

In addition to providing continuing education opportunities for greenkeepers as well as scholarships to help prepare the next generation, pesticide manufacturers' active membership in professional organisations, such as BIGGA and other turf organisations, aims at ensuring the turf industry a voice before the various audiences upon which its future depends.

At the same time, non governmental organisations (NGOs) seek to influence public opinion such that regulatory authorities are challenged to restrict the use of turf care chemicals. As a result, regulatory authorities may demonstrate reluctance to approve the use of products specifically designed for turf care, even though these products may be more effective and more environmentally beneficial than alternatives. Working in concert with trade associations, pesticide manufacturers endorse reasonable, science based solutions to these regulatory issues.

GREENKEEPER STEWARDSHIP

Pesticide manufacturers are committing significant resources to support the future of the turf industry. However, greenkeepers play an equally important role. Stewardship on the part of greenkeepers falls into two primary areas: responsible use and industry support.

Good stewardship requires support to maintain the effective products already on the market. It also involves improvements to those products and investment in new turf products, all of which frequently hinge on informed and responsible use.

RESPONSIBLE USE

Pesticides are just one tool in a greenkeeper's integrated turf management toolbox. In order to get the maximum benefits and results, turf products should be incorporated into an integrated management programme that includes: irrigation, fertility, mowing management, cultural practices and use of pesticides.

Great demands are placed on greenkeepers to deliver the full value of the turf that they manage. That value can only be fully realised through safe and effective control of diseases, weeds, and insects. But with that control - most often achieved with pesticides - comes responsibility to comply with the regulations governing their use.

Regulation of professional turf chemical products varies from country to country, but includes these basic elements:

- It is a requirement in all countries that every turf pesticide product must be registered according to local rules. Although European countries have their individual schemes, they are all based on the principles of 91/414/EC, the European legislation covering use of pesticides.
- Applying a product outside of its approved uses or using a product not labelled for turf is illegal unless a "specific off label approval" (SOLA) exists. Off label use is only given where there are no products already registered for the particular situation; SOLA's are not based on any biological performance data and are not supported by the manufacturer. They are used at the user's own liability; crop safety is not investigated.
- Products should only be applied by those well trained in their use and, in the case of the UK, specifically licensed to apply the products.
- Maintaining accurate records of product applications.
- Products should only be applied to the areas intended for treatment.
- Application in inappropriate weather conditions can result in spray drift to nearby gardens and into other non target natural areas, with the possibility of unintended side effects. Incidences like these may be publicised as a justification for banning pesticide products or challenging the professionalism of the operators.
- Application equipment should be well maintained and recalibrated regularly to ensure accurate application. Over application of a product not only risks increasing disease resistance but also the cost per application of the product.
- Products should be stored under lock and key and empty packaging and any unused product disposed of according to local rules and in an environmentally friendly way.



INDUSTRY SUPPORT

In the UK regulations governing the use of professional turf care products are quite specific. Only professional products having specific approval for use on managed amenity turf can be applied and, as stated above, only by those certified in their use and holding a Certificate of Competence.

Regardless of location or specific regulation, the most common argument used to justify using unapproved products is cost. However, any short term economic benefits are far outweighed by the risks. Pesticides approved for use on turf have been developed and formulated to be effective and are also fully supported by the manufacturer.

A Turf Manager's investment in and responsible use of approved turf products not only improves the course's playability, but also acts as insurance to protect the high value of the turf and to reduce the potential for liability. Off label use is not the answer. Correct product use and healthy competition between approved turf pesticides are the most effective ways to ensure effective turf control and competitive pricing.

A PRICELESS VISION

The real value of turf products is considerably more than just the price. The benefits in increased player satisfaction, alone, are invaluable. The purchase and appropriate use of every turf product drives the delivery of new, innovative turf products and formulations, funds the highest levels of knowledge and service to customers and the industry, and supports a wide array of integrated turf management resources to help greenkeepers optimise the value of the turf they manage.

By working together and by supporting one another, greenkeepers and pesticide manufacturers will achieve their shared goal to enhance the appearance and playability of their golf course in order to create an exceptional golf experience for their customers.



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The Pesticide Debate

John Allbutt, Chairman of the Amenity Forum, discusses the future of pesticide use and the current forward steps the fine turf industry is taking.

It is very good to see the current active debate about the future availability of pesticides in the UK, the possible negative effect of our EU membership, and whether we might end up with little or nothing to use in the future. However it is very important that the debate includes an up to date picture of what is actually happening in the UK at the moment and what is likely to be happening in the near future.



Agriculture and amenity horticulture, this group includes sports and leisure as well as parks, gardens and amenity woodland etc, were threatened with a Pesticides Tax. The industry responded by suggesting that this be deferred while an attempt was made to voluntarily reduce pesticides use and seek ways of achieving 'best practice' where the use of a pesticides is considered to be necessary.

This became the Voluntary Initiative - the VI - that initiated a series of projects seeking to achieve the primary objectives of reduction and to achieve best practice when pesticides are used. It is true that the biggest area of VI activity has been in mainstream agriculture because the agricultural sector remains the biggest user of pesticides.

However amenity horticulture was never exempted and we were always included in the projects, e.g. the National Register of Spray Operators (NRoSO), www.nroso.org.uk, the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS), www.nsts.org.uk, and the formation of the Amenity Forum (the AF).

To date, the membership uptake of NRoSO by certificated spray operators in the amenity sector has been very poor - due in part to the low level publicity. NRoSO is an ideal way of maintaining your PA Certificates up to date and to know about the changes since you originally took your test.

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Having a rusty pesticides certificate is definitely not regarded as evidence of competence. There have been many changes since the introduction of certification in 1986; in fact a new Foundation Module (PA1) is in the final stages of development and will be launched this year.

The voluntary National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) is an ideal way of being certain that your applicator is in good condition and will deliver a precise amount of pesticide, with an accurate spray pattern, at the set pressure, and won't burst a pipe in the process! Local test centres are in your area and ready to carry out this sprayer 'MOT'.

The formation of the Amenity Forum was an ideal opportunity to achieve a first in our industry - to bring together the many diverse sector interests, organisations and businesses that have, in the past, made it almost impossible to discuss, debate and cooperate in areas of common interest. Not only have we achieved this but we have also attracted as members the very government departments involved in forming the policies and regulations that could restrict our use of pesticides in the future, e.g. The Health and Safety Executive, Pesticides Safety Directorate, Environment Agency.

I am currently the Chairman of the Amenity Forum and am very lucky to have around the table representatives from across the amenity industry, including BIGGA, STRI, IOG, GTC and many more. To see our full membership look log onto www.amenity.org.uk. We exist to represent the amenity industry up to ministerial level for consultation and to lobby on behalf of our industry as a whole - a first!

Just one recent example of the effectiveness of the Amenity Forum is our involvement in the decision by the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD) that the new Approved Code of Practice for Safe Use of Plant Protection Products - a provisional title - will for the first time incorporate amenity horticulture. This means that there will be a single Code for all pesticides use; it will be free and allow us, the amenity horticultural industry, to discontinue our own industry Orange Code. The new Approved Code is in the final draft stage and is expected to be published this year.

In a recent review the Minister said he was pleased with the progress of the VI and had no immediate plans to introduce a Pesticides Tax. However he also said that he was looking for the VI to have some new initiatives up to the end of the three year project, the end of March 2006.

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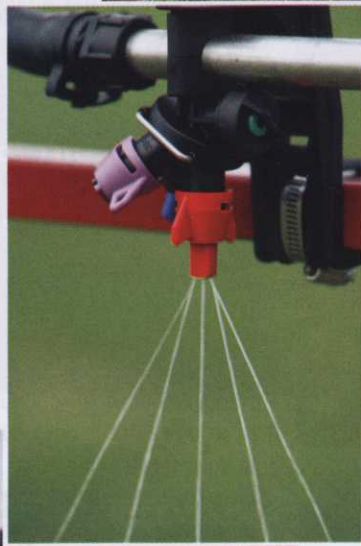
Although agriculture will again be very much in focus, current discussions are also pointing towards the amenity industry sector and the Amenity Forum have already put forward some views.

In addition to all of the above, there are also two very important consultation papers currently under discussion that are likely to have an impact on amenity horticulture in the future.

The Pesticides Safety Directorate is seeking views on their document "The Sustainable Use of Pesticides". This is a very good document and is likely to help with forming future policies and initiatives. The Amenity Forum is commenting on the 'Amenity Action Plan' section and we are hopeful that our suggestions will be incorporated in the final document.

A working group of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides is also consulting on their document "Alternatives to the use of Pesticides". Unfortunately this document deals almost exclusively with agricultural matters and the Amenity Forum are making representations to include many of the excellent alternative practices that have been in use for many years.

The traditional practices by greenkeepers to manage a healthy pest and disease resistant sward of turf are now regarded as a brilliant new approach! Minimising inputs



of fertiliser and pesticides - out of necessity - is now the 'new' approach in many aspects of land management.

In parallel with all of the above activity the UK/EU pesticides review process continues and is resulting in the withdrawal of approval for more pesticides. There is no question that this is having an impact in our industry sector; we have lost an effective worm killer, chafer grub control and with the likely withdrawal of chlorpyrifos in the future, we will lose our main means of controlling leatherjackets.

But this does not mean that it is an unstoppable process with the loss of more and more pesticides until we reach the situation that exists in some other member states. Many of the severe restrictions imposed by other European member state pre-date their membership of the

EU; there is also evidence that some of these have been 'rolled back' in recent years.

It is also very unlikely that we will see the introduction of local control of pesticides use where a professional greenkeeper has to seek written authority to apply a herbicide or a fungicide.

On a more positive note we are seeing some new fungicides being introduced and in the near future there will be a new insecticide for the control of soil grubs, mainly chafers.

Nobody in this process can stand aside and pretend that it is nothing to do with them. If we are to continue to have approved pesticides available we must all ensure that we embrace the principles of best practice. Golf clubs must have best practice policies within the course management document; greenkeepers must be encouraged to further develop existing best practice strategies; golfers must be patient and accept that some scarring of the greens is inevitable together with the odd weed here and there!

Committees must work harder to understand and support these important strategies and make sure that the members temper their criticisms, especially those who suffer from Augusta Syndrome.

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Health & Safety Legislation - Friend or Foe

Having worked as a greenkeeper, Course Manager and latterly assisted in the overall management of a golf club, whenever the words 'Health & Safety' came up they brought a mix of fear, dread, and loathing.

Fear because I could not understand much of what was being said or written. Dread because if I could not understand what was required what chance did I have to ensure the safety of the environment in which we worked and, more importantly, managed? Loathing because I had enough work to do without anything extra.

The purpose of this article is to convince those who may still have any, or all, of the above negative viewpoints that there is no need to fear, dread or loathe this area of management and just accept that it is part of the job we do.

• FEAR & DREAD - THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR OR DREAD

The Health and Safety Executive want everyone to understand what is involved and have made great strides in simplifying legislation to that end. In modern speak their aim is to make it all more 'user friendly'.

If you know you have a problem pick up the phone and ask for help - their attitude would be entirely different to you at that stage than if they were forced to call because of an unfortunate incident - it's too late then, the damage has been done.

• LOATHING - DON'T LOATHE IT, WELCOME IT

Any perceived extra work is soon incorporated into the daily work routine. In the same way that we incorporate the assessment of staff in NVQ training we do the same thing for Health & Safety.

To be honest I thought I would have to sit down for hours every day and fill in paperwork but in reality that could not be further from the truth - as long as you have a simple Health & Safety system in place.

The system is managed in three simple categories or steps.

• COMPLIANCE CHECK

Audit all you have in place and match it to current UK and EU Health & Safety legislation - this will tell you exactly where you are.

• FILLING THE GAPS

The compliance check will highlight what you do not have - you will find that you have a lot in place already thanks to advisors in our Industry/Profession in the past explaining the need to observe a safe working environment - in a lot of instances you will find what you have already just needs updating.

• MONITORING/MANAGING/MAINTAINING

If any new legislation comes into force, e.g. the recent Disability Discrimination Act, or you make any changes following a risk assessment in any area, e.g. changing the design of a golf hole, you must have a simple system in place that will alert you to update as necessary.

An annual audit - a sort of mini compliance check - will ensure you continue to comply with all relevant legislation.

IN SUMMARY

As soon as you decide to take the first step - the compliance check - the Health & Safety Executive will be happy because you are demonstrating that you recognise the need to set a system in place to ensure you manage a safe working environment.

You will find all relevant information you need through the Internet, HSE, GTC, BIGGA, etc or if all else fails give us a call and we will our best to help.

Tip of the Month

Geoff Coggan MG
Vice President of Golf Course Operations - Jan Stephenson Inc



EXPANDING UNDERSTANDING

All too often we as Superintendents, greenkeepers become immersed in our own little world. The golf course becomes 'ours' and anyone that cannot see our point of view or does not immediately gives us the resources we want becomes an adversary. This may sound a little far fetched but if you look closely at your operation you may find more truth to the statement than you first realised.

My tip is to try to become involved in the course operation as a whole. Develop a better understanding of the problems that other department heads face. If you receive financial statements don't just look at yours and disregard the rest, ask questions, try to understand how their budgets work.

How many members do you have? How many rounds of golf are you doing? How can you help make the club more successful, after all you do want that extra person on the crew or that new piece of equipment right!

Approach the powers that be and express your desire to be involved more, if possible try to spend some time with other department heads in their arena so that you get a feel for what they go through. You will probably find the golf pro to be more of an ally than you thought.

Who knows, you may take the reins at your club someday.

Do you have a tip that has helped you in your day-to-day work on the golf course? If so, why not share it with other greenkeepers. Please send any tips you feel would benefit your fellow readers to us either by post at BIGGA HOUSE or by email to gareth@bigga.co.uk.



WOW!

There are some statistics which, if they don't exactly blow your mind, make you go "Wow!" That was the very expression which left my lips when Rigby Taylor Managing Director Andrew Robinson told me how many deliveries the company made in the course of a year.

No, I won't tell you yet. Have a guess. Now bear in mind that this is not just golf clubs, but all of RT's customers but also appreciate that golf does represent a significant proportion of the business.

I can hear your minds working. Roughly 2,700 golf clubs in the country, not all Rigby Taylor customers but those who are probably make a number of orders during a 12 month period. Plus the other non-golf orders to football clubs, local authorities etc.

Not easy is it? Let's go all Bruce Forsyth for a minute. 20,000. Higher or lower? All those who said "Lower" sit down. 40,000. Higher or lower? Again all those who shouted out "Lower" take your seats. Now, those of you who are left - not that many I note. 60,000, you know the drill. Again those who said "Lower," got it wrong. The actual number of orders delivered by Rigby Taylor annually is 75,000.

That just shows the scale of the operation at one of BIGGA's founding Golden Key Supporter companies. It does tend to get forgotten but every time an order is phoned through or placed through the Internet a lot still has to happen to ensure it arrives at its destination and Rigby Taylor spend a lot of time and effort making sure it runs smoothly.

"We are spending over £800,000 on carriage alone every year and this is not passed on to the customer, provided they meet minimum order requirements," explained Andrew, as we sat in the recently-acquired Horwich Headquarters on the outskirts of Bolton.

It is a hidden cost however and Andrew is keen to work closely with the customer to ensure costs can be reduced and the savings passed on or invested in new products.

"I would estimate that we could save £250,000 tonne miles just by cutting down on distribution and getting some of our customers to bulk up on some of their orders," he revealed.

"With good forward planning golf clubs should be able to operate on four deliveries a year. We have nine vehicles and that normally covers most of our haulage but in busy times when people contact us with an order that's needed straight away we have to go outside our own distribution and hire in vehicles and that is extremely expensive.

"It's trying to be efficient and environmentally friendly. Having a decent lead time helps us because we can programme it in and deliver it when the customer wants it whether it be in March, April or whenever. Ordering early doesn't cost the customer any more as they aren't billed until they get it and we do offer 12 monthly payment plans where, at no additional cost, their anticipated annual spend is divided over the year," said Andrew,

adding proudly that the company had recently received a prestigious environmental award from one of their clients - Manchester United.

Andrew is also extremely proud of the company's customer service and believes the latest innovation will make a significant difference to what can be offered to Course Managers up and down the country.

"All our new vehicles are fitted with fork lift trucks and our drivers will be fully trained in using them so when a delivery is made we can store it wherever the Course Manager wants it, even if it's the top shelf. Ultimately, our objective is to deliver it to the 15th green if that's where the order is to be used.

"We've just taken delivery of our fifth one and at £85,000 a time they don't come cheap but we feel it is offering the customer another service. In our book customers come first," he said.

Andrew took over as Managing Director three years ago from Bernard Hedley, who continues as Executive Chairman, and since then has been involved in a programme of continuous improvement.

"We look at our product range on a day to day basis and are continually asking our suppliers to improve what they give to us. They love us to bits because what we do is help them to make the products better, we don't charge the customer any more but we all see the benefit from extra sales.

"For example with 'Breaker Triple' we've seen sales almost double in two years and with 'Activate', the extra rooting agent that has been added, has improved rooting by 30% at no extra cost to the customer."

The company was formed in 1919 when Herbert Rigby and Robert Taylor - the fine turf's equivalent of Mr Rolls and Mr Royce - got together in what has always been a rich industry heartland to sell degreasing solvents to the cotton and textile mills.

"Seeing that the textile industry was in decline they looked to diversify and set up a paint division," explained Bernard, who joined the company following a management buyout in the early 1980's.

A fertiliser division followed and the company's reputation was forged following the STRI man around the area making up fertilisers based on the advice given.

"We continued to extend the range of products including chemicals and grass seed and launched our own Mascot range in 1981," said Bernard.

What launched the company to what it is today was the brave decision to look beyond the natural boundaries of a regional company and open up in competition with a company in the south east and then subsequently

Scott MacCallum travelled to BIGGA Golden Key Supporter, Rigby Taylor's headquarters, in Bolton, to meet MD Andrew Robinson and Executive Chairman, Bernard Hedley.



Left to right, George Johnstone, Manchester United FC, Martin Gibson, Evirowise, Andrew Robinson and Brendon Gott, Rigby Taylor



Rigby Taylor has invested in new vehicles with an onboard fork lift to aid and further improve in the delivery of their products to the customer

the midlands. Ironically, the company which had previously considered the south east to be their patch, Parkers, were later bought by Rigby Taylor.

The company now has six product divisions - fertilisers; pesticides; grass seed; speciality product like wetting agents and plant health products; white lining and top dressings. There is a staff of 150 with 35,000 square feet of warehousing at the Bolton base, another 20,000 square feet at the company's Guildford base and another 10,000 square feet at their Newbridge site, just outside Edinburgh. That's 65,000 square feet in total.

Servicing the products is a UK sales team of 50, recently expanded from 40.

"A high proportion are ex-greenkeepers. What we like to do is take users of turf products and teach them how to sell rather than take someone from outside the trade and teach them about greenkeeping. It's the better option," explained Andrew.

"It takes about three years to take a new rep and train him to become a salesman but they talk the same language as the greenkeeper. We take him up to almost the same level as an agronomist in terms of training. That's not to do away with the agronomist but to work with him and empathise with the problems being faced."

The extra 10 staff have been brought on board to help expand the customer base and service existing customers more effectively.

"It's the old 80-20 rule, 80% of the business is done with the top 20% of customers and a the new staff were taken on to work under our Area Managers to service and build up the smaller accounts," said Andrew.

Looking to the future Andrew feels that chemicals will develop to the extent that the quantities required will be much less than today. Indeed Rigby Taylor have just launched its first new fungicide in 12 years.

"Without giving too much away it offers a much greater cleanliness of

label, will be much safer and a minute amount of chemical will be used in comparison to the old style of fungicide. Compared with existing fungicides we'll be putting on a tenth of the amount of chemical.

"It is the way chemistry is going but the legislation on chemicals is helping to encourage the research," he revealed.

Andrew did admit that the biggest worry was still worms.

"The problem with the new legislation is that if it says on the label that it kills worms it's going to be put on one side. Chemical companies are working on it but the cost of developing is so high and golf is pretty much the only industry that doesn't want worms.

"There are other ways of getting rid of worms but they are all detrimental to the turf, reducing the pH for example."

Andrew did make a plea for greenkeepers not to be sucked into using off label products.

"BIGGA and the industry need to work together to try and stamp out the buying of agricultural pesticides. Yes, they save money but they are taking money away from the companies which are investing in this industry. And, of course, it is illegal.

"If a greenkeeper were to use a non-amenity product and a golfer were to be taken ill the golf club would be in for a serious claim and the greenkeeper could personally be fined.

"We are delighted to be Golden Key supporters of BIGGA because we feel education is the best way to ensure greenkeepers don't make the mistake of taking short cuts which are illegal and could cost them their jobs," said Andrew.

So the next time you take delivery of a Rigby Taylor product just think about the fact that it is just one of 75,000 the company will be delivering this year.

Does make you go "Wow" doesn't it?

NEW PRODUCTS

SCORPIO KING

A brand new class of fungicides has been introduced with the launch of Scorpio from Bayer Environmental Science.

The product uses a unique Mesostemic mode of action that defines a new class of fungicides, oximinacetates. Oximinacetates have a high affinity with the plant surface and are absorbed readily by the waxy layers of the plant. The product redistributes at the plant surface by superficial vapour movement and penetrates the plant tissue.

The product embeds into the waxy layer of the blade/leaf, by absorption by the waxy layer giving longer lasting disease control. Scorpio is in Water Dispersible Granule form and has an ultra-low dosage application rate.

Scorpio is sold in 250gm re-sealable packs, sufficient to treat the equivalent of two bowling greens or approximately seven average sized golf greens. The pack is supplied with a unique measuring and pouring cap for accurate application and facilitating no contact with the operator.

For further information Tel: 01992 784270.



HAYTER'S LT324G

Hayter believe there is a promising future for LPG powered products and have already made improvements to their LPG powered 4 wheel drive triple, the LT324G. The Hayter LT324G is powered by 4 cylinder 1600cc engine built by General Motors.

This develops 40 hp at normal operating speed and ensures the machine has more than enough power to cope with tough municipal applications and yet is quiet and smooth in operation. The fuel is contained within two LPG tanks, one either side of the engine compartment immediately behind the operator.

The LT324G has all the features that you would expect from a Hayter ride on machine. High output, ease of maintenance and low running costs. It also bears the same modern distinctive styling that is now common across the whole range.

For further information Tel: 01279 723444.



GOING UNDERGROUND

The Mona Plant System (MPS) is a modular underground watering system, which provides effective and easy to manage irrigation for both internal and external landscaping of any size.

MPS uses a series of linked water reservoirs to optimise soil moisture and oxygenation, thus helping ensure that plants have the perfect soil conditions in which to bloom stronger and longer.

It also provides significant environmental advantages - it uses up to 80% less water than top watering and 75% less fertiliser, requires no electricity and is made from recyclable polyethylene.

MPS is produced by Tricor International, a UK-based manufacturer and supplier of products to both the consumer and professional sides of the outdoor living sectors in the UK, Europe and US, and the company is launching a free design planning service to help local customers develop tailored plans for their individual requirements.

For more information Tel: 01642 482000.



SMALL BUT EFFECTIVE

MiniMat is designed by Fi-Cord International and has been created to solve the problem of playing on wet ground on golf courses. The unique two-piece technology absorbs club head impact, yet the mat stays in position using only golf tees - in really soft conditions the provided extra-length tees can be used.

The divot mat component moves forward, like a grass divot, causing minimum resistance and reducing shock to elbows, wrists and hands. The divot automatically returns to its original position for continuous shots without re-fastening.

The anchor component absorbs return shock in one direction only while the elastic bungee absorbs tension in the opposite direction, minimising the push pull effect, which would otherwise loosen the securing tee peg fixings.

The photo shows golfer Mark James using the equipment. "It's excellent, has overcome divot nightmares and does everything claimed for it. I'm using it regularly," said Mark.

For further information Tel: 01625 829627.



FULL SIZED COMPACTS

The Massey Ferguson 1500 Series compact tractors offer users a highly versatile, feature packed machine in a compact package. The compact's lightweight but rugged design makes the three new MF 1500 Series models, from 32hp to 46hp, ideal for work in a wide variety of municipal, horticultural, arboreal and local authority applications.

All tractors in the series feature stronger, quieter emissions compliant engines providing high power and torque across the working range, synchronised 12 forward/12 reverse speed transmission with synchro-shuttle, simple arrangement of four synchronised gears in three ranges offering speeds from 0.37km/hr to 30km/hr, hydrostatic transmission option, two-speed, independent PTO with Soft Start switch, powerful hydraulics with high lift capacity to handle heavy implements.

Operator comfort has been a top priority in the design of the MF 1500's. A wide entry to the flat platform on the MF 1547 and semi-flat floor on the smaller models, combined with a tiltable steering wheel, makes for easy entry and exit from the tractors.

For further information Tel: 02476 694400.



DRAMATIC DIESEL PROGRESS

Dramatic progress has been made in the production of diesel engines over the last few years with new models being quieter, smoother and more efficient, yet still complying with tough emissions legislation. One such engine - a 25hp water-cooled 3-cylinder Lombardini - is at the heart of Etesia's new ride-on rotary mower, the Hydro 124DN.

This latest 124cm tractor has the powerful delivery necessary to achieve working speeds of up to 16km/h. High performance levels are enhanced by Etesia's patented cutting and collecting system which will not clog, even in wet or long grass.

Beneath the Hydro 124D's cutting deck, two synchronised contra-rotating blades are angled at 90° to create a powerful vacuum that lifts the grass before it is cut, resulting in a 124cm wide quality finish. High-lift emptying combines with direct rear-ejection and integrated collection, ensuring high productivity and mowing efficiency, especially on larger sites and wide open spaces. The 600 litre collector is hydraulically emptied and holds more than 100kg of grass.

For further information Tel: 01926 403319.

IMPROVED WORKMAN

Toro has given its Workman 3000 and 4000 heavy-duty utility vehicles a stylish new appearance and a host of new features for greater driver comfort, easier operation and better control. The versatile, highly manoeuvrable vehicle can be fitted with a wide range of bed mounted attachments for all kinds of tasks.

In addition to a smart, restyled body, the two and four wheel drive units have been redesigned with significantly more legroom and fitted with adjustable seats for even more space and comfort. A fully hydraulic steering system has also been added to make it easier to turn the improved Workman.

Greater value has been built into the new Workman with the introduction of eight-inch brakes on all four wheels, remote hydraulics as standard, plus longer-lasting tyres.

Other features include a 540rpm rear PTO, optional mid-point PTO and high/low, three-speed synchromesh gearbox giving six forward and two reverse gears. Good weight distribution means that loads up to 2,725lbs can be carried with minimum compaction to surfaces, while the vehicle design virtually eliminates turf scuffing or skating - even on greens when the Workman is fully loaded.

For further information Tel: 01480 226800.



THE BIGMOW

A fully automatic robotic mower designed for unattended mowing has been launched by Turfmech. Suitable for regular maintenance of grass areas of between half an acre and five acres, the battery-powered Bigmow frees up valuable time and labour.



This is achieved through Bigmow's ability to work safely and silently on its own enabling the grass to be cut far more frequently. Powered by rechargeable dry cell batteries, the computer controlled Bigmow is designed to work within a pre-defined area bounded by a low voltage perimeter wire.

For optimum safety during work, Bigmow is equipped with a sonar and safety bumpers enabling it to detect, slow down and steer around obstacles within the cutting area. When Bigmow's batteries need recharging, the machine returns and connects automatically to its charging station.

Equipped with five fully shrouded rotary cutting heads fitted with retractable blades, Bigmow is able to maintain the grass at any required length from 22mm to 95mm, adjusted on a 12 position height control rod. The 1.05m (42in) wide fully-floating cutting assembly incorporates an anti-scalp system for a clean, even finish.

For further information Tel: 01889 271503.

NEW HERBICIDE LAUNCHED

Sherriff Amenity has launched Astalavista, a brand new selective herbicide. Astalavista can be used for the control of a wide range of broad leaved weeds in established amenity turf such as golf courses, playing fields, roadside verges, parkland and lawns.

With its unique formulation of ioxynil, bromoxynil and mecoprop-P, Astalavista has excellent activity on annual broad leaved weeds from seedling to flower buds visible stage and can be used throughout the growing season. It gives a high level of control on problem weeds, such as Speedwell, Clover Yarrow, as well as many others.

For further information Tel: 01638 721888.

FALCON FLIES FORWARD

Bomford has introduced a new forward arm version of its Falcon flail mower, designed to provide greater operator visibility over the flail head. The Forward Arm Falcon can be mounted using either an axle bracket or a three-point quick hitch system. This makes it suitable not only for tractors, but other utility type vehicles.

One particular option that has been particularly successful is to use the new Forward Arm Falcon mounted on the back of a Merlo Multifarmer materials handler. With its hydrostatic transmission, good visibility and four wheel steering the Merlo has proven to be an ideal power unit and allows the versatility of this machine to be fully utilised.

The Forward Arm Falcon can be specified with either a 1.2m or 1.5m wide Pro-Cut flail head, which features a double helix rotorshaft to which a wide range of flail types can be fitted. The Forward Arm Falcon has its own self contained 250 litre hydraulic oil tank, with the option of a cooler.

For further information Tel: 01789 773383.





News from the Chief Executive

"Can you ring Jim Arthur," words that you sometimes did not want to hear from Rachael or Brad who run reception at BIGGA House, especially on a Friday afternoon. Your thought processes went into overdrive wondering what could be the matter this time.

On rare occasions calls were simple, however the majority of the time Jim was set to put his thoughts forward on the content and quality of a seminar, not always BIGGA related, or perhaps comment on an article in Greenkeeper International. He was always consistent in his views and I would imagine that he has forgotten more about greenkeeping than some people will ever know. I have spent many a good hour listening to Jim extol the virtues of his book, putting greenkeeping back on the right track or just condemning 'chemical' companies. Most of us have been there!

He spoke with a passion for the job he loved doing and was always guaranteed to attract a good audience when on the public platform, if only because he was usually controversial. Love him or not his passing is a sad loss to all and in my opinion he was one of the great characters in an industry that has changed so dramatically since he first started out as an agronomist.

He could not have been more different to that other member of the greenkeeping fraternity who recently died, Derek Green. One quiet and unassuming the other quite vocal in his views but both masters of their craft, good friends and a part of greenkeeping history. In a strange sort of way I will miss those telephone calls, life will never be the same for so many of us.

At BIGGA House we have taken delivery of two new purpose made oak bookcases, one financed by a donation from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in memory of Neil Thomas, the other bought by BIGGA.

These have been placed in the Board Room to house the ever growing collection of books in the member's library. We are also developing a small museum in the reception area and would welcome the donation or loan of either books or artefacts for these facilities.

John Pemberton

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

In order to improve the sending and receiving of Section Notes, where possible can all future notes be emailed to gareth@bigga.co.uk by no later than the 5th of the month prior to publication please.

You will receive an email back to confirm receipt of your notes. If you do not receive this confirmation please get in touch with BIGGA Headquarters.

SCOTTISH REGION

Ayrshire

Hello again, just a couple of things to report this time. Our spring outing, held on April 12, over the Kintyre Course had another excellent turn out. The weather was kind to us on the day and all agreed that Jimmy Johnstone and his crew had the course in great condition.

Special thanks to Stuart Selbie, General Manager, and George Brown, Greenkeeping & Estates Manger, for allowing us courtesy of the course. Also to the clubhouse staff for all their help in providing a great day.

Results were as follows: Scratch Prize. S. McBlain, Prestwick St. Nicholas, 75. 1st Class. 1. D. Wilson, Irvine Bogside, 32pts; 2. J. Mair, Hamilton Golf Club, 31pts; 3. K. McCartney, Dumfries & Galloway, 31pts; 4. R. Fulton, Prestwick St Nicholas, 29 pts; 5. D. Tweddell, Turnberry, 28pts.

2nd Class. 1. G. Haughie, Southernness, 36pts; 2. I. Barr, Largs Kelburn, 29pts; 2. D. Gray, The Pines, 29pts; 3. R. Bunting, Ballochmyle, 26pts; 4. J. Irving, Lockerbie, 26pts. Trade Prize. K. Brunton, Greentech, 34pts.

Following the prizes George Brown and Iain Barr presented Ian McKay with a vintage Sisis 3 hole hollow tiner, along with a framed picture to remember the day. We all wish Ian well on his retirement from Sisis and hope to continue seeing him at our outings. He's got one cool motor as well!

Any news call me on 07939 104701.

Denis Tweddell

Central

We have another four new members joining us this month and they are Derek Ross, St Andrews Links, Hugh Davidson, Charleton Golf Course, George Pendrich, Gleneagles Hotel, and Sean Fotheringham, from Dunfermline Golf Club. As usual we extend a warm welcome to them all from everyone in the Section and we hope to see them at some of our future events.

Speaking of future events I sent a list of the educational events, which can be organised on your behalf, and asked if you would list the events you were interested in and return the form to me. So far not one of you have bothered to return any forms, so I take it that you are all so well educated that you don't need any more or that you are just not interested!

The first golf tournament of the season was held at The Golf House Club, Elie, in April and our sincere thanks go to everyone there for making it a most successful day. Special thanks to Brian Lawrie and his staff for having the course in such excellent condition, Vice Captain, Allan Mackie, for presenting our prizes to the winners and also to the bar and catering staff who kept everyone fed and refreshed throughout the day.

Prize winners on the day were: Best Scratch, Daval Trophy. David Simpson, Crieff GC, 69. Best Nett, Greentech Trophy. Michael Love, Grangemouth GC, 64. 1st Class 1st H/cap, Toro Trophy. Hayden Chambers, St Andrews, 68. 1st Class 2nd H/cap, Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 68. 2nd Class 1st H/cap, Section Trophy. Euan Grant, St Andrews, 64. 2nd Class 2nd H/cap. Douglas Barr, Dundee CC, 71. 3rd Class 1st H/cap, Section Trophy. Malcolm Lowe, Tower of Lethendy, 73. 3rd Class 2nd H/cap. Donald Gardiner, Scoonie GC, 79. Stewarts Quaich. Euan Grant and Hayden Chambers, St Andrews, 132.

Patrons. Mike Dennis, Rigby Taylor, 71. Guests. Stuart Archibald, St Andrews, 69. Longest Drive, Daval Prize. Kevin Brunton, Greentech. Nearest the Pin, Daval Prize. Mark Inglis, Muckhart GC.

John Crawford