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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

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Cover artwork by Graham Gaches



Welcome

MORE THAN JUST NAVAL GAZING

As I promised last month the July magazine looks at how you, the greenkeeper, are perceived by others. It may appear to be an exercise in little more than navel gazing but it is actually extremely important. If you don't know how well, or otherwise, you are considered by the people around you then you are in no position to do anything about it. It's as simple as that.

And let's face it even your biggest supporters, those who fight the greenkeepers' corner when push comes to shove, don't always really know the levels of expertise required to do the job to its fullest. They may know that there is more to it than cutting grass. They may even know it involves identifying diseases and introducing the cultural practices to prevent them. But very few will know the complete range of skills required to produce a well maintained golf course.

And no, the complete greenkeeper doesn't - or to put it into the language of my birth "disney" - attend "Mickey Mouse" courses in the country's educational establishments and pick up meaningless qualifications. I've harped on about it on more than one occasion but when the former Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Whitehead, routinely devalues the work of greenkeepers by grouping the training courses with those of Beer Making, Flower Arranging and Circus Studies, it shows the size of the task we have ahead of ourselves when it comes to increasing the respect you should have for doing such a complex and involved job.

The people who have kindly taken part in the "See Yourself as Others See You" feature are all golf people and they do have a positive opinion of your work but they are aware of the problems and I would bet that if you were to ask them detailed questions even those who spend their lives writing about golf and golfers would struggle a little.

A concerted approach to promoting the qualities and skills of BIGGA members is what is required, and over the next few months plans will be put in place to make that happen.

Please take part in the exercise. If you have any examples of greenkeepers being treated badly by golfers, or indeed the converse, please write to me at BIGGA HOUSE or email me at scott@bigga.co.uk. It will all help when it comes to putting a campaign together. Obviously anonymity will be respected if requested. We don't want to make too many martyrs!

I genuinely believe that this is the key to everything. If you are identified and seen as professionals you will be treated as professionals

I close with some good news. Gordon McKillop, of the STRI, is back behind his desk in Bingley. Doesn't sound too significant on the face of it but Gordon suffered a health scare recently and the fact that he is back shuffling papers around his desk again is very good news indeed.

Scott MacCallum, Editor



The Devon and Cornwall Section held a Machinery Maintenance Workshop last month at Seale Hayne College, Newton Abbot. Over 60 members were in attendance, in what proved to be a tremendously successful event. All attendees received certificates from Toro and Ransomes Jacobsen. The Section would like to thank Clive Pinnock and Toro, Alan Dommet and Devon Garden Machinery, Glen Forsdyke and Ransomes Jacobsen and Patrick Flegg, of P.J.Flegg Ltd, for their contributions in making the day such a success.

HISTORY LESSON

New guidance on golf courses in historic landscapes is to be produced by Land Use Consultants for English Heritage. This will review the past, present and future effects of golf course development on historic landscapes, provide criteria for assessment of golf course developments and best practice advice on design, management and planning control and policy.

The project will question assumptions on developments such as golf courses in the historic environment and will thoroughly examine the current situation and future trends to produce a positive and practical guidance document of use to a wide audience from golf course architects to developers, local planning officers and golf course owners and managers.

The study will focus on golf within nationally designated landscapes in particular those on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, but it will also consider best practice within the wider historic environment including World Heritage Sites, Listed Battlefields, Conservation Areas, National Parks, and on the

settings of Listed Buildings within these landscapes.

Working with Land Use Consultants on the project will be the landscape historian David Lambert, formerly Conservation Officer for the Garden History Society, and golf course architect Tom Mackenzie of Donald Steel and Company.

Consultation will be an important part of the process of developing the guidance and initial input is sought from individuals and organisations involved in golf course development, management and the historic environment.

Details of good practice in design, planning policy and practice and landscape management would be particularly welcome. A consultation form is available to be downloaded from www.landuse.co.uk or english-heritage.org.uk/parksandgardens or by contacting Jane Wilson of Land Use Consultants on 020 7383 5784.

A full consultation on the draft document will take place in Autumn 2004, with final publication planned for early 2005.



The Kent Section held a well attended golf day at Hever Castle GC, hosted by Course Manager, David Wood. For report and results see Around the Green.

DE VERE SIGN UP WITH TORO

Leading hotel and leisure concern the De Vere Group plc has awarded Toro a multi-million-pound contract to re-equip all its golf courses in the UK with new turf maintenance machinery.

Under a new five-year deal - valued at up to £500,000 a year - Toro will supply a comprehensive range of turf equipment to all seven of De Vere's existing hotels with golf courses. These include four-times Ryder Cup venue The De Vere Belfry, Warwickshire, De Vere Slaley Hall, in Northumberland, and De Vere Carden Park in Cheshire.

In addition, Toro machinery will be supplied to one other site that will become part of the De Vere portfolio over the next few years - The Carrick on Loch Lomond, which is currently under construction.

"We are delighted to be working with Toro," said De Vere Golf Operations Manager, Robert Maxfield.

"The company has an excellent reputation in the industry and we are looking forward to a very successful five years," he added.

Toro's European Director of Sales, Bob Buckingham, said: "Toro is very pleased to have been chosen by De Vere as their partner for the maintenance of their portfolio of golf properties. We believe together we can introduce significant efficiencies and productivity gains that will



augment the local management of the group's high-class golf courses spread across England and Scotland.

A vital part of the agreement is the high-level of after sales service and tournament support that will be provided through Toro distributor Lely UK and its network of local dealers. Toro has also created a web-based user-guide especially for De Vere. This will log all specifications, service and other details for all of the machines so that Course Managers can see at a glance their complete history.

Peter Mansfield, Toro General Manager at distributor Lely UK, said: "Lely is delighted to be working on a flagship account with such a high-profile group as De Vere. This deal also brings great benefits to us and our dealers and we eagerly look forward to being of service."

NEW STYLE...



David Fellows, Head Greenkeeper of Cocks Moor Woods Golf Club, (Birmingham), rose to the challenge when Midland Section Secretary, Sean McDade, made the wearing of a BIGGA tie compulsory at Section events. The fine for non compliance being £1 with proceeds going to the Christmas Event's Captain's Charity.

David had long preferred the bow tie to the more conventional version so, as the Association doesn't supply the bowed variety, Sean thought he would have a ready supply of £1 coins before the year was out. That was before David, turned up at the Spring Tournament at Trentham Park GC sporting a BIGGA bow tie which was tailored by a friend of his, from an old style standard BIGGA tie.

compulsory at Section events. The fine for non compliance being £1 with proceeds going to the Christmas Event's Captain's Charity.

NEW IOG PRESIDENT

Derek Walder has been elected President of the IOG. Well-known in the industry as a former Chairman and as the IOG Saltex Site Operations Manager, Derek had a long career in horticulture and sportsturf management before his retirement three years ago.

He was handed his chain of office by retiring President Bob Corbin at a board meeting in Milton Keynes.

"This is a tremendous honour and I will continue to promote and work for the IOG with renewed vigour.

"The IOG has a bright future. To follow in the footsteps of Bob Corbin is going to be a difficult act to follow," said Derek, who is a holder of the BEM.

FRIENDS REUNITED



Suzanne Barrett (left) has been appointed Marketing Co-ordinator at Ransomes Jacobsen.

Reporting directly to Selina Flynn, Communications and Promotions Manager, Suzanne will be responsible for assisting in the planning and implementation of Ransomes Jacobsen's international marketing activities throughout the UK.

"We are delighted to welcome Suzanne to the Marketing Department. The experience she has gained through working in the Human Resources department has equipped her more than adequately for the responsibilities she will face in her new role," said Selina.

This is not Suzanne's first experience of working with Selina; previous to their time at Ransomes Jacobsen, they both attended the same primary school, The School of Jesus and Mary in Ipswich and have in fact known each other since the tender age of four!

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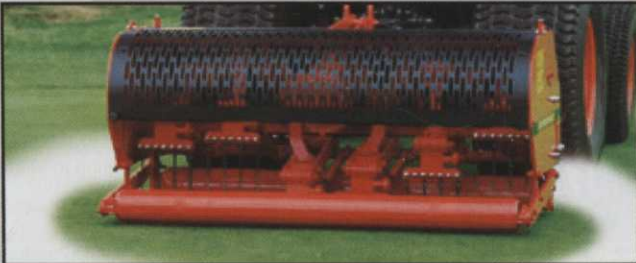


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THE MAGIC OF WENTWORTH



Around 50 greenkeepers from all over the country gave up two days of their Spring Bank Holiday to help out Chris Kennedy and the Wentworth staff for the final two days of the Volvo PGA Championship. They don't all work both days but most do and apart from the shirt and the cap their reward is a season ticket and car park pass for the whole week.

I know that this tournament is dwarfed by The Open but Wentworth really is a magical place. Just walking the course with the odd short cut takes you past houses that take your breath away with their splendour. It's not just the odd one or two but there are so many of them! Walk near the clubhouse and you are never sure who you might see if you are a 'celebrity watcher'.

The weather this year was reasonably kind,

one big spark in the sky on Sunday with just the odd shower or three. Chris Kennedy's warning on the Sunday morning of a heavy storm around one o'clock (that means squeegees out!) did not materialise. This brings me to the magical bit.

David Miller, Merrist Wood GC, had been allocated Scott Drummond's match on the Saturday. Scott had a stormer. His caddie said to David that things were so well that they wanted to keep everything the same and would David be the bunker raker on the Sunday. David explained that the allocation was pre-arranged.

Being so superstitious the caddie (and Scott) were devastated.

David duly went out early on Sunday morning but had finished before Scott Drummond had teed off. The caddie, spotting David passing the 1st tee and asked him if he would come and complete the team. David, after checking that the allocated Greenkeeper, James Lomas from Hadley Wood GC,

didn't mind complied with the request and James and David went out in tandem. The result is now well known, Scott shot a 64 to win the Championship. This brings me to the magical bit.

Being on modest expenses, your correspondent was staying some eight miles away at a very average bed and breakfast and as he had to be on the course so

early in the morning could never get the breakfast. Now Scott Drummond has won but £11,000 this last year on the tour and with family commitments he obviously could not afford the likes of the five star Pennyhill Park Hotel and similar nearby establishments. You've guessed it. Scott, his wife and four week old baby were staying in the bed and breakfast.

Seriously, thanks to all of you who volunteered your services. It made it a great occasion to retire on and it was a wonderful few days.

Derek Farrington



TOP MAN



Anthony Peterson has scooped the top prize of Overall Winner – The Most Dedicated Learner and the prize for Part-time Learner at the Oaklands College Adult Learners' Awards. Anthony was nominated by his tutor Andy Wight for showing an outstanding commitment to his studies and a determination to succeed. He collected his

certificate, a commemorative glass plaque and a cheque for £50 from the Mayor of the City and District of St Albans.

"Anthony is an excellent example of a student who has enriched his life through adult learning and has shown that it is never too late to re-enter the academic environment. His achievement is outstanding and he thoroughly deserves to be our overall winner. We wish him every success for the future," said Helen Parr, Oaklands College Principal.

"When I began the course I was really apprehensive about how I would get on. I didn't do very well at school and left without gaining any qualifications so starting the NVQ was a big step for me. I found the tutors were exceptional and truly supportive and I have really enjoyed my time at the College. I have also found that my writing skills have greatly improved which I am thrilled about as this wasn't strength for me at school," said Anthony

NEW SALES APPOINTMENTS



Rigby Taylor have made two appointments to its national amenity sales force. Steve Dickinson, previously worked for the company in the 80s and early 90s and has spent the last 10 years working for the European Tour. He will

be servicing local authority and fine turf customers in the East Midlands and East Anglia.

Ryun Holden, started his greenkeeping career at Darwen GC and joins Rigby Taylor from Oakmere Park GC where he was Course Manager for the last five years. He will be servicing customers in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire areas.



Following the first GTC article in last months GI, that explained the role of the GTC, David Golding the GTC's Education Director, highlights the changes that have taken place in greenkeeper education and training during recent years.

Hopefully, many readers of this magazine especially the more "mature" BIGGA members will remember my time as the Association's Education Officer from 1989 –1993. I left BIGGA in the spring of 1993 to "front" the Greenkeepers Training Committee. Many people found it difficult to understand why the two established bodies had to separate into individual organisations. Although separately managed and administered, the GTC offices have been and are still are "next door" to BIGGA at Aldwark Manor near York which allows the two organisations to work very closely together.

Why then did the separation of the GTC and BIGGA have to occur back in 1993?

The simple and quick answer is that BIGGA was established to represent greenkeepers and the GTC was funded by the golfers through the Home Golf Unions, the R&A and by the PGA European Tour, plus, in more recent years by contributions from BIGGA and from the GCSAI. Therefore, the change enabled the greenkeeping sector to have a "united" voice on greenkeeping matters, especially greenkeeper qualifications.

The R&A endorsed the work of the Home Unions and the greenkeeping associations not just through matched funding the members per-capita levies but through it's guidance and more recently requesting the support of the GTC to develop the excellent Golf Course Best Practice website www.bestcourseforgolf.org.

I explained the structure and aims and objectives of the GTC in the June edition of GI. The fact that the greenkeeping sector of our great sport first entered into formal training and qualifications back in the early 1960's admirably led by the greenkeepers themselves gave the reformed GTC a firm base to influence the Government on the vitally important area of greenkeeper education, training and qualifications.

In the early 90s the Government was encouraging all industries to adopt vocational qualifications, which had to be employer led. I was invited to Government led meetings that had to have, golf club employers represented otherwise we would have little or no chance of gaining Government approval for greenkeeping qualifications! However, professional bodies such as BIGGA and the IOG were given due recognition.

Therefore, to show that the GTC represented the employers, it had to be independent of BIGGA.

The GTC's vision that vocational training and qualifications were "here to stay" and that a substantial amount of Government funding would be made available to those industries who took ownership of their own qualifications has, I believe, proved vital in the improved quality of greenkeepers, greenkeeping and the subsequent improvement of playing surfaces.

Up until the introduction of vocational qualifications the most popular qualifications for greenkeepers were the City & Guilds awarded Phases and the Scottish National Certificate. Excellent awards but, for example as with the City & Guilds Phases, they very often included the passing (or failing) of an examination. Vocational qualifications (National in England Wales and Northern Ireland and Scottish in Scotland) require competence in 'doing the job' and underpinning knowledge. Many countries around the World are now keen to introduce vocational qualification and we the GTC believe it has got to be good for our sector.

When I joined BIGGA back in 1989 the concern among golf club employers at golf clubs that was highlighted in the R&A's visionary document The Way Forward was that "somebody" had to focus on giving Head Greenkeepers more and better management training. This was to ensure that through effective communication with employers, agronomists and staff they would whenever

possible uphold the traditional methods of maintaining golf courses to give golfers the opportunity to play golf 365 days per year. Oh what a challenge!

BIGGA introduced the first Management courses back in 1989 and I am pleased to see the likes of Frank Newberry and Brin Bendon still helping greenkeepers with communication training including presentation skills plus a wide range of other management skills.

The GTC with the help of BIGGA began to develop the "Headmen" and while management skills have now become the norm for the younger Course Managers many of the more mature Head Greenkeepers have really had to "dig deep" to become effective communicators. How do I know? I was that "soldier!"

We at the GTC fully recognised, even back in 1993 that the future for greenkeepers would be to establish an apprenticeship and also give those craft workers the opportunity to develop to be Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers. To become a reality, the sector had to introduce the appropriate structure and career path that suited both practical outdoor loving people as well as those who have the skills to maintain and manage our golf courses. I believe after a few battles here and there that the greenkeeping sector now has such a structure.

Today's modern Government approved apprenticeship scheme is virtually free to employers but the schemes incorporating the Sportsturf N/SVQ's are designed to be work-based and that in our case means the golf course.

The introduction of N/SVQ's to our sector in 1993 created major problems for training providers who had, traditionally, provided the more classroom, theory based. Now they were faced with the problems of at work assessment.

In simple terms, N/SVQ's were introduced to our industry to ensure that employers "controlled" the content of the qualifications and that staff gained the required skills to produce better golf courses. Easy!

The concept was and still is brilliant, be trained, be assessed and get the recognition for the job you do – National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications!

Much of the work of the GTC in recent years has involved us in implementing the apprenticeship scheme (soon to be funded for all ages throughout the UK) and in the introduction and monitoring of N/SVQ's.

KEY ISSUES WE HAVE TRIED TO ADDRESS INCLUDE:

1. Ensuring the content of the different levels of the Sportsturf vocational qualifications meets employer's needs.
2. Ensuring that the apprenticeship scheme for greenkeepers meets the needs of employers.
3. Ensuring that a network of GTC approved training providers (mainly land-based colleges) provide the education and training to the required standards within the range of turf qualifications.
4. Ensuring that any other qualifications that have been developed by colleges such as National Diploma's, HND's and the more recent Foundation Degree are related to the occupational standards required at craft, supervisory and management levels.
5. Engage the Head Greenkeepers, Course Managers and where relevant their Deputies in training to become qualified work-based trainers and assessors.

In the forthcoming months I will be discussing the various qualifications available in more detail, the role of the colleges in today's education environment and next month the vital role that Course Managers plays in the education and training of their staff.

If you cannot wait to discuss these matters you can contact the GTC on 01347 838640 or email David direct on david@the-gtc.co.uk



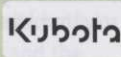
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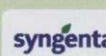
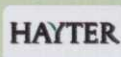
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Education Update

Time seems to fly by here at BIGGA House, especially this week, which has seen a very successful inaugural Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day, a Board of Management Meeting and a meeting of the Standing Committee on Greenkeepers Salaries.

Toro Student of the Year Competition 2004

The Regional Finals of the TORO Student of the Year Competition take place this month. The Scottish interviews are in Edinburgh on July 5, the Northern and Irish interviews are at Manchester Airport on July 6, the South East Interviews are at Hemel Hempstead on July 7, the South West Interviews are at Cheltenham on July 8 and the Midlands Interviews are at Huntingdon on July 9. Full results should appear in the August edition of the magazine.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

The deadline for entries to this year's Competition has passed. However, there is still time to get your application in to the judges if you are quick. Thanks to our sponsors WRAP, Scotts and Syngenta, we are able to offer even more prizes this year, so don't delay and send in your application today.

Continue to Learn 2005

Please remember that Continue to Learn 2005 at Harrogate next January will have even more opportunities to expand your knowledge and skills when we present five workshops and three days of seminars that cover subjects from soil science to leadership and management.

We have managed to keep costs down to give all levels of greenkeeper a chance to attend one, several, or all of these exciting sessions.

Students and lecturers have free entry to all seminar sessions that will be held in Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre on Tuesday 18, Wednesday 19 and

Thursday, January 20, 2005.

The Wednesday of Harrogate week traditionally starts with the Presentation of Awards to new Master Greenkeepers and Environment Competition Prize winners. Next year, 2005, will be no exception when at least two new Master Greenkeepers join the current 36 who hold this coveted award.

Congratulations go to Stuart Hogg, currently at Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf Club and to Ken Ingram who is the Golf Course Superintendent at Bretton Wood, Silver Spring in the USA. The next Master Greenkeeper Examination will take place on 21 and 22 October 2004.

Regional Training Courses

You should have received a Regional Training Course Leaflet in this copy of Greenkeeper International. If you have not received your copy then contact me or Sami and we shall ensure that you get a copy by return post.

Keen eyed members will see that we have had to increase the cost of the courses to £49 for one day and £99 for two days. They are still excellent value however as each day of

training costs BIGGA approximately £120.

Therefore, each delegate gets a subsidy of £71 per day from the BIGGA Education and Development Fund thanks to our Golden and Silver Key sponsors. The Fund is also subsidising the South West Region Conference, the Midlands Conference, the Scottish Region Conference and a number of Section Seminars.

British and International Turf Managers Conference 2005

The plan for the first BITMC, which will be held at the Staverton Park Conference Centre on March 19 & 20, 2005, is beginning to take shape.

Speakers have already agreed to present papers on a number of turf science and management topics plus a number

of management subjects including Media Relations, Leadership and Management and Establishing Working Relationships. Put a note in your diary for 2005 to attend this high level conference that is aimed at Golf Course Managers.

N/SVQ Level 4 Sportsturf Management Review

Along with representatives from all parts of the fine turf industries I attended a meeting held at the offices of Lantra at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, to review the Standards of knowledge and skills required by Course Managers and to decide which of those Standards should be incorporated into the Level 4 N/SVQ.

Fine Turf, ie: Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship, have led

the way in the introduction of N/SVQs and this meeting proved, once again that the Sector was well prepared to present its case for the Sportsturf management qualification to continue.

A further meeting will decide on the actual content of this VQ but Course Managers can rest assured that it will be totally relevant to their needs and to the needs of golf clubs.

BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

Thanks to continued sponsorship from Ransomes Jacobsen, the BIGGA Higher Education Scholarship Scheme is set to run for a further three years.

With more than 40 scholars so far, the scholarship scheme is proving vital in the greenkeeper's search for higher

education funding. The first three Masters of Science, supported by the scheme, graduate on 9 July and my congratulations go to Peter Jones, Eoghan Buckley and Barry Dore.

"Are You Managing Your Health and Safety Using a Maintenance Plan"?

Tutorial Two

I was recently in the unfortunate position of having to investigate an accident involving a young member of the greenstaff who was asked to perform a simple job of work requiring the use of a step ladder. To get the ladder the member of staff had to climb on to a temporary mezzanine structure above the green shed offices that subsequently collapsed injuring his arm and back. The accident should never have happened.

The investigation by the HSE which follows such accidents, found that the club's whole Health and Safety process FAILED.

WHAT WENT WRONG.

- There was no Health and Safety Management System.
- The Health and Safety policy was out of date and responsibilities poorly defined.
- The risk assessments were out of date and not sufficient.
- The job was not supervised correctly nor were safe working procedures in place.
- The club had not been audited previously.
- The Greenstaff were unaware of legislation updates.

Good health and safety management is about knowing the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly requirements of the club, and ensuring you have in place a system for achieving all of the requirements. A lot is written nowadays about managing health and safety but very little is written as to why and the good reasons for it. I will explain. Good health and safety management is all about preventing accidents and illness to employees, golfers and visitors to your establishment. Health and safety management is not about generating endless heaps of paper and endless amounts of checklists that will put you off the real tasks in hand. A good Maintenance plan is presently operated by many clubs and has taken much of the burden of health and safety work from the club and Secretary/Head Green keeper. The plan does not and will not remove any of the responsibility but it does ensure that work gets completed and information stays right up to date.

THE PLAN WORKS BASICALLY WORKS IN TWO MAIN STAGES;

- To ensure the club is in full compliance with UK and Eu Legislation
- To arrange for the club to receive updates to stay complaint with legislation and risk assessments.

Developing your own system or subscribing to a proprietary Maintenance Plan is the easiest way of ensuring your club stays fully compliant with the laws and that Health and Safety becomes a core value in your club operations.

- A Maintenance Plan will encompass the following key elements;
- Health and Safety Audit-Annually
- Update to the Health and Safety Policy-Annually
- Updates of the Risk Assessments-Regular
- Regular Legislation Update notifications
- Updates of the Safe Working Practices/Procedures-Annually

The main advantage of a Maintenance Plan is knowing that your club is organised, Health and Safety is being regularly checked and all of the compliance documentation remains up to date

Haztek International® currently operates a 'Maintenance Plan' package and presently has over 200 clubs subscribing. This plan achieves all of the above.

To find out more please look at www.safegolfplan.com or call us on 0208 905 7552 email info@safegolf.co.uk



At last, a rotary mower with floating decks that gives beautiful stripes.

The Toro Groundsmaster 4500-D has revolutionary cutting qualities. Its five Contour™ Plus cutting decks are free-floating for a ground-hugging even cut, ensuring superior cutting performance. Air inlet pockets keep grass standing tall for a clean cut and heavy-duty rollers behind each deck create beautiful stripes, even in heavy rough.

Groundsmaster 4700-D

Toro's largest rotary mower has seven Contour Plus cutting decks to give a massive 12.5ft wide superior cut. Only Toro can deliver this kind of productivity.

Groundsmaster 3500-D

The unique 3500-D Sidewinder is the only rotary mower with a shifting cutting deck, making it the safe choice for a close finish round lakes, trees, bunkers and on steep banks.

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