

are continually seeking new cultivars. Turf suppliers are well aware of this and as a result are continually looking at the product range they offer. In addition, they take into account developing patterns. Fewer golf courses are at present being constructed, so less turf is required. Because of the increased wear and tear on courses more renovation work has to be carried out. To meet this situation, Rolawn has a no minimum order policy.

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Tree Expert, John Nicholson, and Golf Course Architect, Ken Moodie, work closely with Course Managers to encourage positive tree management. Scott MacCallum spent a day watching them in action.

Play your next shot with a WOOD



Trees have become an integral part of the armoury of many inland golf courses and on several occasions have played a major role in some of the games more historic moments.

Who will forget a young Bernhard Langer clambering up one of Fulford's trees during the Benson & Hedges International or, during the Volvo Masters, Seve frantically trying to persuade the referee that his ball, wedged between the roots at the foot of one of Valderrama's famous cork trees, was actually in a rabbit scrape and that he deserved a free drop.

On another occasion, during the '79 US Open at the Inverness Club, a short cut down another fairway which was being exploited by Lon Hinkle was plugged when a full size tree appeared overnight courtesy of the USGA.

The value of trees on certain types of golf courses has not always been taken as read. In the early days of golf trees were considered unfair and not worthy of a place on a golf course at all.

Play your next shot with a
WOOD



Above: John Nicholson admires the clearance work carried out at Coombe Hill

Overleaf: David Stanton examines some of the planting work at Hartsbourne

Below: Murray Long and Ken Moodie walk the Coombe Hill course



They are three dimensional hazards and with the equipment around when the game was born a skilful player, one who could hit the ball in the air, was penalised more by a tree and its ability to snare airborne shots than a poor player who could much more easily avoid the narrower trunks.

Since then equipment has improved and most players are now skilful enough to hit their ball into the air and the better players are rewarded for their ability to shape a ball.

But, unlike other hazards, like bunkers, trees don't stay the same. They are living beings which change shape and grow. As a result they must be managed.

Golf courses change gradually over the years and it can be almost imperceptible to those who play regularly. It is only those who visit occasionally who can see a difference. It's a little like when you're growing up and your great aunt says "My how you've grown" because she hasn't seen you since last Christmas.

"I believe too many clubs forget how a course changes over the years so they should really have a photographic record of the course so it can compare situations and see how it changes," said Golf Course Architect Ken Moodie.



"We should be encouraging proactive green management rather than reactive," he added.

"I try to look at old plans when I visit a club and you can see where courses do change through bad management or just lack of management and you can see trees or bushes pushing onto tees."

John Nicholson, of Eamonn Wall & Co, works with Ken on several projects, and has also seen many examples of poor tree planting on golf courses.

"People often see golf courses as an extension of their garden. But they aren't. It is a big landscape and big landscapes need big trees. People don't pay enough attention to scale and you often see a hawthorn or a rowan which would look fine in a garden but which just becomes lost and is out of scale with the rest of the landscape."

The style of the terrain should also have a bearing on what type of tree is planted.

Talking during a course visit to Hartsbourne GC, managed by David Stanton, John explained some of the tree planting dos and don'ts.

"Hartsbourne is set in rolling English landscape so you wouldn't plant angular dark trees like pine or spruce but in Switzerland or Austria the land forms are very angular, the mountains have sharp edges and that type of tree looks natural," he said.

David explained the background to the club calling in an arborist to give specialist advice.

"We called John in, not because we felt we had any inherent problems

but because we have some big mature trees which we were thinking about replacing and also because we wanted to fill up some empty areas as well as create more definition on some holes," he said.

The tree planting programme has not been in place long but already David can see benefits.

"Areas we've filled in are now in leaf and you can imagine what they are going to be like in 10 year's time. They are already having an effect so it's fair to say it's working well."

To give the trees a chance of establishing it is important that a maintenance programme is followed through as it can increase the trees survival and growth rate by times five.

"You must remember that a tree is just a cylinder with pipes on the outside. The middle of tree is dead so if you strim or damage the outside bark of the tree you are reducing the tree's potential to produce sugars etc and it is immediately under stress," said John.

Occasionally a Course Manager will decide to carry out the weeding in-house but often the man hours it involves makes for a minimal saving at best," said John, and this point was reinforced by David

"The two man team came in with knapsacks and sprayed around 5,000 trees and it only took them a morning. It was quite unbelievable," he said.

One area in which there was a little bit of debate was John's advice that the grass should be left to grow around the trees. However, the membership felt that they would rather



have this grass cut short to assist in the recovery of balls.

"We took on board the golfers and their particular abilities and felt that we should agree to their wishes," said David.

At Coombe Hill, West Kingston, Head Greenkeeper, Murray Long, has worked with John on the thinning out of the rhododendron bushes which lined much of the course.

"Because they were so dense I knew we weren't getting any regeneration so I explained the situation to the committee. I showed the Chairman of Green exactly what I was talking about, and we agreed to bring in John. That was about about two years ago,"

said Murray, who added that as the club emblem is a rhododendron bush care had to be taken to preserve the distinctive character of the course.

"What came across when I met the committee was the fact that it was a very mature, progressive golf club who had grasped the need to carry out the work," said John.

"There is a big difference between preservation and conservation and many golf clubs have a vocal minority who want to preserve everything... pickle it. They don't realise that they are not preserving what was there before because it's ever changing - it is a living entity," said John.

At Coombe Hill a strategy plan was

Above: Well defined fairways following the line of the trees make for an attractive finish.

Below: Magnificent Redwoods now visible from the 12th tee



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Play your next shot with a WOOD

Key points to remember

Mowers and strimmers are the biggest killer of trees on golf courses

Trees should reflect the scale and style of the landscape.

It is often better to remove inappropriate trees when they are small to avoid club politics and reduce cost.

It is better to buy and plant small trees and watch them grow than buy 15 footers.

When clearing areas be aware that it takes twice as long to clear up as it does to cut down as the debris created is much more than you would think.

If you must plant larger trees for impact it is also better to plant a few small ones alongside as an insurance.

One year guarantees on larger trees can be worthless as trees can live off their own sap for up to five years

Tree planting should be accompanied by a maintenance programme as having a good weeding programme can increase both growth and survival rates by up to five times.

Fast growing trees do not live as long as those which are slower growing.

When planting avoid straight edges wherever possible.

Take shapes from what is growing outwith the confines of the golf course itself.

Avoid species such as poplar and willow as they are surface rooting and will invade drainage systems causing unnecessary blockages.



Above: An impressive view of Barnard Castle in Northumberland

Inset right: The exact same view some 12 years later, blocked by the growth of trees



instigated which look at the management of the trees as well as the way they affected the aesthetics of the holes.

"We looked to see if all the canopies were at the same height because that indicates whether the trees would be dying around the same time," explained John.

One of the major plus points a golf club should take on board when considering tree work is the fact that there are valuable grants available for woodland improvement.

"You can get 50% of the agreed cost for woodland improvement to a maximum of £10,000 in grant," said John, who investigates these on behalf of the club.

Often potential grant aid is lost because work is started before applying for the money. Extra grants may be applicable when the land is still in agriculture but not when work has started on a new course. It is the same when a golf course is being extended. You can get 30% more grant if the

land is still agriculture when the grant is applied for," warned John, who added that you have five years to plant once approval is given.

At Coombe Hill the work has been divided into three phases with each stage being priced accordingly.

"Before we started I put up pictures in the clubhouse from other clubs up to show what was going to happen and informed them when the work was going to start. I expected some reaction from the membership but after a few weeks it died down and when we cleared an area around the 12th tee which revealed some Redwoods that the club didn't even know we had the feedback was very positive.

"They were the biggest trees the club owned but they couldn't be seen until we cleared the path in front of them," said Murray.

Fortunately the clearing work, which also took in some birch and sycamore, didn't interfere with play because the majority of it was well

into the woods and the rhododendrons closest to the fairways were left.

The stump produced by a cut down rhododendron are huge and such is the extensive roots which feed the remainder of the bush it regenerates extremely quickly so return visits to spray any regeneration are necessary in order to maintain the desired environment.

Despite the fact that trees perform a major role at many golf clubs they do tend to be taken for granted. To ensure the best results clubs should have a management programme which takes account of the trees in and around the course and plans for their future. That way we ensure that they will continue to be involved in many of the more memorable moments the game has to offer.

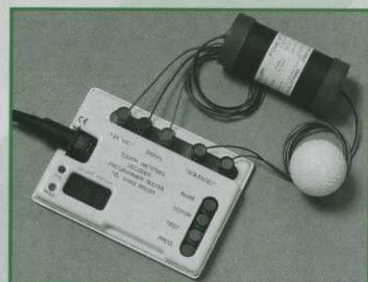
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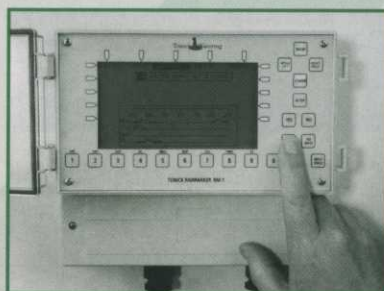
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North

I think I should start this report with an apology for the weather. During a dry spell in April I fitted a rain gauge at Tain and, only some two and a half months later, it has a reading of 170mm which is not far off half the average rainfall for our area! Apparently we are going to have a great summer. We shall see.

Tain boys flew the flag for the section at the Scottish Championships at East Kilbride in June. Gavin Neill won the trophy for the best nett score of the day and Iain Cowper won the third class trophy. Jocky Urquhart, who recently joined the Section, pitched in with a third place in class one. Congratulations to the West Section who won nearly everything else.

At the end of the month we have the Norrie Whytock Trophy and the North Section team hoping to win it this year are, Iain Macleod, Tain (who?), Scott Williams, Peterculter, Iain Cowper, Iain and George Aitken, Peterculter. Apologies to Colin Mackay, Elmwood, who was told he had qualified at the Section outing, but our Sections are different to the ones for this competition. If you are wondering how I qualified, I didn't, but as Section Chairman I get to go to make up the numbers.

Finally, next month we have our 50th Anniversary outing at Downfield in Dundee, a fine parkland course under the stewardship of Paul Murphy. Paul has hosted The Open qualifying this year and now faces the daunting prospect of hosting 80 or so greenkeepers! As this is a special occasion the fee for the day has been reduced to £10 per member so get your entries back quickly. Any past Committee men no longer in the Section who would like to attend would be most welcome. Please phone Dougal on 01224 740329 for details. Andy Wilson left Carnoustie after The Open to become Head Greenkeeper at Brechin GC - his home town.

Iain Macleod

West

Welcome to another round up of Section news. Just a few items to inform you of this month. Firstly, the PC basic user training course, funded by BIGGA, will be taking place at GOSTA HQ on 4 and 5 August. Six places have been reserved for the two day training. Similarly, a course will be taking place on 10 and 11 of August, if you are interested please contact Sandy Bulloch.

A challenge match, Greenkeepers v Club Stewards has been arranged and will take place at Lenzie GC on

Tuesday 24 August. It is anticipated that there will be two teams of 14 and the format will be four ball better ball.

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this I will have some confirmation on the venue for the annual dinner. It is hoped that we can book Victoria's again as this was by all accounts a great success last year.

Stuart Taylor and Kevin Brunton are trying to arrange an 11 a side game against the Central section. If you are interested in taking part contact Stuart on 0141 956 5554.

And finally, welcome to some new members this month. A. Mcleod, P. Hamilton and D. McMillan all from Raiston GC. C. Gordon, Lenzie GC, C. Maxton, Cathcart Castle, Francis Gallagher, Loch Lomond, and last but not least N. M. Stevenson. We look forward to seeing you all at future outings.

Once again if you have any news to offer, please contact me on 0141



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East

Well, here we are, August already. Where has all the year gone. We'll soon be thinking of end of season work, hollow coring, venti draining etc, so only a couple of months left of the season. What a quick year this has been. Time fairly flies by the older you get!

The Section Committee held its Annual Committee Day out at the Hirsell Golf Club, Coldstream, recently and a great day was had by all the committee members who attended. Thanks go to the Captain and Council of the Hirsell for courtesy of the course, the greenstaff for the great condition of the course and also the clubhouse staff for looking after us superbly on a nice day so vast amounts of liquid had to be consumed, that's my excuse and I'm sticking to it! Also a big thanks to local Toro dealer A M Russell for sponsoring the event again this year. It was also good to have along for the day Brian Goudie and Dougie Jeffery of A M Russell and, as a guest of the sponsors, Dave Kerr, of East Lothian Council. This year we had a new name on the individual winners trophy, that was Graham Wood, Dunbar GC. Craig did not win the trophy this year for the third time as he had to play blindfolded, just joking! Well done Graham and we look forward to you defending it next

year, wherever it may be. We are looking forward to it already.

The team event was won by the Chairman's team, so well done to Stuart Greenwood, Chairman, and the rest of his team. Stuart has got his name on this trophy so many times that if he wins again we might have to let him keep it. Well done to everyone for a great day.

The East Section held its summer tournament in early June at Murrayfield Golf Club. As usual it was teams of three playing a Texas Scramble format which always goes down well. Some excellent scoring was seen on an excellent day with no rain until the last few holes, so we were very lucky. A big thanks to the captain and his directors for courtesy of the course, the clubhouse staff for the food and refreshments which made the day even better. Also thanks to Stuart Townsend, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for the superb condition of the course and also thanks to Craig Pennyquick for looking after the cards and starting duties on the 1st tee.

The results for the summer tournament at Murrayfield are as follows.

1. The three amigos, bandits or something along those lines with a score like this. J. Neilson, retired Murrayfield Scottish Chairman, P. Boyd, Scottish Regional Administrator, J. Walker, Managing Director Ritefeed. Score 57.5, par of course 69;
2. G. Thompson, Goswick, D. Wilkinson, Goswick, C. Pennyquick, Winterfield. Score 61, best last 6 holes. 3. C. Gilholm, Muirfield, R. Mullen, Swanston, D. McGinley, Swanston. Score 61. Once again a great day was had by all who attended.

Hope to see you all back again next year for the new Millennium Summer Tournament 2000.

The Section's best wishes go out to John Geddes, Stewarts & Co. and his wife Jackie on the birth of their son Scott who was born on 16 May. Mum and baby are doing well, but if you see John coming into the course looking a bit tired and bleary-eyed, the reason was not a best of 21 ends at Pilrig Bowling Club, as John likes his bowls, but an addition to the family keeping him awake at night. Well done to you both and best wishes from the Section to all the family.



What's all the noise about?

Through this column I would like to thank Ocmis (Scotland) Ltd, especially Nick Lawson and Piers Walsh for inviting myself, Graham Wood and Kenny Anderson to play for the Ocmis Scotland team recently in the BIGGA Tournament at Aldwark Manor. We were extremely well looked after for the entire three days and offer our thanks once again. It is the first time I have been down to HQ at Aldwark Manor and I was thoroughly impressed by the new offices which will benefit all members of the Association.

The tournament was superb, well organised and thoroughly enjoyable to play in. The barbecue at night was superb, but alas our golf was not as good and we finished well down the field. None of us played to our best, especially me, as I lost 12 golf balls and a total of 24 between the four of us. If anybody has any spare ones, stick them in the post, they will be much appreciated. Thanks again for a great time chaps. It was excellent.

Well, that's it until next time around. Next on the Agenda is the Willie Woods Invitational at Willcourse at the beginning of September, so get asking your captains, secretaries or committee members along to this great tournament and let them see what BIGGA and the East Section are all about. Entry forms will be with you soon so we hope to see you there.

Chris Yeaman



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

Cleveland

The season is flying over. Most of our big competitions are over. Like most other courses in our area we are turning into a wetland trust with oyster-catcher, cublons and ducks ever present. We have even put the watering system on to suck it is that wet. However, enough about my course, everything in the Section seems calm.

We have a new member from the Northern Section, Darren McGee, Head Greenkeeper from Crook GC. Fellow Head Greenkeeper Tony McClure won the Durham County Championship here at Brancepeth GC in very hard conditions. Very well done. Once again, any news, give me a call.

Kevin (Scoop) Heslop.

North West

I was just about to start the Section notes 1.7.99 with the radio on in the background when the news came through that BIGGA President Lord Whitelaw had just died. He had been ill for some time but when the news came through it was still quite a shock. Lord Whitelaw had, during his



Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

time as President, been a great asset to the association and, I am sure, will be sadly missed. Over the last few years he never refused an invitation to join us at Penrith GC and present the prizes for the Cumbria Cup tournament sponsored by Course Care. Also at Keswick GC for the N/West tournament. He will be a hard act to follow.



BIGGA's got something to shout about!

The summer tournament at Longridge GC was a great day. 44 competitors enjoyed good weather, good food and drink and a great course produced by John Nicholson and his staff. The "Reg Vickers Trophy" was won by Tom Wilkinson with a 67 nett. We must do something about Tom's handicap. The longest drive and nearest the pin were donated once again by Rufford Top Dress. Richard Atkin won the nearest the pin and Mike Davie had the longest drive. The prizes went as far as 11th place, thanks to donations from the trade and the N/W patrons.

The N/W patrons are Burrows GM, Cheshire Light Machinery, Acorn Equipment and Rigby Taylor. Other companies donating prizes were Cheshire Sand and Top Dressing, SISIS, Bathgate Silica Sands, White Moss Amenity, Ritefeed. Many thanks to Longridge Golf Club for allowing us the courtesy of the course and for their

hospitality. John Nicholson and his staff for a great course, Ray and Pauline for a great meal and Bill Merrit for his hard work and the members for making a great day.

Keep checking your fixture list for golf dates and I still require players for the "Roses Match" on Wednesday 18 August at Howley Hall. Any news or views would be welcome and you can contact me on 0151 724 5412. The North West Section would like to thank The Grass Roots Trading Company for the support given to seminar at Mere Golf and Country Club in April. Such support is always valued.

Bert Cross

North East

On 22 April we held our Spring competition at Seahouses GC. On behalf of the section I would like to thank the committee for the use of the course and thank the stewardess and Alistair Holmes, Head Greenkeeper, who went out of their way to ensure we had an enjoyable day. Best Gross, David Cuthbertson, 72. Slaley Hall. Best Nett, Ken Rutherford, 67, City of Newcastle. Best Nett for Assistants, Neil Irvin, Slaley Hall.

We would like to thank Terry Charlton, of Turf Care, for his prize of a colour portable TV for nearest the pin at the 10th hole. This was won by Russ Black of Westerhope GC. Thanks also to the secretary of Seahouses for donating free golf for four people. This was won by Malcolm Lathan who had the longest drive at the 5th hole. Thanks also to Aitkens, Border Turf Services and Ritefeed for their kind donations.

Qualifiers for the Northern Region Competition are as follows. Cat 1. R Black, N Irvin. Cat 2, G Wright, R Williams. Cat 3. A Parkin, R White. All will be notified in due course.

Congratulations to Brian McArdle and his wife Lynn on the arrival of a baby boy. Guy Melvin recently moved from Parklands to Hexham as assistant greenkeeper.

The Section would like to welcome the following new members. D. McLean, Longhirst Hall; B. McArdle, Slaley Hall; J. Rippon and S. Richardson, both Birtley; M. Watson, Stocksfield; I. Rourke and A. Gunn, both Matfen Hall; G. Martin, Elemore; J. McKenna, Tyneside; T. Foggin, Rothbury; D. Jennings and J. Hutton, both Whickham and G. Gray, Tyneside.

By now the Carburol knock-out will be in full swing. Good luck to all.

The qualifiers for the National Championship are as follows. Best Gross, David Cuthbertson of Slaley Hall and Ken Rutherford of City of Newcastle.

If any member would like to see any of the BIGGA workwear, give me a ring as I have several samples for viewing.

Jimmy Richardson

Northern

This year's President's Day Tournament was held at South Leeds Golf Club. As usual, the weather was not in our favour. Part way around the heavens opened and people were trudging up the 18th like drowned rats! Thankfully this did not seem to spoil the day for the majority. Thanks to the greens staff for providing us with a South Leeds track which is the best I personally have seen it. Thank you also for the excellent food and the warm welcome, as always, from the steward and stewardess.

A big thanks to our President, Mel Guy, for his efforts in helping to organise the day and the welcome 'bevy' at the half way point.

The main prize table was sponsored by Greenpride and PBI. Many thanks for the excellent prizes on show and also to all trade contributors to the raffle prizes. Results for the days golf were as follows:-

Division 1. A. Court, winner of the

Bill Mountain Trophy. D. Collins, J. Platt.

Division 2. K. Purdy, A. Baxter, T. Arana. Division 3. R. Armitage, L. Kirkbright, J. Brown. Trade Prize: A. Cordingley (Ritefeed).

I would like to wish Roy Armitage, of Scarthingwell Golf Club, all the best on his recent retirement. I am sure Roy will keep in close touch with the Club, as he has been with them since the time of construction. I hope you will continue to support the golfing events in the future as much as you have done in the past.

Finally, but by no means least, I am delighted to announce the safe arrival of my daughter Aemilia Beth on the 21 June. Anyone free for a little baby sitting please contact me at the address below!

Anyone with any news from within the section please contact me on 01484 317813 or 07788 442755 or at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield HD5 0LA.

Simon Heppenstall



Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

East Anglia

On 16 June, 45 members of the Section descended on Ufford Park Golf Club for our summer meeting. Under Colin Aldaus the Hotel and Course owner's watchful eye, Gary Cunningham and his staff had prepared an excellent course. The photographer for the Evening Star took a group picture for Neil Manning, Sports Editor, to write an article about BIGGA on the sport pages. The weather was great with temperatures in the high 70's and a cooling breeze. I must thank the hotel for giving us a wonderful welcome and an excellent meal.

The main sponsor for the day was Bartram Mowers Ltd. The winners were: Handicap category 1-9, 1.

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124" wide

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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.



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