

Golf Club, sponsored by Bartram Mowers. The match against the Essex section on the 25th August will now be played at Thorpness Golf Club, not at RAF Lackenheath. S Millard

South West and South Wales Paula Humphries

South Coast

I am sorry there was no report in last month's magazine. I just didn't have any news. If you have anything for the Section report, please give me a call.

All those I spoke to at Westurf thought the move to West Point was a good one.

The members of the trade seemed to be a lot happier this year. There were a lot more stands than previous years. A lot of the locals also attended the show. This included bowling green greenkeepers and groundsmen from the local football and cricket clubs. This must be good news for Westurf. I noted a large increase in the numbers from the South Coast this time. Well done all of you who made the effort. Adam and his Axe Men was well worth the visit. Who needs a chainsaw when you have men like that around.

There seemed to be a lot more activity at the trade stands this year. This can only be good for all concerned. Before moving on from Westurf we must thank Paula for all the hard work in organising the show. Also all the work involved in moving to the new venue. Thank you Paula and we look forward to Westurf 2000 (The Millennium).

Our summer tournament will be held at Rowlands Castle Golf Club on Thursday 22 July. It will consist of a four ball better ball played over 18 holes. Pairing is to consist of a greenkeeper and a member from his Golf Club Committee or a golfing member of his club. A greenkeeper member may play with a greenkeeper member from another club. The cost of the day will be £15.50 per head. All entries to include you and your partners names and addresses, Golf clubs, current handicaps and cheques for £31 to be sent to:- Fred Deaman, Golf Club Bungalow, Alton Golf Club, Old Odiham Road, Alton, Hants. GU34 4BU, Tel: 01420 86679, All entries to be with Fred 10 days beforehand, that is Monday 12 July.

Kerran Daly has secured a new post at Gog Magog Golf Club at Cambridge as Course Manager. We will all be sorry to lose you Kerran, you have been a keen supporter of our Section for a number of year. I am sure the Section will want me to congratulate you on your new post and wish you all the best for the future.

Lastly, Fred is compiling a team of 12 to play the Secretaries. The date is the 8 July, the venue Parkstone Golf Club. Anyone wishing to play contact Fred. If my memory serves me correct the

Secretaries won last year! I am sure that Fred will be after the best team he can find to reverse last year's result. Ken Lodge.

South West

A great day was had by all the mem-bers who attended the Spring Tournament, which took place at Wells GC on April 22. Torrential rain almost postponed the event, but the weather held back and some good scores were recorded. The results were as follows:-Mark Ford, 39 points; 2. Craig Fudge, 38 point; 3. A. Knight, 38 points

The Trade prizes went to Phil Greenway with 38 points. The spon-sors of the event were Ocmis who provided some excellent prizes which were greatly appreciated. Thanks were also given to Wells GC Head Greenkeeper, Maurice Pearce, and his staff for getting the course into great shape considering the adverse weather conditions and also Ray and Pauline and the rest of the catering staff for the superb meal afterwards.

The next meeting is the Summer Tournament, which will take place at Lilley Brook GC on July 22. This event is sure to attract a large amount of interest.

I have been asked to make some enquiries as to the whereabouts of the team strip. The six shirts seem to have gone missing and are needed this year. If you know where they are , please telephone the Team Captain, Dave Bougen, on 01285-720112.

The region will donate one ticket for the BTME in January 2000. The ticket will be raffled and sold at golfing events through the rest of the year, and will be picked at the AGM or the Christmas Tournament. The price will be £1. A ticket can be obtained by contacting Peter Baynton on 01275-855321.

Turning to Education and Training, I have arranged a number of courses for the Summer and Autumn. A one day First Aid course will take place on August 17th at Cumberwell Park GC, PAI course will take place on September 22. PA6 will take place on October 13.

Other training courses for chainsaw and abrasive wheels have been provisionally booked for late October onwards, at Hartpury, Lackham and Canmington Colleges. If you have already put your name down on the waiting lists during the last year, there is no need to contact me as I still have your name. New applications for any of the courses shown above should contact me on 01249-783382.

If you would like to go on PA2 courses, you should contact Noel Stevens on 01452 526111 and he will arrange a convenient training date.

Westurf again was excellent, with very good attendence at the event which was held at Westpoint for the first time. Thanks to Paula for her organisation.

Paul Cunningham.

South Wales

The new look Westurf, I must say was well worth the longer journey to Exeter for what was an excellent day. Congratulations must go to the organisers for the trade Exhibition especially to Paula Humphries. From those who attended the show it was far better being indoors, I'm sure you would agree even though it was a dry day. Thanks must also go to the Axe man who gave us superb entertainment.

The day would not have been a success without the vital time that exhibitors gave. So on behalf of the South Wales Section thanks to all and the trade for an enjoyable day.

I'll give you the update on the Spring Tournament and the golf match BIGGA versus Pencoed College next month.

A date for your diary: BIGGA versus the PGA to take place at St. Mellons Golf Club Cardiff on August 17

Richard Hatcher 01656 742761

Devon and Cornwall

Westurf 99 took on a new look and a new venue which proved to be a great success as the show moved into the purpose built arena at Westpoint Exeter located just minutes off the M5 motorway. The indoor arena created a superb atmosphere very similar to BTME, allowing visitors to catch up on the latest development within our industry. Congratulations must go to our Regional Administrator and the Regional Board for taking such a positive step in moving the show to Westpoint which turned out to be a great success.

Visitors also had the chance to sample the hospitality in the BIGGA stand and to meet our Chairman Gordon Child, Executive Director, Neil Thomas, and Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, who were on and to answer any questions. Educational seminars were run throughout the day with the highlight of the day being the Adam Axe men demonstrating their skills.

With all the hard work Paula has put into Westurf and the Region over the last few months with the added pressures of moving house to sunny Bude, I hope she has time to read this article while listening to the waves gently lapping against the Cornish coast line. Richard Whyman.



South East

At the end of March we had our section qualifier at Royal County Down GC, Newcastle. There was a great attendance on the day appreciating the sunny weather. The championship course itself is in magnificent condition and all praise to Alan Strachan, Course

Manager and to Walter Beattie and the team for the presentation of the course.



Congratulations to our two qualifiers Noel Crawford and his brother Eamon Crawford, both green-Royal keepers at County Down. Also thanks to

Scotts for the prizes of cut glass decanters to the winners. I would also like to thank Terry Crawford, our handicap secretary for overseeing the competition as well as chairman Graham Wylie and secretary Ken Henderson and especially to Royal County Down GC for allowing us to run the section qualifier on their course and for the courtesy they showed to **BIGGA** members.

I would like to welcome further new members to the section, David Lenhan, Head Greenkeeper at Milltown GC Dublin, also Michael King, Eamon Crawford, Noel Crawford and Patrick Bready all from Royal County Down GC

One more thing to mention is a summer golf competition which will be held in early June and members will be notified

Jonathan McCabe



See you all next month!

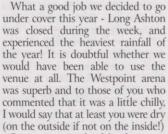


Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

Keep those results coming in, and we'll highlight the qualifiers every month.

Paula Humphries, BIGGA's Regional Administrator for the South West & South Wales, reports back from Westurf99, and looks toward Westurf2000...

Going West



Setting up on the Monday went fairly smoothly. The shell scheme was a little late being put up but eventually all was in place and the show kicked off with a cocktail party on Monday evening which was attended by the traders and helpers and we were delighted to welcome National Chairman, Gordon Child and his wife Marion and Neil Thomas, Executive Director.

Show day dawned (for me at 5.00 am!) bright and clear. New to Westurf this year was a programme of seminars on varying aspects of Water Management. The three speakers were Stephen Bernhard of Bernhard & Co., Helen Wakeley of Symbio and Len Dixon of Field Capacity Ltd. The first seminar held at 9.30 am was attended by over 40 delegates. The others had similarly good attendance so the experiment was a success. Our thanks to the three speakers who were excellent.

Another innovation was the entertainment arena. The fabulous Adams Axe Men, a prize winning team from the New Forest, gave two fantastic demonstrations of wood cutting and tree felling which attracted huge audiences and was greatly enjoyed by all. It was a pity the P.A. system was so poor. The witty and informative commentary could not be fully appreciated.



The attendance at the show was excellent with personnel from all fields of the industry and this year we had a registration book so we have a record of visitors. Nobody got past Susie on the registration desk! so when I have time I will be able to compile a database for traders and anyone else who wants it.

The showground looked great with its huge balloon decorations and thanks go to Avoncrop and Tacit for the loan of the posts and chains for the arena. Our grateful thanks also to Martin Petherick who made the bases for the posts. Hospitality drinks and nibbles were available in the BIGGA stand and it was nice to meet a lot of greenkeepers there.

A golf simulator proved a great attraction and the competitions for the longest drive and nearest the pin raised over £70 for charity. The organisers told me that the longest drive was recorded by Peter Lawrence of East Devon at 323 yards - that's up there with Tiger Woods! The nearest the pin was Ian Chennery from Woodbury. Simon Jefferies golf pro from Okehampton gave advice and tips on swings etc.

Overall it was a great and hugely successful day for the Region and I would like to extend my very grateful thanks to all those who helped on the days of the show, especially my husband who did a great deal behind the scene - and a vacuum cleaner. It was great teamwork.

Prize winners: Best presented shell scheme stand - Andrew MacWilliam. Best presented open stand - Kyetec. Crossword - Terry Farkins. Pre-registration draw - J B Bullen.

Westurf 2000 at Westpoint – Wednesday April 12th, 2000

Put it in your diary now!



Above: Paula Humphries, Westurf organiser

Right: Just one of the many busy stands at this year's event

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Unlike the famous monkeys who neither spoke, saw nor heard no evil, as Roland Taylor explains, using all your senses properly can be extremely beneficial...





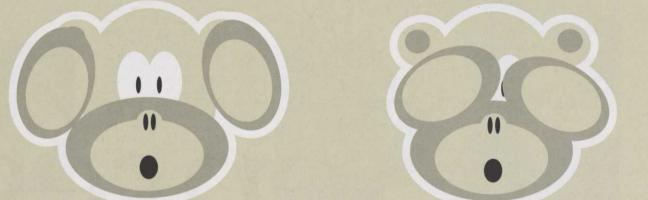
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In an age of high technology when computers play a major part in our lives it is easy to forget just how powerful our own human brain is. We can absorb data from a number of sources, analyse it, and make reasoned decisions in an instant. What has this got to do with golf course equipment you may ask? The answer is a great deal. By using our senses (sound, sight, feel, smell and taste) we can take on board information that our brains unscramble and come up with the best action, if any, that we need to take.

The grass-cutting season is now well under way and, for many, it means mowing from virtually dawn to dusk. In this situation it is easy to overlook a symptom on the mower that indicates something nasty is developing.

The engine fires first time, reels are spinning and drive is operational - no problems, let's go mowing. Hang on a minute, now is the time all the senses should be fully active and sending messages to the brain for analysis.





SOUND

- as the song goes "listen to the rhythm of the beat".

When one works with a piece of equipment every day one gets familiar with the noise it makes, so any changes should be taken as a warning signal. It is those subtle alterations in the noise that need to be listened out for.

The engine

A normal engine will have a steady rhythm regardless of whether it is ticking over or under full power. A change in this indicates that something is not quite right. It may be that the fuel mixture is incorrect and this could be due to a number of factors:

• Old petrol is being used. (Petroleum companies change the composition of fuel to suit the time of year to suit the season.)

• Dirty or polluted fuel is in the system

• The spark plugs are dirty or incorrectly set.

• Clogged up air filters will change the air-to-fuel ratio and make an engine run richer and hotter.

• Cooling fins and radiator grilles may be blocked up with dried grass

thus causing the engine to run hot. • Low oil levels mean poor lubrication, so friction creates heat buildup.

Any or all of these faults will mean an increase in fuel consumption, more pollutant being emitted into the atmosphere and a reduction in the machine's overall performance.

The machine

Two surfaces running at high speed with virtually no lubrication will make a different sound to when they are well oiled or greased.

The changes in reel noise indicate they require resetting. A reel might be damaged or have come off cut. Alternatively, it could be set too hard - this will not only affect the cut, it also places an extra stress on the mower's other components and excessive wear will take place.

Another noise to listen out for is rattling of guards. If securing clips or other fixings have become loose they will eventually break or come undone completely,with the result that the guard eventually falls off. There is always the chance that it will finish up in the cutting system, where it could do considerable damage. Chain drives are always hidden under covers. If they become slack they are likely to slap against the casing and this is a certain indication that some adjustment is needed.

Transmission whine is another sound to keep an ear out for, It may mean that a top-up of a lubricant is required, but if it still persists or increases in volume then something is wrong.

SIGHT

By being ever watchful, you can identify areas on the machine that require some attention.

Oil patches on areas where a machine has stood overnight are clues that need to be investigated. It may be coming from the engine, transmission box or drive system.

Keep an eye out for seepage around hydraulic couplings and hoses chaffing against metal.

Grease oozing from a bearing might mean a seal has gone.

Black deposits around the exhaust outlet area, are an indication that the engine is not running correctly.

Check for a build-up of dry grass and dirt anywhere on the machine, especially areas that are designed to





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keep the unit running at the correct temperature. These include, cooling fins on the engine and hydraulic system, air filters on the carburettor and radiators grilles, if fitted.

Watch out for loose guards, wiring, clip nuts and bolts.

Observe the quality of cut from each mowing unit.

Make sure there are no slack belts or chains. Clean dirt around oil fillers and

fuel caps.

Whilst cutting look out for foreign bodies in the grass such as people, animals, stones, golf balls and tees.

TOUCH

Excessive vibration is a sure sign things are not right. On a rotary, a blade may have been badly damaged or come off - this will require immediate attention.

Any area that is not normally hot needs checking out.

With the engine switched off, spin the reels to find out if they need re adjusting.

Test belt and chain tensions.

SMELL

Burning rubber - indicates a belt is overheating. Fuel - could be leaking from a car-

burettor or fuel pipe. Bonfire - a build-up of dried grass

has been or is about to ignite.

Oil - A gasket might be leaking or there is shortage of oil.

TASTE

As far as the machine is concerned there are no areas where this is likely to be used. If you have done the job properly you can sit back and enjoy your sandwiches or lunchtime meal which will very likely taste excellent.

All this seems like a lot to take in, but in reality one should not become paranoid – most is common sense and comes naturally. It is just a question of being observant, using your senses and responding to something that is not quite right, thus reducing the chances of hassle at a later date.

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Don't let it II Market it II on your parade

In irrigation, the programme scheduling including start times, active days etc uses date as one of the essential input factors. With a PC date running out of synchronisation with real dates this can cause some obvious operational problems Graeme Francis, Marketing Manager for The Hydroscape Group Limited and UK Distributors of Toro Irrigation Products, troubleshoots some potential problems which are facing greenkeepers and their computer-based irrigation systems

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Both seem to bring out an opinion in most people, and whilst the Dome is of background interest, the Bug will potentially have a greater and more global impact.

We hear many stories about the failure of all kinds of systems and the foretellers of doom are having a great time predicting the chaos that will ensue when the clock rolls over from 31st December 1999 to 1st January 2000.

For us, the question that will arise is what will be the effect of entry into 2000 on the operation of equipment used for golf course management.

The whole scenario is encompassed by the term Year 2000 Compliant sometimes shortened to Y2K (no it doesn't involve changing every Y in the dictionary to a K, or New Year's Eve would become 1st Januark 2000!)

Year 2000 compliance is, however, not really to be seen as a joke, as it is important to greenkeepers. The reason for this is that any piece of equipment you use that has a microchip needs to be compliant. This is particularly relevant to the electronic technology used in irrigation control which probably represents the most sophisticated electronic equipment used in golf course management.

There are two types of irrigation systems that need Year 2000 compliance. The largest group is that of controllers utilising microchips with embedded software and a control panel inputting format. These range from small residential controllers which can operate up to, for example, twelve control valves through to the extensive wall mounted golf course decoder systems which may operate up to four hundred stations.

Some of the decoder controllers may now be fifteen years old and consideration of Year 2000 compliance was not a major issue in the mid 1980's. Well it is now, and you should be checking with the supplier or contractor who installed or services the system as to whether the unit is affected and, if so, what can be done to overcome the matter. In many cases the corrective action will be an upgrade of the chip, however you will need to establish that this is possible and that the appropriate chip is available.

The second system type affected by the Year 2000 issue is that using PC based interfacing. More and more greenkeepers are using a PC as an aid to course management. In some cases the PC is being used for general administrative tasks including word processing, spreadsheet production, report generation etc. In many instances a PC is being used as the central component of the irrigation control system. In the UK today it is probable that as many as 75% of new irrigation systems use PC technology to allow the input, monitoring and adjustment of irrigation operations. The



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Some of the decoder controllers may now be fifteen years old and consideration of Year 2000 compliance was not a major issue in the mid 1980's



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benefits of such control are well founded and make PC control a very serious and viable option when considering the specification for a new system to water the course.

With the increased use of PCs comes the necessity to ensure that all elements of their supply is undertaken correctly and that continuity of technical service support is provided. This support includes the ability to fight off the infamous Millennium Bug.

From a pure irrigation viewpoint the key area of attention is in date comprehension.

In the early days of computer development information storage space was both limited and expensive. As a result it was decided that a six digit date format would be used, i.e. the 1st January 1999 is shown as 01/01/99. This format became the standard, and whilst we are still in the 20th century it serves the purpose perfectly well. What has been created, however, is a situation whereby a computer, or any software embedded in a microchip, has no understanding of a change in century. The machine will read any six digit date ending in 00 to be in 1900, and not in 2000. This problem was most highly demonstrated in the personal banking sphere were computers were voiding transaction made on credit cards with expiry dates ending in 00 because as far as the computer was concerned the card expired in 1900!

This is just one example of why Year 2000 compliance is important in computer systems. In addition, there are a number of crucial transition dates after New Year's Day 2000 which will cause date errors. These include 28th February to 29th February and 29th February to 1st March, which are significant because the first year of the third millennium is also a leap year.

Whilst it is almost certain that you will not be running irrigation on New Years Eve 1999 or indeed for several months before or afterwards it doesn't mean that your equipment can avoid being Year 2000 compliant.

In irrigation, the programme scheduling including start times, active days etc uses date as one of the essential input factors. With a PC date running out of synchronisation with real dates this can cause some obvious operational problems.

Year 2000 compliance applies to both hardware and software. A PC may be compliant, but some of the software programmes it is using may not. The opposite is also true, and this hardware compatibility can extend beyond the PC.

As has already been mentioned it is not just the PC itself, but any other peripherals or specialist hardware components of the system which may be affected. Decoder interface units, field interface modules and radio communication elements could all encounter problems if the manufacturer has not had the foresight to build compliance into them.



In essence you need to have an



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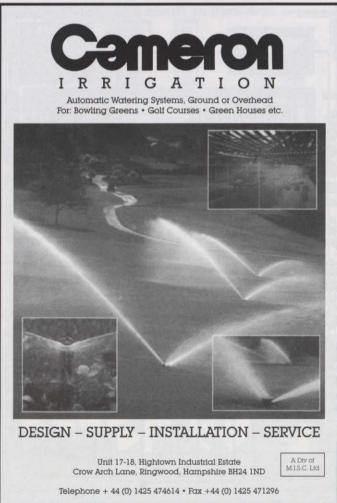




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