9 hole municipal golf course respectively. The post requires an individual experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping/horticultural work with a sound knowledge of modern maintenance equipment. No accommodation is available with this post and salary will be commensurate with experience. The Council is committed to providing, where appropriate, training and development for its staff.

Application forms and further details are available by telephoning the Personnel Unit on 01753 676287 (24-hour answerphone) or by writing to the Personnel Officer, South Bucks District Council, Council Offices, Windsor Road, Slough SL1 2HN.

The closing date for applications is 18 May 1998.



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## MURRAYFIELD GOLF CLUB LIMITED

# HEAD GREENKEEPER

Murrayfield Golf Club invites applications for the position of Head Greenkeeper.

The Club, which is situated within two miles of Edinburgh city centre, is embarking on a long term programme to improve the course and has recently made a major investment in new equipment.

The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate an excellent record of greenkeeping on a course with high standards and be familiar with the latest greenkeeping technology.

A competitive salary will be negotiated and accommodation may be made available nearby.

Applications in writing with full C.V. to

The Secretary,  
Murrayfield Golf Club Limited,  
43 Murrayfield Road,  
Edinburgh,  
EH12 6EU



## COOKRIDGE HALL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

# HEAD GREENKEEPER

Circa £20,000

Cookridge Hall Golf and Country Club are currently seeking to appoint a new Head Greenkeeper. The course at Cookridge Hall was originally constructed in 1992 to the highest specification (USA greens and full Rainbird fairway irrigation system). The property is now owned by First Leisure Plc and comprises an 18 hole championship course, a 40,000 sq ft health and fitness club and a floodlit driving range.

The position would suit either an existing Head Greenkeeper or First Assistant Greenkeeper with a minimum of 2 years experience in that position. Applications should include a full C.V. and hand written letter of introduction addressed in the first instance to :-

Mr Steve Rees, General Manager, Cookridge Hall  
Cookridge Lane, Leeds, LS16 5NL

Applications close on the 15th of May 1998

## CAPDERPERA GOLF CLUB

requires a

# COURSE MANAGER

A thorough knowledge of modern Greenkeeping practices will be required together with a wide experience of equipment, machinery and irrigation systems.

Management responsibilities include leading team of experienced employees, controlling budgets, knowledge of the spanish language an advantage.

Applications with CV to :-

Capderpera Golf, PO Box 202,  
Arta 07570, Mallorca

**Sandy McDivot, Head Greenkeeper at Sludgecombe Pay and Play, discusses the pros and cons of consultants, and outlines how to get advice from them...**

# Field of experience?

There is, in this world, a boom industry that seems to be for ever growing. It may not lay claim to being the oldest profession as that particular tag has apparently been applied to some other vocation but it may lay claim to being the second. One can imagine the scenario; Neanderthal man decides to go into business selling a particular product or service. As soon as they find their first punter and manage to tell of their successes there appears from out of the woodwork someone that says, "Sure you're doing it that way, but if you do it this way you can treble your profits in the first two weeks and what's more I will only take 10% to

start with." I am, of course, talking of the consultant.

In our industry we have a veritable profusion of these that come under the heading of Golf Course Agronomists. In the old days there were but a tiny few in number. Take away Uncle Jim who appears to have been going for several centuries now and a few at Bingley and there was nothing to chose from. But over the years as golf has increased in popularity it seems as though every Dave, Jack and George is setting up business as an expert in the field.

The problem would appear to be that there are so many differing ways of going about the task of maintaining a golf course and indeed so many different types of course. We used to have the old push up golf course that was built decades ago out of what ever was at hand. Now we have the sand based construction and all its derivations. Some advise a lean and hungry approach, others are more willing to use every type of nutrient going in an effort to keep optimum

growth of the grass. Many have there own particular secret that they apply to all courses while others are willing to use any golf course as a kind of laboratory in which to carry out their trials of a new theory that they may have.

There is one thing that puzzles me about the increase in agronomists over the years. It appears to be a peculiar paradox that in the old days when to be quite honest there was nothing like the knowledge of greenkeeping that there is now, there appears to be a greater demand for the adviser. I mean lets face it, when I came into greenkeeping many years ago there was little in the way of education, and nothing in the way of available information compared to nowadays. Some of the Head Greenkeepers that I used to work for knew about as much about greenkeeping as I do about nuclear physics. First year students of nowadays would wipe the floor with some and I stress some of those old Head Greenkeepers whose standard qualification would be to talk with a strange provincial dialect and to be able to wield a scythe. In those thankfully far off days I could well understand committees bringing in advisers every so often so as to give the man in charge a rough idea of what a golf course should look like. But these days it appears that despite the relative huge improvement in knowledge and understanding, the agronomists are as busy as ever. I can only put this strange anomaly down to a sign of the times. I do not think it is a lack of trust but just a general acceptance that consultants are called in for anything that would appear to the present day layman as being in the least bit technical. That would explain why secretaries, stewards and pros do not have their own consultants brought in, ie their jobs are not in the least bit technical.

So what type of agronomists are there. Well broadly I have worked out that they fall into four main groups



1) those who take advice. 2) those who do not give advice. 3) those who give advice. 4) Those who give bad advice.

The best of these for Head Greenkeepers is the first of these ie those who take advice. If you're lucky enough to get one of these agronomists then your whole quality of life can be improved. This is the agronomist who comes along to your course once or twice a year and wanders round while you tell him what you have been doing, what you intend to do and why. He then goes back to his HQ and writes up a report detailing exactly what you have said. Everyone is happy. He's happy as he gets regular employment, you're happy as you get back up and the committee are happy as they get a nice, neat report full of technicalities that they will never understand. If you're very lucky you can actually get this type of agronomist to ask the question "do you wish me to put any of the following in my report a) new machinery, b) new staff, c) all expenses trip to GCSAA annual bash etc...?" Marvellous, and yet so simple.

Then we have the second type of agronomist, those that give no advice. This type can be a very useful stress relieving tool for the present day greenkeeper. As we all know, in order to achieve good results in the long term, we have to endure bad results in the short term. Aeration, top dressing, scarification, feeding you name it, they all result in a temporary deterioration in quality. This is when the above agronomist comes in to his own. The committee or the members ask the perennial question "why do you have to do that just when the greens were getting nice?" to which the greenkeeper can reply "because the agronomist says so" and there on the agronomists report is written hollow time and top dress in the spring, apply 8:0:0 in the summer etc... etc....

Now this to the average greenkeeper is not exactly an earth shattering new theory on the maintenance of fine turf but it does keep the uneducated masses that like to clutter up our fairways, happy that their overpaid Head Greenkeeper is getting useful guidance. There is an additional advantage to be gained from this type of agronomist in that his report contains just enough jargon to keep the golfers respect of their greenkeepers. After all there are not many committee men or ladies, let alone plebeian members who have an earthly of what 8:0:0 is.

The third type of agronomist can be a little more dangerous. This type like to get above their status and give us advice on how to do things. Don't get me wrong, it can be well meaning advice but because they have never been greenkeepers themselves it can be totally impractical. Let me give you an example. I have got a report from an agronomist that advises I hollow time my greens and fill up the holes with pure sand to 5mm from the surface. I then top dress to the surface with regular 80:20 so as to facilitate an overseeding programme. Now I am not sure what planet this particular agronomist was on and what sort of gravitational pull it has, but here on

Earth one cannot simply back fill with sand to 5mm of the surface. Some holes get filled up and others are left pretty much empty, which ever way one does it. So we top dress with plenty of sand and they all filled up right to the surface. It was the only thing that was practical. At Sludgecombe Pay and Play I am blessed with a couple of owners whose only interest in my department is the spending side, I have no greens committees to worry about and so this sort of report does me no harm what so ever. However at clubs that have those dreadful committee members that want to get involved, it could be a problem. They may insist that the agronomists advice is followed to the letter and ask searching questions when it is not.

The fourth type of agronomist is the worst and, I am glad to say, a relatively rare breed. These are the ones who not only insist on giving advice but give bad advice. For example I have heard of a so called agronomist that basically advises severe monthly scarification followed by a heavy, pure sand top dressing. He claims that slit tining does no good what so ever and has a fervent belief in applying vast quantities of calcified seaweed. The problem is, he peddles these theories directly to the greens committees and course owners and they being complete laymen when it comes to turf maintenance fall for his smooth verbal delivery and outlandish claims. In one case where a friend of mine was involved, the course owner accused my friend of trying to pull the wool over his eyes when he disagreed with this particular agronomists advice. The result was the owner took side with the agronomist and my friend found it necessary to find employment elsewhere which I am glad to say he did successfully.

In another case, previously documented in this magazine, the committee forced the Head Greenkeeper to action this same agronomists advice. As this course was a prestigious links course with associated fine turf it was not long before the regular scarifications, sand smothering and huge pH increases from the calcified seaweed took its toll and the greens effectively gave up the ghost and died. However, as is so often the case, the committee once again took the side of the agronomist and the Head Greenkeeper was given the blame and the sack. He managed to get a favourable settlement but such a blow can destroy a career for good.

I must not however get too cynical about agronomists. As I wrote earlier they can and often are, a great asset to the greenkeeper. However, I think the fundamental problem with them is that they are called in by committees once or twice a year to advise and often advice is the last thing that is needed. Sometimes its best just to keep things simple and let the greenkeepers get on with it and the best agronomists are the ones that in the right circumstances do just that. So if you're looking for a good agronomist that can help you, then my advice would be to look around, look at there track history, talk to other greenkeepers that have used them and, remember, they are there to help us.

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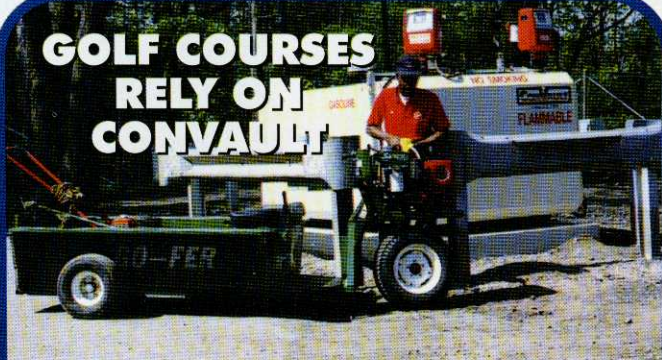
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## Feature listing from April '96

**April '96;** Brush Cutters; Ear Defenders; Forest of Arden Golf & Country Club; Golf in Asia; Turf Production; Environment

**May '96;** Aeration; Lingdale GC; Pumps; Security and Vandalism; Furniture and Fittings; Risk Assessment

**June '96;** Compaction; Seacroft GC; Education; Health and Safety; Architecture - East Herts GC; Fighting Annual Meadow Grass

**July '96;** Loaders, diggers and excavators; Royal Lytham GC; Protective Clothing; Modern Apprenticeships; Irrigation

**August '96;** Turf Tissue Analysis; Environmental Communication; Assessors; Tee Mats

**September '96;** Budgeting; Greenkeeping in Finland; Kings Acre GC; Grinding; Role of Training Providers; Blowers

**October '96;** Drainage; The Wentworth Club

**November '96;** Irrigation Equipment; St Andrews; The Oaks GC; Engines

**December '96;** Maintenance Facilities; History of the Mower; Mentmore Golf and Country Club

**January '97;** Trees; Tenby GC; Communication; Addressing the imbalance in Sports Turf; Hiring Equipment

**February '97;** Attending to the Details; Computers; Fertilisers; Ridding Park

**March '97;** Making Machinery Last; Computers; Irrigation; Musselburgh Old Links; STRI; Defining Playing Performance; Compact Tractors

**April '97;** Turf Quality; The London Club; Computers; Electric Greens Mower; Course Accessories; Ecology; Aerators

**May '97;** Data Tagging; Naunton Downs GC; Alternative Spikes; Suspended Water Table Greens; Shallow Aerators; Working in Germany

**June '97;** Drought Survival; Cooden Beach; Monitoring the Weather; Slitters

**July '97;** Royal Troon GC; Speed of Putting Surfaces; Mowers

**August '97;** Maintenance Facilities; Heather Management; Bunker Rakes; Workshops; Architecture; Kedleston Park GC

**September '97;** Accident Reporting; Greens Mowers; Valderrama GC; Links Courses

**October '97;** Environment; Recruitment; Abbeydale GC; Rough Mowers; Soil Analysis

**November '97;** Environment Competition; Bank Cutting; Risk Assessment; Pumps

**December '97;** Seed Development; Longhirst Hall GC; Toro Awards; Fertiliser Spreaders; Communication

**January '98;** FEGGA Conference; Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC; Mobile Phones; Traffic Management; Spraying; Environment

**February '98;** BTME Review; Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC; Drainage; Thatch

**March '98;** Trees, Golf Course Accessories, News from GCSAA, Leamington & County GC, Trevor Smith's BTME Talk

**April '98;** Gleneagles Hotel, Compact Tractors, Environment, Protective clothing, Rain bird, Internet



# The key to SUCCESS



At the end of March I had the pleasure of attending the North West seminar at Mere Golf & Country Club in Cheshire. The day was organised by my old friend Bert Cross. Bert and I go back a long way, to our army days, both serving in the Kings Regiment in Korea in the early '50s. So we had much to talk about over dinner the night before and very enjoyable it was too. The seminar had to be good to match the luxurious venue, and so it proved to be. The papers given by all the speakers were excellent, covering new courses from Scotland to Saudi Arabia, although I prefer the Scottish version to the desert where golf just doesn't seem right. They were all very interesting. There were also papers on nutritional values and pest control which gave the day a nice balance. The attendance of about 100 delegates, many of whom were trade people, must have been gratifying to Bert and his committee, but sent a clear message to the greenkeepers who did not turn out. You don't know what your missing! A message which seems to echo many educational events.

Why are we greenkeepers so backward at coming forward. When it comes to education it always seems to be the same 10 to 20% who attend and want to learn. Every greenkeeper has a duty to him or herself to keep up to date with the ever changing trend of our industry. We may have been to college recently or in the distant past, but no one will ever know it all and as professional people we owe it to our clubs to keep in constant touch with what's going on.

BIGGA run management courses both at Aldwark and out in the regions along with a National Conference, workshops and BTME seminar programmes, plus on your doorstep the sections and regions run their own educational events just for our benefit, all of which take a lot of time and effort to organise. Why is it that such a small percentage attend?

Education is the key to success. All we need to do is look around us and see how many excellent young greenkeepers have taken this route to bigger, better and higher profile jobs, but they have had to work at it. It's worth remembering that success only comes before work in one place - the dictionary. The association plays its part, all we have to do is turn up and learn. Having let off steam and put the ball firmly in your court, if there is anything you feel the association can do for the benefit of greenkeepers and their education, please let us know and we will try to help.

On the golf course, May is the month we start to see results of all the work put in through last winter

as the turf starts to thicken up and playing conditions improve. For my part I am looking forward to visiting many courses and seeing old friends. My first trip will be to Penrith for the Cumbria Cup on May 20. The National Tournament this year will be at Letham Grange in Scotland. I know that it's a long way for members in the south of England, but I can assure you it will be worth the trip. Scotts, our sponsors have made a big effort on your behalf, and along with your staff and National Board the whole profile of the tournament will be raised over the next few years. So do try to be a part of it and let's see if you have it in you to be a champion. Scotts really do deserve your support, they certainly have mine, so if you think you can beat me, have a go.

The staff at HQ have just gone through a period of change. Last month we reported the sad loss of Janet, our Membership Services Officer and Amanda from advertising. Janet's post has been filled by Tracey Maddison who I am sure will do a good job. Now Emma, who is also moving away, and Karen are both leaving our employment, but I can assure you all that there is a good and sound morale within HQ and the vacancies will soon be filled.

On a happier note our new building is coming along very well and we can look to completion with a great deal of pride and excitement.

Gordon Ch

# STUNG?



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