

Happy Greenkeeper responds

It's the 8th of April 2002, I arrive home from work at approximately 4pm. Yippee! The excitement of the new issue of Greenkeeper International sitting on the door mat, I can't control myself any longer and rip open the plastic envelope. First things first let's look at the jobs' page to see who has been moving around. Nobody I know has moved so on to the second part of the magazine that most people look at, the letters page. One heading caught my eye, "A Right to Replay from Denmark".

This could be interesting I thought. A quick skim through the letter and "Oh my God!" my name at the bottom of the second column. A more thorough read was required. It starts off well with a thank you from Mr Ian C Tomlinson for my letter in the February issue but it quickly took a downturn, and by the time I had read to the end of the third column I was the worst greenkeeper in the world. I should have been burnt at the stake like an old medieval witch, or put in the stocks at BIGGA HQ so all greenkeepers could throw bags of rotten seed or sponges soaked in Farmura at me. (Only joking I know they don't burn witches any more).

Once I stopped the tears after this violent attack of words I read through the letter again then I read my own letter again. I believe that Ian missed the whole point of my original letter. The whole point was that more communication is needed from Greenkeepers to members, committees and other members of the golf clubs management team and vice versa to ensure that the needs of the golfers are met without compromising the condition of, or the maintenance of the golf course. The education of greenkeepers is now so

much improved it could now be the time to start educating the golfers.

Ian may well be fluent in French and have a working knowledge of German but he can not copy a simple passage of English from another issue of this magazine as I was misquoted in Ian's letter. Ian's version of my letter changes the context in which it was written. But don't worry Ian I won't sue you for liable. (BIGGA legal help line advised against the long and expensive court case)

Having read Ian's article in the January issue, which was both interesting and well written, it became apparent that we have very similar problems to deal with at work, in both cases inherited, and both deal with them in a very similar ways. So why this clashing of the pens? Maybe the pen truly is mightier than the sword.

We are all fighting for the same cause but we have different ideas how to achieve the final goal, perhaps some of us should sit down with some of the National board and throw some ideas around for the way forward and stop all this internal arguing, among us, the greenkeepers.

If Ian or any other member of the association would like to discuss my first letter or any other matter with me in person I can always be contacted on 07702 435122 and would be more than happy to chat.

PS. As a final point we hollow or solid tine and top dress every month from April to October and Slit tine almost every week as the weather allows through the Winter months. So we do aerate at Cleethorpes.

Leslie Howkins, "STILL HAPPY" Head Greenkeeper, Cleethorpes Golf Club

Sharing the knowledge 2

Ian Cheney's comments ("Sharing the Knowledge," April, 2002) regarding informing golfers, whether members or fee paying guests, about maintenance operations are absolutely right. Explaining maintenance operations, why they have to be done, how they will be carried out, and when, further improves greenkeeper/golfer relations through improved communication. This also demonstrates to the golfer that the greenstaff are knowledgeable and fully conversant with all aspects of golf course maintenance.

A better educated golfer will be more understanding of the problems and difficulties that can arise at any given time. Those greenkeepers that feel golfers shouldn't know about the maintenance operations may only be masking their own lack of knowledge, or inability to explain or justify their maintenance regimes.

Like Ian I too believe that there are qualifications to suit the individuals career aspirations, and that BIGGA is putting too much emphasis on NVQ's. In the article Education and Training Update (February, 2002), Ken Richardson as the Education and Training Manager of BIGGA spoke

as briefly as possible about qualifications such as national certificates through to post-graduate degrees. He stated that "these qualifications show what the holder knows and not necessarily what they can do" which may or may not be true. But in the context of the article he implies that these qualifications are not as good as NVQ's. Ironically, these are the qualifications (NC, HNC, BSc (Hons) etc) all of which can be taken on a part-time basis, that BIGGA should be promoting if it wants the industry to be taken as a serious profession.

Finally, before everyone writes in to say that there is no substitute for experience, I completely agree, but only if this is experience of the correct management techniques. We don't have to look too far back in history to see the problems that resulted from the feed and water brigade, which thankfully is a dying breed.

Colin Mumford

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'THE TURFTIME TEASER' DETAILS ON PAGE 48

Review: Turf Management for Golf Courses

Jim has drawn on a wide range of experts from across the US to help produce this updated version which covers: Golf and Turfgrass; Designing and Building a Golf Course; the Putting Green; The Tee; The Fairway; The Rough; The Bunker; Golf Course Equipment and Facilities; The Irrigation System; Pests and Stress; Golf Course Management and other Golf Course Operations.

Although aimed at the American market and written in American English, this book contains a vast amount of information useful to the British Greenkeeper. It includes a large number of colour plates, diagrams and flow charts to illustrate the well written text. Indeed, the Chapter on Pests and Stress introduces you to pests and

diseases that you may never encounter. However, if you do, then you will be able to identify and control them using the information in this book. A word of caution, however, not all chemicals approved for Golf Course use in the US are approved in the UK.

The Chapter on Management gives an insight into the way that golf courses are structured in the US, giving Job Descriptions for a range of staff. The specifications for Superintendent and Deputy closely resemble those of Course Managers and Deputies. However, not many British courses have a Fertiliser Technician and I think that we call a Landscape Horticulturist a Gardener. Joking apart, this Chapter contains useful information on Staff Training, and Appraisal, Communications, Grievance

and Discipline and Record Keeping.

The final chapter of the book looks at Championship and Tournament Preparation, Water Features and Landscaping, including a vast range of trees that can be used on golf courses.

The book closes with information on Grass Identification, Seeding and Planting, the Measurement of Areas, Conversion Tables and a Glossary of Terms.

Despite the cost, this book is a useful guide to greenkeeping and golf course management. Care must be taken to interpret its guidance into local language and apply it to the rules and conditions of your country. A useful addition to any bookshelf, it would sit well alongside Jim Arthur's 'Practical Greenkeeping'. **KR**



Turf Management for Golf Courses

Second Edition by Dr James B Beard

This new edition of Turf Management for Golf Courses is now available from the STRI priced at £90 plus £8 post and packing. It represents a major update on the First Edition but retains a similar format and organisation.

BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, gives some health and safety advice and highlights the 2002 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

Education and Training Feedback

Advice and information on health and safety continues to arrive on my desk and two recent articles may well have relevance to greenkeepers and golf clubs.

Anyone using trichloroethylene as a cleaning/degreasing agent in their workshops should be aware that trichloroethylene has been reclassified. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published an Information Sheet following the announcement that trichloroethylene is to be reclassified as carcinogenic under the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 1994. The Information Sheet gives advice on what the reclassification means for users of the solvent, and what action they should take to comply with the change.

Copies of 'Surface cleaning: Solvent update including the reclassification of trichloroethylene', Engineering Information Sheet No.34, are available free from HSE Books on Tel: 01787 881165.

Although not in greenkeeping, the

story, below illustrates the consequences of inadequate training and/or supervision. Are all of your staff trained to operate golf course machinery?

A warehouse worker has received almost £2.4 million in an out-of-court settlement following a lift truck accident. Greg Arde was working for stationery company Duel Limited in Cwmbran, South Wales, when the accident happened on 11 April 1995. Arde was driving a lift truck around a sharp corner when it overturned, crushing him underneath it. Arde's spine was broken in three places, and he is now paralysed from the waist down. Arde claimed that he had not received any training on how to drive lift trucks, and was left unsupervised at the time of the accident. Duel Limited accepted 90 per cent liability for the accident.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

Thanks to sponsorship from the R&A and the continued involvement

of STRI, the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition will run again in 2002. Invitations to enter have been sent to all golf clubs in Great Britain and we require entry forms to be returned by 21 June 2002.

All entries will be reviewed by STRI ecologists, who will select the clubs to progress to the next stage of judging. Selected clubs will receive a visit to assess their level of environmental management before the judges select a winner from each area ie. Scotland, the North, the South East, the South West and Wales. The judges will then select an overall winner. Each area winner will receive a cheque for £500 and a plaque to hang in their clubhouse and the National Winner will receive a cheque for £2000, the BIGGA Golf Environment Trophy and a plaque to hang in their clubhouse.



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, please contact Neil Thomas, Executive Director on 01347 833800 or via admin@bigga.co.uk

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Epani

EDUCATION KEY SKILLS CORNER

Having looked at Capital Letters and Full Stops, this month's Key Skills Corner looks at commas.

Commas:

indicate a natural pause; separate items in a list; 'bracket' information that could be omitted; are used before quotations.

For Example.

When you read a sentence aloud, a comma should be placed where you pause.

When he saw that the green was clear, he decided to cut the fairway.

Three greenkeepers attended the course, although John missed the first morning.

Separate items in a list

You will need a pen, paper and scale ruler.

The large, green, fairway mower is unserviceable.

'Bracket' information that could be omitted.

You will need to bring all of the equipment, including a turf iron, when you come.

Players must wear appropriate clothing, including golf shoes, on this course.

Before quotations.

The Chairman of Green said, "We must rebuild the ninth tee".

There is also a comma after quotations if the sentence carries on.

"Income from green fees has increased by 20%", said the Treasurer.

Beware, you can change the meaning of a sentence by using commas.

Jack cut the green. (Fact)
 Jack, cut the green (Order)

Here is an example for you to try, which includes capital letters, full stops and commas.

btme is held in harrogate north yorkshire each january run by bigga the exhibition includes something for everyone exhibits include sand seed machinery and course furniture a spokesman for bigga said that 2003 was the best year yet

Last month's solution

Thank you for attending the recent Annual General Meeting of the North East Section. I have enclosed a copy of the minutes for your information. Please contact Sid Jones if you wish to attend the next golf day. Do you wish to attend BTME this year?

The groundwork is crucial when you're claiming the earth

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BACK TO THE FUTURE



Above: Neil in the foyer of BIGGA HOUSE on a sunny spring day

Below: The BTME Steering Committee in session

Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pastures new ...

So I left a green and pleasant land and I invite the reader to come with me to the first Monday in the month of August 1987. That very morning, a homespun Welshman arrived at a building set in woods in a place of wild delights called Bingley, somewhere in deepest Yorkshire. It had an imposing name, the Sports Turf Research Institute, not that it meant much to this writer. The STRI had been designated as BIGGA's first 'home' and my moment of destiny had arrived - to set up, organise and administer this new body, formed after two traumatic years which had finally seen the three previous greenkeeping Associations coming together under the BIGGA umbrella.

Little time to reflect on the hills and dales I had left behind, my induction to the world of greenkeeping was to be short, sharp and severe - here's what you have, now get on with it!

What did I have? Well I had a small empty office, save for a desk and

chair. I had been told to collect £15 per head in subscription from some 1200 greenkeepers, members of the previous Associations, who might or might not, choose to join BIGGA. I was advised that a computer system, an exhibition and a magazine were required - like now! So we were off down a long and winding road which brought us to Aldwark Manor, to a portacabin, then rented offices and finally in 1998 into BIGGA HOUSE. I am not intent on an historical account of BIGGA's journey down 15 years but we must reflect briefly on our beginnings to understand and appreciate how far the Association and thereby greenkeeping, for BIGGA has most certainly enhanced the profession, have come since our unheralded beginnings in the Bingley of long ago.

Today our members have a national headquarters, an Association increasingly recognised as one of golf's leading bodies and one which is organised through five Regions and 27 Sections incorporating some 7300

members. It is a go ahead, professional organisation which does not stand still and seeks to look to the future and particularly its members' futures. So in this article it is not the past or even the present upon which I shall dwell but rather I shall look a little further down the long and winding road as our journey continues.

Securing the future ...

Let me start with BTME and Greenkeeper International magazine. These have been major factors in our growth and development. It is all too easy to be sucked into their success and become complacent. This we will not do. We are governed by market forces, supply and demand and there will never be a time when this will be otherwise. So we are intent on developing the Golf Club Show to complement the BTME while continuing to grow the latter, ensuring that it remains in tune with the times and continues to consolidate its position as the leading turf exhibition in Europe. I do hope that the Association of Golf Club Secretaries, with whom we have an excellent relationship, will join with us in establishing and promoting the Golf Club Show for a 'one stop shop' encompassing all of a golf club's needs is surely both desirable and attainable with all interested parties pulling together.

Our magazine is strongly positioned in the market place after 12 years. Times are not easy with the magazine no exception to the downturn in advertising nationally. We will fight our corner knowing how valued a publication it is for both our members and the trade. It is a quality product in design and production and I have been encouraged in recent months by the increasing comments, suggestions and constructive criticism from members as to its future content and direction. These will be taken on board and the magazine must develop in line with the profession and the game. We are intent





Above: Early spring at BIGGA HOUSE (rear view) and below: BIGGA HOUSE - imposing main entrance

on providing ever stronger editorial.

The magazine must not stay rooted in the past and comparing early issues with those of the present day, it is clear that 'Greenkeeper International' has indeed come a long way. It needs to be a standard bearer in taking BIGGA and the profession forward and we will continue to strive to that end.

Dawn of a new day ...

Within BIGGA, the future education and training of greenkeepers will remain of prime importance. More than at any time in the past decade there are serious grounds for optimism. Often in the past we have seemed to be going down a dark tunnel but now there is certainly light at the end of it. A real sense of shared responsibilities is emerging - employer and employee. BIGGA now has a presence, through Gordon Child, and a full vote on the newly constituted 'GTC Limited' - a company limited by guarantee. We have a dual presence on the GTC Technical Committee through Kerran Daly and now with our Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, recently invited to attend meetings. David Golding, in turn, will attend meetings of our own Education Sub-Committee. Attitudes are changing within the Unions represented on the GTC - an acceptance that all interested parties must work together. Indeed our relationships with the other golfing organisations are more cooperative and progressive than at any time in BIGGA's past.

In the longer term there must be hope of increased funding for greenkeeper training. Much remains to be done particularly with regard to the inconsistent teaching and standards at the colleges. It is unacceptable that so many golf clubs still refuse to make provision in their budgets for the training of their greenkeeping staff. Then there are those clubs that insist on their staff taking annual leave to pursue their training needs. We will



continue in seeking to eradicate such outmoded and ill advised traits. There will still be frustrations and setbacks which in many ways mirror the national concerns in the education field. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that our profession is held in high regard for its progress in the training field - many other professions remain rooted in the past and light years behind. I am confident

that the future will bring many opportunities for the discerning and committed greenkeeper to attain first class qualifications leading onto a full and satisfying career.

A need to belong ...

BIGGA is a large member organisation, currently with some 7300 members, and the second largest worldwide. Our membership benefits

are comprehensive and excellent in terms of value for money. Often they are underestimated, but when the need arises and the case proven the support for the individual is first class. I was recently looking at a Claims Report under our legal support scheme and recent payouts have seen individuals receiving sums in excess of £19000, £15000 and £13000 as well as a large number of smaller amounts. These individuals did not join BIGGA for such reasons but in times of trouble I am sure that they would not question the benefits of BIGGA membership. There is strength in numbers and BIGGA needs more members. There are still far too many greenkeepers oblivious to the benefits of membership, in some cases discouraged by their clubs from joining or even by fellow greenkeepers. This needs to change as does the view at some golf clubs that BIGGA is a 'trade union'. What a ridiculous assertion. BIGGA is and will continue to be a professional body there to support its members both in their careers and times of need. The record proves this to be the case. The challenge for the future is to tackle pockets of resistance and opposition and the result will be an ever stronger, still more effective Association.

Change is in the air ...

In 2001 BIGGA commissioned a market research survey to help us in our future planning. A number of key issues arising from this survey are now under appraisal and consideration by the Association, not least a review of our current three tier structure. Any changes in our structure need to be most carefully considered as they will fundamentally affect the way in which BIGGA operates in the future. I would urge members to take an interest in and contribute to the current discussions. There needs to be clarity of both mind and purpose to ensure that correct and effective decisions are forthcoming for the future good of the Association.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Muddied waters ...

This article is looking ahead and where all is not well, we must be prepared to take action now.

BIGGA's members are bound by the Association's Code of Ethics. One of the tenets laid down in this code is that a member will 'refrain from encouraging or accepting considerations of any value which might be deemed an inducement to find favour for a particular party or influence decisions in relation to that party and at all times avoid any exploitation of my Association, industry or profession'. I am sometimes asked how often cases are brought to my attention which violate this code and the answer is few and far between. When the waters are muddied, those prepared to put their heads above the parapet and come forward with evidence are generally noticeable only by their absence. Let me say at once that any members proven guilty of such conduct will have no place within BIGGA or, I would hope, within greenkeeping at large.

However, it takes two to tango. BIGGA would need to examine its relationship with any company proven guilty of offering such inducements. While proof is not

forthcoming, there are certainly stronger whispers than usual at present that some companies are indulging in such inducements. Where there are undesirable practices those working within the profession and the industry must come together to stamp them out. Again where golf clubs have proven cases they will benefit both the Association and the industry in making details available. Breaching our Code of Ethics is certainly not the way to move forward.

Sadly, I find it necessary to comment on an increasingly unethical practice being adopted by a number of companies within the industry. This relates to unauthorised use of BIGGA's membership data. Both 'Greenkeeper International' and the BIGGA Golf Directory are quite specific in this regard... 'Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission'. BIGGA regards breaches of copyright as a serious issue but looking to the future essentially it wishes to work in partnership with companies rather than at arms length from those companies who choose to misuse our membership data.

In this age of computer technology, we now notice that BIGGA copyright is being 'lifted' onto websites without so much as a by your leave. I can only say that we are on the case.

All for one and one for all ...

BIGGA has always been an inclusive Association, incorporating members at all levels within the profession and appreciating that with its large membership, the needs and aspirations of its members will be diverse. There is, therefore, a place for all greenkeepers within BIGGA and this needs to be clearly stated as it is a premise that will continue in the years ahead. There are those who choose to talk of elitism within BIGGA. Nothing could be further from the truth. However, I will pass comment on this charge of elitism being applied to one category of members in particular, the Master Greenkeepers. It is both unjust and unwarranted. They are a group for whom I have much admiration. These members have earned their status through ability, experience and dedication. Significantly they put much back into both the Association and the profession and most surely will continue to do so in the future. As a group they are well respected and will have a significant role in an Association which welcomes greenkeepers of whatever designation into its ranks.

BIGGA at home ...

Since October 1998, BIGGA HOUSE has been the permanent

Right: The monthly staff meeting



headquarters base for the Association and the hub of the Association's activities. Staff are there to serve members' needs, to help realise their aspirations and to continue to strive for the greenkeeping profession to be at the forefront of the game of golf. I believe staff have a close empathy with our members to whom their knowledge and experience is made freely available. In the future, I hope that many more members will take the opportunity to visit their headquarters. With such visits invariably comes the realisation of how far BIGGA has progressed since 1987.

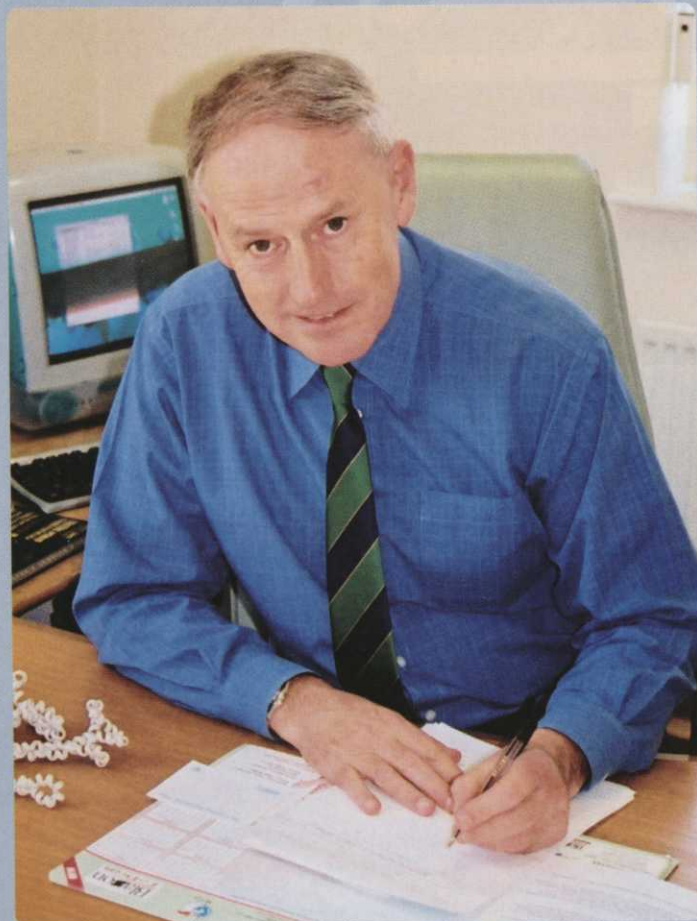
Safeguarding your future ...

Our Association does at times reflect the conservatism to be found in so many golf clubs. That is perhaps quite natural. However, as BIGGA moves ahead, it must embrace and keep pace with change.

At the end of last year, the Board of Management decided to establish the 'Futures' Sub-Committee and to invite a broad cross-section of the membership to serve on it. In early May, the first meeting of the Sub-Committee comprising 12 members including Chairman Elliott Small, will be held at BIGGA HOUSE. The Terms of Reference will include:-

- Education and Training requirements
- Employer/Manager responsibilities - education and training
- Job Analyses
- Liaison with Greenkeepers Training Committee Technical Committee
- Liaison with Standing Committee on Greenkeepers Salaries and Conditions of Employment
- Communication with the industry and the game
- Funding
- Review of BIGGA's three tier structure
- Code of Ethics/Professionalism/Status of Greenkeepers

Below: Neil - attending to business





Below: Regional Administrators' meeting



I am excited by this development and believe that the input from this Sub-Committee will considerably strengthen the Association. The Board of Management has acted with foresight in ensuring that the 'Futures' of greenkeepers and the profession are subject to the widest possible debate and consultation.

Time, like an ever rolling stream ...

Finally, I pose the question as to just why greenkeepers choose to join BIGGA. There will be a myriad of reasons. Many will say it is the wide ranging benefits of membership. The education and training available within

BIGGA will be another dominant reason. Others will say it is for the camaraderie and sense of belonging. During their time with BIGGA, there will be serious debate, key issues to be faced and vital decisions to be taken. There will be responsibilities. However, we must not take ourselves too seriously for BIGGA should also encompass fun and enjoyment, pleasure in the company of fellow greenkeepers, happy days and a sense of shared achievement and success.

Time spent with BIGGA will be transient and we must work together to ensure that the legacy for future generations of greenkeepers will be that of a strong, vibrant and progres-

sive Association fully established as one of the game's leading bodies. It will be widely respected both for its services to its members and also to the profession and game in general. We have come a considerable distance down the long and winding road but to pass on that legacy we need to continue the journey with vision, dedication and the vitality which has marked our first 15 years.

**Time present and time past,
Are both perhaps present
in time future,
And time future contained
in time past.**



Code of Ethics

This Code is established to promote and maintain the highest professional standards of service and conduct among the membership of BIGGA. Through adherence to this Code, members will gain for themselves recognition of individual integrity, responsibility and professionalism whilst enhancing generally the respect and good will for both their profession and Association.

As a member of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, I accept this Code and pledge myself to:

1. Set standards of personal conduct which will enhance the stature of the profession of golf course management.
2. At all times carry out my duties and responsibilities in such a manner as to reflect favourably on the profession and Association.
3. Seek to use every opportunity to broaden my professional expertise for both self improvement and the good of the profession.
4. Follow, as a basic tenet, sound business and turf management principles in exercising the responsibilities of my post.
5. Observe the highest standards of personal integrity in my relationship with fellow greenkeepers as well as other associated individuals and at all times, as far as I am able, assist my fellow greenkeepers as required of me.
6. Pursue job advancement only where vacancies arise and not at the expense of a fellow greenkeeper and abstain from any action, comment or communication not founded on truth which is likely to harm the professional reputation or practice of another greenkeeper.
7. Give endorsements of any kind only upon satisfactory personal experiences of the item identified.
8. Refrain from encouraging or accepting considerations of any value which might be deemed an inducement to find favour for a particular party or influence decisions in relation to that party and at all times avoid any exploitation of my Association, Industry or profession.
9. Support at every opportunity the Association, its Regions and Sections in seeking to improve the public understanding and recognition of the profession of golf course management.
10. Report to the Association any evidence likely to be in violation of this Code or Ethics.

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GRASPING THE NETTLE



Below: Ian Farrall and Tom Dickinson



Scott MacCallum visits Caldy Golf Club which has benefited from a decision to solve their course problems in a decisive manner

Faced with a chronic drainage problem, which had seen nine months lost to golf in the last two years, Caldy Golf Club grasped the nettle in a manner which could well provide a template for other clubs in the same position.

Under the stewardship of Chairman of Green, Tom Dickinson, and Head Greenkeeper, Ian Farrall, the Wirral-based club has rebuilt six greens to USGA specification, five tees and installed a completely new drainage system covering the entire course over the winter period and, weather permitting, the course should be ready to welcome in the new playing season in June.

It was the incredibly wet winters over the last two years, which had seen the course closed, and under as much as eight or nine feet of water, for five months last year and four

months the year before, which convinced Tom, Ian and the Green Committee that it was time for drastic action.

"The course is split by the Wirral Way, a nature trail developed from a former railway line, and one half is clay sitting on sand and the other is sand sitting on clay and try as we might we just couldn't find a way of getting rid of standing water," explained Ian.

As Tom explained, they discovered that the unfortunate soil profile was only part of the problem on the course which hosted The Caldy Classic on the European Ladies' Tour in the mid 80s.

"We had tried rodding out the drains but finally found that the old drainage, installed when the land was still agricultural, was broken in places and had totally silted up. In effect it

GRASPING THE NETTLE

Facing page: The R&A had early assisted with the funding for coastal defences and you can see how they have protected the golf course while the unprotected area further down has eroded considerably

"I see my job as giving the guys support, encouragement and the investment necessary to get Caldy Golf Club to the standard we aspire to and then to communicate with, and manage, the membership, rather than the other way round"

Caldy GC Chairman of Green, Tom Dickinson

Below: The newly designed 17 green makes it a real feature hole

Bottom: This duck will soon have to find a new home other than the 16th fairway!

Far right: How the course was for much of the year



had collapsed. We realised then that any attempted 'patch-up' just wasn't going to work," he said.

Having made that decision it became apparent that the financial implications were enormous.

"When we started to get quotes together I must admit that I thought we might be able to do it for about £150,000, but I was way off because to do the job properly to the proper spec was going to cost almost double that," revealed Tom.

Having already received substantial funding from the R&A for cliff protection work 10 years ago they realised that any other central funding would be limited so it was to its members that the club turned for the finance to complete the job.

Caldy's Past Captains then came up with a superb idea which benefited both the members, who wished to make a contribution to the project, and the club itself.

"We created a Members' Loan Note Scheme whereby members who loaned money to the club were able to benefit from a substantial reduction in their annual subscriptions

depending upon the amount of money they loaned. It was a win-win situation from the club's point of view and the members put their hands in their pockets and came up with the entire sum of money required to fund the project over one year," explained Tom.

Prior to that, Ian and Tom had hoped to do the job as quickly as possible to keep disruption to a minimum but it hadn't looked possible.

"Originally we had been told that we could do it over two years but when we decided that we wanted to rebuild six of the greens as well it looked as though it would be over four years which I didn't like one little bit," revealed Tom, explaining that he felt it would be unfair to Ian and his team to manage the disruption over such a period.

And it was not just on the issue of disruption that Ian felt a phased introduction of the work could cause problems.

"Doing six greens over four years would have meant that each green built would have had a different maturity but now, having done them all over the same period it means that they will be much easier to look after.

Having listened to both Ian and to Alistair Beggs, of the STRI, about the best approach Tom went back to the Board and talked about doing the work over two years as a possible compromise.

However, the key to the decision to bite the bullet and do the work over the course of one winter and spring was an EGM attended by the Course Architect, Cameron Sinclair, who designed the new greens, and Barry Cooper, of the Leicester Drainage Company, who was contracted to undertake the drainage work.

"I think once the programme had been explained to them the members were very much on our side," said Tom, whose own professional experience in Sales and Marketing did much to ensure that the project was "sold" in the most effective manner.

"Not only did we get the support to spend all the money, the body of opinion was that they'd rather not do it over two years but that they wanted to do it over one. This was music to our ears because it was where we'd started."

It was at this stage that the Members' Loan Note scheme was launched and the entire funding for the project was put in place.