



would be the best way of making up a few shots. And so having failed by traditional means to qualify he simply reduced his score by a couple of shots somewhere betwixt playing partner and clubhouse. It was only later when one of his partners noticed the scoring error in the papers the next day that the matter was brought to the attention of the governing bodies.

Then there was the guy whose own speciality was "bird nesting". This comes into its own when a particularly nasty lie is encountered in the rough. Wedging out sideways appears to be the only course of action, that

is until 20 practice swings, plenty of stomping about and some vigorous thumping of the adjacent ground has revealed the ball to be in such a perfect lie that you could get a driver to it.

Finally we go to the greatest country in the world; the US of A. Only a country like America could spend a cool quarter of a million dollars on the uniform for the humble and retiring wives of their glorious Ryder Cup team. Here they take a real pride in this game within a game. They even have a golfing society made up exclusively of cheats whose proud motto is "If you don't cheat, you're only cheating yourself".

In California, there are eccentrics who could even rival our own aris-

tocracy. One such character towards the end of his regular night-time soirees would go to the balcony, flick a switch and there before everyone would stand a full flood lit, downhill golf hole complete with tee, bunkers, green, the works. He would then declare to the assembled drunken multitude that he would make a hole in one and asked for people to bet against him. There would always be a few gullible, intoxicated types convinced that this would be easy money. So having set up the necessary wagers he would go to the tee and gently chip a ball off the front. The look on the party goers faces must have been something to behold as the ball gently bounced down the slope and onto the green where it would go around

and around in ever decreasing circles homing in on the hole until it finally dropped out of sight. The entire hole had been designed whereby any ball chipped off the end of the tee would like in some enormous pin ball machine always end up on the concave green with the hole in the geometric centre. Brilliant!

**Sandy McDivot.**  
Head Greenkeeper,  
Sludgecombe Pay and Play

## Feature listing from April '98

**April '98:** Gleneagles Hotel, Compact Tractors, Environment, Protective clothing, Rain bird, Internet

**May '98:** Greens Mowers, Suspended Water Table Greens, Seeds, Letham Grange Resort, Charterhouse profile, Security and BIGGA's Fund Raising Campaign

**June '98:** Interview with Nick Park, Earthworm special, ATVs, Royal Porthcawl, Grinding

**July '98:** Aeration, Royal Birkdale preview, The importance of research, Architecture

**August '98:** Mill Ride, Fescue, Blowers, Textron, Open Review, Nematodes, Training

**September '98:** Nine holers – Tolladine and Fingle Glen, Turf, Steve Clement profile, Drainage, World Scientific Congress report

**October '98:** Saltex Review, BIGGA Retrospective, Stirling GC, Toro Awards Preview, Tree grants

**November '98:** Royal Opening, Ramsdale Hall GC, Gang Mowers, Hayter International report, Irrigation Systems

**December '98:** Toro Awards, Environment Awards, The Appliance of Science, Engines, Architects, BTME Preview

**January '99:** Pesticide Usage, Life in Colorado, Lyshott Heath GC, Worm Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile, Temporary Greens

**February '99:** Westerham GC; R&A questionnaire results; Finland; grass cutting; BTME99 Review; Bernhard and Co

**March '99:** Loch Lomond, Worm update, GrassRoots, Softspikes, Maintenance facilities, Environment review, Architecture

**April '99:** Carden Park, Telecommunications, Water Management, Rolawn, Seeds

**May '99:** Security, Bude and North Cornwall GC, Spraying Regulations, Jim Arthur, The Acid Theory, Amenity Technology profile

**June '99:** Thorpeness GC, Millennium Bug Busting, Irrigation, Scotts profile, Company adaptability

**July '99:** Carnoustie, Golf Course Furniture, Spike Research, Toro profile, BIGGA Silent Auction

**August '99:** Viscount Whitelaw tribute; Open review; Merrist Wood; Saltex preview; Turf; Trees; Grass Cutting; BIGGA Golf Day review; Redexim profile

**September '99:** Slaley Hall; Tyres; Spotlight on Thatch; Elmwood College Awards; National Championship preview

**October '99:** The Manor House, Castle Combe; Aeration; Saltex review; Mycorrhizas; Toro Award preview

**November '99:** Sir Michael Bonallack interview; The Pines GC; Oil; Bunkers; National Championship review

**December '99:** Agronomy; Security; Environment Competition Winner; Toro Award Winners

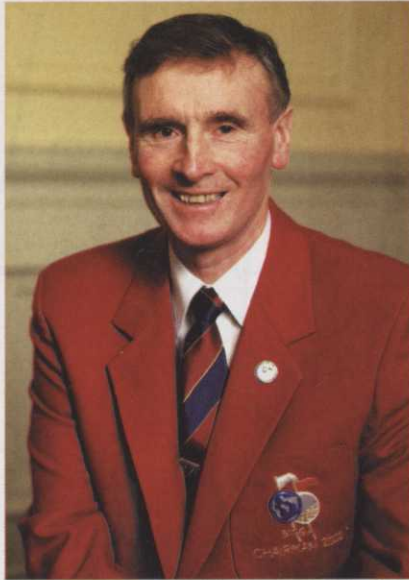
**January 2000:** Greens Construction; Awkward Jobs; Sandy McDivot; Agronomy; Toro Award review

**February 2000:** BTME2000 review; Committed to Green interview; Rookery Park GC; Engines; Chairman's profile; Environmental Management

**March 2000:** Cleobury Mortimer GC; Course Furniture; R&A Conference Report; Cutting heights; Avoncrop profile; Valderama report; Westurf preview



# Helping hands



By the time you read this, most of us will have had our Opening Days and be well into the new playing season and obviously once more the 'Masters' syndrome will be in effect. The atrocious weather suffered by many in various parts of the country up to now, I write this on the March 13, will have affected a lot of greenkeepers in how they have been able to present their courses for the start of the season. Golfers have notorious short memories when it comes to weather and by the end of the first dry week, if we ever get one, they will have forgotten how bad it has been all winter.

Their calls for better conditions immediately, will not doubt put quite a few greenkeepers under a lot of pressure and stress. Already we know of one of our members who has lost his job, (see page 7). Fortunately he is a strong character who knows what's right, and with the help of the BIGGA Helpline he effected an excellent severance package though nothing can atone for the loss of one's job.

If you have problems, ask for help. There's always someone. Initially it may be a fellow greenkeeper, or perhaps your Regional Administrator can give you advice and there's the Legal Helpline, it's there for you.

I was very fortunate, as your Chairman, to represent the Association

at both the GCSAA American show and conference in New Orleans and the CGSA Canadian show and conference in Ottawa.

New Orleans is a wonderful place, so much to see and do. I would love to go back there for a holiday. There is so much character to the city with its restaurants, music, night life and the people themselves, such a cosmopolitan mix. Quite a few BIGGA members who made the trip will testify to this. The BIGGA stand was very busy on the first two days but, like the rest of the show, the Sunday morning was quiet.

I was genuinely surprised at how many people came to our stand and the many questions they asked. We had enquiries about membership, our web site, work placements, superintendents looking to come to BTME, others wanting to know more about the Master Greenkeeper qualifications, colleges wishing to learn more about our educational system and even people asking if we could recommend courses and places to stay for holidays.

As well as quite a few BIGGA members who had made their own way there, it was nice to have Brian Turner, winner of Toro Greenkeeper of the Year and to meet Tommy Givnan, the Toro Student Award winner, having a break from his prize of a study course in the USA.

Two weeks later and I was in Ottawa for the CGSA show and conference where I had to present a paper on Greenkeeping in Scotland. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of people who wanted to talk afterwards about the differences and comparisons between our work programmes. As in the UK and the USA there is a tremendous thirst for knowledge as was apparent by the attendance at all the sessions in both countries. Again we made new friends and contacts and if all the guys from Canada come to BTME that said they would prepare for an invasion. The world is getting smaller all the time.

I would like to thank Ken and David at HQ for the excellent power point pre-

sentation they made up to accompany my talk. It made life so easy.

I have just read my magazine and was interested in the comment by Paul Cunningham in the South West Section notes, than an American exhibitor stated that the GCSAA show was five times bigger than BTME. Sorry Paul but I have to beg to differ. At BTME we had 200 stands and 6000 delegates. The GCSAA had about 750 stands and 21000 delegates. By my calculations they had 3.75 times more stands and 3.5 times more delegates. When we take into consideration that the USA is nearly 30 times bigger than the UK & Ireland, I think we compare more than favourably. I must admit that I was slightly surprised at the GCSAA show as I expected it to be bigger than it was.

Many of you may have read the letter in the March issue of GI from Peter Hampton, of Bernhard & Co, on the subject of old machinery. This is something that is close to my heart, the preservation of old golf course machinery and tools so that someday we might have a museum. I have a couple of old machines myself and also have an old land measure chain. My favourite is two leather horse shoes which were used on the horses pulling the gang mowers at Galashiels Golf Course in my father's time there.

As more and more new maintenance facilities are being built, more and more "rubbish" is being thrown out. But is it rubbish? I appeal to you all that if you have any old machines or tools, hold onto them, or if you do not have the room get in touch with BIGGA HQ first, hopefully we may be able to find somewhere to store them until the time is right. I was fortunate to speak with Peter Hampton and he has intimated that he would be willing to advise and help in the restoration of old machinery.

After attending all these conferences and seminars over the last two months an old saying came back to me, which some younger members can take to heart

"I never learn anything talking,  
I only learn when I ask questions"



Above: Turf quickly established by incorporating ENVIGRO into the soil/root zone prior to turfing

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