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April 2000

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by May 5, 2000

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82 As I see it...

Greenkeeper INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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No news is bad news

Elsewhere in this issue, if you have not already done so, you can become involved in the great Daily Telegraph debate which revolves around an assertion from a well known golf writer that golf course standards have fallen over the last 20 years.

Overall the piece was a positive one about the wonderful work being carried out at Temple Golf Club, near Maidenhead, the current holder of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone Ground Care and Grass Roots, but it was this one statement which has put the cat among the pigeons.

Part of my job within the Association is to encourage journalists to write about greenkeeping matters and to raise the profile of the profession to the wider golfing public. In doing so it can lead to things appearing in the press which we don't altogether agree with. This happens in all walks of life and you have to learn to live with it so you can also enjoy the benefits you get from good publicity which is also generated.

The alternative is to try to manipulate the media and steer the press to write what we want them to write. This rarely succeeds. Look at the trouble the Government gets into in its supposed attempts, through Alistair Campbell, to dictate what the media writes or broadcasts.

It is far better that the subject is carried, warts and all, than be ignored totally because what tends to happen is that even negative comments ignite a lot of more positive feedback which is ultimately to everyone's benefit.

I do know that the Daily Telegraph received a load of mail after the piece appeared. They may not have appeared in the letters' pages, but I know that the response impressed the powers-that-be on the Telegraph Sports Desk and I'm assured that we will be seeing more greenkeeping issues being covered in the forthcoming weeks and months... hopefully highlighting the great work that is being done out on the nation's golf courses to keep on top of the modern stresses and strains.

I also know that the article in question is currently on noticeboards up and down the length and breadth of the country and you may be tackled about it by members.

In most cases it shouldn't be something to worry about. Take it as an opportunity to pass on some words of wisdom to individuals or groups who may then educate some of the other members in the club.

It may be a catalyst for Open Nights or Workshops at clubs which have never previously held such occasions and it will give many a chance for the first time to see what a great job is done by the nation's greenkeepers.

If that does happen and relationships are improved between greenstaff and golf club members how much better it will be all round.

We will then perhaps look back at The Daily Telegraph article and see that out of some negative comments a real positive advance has been made.

Editor:
Scott MacCallum

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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This month, our front cover features Fortrose and Rosemarkie GC



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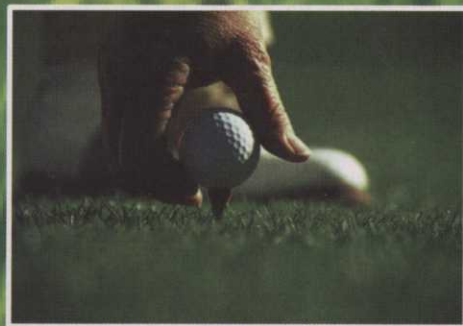
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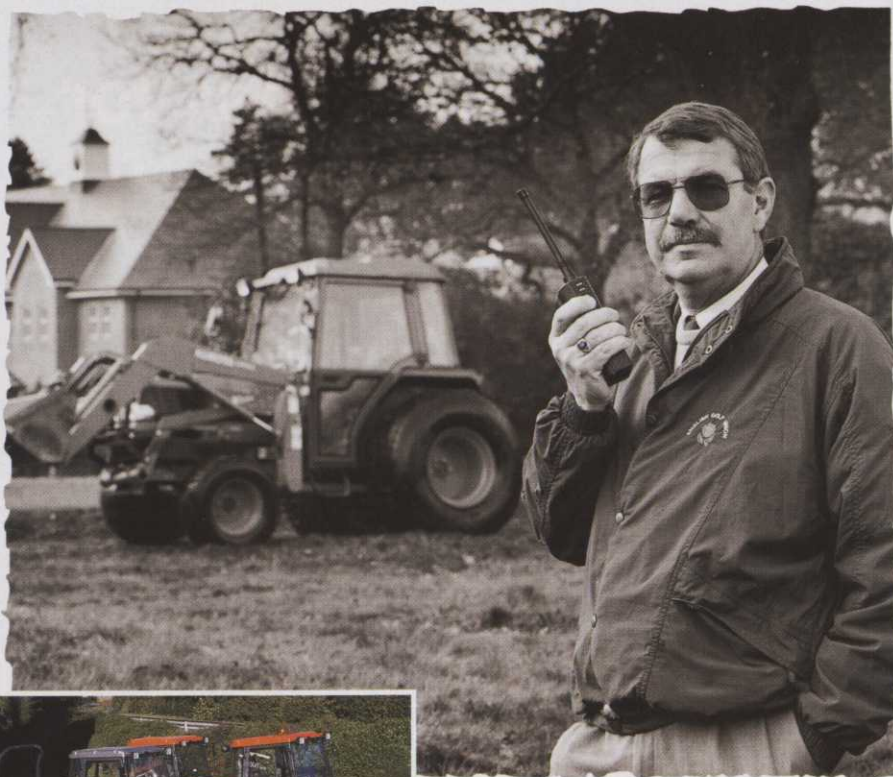
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– Peter Wisbey, Courses Manager,
The National Golf Centre, Woodhall Spa



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Big payout to dismissed Head GK

A golf club has paid out the equivalent of a year's salary to the Head Greenkeeper who was dismissed by the Club Captain without prior warning.

Sam Morrison, a past Scottish Chairman, returned from a two week holiday just before Bothwell Castle Golf Club's AGM and was dismissed by the new Captain on the following Monday with the words, "I don't think you're the man to take us forward."

"The AGM had been fairly uneventful. There were a few little things raised about the course, but nothing more than you would expect at an AGM," explained Sam.

"Three greens had gone a bit sour in October with thatch but the STRI had looked at them and agreed that my approach was correct," he revealed.

"However the new Captain had called a meeting of all Conveners immediately after the AGM and announced that he was going to dismiss me the following day. It caused uproar and the Greens' Convener resigned," he said.

The Captain had presented Sam with a draft settlement on that morning and made him a tax free offer to walk out of the door but Sam refused to accept and took a couple of days off to enable him to consult lawyers.

"I went home and immediately called the BIGGA Legal Helpline and explained what had happened. I was told I had a 99.9% chance of winning a case if I went to tribunal but the lawyer was not sure what I could expect to win in compensation, so contacted a Scottish law firm on my behalf," said Sam, who prior to joining Bothwell Castle two years ago had been Head Greenkeeper at Royal Aberdeen.



Above: Sam Morrison

"My son, who is also a Head Greenkeeper, and I visited the law firm and the lawyer worked out what I could expect to receive from a tribunal. We left absolutely shattered because it was less than I had been offered at the original meeting with the Captain."

Sam had agreed to meet with the Captain on the Wednesday evening but prior to that meeting his Greens' Convener, Andrew Braidwood, a respected local businessman, advised him not to accept the Captain's offer.

"He said it was his first offer and that I should argue for more. That made me feel better and more valued. He also suggested that I take someone with me into the meeting and I called Scottish Regional Administrator, Peter

Boyd, and, at short notice, he agreed to come along.

"His presence made me feel better and I believe unsettled the Captain. He asked Peter if he was going to say anything. Peter said he wasn't but that he would be taking notes on my behalf," said Sam.

"I said that the original offer was not enough because of the loss of face and the damage to my reputation not to mention the fact that the likelihood would be that I would have to move house. I asked for a year's wages and after further discussions it was agreed I would receive one year's nett salary, plus a month's pay, plus all my pension contributions paid in full," said Sam.

Since being dismissed Sam has been heartened by the number of calls he's received from Bothwell Castle members who have been extremely supportive towards him.

"They are appalled about what has happened and the fact that so much of their money has been spent dismissing me. Not to mention the damage that has been done to Bothwell Castle's reputation," said Sam.

Fortunately Sam has been given a job by two old friends, Alex Cruickshanks and David Happel, partners in Daval Products, and he has been selling industrial products and clothing to local golf clubs.

"I am extremely grateful to Alex and David for giving me this opportunity and I am enjoying the work. I would also like to express my thanks to the Bothwell Castle members for their support and in particular to Andrew Braidwood for all his help and advice," said Sam.

Mark takes stock of his new role



Mark Ellis, for the past eight years Course Manager at Mentmore Golf and Country Club, has moved to a similar role with nearby Stocks Golf and Country Club, in Hertfordshire.

"In my time at Mentmore I have seen the two courses develop from the grow in to full maturity and have been involved in all aspects of the evolution. I felt that it was time for me to move on and I believe my new position will be an exciting and demanding one," said Mark, who is a regular member of the BIGGA Greenkeeper Support Teams at The Open at at Wentworth for the Volvo PGA Championship.

GreenLink to distribute GreenReleaf

Following the world-wide acquisition by Milliken Chemical of the marketing & distribution rights for the Green-Releaf product range, GreenLink International Ltd has been appointed the exclusive UK and European distributor.

GreenLink International Ltd is a new company specifically formed to introduce and develop a range of speciality products to the turf industry. Green-Releaf products will join other brands such as Blazon spray pattern indicator and the soil conditioner, Integuide.

Tim Earley, previously with Green-Releaf Europe, has joined GreenLink to further develop the range and will be providing commercial and technical supporting to the mainland UK distributors, Avoncrop Amenity Products, Richard Aitken Ltd and Aitkens Sportsurf and in Northern Ireland, John Lindsay Professional Sportsturf.

"The year 2000 heralds a new era in the amenity industry. Customer requirements are changing and today's technology quickly becomes tomorrow's accepted practice. With the move away from some of the 'quickfix' practices of the past, there is an exciting opportunity for a more environmentally aware approach to the management and maintenance of our sportsturf surfaces and amenity landscape," said Richard Fry, Managing Director of GreenLink International.

Super achievement for Clever Trevors

A remarkable family double was celebrated at Welwyn Garden City Golf Club last month when Course Manager, Trevor Smith Snr and his son Trevor Jnr, now Deputy Course Manager at South Herts GC, were recognised for two magnificent achievements.

Trevor Snr has recently achieved NVQ Level 4, one of only around 30 in the country, while Trevor Jnr has become the first Modern Apprentice in the country to have completed the framework.

Trevor Jnr started as an apprentice at Welwyn Garden City under his father and they worked through their respective education under the watchful eye of the GTC and Ian Merrick, of Oaklands College.

"Trevor Jnr has progressed through the profession from an Apprentice to being Deputy Course Manager at the age of 22 so the Modern Apprenticeship has worked for him while his dad had a very good understanding of work based training having become D32/D33 qualified and completing his NVQ Level 4," said GTC Education Director, David Golding.

"I am very honoured on behalf of



the GTC to be able to present Trevor with his Certificate," he added.

Trevor Jnr had no idea he was in line to be the first to complete his Modern Apprenticeship until a call from David.

"That was about eight months ago and David told me that if I got a move on I could be the first. At that stage I just had a First Aid course to finish off," said Trevor.

The Modern Apprenticeship scheme has been a great benefit to golf clubs looking to train staff.

"It meant I could send my staff on any course I felt they were capable of

doing and it wouldn't cost us a penny. We would pay up front and then be refunded on completion of the course. It takes the pressure off the golf club as long as the employee works hard at it," said Trevor Snr.

Trevor Snr took two years to complete his Level 4.

"Oaklands College was important in my achieving the standard as, when I was putting my portfolio together, they could say if I was going over the top or not doing enough," he said. Pictured L-R. Trevor Smith Snr, David Golding, Trevor Smith Jnr and Ian Merrick.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Profile

Usually the spotlight falls on the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper at a Club.

Now it is the turn of those whose work often goes unheralded to star.



Name: Stuart Hayes

Club: Glencorse GC

Position: Second Assistant

Age: 22

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?

Five years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?

None. I have recently completed my apprenticeship

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?

Cutting fairways

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?

Divoting fairways

5. What job other than greenkeeping might you have ended up doing?

Policeman

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

My boss, Ian Bell, Glencorse GC

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?

Give smaller clubs the same technology as larger clubs

8. What are your hobbies?

Golf, fishing, American football and reading

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?

A social Section and the chance to meet other greenkeepers

10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?

I hope to have won the lottery and be lying on a beach somewhere hot!

Management changes at Textron

In line with internal management development plans at Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products, Peter Bell has been promoted to the position of Sales Director. He succeeds Andrew Sunaway who has left the company to pursue career interests outside the turf maintenance sector.

Neil Woodfin, the company's Product Manager has also been promoted to Marketing Director, reporting directly to Managing Director, Harold Pinto.

Also joining the management team is Ian Campbell, who joins Textron as Finance Director, International. With a background in the textile industry he has worked for Courtaulds Textiles Plc and Liberty Lace in the UK, Spain and the United States.

In addition Sharon Jenkins has been appointed Communications and Promotions Manager. In this newly created position Sharon will be responsible for the planning and implementation of Textron's marketing activities throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Rupert Price has been promoted to Business Manager reporting directly to Neil Woodfin, the recently appointed Marketing Director.

Part of his brief will be research into new technology especially in the area of the Internet and e-commerce, together with supporting the planning and implementation of sales and marketing strategies across the Textron brands.



Clockwise from top left: Peter Bell, Neil Woodfin, Sharon Jenkins and Rupert Price

College awards top honour to Toro

Myerscough College has presented Toro with a special commemorative plaque in recognition of the company's sponsorship support for its high-profile turfgrass conference.

The college, the only place in Europe that runs turf science degree courses, used Toro's cash support to host a two-and-a-half-day keynote conference on the microbiology of turfgrass systems.

The event attracted speakers from as far afield as the United States, and was attended by more than 150 delegates made up of students and turfcare professionals.

Toro's support also enabled the college, in Preston, Lancs., to fund a subscription to the Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information File. This internet databank contains thousands of helpful research papers on turfgrass science.

"We are grateful to The Toro Company for its generous cash sponsorship to support our activities. It enabled us to host a high-profile conference, which we are repeating in November, and to access information on the internet, which is proving vital to our students," said Martyn Jones, Programme Leader of Turf Science.

"We thought it would be a nice gesture to show our gratitude by presenting them with a special plaque," he added.



Northern Section Seminar's success

Cutting every day doesn't give grass time to recover

That was one of the messages delivered by Martyn Jones, of Myerscough College, at the Northern Section and Rigby Taylor Seminar held at Bingley Golf Club at the beginning of March.

Martyn explained to the gathering of around 60 that grass requires 24 hours to recover so to cut every day doesn't give it a chance to recover. He reminded those old enough to recall the 60s that greenkeepers, of whom he was one at the time, cut Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

He was talking on the subject of cutting heights and posed the question of whether there was an inevitable conflict between the greenkeeper and the player.

Earlier John Holt, of Rigby Taylor, urged greenkeepers to look at ratios when purchasing product and reminded delegates that a 5-0-10 was actually the same as a 1-0-2.



In the afternoon there was a joint presentation on Golf Course Design, Construction, and Environmental Issues delivered by Chris Peel, of Grass Science; Nick Wright, of Fairhurst Environmental; Geoff Hodson, a golf course constructor and Andrew Mair,

of GBG Golf, who was joined by his partner and last year's Ryder Cup Captain, Mark James.

Between them they talked through the stages of a new project and highlighted the appropriate time at which each element should be introduced.

Old Course refacing work now complete

All 112 bunkers on the Old Course have now been refaced in preparation for the Open Championship in July. The work has been carried out by the Links Trust's Old Course greenkeeping team over the last 12 months.

From the notorious Road Hole Bunker on the 17th to the innocuous-looking Kruger on the 9th hole, every individual bunker was stripped down and the sides were refaced using layer upon layer of turf – a process known as revetting. Three of the largest bunkers – Hell, Shell and Cottage – had more extensive work carried out. They were rebuilt using railway sleepers sunk into concrete to create a template for future repairs. Around five and a half acres of turf from the Links Trust's turf nursery were used in total.

"It is a major achievement for the greenkeeping team," said Alan McGregor, General Manager.

"This is the first time in the history of the course that all the bunkers have been revetted in one go - usually bunkers are repaired and renewed on a five year rolling programme."

BIGGA presents donations to charity

Right: BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas, presents Louise Stimson from Imperial Cancer Research with donations totalling £500. Proceeds were raised from the sale of raffle tickets at BTME.



A presentation was made at the recent South Wales Seminar, to Peter Gillard, of Pencoed College, on behalf of the South Wales Section by Ken Richardson, in recognition of his dedication to greenkeeping and assistance to greenkeeping in the south Wales area. Also pictured are Tony Webster, of TIS Ltd; Malcolm Davies, Chairman of Education; Dennis Archer, Course Manager at Whitchurch GC, and Peter Lacey of the South Wales Section.

Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifying details

The following venues and dates have been chosen as the Section Qualifiers for the 2000 Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship, for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.



Ayrshire
Wednesday 26 April, Western Gailes GC

Central Scotland
Tuesday 11 April, Jubilee Course, St Andrews

East Scotland
Wednesday 26 April, North Berwick GC

North Scotland
Thursday 25 May, Buckpool GC

West Scotland
Thursday 27 April, Ranfurly Castle GC

North East
Thursday 13 April, Bamburgh Castle GC

North West
Wednesday 3 May, Bury GC

Northern
Tuesday 11 April, Bradley Hall GC

Cleveland
Tuesday 11 April, Ramside Hall GC

Sheffield
Tuesday 9 May, Wheatley GC

North Wales
Wednesday 5 April, Frodsham GC

East Midland
Wednesday 10 May, Chilwell Manor GC

Midland
Friday 28 April, South Staffordshire GC

East of England
Tuesday 25 April, Canwick Park GC

Berks, Bucks & Oxon
Monday 17 April, Wokefield Park GC

Mid Anglia
Thursday 20 April, The North Hampshire Country GC

Surrey
Thursday 4 May, Merrist Wood GC

Kent
Thursday 8 June, Faversham GC

Sussex
Thursday 4 May, Royal Eastbourne GC

London
Wednesday 22 March, Hanbury Manor GC

East Anglia
Wednesday 26 April, Haverhill GC

Essex
Wednesday 12 April, Forrester Park GC

South West
Tuesday 18 April, Clevedon GC

South Coast
Thursday 11 May, Alton GC

Devon & Cornwall
Thursday 24 February, Trevose GC

South Wales
Wednesday 3 May, Southerndown GC

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



Andy is Rolawn's Depot Manager of the Year

The Rolawn Depot Manager of the Year award is made in recognition of the contribution made to the business by Rolawn's depot managers. This year it has been given to Andy Boaler, depot manager at the Company's Nottingham Depot.

Andy, who joined the Rolawn Turf Company as Nottingham's depot manager in 1990, has won the coveted award for the second time in his ten year career with the firm.

Andy is married with twin daughters. He is a keen footballer and supports Nottingham Forest. The family live in the Arnold area of Nottingham.

Gift vouchers and a certificate of recognition were presented by Rolawn's Sales and Marketing Director to Andy at the Company's recent Conferences held at the BIGGA Headquarters at Aldwark Manor, York.

"Rolawn has 18 turf depots situated throughout the UK, all manned by Rolawn Employees. It is always a difficult decision to make but I am delighted to present the award to Andy this year who has proved himself to be an excellent depot manager by building excellent relationships with our customers in the Nottingham area," said Terry Ryan, Rolawn's Sales and Marketing Director.

New support role for Ged at Biotol



Cardiff based environmental solutions company Biotol has appointed Ged Cunliffe to the position of Marketing Support Manager.

Ged joined Biotol in 1986 shortly after leaving Cardiff University with a BSc Hons degree. Initially employed as a laboratory technician, he progressed through the company building a comprehensive knowledge of its products and customer base. In his new job Ged will concentrate on broadening the understanding of microbial and natural products.

"The scope for biological products in the global marketplace is enormous, but we have to educate potential customers on the wide range of benefits that can be realised from using them. My job will involve talking with users and potential users about our existing product range as well as managing the introduction of new products," he explained.

BIGGA exhibits at GCSAA conference



Above: Chairman, Elliott Small and Executive Director, Neil Thomas chat with visitors to the BIGGA stand, at the recent GCSAA Conference and Exhibition in Orlando, USA

2002 Amateur Championships to be hosted by Royal Porthcawl

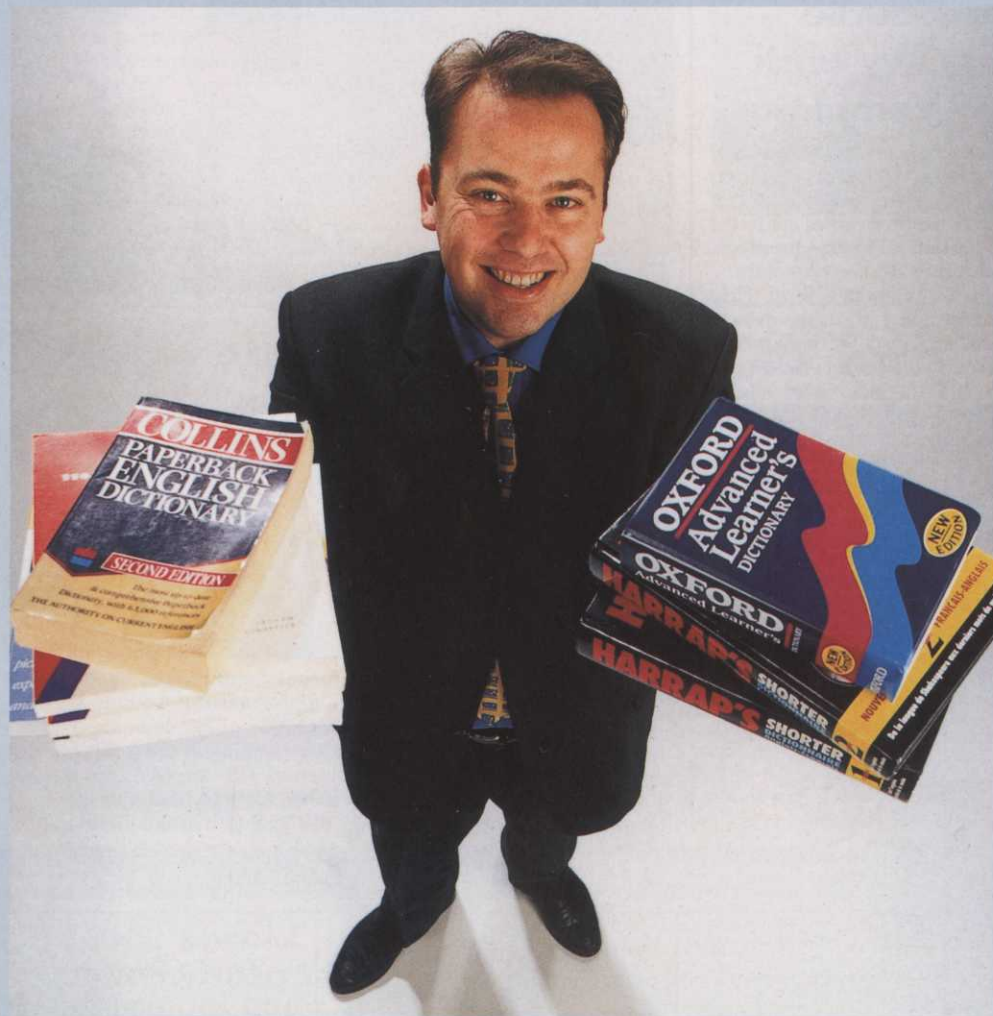
In February's magazine, under the heading "Raymond on the move", we mentioned that new Pyle and Kenfig head man, Raymond Hunt, was preparing for the 2002 Amateur Championship.

We would like to point out that Pyle and Kenfig is hosting two of the qualifying rounds for that Championship while the event is actually being hosted by neighbouring Royal Porthcawl.

Apologies for any confusion caused.

Greenkeeper
INTERNATIONAL

Barenbrug's Ben achieves NVQ success



When Ben Petitjean, Barenbrug's Area Manager, was first shipped off to England from his native France, life was far from easy for him as he didn't know his 'grass' from his 'elbow' (without the help of a dictionary!) But four years on, he's every inch the British gent and his English is so fluent that he has just completed a Diploma in Management NVQ4. Ben's studies form part of Barenbrug's overall training strategy which is now focussed on the Investors in People programme. Ben's arrival in England was itself a result of Barenbrug's worldwide commitment to employee integration across its international network. Paul Johnson, Barenbrug's Managing Director said: "We are delighted that Ben has grown so well with us and are very proud of his achievement."