

the Greenkeeper and Guest Day meeting at Boughton Golf Club on the 13th of September and I'm sure Gary Debenham will have the place looking good for our visit.

Jason Bean.

Surrey

Our summer tournament was held on July 27 in warm and sunny weather at Farnham Golf Club. Many thanks to Peter McMorran and his team for presenting the course in such fine condition and to Farnham Golf Club for allowing us courtesy.

Top of the points were;

Greg Richards, Hankley Common, 42pts
Douglas Stewart Fernie, Royal Epsom, with an amazing 41 pts and two ricrochets; Mike Gould, Copthorne, 40 pts a very welcome visitor from Sussex Section. Nearest the pin; Anthony Rudolf Bremer, Dorking, Longest Drive; Dave Guy.

Finally the Booby Prize for most golf played we congratulate Dan Wheeler. Many thanks to Sheerwater for sponsoring the day and supplying such good quality prizes.

Anthony Freeman our Surrey Section Chairman has arranged a visit to the All England Tennis Club at Wimbledon. This promises to be a most interesting excursion that will take place on October 17 from 2pm until about 4.30pm. Please contact Anthony before October 10 as all visitors must be registered prior to the day. Now other items of news from your roving reporter from around Surrey. Garry and Nicola Bishop at Tandridge Golf Club have celebrated the birth of a son. Ethan James, 8 lbs 13 ozs on July 11 and from Hindhead Golf Club Steve and Kerry Holmes happily announce that their daughter Jessica Michelle 8 lbs was born on Sunday, July 29. Local moves from club to club include Gordon Bell gone from Woodcote Park to take up his new position at Copthorne Hotel Effingham Park as Estate Manager/Head Greenkeeper and the new Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Bramley Golf Club is Barry Smith from Shillinglee.

By the time this is in print we will have played the McMillan Tankard at Sunningdale. Results in October's edition. The autumn Tournament is at Croham Hurst on October 4 and the Turkey Trot and AGM take place at Malden on November 30.

Please remember to contact Anthony Freeman about the All England Tennis Club visit at Wimbledon and we thank Eddie Seaward in advance for an opportunity to see the inner workings of one of England's greatest sporting attractions.

Brian Willmott.

South West

This year's summer tournament was held at the Dendelshire Golf Club. It was a very hot and sunny day with about 30 people and myself sitting on the patio sipping my Pimms. A very big thank you must go to Craig Fudge and his team who had the course in a truly excellent condition, with the greens like velvet and magnificent to putt on. Craig also put the boys off the white tee's just to make it more interesting,

also the catering staff for an excellent meal.

A big thank you to Roger Davey and Ocmis Irrigation for sponsoring the day and supplying the trophy and prizes. In first place with a score of 40 points and winner of not only the Ocmis trophy but also the Assistants' Trophy was John Bachelor, second was Craig Fudge with 39 points and third was Jon Jarvis with 35 points. The nearest the pin was won by Ceri Richards but seeming he was a rep, we decided to award it to Don Southey, and the longest drive went to Gary Cook. We raised £52 in the raffle and many thanks go to those who supplied the prizes. Again many thanks go to Craig and all the staff at the Kendelshire Golf Club.

The next dates to look out for is Sept 12 match versus South Wales at St Pierre. Anyone wishing to play in this match should contact K James who will pass your name onto the team Captain. The other date to look out for is 16th Oct the autumn tournament and AGM which will be held at Cumberwell Park Golf Club anyone wishing to play can contact K. James on 01934 627 143/07788 427 677 if you do not receive any notification through the post.

K. James

East Anglia

Firstly may I congratulate Paul Smith and his team at Royal Lytham & St. Annes for putting on a great venue for the 130th Open Championship. The course looked in splendid shape and certainly caused some problems for the professionals, and well done to the BIG-GA team for their sterling performance of bunker raking during the Championship. Matthew Gill, from Stowmarket Golf Club, represented Otley College as their candidate in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the year and got through to the interview stage. Well done Matthew.

Many Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers take pride in looking after their golf courses from year to year without any recognition, these are the backbone of the Association and I think that it is time to bring their names forward to the Section and others so they may feel that their hard work over the years gets the appreciation that it deserves.

This month there are three individuals that have accrued over 100 years of working experience between them, they are George Newson, Head Greenkeeper at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club, with 39 years at the club; Roger Plummer, Head Greenkeeper at Royal Cromer Golf Club, with 36 years at the club and Roger Eade, Head Greenkeeper at Stowmarket Golf Club, with 35 years at the club. I hope you have enjoyed looking after your courses as much as your members and visitors have enjoyed playing on them, I know that it is one of the most difficult jobs to do because there is always someone there to criticise. My congratulations go out to you, you are an example to us all.

My little granddaughter is now ten weeks old and Christine and I were asked to baby-sit over the weekend on a Saturday night with my daughter picking Sky up on Sunday lunchtime.

After several bottles, Sky decides that she preferred to sleep being held, and would kick up a fuss if she was put down. Well granddad ended up carrying her around for the first five hours until 3:30am in the morning before Christine took her turn and I managed to get three hours sleep until Sky decided to wake the whole household. Then she decided it was time for another feed (Oh Joy), I thought that I had finished with all that 17 years ago. One thing she has her grandmother's temper and takes after me with a good set of lungs.

I did manage to watch Castaway and The Secret of My Success on video while walking around the room with her in my arms.

On our ramblings through East Anglia this year, we found ourselves at Eaton Golf Club near Norwich on August 1. The weather was perfect, warm and sunny with a slight breeze. Mick Lathorne and his team had worked hard to produce an excellent course, Mick was advised to take a fortnights holiday as the course looked better than it did on Captain's Day and that there would be plenty of flack from the members. (Ha Ha)

All the staff at the golf club made us most welcome and coupled with an excellent meal it rounded the day off perfectly. Jim Cook the club captain welcomed us to the Eaton Experience and everyone agreed it was well worthwhile.

Our main sponsor of the day was Toro (Lely UK) and Larry Pearman and Ian Willett worked tirelessly throughout the day to ensure nearly everything run as smooth as possible and Roger Plummer and Robert Whiting sat and patiently worked out the score cards and calculated the results. Results as follows:

0-10 Handicap Section

1. Robert Whiting, 34 pts
2. Peter Howard, 33 pts
3. Mark Keysell, 28 pts.

11-17 Handicap Section

1. Lawrence Wright, 38 pts
2. Paul Gould, 37 pts
3. Steve Millard, 33 pts.

18-28 Handicap Section

1. Steve Crabb, 40 pts (Overall Winner),
2. Robin Baker, 38 pts
3. Ian Richie, 38 pts

Longest Drive - Mark Day

Nearest the Pin - Mark Turner

Captain & Club Official Shield

1. Glen Rayfield & Chris Pearsons 66 pts
2. Ian Willett & Robin Baker - 65 pts

For the first time in ten years one of our band got a hole-in-one. Keith Titshall holed out on the 9th hole - 194 yards with a 3 iron, one bounce and in. (Well done Keith.) The toilet seat was won by Pat Swinn from Rushmere Golf Club, only Pat could wear large light blue check shorts with matching shirt in attempt to put off every other golfer on the course.

The section sends its thanks to Jim, the Captain and all at Eaton Golf Club for a great day out.

I would like to thank all the other sponsors for their contributions to the day. Aventus, Rushbrooks, Prime, Turf Care, SISIS, Tacit, Atterton & Ellis, John Deere, Ben Burgess, Tomlinson Groundcare, K.B. Leach, Stalham Engineering.

I have confirmed all bookings for 2002 and Colin is working hard on the

venues for 2003. Our next meeting will be held at Purdis Heath on October 10th, see you there.

Ian Willett



I would like to first of all pass on my congratulations to Alan Strachan and his greenkeeping team at Royal Co Down Golf Club, for another successful British Seniors Open. After the installation of a completely new irrigation system at Royal Co Down last winter, it is nice to see all their hard work come to fruition with the excellent presentation of the course. This year's British Seniors Open was another resounding success boosted by the presence of Nicklaus, Palmer and Player.

The latest Section golf competition was held at Royal Belfast on July 6. This is a quite magnificent parkland golf course between Holywood and Bangor overlooking Belfast Lough. The afternoon competition was played in bright sunshine, light wind, with temperatures into the seventies. Head greenkeeper Jim Eager and his staff had the course in outstanding condition. Many thanks to Royal Belfast Golf Club for allowing us the courtesy of the course. The competition was generously supported by our sponsor Graham Prosser of Tacit. The top four prizes went to

1. Andrew Wray, Castlerock Golf Club, 37 pts.
2. Gary Murphy, Silverwood Golf Club, 37 pts.
3. Noel Crawford, Royal County Down GC, 34 pts.
4. James Eager, Royal Belfast Golf Club, 34 pts.

Visitors prize went to Peter Smith, Royal County Down Golf Club, 34 pts. I would also like to thank all the members who attended, many travelling a considerable distance from City of Derry, Castlerock, and Portstewart.

Our Section qualifying competition for the National Championship will have been played at Royal Portrush on August 28 on the Valley course. The result will be in next month's magazine.

Past chairman Graham Wylie has just returned from The Open Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes. Graham was part of the BIG-GA support team at this year's Championship, and was featured on BBC television during the Saturday afternoon session talking to the Duke of York. He has informed me that the trip was a brilliant experience and would like to thank everyone at BIG-GA for giving him the opportunity to be part of this year's Support team.

Well that's all my new for this month but I would like to welcome new members Rodney McKay, Galgorm Golf Club; Jim Eager Head Greenkeeper, Royal Belfast Golf Club, and Harry Greighton, Deputy Head Royal Belfast Golf Club, to the Section this month.

I will feature the charity golf day at Clandeboye Golf Club and Championship qualifier on the Valley course in next month's notes.

Ken Henderson

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Entries to reach us no later than Friday, September 14, 2001. The first correct entry drawn will receive a stylish BIGGA Sportswatch!

The judges decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

This competition is not open to BIGGA staff or non-members.

Last month, Robin Evans, from Whitby Golf Club, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

Our congratulations and a fantastic BIGGA sportswatch are on their way to you!



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Mr SR Swanson, Course Manager, Clandon Regis Golf Club Ltd,
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Housing Associations

As Basil Fawlty might say, satellite television is an avenue of pleasure that has been closed off to me. I have attempted to persuade Mrs McDivot of its necessity by pointing out that amongst other little treats, it would make available to her a channel entirely devoted to shopping, but she immediately makes the assumption that this is a pathetic ploy to spend my evenings in unathletic pose while watching sport with beer can perched on rapidly expanding abdominal region. Her objection to televised sport centres around her argument that there is little point in watching someone kick or hit a ball around when you can enjoy real life drama unfold in the form of soap operas.

That is not to say that I am totally alien to the pleasures of the dish receiver. I have to admit to straying into the habit along with my work colleagues of partaking of the odd beverage or two on a Friday afternoon in the clubhouse. This we do as a team building exercise, a boost to morale and a celebration at the accomplishment of yet another weeks work. While engaged in this highly civilised accoutrement to the working week we often watch golf on Sky Sports. This is of the highest quality and a pleasure to watch but I must state my objection to two frequently shown adverts that are totally derogatory to our noble profession. In fact they put us into the same bracket as estate agents and tax inspectors; a minority group that it is perfectly acceptable to be prejudiced towards. The first advert depicts one of our brethren as an unkempt, drug crazed psychopath, hell bent on holding up poor Freddy Couples while he moves the hole to a small promontory of the green that juts out into a lake. The other shows a greenkeeper spending hours rolling golf balls up to the hole making sure the position he has just chosen is as crowned as

possible. In both cases, the message is given that the manufacturer's equipment can more than cope with our evil intentions. Unfortunately for us, the additional message is that we are all Charles Manson clones whose sole raison d'être is to irritate golfers. This is a viscous and totally unnecessary aspersion to the good name of our profession. Everyone knows that only a small proportion of our time is devoted to irritating golfers and in my experience golf clubs rarely employ more than one drug-crazed psychopath on the greenkeeping team.

But sometimes on Sky Sports, they show those films of old golf matches featuring the likes of Sam Snead, Roberto De-Vincenzo and Peter Alliss in the days when he had a backswing. At other times there is live golf of the latest US tournament and it is fascinating to see the difference in the two. Certainly the golf seemed a great deal less complicated in the old matches. None of your lining up putts from 20 different directions or consulting the yardage manual on chip shots. They just seemed to walk up and whack it in those days. But the thing that stands out most of all between the golf of the past and nowadays is the courses and their associated standard of presentation. Despite visiting some of the Worlds finest layouts, in the old days they all seemed to be presented in uniformly abysmal condition. Large areas of brown or dead turf, bare patches, untidy tufts of coarse grass and that's just the greens. In contrast, the modern day alternative is utterly immaculate. Perfect striped fairways where the sight of a weed would invoke a public inquest, manicured rough -if that's not a contradiction in terms- and bunkers and water hazards so perfectly edged and trimmed that the place seems to look more like some kind of surreal teletubbies set

rather than a golf course. I have to say to me the modern day championship courses can start to look a tad artificial, which is probably due to the fact that they are

designed, built and maintained in a totally artificial manner. In fact in a straight contest between these courses and Mother Nature, even playing from the ladies tees and receiving a shot a hole, Mother Nature would be well and truly thrashed by about the twelfth. Personally as I look out through the clubhouse windows, beyond the incessant downpour called spring and onto the more natural look of Sludgecombe, I opine that these courses are amongst other things, severely lacking in large areas of mud. However that's just a personal opinion and unfortunately one that doesn't always coincide with that of my members.

But what then has been the driving force behind these changes over the years? Golf courses change with vogue just like everything else in life. Take house architecture for instance. There is a surprising similarity between the fashion in house style and that of golf courses. Back in the early part of the last century, the simplicity of the arts and crafts and art deco movements came out of a rejection of the ornate stuffiness of the Victorian age. This was followed up with the 1930's urban sprawl which symbolised a need to return to the more simple life of the country albeit as a more sanitised version. Hence the main roads that reach out from the cities into the tranquillity of the countryside are lined with neat 1930's style housing, often with Tudor style beams and each surrounded by its own piece of countryside in the form of a garden on at least three sides. Golf course architecture was in its infancy at the time but Colt, McKenzie and Ross et

al, all produced courses that would be in similar compatibility with nature as much as was possible. The land on which they were laid out was never altered to any degree and intrinsic features were utilised in the design. Water hazards were rarely employed unless they were naturally present and bunkers were made to look indistinguishable from their links counterparts.

But often it is a rejection of the past that is the inspiration for future fashion. So in the old immediate post war days we had courses that were understandably lacking in colour and definition and though the 70's and 80's we experienced a rejection of such blandness with the resultant bright stripy green hues, brilliant white sand and that revolting blue dye in the lakes. Look at the amount of grass that was seen on the greens in the old film footage of the 50 's and 60's. A 50 foot putt required a backswing that some of Sludgcombe's regular members would struggle to achieve with a driver. Was the crude lushness of these decades a rebellion against the austerity of the pre and post war years. The fact is, in those days average golf clubs were not in the summer at least always able to afford the luxury of dense grass coverage and with just a couple of greenkeepers that had to mow the greens using push mowers, who would want it. Maybe the trend setting courses we observe in those old films had gone out of their way to create grass so as they were set apart from the ordinary golf club. They could afford grass and so they made damn sure they would get it. It would become a measure of wealth. Onlookers would say to themselves "Look at that. They've got real grass on their greens that stops the ball from continually running 30-foot passed the hole. I wish we had that on our course

The need to forget the war years also heavily influenced the building boom of the 50's, 60's and 70's. The housing at that time was cheap and modern and no one seemed to bother too much about visual appeal. If it was old, knock it down and stick up a few million tons of brick and concrete. Hence we had the seemingly

ludicrous building schemes of those times such as the Old Course Hotel on the 17th at St Andrews. Similarly the thankfully few golf courses that were built at this time, were often appallingly bad in both their construction and their design. Bunkering would generally consist of large saucer shaped monstrosities, often shallow and boring which was presumably an attempt to match the design philosophies of the day.

Then in the late 80s, housing developments attempted to reproduce country village like architectural diversity and we were inundated with features such as clock towers that were stuck practically everywhere, even on top of office blocks. At about this time we started to observe an almost mirror image traditional golf course fashion revival in the form of the odd double green a' la St Andrews and Pete Dye's bunker faces lined with railway sleepers. Even we greenkeepers indulged in a bit of ruralisation, as I seem to remember a severe outbreak of revetted bunkers at the time. It did not matter if the course was a hundred or so miles inland we all started to cut out acres of turf ready to pile up the faces of our bunkers.

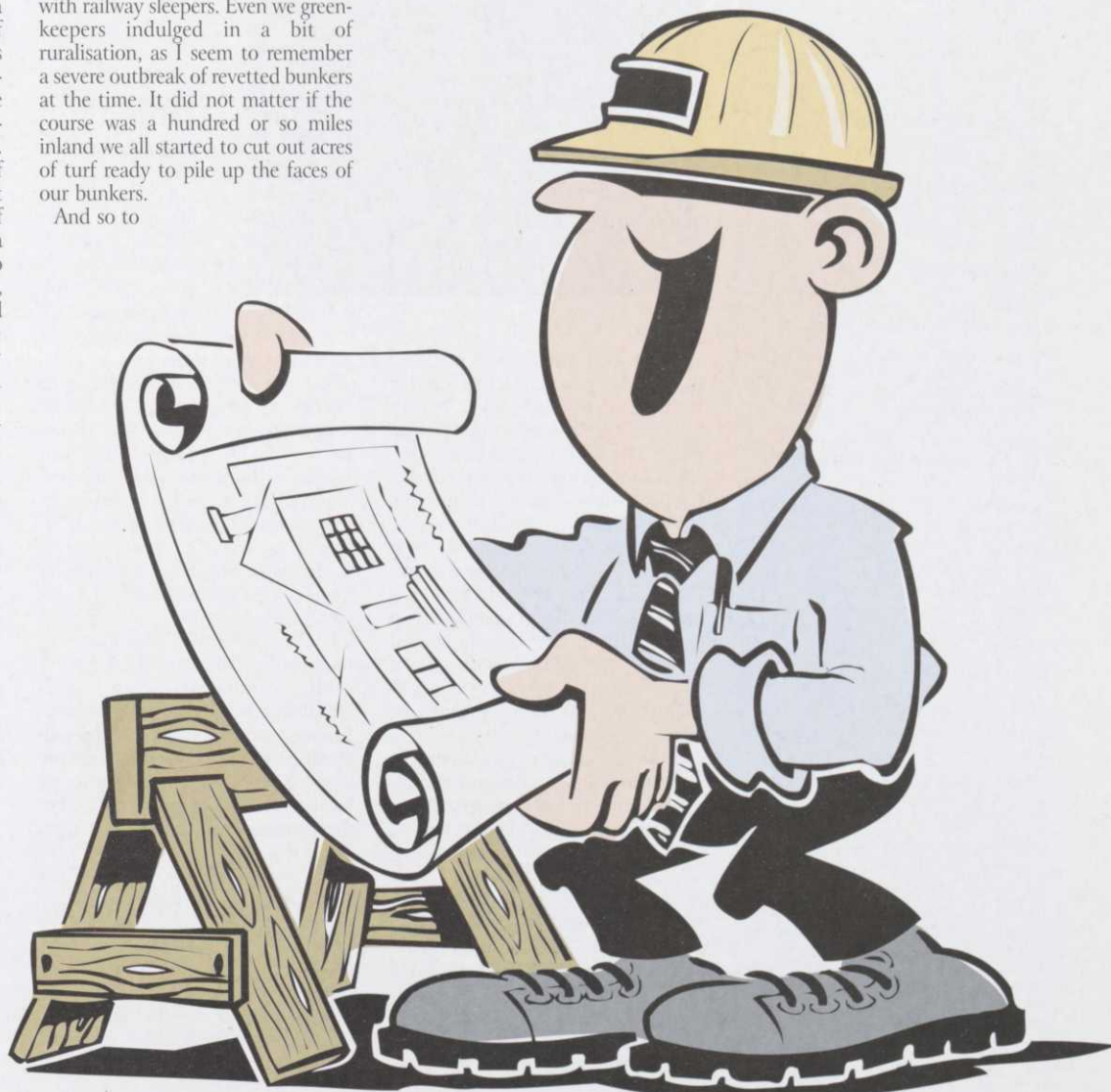
And so to

today. The key word in house fashion is authenticity. Houses are sold as having original features. The coveing, panelled doors and fireplaces that were ripped out in the 50's are now being replaced with a vengeance. It does not matter whether it is Victorian Gothic, Georgian or even 70's kitsch; it must be reproduced and conserved at all costs. It has even got to the stage where ghastly 60's tower blocks are listed as being architecturally significant. And so it is with golf courses. People are regressing to their roots and reproducing the original design features of old. Bunkers are remodelled with creative shapes and mounds and their edges allowed to grow wild. Large areas of rough grassland are recreated and in some cases even the dreadful lines of

leylandii and poplars are being replaced with the indigenous alternative.

The future? Well could we take things a logical step further and start to appreciate the more subtle shades of green that are to be found on our older more unaffected courses. A need for change and a rejection of the past has inspired us before. So now that the past is the multicoloured world of artificial courses, perhaps the future is to reject these synthetic abhorations and to embrace not only the design concepts of bygone ages but also their colours and textures as well.

Sandy McDivot. Head Greenkeeper,
Sludgcombe Pay and Play



Feature listing from September '99

September '99: Staley 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 Bonalack 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; Valderrama report; Westurf preview

April 2000: Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC; Utility Vehicles; Irrigation; Seed breeding; Gem Professional profile.

May 2000: Ross-on-Wye GC; Top Dressing; Course Mapping; Compact Tractors

June 2000: National Championship preview; Spraying; World Education Conference review; Environmental Management; Mowers

July 2000: Open Championship Preview; Dougal Duguid Court Case Report; Pest Control; Aventis profile; Course Conditioning

August 2000: Open Championship review; Water Features; Saltex preview; Charcoal; Malone GC; Royal County Down; Grand Tour Scholarship

September 2000: Blowers and Sweepers; Berkshire College Academy; National Championship roundup; Gordon McKillop interview; Winter health checks

October 2000: Toro Awards Preview; Ronald Fream; Irrigation; Saltex Review; Pest Control; Woburn GC

November 2000: Grass Cutting Machinery; Clandeboye GC; Drainage; National Championship review; Leatherjacket management

December 2000: Toro Awards; Making the most of your Dealer; Budget Boosters; BTME2001 preview; BIGGA/Bernhards CGSA delegation preview

January 2001: Communication; Tyres; Turf diseases; Kingsbarns Golf Links; Environment Competition Winner - Dyke GC; Talking Heads - Pest Control

February 2001: BTME2001 review; Winter Mowing; Irrigation; Broadstone GC; Hedges; Security

March 2001: York GC; Greens Maintenance; Meland GC, Norway; Greens Mowers; BIGGA Essay Winner; Grass Science profile

April 2001: Lightning detection; Brockett Hall GC; CGSA report; Fairway Mowers; Irrigation; Sward renovation; BIGGA Essay winner; Turf Disease

May 2001: Foot and Mouth Disease Special Report; Maintenance Facility report; Bunker Sand; ATVs; RainBird Profile; Fineturf Genetics; BTME2002 countdown; Electric-powered machines

June 2001: Stoke Park Club profile; Stuart Cagle MG; Tractors; Leaf Spot Disease; Take All Patch; Construction

July 2001: Royal Lytham profile; Tees Mowers; Fertilisers; Green Grasses; John Deere profile; Sandy McDivot; College Listings

August 2001: Aeration Survey; Machrie GC profile; Rough Mowers; Saltex Preview; Dr Alan Gange - environmental research; Hayter Profile; Ponds; Open Championship review; Toro Student of the Year profile;



Award month



Immediately after finishing this column I have the great pleasure of travelling up to Stoke Park to present the club with its Golden Key plaque. As we have said before we're all delighted that Stoke Park has shown the foresight in being the first golf club to contribute so generously to the Education and Development Fund through the Golden Key programme. We do hope that more clubs become involved because, after all, it is the golf clubs which ultimately benefit from all the good work that is carried out as a direct result of the existence of BIGGA's Education and Development Fund.

I'm also pleased to be making the visit because I haven't been to Stoke Park for many years and I'm looking forward to having a good look at the golf course.

Talking about presentations, I can't go on without congratulating Walter Woods on becoming the next recipient of the prestigious Old Tom Morris Award, made annually by the GCSAA. We're all very proud of Walter who was the Association's first Chairman in 1987 when he combined the role with his demanding "day job" of maintain-

ing high standards, at the St Andrews Links courses. He has done huge amounts to advance greenkeeping as a career in general as well as given so many young greenkeepers a boost in their own career development.

Past winners of the Award include Arnold Palmer, President Gerald Ford, Bob Hope and Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, while the last winner was Tim Finchem, Commissioner of the US Tour. So you can see the exalted company Walter is keeping. It is a great honour for Walter, particularly as it is in the name of a fellow St Andrews man, and a great honour for our Association.

I'd like to thank all the members who took part in the recent R&A funded survey conducted by Mike Williamson. The Board are currently looking at the responses and we shall report back at a later date on the findings. While in Yorkshire for the Board meeting to discuss the report I took the opportunity to call in on Simon Haynes, at Skipton Golf Club. Simon used to work for me and has been made welcome by the locals on his move north.

His golf course was surrounded by sheep but the course was still open. In contrast we've just returned from a short break in the South West - a bit like Tony and Cherie Blair - and there is still a great deal of evidence of the

Foot and Mouth outbreak. It seems there are different rules in place for different parts of the country.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish Dave Sammels and his team at The De Vere Belfry all the very best for the Ryder Cup later this month. Having been in the same position myself in 1981 I know the pressures involved in preparing a course for a Ryder Cup. With the way the Cup has grown over the last 20 years they are even greater now, so I hope that Dave and the team get the weather to show the course off to its best advantage and none of the problems adverse weather can bring.

Saltex is just around the corner and I look forward to seeing many of you in Windsor. You know you are all welcome at the BIGGA stand for a chat, information or just to say hello.

Just before I finish I'd just like to say that working on a heathland golf course I particularly enjoy this time of year when the heather is in full bloom and everything is looking very nice. It makes you forget the problems of earlier in the year... or very nearly does at any rate!

Clive Osgood, Chairman