



Lynda Green

Simms and Jeffries between 1982 and 1984, where she became fascinated with the manufacturing process, and was often found in the foundry, watching the machinery being made. In 1991, Lynda arrived at her present company as Administrator, and, due to a sublime twist of fate became a Director and Company Secretary 13 months later.

Extremely dry weather conditions during the first summer following Lynda's appointment had been bad for business, all staff were about to be made redundant, and the company was to return to its former owner, Colin Pryce.

Lynda, who had fallen in love with the Terralift, was convinced that the company was worth saving. She talked to the bank and her husband, re-mortgaged the house, and with a third person, arranged to buy shares in C & P Soilcare Ltd.

The following Autumn, the company introduced the Deep Drill, and despite a serious theft in November 1994, which robbed the company of the majority of its equipment, including spare parts, the new management team have not looked back.

When I spoke to Lynda, she was one of the few people who had enjoyed last year's wet summer, as it produced the ideal working conditions for the Terralift, which had been working non stop.

"We are expanding" she said, "like my waistline," and confided that her husband, who is very supportive, was busy designing and constructing a new version of the Terralift, which promises to be faster, easier to handle and a prototype for Terralifts of the new Millennium.

On the subject of surviving as a woman in a man's world, Lynda says she's gotten away with murder.

"Sometimes I'll surprise customers by admitting I don't know the answer, and I'll give them the number for the STRI, BIGGA or the IOG. They always accept it. It's best to be honest, and both greenkeepers and groundsmen are happy to call these numbers."

Lynda's relaxed attitude, showing a security which allows her to admit

occasional ignorance, clearly breaks down barriers which could exist between two men, who feel that personal pride is at stake. She laughs at the memory of her first solo outing with the Deep Drill on one of the courses at The Essex Golf Club.

"There was no-one else free to do the job, and rather than let them down, I asked if they would mind if I did it. I couldn't make the machine perform in straight lines, and after the first day, Nick Warren, the Courses Manager, kindly suggested a better way of lining up the machine. He was right. It was much easier and far more immediate."

It would seem, if the experiences of our four ladies are anything to go by, that there is little to stop any woman joining the industry. She should be prepared to spend most of her working life surrounded by male colleagues but can expect little or no hostility, even when she is the first female employee at her work place, or the only woman on an educational course. Enthusiasm counts for a lot, and she may find that she needs to work harder than her male equivalent at the beginning of her career to prove to others, and sometimes, more importantly, to herself, that she is capable of fulfilling her ambitions.

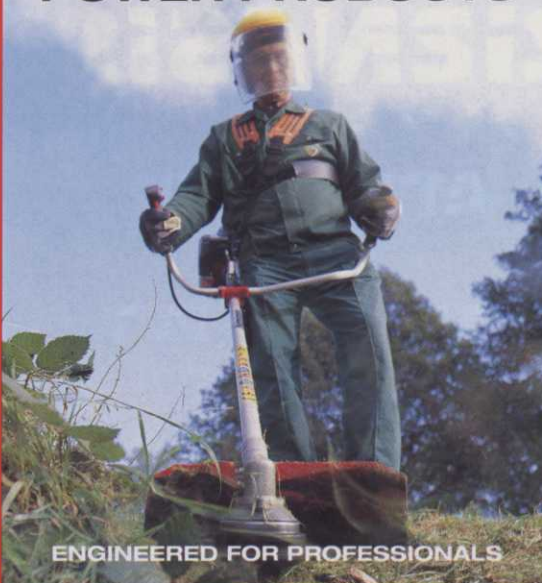
The advantages of being in the minority, appear to far outweigh the disadvantages - more attention from college lecturers, fatherly guidance from male superiors, more fun, and closer relationships with customers.

Of course, our four examples are all exceptions to the rule, and as such, almost certainly possess above average ability, force of character, and an iron will to succeed. Nevertheless it is heartening to realise that the traditional female nurturing traits have translated so well, not only to the welfare of people as customers, but also to machines and turf.

One thing is certain, if a woman is destined for a career in the fine turf industry, no matter how many wrong turns she takes, or how often she is persuaded against it, by either herself, or others, eventually she will arrive.

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Apply Attacker immediately if disease appears.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Attacker is derived from extracts of citrus fruits and is non-toxic to humans at recommended dosage rates.

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A systemic additive for promoting growth in plants. Contains fruit acids, yucca extract, organic acids, triglycerides and vitamin P.

Contact action on pathogenic fungi: it is non mutagenic therefore it is less likely that a resistance will be created.

Acts systemically as an exoelictor, the vitamin in Attacker helps keep the biosynthesis of phytoalexins production.

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Curatively, by rupturing the fungi membranes, the polysaccharide fragments are endoelictors, increasing even more phytoalexins and the natural control is even more effective.

The product penetrates the plant from the bottom up and is transported within live tissue of the plant.

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2

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3

The fruit acids temporarily lower the pH to a level inhospitable to fusarium.

4

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Greenkeeper International

Tungsten tips for new verticut units



The new THATCH-AWAY 480T Verticutting unit fits most common greens triple mowers and incorporates a wide range of new features designed to overcome the various problems traditionally associated with verticutting.

The most obvious feature is the unique FAN-FORCE blade design which not only has Tungsten Tipped teeth that cut exceptionally cleanly and resist wear, but also incorporates six fan paddles on each blade to create a strong draught which blows the cuttings right into

the grassbox. In addition a larger throw plate which fits closer to the blades helps to ensure that the cuttings fill the boxes full without dropping back onto the green.

Full width rollers and micro height adjusters enable these units to be used for very light regular grooming. However, the close spacing of the FAN-FORCE blades and the hooked profile of their teeth also allows them to cut deeper when required to remove heavy build ups of thatch and prune the tillers to stimulate vigorous new growth.

Farmura's new spraying system

The F25 Spraying System from Farmura, successful in the bowling market has also been taken up by Golf Clubs with great enthusiasm. The new Farmura F25 Mark II reflects a number of improvements suggested by users including an extra bracket to the 1.5 metre spray boom, fold-down handlebars for easier transport and storage and a bolted frame for easy maintenance.

Together with its instant start/stop spraying action, rechargeable battery and unique pivot tank the F25 Mark II is all set to continue its success story.

Also available is a Hand Lance for working around trees, spot treatment an landscaped areas and a Pocket Bleeper to ensure accurate spraying.

For further information Tel: 01233 756 241

Huxley's all-weather solution

Hampshire-based firm, Huxleys, has established a specialist division dedicated to the professional supply and installation of premier quality all-weather turf surfaces for golf courses - see Sisis/Huxley story.

Known as Huxley Golf, the new division has been formed in the wake of a highly successful 18 months during which Huxleys have supplied and installed all-weather synthetic turf surfaces at public and private golf clubs nation-wide and been selected by the English Golf Union as an official supplier to The National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa.

Huxley Golf surfaces installed at The National Golf Centre comprise three practice tees and a putting green, enabling golf practice and teaching to continue at Woodhall Spa throughout the year irrespec-

tive of conditions underfoot or the level of use.

The principal application for the range of all-weather synthetic turf surfaces being supplied and installed by Huxley Golf is as a premier quality replacement for natural turf used on golf tees, practice tees, paths, cartways, putting greens and golf greens.

"Customers have looked to our specialist team to solve a variety of problems with natural turf caused by high levels of use, bad weather and poor growing conditions or high maintenance and repair costs," explained director, Paul Huxley.

"Our experience has shown that proper advice and expert installation are the keys to providing an alternative surface which looks, feels and reacts just like the real thing. We also offer technical assis-



tance and maintenance advice to ensure that the surface remains in first-class condition."

For further information on the capabilities of the premier all-weather synthetic surfaces available

from Huxley Golf, and a customer list, please contact Paul or Barry Huxley, Huxley Golf, The Dean, New Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9BL, UK. Tel: 01962 733222. Fax: 01962 734702.

Flowtronex hotwires the market

FLOWTRONEX PSI has unveiled a new product designed to immediately and accurately alert pumping system users to potential system problems.

"The pumping system is the heart of the irrigation system. It's the first critical place on a golf course. If a significant problem develops, you want to know exactly what the problem is right now," said Jon Williams, FLOWTRONEX PSI Product Development Engineer.

The device, called HotWire, is the only auto-dialer on the market that informs the user of the specific problem through a paging system.

With HotWire, the customer monitors up to four specific functions, such as a power failure or a hard fault, by assigning each a 1-5 digit code. If a problem occurs, it picks up the phone, dials the pager service and punches in the code to appear on the end-user's pager.



Tri-Ag Ltd of Wymondham in Norfolk has introduced the TM40 Trailed Rotary Cutter, a robust, high capacity unit with its own engine and one metre (40in) cutting width.

Suitable for use behind an ATV, the relatively narrow width of the TM40 enables it to operate virtually anywhere an ATV can go.

Of equal importance, the one metre cut width is ideal for paths and bridleways and is also narrow enough to pass through restricted access gateways.

Exceptionally robust, the TM40 features a tubular steel chassis and rugged steel deck. It can also be towed behind any vehicle with a tow hitch, and runs on 400x8 pneumatic tyres suitable for high transport speeds.

Designed to tackle long grass and



light scrub, the TM40 is powered by a choice of Honda GXV 270 8.5hp or Kawasaki FC290V 9hp engines. Height of cut is adjustable between

18 and 2cm (7 to 3/4in). Prices from £1,650.

Further information Tel: 01472 240869

www.rpal.co.uk

Rhone-Poulenc Amenity has launched an end-user promotion on SUPERTOXTM 30, the respected selective herbicide that controls over 22 weeds in established turf. This promotion coincides with the change of active ingredient from mecoprop to mecoprop-P which reduces the environmental impact of SUPERTOXTM 30 without compromising its performance.

For further information Tel: 01277 301115 or visit their website at www.rpal.co.uk.

Biotal products

Biotal Industrial Products has developed a range of microbial and natural treatments for its Restore the Balance programme aimed at the Professional Sports and Leisure Turf Market. The programme consists of Microbalance, which, when used as part of a managed programme for fine turf, will help prevent fungal problems, enhance nutrient utilisation and improve soil health: Biofeed to stimulate plant growth and Microbooster to enhance the natural soil microbial population.

For further information Tel: 0113 250 0747.

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- Helps restore effective aeration

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Scott MacCallum didn't have far to go to visit Rolawn, BIGGA's newest and nearest Golden Key Supporter

Turf's up



Rolawn's turf is collected via a miracle of modern machinery

As a measure of the progress made by a company, not to say an entire industry, it is interesting to hear the story told by Ken Dawson, Chairman of Rolawn, BIGGA's latest Golden Key Company.

In the mid-70s, not long after Rolawn was founded, Ken was visiting a 10-acre field. But this wasn't just any field. No, this was the field which contained an entire year's worth of production for the company.

When he pulled the gate shut and walked away, the enormity of what was facing the company began to hit home. Just how exactly were they going to sell that much turf?

Now that 10-acre field doesn't represent one morning's work for Rolawn.

As I said. Graphic indicators of just how far a company has come in that short time don't come much better.

"Now we have 800 hectares - 2000

acres - of land in production at any one time," revealed Sales and Marketing Director, Terry Ryan.

Nowadays all the turf is grown in the Vale of York, within easy distance of the Elvington-based Headquarters and not far from BIGGA HOUSE, but that wasn't always the case. The company roots belong to an area which is better known for oil rather than turf production.

Rolawn, which is now the largest turf company in Europe, was originally started on the Aberdeenshire Estate of Lord Forbes, the company's founding Chairman. However, as you might expect for the area around Aberdeen, which is affectionately known as the Granite City, the soil was granity and not ideal for growing turf.

Detailed soil surveys earmarked the Vale of York as the ideal location and the company moved south, although

its registered office has always been retained in Scotland.

"A number of factors have contributed to the successful relocation not least the availability of sufficient quantities of ideal land. Farmers have also become more comfortable with the fact that responsible turf growers do not strip the land and we do actually improve the fertility of the land... We also pay our bills," said Terry.

In addition to the growth of the turf growing industry in terms of size it has also come on leaps and bounds in terms of sophistication.

"Seed mixtures have moved on. Even in the short time I've been in the industry I've seen a huge difference. The quality of the grass sward just gets better and better," said Terry, a man whose ready wit and enthusiasm is known throughout the entire turf industry.

Turf's^{up}

For You



Hang out your washed turf, with Rolawn's wash and go turf

"We took a decision a few years ago not just to publish the cultivars we use but also to show the sown percentages. We print 100% of what we sow."

The arrival into the big time for Rolawn came in 1977 when a well known lawn tennis club ordered turf for several of their courts.

"Up until then the basic concept of high quality cultivated turf wasn't accepted in the UK. It was the pivotal point for us," said Terry.

"At that time there was little in the way of competition in the quality end of the market. There was a turf market involving meadow turf but not an industry as such. It was a very low quality product."

When people discovered what could be done with good quality turf sales rocketed.

"People could see that they could have a domestic lawn, or, in the golf market, a green or tee in play much sooner, much quicker and be much surer of the outcome."

With its Scottish roots, and having started in the golf sector, the Royal and Ancient game has always played a big part in the company's thinking although nowadays it represents only around 15% of its business.

"It is fair to say that every famous golf course in the country has used

Rolawn at some stage or other. We recently supplied 25,000 square metres to Carnoustie while we also sold some washed turf to St Andrews."

"In fact during the last three years we have seen an increasing demand for washed turf and we are responding to this by commissioning a brand new turf washing plant that is due to come into production this spring. We will be able to produce more washed turf than anyone else in the market in both standard and large roll formats."

Rolawn's activities in the golf course sector have helped create business in some of the other bigger markets.

"It is helpful if you are sitting with someone for a housing company, seeking specifications, and you can say you supply Wentworth, St Andrews and Carnoustie. They sit up and take notice. On the back of the golf course market you can push into other markets."

One of these areas is gardening and Rolawn has benefited greatly from the fact that television programmes, like Groundforce and Home Front in the Garden, have brought gardening to the masses - people who would not perhaps have watched the likes of Gardener's World.

With mention of Groundforce, Terry produced a signed photograph of Alan Titchmarsh and the Groundforce team. The one disappointing element of which was the fact that the two most prominent features in it were Charlie Dymock's muddy knees. But that's another matter.

"Charlie came here to see us," he announced with justified pride.

"She was on the back of a turf harvester. You can imagine the tractor driver. We nearly lost him in a ditch! But seriously, the day after garden programmes air the Rolawn phone lines light up."

Most of the gardening programmes get in touch with Rolawn from time to time. "We have a policy of co-operating with them and while we don't get a straight name check we always appear on the fact sheets that accompany the programmes."

The company also sponsors the Family Garden at the Royal Horticultural Society grounds at Wisley.

In addition they supply football grounds in the UK and Holland, including the famous Ajax stadium with its retractable roof, in Amsterdam, and northern France.

The Elvington base - when it's not featuring in the National news as a result of horrendous flooding - is ideally situated for Hull and the ferry services to northern Europe. Incidentally, during the flooding, much of the worst of which was less than a mile from the Head Office, they kept harvesting every day.

"It is a logistical real challenge when you have to send 25 wagons in a two day period on the ferry. You have to sit down and plan it because turf is a highly perishable product and will die if it doesn't get where it's going on schedule. We've discovered ferry services no-one even knew existed," said Terry, who added that ironically it is cheaper to ship turf to Holland than it is to get it back to its ancestral home in Aberdeen.

While there are other markets which are more lucrative in terms of volume it is to the golf sector that Terry naturally gravitates.

"We have exhibited at Hampton Court and Chelsea Flower Show but when people ask me which of the shows is my favourite I always say BTME... and not just because I happen to live in Harrogate.

"That's because I'm not talking to people who think I'm talking Chinese. Greenkeepers talk the same language. If I mention to a greenkeeper that Aberelf, the number one cultivar in the STRI listings, is in our turf for '99 he'll appreciate that fact because he's educated to look for that sort of thing."

Rolawn were one of the first

exhibitors at BTME and Terry has noticed a change in the habits of visitors to the show.

"We still take the odd order at exhibitions but we used to take orders of thousands and thousands of metres at shows. I believe that is a sign of a mature industry because there is more competition, people have more choice and they want more time to think about what they are doing before placing an order."

While they are delighted when they get a an order to cover an entire new golf course many sales come as a result of a no minimum order policy which means if a golf club wants 50 metres for a new tee they'll supply. Anything indeed down to one square metre.

"It is sometimes difficult getting this through to greenkeepers who tend to think that we're a big turf company so we only deal in huge orders. Our bread and butter is small amounts."

A significant event in the history of Rolawn occurred on February 12th '98 when a successful management buy-out was completed with the support of Lloyds Development capital.

"It means we are now a lot more flexible and can move a lot quicker," explained Terry, who is one of the shareholders.

"It's been a hard 12 months but a good 12 months. We've hit the budgets we set ourselves and a little bit more," he said, speaking on the day which marked the end of the first financial year under the new regime.

One change that has been seen within the company is the willingness to look at products outside of the pure turf which was always their sole product.

"We are now evaluating new products all the time and have our first coming out next month. It is a turf and seed establishment fertiliser called Groright which we've aimed at the trade rather than retail market."

Future plans for the company include expanding further into the European mainland and strengthening their brand name.

"In the industry Rolawn is a well respected name and a well known name and we'd like that to be true for beyond our industry. We want to achieve wider recognition within the UK, even You wouldn't bet against them because you can be sure Rolawn won't let the turf grow under their feet.

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