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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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Education Update

Ken Richardson highlights the additions to the Education Programme at Harrogate Week, including Fringe Seminars and much, much more.



You should all have received a copy of the Harrogate Week 2006 brochure, supported by the GTC, with last month's copy of Greenkeeper International. If you did not receive a copy contact BIGGA HQ and we will send one out to you.

Those who did get their copy will have seen that the brochure contains a wide range of educational opportunities for all those who wish to attend. From workshops and seminars to a one-day conference and debate, greenkeepers, groundsman, golf course managers, grounds managers, golf club secretaries and golf club managers and officials will find something that appeals and, more importantly, increases their knowledge.

Added value can be obtained from the Careers Fair and Student Forum, sponsored by Toro, half-day workshops, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, a Women's Forum, the Keynote Speaker and Presentations, the Banquet, networking and formal meetings. This all adds to BTME & ClubHouse, plus a series of Fringe Seminars presented by a range of exhibitor companies.

Wednesday January 25 sees a full day of seminars presented by the English Golf Union and the Association of Golf Club Secretaries, aimed mainly at golfers, golf club officials, golf club secretaries and secretary managers. However, golf course managers could also benefit from attending.

A further addition to Harrogate Week is a series of talks devoted to Sustainable Golf Course Management, that is supported by the R&A. These take place on Thursday afternoon, January 26, followed by what is sure to be a lively debate on Friday morning.

FRINGE SEMINARS

Many exhibitors at BTME & ClubHouse have taken the opportunity to present a seminar during the Show. Full details will be published soon but the following companies have confirmed that they will be making presentations.

Tuesday 24 January

Toro
WBB Minerals (Rufford and Pro-Sport)
Headland Amenity Products
Rigby Taylor Ltd
Otterbine
STRI
Lloyds and Co Letchworth Ltd
Complete Weed Control

Wednesday 25 January 2006

Toro
Aqua-aid Inc in association with Tower Chemicals Ltd
Aquatrols in Association with Vitax
Hunter Industries Inc
Thursday 26 January 2006
Premium Credit Ltd
Toro
Terrain Aeration Services
Headland Amenity Products

All of the fringe seminars are free of charge and do not need to be booked. They will all take place in the Queen's Suite at Harrogate International Centre that can be accessed via Halls B and C or from the covered walkway.

STUDENT FORUM

Thursday January 26 is Student Day at Harrogate Week 2006. Visit the show, network with employers, discover what career opportunities are open to you, attend the Student Forum and enter the Student Quiz when you could win an I-Pod. Details of the day and quiz entry forms are being sent to all training providers in the UK and Ireland.

BIGGA CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Congratulations to the following list of members who have been awarded their Diploma in Continuing Professional Development.

Ian MacMillan MG
Nigel White
Stuart Hogg MG
John Quinn MG
Kerran Daly MG
Andy Campbell MG CGCS
Mark Broughton MG
Alex McCombie
Richard Whyman
Seve Schmitz MG
Lee Strutt MG
Ian Willett
David Hannam MG
Kevin Kenny



TORO STUDENT OF THE YEAR



A close fought Final held at BIGGA HOUSE on September 26 saw Alan Pierce, from Ham Manor Golf Club, selected as the Toro Student of the Year 2005, with David Newton and James Lindsay selected as the two runners-up. More details appear

elsewhere in this magazine. I would like to congratulate all eight finalists who were well prepared, were immaculate in their presentation and showed that the future of greenkeeping is in good hands.

Alan attended Plumpton College, in Sussex, and as part of the first prize, his Lecturer, David Blackmur, will join the BIGGA party at the Golf Industry Show in Atlanta in February 2006.

Thank you to all those who took part, to their golf clubs for supporting them, to the judges for giving their time and especially to Toro for continuing to sponsor this worthwhile event.

Tip of the Month

Ivan Killip

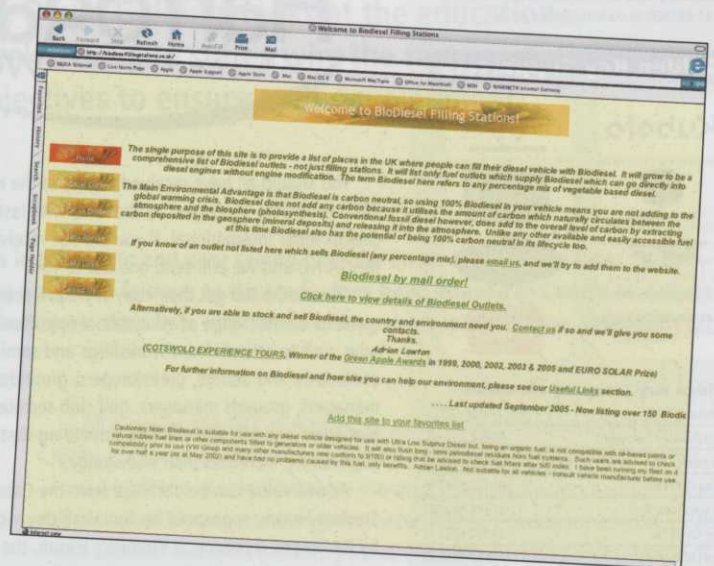
Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Gatton Manor Golf Club



As there is more and more demand on golf courses to become environmentally friendly, with the EU putting more pressure on our government to meet targets. It's no wonder we have to find new ways to manage the golf course in a symbiotic relationship with nature and ourselves.

My tip is running your diesel engine mowers on a product called biodiesel. Biodiesel is basically vegetable oil or filtered fat. You can have the product delivered to your door, and if you run out you can always use regular diesel. You can also run your personal vehicle with biodiesel on the roads, as some petrol pumps supply this alternative fuel.

It is totally clean to the environment as it produces no carbon gases, you will also be using up a waste product that would normally be discarded. To find the nearest supplier to you, and to find out more about biodiesel check out their website at www.biodieselfillingstations.co.uk.



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Call Us Today For A Demo

Rachael and Gemma would like to welcome 61 new members to the Association and talk about time off for dependants.

Membership Update



WIN

A WEEKEND SURVIVAL COURSE FOR TWO



Our congratulations go to **Nigel Robins of Whittlebury Park Golf and Country Club** who wins a survival weekend for two.

Nigel will spend the weekend building his own shelter, learning about edible plants and survival medicine and receiving instruction in navigation.

DID YOU RECEIVE YOURS?

The new 2005/2006 Membership Handbook was launched with the October Magazine. The handbook is an, all encompassing one stop guide, which offers easy access to information on many organisations and individuals. If you did not receive your handbook or would like extra copies please contact Rachael or Gemma on 01347 833800.



BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

Kenneth Liddell, Central
Alexander Macdonald, North
Shaun Macdonald, North
Euan Macdonald, North
Andrew Mackay, North
Craig Mackay, North
Nicholas Marsland, North
David McLeish, Central
David Ronaldson, East
Alastair Ross, North
George Simpson, North
John Smith, East
Matthew Thomson, East

NORTHERN REGION

Peter Colley, Northern
Richard Cook, North West
Mark Finley, North West
Adrian Hallatt, Sheffield

Philip Jordan, North West
Paul Judd, Sheffield
Neil Kenyon, North West
Martin Kirby, North West
Spencer Lloyd-Pye, North West
Geoff Marchant, North West
Stuart Mason, Northern
Adam McColl, North Wales
Adam Moore, North West
Andrew Scaman, Northern
Dominic Skinner, North West
Dave Squire, North West
Mike Wiszniewski, North West

MIDLAND REGION

Michael Boyes, Mid Anglia
Daniel Kendle, East of England
Matthew Pratt, East Anglia

SOUTH EAST

Simon Barber, Essex
Tony Barker, Essex
Gary Brayshaw, Surrey
Christopher Evans, Surrey
Michael Goodyear, Surrey
Stuart Hazleton, London
Benjamin Jeavons, Surrey
Elaine Kelley, Surrey
Christos Kyriazis, Kent
John Lynch, Surrey
Lee Mayhew, Surrey
James Murphy, Surrey
Philip Ryder, Surrey
Paul Skuse, London
Chris Young, East Anglia

SOUTH WEST/WALES

Anthony Clarke, South Coast
Christopher Dawe, South West

Peter Gilbert, South Coast
Matthew Lane, Devon & Cornwall
John Osment, South Coast
Stuart Ross, South Wales
James Yeates, South West

INTERNATIONAL

Thomas Ijland, Spain
Michael Lee, USA

STUDENT MEMBER

Craig Spruce, Northern

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Adrian Handbury, Midland
Lodewijk Klootwijk, Netherlands
Nuno Sepulveda, Portugal

NOVEMBER'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a Digital FM Scan Radio/Alarm. The radio can stand alone or can be clipped onto a belt with headphones for when you're on the move. Our congratulations go to Eoin Riddell of Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

Quick Guide to Time Off for Dependants

This right allows employees to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with unexpected emergencies and make longer term arrangements. The emergency must involve a dependant of the employee.

WHO IS A DEPENDANT?

A dependant is the spouse or partner (living at the same address), child or parent of the employee. It can also be an elderly relative living at the same address. In case of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down a dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance. Such as, if the employee is the primary carer or is the only person who can help in an emergency, such as when an elderly neighbour living alone breaks a limb.

UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES CAN AN EMPLOYEE TAKE TIME OFF?

- To deal with a death of a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employees child during school hours
- If a dependant falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured
- When a dependant is having a baby (this does not include time off after the birth as this is covered by paternity leave)

HOW MUCH TIME OFF CAN YOU TAKE?

The legislation does not specify the amount of time off which is reasonable since this will vary according to circumstances of the emergency. In most cases one or two days off should be enough to deal with the immediate crisis and make alternative arrangements.

IS THE TIME OFF PAID?

The right to time off does not include an entitlement to pay. If it is paid it is down to the employer's discretion or to the contract of employment between the employer and employee.

This information should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. For further information go to the department of work and pensions website www.dwp.gov.uk.

Coming up next month : *Quick Guide to Parental Leave*

This Time it's for Real!

**RANSOMES
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Scott MacCallum reports on the National Championship, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, which produced a case of *deja vue* for the winner.

If there is such a thing as fate Noel Crawford could certainly vouch for it. Last year he was leading the BIGGA National Championship, held at Alwoodley Golf Club in Leeds, but had to leave early to catch a plane back to Northern Ireland. So that we had a picture for the magazine he posed with the Trophy before heading off. While he was in mid air though Graeme MacDonald, playing towards the rear of the field, came up on the rails to take the top prize.



Above: National Chairman Kerran Daly dusted down his clubs and defeated Bert Cross

Right: A spectacular Seve-esque escape from a bunker



Below: The attractive par 3 4th at Sherwood Forest



Right: The devilish Sherwood greens produced some knashing of teeth



This year, thanks to some fine golf and a change in the rule which meant the top gross score won the top prize, he got his hands on the trophy for real. And what do you know when it came to the photographs the battery on BIGGA's camera went dead just before the top prizes were presented and if it wasn't for the quick thinking of Arnold Phipps Jones and his personal digital camera, we might have been relying on the picture taken the previous year for this year's magazine.

"I won the gross prize three out of the last five years and I was delighted when the rules were changed so the person with the lowest gross score became the National Champion," said the Royal County Down greenkeeper and +1 golfer.

"I think it's quite right that the lowest score should win and hopefully it will encourage some of the top golfing greenkeepers to take part - I saw that the runner-up in this year's Amateur Championship (John Gallacher) was a greenkeeper," said Noel, who despite his undoubted skill very rarely practices.

"I think I've practiced twice in the last five years," said the man who is a former Ulster Youths' Champion and a multiple winner of the Royal County Down Scratch Cup.

Noel is part of quite a golfing dynasty with his brother, 2 handicapper, Eamonn, also a regular attendee and winner at the National Championship, although not this year, and his nephew, Gary, currently the Northern Ireland Section Chairman, is also a regular visitor.

"I always enjoy the National Championship. Everyone is very friendly and the golf courses are excellent. I hope to be back to defend at Burton Golf Club next year."

The event proved to be an superb two days of golf with Worksop and Sherwood Forest fine challenges and a credit to Course Managers, Barry Lax and Kim Kirkham, respectively.

The first day was remarkable on a number of scores.

None more so that the emergence of National Chairman, Kerran Daly, as a real golfing force. Noel Crawford may not have practiced much for five years but Kerran hadn't picked up a club at all in years. He proved rustiness was merely a state of mind as he defeated his fellow National Board Member, Bert Cross, 2&1 in a hastily organised bounce game at the back of the field. The fact that Bert had spent three hours on his feet as Official Starter before quickly changing for the match shouldn't deflect from the achievement.

Another match, just ahead of Kerran and Bert, saw Rupert Price



Above: Gary Rowe collects the prize for Best Nett

and Sean Winn, representing Ransomes Jacobsen, sponsors of the National Championship narrowly lose out to John Pemberton and Scott MacCallum for the Worksop plate which was donated to the Association on the morning of the match by Worksop Secretary, David Dufall.

These were merely golfing side shows not to deflect from the serious stuff being played up ahead and when the dust finally settled the first piece of silverware to be decided was the Regional Trophy which went to the Midland Region with a score of 595 the eight man team comprising - Simon Woolley, Nigel Colley, David Fellows, Carl Small, Neill Smith, Charlie Milbourn, Russ Moody and Brian Robson - finishing 11 shots ahead of the South East and their team of Keir Grimwood, Gary Rowe, Adam Marrable, David Beale, David Badham, Robert Kemp, Tony Bremer and Chris Wells.



Right: Yes he does look younger, Champion Noel Crawford with the trophy last year!

The form men of the opening day in the individual event were 1 handicapper George Mitchell and 2 handicapper Shaun Richards, who both shot two over par 74s. Noel Crawford was just one shot behind after a 75.

Leader of the nett competition was Gary Rowe, who shot a nett 70 off his 10 handicap, and Kier Greenwood, who also shot a 70 off a handicap of 12.

Worksop Golf Club did everyone proud at the Championship dinner after the first round during which Kerran Daly thanked and paid tribute to Ransomes Jacobsen, the sole sponsor of the event. The Team prize was presented to the Midland Region, as was the Nearest the Pin to Carl Small, (39 inches to the final hole followed by a missed putt) and Longest Drive to Gary Burgess, who needs to be tested for performance enhancing drugs!

Below: Kim Kirkham and Barry Lax, Course Managers at Sherwood Forest and Worksop respectively



Above: The victorious Midland Region

Below: Champions all!



John McLoughlan obviously had moderation at the forefront of his mind at the dinner as the next day at Sherwood Forest he produced the best round of the entire Championship, a one over par 73, posting a two round total of 152. That hauled him up to third place overall one behind Shaun Richards, who added a 77 to his opening 74. The eventual Champion, Noel, playing with John and another scratch man David Coupland, added a second successive round of 75 for an unbeatable total of 150.

In the nett competition Gary Rowe added a 71 to his 70 for a 141 total two ahead of Simon Woolley and a further clear of David Fellows.

Everyone was extremely impressed by the quality of greens at both venues and particularly Sherwood Forest's that were cut at three mil and in perfect condition. They were so slick many people fell foul particularly if they found themselves on the high side.

Next year the National Championship will be held at Burton Golf Club on October 2&3.

Additional photography by Arnold Phipps-Jones

Course Feature

The Three Musketeers

Gareth Jones took a trip to the highest part of Oxfordshire and found three men implementing critical change at Chipping Norton Golf Club.

At the highest point in Oxfordshire you will find three men united. A trio battling the old golf ethos to ensure a future for their beloved golf club. These three individuals are the Head Greenkeeper, Chairman of Green and the General Manager at Chipping Norton Golf Club and they have formed a formidable alliance to rival that of the Three Musketeers.

Head Greenkeeper David Sturgeon, Committee man John Taylor and management expert Neil Clayton have all brought their vast skills and considerable knowledge together as they strive to steer Chipping Norton along the path to a healthily, secure, successful future. Crucially, the trio have concentrated their efforts on the club's most valuable asset - the par 71, 6316 yard, 18 hole golf course.

To allow them to do just that, change and modernisation had to be implemented at the club by the two founding fathers of this alliance, David and John. The Chairman of the Green Committee has been the power behind the winds of transformation at Chipping Norton, ensuring the correct procedures are installed within the club to allow David and his four man greenkeeping team to do their job to the best of their high ability.

The major issue tackled has been one of greenkeeping's ancient problems. A difficulty so old that it no doubt stretches back to the time of Old Tom Morris himself - the lack of continuity caused by the conveyor belt system of Green Chairmen.

"Most greenkeepers will have experienced it at one time or another. The problem with having a new Chairman of Green in each year is that there is no structure to the developments on the course. Each one, rightly or wrongly, wants to make their own mark on the course, but with everyone having different ideas you have dramatic swings in direction year on year. That's not good for anyone, but the course is especially affected, negatively. We needed a long term, sustainable plan, but it wasn't possible under the old system," confessed David, who has been at Chipping Norton for over six years.

This is where the benefit of a strong ally within the membership came into play for David. John, who had already been the driving influence behind the construction of a new clubhouse in 1995, set about instilling a new management style within the club. The hard work of David and John ensured that their vision was realised. Instead of a yearly cycle, the Chairman of Green now serves for three years, heading a committee that shares the same long term views for the golf course.

John, a Chipping Norton member for over 28 years, currently heads the Green Committee. Unlike some Chairman of Green, he has spent his time learning the science of greenkeeping rather than dictating his desires to David and his team.



David, front right, John, far right, and the four members of the greens staff

"John is a problem solver and he has been very useful for me, he's got really stuck in. When he became Chairman he went about improving his knowledge, reading Greenkeeper International and building up the club's library. He didn't come in and tell us what to do, he came to shadow and learn from us. It's that respect he shows for us that is important, as he has earned the backing of my greens staff," said David.

The final piece of the Chipping Norton jigsaw was put in place just nine months ago, with the employment of Neil as General Manager. The former RAF man, who had previously worked at The London Club, has come in to oversee all aspects of the club and to provide that vital communication link between the committees and employees.

"The whole change in system was the result of a steering committee, some three years ago, which was then accepted and adopted by the membership. Now that has been implemented we realised that we needed a middleman. Three years for a Chairman of Green is certainly not forever, when I step down we don't want to lose momentum. We needed a General Manager in place who could guide the next person into the job and keep the overall objectives on route. Neil can make sure everything is in place for the next Chairman of Green. That should make it easier and will benefit the club as a whole," explained John, who, now retired, devotes a large amount of time and support to both the club and David, lending his background in Industrial Management to the cause.

Importantly, Neil's role has opened up the communication channels within the picturesque club. He sits on all committees and will liaise closely with David to ensure the Course Manager is fully in the loop. The General Manager position has also meant that certain jobs, such as material

Course Feature



costing and sourcing, can be taken off David's shoulders, to allow him to concentrate his attention on the course.

"My responsibility is the future of the club. I can step back and look at the long term issues affecting us, such as the environment and irrigation. It's seeing the bigger picture and realising how it all fits together with the concepts at Chipping. We have a template in place so everyone can see clearly the direction we are going in. It is my job to make sure we don't divert off this too severely, whatever positional changes may occur," stated Neil.

An example of the trio's foresight is the reservoir that has appeared behind the neatly hidden greenkeeping facilities. While a concept created by the previous Chairman of Green, it is a project being taken to the next level now. Affectionately known as the lagoon by the team, it highlights that the future is never far from the mind of the present. Currently taking rain water from the clubhouse roof, it will also be delivered off the car park, the waste water system and from the wash down area, which is in the process of being built.

"It's using common sense and doing the bits and pieces that might not be a major concern now, but will be soon. A lot of investigation has gone in to it all. We are installing a reed bed at the entry into the lagoon and taking water from these extra sources will be a great advantage.

"We've needed more water on the course for a number of reasons. We've modified, and in some cases enlarged, the older greens, which are on limestone brash, so have very strong drainage. Also, being up high means we are drier for longer periods. The conservation of water means, hopefully, we wouldn't have to rely on the limited mains supply," said David, who works closely with his Deputy, Adrian, who has been at the club for 30 years, man and boy.



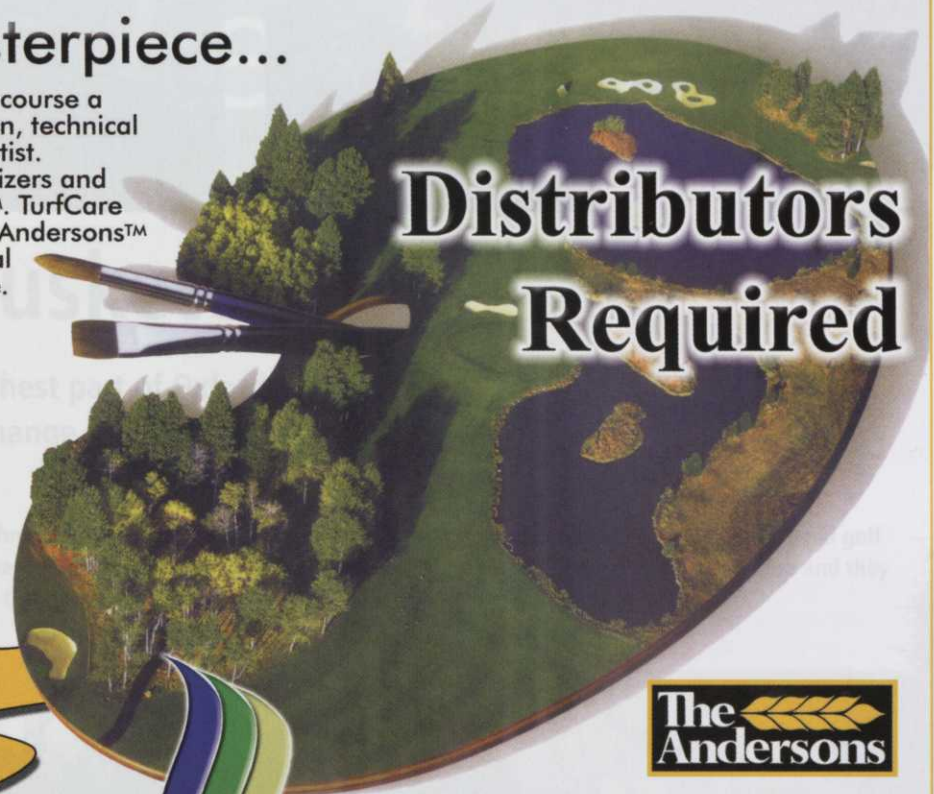
Look closely and you can see the course suggestion box that David placed on the island for the members

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Course Feature



The 3rd hole at Chipping Norton



Artificial winter mats have been inserted within the actual tee

"When David came here he brought in more expertise and a new level of refined professionalism. New ideas and practices have come in from David, which have moved the greens staff and course on. We would be foolish to interfere and try and tell him how to do his job. It is about asking and listening to his reasoning. I've learnt a lot from him, so I can answer some of the questions asked in the clubhouse, instead of having to go and bother David about every little aspect," said past Captain John.

It is all adding up to the completion of the three men's aims of a secure, prosperous future for Chipping Norton. This winter will see the finishing touches to their existing improvement plans, the removal of 160 trees from the back 9, after 250 have already been taken out. Schemes like this don't always go down well within a golf club, but a clear sign of the Musketeers' success has been the reaction from the 800 strong Membership and visiting players.

"We have the confidence and trust of the members here, which I feel is 90% of the battle. When I joined, it was a 'them and us' mentality, especially with the committees. Now everyone is united and working towards the common good. Little things help that, like bringing in the rest of the team to try out new equipment and allowing them to influence the decision on it. On the other side, it is talking with the members and answering their questions with real reasoning. It makes everyone feel part of something, which is very important," commented the experienced Headman, who has been in the profession since 1976.

"We are not the Sunningdales or Wentworths of this world, but what we can offer is a 'Gem in the Cotswolds'. We aimed to get to a standard where visitors could take something good away with them every time they played the course and we have done that now. It's not just financial investment, it is commitment to the enduring quality and presentation of the course - something I like to call 'invisionment'. Enthusiasm is our biggest asset here," stated the hard working, determined Chairman of Green.

"Both the club itself and the course have gone up in standard. It is about taking it all forward now and making sure we have the correct equipment and knowledge to improve the longevity and quality and then maintaining that. In terms of health, presentation and challenge the course is currently the best it has ever been," concluded Neil.

This last statement is accompanied by agreeing nods from all three men. You get the impression that the rest of the Chipping Norton membership would do the same when hearing that quote, proving change is not always a bad thing, but an essential necessity in many cases.



John sourced the materials and David did the installation of these stairs



The 'lagoon' will provide a crucial water supply in the summer

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Harrogate week





EXHIBITION 24 - 26 January 2006
EDUCATION 22 - 27 January 2006

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