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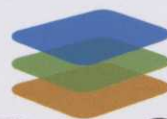


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Most people associate Rufford with quality top dressing and rootzone materials. That's probably because we've spent the last eighteen years putting research & development and quality control at the heart of everything we do.

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sports surface technology

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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Front cover an Internal Tank Sprinkler courtesy of Toro

NEW THIS MONTH!

Check out the Buyers' Guide on page 48-52
For ways in which Terraqua Environmental
and U-Install Irrigation can help you!



Welcome

JIM ARTHUR

The phone would ring and I'd be told, "It's Jim Arthur". I knew then that the next 20 minutes or so would be taken care of and that I'd have to be on my game.

Every conversation with Jim was like a contest, thrusting and parrying, interspersed with a chance to towel down, take instructions from the corner and move onto the next topic. If I wasn't defending myself I'd be defending others, attempting to put across the alternative view. But, of course, there wasn't an alternative view and Jim was well skilled at dismantling the considered arguments of others. If he hadn't been the foremost agronomist of his age he'd have made a great courtroom lawyer. His mind was as sharp as a tack and even well into his 80's his brainpower hadn't seemed to have diminished. That, coupled with his incredible strength of personality, was enough to carry most arguments.

I always knew when putting the magazine together which articles would cause steam to explode from Jim's ears and have him reaching for the phone. There was a long list of no-nos when it came to topics we should be covering in Greenkeeper International and he was most concerned that young greenkeepers shouldn't be exposed to articles on that list. Indeed, his ideal scenario would be for him to see every article before it reached print so he could vet, or more likely, bin. We had many conversations about this very subject and while I agreed to differ, I don't believe Jim ever did.

While there are many, myself included, who have been the subject of some less than kind comments and temporarily scratched his name from the Christmas card list it is impossible not to admire a man whose passion for the subject remained undiminished for well over half a century. If I can muster even a fraction of that passion in my 80's I shall be a very happy man. I felt, like many others, that Jim should relax and enjoy the fruits of a well earned retirement, but such a thought was totally alien to him.

He stood over the world of greenkeeping like a colossus. I would wager that if you were to listen in to any group of British greenkeepers talking about their jobs the name of Jim Arthur would be mentioned at some stage in the proceedings.

I have no doubt, despite his passing, that his name will continue to echo around Seminar Rooms and Lecture Theatres, not to mention bars, for many years to come and in his book, Practical Greenkeeping, he produced a publication which will act as his legacy, a must read for young greenkeepers for years to come.

It is the end of an era. Never again will I be told that it is Jim Arthur on the line but his philosophy on traditional greenkeeping will never be ignored or forgotten.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

GORDON BOWS OUT

Gordon Huddy, the GTC Board of Directors' Chairman, has retired at the company's AGM held on May 19. Gordon has been working with the GTC for 11 years and has spent half of that as Chairman.



Bob McLaren, who chaired the Committee during the eighties when it had no funding, was still at the helm in 1993 when the 'new' GTC was born. From 1993 much progress had been made, especially in the area of qualification reviews and development, and the introduction of work-based training was firmly in the hands of the employers and Course Managers.

Gordon took over from Bob as Chairman in 2001 and GTC Education Director, David Golding, paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman: "Gordon was the R&A Representative and that link has proved so important and his support and encouragement to the committees and staff has been tireless.

"Both gentleman, like all those representatives who sit on committees within golf, are the people who often are in the background and their work and commitment goes unrewarded and we would like to thank Gordon for all his hard work as he bows out."

Read Gordon's GTC Column, as he reflects on his time on the GTC and the enormous developments made.

SALES COMPLETE LINE UP



Karen Russell is the latest person to join the BIGGA ranks at Headquarters, as she takes on the role of Sales Administrator, bring the Association's sales team back up to full strength.

Karen, 34, joins BIGGA after an eight month stint with Barker Brooks Media, which is based in Harrogate. Karen only moved up from her beloved Bedford to Yorkshire 18 months ago to be with her husband, Allan, with the couple marrying in February 2004.

Previously to her move to the blustery winds of the north, Karen worked for multi national giant 3M for 14 years, in the Customer Services Department.

"I started with BIGGA at the end of April, so I'm now really developing into my new role. I have been looking forward to taking this job on, as it brings me back to my roots of daily contact with clients, which I really enjoyed when working at 3M," said Karen.

The BIGGA employee enjoys travelling, competing with her hubby as to who has visited the most countries, and she describes China as the most interesting place she has gone to. Her claim to fame is performing at Wembley Arena in the early 1990's at the British Youth Band Association Championships, where she played the trumpet.

INTENSE TIME AT HAWKSTONE

Hawkstone Park has made one of the first orders of the Sisis Aer-Air System, fitted to a Sisis Javelin aerator.

Paul Hyde has been Estate and Golf Course Manager for just six months but is already making his mark. During the winter the drainage system on the Windmill Course was extended and refurbished, along with several of the tees on the Hawkstone Course, but Paul's priority for 2005 is an intensive programme of aeration on all three courses.

He is a strong advocate of regular aeration and studies new techniques as they come along. "We will continue to hollow core in the autumn, and use a vertidrain a couple of times a year, but in addition, will use the Aer-Aid constantly on the greens and tees," said Paul.



NEW KUBOTA DEALER

Kubota has enhanced its UK dealer network with the appointment of Farmstar's branch at Long Bennington, near Newark, as a full line Kubota tractor and groundcare machinery dealer for Nottinghamshire and parts of Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.

"Farmstar is determined to build a solid business for Kubota products among golf and sports clubs and landscape contractors throughout the area. Our newly appointed specialist groundcare Sales Manager, Simon Hall, will be working hard to extend the

benefits of Kubota ownership to individuals and organisations," said Graham Leach, Manager of Farmstar's Long Bennington branch.

From August, Kubota will have a new southern area machinery demonstrator and trainer within its tractor and grass care division. Having joined the company in April, Phil Brooks is currently shadowing Mike Hawkins, the current holder of the position, who will retire officially on August 19 after 17 years' service.

Phil is no stranger to the Kubota product range having worked previously with Kubota dealer, Globe Organic Services, Solihull. When he takes over formally on August 22, Phil will be responsible



Phil Brooks, left, and Mike Hawkins, who retires from the company in August

for demonstrating Kubota tractors and ride-on mowers to prospective customers located south of a line from the Wash to mid Wales.

Mike has worked as an engineer and machinery demonstrator since 1955 when he left school to join equipment manufacturer Twose of Tiverton. Despite official retirement in August, Mike plans to assist Devon based Kubota dealer, MST, on a part-time basis.

"Stepping into the shoes of Mike is quite a daunting prospect. However, I am delighted to be taking over an area which contains a very large number of satisfied Kubota customers and an excellent dealer network," commented Phil.

SEOUL SALES OVERHAUL

Since relocating to Birmingham, Seoul Nassau has spent the last two years reviewing and restructuring their business to provide a better level of service to the industry.

Crucial to this has been the full review of the external field sales team. With numerous company acquisitions over the past five years the spread across the UK of sales teams was uneven.

Seoul Nassau now have an external rep force of 25 and that has been broken down into three geographical areas - North, Midlands and South, which are managed by Regional Sales Managers

Mark Wilton, Dave Murphy and Dave Rahman. New sales representatives have been appointed in the form of Darrin Urquhart, Scotland, and Mark Lunday, South West, who have both joined the company direct from their previous roles as Head Greenkeepers.

"Essentially, the driving factors behind recent changes have been to reorganise the rep force, streamline internal administration, improve product quality and deliveries," said Gerard O'Driscoll, Sales Director.

INAUGURAL CHALKY MEMORIAL TROPHY

The inaugural Colin White Memorial Trophy was played for in May at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club by the South Coast Section. A great turnout ensured the day was a huge success and Colin's mother, Jill, and two brothers, Steve and Rob, were welcomed by the Section.

The first winner of the trophy was Shaun Whittle, of Moors Valley Golf Club. The picture shows Shaun receiving the trophy from Colin's mum, Jill, and Avoncrop's Chris Briggs. A raffle on the day raised £280 for Macmillan Cancer Relief.



HARRY WALSH

It is Greenkeeper International's unfortunate task to advise of the death of Harry Walsh.

Harry was a former Chairman of BIGGA in 1972. He had previously been Secretary of the North West Section for

many years and continued to keep an interest in the affairs of BIGGA right up to his death. Indeed it was only a few weeks ago that Harry asked his son, John, to inform BIGGA of his change of address so that he could continue to read the magazine.

He collapsed and died of heart failure on May 3 2005 at the age of 95. We can all deduce that greenkeeping is a healthy form of work.

He retired at 65 from the job of Head Greenkeeper at Bolton Old Links, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, and previously had been Head Greenkeeper at Manchester Golf Club, Middleton. John Walsh passed this information to us with much sadness but also much pride for his father.



THE HARD LIFE

Anyone who thinks topdressing is tiresome should talk to Tony McLure, Head Greenkeeper at Whickham Golf Club, in Northumberland. Since the club bought a Dakota 410 Top Dresser nine months ago, the task has become a delight.

Previously, it took five staff 40 hours using shovels and brushes. Now it is a one man operation taking just two - four hours.

"It used to be such an arduous job that we only topdressed twice a year. It was difficult to maintain an even depth with shovels," recalls Tony.

The Dakota top dresser, distributed by Campey Turf Care Systems, was supplied to Whickham GC via their dealer in the North East, Greenlay Grass Machinery Ltd.

FOREIGN CHALLENGE

David Ashley has been appointed Golf Course Manager at Tsada Golf Club, Paphos in Cyprus. David, 36, worked at Great Barr Golf Club for eight years before moving to Aston Wood Golf Club as Head Greenkeeper in 1994 and then onto Lea Marston Hotel as Golf Course Manager.

David has just completed a HNC in Golf Course Management and Sports Turf Science at Morton Morrell and is looking forward to his exciting new challenge abroad.

A CUT ABOVE

Construction is well and truly underway at The Carrick at Cameron House with the first cutting on the 8th green having taken place recently. With many bunkers almost complete and the seeding of all holes occurring in May, the course is just months from reaching its championship standard.

In total, five sets of tees and greens have been seeded, with the 8th green the first to be cut. Head Greenkeeper, Paul McLearn, commented: "The cutting of the green on the 8th has been a real milestone in the construction of the course. It's fantastic to see the course progressing and taking its world class shape".

The 8th is the longest hole on the course and its fairway was seeded in May, along with the other holes south of river; the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th. The 7th fairway is currently in the process of being destoned with a further nine holes having full drainage constructed. The remaining holes are due to be seeded over the summer period.

THE FORM OF HIS LIFE

David Coupland, an Assistant at Boston GC, thought he was in for another so-so round in the recent East of England Section event held at Sleaford GC. The two handicapper was out in 39 having used up all of his shots when he came to the 10th tee.



What happened next he will remember for the rest of his life - he came back in 28 shots with eight birdies and a solitary par to win the competition, ironically on a better inward half.

PRECISION GRANT

Blair Precision Engineering of Carnoustie have received a four figure grant from the Angus Grant Scheme towards the purchase of a CNC lathe allowing the business to undertake a more varied and specialised manufactured components programme. The Business Gateway Angus helped the business access the grant from the fund, which was established with monies from Angus Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the European Regional Development Fund.

The business specialises in the manufacture of replacement metal tines. Over 450 golf clubs across the UK are currently supplied with over 150 product lines to suit both original and customised requests.

"The support of the Angus Grant Scheme was crucial to our decision to make this major investment in CNC equipment at this time. This provides us with a solid foundation for future expansion," said Owner, John Jeans.

RICHMOND DIG DEEP

The Richmond Golf Club is in the process of a two phase bunker reconstruction project with course constructor MJ Abbott.

30 bunkers have been completed this winter. Work on another 20 is set to start in October, with the club opting to do the project in-house. Each bunker has new external drainage with its own positive outfall or soakaway chamber.

"With 100 year old bunkers we thought it vital to reconstruct them in strategic places using modern techniques. As a result, location, as well as the playability of the bunkers, has been dramatically improved. They now look spectacular," said Course Manager Lee Strutt.

"The club struggled with wash down of sand on the face of the bunkers. There was also a problem of poorly draining bunkers, so since the reconstruction they now drain well," said Nigel Wyatt, Contracts Director for MJ Abbott.

Work started with the stripping out of old turf and bunker sand, followed by reconstruction of the bunker in subsoil. A combination of Inturf dwarf rye and fescue bent was used to marry in with existing and was sanded with Topsport Kingsley Number One Sand.



LEESE GETS IN THE ZONE

Kevin Leese has been appointed Zone Sales Manager for central England by Kubota UK Limited's tractor and groundcare division. Covering an area stretching from South Yorkshire down to north London and from

Worcestershire across to Essex, Kevin brings to the position more than 20 years' sales experience within the agricultural and horticultural industries.

His day-to-day responsibilities entail all aspects



of dealer support including stock control, product demonstrations and the training of dealer staff and their customers in the care and operation of Kubota tractors and diesel ride-on mowers. He will assist also at local and national shows and events where there is a Kubota presence.

"This is an important additional appointment for Kubota's tractor and groundcare division. Kevin's long experience and extensive knowledge of the industry will be of great benefit to Kubota dealers and their customers throughout central parts of the United Kingdom. We are very pleased to have Kevin as a member of the Kubota team," commented Sales and Marketing Manager, David Roberts.

ITALIAN PLANT IMPRESSES

New Holland equipment dealers from the UK and the Republic of Ireland recently went on a three-day fact finding trip to Jesi, in Italy, to see the manufacturer's modern factory.

Participants were able to appreciate first hand the build quality of New Holland's specialist tractor line-up, which illustrates the brand's commitment to innovation and modern styling. Of special interest to the groundcare industry were the TND-A, TNS-A and TCE tractor ranges in the 40 - 75hp class.

Delegates were shown how equipment is designed to meet end-users' exact requirements in terms of performance, high work rate and comfort. Amongst the dealers attending was Richard Campey, Managing Director of Campey Turf Care Systems, based in Macclesfield. "The Jesi plant is certainly impressive and the whole operation confirms New Holland's dedicated approach to technological development and an awareness of users' specialist needs," he said.

CRUCIAL AERATION

Aeration on the golf course is the single most important job, that is the message from Ian McMillan, Course Manager at Walton Heath Golf Club. Ian made the comments after recently taking delivery of a Terra Spike XF, the latest deep aerator from Wiedenmann UK.

"I'm a great believer in aeration of all kinds. It promotes healthy root growth and that, in turn, provides healthy and strong grass plants. Deep aeration helps with drainage, allows water and air to the rootzone and provides compaction relief to heavily used areas," said Ian.



The Walton Heath Team

ROCKY ROBIN

It was with some interest that the Royal Guernsey Golf Club team noticed recently a Robin flying in and out of their maintenance building. It wasn't long until Head Greenkeeper, Marcus Hamon, and his right hand men were following the bird's flight path and found that their feathered friend had built a nest in a wooden cabinet at the back of the building.

"After informing the staff to be careful and not to disturb the Robin we then kept a careful eye on it hoping for some further development," said Marcus.

Those developments soon came, as just week's later the Robin gave birth to three chicks and, as the photo shows, has been busy flying in and out of the building to feed them.



TOUGH TERRAIN TACKLED



Tom Hooper, Course Manager, left, and Steve Bush, Ernest Does & Sons

South Bedfordshire Golf Club, Luton, has recently purchased a Wiedenmann Greens Terra Spike and New Holland tractor combination from local dealer Ernest Doe and Sons of Bennington.

The newly arrived equipment will be used on the 18 hole Galley course and the 9 hole Warden Pay and Play course at the 1,000 member club, to help improve drainage and relieve compaction. Predominantly situated on chalk, there can be as little as 25mm of rootzone on the fairways.

"We are beginning a five year course modification programme in here. The terrain is tough and we are looking to increase root growth across both courses and reached a depth of 200mm on the first pass across the greens. If we can get down to 250mm, then that would be ideal," said Tom Hooper, Course Manager.

BUSY DAYS FOR FAIRWAYS

The Aspire Golf Centre situated on the outskirts of Aberdeen has recently taken delivery of wide selection of Ransomes Jacobsen golf course maintenance equipment to prepare for the final stages of growing in and the opening of the new 9 hole golf course in early summer. The machinery has been taken on a five year contract hire agreement from Fairways GM of Kinross, Ransomes Jacobsen's dealer for Scotland.

"We have great aspirations here. The Jacobsen TR3 and the super light fairway mower, the SLF 1880, can be used on the golf course fairways and also the target range. Likewise, the out front rotary HR 4600 will be used to maintain the rough and semi-rough and also the outfield on the range," said Roddy Mess, Head Greenkeeper.

Pumpherstons Golf Club of Livingston, West Lothian is another club that has turned to Fairways GM of Kinross for its golf course maintenance equipment. The club has just received a Jacobsen greens and tees mowers.



Aspire's greenkeeping team with their new equipment

TURFCARE APPOINTED DISTRIBUTORS

The TurfCare Group has been appointed the new UK distributor of The Andersons range of turfgrass fertilisers. The Andersons' fertilisers will be sold by group company TurfCare Solutions as well as through TurfCare's other UK based distributors.

Commenting on the recent distribution agreement, TurfCare General Manager, Frank Dargan, said: "We are very pleased to have secured this agreement for the UK. Having sold The Andersons products in Ireland for some years now, we have confidence in their quality."

In addition to The Andersons, TurfCare Solutions also sells Floratine, Gro Power Organic and the Plant Marvel range of water soluble fertilisers.

INTURF HIT 20

Inturf are celebrating 20 years in business with further growth. The business is now launching new turf centres at York and Grantham as part of its continued commitment to meeting the needs of landscapers and leisure gardeners.

"We've tried to be innovative from the outset. We introduced custom growing, rootzone turf, big roll turf, fibre reinforced turf, lay 'n' play turf tiles and brought modular moveable turf to the UK," said Derek Edwards, founder of Inturf.

Since 2003 the day to day running of the company has been in the hands of Alex and Stephen Edwards, Derek's twin sons, both of whom have worked their way up the company from production, distribution and installation.

As part of the company's growth Nicky Burt, pictured, has been appointed Manager of Inturf's new lawn centre at Grantham. The centre offers unlimited supplies of freshly lifted turf to landscapers in Lincolnshire, Nottingham and Leicester. Nicky has worked in sales for a number of years and is from a farming family.



SPANISH HUNTER

Hunter Grinders Ltd was one of several British machinery manufacturers who recently attended the Spanish Machinery Trading Company, Atica, Trade Open Days, held at the Montanya Hotel, near Barcelona, in Spain, in March.

As Atica has only been the appointed distributor for Hunter Grinders since early 2004, this was the first time Hunters had attended this event, which is held every 18 months.

"Our relationship with Atica is still in its early stages and we are very keen to develop an awareness of our products within the Spanish Golf and Local Authority Markets. It was encouraging to see such a lot of enthusiasm for our product range. This was a very useful exercise," said Keith Cann-Evans, Hunter Grinders MD.

MONARCH OF THE GLEN



Kevin Fish, right, receives his award from Michael Rayment

The Secretary of The Glen Golf Club in North Berwick, Kevin Fish, has been named the first ever Secretary of the Year.

Kevin was picked ahead of five other finalists at a gala dinner in front of more than 200 of his peers at The Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. He wins a trip for two to Australia with £500 spending money, five cases of Hardys Wines, a visit to Hardys' vineyards in South Australia, and a round of golf at the Royal Adelaide GC.

"The five judges felt that Kevin was the clear winner. The clubhouse at The Glen was so antiquated that it wasn't fit to be associated with the stunning course the club offers. Unfortunately Kevin couldn't do much about it, as the local authority owned it. However, after lengthy communication with members and professionals, he raised subscriptions and promoted the club as a tourist destination, raising enough revenue to buy the clubhouse," said Alistair Dunsmuir, Editor of Golf Club Management.

Kevin added: "I'm most pleased with the recognition I received from my peers. To be told by them that they think I'm doing a great job is an amazing feeling."

FROST AT NOVOZYMES



After the acquisition of Roots in 2003 and pursuing its expansion in the UK Amenity Market, Novozymes Biologicals has appointed Hugh Frost as their new Technical Manager.

Hugh previously worked for the John Innes Centre, in Norwich, as the Horticultural Manager of field trials and landscape amenities.

Hugh will have the whole technical responsibility for the UK/Ireland market, including customer assistance and training, contacts with research institutes and technical bodies, management of field trials and exhibition attendance.

SCOTTISH SLAY SECRETARIES

The annual fixture between the Secretaries Association and BIGGA Scottish Region took place at Ralston Golf Club, Paisley on Monday April 4.

The Secretaries Association were the hosts and had high hopes of recording a victory. The top pairing, our Chairman, Iain Barr, and Dennis Tweddell led the way and secured a halved match against Bill Crighton, Captain of the Secretaries Association and local Secretary, Joe Pearson. This was the only half in the match.

BIGGA suffered only two losses in the contest, Colin Black and Eddie McGee losing and the Regional Administrator losing at the 18th. He made the excuse that he had to play the two members of the Secretaries team on his own and this was the reason for his defeat and he is sticking to this story.

Wins for A. Dunn and A. Philp, G. Morrison and D. Wilson, M. Lothian and S. Higgins, S. Sullivan and S. Robertson, D. Scott and A. O'Hara, S. McTaggart and B. Aitken and K. Hodges and G. Wood combined to secure a convincing victory by 7 1/2 points to 2 1/2.

Our thanks to Alex Beveridge and the members of the Secretaries Association for organising this year's fixture and we look forward to next year's match.

Finally, thanks to the Captain, John Haining, the Committee and Joe Pearson, Secretary of Ralston Golf Club, for the courtesy and hospitality on the day.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

BARENBRUG CONTINUES GROWTH

In a move to grow its business in Scotland, specialist grass seed breeder, Barenbrug UK, has appointed Stewartsturf as a new distributor. Based in Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, Stewartsturf is the new sole distributor for Barenbrug products in Scotland.

Established in 1894, Stewartsturf employs 50 people and has an annual turnover of £5 million. It supplies a range of products such as grass seed, fertilisers, tools and equipment to golf courses, local authority and sport and landscaping customers and offers a seeding, turfing and drainage contracting service.

Managing Director, Graeme Forbes, commented on the appointment: "We have been looking at Barenbrug for some time. Their good reputation in the UK and their status as an independent company fitted us perfectly. We know there is a very strong market for Barenbrug products in Scotland and we're looking forward to growing the business together."

Barenbrug UK Managing Director, Paul Johnson, said: "We are very pleased to have Stewartsturf on board and working with us to expand the business in Scotland, alongside our new sales team and the new Falkirk facility."



Left to right, Kenny Archibald, Graeme Forbes, Jayne Leyland and Billy Nimmo

SCOTTS STRENGTHENED

Scotts has strengthened its UK and Ireland Professional Turf and Amenity Division sales team with a number of personnel changes.

Simon Bamaby has been promoted to Technical Product Manager for the business. In this role, he is responsible for the ongoing technical development and product marketing of the Turf and Amenity Division's product range, and providing support for business growth. He also continues to provide specific key agronomic field support to the UK and Irish markets.

Scotts has appointed a new member to the team, Ed Carter, as Northern Area Sales Manager. Ed joins from Alpha Amenity, where he worked for nearly four years as a Technical Sales Representative in Northern England. He has over



Simon Barnaby, left, and Ed Carter

eight years' experience in the professional market, holding positions in greenkeeping, parks maintenance and forestry.

GTC News



Retiring GTC Board of Directors' Chairman, Gordon Huddy, reviews his time with the organisation and what has been achieved in a short period.

After 11 years on the GTC Management Committee, half of them as Chairman, David Golding, the Education Director, asked me to write a short piece, before my retirement, on how things have changed over the years and what the prospects and challenges for the future are. Certainly a lot has changed in that time and most has been for the good in the training of greenkeepers.

If I look back to the early to mid nineties, one can recall the heated debate of the idea of vocational qualifications, the way they were taught and how they were assessed. At that time many people challenged the modern methods and were in favour of assessment by exams with pass and fail standards. There was much resistance to the idea of Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers as assessors and a great deal of debate about the use of these assessors, where they were allocated and how much they were used. It all seems a long time ago and now the work-based delivery and assessment is well accepted and the GTC has trained over 1000 assessors all over the country, with plans to train a further 200 this year.

It has also standardised the syllabus - learning materials - which are taught as the underpinning knowledge elements both for NVQ2 and NVQ3. There is work to be done however on the delivery of these syllabuses and the GTC will be looking into this in the future.

On the operational side of the business, the GTC has moved out of its rather old temporary accommodation into a new modern, well equipped office with the full range of modern office equipment. The GTC's status had been changed to a Limited Company by guarantee and the structure of the organisation has been changed to include a Technical Committee reporting to the Board. Their function is to provide a constant input of new ideas to the Board for approval and finance. BIGGA has a strong representation on the Committee and their input is vital to the current and future work of the GTC on behalf of the sector.

Outside the regular income from its supporting bodies there is now a provision to finance special projects, with Board approval. Our thanks are due to Dr Mike Canaway for chairing this Committee so ably. All this progress has been the result of the work and dedication of David Golding and his loyal but limited staff. They are to be congratulated for all their hard work, often done in difficult circumstances and their ability to work together and overcome problems. I would like to thank not only David himself but also Fiona and Yvonne for their invaluable contributions.

What about the future? There is work to be done. We are living in an age of electronic communications and already it is possible to learn the underpinning knowledge for VQ's and, more recently, the Foundation Degree on the Internet. I was visiting Augusta for the Masters a few years

ago and made contact with Wendy O'Brien, currently a greenkeeper at the Carden Park Resort near Chester. She was on an assignment as a greenkeeper at Augusta and she was actually doing her NVQ 3 via the Internet during her time off work at the golf course. Extraordinary but this may well become normal in the future!

The changes in the game in the future will impact on the technology of greenkeeping and, in time, on the syllabus to be taught and the skills to be learnt. Global warming and resultant climate change are probably going to call for grass to be cut throughout the year and for the development of alternatives suitable for doing this. Increasingly members of golf clubs are not going to be satisfied with their course being closed for a lot of the winter months and having to play off temporary tee and temporary greens.

They will want their course to be playable on the finest grasses possible for the whole year. Drainage will become a key factor. Pay and play courses are going to spread and grasses to withstand the heavy wear and tear are going to be needed.

There will be further developments in combating the effect of improving skills and improving equipment on the top players in the world, bunker design and maintenance, control of rough and course design are due to change in the future. All of this will expand the syllabus of knowledge and practical skills needed by the greenkeeper and the GTC's job will be to ensure that training will not only keep up with the changes but actually to lead the way forward. I feel very confident that David Golding and his staff will be up to the challenge.

There are some excellent competent greenkeepers and Course Managers working on our golf courses and if I was to leave one message with employers it is to invest in your staff's training and your members and visitors will be rewarded by a better maintained and managed course.

Finally, having spent so much of my time with the GTC listening to the importance of skills training and having the related knowledge, I am now able to go off to cut my fescue/bent lawns at the right height for the time of year with a machine correctly set and wearing the appropriate clothing and footwear!

Yours aye

Gordon Huddy

Chairman, Board of Directors GTC

Education Update

Ken Richardson looks at the difference between education and training, who should pay for it and the help available towards the cost of education and training.

Education and Training

BIGGA regards the training of greenkeepers as its number one priority but what is training? Training is the process of teaching or learning a new skill. In other words it gives a worker the skills and competences to be able to do their job.

Education is the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning. In other words it gives people a wide range of knowledge that they can use within a job and within their everyday life.

It should also give them the ability to analyse facts and data to enable them to determine 'best practice'. All training should include some education, but education may or may not include training.

WHO SHOULD PAY FOR GREENKEEPER TRAINING?

The easy answer is the employer, i.e. the golf club. The reason for this is to ensure that all greenkeepers are capable of performing their duties to the standards required by the club in a safe and responsible manner.

Moreover, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 include a regulation that says that employers should give adequate information, instruction and training to employees to ensure that they are competent to operate work place equipment. Therefore, it is a legal requirement that all employers, including golf clubs, ensure that their staff are properly trained and are assessed as competent to operate machinery and work equipment.

However, the cost of training may be met by the government and could be offered free of charge. Contact your chosen training provider/college for details.

Should golf clubs train all greenkeepers to the highest possible level? The answer to this is no. Training should be provided to enable greenkeepers to do their current job or to prepare them for promotion.

All greenkeepers should be given Induction Training, e.g. information on Health and Safety, Working Hours, Etiquette, Uniform etc, when they commence their employment. This training can then be followed by formal, on the job, training that provides them with basic greenkeeping skills, e.g. Cutting, Raking, Brushing, Setting Up the Course etc.

Induction training need not take a long time nor need to be expensive but any costs should be borne by the golf club. As stated above, formal training can be subsidised by the government and can, in some cases, cost nothing.

Further, formal, training is available for those greenkeepers wanting to move into supervisory and management positions and this training can, in some circumstances, also subsidised by the government.

BIGGA can help its members through its Education and Development Fund. This Fund can provide a refund of up to £350 to any member who has had to pay for his/her training. However, as I have stated above, there

is no excuse for golf clubs refusing to pay for appropriate training required by law.

Formal training and assessment can lead to the award of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications and to other qualifications such as Foundation Degrees.

WHO PAYS FOR GREENKEEPER EDUCATION?

The answer to this question is 'it depends'. It depends on the reasons for the education course, whether the course is relevant to the greenkeeper's job or future job, whether the golf club has a budget for further education and even on the greenkeeper's country of residence.

Higher education in England/Wales, in Northern Ireland and in Scotland is bound by different rules. For example, Scottish residents studying for a higher national diploma at a Scottish college may not have to pay any tuition fees, whereas students in England may have to pay.

Some golf clubs pay all tuition fees, some pay some of the fees and some pay none of the fees. Those clubs that pay some or all of the tuition fees may stipulate that they require the greenkeeper to remain working at the club for a set time after completing a course. This should be included in the greenkeeper's terms and conditions of service (contract).

WHY BOTHER WITH EDUCATION AND TRAINING?

For the golf club, education and/or training ensures that their greenkeepers are trained and competent to prepare their golf course to the highest standards within an allocated budget. For greenkeepers, education and/or training gives them the skills to prepare golf courses to the highest standards.

Education and training costs money but, as I have outlined above, financial help is available from the government, from BIGGA, from the GTC and from the R&A. All golf clubs should have a training budget, especially as Health and Safety law states that training is a must.

Remember, that if you think that training is expensive try ignorance.

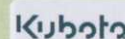


Unlock the doors to progress through BIGGA's Education and Development Fund - the key to a great future for greenkeepers, golf clubs and the game of golf.

Golden and Silver Key Membership is available to both companies and individuals.

For details, please contact Ken Richardson on 01347 833800 or via ken@bigga.co.uk

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