Renewing a Link to the past

One of the most interesting pieces of news released in the last few weeks was that Royal Liverpool Golf Club, better known as Hoylake, is to return to the Open Championship rota, having last hosted an Open in 1967. Coming hot on the heels of Carnoustie’s return in 1999, after a gap of 24 years, it is another example of the R&A’s policy of widening the Championship rota.

I don’t suppose I’m alone in welcoming this development, particularly as none of the existing venues are being removed.

The Open is an amazing, unique, wonderful event. Every year something happens which quickens the pulse and causes your jaw to drop. Think back over the last few years. We’ve had Costantino Rocca’s amazing putt on the final green at St Andrews to force the play-off with John Daly. Justin Rose’s holed chip from the rough to signal the end of his amateur career closely followed by Brian Wait’s extraordinarily difficult bunker shot to force a play-off with Mark O’Meara both at Royal Birkdale; then of course there was Jean Van De Velde and local hero Paul Lawrie at Carnoustie and, last year, Tiger Woods at St Andrews becoming the youngest ever to complete the set of Grand Slam events. History in the making.

Before that we’ve had the Duel in the Sun at Turnberry in 1977; Tony Jacklin at Royal Lytham; Sandy Lyle at Royal St George’s; Nick Faldo’s 18 straight pars at Muirfield and the first ever four hole play-off at Royal Troon.

Each venue on the current rota has offered something worthy of permanent space in our memory banks and extending the rota will give yet more opportunities for memorable moments.

There are so few classic links courses in this country, and even fewer with the infrastructure to host a modern day Open Championship that the R&A and Royal Liverpool Golf Club must be applauded for taking the initiative and spending the money necessary to make Hoylake a venue again. Since Roberto de Vicenzo won the Championship there in 1967 the Championship has become unrecognisable with a tendency for the selecting committee to choose courses which should be regarded now as a town, and media exposure which requires an army of journalists, photographers and broadcasters. I understand extra land has been acquired by the club and, even fewer with the infrastructure to host a memorable tournament worthy of permanent space in our memory, and even fewer with the infrastructure to host a memorable tournament worthy of permanent space in our memory.

Brushing aside the hype and preparing for The Open’s return.

One downside might be for members of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team who thought they had completed the set when they worked at Carnoustie two years ago. They will now have to wait until at least 2006 to add the final notch to their personal Open Championship belts.

Robert to provide support for Marriott

York-based independent turf consultant, Robert Lovocks, (left) has been appointed by Marriott UK to provide agronomic support to the 11 Course Managers at golf courses located at Marriott Hotel and Country Clubs throughout the United Kingdom.

Encompassing 16 separate golf courses in England, Scotland and Wales, the appointment by Marriott UK involves the provision by Robert of advisory visits as well as detailed soil and plant analysis, as required by the individual Course Managers.

Robert’s appointment was confirmed by David MacLaren, (pictured right) Director of Golf Operations, Marriott UK: “This appointment is part of a world-wide strategy by our parent, Whitbread plc, aimed at reinforcing Marriott Golf’s position as the number one provider of quality golf and associated hotel and leisure facilities in the United Kingdom,” he said.

Although we are very proud of the work carried out by all our Course Managers, it was felt that they deserved additional independent technical support to help maintain Marriott’s golf facilities in peak condition throughout the year.”

David explained that Robert came highly recommended having worked closely over the past two years with the Course Managers at Marriott Harbury Manor and Marriott Forest of Arden. Both courses are PGA European Tour venues and have hosted four English Opens between them since 1997.

“I am naturally delighted to have been chosen to provide independent agronomic input and technical support to such an important group of golf courses,” commented Robert.

Charterhouse present dealer awards

Charterhouse Turf Machinery, the specialist distributor of turf and grounds care equipment, recently presented their 2001 Dealer Awards. The awards recognise outstanding achievements made by the company’s 16 Tractor Dealers and 34 Turf Machinery Dealer Outlets throughout the UK. Awards were also presented for development and success in reaching and surpassing targets in other key business areas.

Pictured above are Philip Threadgold, Sales Director Charterhouse Ltd; Ian Royston, Risboro’ Turf - a division of Turner Groundscare (Winner of Turf Machinery Dealer of the Year); Richard Jenkins, Managing Director, Charterhouse Ltd; and Tony Scambler of AJ Scambler (Winner of Tractor Dealer of the Year).

Peter claims UK territory

Bernhard and Company has appointed Peter Hampton (right) as their new UK Territory Manager. This follows the company’s continuing development as leading manufacturers of professional grinding equipment. Peter was previously the company’s US Territory Manager for Western North America.

He has been responsible for business and field support to distributor salesmen supplying Express Dual Grinders from the Mississippi to the West Coast, including Canada.

“Having been in the grass machinery industry since 1963 Peter has a wealth of experience and has been involved with many innovative changes in the industry,” says Stephen Bernhard, Managing Director.

A Trade Member of BIGGA for over 25 years Peter numbers many UK Greenkeepers as his friends.
Have your say and help BIGGA grow

BIGGA is big - and getting bigger! We want that growth to continue, and we have therefore commissioned an independent market research study, with two aims:

We want to know what our members, and those with whom we work most closely in the golf industry, think of the services we offer and the way we deliver them.

We are also looking for new ideas, particularly in the areas of sales and marketing, so that we can protect and enhance the income base on which our continuing growth depends.

The study is being financially supported by the R&A, and will be carried out by Mike Williamson, of MW Associates, a specialist golf research company which carried out a similar study for the Sports Turf Research Institute in 1999.

Mike will be sending questionnaires to about 2000 BIGGA members, and talking to representatives of golf companies, golfing organisations, and golf clubs. The survey work will be undertaken in March and April, with the full research report going to the BIGGA Board in June.

We do want (and I'm sure we will get) frank opinions and good ideas from as many of our members, clients, and those we work with as possible. So:

If you receive a questionnaire from Mike, please do complete and return it. BIGGA is YOUR Association, and we very much want your input to this study.

If you are contacted by Mike or one of his colleagues, please do spare a few minutes to pass on your views and suggestions.

If you do NOT receive a call or a questionnaire (since these will only go to a random sample of members), and you would like to participate in the survey, please contact Mike Williamson and he will be delighted to include you. Mike can be contacted at:

MW Associates, PO Box 6677, Edinburgh, EH14 3YB. Tel/Fax: 0131 476 6677

e-mail: mwassoc@virgin.net

We want BIGGA to get better as well as bigger - so please do help us with this important research.

Neil Thomas, Executive Director

John Shaw Machinery host seminar series

Toro dealer John Shaw Machinery staged a series of one-day seminars designed to assist all those involved with the maintenance of sports and golf turf throughout the area it serves across southern England.

For the three events, titled Sports Turf Maintenance - the Future, the firm, based in Sussex, brought together a group of top speakers that attracted a large attendance from golf and groundscare professionals.

Eddie Seaward, Head Groundsman at The All-England Club, Wimbledon, gave the keynote address. He told the interesting story behind the redevelopment of the Wimbledon complex and provided delegates with a personal insight into his turf preparations for The Championships.

The other expert speakers were Andy Brown, of The Toro Company; Neil Squires, from the STRI; health and safety consultant John Albott, of John All but Associates; and John Westrope, Humberside Groundcare Finance.

The audience was made up of a cross-section of head greenkeepers, their staff and senior golf club officials, as well as groundsmen from the sports turf side of the industry.

Venues were Kings Hill GC, West Malling, Kent; The Wentworth Club; and Singing Hills GC, Albourne, West Sussex.

John Shaw’s marketing director David Cole hosted the events. He said that since its inception his company has focused on the professional turf maintenance market. Their new company slogan was Providing Solutions for Groundscare Professionals and it was against this background that they had put on these seminars.

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Graham launches internet project

A new greenkeeping website www.golfingsupplies.net, has been launched by Graham Pickin, Head Greenkeeper of Thornhurst Manor, Doncaster.

“The net has plenty of greenkeeping resources, but they are a little bit fragmented, I thought it would be a good idea if I could browse other greenkeepers own sites including golf courses and suppliers, also join in with a discussion forum and possibly find a bargain in a golf course equipment auction or even get rid of some old machines that are lying around the sheds all in one sit,” explained Graham.

The site is completely free and no monies are passed through the site at all. At the auction the successful bidder has the sellers details sent to them automatically via email.

Top level changes at British Seed Houses

British Seed Houses has announced two senior management changes at its Lincoln head office. British Seed Houses director Simonaylor becomes unit manager for the Lincoln-based operation with overall responsibility for all seed business done from the site.

Jon Chippendale becomes amenity seeds manager and is now responsible for all grass seed, wild flora and granular fertiliser sales into the amenity sector.

Apology for email address error

In last month's magazine under the heading Grand Tour Scholarship 2001 we listed Bettina Schrickel's email address incorrectly. It should have read ntjbettina@aol.com and not ftjbettina@aol.com as we listed at the end of the piece. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.
Autumn applied in September - October with enough potash to harden up the turf. Greenkeepers and groundsmen to look forward of the management of the course, greens, pitches and Turf Rise, or liquid form applied 4 - 5 times after their turf to a high standard with the satisfaction of players and committee alike. The following is a list of some of the distributors throughout the U.K. and Europe.

Phil joins namesake

With a name like Seedhouse, Phil was destined to work for a seed company. The latest member to join the Johnsons Sport and Amenity team, Phil has an easy job of attracting customers. They all want to talk about his name!

Phil plays a very supportive role to the team, dealing with inquiries and processing orders. He has completed the STRI residential course "The passport to perfect courses", and can act with authority when advising customers on mixture selection.

He is very confident about the range he is selling. "Johnson's Sport and Amenity range of grass seed mixtures represents the best choice for turf grass. From rugby pitches to golf courses, the new range can cope with the best of British sport and the worst of British weather," quotes Phil.

Advanta Seeds aim for Headstart with first Internet site

Advanta Seeds UK has launched its first Internet website at www.headstart-advanta.co.uk.

The clear and colourful pages, which are easy to navigate, explain the features of Headstart - the biological seed treatment applied to all Advanta's amenity grass seeds. Seeds treated with Headstart emerge faster and stronger than untreated seeds. The seedlings also have an improved natural resistance to diseases, and are less prone to drought stress. The treatment, which is non-toxic and completely safe, contains only natural substances including cytokinins and enzymes. These encourage cell division, and help mobilise food reserves within the seed. It also has chelated trace elements, which are readily available to the young seedling. Water attracts roots moisture from the soil to help the start-up process.

"Headstart is particularly useful where groundsmen and greenkeepers are under time, or weather pressure, to establish new swards or repair existing ones," explained Advanta's Amenity Sales and Marketing Manager Dave Phillips.

"With so much work postponed from the autumn and the rain continuing to fall, Headstart could make all the difference between success and failure, for any reseeding work carried out this spring.

"We want our customers to know what Headstart is and what it can do. The website will answer any questions, and also provides a quick and easy way to contact us, through the response form on the last page."
Volunteers required!

Volunteers required for the following events:


The Association will again be providing a support team for this prestigious event, this year, for the first time, it will operate on each of the four competition days. Each team member will be allocated a match and will walk the course with the game, raking any bunkers found by the players. In addition, should adverse weather conditions prevail, you may be required to assist the Wentworth greenkeeping staff in keeping the course playable.

You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course and there is no provision for overnight accommodation. You may apply to help on any or all days and usually all those who apply are given the chance to participate on at least one day.

When applying please give details of your polo shirt size as this may be provided together with daily meal vouchers.

Helping at this event will not prejudice your chances of a place on The Open Championship Support Team.

The Open Championship, Royal Lytham & St Annes, July 19-22, 2001

The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at The Open Championship will be involved in early morning course preparation; bunker raking, while matches are in play, and evening course repair. You must be available from Wednesday evening, July 18, through to the close of play on Sunday, July 22. While all transport, accommodation and meals will be provided between these dates it is the team member’s responsibility for travel from home to the venue and return. When applying please give your polo shirt size.

Full BIGGA members only may apply in writing, for either or both of these events to: John Pemberton, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark Alne, York, YO61 1UF. Should you require any further information John can be contacted on 01903 260956 or via email: john@bigga.co.uk

The Wentworth support team will be co-ordinated by the BIGGA South East Region and Derek Farrington, the Regional Administrator, is available to offer help or information. Derek can be contacted on 01903 260956 or mobile 07850 162401.

Moore aim to give ‘more’ mower for your money

With the Moore Mower now in full production, with both its 36” cylinder and 44” rotary mower heads, it is not surprising that Frank Moore is busy adding attachments to his innovative brainchild.

Now a novel Dumpbarrow has gone into production. A practical means of shifting materials such as hardcore, ballast, builder’s sand, soil or manure, the attachment can be fitted to the Moore Mower in a couple of minutes with minimal effort.

Designed to carry 100kg, its low profile makes hand loading easy; for unloading, the body is tipped hydraulically to a vertical position and will empty completely in a few seconds, making the whole operation extremely quick, especially where the load must be carried some distance.

A prototype has been in use for several years and has shifted tons of various materials, often at confined and otherwise inaccessible sites. RRP for the attachment is £396 + VAT.

For further information contact Frank Moore, telephone 01308 862653.

Royal Mid Surrey GC appoint Inturf as turf supplier

Inturf has produced turf that exactly matches the specific requirements of Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club. Royal Mid Surrey, at Richmond, approached the York based company to grow turf for a major redesign that will involve the re-turfing of 36 greens. Rapid establishment is essential to bring the holes back into pay quickly, and to minimise loss of green fee revenues.

Under its Custom Grown Turf service Inturf imports prescribed rootzone and seed that matches the conditions where the turf will eventually be laid. The company then grows it for the client, strictly following the highest standards of turf management. For Royal Mid Surrey Inturf is growing the turf on a USGA specification rootzone.

The Club has selected the grass mixture itself, choosing varieties that will give an equally proportioned bent/fescue sward. The project at Grantham involves growing some 20,000 m2 of turf - enough to cover about three soccer pitches.

Royal Mid Surrey’s turf is currently being cared for at the 330-acre Grantham nursery by seven of Inturf’s turf management experts. They are implementing a strict greenkeeping regime, with much of the work being done by hand. Their final task will be to harvest the special turf, ready for installation.

ESD Waste2Water launches new recycling system

ESD Waste2Water launched their new Recycling Wash-Off System for Golf Course Equipment at BTME.

The system is installed as part of the wash-off facility, replacing ‘traditional interceptors etc’. The contaminated water is biologically cleaned and recycled for continual reuse, potentially saving very significant amounts of water.

The system provides a rapid breakdown of Organic contaminants including: Oil, Grease, Petrol, Diesel, Pesticides, Fungicides etc., into Carbon Dioxide and Water.

A range of capacity sizes are available to suit wash-off requirements from a small 9 hole course up to a 34 hole golf complex and beyond.

With environmental consideration of everything we do now so important, the benefit of this new closed-loop system, which saves very significant amounts of water and at the same time removes a number of major potential contamination areas, makes this one of the most exciting developments for some time.

For more information contact Tim Earley Tel. 01782 373 878.

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