

An unprecedented level of interest in velvet bents (*Agrostis canina*) at this year's BTME took even amenity specialists British Seed Houses by surprise. Now that the variety Avalon has proven itself on UK greens for the first time, Danny Thorogood of IGER looks at the species' suitability to a market so dominated by browntop bents (*Agrostis capillaris*).

# Argostis *capillaris*

## Velvet Bent – a Turfgrass species re-examined?

Velvet bent is a common grass, widely distributed, and ideally suited to climatic conditions in the UK, often becoming dominant in damp or

wet places. This makes it an ideal candidate for greenkeepers who should consider exploiting its well-documented attributes.



**ons seed  
success  
our feet**

We supply Wembley's 'hallowed turf' and are one of Britain's leading professional turfgrass providers. Proof that good breeding breeds success. Call now for details of your local distributor and receive your free 1999 seed catalogue.



**Johnsons**  
Sport &  
Amenity

Perryfields Holdings Ltd. Thorn Farm, Inkberrow, Worcestershire WR7 4LJ Tel: 01386 793135 Fax: 01386 792715 or 01386 792216

# Argostis *capillaris*

The tremendous shoot density shown by Velvets comes from a combination of stoloniferous growth and rapid tillering. The stolons are very slender, producing tufts of fine leafy shoots that knit together in a close turf. It is easily distinguished from creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.) by its prominent long pointed ligule at the junction of the leaf sheath and blade.

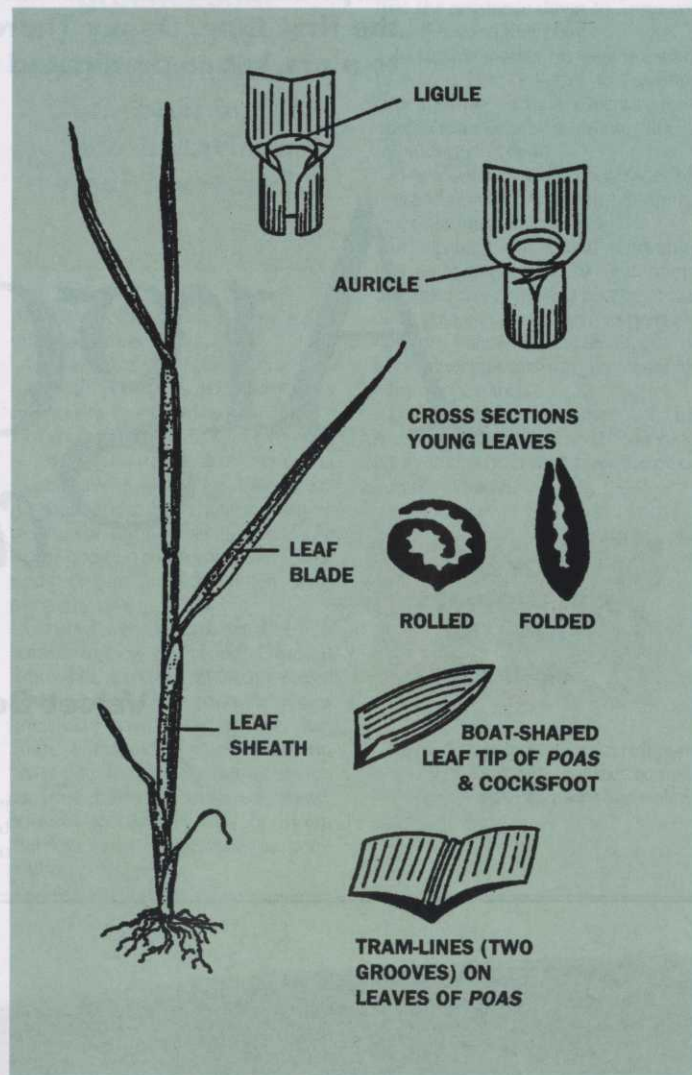
The velvet bent is stronger-growing than creeping bent, so it might need feeding little and often, although overall nutrient levels are probably the same, or lower. It produces the highest quality turf of any species under close, frequent mowing and has better low temperature, shade and drought tolerance than other bents.

So velvet varieties could provide the boost in grass quality greenkeepers need. Their shoot density and adaptability to environmental stresses mean that quality greens, playable over an extended season, can be produced.

Poorly managed velvet bents will produce thatch - a build up of undegraded lignified tissues at the soil-grass interface. Up to 5mm of thatch will cushion ball bounce and increase wear tolerance. It also insulates the soil against temperature extremes.

To maintain a high turf quality, groundsmen should cultivate conditions that favour aerobic microbes. Frequent top-dressing with a loam-based material increases the microbial population and ensures good contact between plant and soil. Liming may also help by raising pH, and coring and spiking will help by producing a free-draining, well-aerated soil.

If thatch has been allowed to develop, it can be rectified by thorough scarification in late summer



when there is active grass regrowth and less chance of weeds moving in. If necessary, top dressing, cultivations, and liming should then be practised to avoid a recurrence.

Velvet bents are not new to the industry and their ability to produce a stunningly attractive surface was known in the early 1900s. Yet none have been marketed since

Kingstown in 1963. The breeders and developers of Avalon clearly see its potential as an alternative to browntop/fescue mixes on greens.

Overall, velvet bent seems to meet the market demand for exceptional swards on loam-based golf greens. Greenkeepers who tried it last year have seen its resilience in heavy use situations.

SEEDS  
SERVICE  
SOLUTIONS



**Velvet Bent**

*The New Concept for Golf Greens*



Bewsey Industrial Estate, Warrington WA5 5LE

Telephone 01925 654411 • Facsimile 01925 230682 • E-mail: seeds@bshwarr.co.uk

“IT'S NO GOOD ASKING A SEED COMPANY ABOUT TURF MANAGEMENT”

“



”

*Maybe not the average seed company. But then, Oliver is no average seed company.*

*We combine seven decades of specialisation in grass mixtures with all the experience and resources of the Cebeco Group, one of Europe's leading plant breeders.*

*We offer seed blends of unrivalled purity and performance, plus the Cebeco Nutri range of fertilisers.*

# Oliver

Turf Management

*And we provide expert advice on every aspect of turf management. So the balls may be hooked, hacked, kicked or smashed - but with our seed and our know-how, the grass can't be beaten.*

*For your free copy of this season's Oliver Turf Management catalogue, phone or fax today - or just ask us to come and see you, on your own turf.*

Oliver Seeds Ltd, North Cliff House, North Carlton, Lincoln LN1 2RP Tel: 01522 730836 Fax: 01522 731069

Ad Ref 571

# SHARPES



**A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE IN SEED FROM TEE TO GREEN**



**IMPROVE DISEASE RESISTANCE**  
**IMPROVE SUMMER COLOUR**  
**REDUCE MOWING NEEDS**



For more information, please telephone Customer Services at Advanta Seeds UK on 01529 304630

Ad Ref 453

# sisis ECOSPRAY

the "no drift" sprayer

PRODUCTS  
MILLENNIUM

Puts *you* in control of your spraying schedules, not the weather - can be used even in windy conditions

Environmentally sound - can be used close to flower beds, shrubberies, water courses and other sensitive areas

Makes spraying more effective: All the spray goes where you intended

Patented, perforated shields maintain spray pattern whilst eliminating drift

Various models available to fit virtually any vehicle

Units fold securely for ease of transport

All the advantages of dealing direct with the manufacturer

**sisis DIRECT**

**ECOSPRAY**

Full details from:

SISIS EQUIPMENT (Macclesfield) LTD, Hurdsfield, Macclesfield, Ches, SK10 2LZ Tel: 01625 503030 Fax: 427426 E-mail: info@sisis.u-net.com Website: www.sisis.com



**Scottish Region**  
Peter Boyd  
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

**North**

Entries for the Spring outing will be out shortly. We visit Inverness GC on Tuesday May 18. Head Greenkeeper Brian Fraser and his staff will have the course in great condition as always, so get your entry form returned quickly to ensure participation. The first four draws of the 200 Club will be made on the day, so please send back your money for that as well.

No new members to report this month, just a temporary lull though. The Scottish Conference was a great success last month in Dunfermline with several North members present as usual. This venue is very good and well placed for people coming from all directions, so hopefully we can use it again.

My trip to the GCSAA Show in Orlando Florida was an amazing experience and one I would recommend to all members. My talk went well, and I would like to thank the BIGGA staff, and Chairman Gordon Child, for getting up early to attend and give me moral support. The hall had seating for 1600! With about 750 people in attendance, which at 7.30am is not bad.

I told them that at Harrogate some guys are just going to bed when the pre-programme breakfast was starting at 6am! My interview for 'Par For the Course' on the Golf Channel went okay but I await the tape to see how it actually came out.

One of many highlights was undoubtedly meeting Arnold Palmer at his golf club in Orlando. I was really surprised that so many Brits were there and some seem to go often. I hope I convinced a lot of people to come to the North of Scotland for their golfing holidays this summer.

It's April now and hopefully the weather is dry, warm and even sunny. We need a good Spring to aid recovery on our saturated courses and give us something to work with for the coming season. Let's hope for a good Summer and happy golfers if that is possible!

I A Macleod.

**West**

Question. How on earth has the Glasgow area managed to miss all the snowfalls seen recently on national TV and in newspaper publications?

Alas, latterly the rainfall has been determined, I think, to make up for the lack of white stuff. Let's hope that the rainfall doesn't cause too much misery by delaying winter programmes and work schedules and that we all have a sympathetic Committee and tolerant membership for the '99 season! Did I hear laughter out there?

The latest Committee meeting took

place at Claremont Bowling Green, matters arising included the introduction of a '100 Club'.

Tickets are on sale at £5 each and available from your Committee members. The first draw for £100 will take place at the Spring outing, the second draw again £100 at the Autumn outing and the third will be at the AGM/Games night for £50. One final reminder of the Spring outing being held at Bothwell Castle GC on 29 April. Check your mail for application forms!

The games night at Claremont Bowling Club went ahead as planned on the evening of Thursday 18 February. Not a large turn out by all accounts but enjoyable nonetheless. The results are as follows: Victors were John Scott Jnr and his partner. Need I really mention his name as this has become rather habit forming for him - as usual Stuart Taylor. Well done guys. Stuart, I think perhaps a handicapping system be introduced for you, what do you say to one arm up your back, blindfolded?

I understand that it was a fairly close contest with the final result from the outcome of one game, nail biting stuff! We thank Claremont Bowling Green for use of their facilities, thanks also to the bar staff for keeping the boys well lubricated throughout the evening and, as ever, thanks to John Scott for providing the pies. As a final thank you we would like to thank Naim Brown for sponsoring the raffle prize of £50 won by George Nesbet of Killermont GC.

On 24 February, Rigby Taylor held a one day seminar at the Ibrox Stadium. Unfortunately I was unable to attend although I have been informed that it was a very informative and enjoyable day.

Having attended the Education Conference at Lauder College on Tuesday 2 March I can only tell you what an informative and enlightening day it was. Anyone who attended would certainly return with plenty of food for thought (certainly bacterial or fungal). A most interesting selection of speakers with subjects on - COSHH, latest legislation, Architecture, Golf Course Design, Archeology, That's what I said, Ian McMillan, of Hankley Common, Soil Bacteria, an excellent subject highly technical, Sir Michael Bonallack and last but not least Supaturf on the subject of Wetting Agents.

The facilities at Lauder College were second to none with countless cups of coffee, if required, and an excellent choice of lunches. Very tasty too. Well done to all who organised and helped make the day the success that it was.

Stuart Taylor has informed me that two football matches are currently being arranged, one against the East Section and the other against the North Section, hopefully to be played some time in April. Anyone interested should contact Stuart on 0141 942 5554.

I have no other news to offer you

this month so I shall end it all here.

As usual, if you have any stories or snippets of information that you feel are worthy of mention, then give me a call at H. 0141 776 1532 or M. 07050 173080.

Gavin Jarvis.

**Central**

Another eight new members join us this month and they are Richard McLuckie and Iain Marshall, from West Lothian GC; Darren McKenna and Nikki Riddel, from Drumoig GC; Andrew Fraser and Alasdair Collier, from Stirling GC; Barry Monie, from Muthill GC and Blair Samuel, from Ladybank GC. We extend a warm welcome to them from everyone in the Section and hope to see them at some of our future events. I keep extending this invitation to everyone but very few take up the offer and miss out on the chance of meeting fellow members.

Past Section Chairman, Jimmy Lees, has not been too well lately and has spent some time in hospital recovering from an operation.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery are sent to Jimmy from everyone in the section. Hopefully it won't be too long before he is back to full fitness again.

Best wishes for the future go to Alastair Philip, from Comrie Golf Club, and his new wife, who were married at Crieff Golf Club recently. (Sorry, I don't know your wife's name Alastair!)

Kenny Stirling is on the move from the Dukes Course at St Andrews to the new course at Kingsbarns, which is just along the road from St Andrews. Hope everything goes well for you in your new employment Kenny!

Belated congratulations are also due to Alex Robertson on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Grangemouth. Alex is that quiet bloke who attends and supports every BIGGA event, no matter where it is in the country and the surprising thing is that he doesn't even have a car. Wish there were more members like you Alex!

It was gratifying to see a good number of Section members at the Scottish Conference at Dunfermline last month, but it was disappointing to note that none of the local clubs were represented. I will probably be able to give you an explanation next month. For those of you who were unable to attend, you missed a great day and congratulations are due to Peter Boyd for organising such an excellent conference on our behalf.

REMEMBER! The closing date for the Spring Tournament is the 24 March and this is your chance to qualify for the National Championship at Carden Park, Cheshire in October. Two members from each Section qualify for this event and when you add the value of qualifying to the value of the section prizes, you will be competing for

prizes worth in the region of a £1000, and that's before you get to Carden Park! Changed days from when you won a £5 voucher to spend in the pro shop! Just another of the benefits you get when you are a member of BIGGA.

I'll give you the final update on the Section's Past Chairmen next month. John Crawford.

**Ayrshire**

By the time this is published Easter will have come and gone so let's hope Spring is well and truly in the air.

As intimated last month our Spring Tournament will be at Ballochmyle Golf Club, 6 May 1999, with the afternoon medal rounds, best gross and nett scores, qualifying for the new National Tournament. The morning will be reduced to an optional 9 hole event of a to be arranged format. Your entry forms will be with you soon along with details of the doubles knockout tournament so get your team arranged, fill out your entry form and return it to our secretary, Derek Wilson.

I was too pre-occupied with work commitments to attend the recent Scottish Conference in Dunfermline. The array of speakers and subjects looked very appealing and any reports I've heard was that it was an excellent and informative day. On behalf of our members thanks to Regional Administrator Peter Boyd for all his work in organising this successful day.

After receiving the support of my club committee, I was delighted to confirm my acceptance to be Duncan Gray's Vice Chairman. My feelings at the time were there were other experienced and deserving greenkeepers more worthy of this position than myself but most seem uninterested with the administration of our Section. There are presently vacancies within our committee so anyone interested in helping out or progressing to committee please step forward.

Committee members please note



**Northern Region**  
Douglas Bell  
Tel: 0151 431 0433

that our next meeting will be on 19 April 1999 at 7.30pm with the Parkstone Hotel as our venue. See you next month.

**North East**

On February 25 we had another successful Winter talk given by Scotts. Our thanks to Richard Walton on providing an interesting evening. Word must be getting around as there was an excellent turnout of 50 greenkeepers present plus one or two committee members, even travelling from as far away as Warkworth.

I reckon that the likes of Steve Cram, of Slaley Hall, deserve a mention as he is the man responsible for arranging these talks. If anyone has

any ideas for talks next winter have a word with Steve as we are always looking for new subjects.

Congratulations to Ian Hutton, formerly of Slaley Hall, on being appointed Head Greenkeeper at Garesfield G.C.

Anyone got a problem with moles? Try giving Steve Pope a ring as he is qualified to do something about it.

Future golf dates: August 5 at Beamish Park, match against Cleveland Section.

Early July we are hoping to have a summer comp. at Garesfield.

No doubt the next Section news will provide more moves from within the Section as there seems to be a few vacancies.

Jimmy Richardson.

### Cleveland

A very good lecture was held at Darlington GC on Thursday 18 February. The speaker was Phil Braithwaite, from First Response, who talked on Health & Safety. The meeting was attended by 19 greenkeepers, a good turn out. A very special thanks must go to the Steward, of Darlington GC, for putting on an excellent supper at very short notice.

We have four new members to the Section. They are Robert (Nobby) Massa, Assistant at Richmond GC; Neil Rogers and Mathew Robbins, both from Dinsorle Spa GC; Jonathan Eggelestone, from Brancepeth Castle GC.

Dress rules - I know I keep going on but Head Greenkeepers must inform younger members of staff that when attending lectures etc, shirt, ties and jackets are mandatory. I do not want to discourage younger members of the Section, but rules are there to be obeyed. Association ties are not that expensive.

Last but not least, Golf Day at Seaton Carew on 20 April 1999. Please have your membership cards with you and if you cannot play, please let Barry Walker or any of the lads in the section newsletter know in good time as this is a popular venue.

Kevin (Scoop) Heslop.

### Sheffield

Firstly, may I apologise for the lack of news in the recent editorial, this mainly being down to the Royal Mail and breakdown in communications.

This is a bit late but Happy New Year to you all!

On 30 November we held our Christmas Competition (which now seems a long time ago!) at Rotherham Golf Club, who I would like to thank for the courtesy of the course and facilities once again!

It was a fairly pleasant day for golfing and the day was enjoyed by everyone who played. Rotherham was in excellent condition and our thanks go to Dave Chappell and his staff. Well done Dave! Thanks also go to the catering staff for an excellent meal. Thanks go to our main sponsors of the day who were Rigby Taylors and Brian Booth. I think this was probably one, if not the best, prize table we have ever had with 28 prizes. Thanks also to other trade members including, Aitkens, Henton and Chattells, Purdys and Steve Burrough.

May I thank all our trade members for the support they gave us all year round with the prize tables and raffles. Some very good golf was played but, the winner with a very! very! good score was Alan Samson with 31 pts. Well done Alan.

1. A. Samson 31 pts; 2. W. Cooke 26 pts; 3. J. Dorach 26 pts

Finally a very belated congratulations go to Steve Hulme on his appointment as Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Murrayfield Golf Club; Steve moved from Wortley Golf Club. Good luck Steve, even though by now you've probably settled in very well.

John Lax

### North West

I start this month's Section news, sadly reporting the sudden death of Neil Elwell a N/W greenkeeper. Neil was Head Greenkeeper at Hale Golf Club in Cheshire, and although I do not have all the details, I understand that he died in his sleep due to a massive brain haemorrhage. Neil was only 38 years old, and had been at Hale

Golf Club for some years. Our thoughts are with his family.

On a brighter note Chris Sheehan, Head Greenkeeper at West Derby GC, is happy he visited the BTME this year. He entered a competition on the Oliver Seeds stand, and had his winning ticket drawn out. He wins a trip for two to Amsterdam. I wonder what he stood in on arrival at Harrogate.

I hope you have registered for the Spring Tournament by now, if not you only have until Tuesday 13 April. There will be plenty to play for: eg best gross and best nett scores qualify for a free entry to the National Championship, to be played at Carden Park on 3 - 5 October saving you £95 in registration fees. Also the best six scores will qualify to play for the N/W team in the regional final at Macclesfield GC on Wednesday 25 August, which is being sponsored by R.J. & J. Campey. All this beside an excellent day with a good prize table, and a great course to play on.

If you are late to register contact Bill Merritt on 0151 284 4416. While preparing the fixture list for the year, I had to meet Peter Jefford a couple of times at the Tillcon quarry where Rufford make their top dressing. Rufford sponsored the fixture lists this year, and I was taken down the quarry, and shown the whole process of how the top dressing is completed. I feel some of you might like to be taken on a guided tour of the quarry, and if so ring me, so that I can make arrangements. I think you will find it very interesting.

For the members in the far northern reaches of the N/W section, we have the Cumbria Cup competition to be played at Penrith G.C. on Wednesday 12 May. This is sponsored by Course Care, and is by invitation only. That seems to have covered it for now, but any queries or news please contact me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross.

### North Wales

March 4, two weeks till spring, the qualifying competitions have started, my course is closed. I look out of my

window and yes, its snowing! Isn't life great, NOT!

The annual greenkeeping technical seminar was held at the WGH in February and was attended by over 80 people including 11 trade stands. All the staff of my club attended including the secretary and Chairman of Greens who found it a very useful day indeed. When this event is organised we try to cover every aspect of the industry so there is something for everyone. The reaction sheets handed out at the end showed that the delegates are very positive about the event, not just criticising but making useful comment and suggestions, all of which will be discussed at the next liaison panel meeting, especially the PA. My Chairman wrote a full report on the day to show our executive committee what an excellent day it was. I would also like to thank the trade for supporting this event. I hope it was a success for you too.

Still at the college, the NVQ courses finish this month, coming to a successful conclusion with five students nearing completion of their Level 4. The college is also taking delivery of the machinery package from Textron which includes the electric grassmower so now the students will have state of the art equipment to use, again more partnerships forged!

Our Section is going from strength to strength. I would like to welcome these new members, Timothy Coombs, David Wrennall, Caldycott GC; Russell Weston, View Cross GC; Darren Moore, David Smith, Northop Golf & Country Club; Bryn Edwards, Maesdu G C; Dale Butterworth, Heswall G C, and James Bebbington, Eaton GC. Welcome to our Section, I look forward to meeting you at future events.

Section Secretary, Gary Edwards, informs me that a lot of clubs are interested in hosting our golf events, a couple are even Royals. The distribution of the clubs also covers the whole of our Section, so hopefully no one will feel left out. I'll give you names as the dates are officially fixed. Remember Llarynynech on 2 April (National Championship Qualifier).

## The Articulator®

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

Model 721X

124" wide

The finest Wide-Area Rotary available

The 721X Articulator® features seven individual 21" cutting decks which deliver a cut-path over ten feet wide. LasTec's revolutionary patented belt-drive system allows all seven cutting decks to articulate independently, but without messy, power-robbing hydraulic drives. The 721X Articulator brings you the best of three worlds - the unmatched cut quality of a single push mower, the high productivity of a wide-area mower, and a better price than any mower with its quality and capacity.



I've approached Jerry Hughes, of Llanvöllan GC, to ask whether he would serve on our committee. I'm glad to say that he accepted. (He's still trying to get his arm back to normal). Only joking, I feel that Jeremy is a good addition to our committee with his enthusiasm for every aspect of the game. Thanks for taking up the offer.

Our Education Officer, Phil Davies, recently suffered a rather nasty viral infection of the spinal cord, which laid him low for a few weeks. However, I'm glad to report that he has made a good recovery and I'm sure most of you will see him on his travels. Take it easy Phil.

Here's to a dry warm Spring, now where's me snow cover. See ya.

Dave Goodridge.

### East Midlands

The Section, for the first time on 11 February, held a Go-Kart evening at Wymeswold. This attracted 14 members who thoroughly enjoyed a great and competitive evening of races. After some close fought racing and one minor collision between Richard Barker & Kevin Kinzer, the eventual winner was Paul Bertenshaw, with Adie Porter taking second place. This, after 14 races, two semi-finals and a grand final.

I would like to thank all members who supported the evening, especially our two reps Mike Shepherd, of Vitax, and Kevin Kinzer, of E T Breakwells. Also thanks should go to Gavin Robson who organised this most enjoyable evening. Another Go-Kart night may be organised later in the year so if anybody else is interested and would like to see if they can become the East Midlands champion, please let Gavin or myself know. If anybody has any other ideas for social outings, could you please forward them to the committee.

On behalf of BIGGA and Kirby Muxloe G C, I would like to congratulate Mark Bindley on completing 20 years service at Kirby Muxloe G C. Marked joined Kirby Muxloe straight from school and is a well respected member of the Section.

Congratulations should go to Chris Bates, of Kirby Muxloe, and his wife

Jane, for the latest addition to their family, a healthy daughter named Lucy. Antony Bindley.



Midland Region

Peter Larter

Tel: 01480 437507

### Midland

The fixture list and various informative letters should have reached you. I hope you will be able to support your section and be able to attend the majority of educational trips and golf events that have been organised for your benefit as members to the section. There has been in the past very little support for the educational trips so please make the most of the opportunities and if you have any ideas please contact me on 01562 861434.

On behalf of the Section I would like to thank Peter McCrainger, of Carburul, for his help and commitment to getting the letters and fixture list printed and posted.

I have one piece of news regarding the committee; Nigel Couchman has been co-opted onto the committee and will serve for the year. Finally I would like to introduce some more new members; they are as follows - Adrian Moss, Michael Taylor, Steven Harris, Robert Barrs, Robert Surgey, Simon White, Robert Cook, Richard Drudge, Kevin Gibney.

Jonathan Wood.

### Bucks, Berks and Oxon

The first golf event of the season takes place at Beaconsfield Golf Club on Tuesday 20 April. This event is also the qualifier for the new National Championship to be held at Carden Park in October. There are two qualifying places up for grabs within the Section and these are for the best gross and best nett. Full details will be given on the day with regards to competition rules. If you have not already entered this event please phone me

as there may be a cancellation slot available.

On a personal note I travelled up to Headquarters last month to attend a Secretaries' meeting, giving me an opportunity to see at first hand the new building. The building is very impressive, money well spent, as this represents our profession. It has great training facilities using the latest technology to assist with lectures and presentations. Anybody attending future training courses will be impressed with the set up. Despite the three hour drive it was worth the journey, it gave me the chance to put faces to the people I have dealt with on the phone.

In the coming months the Oxfordshire are going to be looking for some volunteers to assist with daily bunker raking during the Benson & Hedges tournaments. If you have not taken part before then I would recommend you apply to help out. It gives us an opportunity to watch at first hand the intense preparation required in setting up a golf course for a European Tour event. I am sure David Gower would welcome a few extra helpers this year.

Finally, as from next month, Ross Wilson, from Donnington Grove, will be taking over the article writing (good luck Ross). If you can provide any information to assist Ross I am sure he would be grateful.

Lindsay T Anderson.

### East of England

Sorry for the lack of reports in the magazine recently, but it has been quiet around the Section this year so far. The AGM took place at Belton Woods and the same committee was elected. Do you think that nobody wants to stand or are we getting it right for you at Section level?

The Fieldcare Texas scramble at Belton was won by Phil Wilkinson's team and the course was in great shape thanks to the hard work of Sheamus Cogan and

his staff. BTME has passed and I hope you all had a chance to see the new products on show or take in some of the education seminars.

I have just come back from the new BIGGA headquarters and was very impressed by the design and layout, much more professional than the previous building.

Ken Richardson, Education and Training Manager, would be willing to run training courses if we can get enough numbers in our Section, i.e. computer training, health & safety etc, so let me know if you have any ideas.

The fixture cards are at the printers and should be with you shortly. The cards this year are being sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and Aitkens, thanks to Ben Petitjean and Peter Fell. We have some fantastic venues this year and hope we get better support for all the events organised.

Let me know if you have any information or ideas. That's all for now.

Graeme Macdonald.

### Mid Anglia

An 'open forum' discussion was held in February at South Beds Golf club on the following subjects: Annual Meadow Grass, Better Methods and Conservation. Ten people attended, contributing to an interesting afternoon's debate on topics which are relevant to all greenkeepers.

The Spring Tournament is to be held on Thursday 29 April (not the 28th as published in last month's magazine) at Aldwickbury Golf Club. Entries are by the appropriate form, enclosing a cheque for £23 made payable to Richard Saunders, Fixtures Secretary. This event is the qualifier for the new Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship, the final of which is to be played on 4 and 5 October at Carden Park, Cheshire.

The Lodgeway Fourball will be made at Aldwickbury, so please make sure you bring along your entry form. Alternatively, you may post it to

Model 425D 96" wide

### Manoeuvrability, Safety and Accuracy

The 425D Articulator® features four articulating 25" cutting decks combined with a unique hydrostatic drive unit, and a Kubota 38hp water-cooled diesel engine. The result is a revolutionary, zero-turning radius, wide-area, contouring mower. The 425D has a wider wheel base, and lower centre of gravity to provide greater side-hill stability and safer cutting on severe terrain. A mulching kit can be added to dispose of leaves, and height of cut can be changed in just 5 seconds, giving you the finest finish mower in the world.



Our unique patented belt-driven articulating deck design gives you an unsurpassed quality and accuracy of cut

The  
**Articulator®**

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

**FREE  
DEMONSTRATION**

Call for a free demonstration in your area NOW!

Scotland: Double A Trading: Sandy 01382 330556

North: Greenlay Ltd: David 01670 822857

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

Marlwood Limited

Court Lodge Farm, Forge Lane, East Farleigh, Maidstone, Kent ME15 0HQ

Tel: 01622 728718 Fax: 01622 728720



## Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

Steve Mason if you wish to enter.

Finally, I would like to welcome the following new members to the Section.

Paul Cook, Buckingham Golf Club; Glen White, Brampton Park; Paul Herbert, Aylesbury Park; Russell Elms, Chesfield Downs; Mathew Ruff, Windmill Hill; Paul Coles, Brampton Heath; Alistair Sword, Redbourn; Phillip Hutchings, Beadlow Manor and Peter Dear, Brocket Hall.

Paul Lockett.



**South East**  
Derek Farrington  
Tel: 01903 260956

### Essex

It's Spring time, with the first quarter of the year flown by. As we are now fast approaching the hectic golfing calendar, let's hope the cutting season is kinder to us during 1999 than last year, with 'stress' put not only on the machinery side but all our staff as well.

Our Secretary attended a meeting held at BIGGA House on 25 and 26 February along with all the Regional Administrators, Section Secretaries and Staff from H.Q.

to discuss the future of the Association.

Items on the agenda included the new "Stylo" Leisure and Work Wear range which are both of good quality and reasonably priced and which you will be able to see for yourselves at our section events. The 'Magazine' where Scott MacCallum, the Editor, is interested in any of your views - ask Sandy McDivot. The all new National Championship which will be an exciting tournament, held at an outstanding venue and for those who have entered you will not be disappointed. Also looked at Membership, Education and BTME 2000. Martin said the meeting was very productive for all the staff at H.Q. not only for their professionalism but for all their hard work to make our Association so successful.

On the Membership front we would like to welcome our new members: Michael Franklin, Ilford GC; Terry Edmonds, Braintree GC; William Bywaters, Basildon GC; Michael Oakes, Rochford Hundred GC. This brings our membership total in Essex up to 175. Let's make a big effort to reach 200 by the year 2000 with us all encouraging other greenkeepers to join the Association and inform them

of all the benefits that are open to them.

On the education front, we would have held our second evening lecture at Writtle College, with Jon Albutt as our guest speaker, sponsored by Grass Roots. For those who are still interested in attending the Autumn/Winter courses either on computers or management skills contact Martin on 01245 603131, who will give you more information or add your name to the list.

Hope to see you at Burnham-on-Crouch G.C. for our Spring Tournament, one not to miss, where there are two prizes up for grabs for entry to the National Championship at Carden Park 3 - 5 October.

Dave Wells 01702 522202.

### Kent

There have been several requests for a list of the new and current committee members, so they are as follows. H Morgan, Secretary/Treasurer, T. Hindmarsh, Chairman, G Debenham Vice-Chairman, K Diamond Committee Members and J Francis supporting attendance. The last meeting was held on 3 March 1999 at Wilderness GC. This went very smoothly and shows signs of a promising year ahead.

The fixture list will be mailed out in early April to those who replied to the mail shot. If any new members join the section during the year and would like a copy of the fixture list, then contact either myself or H. Morgan on 0403 207622.

The fixture list is as follows; Chart Hills 24 May, Broke Hill 26 July, Tandridge 4 October and Darenth Valley 1 December.

The price of the golf days will be a consistent £22 at all of the venues and all the events will be on a first come first served basis as we are expecting a busy schedule. The date for the AGM will be brought forward this year to November time, date clarified nearer the time.

I would like to thank all of the companies who have supported our section this coming year with their sponsorship.

If anybody has any news or recommendations then please contact me on 01474 879200, as I would rather make this a more interesting article. The only news I have for you is that B. Farnham has left the LGC since the last edition, he has returned to the construction trade and we would all like to wish him the best in the future.

Kneale Diamond.

## REELMASTER® 2300-D & 2600-D MADE PRECISELY FOR ALL TYPES OF GRASS AND TERRAIN

Toro's all-purpose Reelmaster trim mowers offer the total solution for a matchless performance around bunkers, tees, collars and approaches, and over sports fields and amenity areas too.

Featuring the exclusive L-I-N-K-S™ suspension system for enhanced ground contour following, both the 2300-D and 2600-D are ideal to give a superb quality of cut and will tackle most kinds of turf and terrain, even early morning wet grass.

Highly advanced in design, engine, drive and main-frame, they also boast high torque, customised cutting units with variable speeds.

You can trust Toro to give precisely the result you require.

Simply telephone 01480 476971 and we'll arrange for a local dealer to contact you.

**TORO**

**TOTAL SOLUTIONS**

TORO distributed by: Lely (UK) Limited, Station Road, St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE19 1QH  
Tel: 01480 476971 Fax: 01480 216167 E-mail: [toro.sales@lely.co.uk](mailto:toro.sales@lely.co.uk)  
Lely Ireland Limited, 6 Airton Close, Tallaght, Dublin 24.  
Tel: 00 353 1 459 3314 Fax: 00 353 1 459 3320 E-mail: [info@lely.ie](mailto:info@lely.ie)







**South West  
and South Wales**  
Paula Humphries  
Tel: 01288 352194

The new contact address for Paula is: Riverview, 2 Granville Terrace, Bude, Cornwall.

### South West

There were two sad events which occurred during the month of February in this region. The first was the death of Jamie Brunton-Reed, who had been working at my club, Cumberwell Park Golf Club, for the past four months. Jamie, who was only 20, suffered from a rare genetic blood disorder, and had been ill for some time. Jamie had also been studying on a part-time greenkeeping course. He will be sadly missed by everyone at the club.

The second sad event was the tragic death of John Thomas, from Lansdown Golf Club. John had given 18 years of hardworking and loyal service to the club and will be deeply missed by all those connected with the club. He leaves behind a wife and two children.

The death of John left an air of sadness as greenkeepers gathered

for the Winter Tournament held at Lansdown on 25 February. Despite the trauma of the previous week, Head Greenkeeper Steve Pell and his staff got the course into immaculate condition for the event, with particular praise being given for the "quite remarkable greens." The results of the tournament were as follows:

1. Steve Mitchell - 38 points; 2. Dave King - 37 points; 3. Nick Wilson - 35 points

Nearest the pin was won by Nick Perkins, and the trade prize went to Phil Greenway from Roffey Bros. The event was sponsored by Lawson Products, so many thanks to George Sinker for his support. Thanks also go again to Steve Pell and his team, Rachel and Gary in the catering department and also the secretary of Lansdown for allowing us the use of the course.

Following the golf and meal, a collection was made from the members to go to the family of John Thomas. This was swelled further by money generated from the Nearest the Pin competition.

Among the golfers who took part in this tournament was Dan Dobie, Head greenkeeper at Marlborough Golf Club. Dan retired on 26 February, so we wish him good luck and a happy retirement.

The next event is just a few weeks away with Wells Golf Club hosting the Spring Tournament on Thursday 22 April. You still have just enough time to get your name down for this one. There's not much time left either for Westurf, which is taking place on April 27, so for further information, telephone Paula Humphries on 01363 82777.

I am still receiving requests to reserve spaces on the training and education courses that we run. I am still building up a list of names, but as soon as I have enough names, the course can then be organised and the applicants will be contacted with the necessary information.

For any other enquiries, please write to me or telephone on 01249 783382.

Paul Cunningham.

### South Coast

The Section Seminar was held at Sparsholt on Tuesday 23 February, and it was well attended with 70 delegates in attendance. It was very encouraging to see so many members there. The Speakers, as always, were of a very high calibre and we are indeed very grateful to them for giving us their time to talk to us.

However, it did not go unnoticed that there was a good representa-

tion from North of the Border!

Thanks to Jef, our Secretary, who did a grand job in organising the event. Also thanks to all those who helped out on the day. We must not forget our Sponsors for the day, they were: Gem Professional, Grass Roots Trading Company Ltd, Huxleys Grass Machinery of Alresford and Winchester Garden Machinery. Thanks to you all for supporting us and helping to make the day go so well. Last but not least, thank you to Sparsholt College who provided us with lunch, the hall and all the little extras that were required.

This is the last call for Westurf, Jef has had a few calls about seats on the coach. However, at the time of writing this report there are still seats available, the coach is being sponsored by Rigby Taylor.

If you haven't already done so, phone Jef on 01635 846575 without delay. Paula has done a lot of work in moving Westurf to Westpoint. It is now up to us to give her and the members of the trade our support. I am told the stand space has more than doubled. This means more members of the trade in attendance, more machinery, and more people to see.

See you all on the coach - The Day - Tuesday 27 April 1999 - The



Place - Westpoint

Our Spring tournament will be held at Canford Magna Golf Club on Tuesday 4 May. Play will consist of a 27 holes medal, please ensure that all trophies are at Canford Magna on the day. It is up to all of you who won last year to see that the trophies are returned. The cost of the day is £16.00; this is to include lunch and the evening meal. All entries complete with current handicaps, names, addresses and cheques for £16.00 to be sent to: Fred Deamon, Golf Club Bungalow, Alton Golf Club, Old Odiham Road, ALTON, Hants, GU34 4BU. Tel: 01420 86679. Numbers are limited to 50, so get your entries in as soon as possible. Fred has taken over as the Tournament Organiser, Trevor Smith has stood down from the committee. We would like to thank Trevor for all the work he has done in the past in organising the previous tournaments.

Lastly, the players with the best gross score and the best nett scores will go forward to the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship. This will be held later in the year. Good Luck to Everyone!

Ken Lodge.

Devon & Cornwall

Eighty members attended the Section's Avoncrop-sponsored meeting held at St Enodoc Golf Club on Wednesday 24 February. Many members had to travel through heavy rain and a lot of road works to arrive at St Enodoc GC, but on their arrival the weather cleared to give them perfect conditions to compete for the Avoncrop Trophy over St Enodoc's superbly presented Church and Holywell courses which are a credit to Stuart Dymond and his crew.

As usual our non golfing members had a guided tour of the course which included a look at the club's recently constructed irrigation lake and pumping station by Course Manager Stuart Dymond.

After a superb lunch, John Palfrey representing the day's sponsors, Avoncrop, presented the Avoncrop Trophy and prizes on behalf of Avoncrop Amenity;

Church Course 0 - 23 handicap.  
1. T. Gooch, Torrington; 2. B. Ridgeway, Fingle Glen; 3. R. Daly, Exeter.

Holywell Course 24 - 28 handicap.  
1. H. Roberts, Crediton; 2. M. Samuel, Rigby Taylor.

Our educational talk presented by Tim Earley on "Are microbes really necessary" completed an excellent day. The Section would like to thank St Enodoc Golf Club and all their staff who made our day so special, with a special mention to Stuart Dymond and his staff who, as always, had the course in excellent condition. A big thank you to Avoncrop for sponsoring the day.

Your attendance is required at this year's Westurf at Westpoint, Exeter on 27 April. For the first time ever all the trade stands have been taken, so you'll be able to view all the latest machinery and products available. Also, this year, the region has put on a seminar programme starting at 9.30am and you can watch the Adams Axe men perform their tree felling act.

Richard Whyman.

South Wales

Summer is just around the corner after our mainly wet Winter. Shortly, or by now, the irrigation systems will be primed ready for a hot spell, if there is ever such a thing. On the subject of water, the meeting on Wednesday 10 February was by John Mosedale, of the Environment Agency.

John's presentation on where, how much and what abstracting water can entail was and will be of benefit to those who attended the lecture. Thank you to John and also our friends from the IOG who also came along to a very interesting evening.

This month is our last evening meeting and in conjunction with the IOG it is our annual quiz of

general knowledge and a couple of greenkeeping questions thrown in. To be held at Pencoed College on Wednesday 14 April, it's a great night of our own humour and entertainment, so please come along.

On the 27 April at its new location at Westpoint in Exeter, is WESTURF. This is a day that must not be missed. Standing out in the rain is now a thing of the past as we are under cover. You can also bring your wife along so she can shop in the nearby Exeter town centre. This year the day will be dry now we are under cover, but every eventuality has been thought of and there will also be outdoor demonstrations to see.

You all by now should have received a fixture list for this year's golf tournaments, but if not, our first day is to be held at Southerndown Golf Club on 5 May. That date rings a bell with me, yes that's right, I'm on my honeymoon. Anyone with any information please contact me on 01656 742761.

Richard Hatcher.

North East

A few events just taken place here this month. First, an evening held at Greenacres GC and sponsored by J E Coulter.

Coulter's Service Manager, Martin, gave us a very entertaining talk on machinery servicing and some of the rare things he had seen over the years. Second, an evening held at Greenmount College with Eric Hunter on cylinder and bottom blade grinding. This was an ideal opportunity to see close up the technique involved in the grinding of cylinders. This evening was so much of a success that we will have to run a few more.

Thanks to Eric Hunter for taking the time to come over and give this demonstration. Congratulations to Mark Farrell, Stakis Park Golf Club, who has just finished his Greenkeeper training at Elmwood College, Mark now has an

Northern  
Ireland

S.N.V.Q.II qualification and maybe now we will see some work instead of running away to Scotland every couple of months. Good luck Mark.

Finally congratulations to Mark Cassidy and his wife Kathy on the birth of their second child, a baby girl. You will have to work very hard now to earn brownie points to get a night out.

Eamonn Farrell

South East

On Wednesday 3 March an evening event was held with a presentation from Martin Hinch, J E Coulters Ltd, introducing us to the TEXTRON Company and its many facets, also some of Coulters own workshop techniques. The evening was rounded off with a quiz where our team: T. Crawford, J. McCabe, K. Henderson and P. Johnston, white-washed the opposition although some of the questions set by Neil McLaughlin would have been more at home on University Challenge.

Thanks to Greenacres Golf Club for the use of the facility and indeed to Martin Hinch from J E Coulters Ltd for his presentation. Jonathan McCabe.

Lightweight  
vibratory rollers

**DON'T SHAVE YOUR GREENS!**

Tungsten tipped  
Fan-Forced verticutters



USE THE  
**SPEED TEAM**  
INSTEAD!

The two SAFE ways to increase green speeds  
are grooming and lightweight rolling

**BOOK YOUR DEMO NOW!**

**GREENSWARD DIRECT**  
0113 267 6000



**THATCH-AWAY 480T**

Precision grooming with total grass collection from  
the unique Fan assisted, Tungsten tipped blades

**TRUE-SURFACE**  
...makes true greens!