

# GI

# GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Inside...

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The confusion over the use  
and misuse of red diesel

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THE STRI OFFERS SOME  
USEFUL ASSISTANCE

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Golf  
Course  
Feature

GI visits **Worplesdon Golf Club**,  
where an extensive tree removal  
programme has taken place





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## WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



# BTME

**I spent time with people from all over the world during Harrogate this year, and very enjoyable it was too. It makes it all the more galling that the accusation that Harrogate is nothing more than a “regional show” is currently being spouted by certain individuals and groups.**

It is obvious that a greater percentage of people from within easy reach of any venue will attend an event, but the range of accents to be heard at Harrogate, covers all parts of the UK - as well as many of an international nature. Flat caps, whippets and Yorkshire puddings are not generally front and foremost.

I've also read the comments that, as BIGGA represents the customers ie, its members, - “It's like a band of truck-drivers running the Commercial Motor Show”. It may be a strange concept, but BIGGA employs specialists to fill specialist roles rather than expecting its members to fit in the running the Show round their day jobs.

Indeed, thousands of people have attended, done business and enjoyed the Show since it first opened its doors in 1988 - people who, incidentally, include the gentleman who made the aforementioned comments in an industry blog.

They are also gravely insulting to the manner in which BTME has been managed since the start, and incidentally came with no examples or evidence whatsoever that the Show is run anything other but extremely professionally.

We are on the verge of a General Election and are hearing all sorts of promises from those people hoping to persuade others that they can do a better job than the incumbents. Let me tell you something. If those people do find themselves holding the reins they will find that it's not quite as easy as it sometimes appears from the sidelines.

The easy bit is to shout about how things could be better, but there are often so many “simple” solutions on offer, getting a consensus and a single route to a given goal is all but impossible and the compromises that inevitably have to be reached bring things remarkably close to the status quo.

We do hear calls for one show to represent the industry. Companies are not forced to attend both and should - indeed they have a duty to themselves - take a view as to what is best for their business, whether that be attending one show, two shows or no shows.

My wife and I are currently looking for a new car. There is a lot of choice out there and it is difficult to weigh up all the various offers. Wouldn't it be so much easier if the car manufacturers got together and decided to produce one car for everyone? No difficult decisions, no dilemmas about whether you were getting the best deal or not. As Alexander Meerkat says “Simplest”.

...or is that a stupid idea?

Surely choice is something to be embraced and we should all trust our judgment sufficiently to make the right decision for ourselves.

In the meantime I would ask people to look at what they would lose by leaving Harrogate, as well as what they feel they would gain by foregoing choice and moving to another venue in, what is, another region of the British Isles.

Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**



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



# GI NEWSDESK

The latest news from around the globe



## Congratulations to IPU

L - R: Richard Casey - Managing Editor of The Sunday Times  
Jenny Craddock - Sales Office Manager of IPU Group  
Robert Beebee - Group Managing Director of IPU Group

The Best Small Companies 2010 two star accreditation status has been awarded to ground care equipment company, IPU Group, for the second year running, in recognition of excellence in the workplace.

Best Companies, in conjunction with The Sunday Times, established the accreditation award scheme based on staff feedback and employee engagement as an integral part of a company's success and growth.

The accreditation scheme features a star style system with companies awarded one star for first class, two stars for outstanding and three stars for extraordinary performance.

A total of 571 organisations from the private and public sectors applied for Best Small Companies accreditation this year and IPU Group was the highest placed manufacturing company, appearing at number 50 in The Sunday Times list.

"We are really excited to have received two star accreditation in both the 2009 and 2010 Best Small Companies lists, and it's particularly pleasing to pick up this latest award while we are celebrating 50 years in business," said Robert Beebee, IPU Group Managing Director.

"Having a fully engaged and motivated team is vital to the service we are able to offer our customers and the continued success of our company."



## Eddie Simms

Eddie Simms, the founder of Par 4 Irrigation Ltd, died suddenly on February aged 73, Eddie founded the company, based at Ripon, North Yorkshire, in 1981 and oversaw its development in becoming one of the leading Irrigation companies in the North of England.

He retired in 2002 but retained his interest in the Irrigation business and was a well respected figure in the local golfing community, playing his last round just two days before his death.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him and is survived by his children Emma, Claire and Mark.

## BIGGA SUPPORT TEAM BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP AT WENTWORTH ON MAY 20, 21, 22 23

A few volunteers still required to help Chris Kennedy and his team at The Wentworth Club on the above dates. All or any one day would be greatly appreciated.

A great chance to see the at close hand the recent extensive changes that have been made to

the even more formidable West Course over the past year.

For more information please contact Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator  
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk .

Mobile 07841 948410 or 01737 819343.

## NEWSDESK

Please email your news items and press releases to **Scott MacCallum, (Editor).**

**scott@bigga.co.uk**





## EAST OF ENGLAND ORDER OF MERIT WINNER CROWNED

At the East of England sponsors drinks reception at BTME '10 Rob Bemment of Immingham Golf Club was crowned winner of the Greenkeepers' Order of Merit. This is made up from the scores posted from the Section's four individual golf events played last summer. Once again the blazer prize was sponsored by Bank's Amenity Products.

Rob (left) is pictured receiving his blazer from Simon Banks (right). Many thanks to Simon for his continued sponsorship of this event.

## Airline for Golfers

The world's first airline dedicated to golfers will take off later this month with a range of routes connecting some of Scotland and Ireland's most spectacular courses.

Golf Links Express, an offshoot of the Loch Lomond Seaplanes, is due to ferry golfers on a number of routes between Prestwick, Lough Earne golf resort in Ireland, Machrinhanish Dunes in Kintyre, Loch Lomond and Machrie on the island of Islay.

The new service will open up some of the finest and most remote courses to time-pressed enthusiasts from around the world and will operate out of Prestwick Airport providing instant links to remote course for thousands of foreign golfers who travel to Ayrshire every year.

Hours of travelling between some of the country's most spectacular golf destinations will be reduced to minutes by the amphibious on-demand service.

"We've already had bookings from golfers as far a field as the US, Scandinavia and Ireland," said David West, founder of both Loch Lomond Seaplanes and Golf Links Express.

"Prestwick International Airport already welcomes tens of thousands of golfers every year but many rarely venture further than Ayrshire because of the travel time by road. Now they can access some of the best links courses."

## BIGGA Charity Golf Day Monday, June 14, at Aldwark Manor



Following the success of last year's BIGGA Golf Day, £911.41 was donated to The Asperger's Society. The event is to be held again this year with the profits to be donated equally between Help the Hospices and the Cotswold Care Hospice.

The day will be very informal, giving BIGGA the opportunity to promote a strong relationship between greenkeeper and trade members, while at the same time enabling everyone to enjoy a competitive, yet friendly, game of golf.

The programme for the day will follow the successful format of previous years:

- Bacon sandwich, tea or coffee from 10.30am
- Shotgun start from 12 noon
- Teams of 4 entered in competition over 18 holes, best 2 count on each hole
- Halfway House refreshments
- Two course Buffet Meal with complimentary drink
- Team prizes
- Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin individual prizes

The entry fee per team is £300 + VAT. With the offer being made first to those, like yourself, who entered a team last year. If you would like to participate please confirm to my assistant, Sandra Raper (Tel: 01347 833800) or by Email to [sandra@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sandra@bigga.co.uk).



## A Lovely Memory



Chris Spurden, right, gave up a promising greenkeeping career when 12 years ago his dad, David, Head Greenkeeper at Ganton, was tragically killed when they were both part of a group was out shooting rabbits on the golf course in the dead of night.

Instead Chris opted to join the fire service, but he did want to retain one link with his previous life.

Before his death, his dad's 1950s personal Atco mower had stopped working and he had spent ages tinkering with it, trying to get it back in action before he retired.

Such was its sentimental value Chris sent it off for repair, even though the company stopped making the parts. Now, 12 years later, mower and owner have finally been reunited.

The task of repairing the mower fell to John

Adamson, left, of FG Adamson & Son, based near Hull, who had been a personal friend of David.

"The problem was getting hold of bits for it because it is a 60-year-old machine. But Chris's late father was not only a good customer but a great friend," said John, who spent a great deal of time looking for parts from written off machines

"We basically salvaged bits from people's cast-offs. The company which made the engines had gone bust. Everything you wanted for the machine has been obsolete since the 1960s."

So now, thanks to the dedicated efforts, Chris will be able to think about his father every time he cuts his own lawn.

*Picture courtesy of The Yorkshire Post, taken by Gerard Binks*

## SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT: MURCAR GOLF CLUB, ABERDEEN ON THURSDAY JUNE 17

The 2010 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Murcar Golf Club, Aberdeen, on Thursday, June 17, by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. The cost of the event will be £25 which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, two course evening meal sweep and prizes. (Apprentice fee £12). Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring Golf outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance to the Regional Administrator, Peter J. Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA by Tuesday 8 June, 2010.

Please make cheques payable to BIGGA Scottish Region.

If you have an email address please enter it on the space provided on the entry form. The draw will be posted on the BIGGA Website.

Peter J. Boyd  
Regional Administrator

## D&C Seminar

In February 70 greenkeepers from across Devon and Cornwall attended the second seminar jointly organised by Duchy College.

The theme was aimed at developing the audiences understanding of greenkeeper management techniques and the resultant impact on golf and sports turf playing surfaces. In the morning session Steve Gingell, Regional Area Manager for the STRI, took the attendees through the principles of the "Disturbance Theory".

Steve presented a detailed case outlining the balance and implications between turf maintenance operations and their results on named turf grass genera and species with their own individual and specific preferred growing and habitat requirements.

The afternoon speakers developed this theme through taking a detailed look at the soils, root zone and growing conditions needed by grasses.

Andrew Turnbull, from Allturf Management, explained the function of sugars and carbohydrates within the plant and the consequences to the grass plant and the soil life in his lecture titled "Carbohydrates/ The Brix of Life".

Mark Atkins, from Soil Harmony, in his talk titled "Life Beneath Your Feet" developed this theme further emphasising the symbiotic relationship between the turf grass plant and the soil life.

Colin Webber, Chairman of the Devon and Cornwall Section, commented that he was really pleased that BIGGA and Duchy College were able to work together and present at a local venue such an important and up to date message to sports turf managers regarding the holistic approach he considered essential to the future of the industry.

An understanding by turf managers of the soil life as well as the physical and chemical aspects of soils is well overdue.



## South East Region Annual Gentlemen's Dinner

### Walton Heath Golf Club

After a severe early morning frost competitors at this years Annual Gentlemen's Day at Walton Heath Golf had the pleasure of some almost warm sunshine after the long cold winter.

This year members and their guests enjoyed the challenge of the New Course at Walton Heath superbly set up by Ian McMillan and his team.

Highlight of the golf was an outstanding round with a gross score of 68 by Ron Christie to win the Ray Day Memorial Trophy.

The three hole start enabled all to finish in good time and sit down to an early dinner.

Following an excellent meal the Captain of Walton Heath Golf Club Stephen Hutton presented the prizes to the winning competitors.

George Barr thanked the Host Club for, as always, making us so welcome on the day.

The evening was conclude by the humour of guest speaker George Newman.

The South East Region of BIGGA is most grateful to the following companies for their most generous sponsorship of this event:-

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- BLADE AMENITY
- CMW
- ERNEST DOE AND SONS
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- JSM
- RIGBY TAYLOR
- TACIT GOLF EQUIPMENT
- SISIS



## ENVIRONMENT AGENCY NEW POWERS TO "PUNISH" POLLUTERS

The UK Environment Agency has recently been given new powers to punish polluters without applying to the Courts first, as was previously the case.

It is anticipated that these additional powers will increase the flexibility of the Agency, enabling it to become more proactive in monitoring and dealing with miscreants. The Agency will now be able to force establishments to clean up any environmental damage they cause, order the cessation of environmentally damaging operations and impose fines, without the need to seek the authority of the Courts.

The new powers contain a number of proposals, including a new maximum civil penalty of £250,000.

Several recent contamination incidents and the rigid response of the Environment Agency include:

- Sidcot School was fined a total of £17,000 in August 2009. Heating oil escaped from a corroded underground pipe, connecting two oil storage tanks to the school's boilers.
- The Chairman and Treasurer of an unnamed golf club were recently prosecuted after an underground pipe from a fuel storage

tank was punctured, causing more than 1,500 litres of oil to leak into a nearby water-course. They were charged with a criminal offence and could have faced imprisonment of up to two years. This case went to the Court of Appeal, which held that it was right that the two officers should be prosecuted, however, it used its discretion to acquit the pair.

By their very nature, golf course maintenance operational activities can cause pollution. Activities including equipment refuelling, chemical handling and equipment wash-off all pose a significant potential pollution risk, so it is very important controls are in place to minimise this risk.

It is a criminal offence to allow certain substances including mineral oils, detergents and chemicals to enter surface drains, watercourses or Soakaways, causing groundwater pollution.

As the golf club case highlighted above re-enforces, if you not are complying, you are personally liable for breaking the law, with the threat of a substantial civil penalty and or criminal fine and imprisonment for a serious infringement.

## NEW CORNISH DISTRIBUTOR FOR LINDUM

Lindum Turf has appointed Contec Landscape as the company's sole distributor in Cornwall.

Contec, run by the established partnership of Steve and Rob Furse has been supplying landscapers in the region with hard and soft landscaping materials since 1989 and Lindum's turf since 2005.

"Up until now we've left our options open but we haven't found another turf grower who can provide the consistency of both quality and service that we need," said Steve Furse.

Lindum's MD Stephen Fell said that Contec Landscape has been steadily building up its business, and put a lot of work into promoting Lindum.

"Steve and Rob are already doing a good job selling our specialist lawn and bowling green products and are ideally placed to develop the golf market in their area," he said.

For further information contact Lindum on Tel: 01904 448675.

Or visit their website at: [www.turf.co.uk](http://www.turf.co.uk)





FEBRUARY 2010 SYNGENTA TURF ADVERTORIAL



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## Primo Maxx cuts the time and cost of golf course management

### In Brief

**Primo Maxx** application could reduce the time and money spent on fairway mowing – potentially saving over £4000 a year on fairways alone

Cranfield University calculations have shown **Primo Maxx** use can cut overall golf course CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 48% and management costs by 15%

Enhanced turf quality gives a better playing surface with less divot damage and faster play

Improved root structure produces healthier turf and keeps courses looking great all summer long

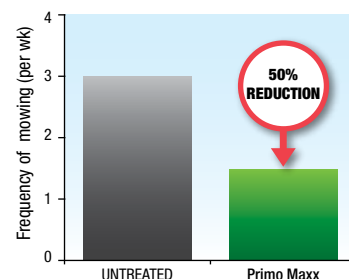
### Save time and money with Primo Maxx



Input cost rises have dramatically increased mowing costs over the past year – creating even greater cost savings with a **Primo Maxx** programme.

Independent user trials with **Primo Maxx** applications on fairways, conducted by STRI, identified that turf managers could typically reduce the frequency of mowing by 50%, whilst still enhancing playing conditions.

Results were consistent under a range of fairway management regimes, often requiring just one cut per week to maintain high quality fairways. Where mowing remained weekly, the result was improved turf quality and reduced evidence of clippings left on the surface.



Source: Observational reports of turf managers undertaking **Primo MAXX** fairway trials

### Trim down fairway mowing costs

Most golf courses typically spend 24 to 40 man hours a week mowing fairways through the growing season. A **Primo Maxx** programme could release up to 20 hours additional time for essential maintenance to improve greens, tees and work around the course.

Furthermore, with the cost of running a fairway mower calculated by greenkeepers at over £11 an hour, **Primo Maxx** could save more than £4350 a year in lower fuel, maintenance and repair bills – along with the opportunity to cut your carbon footprint by 44%.

Turf managers always report that **Primo Maxx** gives greater flexibility to manage the mowing during difficult weather conditions and causes the least inconvenience to players.

#### Reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

44%

#### Reduction in cost

19%

Source: Cranfield University Centre for Sports Turf Technology



### Fairways looking good

**Primo Maxx** increases the density of fairway turf, creating a better playing surface on which balls sit higher and cleaner. The result is a more rewarding experience for players, reduced risk of divot damage and faster play.

The improved drought and stress tolerance of **Primo Maxx** treated turf ensures fairways stay looking better through the season and recover faster.

Greenkeepers report a cleaner cut when mowing and, since the turf is growing slower, any patterns cut into the fairway stay visible for longer.

The result is:

- Faster mowing
- Reduced volume for composting
- Sharper, cleaner finish
- Less drop off of grass clumps when mowing in wet conditions

The activity of **Primo Maxx** has been shown to reduce the effects of unsightly summer stalking on fairway turf.

### Application recommendation summary

#### Greens and Tees

**PrimoMaxx** at 0.4–1.6 l/ha  
Plant growth regulator

Maintain cutting height at 4–12 mm

#### Fairways and semi-rough

**PrimoMaxx** at 0.8–2.4 l/ha  
Plant growth regulator

Maintain cutting height at 10–18 mm

For full further details of **Primo Maxx** application recommendations on tees, greens, fairways and semi-rough areas, along with other sports turf surfaces, visit the website [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk)





## Turf so good they'll all want to play.

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Primo Maxx is a new liquid formulation that is easy to use and comes with a simple to follow season-long programme tailored for specific areas around the course and is compatible and easily mixable with other products.

To learn more about Primo Maxx please go to [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk)



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TM





# Grinding Workshop for Greenkeepers and Groundsmen

A group of greenkeepers and groundsman were recently treated to a free workshop. The topic of discussion was to be the performance of mowers and their cutting units.

The workshop was presented by Bernhards, using a Toro fairway mower that had been provided courtesy of Devon Garden Machinery.

The trial began in the machinery workshop, examining the performance of some cutting units on a mower that had been set up with blunt blades which had contact with the bottom blade. Then we compared them with the some other cutting units that had been re-ground and set up to have a very light contact between cylinder reel and bottom blade.

Firstly we appraised the mower that had been set up with a heavy contact, tight to the bottom blade. Then we proceeded to dip the fuel tank and measure the amount of fuel recording evidence to later quantify fuel economy.

The group then headed off to one of the college football pitches to view the mower cutting one half of the pitch. With the damp Cornish weather setting in the pitch was mown and timed. The mower had its boxes on so that we could measure the volume of grass mown from each cut. The clippings were placed in a bag and then weighed.

The results recorded from the mower set up with a heavy contact were as follows:

- 25 kilos of grass clippings measured from the boxes (wet)
- it took 13 minutes and 2 seconds to mow
- 2.4 litres of fuel were consumed (calculated by refilling the fuel tank to 60 litres and measuring the volume that went back in)

• The clippings were then viewed under a macro scope and appeared yellowy in colour at the tip where the cut had been made, and also visible was a serrated edge proving the poor cutting action.

The group was then given a grinding demonstration using the Anglemaster Bedknife Grinder, and then the Express Duel Reel Grinder. All five units were then ground to the manufacturer's recommendations. The fuel levels were checked to guarantee the same amount of fuel as before when the first cut commenced. It was then back up to the football pitch to view the other half being cut, luckily by this time the weather conditions had improved. We went through the same process as earlier in the day, except with the mower re-ground and set up with a light contact.

The results for the second test are as follows:

- 21 kilos of grass clippings measured from the boxes. (the less weight could be due to a drier cut meaning less moisture in the grass leaf)
- it took 12 minutes and 52 seconds
- 1.5 litres of fuel was consumed
- Once viewed under the microscope the cut appeared a lot cleaner

So we learnt that a sharp mower with less contact performs better because it gives a cleaner cut that leads to a healthier plant promoting a less disease prone sward. The mower took 10 seconds less than earlier in the day probably because of less contact from the cylinder blades to bedknife making the engine work harder.

This probably lead to the most significant finding which was the amount of fuel consumed, 33% less than in test one.

In the current climate of high fuel prices it goes to show how much more economic a sharp and correctly set up mower can be, not to mention the benefit in agronomics terms!

This was a thoroughly enjoyable day from which everybody took something away, so a big thank you must go to Duchy College, Bernhard Grinders and Devon Garden Machinery.

*Gavin Moore, of Launceston Golf Club*



# Chairman's Word

**National Chairman, Paul Worster,  
gives his thoughts for the month**

In this month's column Paul Worster reports on a busy first month as National Chairman: travelling and comparing and contrasting what we do in the UK with what is being done by greenkeeper trade associations in the USA and Europe. He also reviews what greenkeepers achieved during difficult times in the past and concludes this month's column with a message to all BIGGA volunteers and members.

**Visit to America. I represented BIGGA at the GCSAA Trade Show in San Diego in February 2010. Some interesting facts from the Show: the San Diego Convention Centre is over half-a-mile in length; the show contained some 660 exhibiting companies, and was absolutely crammed to the rafters with greenkeeping equipment and materials!**

There were a surprising number of similarities between BIGGA and GCSAA members. American Superintendents are increasingly concerned about issues such as bunker maintenance and cost-saving on labour and materials throughout their operations. They are also paying increasing attention to the impact that golf may be having on their environment.

The 3 'P's – 'People', 'Planet', 'Profit'. Environmental concerns in the USA are summed up very nicely by this phrase the 'Three P's'. This means that profit is not a dirty word, but a necessary part of being sustainable, going hand-in-glove with "People" and "Planet". If a business is not profitable, it will not function for long. To quote a line from the conference – "strong environmental consideration in golf is something we can celebrate".

The GCSAA as an organisation is also concerned about ensuring that all its members are fully engaged in participating at their events, particularly education and CPD. They also feel that the modern Course Manager should be communicating widely about what exactly his Trade Association does for his career and his standing. Something I believe we should do more of in order to raise the profile of what BIGGA, its HQ team and volunteers are all

doing to advance the greenkeeping profession in the UK.

FEGGA held its two day annual conference in Vienna. FEGGA represents almost all the greenkeeping Associations in Europe, including Russia. South Africa have been associatemembersfortwoyearsand sent two representatives to Vienna. FEGGA co-ordinates education and support for all its member countries, many of whom are very small – the Bulgarian Greenkeepers Association represents about 25 clubs. However, I found all the delegates to be friendly, well educated, and totally committed to their profession. By far the majority of the 20 or so associations are run entirely by volunteers.

A good example of the spread of education was the host country. The Austrians have about 300 members and almost three-quarters of these have achieved accreditation via a system provided by the GTC. For me this shows the kind of results achievable through the efforts of dedicated volunteers. and I look forward to the day when the UK boasts similar achievements. We, in BIGGA – Members, HQ and Volunteers – have such key roles in taking the profession forward in the UK.

BIGGA. Interestingly 2012 is the 100th anniversary of the formation of the first Greenkeeper Association in Britain (BGA – British Greenkeepers Association). There is some evidence of a Scottish Greenkeepers Association possibly pre-dating this, but I'm told all records were destroyed in a fire.

British Greenkeeping was interrupted as our forefathers fought their way through two World Wars. However, such was the dedication and tenacity that, each time, the industry came back to life and

continued where it left off; building towards what it is today.

I think we can all learn from this in today's difficult economic times. What we perhaps need to show as greenkeepers and volunteers for the Association is exactly what our predecessors showed when they were challenged. We need to engage and support the activities and educational programmes that will take the profession forward. I believe that both you and I can help take our profession forward, further and faster.

So, how can you help? You can help us to grow our membership and advance our profession. The profession needs you to communicate the value and importance of being a BIGGA member – to employers, to golfers, to non-members, and to Trade Partners.

BIGGA can help you to do this as it continues to help provide the education and the opportunities for development that volunteering for the Association brings to individuals\*. This provision will help ensure that the esteem with which the profession is held by all participants of the sport continues to grow.

It may be the case that you feel awkward or uneasy about volunteering or offering your help or even asking for assistance or advice. Perhaps no-one has ever asked you to volunteer for anything before.

Well, the Association can help you and the profession can use your help.

There is perhaps no better time than right now.

So – right now - I am asking you.

You can learn more about taking yourself and the profession forward through volunteering for BIGGA by contacting your local BIGGA Section whose details are on the BIGGA website [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) or, if you prefer, by contacting Paul Worster direct on [talktopaul@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:talktopaul@hotmail.co.uk).

**Paul Worster  
National Chairman**





# Greenkeepers Training Committee



**David Golding, Education Director, looks at how best the GTC can continue to encourage its network of training providers**

**The GTC is continually seeking to promote our respected Training Manual and Learning Materials and is willing to share its experience and intellectual property with other organisations and countries, many of whom have no formal education, training and qualification structure for greenkeepers.**

While the GTC does not advocate that it has everything perfect we do pride ourselves on having access to subject specialists, all willing to provide us with their expertise to share best practice.

We endeavour to keep the GTC manual and learning materials up to date and in line with current British qualifications which we then promote through the Awarding Bodies for centres, colleges and individual training providers to align their various courses to.

Standard documentation can help promote best practice and I am pleased to inform readers that we are producing a Groundsman version of the Level 2 training manual (black book) in association with the IOG which will in turn help centres and colleges.

The learning materials for Level 2 and Level 3 were written to be applicable for all sports turf students so they will only require minor changes, mainly to align to the new Work Based Diplomas in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for greenkeepers and Groundsmen/women.

By using industry experts to develop and review the manuals and learning materials (many who have links to our approved colleges), we believe we have a united sector all "singing from the same hymn sheet" and now with groundsman-ship working closer with the GTC this can only be of benefit to the employers and workers within the sports turf sector.

The GTC has also contributed to the standards developed by the pan-European working group, which more and more golf developing countries are looking to adopt and many require support

documentation to speed up the process of educating and training greenkeepers.

The pan-European working group has received development funding support from the R&A and EGA and a full report has been submitted recommending the formation of a European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU).

Once agreed the GTC will hopefully have a major role to assist greenkeeping Associations and Federations to establish an education structure based on best practice to assist golf course maintenance and management standards.

The establishment of a European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU) is also designed to introduce a greenkeeping passport scheme which will help employers and greenkeepers in each participating countries view the various qualifications against agreed European standards at three levels, greenkeeper, supervisor and manager.

Visit the EGEU website [www.egeu.eu](http://www.egeu.eu) to access the standards and progress of the initiative to help spread the message of best practice.

British employers and greenkeepers will recognise the standards, which is recognition of the work many individuals and organisations, too many to mention, have had in establishing National Occupational Standards (NOS) for greenkeeping in Britain.

It is from these standards that each country can then develop qualifications whether they are work based or centre (college) based.

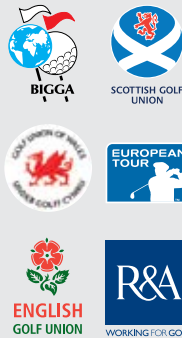
Back to more "local" issues and the GTC's ongoing support to promote the Sustainable Golf Course programme through a special project with the R&A.

A second series of workshops will be held this summer through Britain where Course Managers share their experiences in all aspects of the Sustainable programme with delegates from the turf centres and colleges and this year representatives from BIGGA, GCMA and the PGA will be invited.

## In Brief

This month, David looks at how best the GTC can continue to encourage its network of training providers to share best practice with all greenkeepers while at the same time assist golf developing countries and individuals looking to access standards and greenkeeping information.

The GTC is funded by:



There has been an ongoing debate relating to sward exchange programmes however there are also other aspects of the programme which need addressing, eg water harvesting, woodland management and while the greenkeeping world of golf are constantly discussing these important issues the GTC firmly believes there are other organisations who need to be made aware of what the game is trying to promote hence the widening of invitations for this years events.

There are clearly a growing number of excellent case studies from courses who have progressed on one or more aspects of the Sustainable programme and these will also be made available to view through the website.

The aim of the GTC, in association with its representative bodies and the R&A, is to ensure today's and tomorrow's greenkeepers and Course Managers have access to all best practice information from all sources and in particular the staff employed at the approved centres.

These individuals are crucial to the promotion of the Sustainable programme and whilst the GTC can produce learning materials it is the Course Manager and the students "lecturer" who have the role to discuss all aspects of the programme.

The difficult job is getting the message through to the golfer that we all need to be more aware of the environment and how best we address the increasing number of issues which relate to maintaining and managing a course in a sustainable manner.

This is why we are inviting individuals from key organisations within golf to assist with spreading the word of why it makes sense to adopt a sensible, realistic and practical programme to maintaining the courses.

Maybe nothing new to many Course Managers however there are more directives coming to our attention and we have to adopt them or better still be already working within the various guidelines or in some cases legislative regulations.

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# Learning & Development

**Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, describes the projects the L&D department is currently working on**



**Spring seems to finally be springing, the daffodils are brightening up the countryside and the clocks have sprung forwards. The light nights are finally inspiring me to get off the sofa and go out for a walk and enjoy the fresh air. I'm sure that you'll all agree that we've seen enough snow to keep us happy for several years to come.**

Spring also inspires me to start working on all the projects that get put on hold over the manic Harrogate Week and Golf Industry Show period. So, with a holiday under my belt, I think I'm finally ready to face 2010!

As you know, the majority of the initiatives and projects done by the Learning and Development Department are funded through the Learning and Development Fund which is supported by the Gold and Silver Key members of BIGGA.

I am pleased to confirm that those companies who have agreed to continue their support in 2010 are:



## Gold Key

**John Deere  
Toro  
European Tour  
Ransomes Jacobsen  
Syngenta  
Kubota**



## Silver Key

**Vitax (new in 2010)  
Symbio  
ARC Legal Assistance  
Bernhard & Company  
RainBird  
Heath Lambert  
Hayter**

*(This list reflects the companies who had renewed by 5 March 2010).*

My thanks go to those listed who enable us to continue to develop resources for the members.

Several new projects have been discussed with the Learning and Development Sub-Committee that comprises members of the Board of Directors and other invited representatives - Chris Sealey, Gary Cunningham, Andrew Mellon, David Golding and Lee Strutt MG, AGS. The recommendations put forward by the Sub-Committee are taken to the Board of Directors to get the green light for the projects to commence.

Projects which we are working on at present include an overhaul of the Continuing Professional Development scheme. The intention is to develop a system that rewards learning and creates learning opportunities meaning that CPD credits will not be dependent purely on attendance at Section, Region or National events. If you are reading this and thinking 'what about



The funding provided by Golden and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Golden and Silver Key Sponsors.

my CPD credits?', don't worry, the old system will be integrated. The development of the new scheme requires time and a lot of work to ensure that it is sustainable for at least 10 years. Watch this space for further details on its development.

In the February issue of GI there was a small article on page 8 announcing a joint initiative between BIGGA, Jon Allbutt and the HSE introducing the Skills Sharpener training 'Tool Kits'. Although the article was slightly premature, we hope to have launched the Skills Sharpener on the website by the end of April or early May. The Skills Sharpeners are practical talks that Head Greenkeeper/Course Managers can use to deliver training to their staff on the following subjects:

Belt Up on Slopes  
Slips, Trips and Falls  
Check Your Machine  
Watch Out! (Spotting Hazards)

Watch the website and the magazine for launch information.

## Higher Education Scholarships



Supported by  
Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarships have been awarded to:  
Derek Robson - Certificate in Turfgrass Management



## Contact Details

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### NEW APPOINTMENT

Ransomes Jacobsen has appointed Steve Barnfather to the newly created role of Trade Sales Manager with responsibility for all non-exclusive dealer activities.

He will be primarily responsible for the development of Ransomes Jacobsen's non-exclusive dealer network across the UK focussing on Iseki compact tractors and mowers, E-Z-GO utility vehicles, Ryan turf maintenance equipment and the smaller Ransomes pedestrian mower range.

His dealers currently include Cherry's Country Hardware, Devon Garden Machinery, Grasshopper Horticultural, JE Lawrence & Sons, Lodgeway Tractors and Sharnford Horticultural together with the newly appointed Fentons of Bourne and DJ Scott Garden Machinery. Ransomes Jacobsen plans to appoint a further 20 non-exclusive dealers over the next 12 months, all of whom will fall under Steve's remit.

During his career in the industry he was the ground care general manager at the Hexham branch of Carrs Billington; he has worked in the hire sector with SGM Hire and Swan Plant and in a sales role with Landforce Woodchippers.

Steve lives in Morpeth, Northumberland with his wife Lesley. He has three grown-up children and is a long-suffering supporter of Newcastle United Football Club.

## Soil Treatment Success

Cheshunt Park Golf Club has taken delivery of its first batch of Ultra-Soil Penetrator and Ultra-Soil Retain.

This two-part liquid soil treatment has the ability to reduce the amount of water and fertiliser used on turf and other plants by up to 80%!

During trials the results have shown that the soil quality is substantially improved in a short space of time by decompacting and aerating the soil with these natural, non-chemical

products. Compacted soils and sparse patches have shown great improvement. Water logged clay soils can also be drained with one spray application.

David Renouf, of Broxbourne Borough Council commented,

"We are focussed on delivering the best possible performance for our golfers at Cheshunt, while being very aware of our budgetary responsibilities and environmental issues. The

Ultra-Soil product range offers the opportunity for us to achieve these objectives.

When these totally environmentally friendly products have been applied to the trial areas on the greens at Cheshunt Park, we have seen a vast improvement in grass cover and drainage performance."

For more information contact, Andy Church, Ultra-Soil on 07835 066439 or head office on 01992 822553, email [info@ultra-soil.com](mailto:info@ultra-soil.com)

## Uncertain Future of Sherfield Oaks Golf Club

The future of Crown Golf-operated course, Sherfield Oaks Golf Club, is uncertain after the Club's landlord, Luddington Investments Ltd was placed into administration late last year and KPMG appointed as the administrators.

As the Golf Club's operator, Crown Golf is not directly affected by the landlord's demise and business continues as normal at the Club. Crown Golf is currently considering the option to purchase the 89-year lease, and is continuing to discuss the matter with Luddington's administrators.

Crown Golf is Europe's largest golf course owner/operator, with 30 UK golf properties and 52 golf courses in its portfolio.





## Philip Joins ETSL

Philip Armitage has joined The European Turfgrass Specialists Ltd as a turfgrass agronomist.

He is responsible for delivering technical support and advice to clients based throughout the UK and mainland Europe. Prior to his current position, he worked for the STRI as a turfgrass agronomist for five years. He further developed his skill set, by building an extensive knowledge base and experience as an Irrigation Manager for GlenFarrow for three years coupled with ten years experience maintaining and growing in golf courses in the USA – Pinehurst Golf Resort, the UK – Belfry Golf Courses and Sweden – Dyne Kiliens Golf Klubb.

Philip graduated from The University of Central Lancashire in Preston, England with a degree in Turfgrass Science.

In order to contact Philip Armitage, please use the following: Email: [info@euroturfgrass.co.uk](mailto:info@euroturfgrass.co.uk) or Tel: +44 (0) 8442 259614

## Thriller Drillers



Wellhead Drilling is a drilling company which specialises in site investigations and ground testing for foundation design.

Recently the company discovered an inherent problem at some golf clubs due to water logging on the greens, bunkers and fairways. Wellhead can rectify this problem simply, quickly and permanently.

Using hole changing equipment, the turf is removed at each position, then a series of 75mm diameter boreholes are drilled through

the clay into a permeable strata which allows the water to drain away. The machine is capable of drilling to a depth of 20metres ) The boreholes are then backfilled with 10mm washed gravel then (root zone) before the turf is replaced, leaving no outward sign that any work has been carried out. Following this the green, fairways or bunkers can be played on immediately..

For further information contact Edd Stanton on or email [wellheaddrilling@googlemail.com](mailto:wellheaddrilling@googlemail.com)

## FESTIVAL SOLUTION



A Verti-Drain 7626 is proving its mettle on the Isle of Wight, where Andrew Earley, Contracts Inspector for the Parks and Countryside Division at Isle of Wight Council, is using Charterhouse Turf Machinery's most powerful decompactor to tackle some extreme conditions.

With an extensive brief that covers turf surfaces from sports pitches to parks and ornamental areas, Andrew runs an ongoing programme to tackle compaction and drainage problems.

He explains that the main reason for choosing the Verti-Drain was to treat compaction from the Isle of Wight Festival that takes place on the island in June each year.

"The Festival is held on Seaclose Park in Newport and attracts around 65,000 people a year. This park is very large and has eight full size football pitches on it, making it the ideal venue for the Festival," said Andrew

"But over the three day festival, the pitches get seriously compacted. Last year, I decided that we needed to invest in something that could handle the intense workload after the event better than the smaller Verti-Drain we already had. I needed to get a machine that could cover a larger area in a smaller amount of time, so we did some internet research and came across the Charterhouse Verti-Drain 7626."



# *A breath* of fresh air

Scott MacCallum visits Worplesdon, a club which can now breathe thanks to an extensive tree removal programme









**It's amazing how things creep up on you. One minute you're the young whippersnapper with your whole life ahead of you, the next you're one of Terry Wogan's TOGs, and nodding earnestly during Grumpy Old Men. It's the same at Worplesdon Golf Club, in Surrey. One minute it's regarded as one of the finest heathland course in the country - the next thing it's tight and tree lined, albeit still an excellent test of golf.**

Of course, the truth is that neither of these things happened overnight. They crept up little by little, bit by bit, and before you know it the grey hairs outnumber all others and the previous wonderful views across the golf course are blocked by unruly timber.

There are adverts on TV which point to a product that can help with the former but the latter has required a real commitment to change from the Worplesdon members and a professional plan, professionally executed.

The catalyst for a return to how the course used to be came from the older members who could recall the wonderful heather and genuine heathland on which they had once played their golf.

"The members who have only joined in the last 15 years only know the course as woodland and it was those members in the main who had objections and asked why we were going to change what they felt was a lovely golf course – a lovely woodland golf course," said Jeremy Caplan, who was the Centenary Captain in 2008 and current Chairman of Green.

"When I joined in 1965 the heather was in abundance, but the trees have grown up, almost imperceptibly, year on year and it is only when you look at photographs do you appreciate how much the course had changed," said Jeremy, who said the club's prestigious Worplesdon Foursomes had generated a great many photographs to use as evidence of how much it has altered.

Impetus for change also came from Course Manager, Brian Turner, who had identified the problem when he took over five years ago.

"There was no light or air movement on the course and this was particularly poor on the 16th and 17th tees. The back of the 12th green where I had no sunlight at all and the quality of the sward was suffering. Now it's one of the first greens to get the sun," explained



Brian, who is in his second stint at the club, having spent a number of years at Sunningdale.

Brian had worked with woodland specialist John Nicholson, of John Nicholson Associates, at Sunningdale, and it was to John who he turned after he had got the go-ahead to look into the problem.

"Bringing John in was a carry on from my Sunningdale days where he helped me and did a very good job and I saw the need here to return

the course to a more heathland look. I felt that the course could be revitalised if we undertook a professional woodland management programme."

John Nicholson has carried out work at a number of Home Counties courses.

"What you have to remember is that heathland is an ecosystem in transition and is always wanting to revert to woodland. Harry Colt identified heathland and linksland,



INSET TOP: Jeremy Caplan  
INSET BELOW: John Nicholson

PAGES 18-19: The 5th after the tree removal (MAIN) and before (INSET)

The 9th after the tree removal (MAIN ABOVE) and before (INSET ABOVE)





which have the same ecosystems, as ideal for golf as they attract fine grasses and are free draining,” explained John, who made a presentation to around 80 Worplesdon members explaining the need for an extensive woodland management programme to return to the course to where it once was.

“Those who attended John’s presentation understood what was going on and appreciated that it wasn’t just a butchery exercise but that it would be done very carefully, ensuring that the correct trees were removed and that younger ones were left to take their place,” said Jeremy.

“I think that some members had the wind taken out of their sails when they posed their questions and got scientific agronomic replies. I think they were slightly taken aback and had their initial perceptions changed.”

One of the concerns that is often expressed when tree removal, heather regeneration, schemes are muted is that the course will become a lot easier as a result.

“In many cases we make it more difficult because you are creating more temptation – a desire to cut a

corner that was previously wooded – and as amateur golfers we all, to a man or woman, think we are better than we are and attempt shots that we shouldn’t. In reality scores tend to go up not down when we carry out such work,” said John, who recalled a comment from his business associate BBC commentator and ex Ryder Cupper, Ken Brown – “Why would an 18 handicapper want the course hard anyway?”

It was agreed that the work would be carried out in three phases and Brian felt that the most dramatic and politically-sensitive phase – work within sight of the clubhouse – be carried out first.

“I think after the first phase had been completed the members were appreciative of the trees that were cut down but had no real imagination of how bare it would look when the undergrowth had been removed,” said Club Captain, John Philips.

It was not long before the views across the course that had re-emerged, some after 30+ plus years were being enjoyed be all.

John (Nicholson) undertook all the preparatory work required ahead of the first chainsaw slicing

timber – acquiring felling licences from the Forestry Commission and appointed the contractor, Tony Craggs, who would undertake the felling work and another contractor would come on, remove the stumps and carry out the mulching and scraping. John supervised the job from start to finish so he was in hand to address any issues that arose.

“There were two men who lived on site in a caravan while they carried out the work. They were amazing workers and worked from first light until it was dark,” explained Jeremy, whose role during much of the work was to offer reassurances and answer questions from concerned members who were watching large swathes of their golf course being thinned out.

He also received a deputation from a group of local residents who explained to him that there was a longstanding protection order on trees bordering the course.

“The interesting thing was that the licence that John had acquired from the Forestry Commission over road everything already in existence. However we spoke with the residents and with everything being



INSET TOP: Brian Turner  
INSET BOTTOM: Paul Robinson  
(Deputy Course Manager)





done so sympathetically the work was agreed without any acrimony.”

The issue of change puts many people on edge and members are genuinely concerned if any dramatic changes to the golf course they love are to be made.

“Members here had got used to playing holes individually and not being seen by anyone on adjoining fairways. They liked the isolation, yet they would happily play other courses – links courses, where you could see everyone else,” said Brian.

One major benefit has been that holes can be played in the manner they were intended.

For example the 14th has a bunker on the left hand edge which had been virtually hidden by trees before the work was carried out and golfers aimed much further right, often going into the garden of the house on the right hand side of the rough. Now players can aim much further left, aiming to drift the ball off the now visible left hand bunker into the middle of the fairway.

With the final phase completed during the last winter programme, in total around 35%-40% of trees were removed - approximately 800 tonnes of timber and, with the seed beds uncovered, once again heather has begun to return to the course.

In many ways the tree removal is the easy bit with the clear up and

on-going maintenance work creating many more man-hours.

“When clearing woodland people have this lovely idea that there will be a lawn underneath but when you go into unmanaged woodland it’s actually quite nasty – brambles, bracken etc because the ecosystem has been created due to the lack of light and air,” said John.

“There is more maintenance work now that the trees have been cleared but we have the manpower and machinery to carry out the work and it doesn’t take too long to maintain.

The benefits far outweigh the work that it has created,” said Brian, who leads a team of eight at Worplesdon.

With the work complete the verdict has been virtually unanimous in its praise.

“Our regular visitors have been very complimentary. We have an annual event, the Cyril Gray Public Schools Championship, which brings 32 teams of six to Worplesdon and to a man they have said the course is fantastic,” said Jeremy.

John, who regularly visits golf clubs up and down the country, has heard a number of people comment on the work at Worplesdon.

“It is nice to be able to sit in the background and smile knowing that I was involved in it,” he said, while he is full of praise for the decisions that the golf club took to get to

the end result.

“I think Worplesdon has achieved a lot more here because they didn’t compromise, something a lot of clubs tend to do in similar situations. I think, apart from one or two areas, the club did everything I would have wished for them to do. And it’s more difficult for them as I don’t have to live with it, and the concerns of the members, every day. I do think Worplesdon has been the bravest club I’ve been involved with,” said John, who has seen many individuals who have been the driving forces behind similar projects leave their clubs, and even give up golf, because of the pressures and strains of piloting such a project through a sceptical golf club.

“That very nearly happened here,” revealed Jeremy, who has been on the receiving end of many more positive comments from a membership, whose only real concern is the preservation of the one piece of untouched land on the right hand side of the 9th.

“People say to me that they are praying that we are not going to do anything to that area, which contains several rhododendrons.”

That aside Worplesdon is reaping the rewards for their decision and commitment to carry it through and the club once again boasts one of the foremost heathland courses in the country.

**ABOVE:** The 14th hole with the left hand fairway bunker now visible from the tee



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James de Havilland takes a closer look at the intricacies of current machinery, this month looking at the Toro Reelmaster 5610

# The anatomy of...

## a Fairway Mower



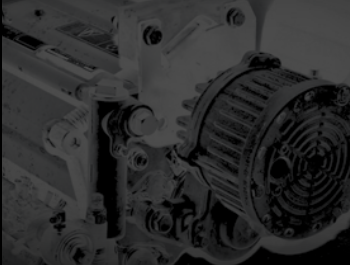
It's all about the DPA cutting units...

There are three models in the Toro Reelmaster 5010 series, the 35.5hp RM5410-D with 5 inch, 8- or -11 blade reels and the 35.5hp RM5510-D and 44.2hp RM5610-D, both with 7 inch reels and a choice of 8- or 11-blades. These differences apart, each model shares the same basic running gear and DPA reel design. Here we take a closer look at the range-topping 5610...

**ABOVE:**  
With a ground bearing pressure of around 10psi, the five-gang Toro Reelmaster 5610 can operate in less than ideal conditions. The 7 inch diameter units can be specified with a choice of 8- or 11-blades.



# Step-by-step Analysis... Toro Reelmaster 5610



**Ride-on Fairway mowers have evolved to the point where modern units can now deliver a consistent quality cut at outputs that would have been considered impossible perhaps even a decade ago. To suggest there have been huge developments that have enabled this would be wrong, but subtle design tweaks have been combined to make the Toro Reelmaster 5610-D a deservedly popular model.**

Of equal importance, Toro, and indeed all the key manufacturers, have taken the maintenance demands of their mowers into consideration. No point in developing a mower that can deliver high levels of performance if this needs to be matched to intensive workshop care.

In the case of the Reelmaster 5010 Series, a key development has been the adoption of Toro's now well proven DPA, Dual Precision Adjustment, cutting units. A key DPA design feature is the use of a cast alloy main structure. Unlike traditional welded tubular cutting unit frames, Toro claim the rigid cast alloy frame of a DPA unit is easier to build 'true' in the factory and, once in service, remain that way. This means there is no parallel adjustment built in to accommodate any difference in end-to-end reel to bedknife clearance; the company suggests it will not be needed.

Other DPA design features include a removable cast support frame for the bedknife. This is designed to not only make it simpler to remove the bedknife for sharpening but to also allow the bedknife clearance to the reel to remain constant and at the same level as it is adjusted to accommodate wear/sharpening. According to the company, this prevents the bedknife having to be lowered as it wears, so doing away with 'bulldozing' the sward before it can be acted upon by the cutting action of the reel. The aim is to ensure a consistent cut as the reels are reground and across the full 2.54m cut width.

The EdgeMax bedknife comes as part of the Toro package when new, although a standard steel bedknife is available as a lower price replacement. The company suggest, however, that the EdgeMax design will retain its sharpness up to three times longer than standard steel. This is thanks to the increased wear resistance of the cutting lip. When the EdgeMax needs to be reground it can still be sharpened using a standard grinding wheel.

An interesting point is that



Operator orientated features include adjustable side arm and steering column. The seat can be specified with pneumatic suspension. This has the advantage of automatically setting the spring rate to suit the weight of the operator.



Toro first introduced its DPA - Dual Precision Adjustment - cutting units on its greens mowers, the cast alloy units progressively being introduced to other models including the Reelmaster 5010 series of fairway mowers in 2006.



The rear mounted engine radiator and hydraulic cooling package is easy to access for routine cleaning. Positioning the coolers at the rear of the mower helps reduce noise reaching the operator and allows Toro to offer a cab as an option.



Ribbed front rollers are made of Teflon coated alloy. A choice of groomer or 'groomer broomer' can be specified along with a choice of rear roller scraper or brush. Toro fit their Reelmaster 5410 with 5 inch reels. These are well suited to links and undulating ground.



Separate pumps are fitted for steering, traction, unit raise and reel drive. Note extensive use of solid hydraulic lines. Behind the pumps are the valves that are used to set the reel speed in relation to forward speed. Consistent clip rate is claimed for an even finish.



The rear engine hood tilts to provide good daily service access with all check points, including the battery, on the same side. Open frame design aids cooling and helps to prevent debris build-up around key components.



Adjustable side arm houses key controls. It can also be raised to allow access from the offside; useful in sheds where the mower may be parked with poor nearside access. Visibility from the seat and a general lack of clutter make it easier to accurately place the mower.



A simple stop if flipped up to limit the maximum mowing speed by limiting the travel pedal. Adjusted by adding or removing washers, the system allows the mower's speed to be easily set in the workshop, the operator flipping the stop down for full travel speed.



Toro advocates setting the reel to bedknife with light contact and not have an 'air gap'. This light contact, suggest the company, helps retain a 'square' edge on both the bedknife and face of the reel blades. In service, the units should make a characteristic 'singing' noise. To adjust the clearance, a single click on the ratchet adjusters on each side of the unit will make 9/10th of a Thou adjustment.

Judicious backlapping is also recommended by Toro. The key is to do the job little and often and not waiting for a noticeable drop in quality of cut before reaching for the lapping compound. Diligent maintenance of the bedknife to reel clearance and sensible backlapping are keys to extending the periods between a regrind, suggest the company.

The best way to assess how well the units are cutting is to of course look at the job they are doing. The simple workshop test is, of course, to use paper strips to check the units, ensuring they are cut cleanly when the strips are sliced from the vertical.

A Teflon coated ribbed alloy roll is fitted as standard to DPA units and a groomer or 'Groomer Broomer', with integral brush, may be specified. The grooming attachments both have permanent drive that will keep then spinning when raised out of work. This prevents debris building up on the groomer / brush. The working position of both is adjusted via a single click control with a distinct 'handle' enabling each one to be set at the same height as its neighbour.

In the UK, most Reelmaster 5610 mowers are specified with a powered rear roller brush, a scraper coming as part of the standard specification. The rear brushes have a spiral design that both vertically and laterally sweeps the roll and so prevents the build up of grass, worm casts and other debris.

To help control float over undulations, a spring compensation unit is fitted to each unit. A simple threaded rod adjustment can stiffen the spring as required. In most cases a single compensation spring is sufficient, but a second can be added to cope with more severely undulating fairways.

### Running gear

The Reelmaster 5010 Series all share the same layout and running gear. Unusually, Toro offer four-wheel drive as an easy retrofit option. If two-wheel drive turns out to be the wrong choice, adding a

driven steering axle will not break the bank.

An integral part of the four-wheel drive package is CrossTrax traction control. In broad outline CrossTrax is designed to prevent wheelslip, automatically diverting 'power' from a front wheel with low grip its opposite number at the rear. This idea is not necessarily unique but users suggest it can help cut slip on damp, dewy mornings.

The four-cylinder Kubota engine, which is turbocharged on the 5610, drives four separate hydraulic pumps. Each pump is dedicated to one job; steering, unit raise lower, traction and sending oil to the unit motors. According to Toro this ensures the cutting units are not starved of power as they are raised out of work when the operator starts to make a turn. Of equal importance, the units will be more likely to be up to speed sooner when they are dropped back into work following a turn.

It is also interesting to see the amount of solid hydraulic pipe that is used, Toro using hose only where necessary. Solid pipe is better at dispersing heat than hose and, because it can be fixed in place, is less liable to wear. As with other manufacturers, Toro see hydraulic hoses as wear items, with a recommended service life of two years. In practice most users prefer to keep an eye on the hoses, replacing those that show signs of fatigue. Sensible routine maintenance, in other words, is a key to ensuring any weak hoses are replaced before they can have a chance to fail in service.

### Operator area

The operator area is free of levers and clutter, the steering column adjusting to suit different sizes of driver. The standard suspension seat can be up-graded to a pneumatic version, the key advantage of which is that the seat automatically adjusts to accommodate the weight of the person sitting on it. This can make a huge difference to operator comfort as few will take the time to set up the seat when swapping between machines.

All key controls are mounted on a side arm, a pair of bolts enabling the arm's height and level to be adjusted. There are no levers, a joystick operating the raise and lower with toggle switches for reel engagement. Ergonomics have really come a long way in the past 10 years, Toro working to ensure all their ride-on mowers share the same basic control systems. This is

a real help when swapping between different mowers.

One simple but interesting development introduced with the 5010 series is the working speed control. Comprising an adjustable stop, the control is flipped up to limit pedal travel. This prevents the operator exceeding a pre-set speed. When travelling between fairways, the stop is simply flicked back down to allow the travel pedal to be pushed down fully. To adjust the set working speed, washer spacers are added or removed as required, a decal in front of the stop indicating how fast the mower will go with a given number of washers installed.

### Maintenance

The rear engine hood has a swing out rear screen. This is easy to blow clean. The hydraulic cooling radiator pivots on pins at its base, allowing it to be either blown clean when tilted back or lifted and cleaned whilst resting on the ground. Having the radiator pack at the rear of the mower also means less noise from the cooling fan reaches the operator, as well as reducing the amount of heat behind the seat.

With the radiator screen closed, the engine hood can be tilted to provide nearside access to all key daily checks. This includes the battery. There is also a good deal of space around the engine, so getting at filters is easier. The chassis is also 'open', a useful point when it comes to giving the mower a cleaning blast of compressed air.

The operator seat platform tilts to the offside so again providing nearside access to the hydraulic and the reel speed valves. Again, Toro have tried to design the 5010 Series so they are easier to look after and, when work is needed, make the job of the mechanic less complex.

### Summary:

Quality of cut is a key design priority with any mower designed to produce a good finish. What is interesting is the way in which ideas first seen on greens mowers have filtered through to fairway mowers. A Toro Reelmaster 5010 is equally at home mowing fairways as a premier league sports pitch. The quality of cut it produces is that good.

*With particular thanks to Tadmarton Heath Golf Club and Course Manager Brian Owen, Alastair Rathbone, Central Contract Supplies and John Pike and Rob Atwell of Toro distributor, Lely UK.*



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# Rising to the Challenge

Rosie Freeman discusses why stormy seas and torrential rain and winds are no match for the determination of Head Greenkeeper Alick Mackay at Furness Golf Club

**As golf club locations go, Furness Golf Club's on the Furness Peninsula on the Cumbrian coast is nothing if not dramatic. And difficult – especially when it comes to grass-growing conditions.**

The Walney Island course in Barrow-in-Furness – thought to be the sixth oldest golf club in England – is perched on an exposed tip that sees its west-side thrashed by the Irish Sea and subject as a whole to some of the heaviest rainfall and winds in the country.

So it goes without saying that Head Greenkeeper, Alick Mackay, has a difficult job on his hands producing and maintaining grass cover on this, the most demanding of locations.

Having joined the club five years

ago – when fairways 11 and 12 were almost bare and there was talk of tearing some areas up for returfing – the course's transformation is testament to his perseverance and teamwork with experts at the STRI and Barenbrug.

"This is a very difficult course subject to extreme conditions, We're not a true links course, but we are rugged seaside course and we also get a heck of a lot of rain here. In 2007 we had over 30 inches of rain and last year over 48 inches. So we're at the beck and call of the weather – it dictates everything," said Alick

He had been consulting with the STRI's Henry Bechelet on a bi-annual basis since 2004. But it was when the pair combined their strengths and expertise with that

of Jayne Leyland, of Barenbrug, in 2007 that proved the turning point.

"We have an STRI visit twice a year. In the past, we've tried different mixtures and had other seed companies involved, but to no avail. The problems got so bad three years ago there was talk of returfing, but myself and the Chairman of Green, Gordon Walker, were adamant we were sticking with seed. That's when we decided to involve Jayne."

Furness Golf Club is a difficult site and environment – it's subject to relentless rainfall, wind and salt-spray and it was after a lot of grass cover was lost down one particularly sandy end of the course that they turned to Jayne.

"Alick wanted to reseed to get better cover, but we needed to bring



Head Greenkeeper,  
Alick Mackay





in a specialist who knew about the different grass types and how they would perform in this environment after seeing them perform in trials.

Alick invited Jayne to offer advice on seeding solutions for the more environmentally challenging parts of the golf course. We really appreciated her input," said Henry.

Soil tests conducted when Alick first joined Furness confirmed that fescue and bent grasses were in general best suited to the course's sand and clay soil.

However, the introduction of unique, site-specific species would also prove essential in order to cope with some of the extreme environmental stresses identified throughout the golf course.

"The clay tends to dry out in the summer and the ferocity of the wind

on the sandier parts of the course also makes for difficult conditions," Alick explained.

"There's barely a calm day here! We're also without irrigation on the tees, which is a factor. But the mixtures Jayne came up with have been a success and we now have full coverage."

A prime example of finding a mixture to suit Furness' extreme conditions is the use of a low-input drought- and salt-tolerant BAR 40 on a very exposed, problem tee.

"This particular tee, the 8th tee, is battered by wind, rain and salt-spray – it's very exposed," says Alick.

"Our greens range from being wet to being very dry hence using the different mixtures.

"The weather really does dictate everything for us. Jayne has recog-

nised this and so if a mixture isn't working we re-jig it to suit."

In addition, a solution has also been found for Furness' wind-burnt fairways in the form of a fescue mixture containing that delivers superior sward density with excellent drought tolerance, salt tolerance and recovery. A perennial ryegrass mixture has also helped improve Furness' fairways in heavily trafficked areas.

A Tall Fescue has also been used to keep cover on some mounds and problem areas around the course.

Alick is clearly delighted with the improvements to the course. "It's been a lot of hard work – I've been here five years and it's taken all that time to get it right. Including myself, we're only a staff of three maintaining 18 holes and, together with Jayne and Henry's input, we can all be really proud of what we've achieved here."

But the hard work doesn't stop here. Alick continues to work with Jayne on a species exchange trial on a practice green, something that will in the future help him – as well as his fellow greenkeepers trying to achieve grass cover in similarly adverse weather conditions.

Alick's willingness to try new mixtures and cultivars has, in fact, been key to the success of this project.

"Some people sit on the fence and just use traditional mixtures, but it's important to try new things to see what will suit different conditions and climates," he argues. "Personally, I'd like to use just fescues and bents throughout the course, but some of the mixtures have other species in and so this just goes to show that you can't always have what you want.

"You have to look at the alternatives available. The mixtures have been a success and we've now got full grass cover. You have to be open-minded."



Head Greenkeeper, Alick Mackay in the distance

For further information on the particular mixes used please contact Jayne Layland at [barenbrug.co.uk](mailto:barenbrug.co.uk)





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# Hollow Coring



Hollow coring greens is a disruptive operation.



## What size tine? How much top dressing? How long will it take?

The STRI offers some useful assistance in dealing with your hollow coring needs

### Why model core aeration and top dressing?

**It seems that thatchy greens are a perennial problem at a significant number of clubs. This may come as no surprise when often many greens are managed as if thatch were not a problem at all with limited hollow coring and/or scarification regimes employed.**

While many greenkeepers have the desire to improve the situation, their respective committees often prevent them from carrying out the necessary work. Whether hollow coring (above) or deep scarifying, this reluctance is largely due to

the fact that thatch removal is an invasive operation, and golfers generally fail to see beyond the short term disruption in play these operations cause.

When a thatch problem such as that seen above is identified, an array of questions arises. How do we rectify the problem? What will correction of the problem entail and how long will it take?

We know that hollow coring and/or (deep) scarification coupled with top dressing is the remedy.

Just how much top dressing is required and timescales for the work are more difficult questions to answer.

In this article the application of



**THATCH LAYER:** A deep layer of thatch immediately below the putting surface in need of removal to improve turf health and playing conditions. Several years of intensive hollow coring will be necessary to remove this thatch layer and return a uniform soil profile and firm surface.



mathematical models currently available are appraised. Three models that allow us to calculate appropriate tine sizes and amount of top dressing required are reviewed. It will become apparent that it may even be possible to set definitive targets and put a timescale on thatch removal programmes.

### The models currently available

There are three models all of which are currently available online for use at their respective websites.

The first two models are of practical use as they stand, in that they are essentially simple calculators of area impacted through hollow coring, then the amount of top dressing required after coring.

Both models calculate using tine dimensions decided by the user. The third model, whilst perhaps being the most promising, is at present still in its developmental stage.

*Look at*

#### Greenfactory Productions Online tine tool:

<http://www.greenfactory.co.uk/tools/tinetool/index.aspx>

#### Online Wedge Hollow Tine Simulator:

[http://www.wedge-bv.com/english/wedge\\_handelsmaatschappij.html](http://www.wedge-bv.com/english/wedge_handelsmaatschappij.html)

The 'Greenfactory Productions Online tine tool' and 'Online Wedge Hollow Tine Simulator' allow the user to calculate the area impacted by various coring operations. Area impacted when hollow coring has been documented by Baker (1983) and Hartwiger & O'Brien (2001).

These online models take the works of Baker (1983) and Hartwiger & O'Brien (2001) a step further, enabling the user to quickly calculate surface area impacted by various tine diameter, spacing and penetration depths.

Based on a predetermined target surface area, both calculators will also output the number of operations required to satisfy that target.

In the example shown below (Figure 1) the Online Wedge Hollow Tine Simulator model has been asked to calculate the area impacted using standard ½ in. (12 mm) diameter tines, arranged at 2 in. (50 mm) centres and penetrating to a depth of 3 in. (75 mm).



Figure 1: Input and output gained from the Online Wedge Hollow Tine Simulator. Modified from [http://www.wedge-bv.com/english/wedge\\_handelsmaatschappij.html](http://www.wedge-bv.com/english/wedge_handelsmaatschappij.html)

The area to be worked (i.e. 5625 ft<sup>2</sup> □ 500 m<sup>2</sup>) has been selected as that of a single green. A target area of 20% (annually) has been input.

This target is based on what a USGA Green Section report requires for a core aeration programme to be successful on mature greens (Hartwiger & O'Brien 2001). Hartwiger & O'Brien (2001) acknowledge that this figure of 20% impacted area is based on experience and not experimental data.

In certain circumstances, where thatch levels are very high for example, a greater surface area may need to be impacted to achieve the desired effect. The impacted area is thus dependent on your circumstances and adjusted accordingly.

After calculation, the output tells us that with the tine specification detailed, 4.91% of surface area will be impacted by a single operation (Figure 1).

Perhaps more importantly is the fact that more than 4 coring operations will be necessary to achieve the target of 20%. Indeed, the model is a little over simplistic in this regard as it makes no account for overlap of core tines in subsequent operations.

The Greenfactory Productions website can also be used to calculate the area impacted when scarifying as opposed to hollow coring.

For this, visit the website <http://www.greenfactory.co.uk/tools/TineTool/scari.aspx>

#### Online Top Dressing Calculator:

<http://aggie-turf.tamu.edu/aggieturf2/calculators/topdress-sheet.html>

More often than not, having opened up the soil profile through coring, one wants to replace the removed material with fresh top dressing to dilute thatch, restore surface levels and firmness, improve drainage and/or generally improve the overall quality of the rootzone.

This model enables the amount of top dressing required after a specific coring operation to be calculated.

As with the tine simulator above, this model requires the input of the tine diameter, depth and spacing, the latter needing to be input as the number of cores per unit area (i.e. cores ft<sup>-2</sup>), which are documented by Hartwiger & O'Brien (2001).

In addition, the total area to be top-dressed and depth of top dressing required on the surface are also required as additional parameters for the model to calculate.

Usefully there are three outputs from this calculator: (i) the amount of top dressing required if the surface were not hollow cored, (ii) the amount of top dressing needed to fill the specified hollow core holes and (iii) the amount of top dressing required to fill the hollow core holes and satisfy the amount of top dressing required on the surface.

One criticism of the model might be that it appears to assume that



all the top dressing applied will fully integrate into the tine holes. In practice, of course, the integration of sandy dressing is often problematic.

Following on, the previous calculation made in hollow tine simulation is followed through. The amount of top dressing required is calculated for ½ in. diameter tines arranged at 2 in. centres and to a depth of 3 in.

From these parameters the model has calculated that 9 ft<sup>3</sup>, 69 ft<sup>3</sup> and 78 ft<sup>3</sup> is needed to apply 0.02 in. (0.5 mm) of top dressing to the un-cored surface, to fill the holes, and to fill the holes and provide 0.02 in. of top dressing respectively.

Assuming that the bulk density of sand is typically 1.75 tonnes m<sup>-3</sup> (Baker 1990), these amounts equate to approximately 1.0 kg m<sup>-3</sup>, 6.0 kg m<sup>-3</sup> and 7.0 kg m<sup>-3</sup>.

### Core Aerification And Top-dressing Model:

<http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/plantsci/turf/main.htm>

This Core Aerification and Topdressing model is a computer simulation that evaluates the effectiveness of hollow coring and top dressing (Li et al. 2002).

It is valuable in that you can model several scenarios and set certain targets you wish to attain. Examples of possible scenarios that might be modelled are a soil exchange programme, removal of thatch or an imported sod base after turfing.

The model can also be run for soil and sand based greens. A selection of coring and top dressing programmes can be selected.

These regimes include hollow coring, removing cores and top dressing; hollow coring breaking down cores and top dressing; hollow coring with no top dressing and top dressing alone.

Modelled calculations require more detailed input parameters.

As well as the hollow tine dimensions (i.e. diameter, depth of penetration and spacing), the model also requires bulk density of indigenous soil, the amount of top dressing sand in indigenous soil as well as a target for the amount of sand within a predetermined depth of soil.

If the model were to be used out in the field, then the existing soil and top dressing material would need analysing for bulk density and sand content in order to devise a suitable coring and top dressing programme.

In the example a scenario has been set up where the aim is to carry out a soil exchange programme. The objective is to improve the sand content of a soil based rootzone to 4 in. (100 mm).

Bulk densities have been assumed to be that of a typical clay soil (Brady 1990) and sand (Baker 1990). The existing soil is said to contain 20% (w/w) sand and a target of 80% (w/w) sand is set. Tine dimensions have been set as standard ½ in. (12 mm) diameter arranged at 2 in. (50 mm) centres and penetrating to a depth of 3 in. (75 mm).

With these parameters input, the model calculates that a green of 25 by 25 yards (i.e. 5625 ft<sup>2</sup> □ 500 m<sup>2</sup>) will need to be cored 18 times and require 3 yd<sup>3</sup> of top dressing after each coring treatment. In addition, by the end of the programme 88% of the surface area will have impacted.

Again assuming a typical bulk density of top dressing sand is 1.75 tonnes m<sup>-3</sup>, the volume of sand needed after each coring treatment can be estimated in kg m<sup>-2</sup>.

The model's estimate of 3 yd<sup>3</sup> equates to approximately 8 kg m<sup>-2</sup>. This figure initially appears high, but the model calculates that a minimum of 0.02 in. (0.5 mm) layer of sand is laid down across the whole surface as well as filling the holes.

However, returning to the Online Top Dressing calculator, it was calculated that 6 kg m<sup>-2</sup> was needed to fill the holes alone, this figure being more in line with standard recommendation. Data for deep scarification would also be a useful additional parameter for the model.

While having great potential for devising suitable hollow coring programmes, this model cannot as yet be used out in the field due to the lack of empirical data.

Field experimentation is necessary to fully validate the model and ensure the coring programmes it devises are sensible.

Sensitivity analyses are also required to identify the most important parameters affecting the model.

The model appears to be sensible for the inputs it is generating. For example, it correctly decreases the number of hollow coring operations required with increasing tine size and/or a decrease in tine spacing arrangement.

However, there is lack of flexibility in that at present it assumes that there is no overlap between coring operations.

Also a programme encompassing the use of different sized tines at different times of the year cannot be determined at present.

It should also be noted that this model can only be used to estimate the removal of existing material, no account is made for increasing organic matter as a consequence of ongoing growth.

Removal of sod base could also be contentious as no account is made for depth of sand applied and building on top of a sod layer.

### Conclusion

The Online Wedge Hollow Tine Simulator and the Online Topdressing Calculator may appear a little simple, but what they do achieve is offer the ability to make more informed decisions when formulating hollow coring regimes.

By calculating the area of turf affected by certain coring operations, it becomes apparent how little material we might be removing on an annual basis.

This may, in certain circumstances, explain why thatch problems remain. It is often the case that despite top dressing after coring, the holes remain visible and render the surface uneven.

Visibility of the holes may be influenced by accelerated growth of turf over the holes as well as the holes not being completely filled with top dressing.

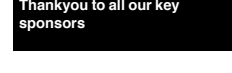
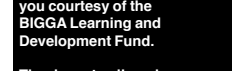
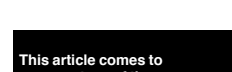
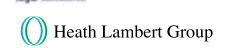
The top dressing calculator indicates that we might be under-applying top dressing after coring, thus compromising aesthetics and smoothness of playing surfaces.

While these models go some way to answering the questions of how we rectify a soil profile problem, what that will entail and how long it will take, the model with the greatest potential is the Core Aerification and Topdressing Model.

This model enables the user to run several scenarios before deciding upon the most suitable coring and top dressing programme.

Timescales for different hollow tine set-ups can be evaluated against predetermined targets derived from soil analyses and a suitable hollow coring and top dressing programme decided upon.

The failing of this model at present is a lack of empirical field data needed to evaluate how sensible its outputs are.





# Compost...

## The environmentally friendly way forward

Having forged a reputation as one of the most challenging venues to have ever hosted The Open, Carnoustie is now establishing a strong set of environmental credentials as well. Paul Mathers, of WRAP, discusses how quality compost is being used to maintain its three prestigious links courses...

**Recently Carnoustie, which hosted two of the most exciting Open Championships of the last dozen years in 1999 and 2007, has been turning its attention towards its environmental standing, ensuring that the 46,000 golfers who play the course each year do so in the knowledge that they are playing on one of the greenest golf courses in the world.**

As part of this ongoing commitment, the Club has produced an Integrated Environmental Action Plan which sets out how it addresses the careful management of turf grass and non-playing area habitats. This covers a wide range of environmental activities such as water management, waste reduction and energy efficiency in a bid to

improve Club-wide environmental performance.

One particular aspect of this commitment is the Club's decision to trial the use of high quality compost in the repair and maintenance of all three links courses. Compost manufactured to the BSI PAS 100 specification, which ensures quality and consistency to the highest standard, was first used by green-keeping staff to improve the growing conditions of ground under repair, and subsequently as a constituent element of divot mixes.

The first of these trials was in 2007 when Carnoustie's green-keeping staff needed to re-model and re-seed an area of rough and semi-rough adjacent to the 18th green, just short of the Barry Burn. Crucially, because the Club closes for no longer than two weeks each

year, this urgent work needed to be completed as quickly as possible so the area could be back into play. It was critical also that natural flora was protected, and that native grasses were encouraged to re-establish.

Course Superintendent, John Philp, worked in close consultation with the sports, amenity and landscape supplier Rigby Taylor and applied organic matter to the areas in the form of BSI PAS 100 compost. Around seven tonnes of quality compost was locally sourced from Forth Resource Management in Edinburgh, and applied to the area to improve soil consistency and encourage rapid re-establishment of grass.

The results were remarkable. Because the soil in the Carnoustie area tends to be sandy, all water







and nutrients quickly drain away making support for vegetation limited at best. But though the use of that quality compost, nutrient and water content improved and enabled vegetation to re-establish swiftly and healthily. Importantly, the ground under repair was also brought back into play in half the normal amount of time allowed for such work.

Based on the success of this trial, the Carnoustie team were keen to examine other application opportunities. With its ready and plentiful supply of nitrogen and phosphorus and other nutrients and minerals, BSI PAS 100 compost was found to be an ideal material for divot replacement.

A further 30 tonnes of BSI PAS 100 certified compost – prepared to a 6mm grade – was sourced and

mixed at a ratio of 3 to 1 (sand to compost) to produce the basis of a divot mixture. Grass seed was added, alongside a seaweed meal to provide additional micro nutrients and mirror the make-up of the natural seaside links soil. The divot mixture has been a great success as well. Grass flourishes and colouration of the turf matches the rest of the course seamlessly, giving a highly professional finish. John Philp and his team are now looking at how BSI PAS 100 compost can be used in a topdressing mix for use in weaker, more drought susceptible areas.

Crucially, the trials at Carnoustie also resulted in significant cost savings. Compared to fensoil, for example, the use of BSI PAS 100 compost resulted in a saving approaching 30% - or around £13

per tonne. Encouraging, this saving came in part from the significant reduction in transport costs; while fensoil is sourced at the other end of the country in the south east of England, BSI PAS 100 compost can be sourced locally from Edinburgh and all around the UK.

The example of Carnoustie demonstrates that world class results can be achieved more economically, and more environmentally friendly, than by traditional methods. And for greenkeepers keen to replicate Carnoustie's success, WRAP provides a comprehensive Compost Suppliers Directory that enables greenkeeping teams to search by postcode for their nearest BSI PAS 100 compost. This means that every golf course in the UK now has the opportunity to emulate Carnoustie's move to a greener links.



#### about the author

Paul Mathers is Waste & Resources Action Programme Manager for Landscape & Regeneration.

For more information on how Carnoustie Golf Club has been using BSI PAS 100 compost, visit [www.wrap.org.uk/sportsturf](http://www.wrap.org.uk/sportsturf) or call Paul Mathers at WRAP on 01295 817899.

WRAP



# Red Alert

Confusion surrounds the conditions of use for operators fuelling vehicles and turf machinery with red diesel. Ed Philips seeks to clear the undergrowth

**'Red' diesel has long been employed in the landscaping, local authority, horticulture and farming sectors as a far cheaper alternative to its 'white' counterpart.**

Yet vehicles and machinery operators remain confused about the conditions for its use. What is crystal clear however is that penalties, even vehicle seizures, can result from illegally deploying the fluid in tractors, utility vehicles and turf machinery, for example.

Publication of a new order in 2006 amending the list of vehicles allowed to use rebated fuel (red diesel) has only served to muddy the waters further it seems, notably over its definition of tractors qualifying as exempt vehicles.

In a bid to clarify confusion for end users, H M Revenue and Customs – the government agency charged with policing red diesel – and the DVLA jointly issued a Memorandum of Agreement on 10 January 2008, which defines permitted and prohibited use of the fuel in “agriculture, horticulture and forestry”.

To add clarity, GI answers questions about the dos and don'ts of the fuel.

## What is red diesel?

It's a rebated fuel, which, compared to regular 'white' diesel, has a far lower tax charged on it. The fuel is dyed red to discourage general use and to allow the authorities to spot suspected illegal use.

An invisible chemical tracer is added so that even if the dye was removed, tests on a fuel sample would reveal it to be non-road legal.

Legislation was first introduced in 1935 to allow vehicle concessions for red diesel but the passing of the Hydrocarbons Oil Duties Act 1979, Schedule 1, updated the law to include tractors.

## Who can and cannot use it?

The memorandum of agreement states that red diesel is allowed to be used in “farming the land, agriculture, horticulture and forestry” but is barred from use in the “breeding, rearing or keeping of any creature relating to sport or recreation, dealing in agricultural,

horticultural or forestry products, landscaping, or the maintenance of recreational facilities”.

If a vehicle requires a tax disc, it also requires white, not red, diesel.

## When, where and in which vehicles can red diesel be deployed?

Three categories of legal operation apply to the amenity sector – “unlicensed vehicles, mowing machines and tractors”. An unlicensed vehicle is one not used on public roads and untaxed.

However, if a vehicle has become untaxed since 31 January 1998, it will require a Statutory Off-Road Notification (SORN).

Mowers – whether pedestrian or ride-on – must be a “complete vehicle” to use the fuel. The “machinery” (engine) must be built into the vehicle for it to qualify under this category.

A tractor with mowing equipment attached to it for example would not qualify in the mowing category as it is not purpose-built – an exclusion also applying to any type of utility vehicle with removable mowing machinery attached to it.

Conversely, a vehicle consisting of a Land Rover chassis for example, with permanently fixed grass-cutters, designed and constructed for grass-cutting and used solely for that purpose.

Tractors, however, offer the most scope for misinterpretation. To qualify as an exempted/excepted vehicle, the tractor must be “agricultural” – designed and built for use other than on roads.

To be driven on public roads legally with red diesel in the tank, tractors must be used solely for one of three applications – “purposes relating to agriculture, horticulture or forestry, for cutting verges bordering public roads, or for cutting hedges or trees bordering public roads or bordering verges which border public roads”.

## What machinery cannot be fuelled with red diesel?

The chief confusion surrounding the law on red diesel centres on the definition of what the memorandum means by “agriculture, horticulture and forestry”.

HMRC's view remained clear that the definition did not include (and never had) landscaping and maintenance of recreational facilities.

The public sector and amenity organisations may have naively deployed red diesel and been forced to make costly changes later. Agricultural contractors for example, could be faced with similar setbacks if they've driven tractors while undertaking amenity contracting alongside their mainstream business.

The view now is that if a tractor is utilised for amenity work it cannot also do agricultural work – unless it is retaxed and the fuel drained down and changed, which in most cases is impracticable.

To avoid paying the penalty, the only safe advice is to fuel tractors on white diesel if they are not used 100% on agricultural, horticultural or forestry duties.

## What are the penalties for illegal use?

It is a criminal offence to misuse or supply red diesel or mix it with any other fuel, as it is to move any designated chemical marker or dye from the red diesel or add anything that might counteract the marker.

Offenders can be penalised by being charged for the backlogged fuel and even by having vehicles seized.

In some cases, offences may be dealt with in the criminal courts where a prison sentence of up to seven years could be imposed.

They may also be asked for backdated fuel payments, although some leniency appears to be shown in the amenity sector to allow for pre-memorandum confusion surrounding the use of red diesel.

The threat of punishment is real, however and one council has been asked for payments backdated to Jan '08.

The council had their parks department tractors dipped for red diesel useage by HMRC, believing that their grounds maintenance operations were thought to be exempt from full excise duty.

The assessment resulted in a notice to pay more than £20,000 in excess duty, covering the period from January 2008.



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## Powder Coating: *Who Me?*

Sean Sullivan, Superintendent at Briarwood Country Club in Montana, USA, offers some practical advice on powder coating which can add years to some of your course furniture and make significant savings

**Has the appearance of the ball washers on your course deteriorated to the point where aerosol paints are not helping anymore? How about your cups?**

If you don't have the budget to replace these accessories, there is a way to bring back the "factory look." Like the factory, you can powder coat your course accessories. Here at Briarwood, we have powder coated our ball washers, ball washer brackets, cups, and sprinkler head tags.

Powder coating can be done in your shop with very little start up money. To start, you need a powder coat gun. A basic gun can be purchased from Electro Static Majic. The powder coat gun kit costs £119. Next, you will need an oven that is capable of baking at 180 C. Usually any oven is capable of this temperature, regardless of condition. Remember, the oven doesn't have

to look pretty because all you need is the baking ability. I acquired our oven by asking the membership, in the monthly newsletter, if anyone was throwing one out or had one in storage somewhere. It took less than a week to get it. Most importantly, don't use your wife's oven as I will not be responsible for the trouble that causes.

We have a sandblaster to remove the old finishes off the equipment, but a sandblaster is not a necessity as long as you remove the old finish down to the metal. Once the old finish is removed, wipe down the metal with mineral spirits. That will remove any surface contamination such as oil, dirt, or dust. Also, use latex gloves when handling the metal to keep the oils on your fingers and hands from contaminating the metal surface. If you want to get a sandblaster, Northern Tool UK has a couple of DIY models that range in price from £185 to £250. Be sure to

check the specification of the sandblaster to make sure you have an adequately sized air compressor.

Now you are ready for the powder coating process. Powder coating works by statically charging both the metal object being coated and the powder itself. When dusted, the powder sticks uniformly to the surface of the object. Once coated the object is placed in the preheated oven for 15-20 minutes. After the timer goes off, remove the item from the oven and let cool. Once cooled to the touch, that object is ready to be put into service. That's part of the benefits to powder coating, there is no drying time needed to cure the paint.

When we powder coated the ball washers, we fabricated t-bolts for the tops allowing us to coat the bottom edges. We screwed the t-bolts into the ball washer tops and placed on a cookie sheet. We attached the electrical lead to the cookie sheet. A



scrap piece of steel plate will work if your wife won't let you have an old baking tray. Remember to let her know that she won't be getting it back! The baking tray or steel plate is just an easy way of transferring the work to the oven. Apply a uniform coating of powder to the ball washer top and then bake for 15 minutes. Using the cookie sheet we were able to bake two tops at a time. For the body of the ball washer we fabricated a stand that resembles and functions like an engine stand. It allows us to rotate the ball washer so we can put on a uniform coat. The stand also supports the ball washer during the baking process; our oven isn't big enough to stand the ball washer on its end.

We built two stands so that we could be baking one ball washer and be coating another at the same time, to speed up production. We built the stands with scrap metal that we had lying around the shop. Although during the winter, production speed isn't a priority. It is always good to know your limits. Here in the States, if you send out the ball washers to be recoated it will cost about \$60 for each ball washer, in the UK that is the equivalent to £38.

If you use aerosol paint the finish is gone by mid season. Note: the powder comes in a large variety of colours and textures so you can customize your ball washers any way you want. We coated 32 ball washers with an equivalent cost of £35 of powder. Even if you add in the cost of the gun, it is still cheaper than having five ball washers done by an outside business. Another benefit to doing your own powder coating is that you can put on a thicker coat than the factory. Remember that the factory is in it for the profit and what we need is durability. Once the parts are coated and cooled, the ball washer can be re-assembled and put back into service.

To coat the cups, thoroughly remove all sand and dirt from the cups. Sand grind, or chemically remove what's left of the old finish. You can purchase ¼ kg of gloss white powder for 7.99 pounds sterling. I suggest that you buy extra powder to have on hand for when you need to freshen up the cups. The ¼ kg will be enough to restore two sets of cups. The powder coated finish will last longer than aerosol painting and is quicker to do. It takes about 10 minutes to cleanup and remove the old finish. The act of powder coating takes about two minutes, at most. Comparing that to two or three coat of aerosol paint, if applied



correctly, will take 5-10 minutes. Bake the cups for 15 minutes and when the cups are cool to the touch, are ready to be placed into service. Painting will take several hours to harden, depending on temperature and humidity.

Total time for the powder coating is 30 minutes for individual pieces and each piece has a better finish than with aerosol painting. I don't have the replacement cost for cups in the UK, but I can guess that it is more than £7.99 for two complete sets of cups.

We fabricated our own ball washer brackets to support the ball washers on wooden posts. I purchased 1 kg of gloss black powder which was enough to cover 39 brackets, with some powder left over.

We fabricated a support stand to hold four brackets for the powder coating and baking process. After fabricating the brackets we removed all the sharp edges with a grinder.

Then we thoroughly cleaned the metal with mineral spirits. We placed four brackets on the home-made stand and began to powder coat. Remember to check all the corners for adequate coverage.

Even as pseudo-experts in the powder coat process, we still missed spots which then needed a second coat to cover. Once coated, bake for 15-20 minutes and that's it. You will have a glossy finish, which is corrosion resistant, scratch resistant, and is also UV resistant. We were able to fabricate and powder coat 39 brackets for 1/10 the cost of the same bracket, from a golf industry supplier.

If your course accessories look unsightly but are still useable, consider refinishing them by powder coating. It is very inexpensive to get started, and powder is no more expensive than the cheapest aerosol paint.

Yet the finish will last one or more seasons and comes in more colors and textures than you can imagine. By doing our own ball washers, we saved the course the US equivalent of £1312. By fabricating and powder coating our own brackets, we saved the equivalent of £500. Recoating the inside of the cups saved us the equivalent of £220 each time we would have replaced the cups. For the first season we saved Briarwood over £3125, while giving the course accessories a "factory fresh" look. I already own the powder coat gun, so our investment was small.

We already had the sandblasting cabinet, which speeds up the process, but is not necessary to have good results. Powder coating can be used on any metal part in your shop, on which you would like a durable, corrosion resistant finish. The limiting factor is the size of the oven and even that can be overcome by investing an infrared heat lamp.

You can check out the powder coat gun and supplies at [www.electrostaticmajic.co.uk](http://www.electrostaticmajic.co.uk). There are other suppliers of DIY powder coat supplies, the previously mentioned supplier is the first one I came across while trying to convert this article to English.

If you would like specific questions answered you can e-mail me at [briarmain@180com.net](mailto:briarmain@180com.net).





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LEFT: A *Microscolex phosphoreus* cast (circled) next to a golf ball to show size.

BELOW: Close-up of two adult specimens of *Microscolex phosphoreus*. Each is of typical adult length, of about 25 mm long.



# Close-mown greens face a *new menace*

By Dr David T. Jones, earthworm specialist, Natural History Museum, London, and Dr Kate Entwistle, Turfgrass Pathologist, The Turf Disease Centre, Hampshire.

**In the last few years a small, non-native earthworm called *Microscolex phosphoreus* has started appearing in golf greens and bowling greens across Britain. It deposits small casts on the surface of the sward that can interfere with play.**

Anecdotal evidence suggests it does not respond to any of the products currently available for controlling earthworms. It is thought to be spreading across the UK, and your help is needed to investigate its distribution.

## **Microscolex on the move**

*Microscolex phosphoreus* is native to temperate South America. But this species has been spread by man's activities, and it has now been found in parts of North America, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and continental Europe. It was first recorded in Britain in 1899 from Worcester, followed by two more

records in 1913 from Nottingham and Jersey. There were no further reports from Britain for almost 100 years.

However, in the past five years about 20 new records have been confirmed from golf and bowling greens. These isolated populations are scattered across the country from Cornwall and Kent in the south, up to North Yorkshire. Worryingly, unconfirmed sightings by turf managers and agronomists suggest that this species may now have arrived in many other locations in Britain. At the moment it is not subject to any official notification, nor is it on the list of quarantine species.

*Microscolex phosphoreus* is a small, pale, thread-like worm of length 10–35 mm, and width 1.0–1.5 mm. Unlike our native species, this earthworm is unusual because it can exude a luminescent fluid at night when disturbed, although it is not always easy to see its greenish glow. It produces small casts on

the surface that are about 10–15 mm in diameter, up to 10 mm in height, and which detract from the visual quality of the sward. The casts consist of loose sand grains and fine soil particles suggesting the earthworm lives and feeds in the root zone where there is a high sand content. The casts are sometimes clustered close together indicating highly localised patches of infestation.

Native species that cast on the surface tend to do so at night. Therefore, areas affected by deposited casts can be swept clear before the turf is mown prior to play. In contrast, it has been reported that *Microscolex phosphoreus* can cast throughout the day, causing a continuous problem for play, especially on putting greens. No studies have been carried out on this species in Britain but discussions with some turf managers whose greens are infested suggest that products used to reduce the surface casting of native earthworms have no







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affect on this invasive species, even when applied at the highest recommended concentrations.

### Putting *Microscolex* on the map

Now the Natural History Museum and the Turf Disease Centre, sponsored by Syngenta Golf and Landscape, are investigating *Microscolex phosphoreus* to map its current distribution and to assess how rapidly it may be spreading across the country.

You can help by looking out for this species and its small casts on your golf greens and bowling greens. However, these earthworms can only be correctly identified by examining them with a microscope. So, if you think you have this species we would be very grateful if you would send us a small sample of infested turf.

These delicate earthworms can be easily injured or killed while trying to remove them from the soil. Therefore, it is better if we extract the earthworms from the turf under laboratory conditions. Their populations may fluctuate with changing weather conditions and you may not see their casts at the time when this article is published. However, please keep looking, and send us turf samples any time over the next 12 months if you find their casts.

If possible, please use a golf hole changer to take the turf sample. Place the hole changer over a piece of turf with one or more casts on the surface. Remove the soil core and with a sharp knife cut the soil core at a depth of 50–60 mm and send us that top layer with the grass and roots still intact. If you don't have a golf hole changer, send a turf sample of similar surface area as a golf hole.

Please fill in the short questionnaire and return it with your sample. If you send your email address we will confirm whether or not you have *Microscolex phosphoreus*. All the information you send will only be seen and utilized by the Natural History Museum and The Turf Disease Centre, and will be treated as confidential. We will not disclose specific site locations or contact information to third parties. A summary of our findings will be published in this magazine and full results will be published in a soil science journal and made available on the web. In all publications the distribution map of *Microscolex phosphoreus* will be plotted at low resolution to ensure precise locations cannot be determined.



Close-up of *Microscolex phosphoreus* cast, showing loose formation of sand grains and soil particles. The cast is about 10 mm high.

## How to send your turf sample

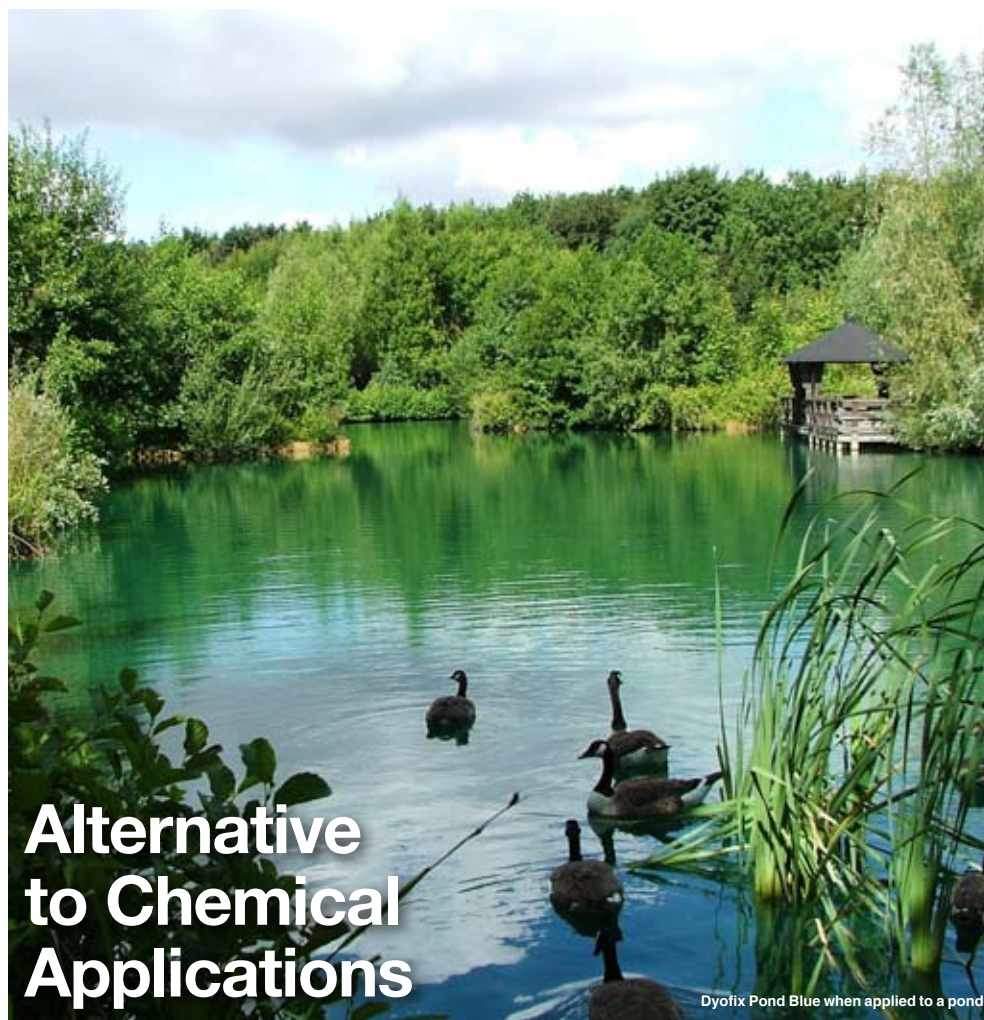
You can send your turf sample through the post in any small plastic container that is strong enough not to get crushed in the post. Puncture some small air holes in the top of the container. Ensure the sample is moist but not waterlogged. Loosely pack crumpled-up newspaper around the sample to prevent it being thrown about inside the container while in transit. If necessary, use strips of sticky tape to ensure the lid of the container remains firmly closed. Put the container in a padded jiffy bag together with the completed questionnaire, and send by first class post to the address at the bottom of the questionnaire. Please place the questionnaire in a plastic bag so it is not damaged if the container should leak.

## Microscolex Mapping Project Questionnaire

*Dr David T. Jones, earthworm specialist, Natural History Museum, London*  
*Dr Kate Entwistle, Turfgrass Pathologist, The Turf Disease Centre, Hampshire*

<b>Contact details:</b> Name:  Email address:  Phone number:	<b>Location of turf sample:</b> Name of club:  Address of club:  Postcode:
<b>Date the sample was taken:</b>	<b>Where was the sample from?:</b> For example: golf green, bowling green, other (please specify).
<b>In what year (and month, if possible) did you first notice these small casts at your club?:</b>	
<b>Any other comments:</b>	
I AM / I AM NOT* willing to help with future investigations relating to the occurrence of this earthworm. * Please delete as appropriate	
Please complete and return with your turf sample to: <b>Dr David T. Jones, Department of Entomology, Soil Biodiversity Lab, 7<sup>th</sup> floor Darwin Centre 2, Natural History Museum, London. SW7 5BD</b>	





## Alternative to Chemical Applications

Dyofix Pond Blue when applied to a pond

Dichlobenil, the last remaining biocide used to control rooted submerged plants, was withdrawn last month to comply with EU directives. With it, the range of products available to greenkeepers charged with the upkeep and maintenance of water hazards will be more limited than ever before.

One of the few non-toxic and environmentally friendly products available is Dyofix, an algae prevention and inhibitor product which uses blends of European Food Safety Approved colours.

The imminent Dichlobenil ban comes as research by the charity Pond Conservation found that 80% of Britain's ponds are in a "poor" or "very poor" state, and their condition has deteriorated markedly since 1996.

Dyofix has been developed by West Yorkshire based industrial colours specialists, Town End (Leeds) plc.

"Our inhibitors don't kill algae, but they do prevent growth, allowing the algae to either sink or be scooped off the surface of the pond," said Director Peter Watson.

The Dyofix product range – Pond Blue and Lake Shadow – are free of pesticides, algacides and other harmful chemicals. They don't have a chemical reaction or interaction to attack submerged plants and/or algae; instead they have a mechanical reaction with the water to create a UV reflector, and so don't pose any threat to humans when retrieving their golf balls.

Dyofix Pond Blue can be used by golf clubs and greenkeepers to prevent the growth of algae and submerged plants and colour the water an appealing blue colour.

One kilo of Pond Blue will treat up to 10,000,000 litres of pond water.

Dyofix Lake Shadow offers the same benefits as Pond Blue and has been developed for customers who require a more subtle colourless effect in their lake or pond.

Once applied, both products will last for several months, and can be used all year round.

[www.dyes.co.uk](http://www.dyes.co.uk)



## AIMED AT GRAVEL SURFACES

Scotts has launched a new pre-emergent herbicide that protects against regrowth on gravel and soft surfaces.. Applied post-emergence, ProShield is rainfast within one hour and gives rapid knockdown and kill to a broad range of problematic weed species while its barrier action prevents germination for up to six months.

It is fast acting because of the synergy of its two potent actives, Glyphosate and Diflufenican (DFF), which have complementary modes of action. Diflufenican is extremely hydrophobic.

It adheres to the surface and forms a skin or 'barrier' that protects against germination. Because it's hydrophobic it stays in place, preventing weed germination.

Glyphosate is taken up through the foliage and translocated throughout the plant. Its post-emergency activity kills seedlings and established weeds. The effects of ProShield on broad-leaved perennials can be seen 8-10 days after application, compared to 14-21 days with Glyphosate only.

[www.scottspprofessional.co.uk](http://www.scottspprofessional.co.uk)





## New Wetting Agent

Vitax Amenity's leading, long term wetting agent Ultraflo is now available in a new formulation with a dilution rate cut by over 50%.

Ultraflo Advance retains the same application rate as its predecessor – 50 litres per hectare – but this can now be diluted in just 950 litres of water instead of the former 2,000 litres. This means that more turf can be treated with a single tank saving time, money and water.

Vitax's Commercial Manager Daniel Wilkinson says that although Ultraflo has earned a solid reputation as a highly effective, long term wetting agent which reduces irrigation requirements by improving water penetration, it is the product's longevity that has made its name.

"Ultraflo's main claim to fame is the fact that a single application persists for up to 12 months," he explains. "If the product had a disadvantage it was the amount of water needed for application. With the development of Ultraflo Advance we've kept all the long term benefits of the original, including reduced risk of run-off from sloping ground, flooding and water logging of turf and put them into a much more manageable and even more cost effective form."

Ultraflo Advance is available in 10 and 20 litre drums and suitable for application on both fine and amenity turf.

www.vitaxamenity.co.uk

## SPORTS PITCHES



Limagrains UK has revamped the popular winter sports seed mixture MM60 this year so that it contains double the level of STRI chart-topping perennial ryegrass Madrid, and for the first time, new variety Milan, also rated highly on the STRI List.

Limagrains's Matt Gresty explains: "MM60 is a 100% perennial ryegrass mixture designed to provide a dense hard wearing sward with excellent recovery and disease resistance.

As more seed for these new varieties has now

been produced, we have been able to increase the levels in the formulations raising the visual merit and ground cover potential to further enhance the playing surface of winter sports pitches."

MM60 now contains 30% Madrid, 10% Milan, 45% Melbourne, and 15% San Remo. As with all the MM range, the seed is treated with the biostimulant Headstart to help improve establishment.

www.limagrain.co.uk



## New Publication from British Seed Houses

British Seed Houses' new publication explores the options available to Greenkeepers and offers an explanation of the difference between Fescues and Bents. With a foreword by Leah Brilman, Director of Research & Technical Services at Seed Research of Oregon, this guide details the characteristics of suitable cultivars and puts the case for sowing a purely Velvet Bent mixture.

The brochure is available to download from [www.bshamenity.com](http://www.bshamenity.com) or to get a printed copy email to [seeds@bshlincoln.co.uk](mailto:seeds@bshlincoln.co.uk)



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Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd is a £100 million turnover company operating from 19 branches in East Anglia and the South East of England, under three trading names; Ernest Doe, Ernest Doe Power and Harper & Eede. Head Office is located at Ulting near Maldon in Essex on a 10 acre site.

The company employs just over 500 people, with over 120 service and parts vans on the road, 20 of which are dedicated specifically to groundcare.

### *History*

The company had its beginnings in 1898 in a blacksmiths shop run by Ernest Doe. The initial business was involved in making and repairing agricultural implements, and then, through the founder's son, Ernest Charles Doe, the company expanded by gaining tractor franchises, notably Ford and now New Holland.

Through the years, expansion was gained by extending the branch network and diversifying into both construction and groundcare. This expansion was started by Alan E Doe, son of Ernest Charles, and more recently by Alan's son Colin Doe, the current Managing Director.

The company has been very active in the supply of professional grass machinery for over 50 years and has latterly become Ransomes Jacobsen's largest European dealer, having won their UK Dealer of the Year award several times and has also been crowned European Dealer of the Year.

The company's slogan is "Where you can buy with confidence" and the underlying premise behind this is that Ernest Doe is there not just to

sell good products, but to ensure that they can be maintained and repaired.

### *Key Services Offered*

Ernest Doe has full servicing workshop facilities at each of its sites. Apart from the usual repair and service work, the company offers a tyre service, a paint shop, a ram shop which can deal with hydraulics and make up hoses as required, air conditioning maintenance and full cylinder grinding capabilities.

The company also offers Doe Plus, a warranty and breakdown policy which is combined with a maintenance contract so that repairs and servicing can be covered on a fixed cost basis.

A full parts stocking policy is enhanced by daily deliveries between branches to ensure that parts are readily available at short notice.

All the major franchises offer a pre-7am next day delivery to

the company's premises. The company has parts vans on the road which can bring parts direct to customers' doors.

The company's own transport fleet operates a collection and delivery service with articulated vehicles available for larger plant.

### *Training*

The company operates a four year apprenticeship leading to NVQ Level 3, specialising in groundcare. Apprentices spend time at Evesham College as part of their training.

### *Major customers*

The company has supplied many of the local authorities, golf, football and sports clubs in East Anglia and the South East.

**To nominate a GI Dealer of the Month contact Scott MacCallum with your reasons why the dealer of your choice should be featured...  
Email [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)**



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to mention*



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## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 5th  
of the month

All the latest news from your Section

# Around The Green



## Scottish Region



### Central

Not a lot to report on this month but the Section has held a couple of interesting evening seminars at Elmwood recently with Andy Russell, from Headland Amenity, and Kenny Liddle, from Bayer Crop Sciences, talking generally about fertilisers and pesticides.

Attendances were reasonable although it is surprising that there were so few younger members and students along. It is a great opportunity for them to learn practical points about many of the products on the market from incredibly experienced people as well as the opportunity to network with many Course Managers from the area. Both are things that will help them as they move forward in their career.

When I was a student, I certainly learned as much attending events such as these and even golf outings and by asking questions of the course managers of the time than I ever did at college.

On April 27, Stan Zontek, and friends from Penn State, will be talking at Elmwood on winter damage while the spring outing will probably just have been played as you read this. Winners and losers in the next report and on [www.biggacentralsection.org.uk](http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk).

Back in the area after a couple of years away is Andy Campbell, formerly of the Duke's Course, who has begun working with Ransomes Jacobsen and is planning to base himself in the St Andrews area. Welcome back Andy and I'm sure we see you at a number of our events in the future,

Gordon Moir



### East

Well we thought the last of the snow was gone.....But back it came! Just when we were getting our winter work programmes on the course finished.

Looking for our first flowers of spring I think everything is at least one month behind in Scotland and probably the rest of the UK. Roll on the summer!

Back in February we organised a site visit to Barenbrug seeds Factory and Falkirk FC.

Our thanks go out to David and Billy for the very informative talk on their seed cultivars at the Barenbrug factory; Jim Dawson, Head Groundsman at Falkirk FC. for showing us round, and last but not least, Tom Brannan, of Greentech, for sponsoring the very enjoyable day.

The Scottish Conference held at Carnegie Conference centre Dunfermline on March 2, was excellent, all credit to Peter Boyd, BIGGA Regional Administrator, for bringing together some of the best speakers we have linked to our profession.

Our spring Outing is almost upon us. It is time to blow the cobwebs off the golf clubs and possibly the golf swings too. Kilspindie is the venue, a very popular golf course down the east coast and we anticipate a big turn out for this one. Good luck to everyone who plays and enjoy the day with fellow greenkeepers. Let's hope the sun shines for us.

The East Section wishes Chris Yeaman every success in his new job as Head Greenkeeper at the Royal Burgess Golfing Society Edinburgh.

Have you registered yet?

CPD points are being made more available in our Section with educational site visits that

we are organising in our Section. BIGGA is now recognising these for credit points so why not go to the BIGGA website to find out how to claim other credits from work related studies that are on going in our profession. Download forms and register. It's free to BIGGA members.

The US. Masters Syndrome is upon us ..... golfers brainwashed by the Evergreen Masters at Augusta now in glorious HD on 50" flat screen TVs.

The Question will come on the Monday morning of April 12 at local golf course - the same as we hear every year. How come we can't have our courses looking like that?

The Answer? Climate, money, staff... Do we need to say more?  
Until Next Month  
Tom Murray



### Ayrshire

Hi, I would like to take this opportunity to wish Dennis Tweddell good luck in his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at GC Schallenburg, in Germany, All the best 'D'. Unfortunately Dennis now leaves behind an Ayrshire Section without a leader! We all have Dennis to thank for all the hard work he put into our Section over the years ie the footy matches against the West Section and especially the home and away ties against the Irish GreenKeepers. Going to be a great autumn outing to Germany I'd say!

A record number of bodies turned out for the Scottish BIGGA Conference, in Dunfermline, on Tuesday, March 2. Many topics were covered, including the 2mm debate! A few eyebrows were raised at that one, I can tell you! It would

be interesting to hear anyone's comments on this issue. It was a very informative day for everyone involved and, a very entertaining presentation from STRI among others.

A big thank you must go to Peter Boyd for yet another successful conference. Thanks Peter!

Finally the Ayrshire spring outing has been arranged for Tuesday, April 27 at Largs Kelburn GC.

I look forward to seeing you all there.

Any news or gossip don't hesitate to contact me.... John Mair on 07500874449 or email me [johnmair982@btinternet.com](mailto:johnmair982@btinternet.com).

John Mair



### North

As I write this month's report the weather seems to have taken a turn for the better. At least on the coast it has anyway. Some courses inland still have quite a bit of snow lying about. You can travel 10 - 15 miles out of Aberdeen and you'll still find eight inches of snow, and that's at the beginning of March. Not long now until the season gets under way. We start our season, as do most clubs, with a Captains/Vice Captains' match and this takes place on March 27. Is it me or is the season starting earlier. With this weather we've had they'll still expect the place to be in tip top condition.

I recently spoke to the Scottish Chairman, John Geddes about the Scottish Conference down in Dunfermline. He was saying that there was a record amount attending this year and that Peter has got to find somewhere a little bigger if this year's attendance is anything to go by. John said that the speak-



ers kept everyone entertained although he did say he spotted a couple of nodding dogs in the afternoon session. Thanks go to Peter Boyd for yet another successful day and it just goes to show how popular it is. Thanks also go to the lads that travelled down from the North Section to show your support. You know who you are. Thank you.

The 200 Club is upon us again and that man Robert Hardie has been working his socks off to make sure it all runs smoothly. He has told me that the cards for this year have already been sent out so you should have received them by now. If you need any more cards for friends and family or you simply don't want to be part of the 200 Club then please get in touch with Robert on 07590 775957 and he will be only too happy to help. The cards are once again sponsored by Gary Smith and Scotts. Thank you so much for your continued support of the North Section.

The committee has asked me to point out that when you as a member of BIGGA, and use your card to get complimentary golf, you must telephone the golf club in advance to let them know that you will be turning up to play. Also please make sure that your membership card is up to date as more and more golf clubs are asking to see the membership card and photograph. Believe it or not some members are passing their own cards to their 'mates' to use on different courses. Anyone found doing this will be asked by the committee why this is so. It also spoils it for the other members.

I finish this month on a sad note for the lads at Peterculter GC. They are losing one of the finest apprentices who has ever graced the greens there. Who you ask? Warren Beveridge has decided enough is enough and headed back to where he lives. He has taken up a position at Inch Marlo Golf Centre in Deeside. The lads at Peterculter are absolutely gutted, Warren. As in the words of the Deputy, Mark Angus, he's a great lad and he'll be really missed. I just hope that you continue to come to the outings and that you have learnt to tie your tie! Good Luck Warren.

That's all for this month, any news give us a shout on 07813889374.

Ben Brookes  
Murcar Links



## West

Well let's hope by the time of press the weather has changed slightly as I think everybody has experienced enough of the cold, frosty conditions, and would like some sunshine and warmth, even a small amount of rain.

Panic will now ensue to catch up with all the course preparation jobs and aeration work, then the top-dressing and scarifying, how can we possibly fit it all in, I wonder?

After promising to submit an article each month low and behold the February issue was minus my article which I think can only be put down to a mislaid e-mail, never mind I do intend to try each month to put something in for the benefit of the members and would therefore request some help. Could members please contact me with some information on births, marriages, sponsored events, or even a point they want to get off their chest, all my contact details will be listed at the end.

Matters to be mentioned are the Scottish conference which I thought was very interesting although I was expecting some more discussion and controversy with regards to Greg Evans, but only a couple of people asked some questions so I assume everybody pretty much agrees with his principle argument. STRI followed and certainly put a different and entertaining slant on their presentation but the main points were put over comprehensively.

The afternoon timetable of Course Designer/Architect, Paul Kimble, was extremely interesting as it makes you realise what types of considerations have to be accommodated when looking at different sites and how often they alter the original formulation.

The last speaker of the day normally has folk falling asleep or nodding off at least but Lee Strutt seemed to hold their attention, probably because of the unusual subject matter of transplanting heather. I found his talk exciting and informative and was pleasantly surprised at the cost when considering how much work and time went into the operation.

Well done to all the speakers

and to Peter Boyd for his efforts, Stuart Greenwood filled in for Iain Macleod, as he was unwell, as Chairman of the morning session, and the Scottish Chairman, John Geddes, looked after the afternoon session. Well done to both. Let's hope next year's conference is as good.

A visit to Barenburg Seeds was arranged at the last minute on March 9 and some nine people attended all of which I gathered found the experience to be very informative. They were shown round the warehouse and facilities and then later given a tour of the Falkirk football pitches.

Barenburg has offered this in future should members be interested and the Section will probably look to organise something later in the year.

Dates to note

The spring outing at Lanark golf club on April 29, the summer outing at Murcar Golf Club on June 17, and the autumn outing at Helensburgh Golf Club on September 2.

As stated previously should members wish to have a specific item they want mentioned then please contact me on [st.greenkeeper@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:st.greenkeeper@ukonline.co.uk), or 07790823914, or my land line is 0141-942-5554.

Here's to a good season.

Stuart Taylor

## Northern Region



### North Wales

With Easter comes the season proper and instead of fighting the elements to get on with our work, we now find ourselves fighting an ever increasing tee time list to get on instead! We don't get bitter about it though do we? Well not much anyway.

The spring tournament takes place at Caernarfon Golf Club on April 28 tee times between 10am and 12.30, this competition is an individual and entry forms are to be returned to Jez Hughes by April 21 please.

There is a two day grounds maintenance trade exhibition taking place at Conwy (Caernarvonshire) Golf Club on April 21 and 22, entry is free but by ticket only, tickets available from Conwy Golf Club, or from any of the company reps showing at the exhibition.

In local news John Edwards, Head Greenkeeper of Padeswood and Buckley Golf Club broke his ankle in the recent bad winter, I think I speak for us all when I wish him a speedy recovery.

Carl Parry, of Mold Golf Club, has taken on the position vacated by ex-Around the greens columnist Dave Goodrich, at Denbigh Golf Club. By all accounts he's a character who will thrive in his new surroundings and his input will soon show through on the course. That's about it for now so.

All the best until next month!

Pete Maybury 07756001187  
or e-mail [petemayb66@aol.com](mailto:petemayb66@aol.com)



### North West

Well, as I write this it's March and I'm sure I saw some grass growing yesterday, Winter is well and truly behind us and hopefully everyone in the North West has the weather they want and surely deserve after the Winter we have endured.

Plans are afoot for some great golf outings this year and the possibility of a joint venture with the gcma on an educational theme, but more on this at a later date.

Our first golf outing will take place at Fairhaven Golf Club, on Monday, April 26, it's a course I have never visited, but have heard only good reports of. Please come along if you can, sometimes it's good to visit other courses and chat with your peers.

Once again please send info on anything you deem to be of interest to your fellow sports turf managers and we will add it to these notes.

I'm going out to smell the sweet smell of cut grass. Oh how I've missed that smell, happy cutting for April,

Cheers

Peter McVicar  
[pdmv@htmail.co.uk](mailto:pdmv@htmail.co.uk)  
07885347818



### Northern

Hello, hope you are all well. I am finally pleased to say, sitting writing this in the long awaited



# Around The Green

sunshine. Let's hope this is the start of a glorious spring.

A few golf dates for your diary, April 20, The Sandmoor Golf Club (Leeds) 1st tee at 10.30. Wed, June 30, Scarborough North Cliff Golf Club first Tee at 10am (Accommodation can be arranged for those wanting to make a few days of it.)

Wed, July 14, Wooley Park Golf Club (Sheffield Match) 1st tee at 1pm; Wed, August 25; Invitation day at Harrogate Golf Club 1st tee at 9.30. The cost of all events is £20 payable at least one week prior to the event. Sorry there is no news or gossip this month if you have anything you would like to share please pass it on to me thanks, Frank Stewart, 72 West Park View, Roundhay, Leeds, LS8 2DY. Phone: 07947 401278.

Frank Stewart



## Sheffield

Our Spring lecture was held at Rotherham GC on March 11. The speaker on the day was Eddie Seaward from The All England Lawn Tennis Club. I'm sure those who attended will agree that Eddie gave a fantastic talk that was interesting and informative. I'm sure not all of us would like those pressures though.

Unfortunately though we once again had a very disappointing turnout. In the Sheffield Section we have around 160 members and I think there were around 10 greenkeepers at the last event. I fully understand we are in difficult times, golf clubs are restricting members attending, members are very busy at work and it doesn't interest some people.

I feel that it is vital that we maintain a strong a Section as possible if not for ourselves for the next generation of greenkeepers. Not all events we organise appeal to everyone, but they do provide the opportunity to network and find out other people's problems and their success stories.

I must once again thank the representatives in our area for providing us with fantastic raffle prizes once again and for their attendance at these events.

You will all be receiving invitations for our first golf match soon. Hopefully we will see many of you there.

That is all from me for now, if anyone wants to contact me for any reason please feel free.

Speak to you all in May.

J. Stevens

jimmy\_jams20@hotmail.com  
07738719614



## North East

Well what can we write about this month, unfortunately there is not a lot going on. No doubt everyone is fed up with the snow this winter. Funny isn't it, when we want snow to close the course for a rest it's not too long when we are moaning to have it re-opened because we are sick of it. Ah well, it's nearly spring.

Both golf competitions are sorted this year two new venues which are long overdue. Firstly we are at the City of Newcastle on April 21, tee off time is a little later this year between 1-30pm --2 30pm, hoping this will tempt more people to play as they need not have to take a full day off.

Secondly, the Autumn comp is to be played at Gosforth GC [Bridle Path] on October 6, tee off time at 12noon till 1pm. This is the first time we have played there for a very, very, long time, so let's hope this year we can attract more people as its pretty much easy to get to both courses.

Michael McKenna, of Hexham GC, is leaving his job there and moving to new pastures at the end of March to work at the prestigious Loch Lomond course. I'm sure we all wish him well in his new job.

Well that's it for another month. News is getting a bit thin these days. Someone out there must have some news to write about it can be anything you want well within reason of course.

Jimmy Richardson

## Midland Region



### East Midlands

Hello everyone, hope you are well and enjoying the brighter days that we have been having. The start of the spring is upon us, and we can hopefully look forward to some warmer weather.

The spring tournament this year is at Erewash Valley GC and I hope that you have all sent your entry forms off and brushed the 1st tee nerves under the carpet! If you haven't sent in your form by the time you read this then you still have a couple of days before the closing date so please e-mail or ring Andy to let him know you are interested. If you are coming to a Section event for the first time then you can expect a warm welcome from everyone and a great day out. Erewash Valley's Course Manager, Graham Arnold, who has been a very active member of BIGGA for many years from its early days is due to retire during 2010, so please all come along to pass on our thanks and appreciation to Graham - especially some of the 'older' faces within the Section, who haven't been seen for a few years - we know you're still out there!

The Spring event this year is going to be part of the qualifiers for the National Championships this year along with the summer competition, both events are Stableford scored and aggregate scores will worked out to decide who we send. So if you want a chance to play the famous Red and Blue courses at The Berkshire during early October, and have the entry fee paid for you, please remember to get your entries in for both events.

By the time that you read this all of you that entered should have received the information regarding the Headland Pairs' competition. With some different pairings for this year and quite a few new teams it promises to be a hard fought competition with the venue for the final being the New Course at Sunningdale in September. Fantastic. But remember - you've got to be in it to win it!

The Section committee is

working very hard to come up with some great education days which we hope you will all enjoy and more importantly, get some benefit from. Once again, if anyone has any suggestions for what they would in the way of education or social events or even just some news from within the section then please contact Andy de Wet at [biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com](mailto:biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com).

Matt Wormald



### Mid Anglia

Not much news this month folks but please note that the Spring tournament has been re-scheduled for Tuesday, May 18 and will now be played at Bedford and County Golf Club, Green Lane, Clapham. Thanks very much to Geoff Fenn for arranging the venue for us at such short notice and good luck with the London Marathon, rather you than me. Berkhamsted, Stocks and Ashridge will be hosting the Section later in the year. And don't forget that the Spring tournament is also the Regional Qualifier for the National Championship and also the results will go towards Golfer of the Year. Please come along and support the Section, especially if you haven't been for a while. We always get a warm welcome at Beds and County and it is a very nice golf course. Get your entries in to Richard Saunders as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Rich can be contacted on 07795 328663.

Craig Spooner

[craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk](mailto:craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk)



### Midland

The Spring Tournament this year is at Trentham Golf Club, on Monday May 17 with a 12 noon start. Cost of £23 to include soup and sandwiches before golf, a three course meal after golf, with Nearest the Pin on all par 3's, and a main prize table worth £250 courtesy of Farmura. To give more a better



chance of a prize there is to be a slight change this year in the way such are distributed: There will be an overall 1st, 2nd and 3rd, plus the next best in handicapped categories 1, 2 and 3 (I hope that makes sense). Please see our website at [www.biggamidlandsection.com](http://www.biggamidlandsection.com) <<http://www.biggamidlandsection.com/>> for an entry form, or ring Rhys Thomas on 07775 581 615 or Gary Cunningham on 07780 953 764 to enter. It would be lovely to see some new faces this year, why not come and see if you enjoy it? You will be made very welcome.

This month's calendar page sponsor is our old friend Osprey. To add a shot of sense to your water management and distribution needs please see their website: [www.ospreywmg.com](http://www.ospreywmg.com) <<http://www.ospreywmg.com/>>. Our thanks to Osprey.

Many congratulations to Paul Woodham, who has left Gay Hill G.C to start a new career with the STRI. Paul started with the STRI on March 1 and we wish him all the best on behalf of the committee and members of the Midlands Section.

My thanks to our Chair, Ed, for the above. If, however, you would like a little more to our notes then please email me on [sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk](mailto:sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk) with any news. I look forward to your many emails (yes, it is the first!).

And yes the trout season's open, and what a shame that Grayling take the same flies.

Sean McDade



## East of England

Finally, two weeks without rain, no sign of any snow, temperatures above 5 degrees (just!) and, dare I say it, a sight of the sun. Maybe things are finally looking up after the long trek of a winter we have had.

Our Section had its Spring seminar on March 10, at Newark Golf Club. The day included presentations from Graham Williams, John Deere Irrigation; Gwyn Preece, John Deere Sprayers; Peter Wisbey, talking about working in Portugal and Spain (appealing after this winter!); Alan Martin,

Mansfield Sands, about the process of getting topdressing and topsoil from the quarry to the golf course; and a course walk from Course Manager, Graeme Macdonald, showing some of his re-construction work and heather generation projects. Many thanks to all speakers for an interesting and informative day, and to Newark Golf Club for their hospitality, especially the "Cow Pie".

Our golf fixtures for the season have been finalised, with one change of venue to last month's post. The fixtures are;

Newark Golf Club  
Thursday May 27, tee off 1pm; Tydd St Giles Golf Club, Thursday, July 15, tee off 1pm; Lincoln Golf Club, Wednesday, September 22, tee off 1pm; Match vs Trade, Louth Golf Club, Thursday October 14, tee off 11am; AGM, Sleaford Golf Club, Thursday, December 16, tee off 11am; Christmas Bring and Win

All members are invited to the golf days and we look forward to seeing some new faces this year.

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

[steveimmingham@aol.com](mailto:steveimmingham@aol.com)

## South East Region



### Surrey

Sunday March 7. I hope you all enjoyed Ron Christie's 2010 newsletter and his attempts at humour at the expense of his fellow members. I did and thought I would never start laughing. Poor John Ross has never had a face that looks like Adversity, whoever she may be, and to ask us all to share in the Section's support, that who knows who wore last time, can only lead to a potential pandemic on the same scale as bird or swine flu. Then on to blaming yours truly for Surrey not winning the Tri County Match in 2009 when you all know that my card must have been tampered with for I am sure the 4 and the 1 must have been reversed by some ill meaning and envious person or persons unknown.

Scotland v England and the

shortest paragraph in the newsletter. Just imagine how long that it would have been if the win had gone Scotland's way, not a paragraph more a book!

The section on Education I liked and if only its curriculum included English Grammar then maybe our Secretary in his Magazine section, when referring to my joining the Chipolatas, would realise that an apostrophe is only needed in the possessive case. And lastly, everyone knows that the so called photograph of me must have been altered, it's definitely my body but whose old bald head have they put on top? Thanks Ron 10 out of 10 for effort.

The Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath was a great success, the course was excellent, the weather was warm and sunny, an unexpected delight in early March and the meal, as always, very good indeed. One of my playing partners was Derek Farrington, a kindly but somewhat absent minded old chap who in his latter years really likes an electric trolley to help him round a golf course. He hired one from the pro shop and all went well until our 9th hole when the trolley appeared to run out of power. No amount of wriggling wires got it going and with regret Derek decided to leave it at the tee. He put his bag on his back and mumbling obscenities directed at the pro and all electrical goods continued on his merry way. We arrived at the green but before putting out we looked in astonishment at the said trolley as it raced driverless towards us. We thought that the next group had managed to repair it and sent it on its lonely journey but no we were told later that they had not. It had apparently decided, as they were approaching the tee, on self repair and rushed off, ran into the rough, toppled over, righted itself, hurtled between two bunkers and returned to Derek like a lost dog delighted in finding its master. It had a few more unplanned stops but did finish the round and if I could buy a trolley with that amount of intelligence I'd swap it for my sat nav any day.

Sorry almost forgot to report that the winner of the Ray Day Memorial Trophy was our very own Secretary, Mr W R Christie Esq'.

Yesterday March 6 was the Wedding day, in Leatherhead,

for Sara Worden and Course Manager Neil Gilham, Reigate Hill GC. Congratulations to you both from Surrey Greenkeepers.

Application forms for auditions for the Chippendales can be obtained from any committee member except myself. For the Chipolatas just forget all about stardom, wrap yourself in bacon, find a friendly turkey and wait for Christmas

Brian Willmott

Email [brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk)



### Essex

Another dismal month on the weather front, though over the last few days it seems to have picked up a bit so lets hope we are through the worst of it.

We have just had our second committee meeting of the year and feel that we have made some good decisions. Firstly on the golf day front, and the most important, I'm sure, is the cost of the golf days. Entries for the rest of this year are capped at £15 Greenkeeper members and Section Sponsor's and £20 for Trade (Non Sponsor) & Guests.

We have standardised the prizes, making a much fairer system. With the same prize values give out for the division winners and also runs throughout the four main events. We have done the same for the overall winner, who not only gets his place at the National Championship but gets the same value prize at each event. Trade and Guest prizes have also received the same treatment.

We have also dropped the Longest Drive in favour of two Nearest the Pins. This is a much more open way, allowing more players the chance of a prize.

Secondly, we have decided to have a blind pairs competition at our second event at Channels. The way this will work is that every player, plays his own game and then after everyone has finished the cards will be shuffled and drawn to find your partner. (a) It's a bit of fun and (b) it gives everyone a fair chance of winning if you get a good draw. The winning pair wins a place at the National.



# Around The Green

You should by now have received your fixture book for the season (if you lose it, you will be able to download a new one from the website). We have done it this way to cut down on the postage cost. Over the last year we sent out a minimum of six mail shots which was at a big cost to the section. So this year we are sending out just the new fixture book, which will contain all the entry forms for the coming year. We will then remind you by email, nearer the day of the event. It's important to us that you let us have your current email address so we can contact you quickly, so please if you have not yet done so, let me have them.

We have purchased a new laptop and digital projector, to keep records of the golf scores and it can also be used when we have any seminars or talks. We have also decided to project the starting times and results. So watch out at the golf days, from now on your scores will be in highlights, so you'd better get out on the range and hone that game to avoid embarrassment.

We welcome five new sponsors to the section this season, Advantage Environmental, BFS (Billericay Farm Services) BMS Products, Chaingreen Ltd (Sea Nymph) & Old Forge Mowers. I will publish the full list of all our sponsors next month.

The website has moved forward in leaps and bounds. I think we are nearly there with the main structure; I will from time to time make changes as and when is needed. Sponsors will have their own page as well as a link to their site. The interesting thing for us is that you will be able to see any special deals or tips they might have at the touch of a key. The addition of a new style photo gallery will make for some interesting comments I'm sure. There will be one for every event through the season.

The Forum with a Login is now working and although I have had a few glitches, I think it is all right now, try it and see if it is still giving a problem get in touch.

Plans are still ongoing for an education seminar later in the season, but watch out on the website for training courses that Paul will be running throughout the year.

I understand that Antony Kirwan did very well at the

Walton Heath Gentleman's Dinner event the other week, finishing in second place in the 0 - 10 category and taking the Longest Drive to boot. Well done Antony and well done to the others from our Section that made the trip, I understand it was a good day out.

Ben Scrivener, long time deputy at Benton Hall, is on the move, taking the Head job at New Malton Golf Club near Royston, in Hertfordshire. Well done Ben and good luck in your new position, I for one, know you will do well. We hope to see you at some of our events, when you've got yourself established in your new position.

I look forward along with the rest of the committee to seeing as many of you as possible at our first Golf day at South Essex Golf Club.

Tuesday, April 27. Smart Casual Dress. 12.30pm, Start time. One tee Start. Full details can be obtained from the website.

If you have any news for this magazine or the website please contact me by email: [essex-bigga@talktalk.net](mailto:essex-bigga@talktalk.net)

Arnold Phipps-Jones  
Press Officer.



## Kent

There are many things in life which are uncertain and very often, unlikely. Such as Millwall winning a trophy, for instance. And we often say, "That'll happen when hell freezes over", never really understanding or appreciating what that could actually be like.

Well, few would have believed that a humble group of greenkeepers from Kent would ever grace the links of one of the greatest golfing regions in the world, but, on a day when hell actually did freeze over in a continuous blast of ferocious, arctic winds that had brass monkeys crying as if they'd lost certain vital organs, the men of Kent played Princes Golf Club.

On arrival at Princes, we were greeted by an odour so bad in the car park that we were, at first, appreciative of the wind to stop us all from being violently ill. The order of the day as far as attire

went was to get as many layers on as possible to protect yourself from the cold and not to worry too much about what having the flexibility of a breeze block what do to your golf swing.

The course itself was fine, albeit in a very much "under construction" state as pretty well every bunker was undergoing a major re-vamp. Recent rains in these areas had produced the best revetted ponds I've ever seen. It was, however, firm and fast as any true links should be. A prospect for any budding inventors soon became apparent not too long into the round. After picking my bag up for the umpteenth time after it had yet again blown over during my backswing, it became apparent that at such wind prone venues a traditional two-legged bag stand is woefully inadequate. So if someone could design a sturdier option, and I'd recommend something with guy ropes, I reckon they could corner the market.

On reaching the halfway point and discovering that there was no hot refreshments available we manfully willed ourselves on to do further battle with the back nine. The wind at this point had reached such an intensity that even the seagulls had upped sticks and gone somewhere far more sensible. Unfortunately, an extremely notable absentee at this point was Vic Maynard, from Ernest Doe, who regularly patrols all the venues we visit offering sustenance in the form of various tonics and refreshments to help us survive whatever nature throws our way. At Princes, Vic's wagon was deemed inappropriate making battle with the elements all the harder. Playing golf in any shape or form was now becoming almost impossible as the wind got colder and bodies stiffened up. 36 brave men managed to complete their rounds, however, and after defrosting in the showers in the showers for an hour or so, were rewarded with a lovely dinner. Results as follows: 1. Adam White, North Foreland GC 34 pts; 2. Steve Gunner, Wildernes GC, 34 pts (count-back); 3. Michael Roberts, Knole Park GC, 33 pts; Longest Drive, Mark Roach, Redlibbits GC, and Nearest the Pin to Darren Child, Hawkhurst.

I would also like to thank Matt Plested and Kevin O'Neil, of Muswell Hill GC, for being two very welcome guests on the day.

Our usual post match dinner couple of pints was cut surprisingly short at Princes unfortunately. Indeed, we had barely put our spoons down from pudding when Kev was ushering us out the door as he was designated driver for the day therefore, if he can't drink, no-one can!

One low point of the day was the cost incurred to the Section by eight members, who had promised to attend four days before the event, but decided not to go, for whatever reason, after we had confirmed numbers with Princes. The club, rightly, charged us for the numbers we quoted them and, as a result, it cost the Section several hundred pounds of your money. After a long discussion with the committee we have decided that, in order to safeguard Section funds for everyone's utilisation, we shall now be asking for payment up-front for future events. I know this decision will not bother our regular attendees who appreciate the efforts we go to as a committee and the importance of sponsors contributions which have bailed us out on more than one occasion.

I don't want to finish on a low note so I will just say a big thanks to Clive Osgood for organising another fantastic Annual Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath Golf Club. Ian McMillan's course was, as ever, absolutely superb (and the weather was good!).

Roll on Spring  
Best of British  
Rob Holland  
[www.kentgreenkeepers.com](http://www.kentgreenkeepers.com)



## London

The season is just around the corner and it won't be long until we are all moaning about heat and lack of water. I for one can not wait for the season to start.

Not a lot to report this month, just one month to go before our first event which I think we all know is at Ealing Golf Club. To be held on May 20 and if you have not entered yet, make sure you do it soon. Greg Evans is going to show us the course at its best I am sure. The cost of the day includes golf plus a meal for just £20! This tournament is



getting full already with a second list of entries for other section members. Remember this is also the National qualifier. The first and second place winners will get their expenses paid trip to the National Championship at The Berkshire. After all the debate don't miss your chance to have a closer look!

Here is a reminder of fixtures coming up in the section-  
2010 Fixtures

The spring tournament, May 20 at Ealing Golf Club

The Summer Tournament will be held on July 21 at Muswell Hill Golf Club. We will have a BBQ after the golf with golf dress welcome all day, so no need for your shirt and tie. Also the club's Brewery is going to be supplying a bar on the course, plus Sherriff Amenity will also be there with another halfway hut!

The Turkey Trot will be held at Wyke Green Golf Club on December 2. This will be another great day in the calendar.

Please if you have any questions or suggestions on the section please contact us.

You can call or use the web site [www.biggalondonsection.co.uk](http://www.biggalondonsection.co.uk).

## South West and South Wales



### South Wales

As I write this column, it is still bitterly cold and I'm sure that most of us turf professionals are still wondering when spring is going to come along and thaw our greens out! Mind you, by May you will be so busy that you may meet yourself coming back and your summer strimmer boys have, with no warning at all, gone to Glastonbury for a long weekend!

I am also typing this and sending it up to HQ quickly before March's edition of GI comes out, as I did poke fun at a few people last month and want to get April's column to print before I get advised to 'tone it down a bit'. On reflection, it did seem a little harsh to infer that Gerald Orme looked like a gnome as he doesn't have a beard, or to my knowledge, any interest in

angling. Sorry Gerald!

Anyway, back to the Section. Here's what events are taking place in April:

April 14 - Evening lecture visit to Celtic Manor 2010 Course. Tour of facilities with Jim McKenzie before return to maintenance compound for a comparison between the upcoming Ryder Cup and the last Ryder Cup at Valhalla. Jim will be joined by Chris Sealey & Mike Nash who worked on the support team during the Valhalla Ryder Cup. Meeting at 5:30 to 8:30. Event as always sponsored by Countrywide Turf & Amenity. Our thanks to Martin and Peter for their continued support.

April 22 - 'When the Circus Comes to Town' South Wales Spring Seminar at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. This year's topic is preparation and recovery from tournament golf and we have lined up four top course managers to give us a 12 month calendar covering all aspects of preparing for, hosting and then recovering from a tournament. The speakers are Gordon Moir, St. Andrews Links Trust; Huw Morgan MG, Ashburnham GC; Ian Kinley, Royal Porthcawl GC, and Jim McKenzie, Celtic Manor Resort. They will be joined by Richard Windows, from the STRI, who will be discussing the Open Championship and the STRI & R&A's input from an agronomic point of view. The tournaments featured will be The Open, Ryder Cup, European Seniors Open & Home Internationals. This year's event is sponsored by Farmura Environmental so our thanks go to Jonathan Harmer, Gerald Orme, David Binks & Peter Lacey for their continued support of our Section. The day starts at 9:30 and will finish at 3:30 and the cost is £20 per ticket limited to 50 places.

A personal thanks go out to everyone (about 40) who attended the recent Avoncrop Amenity Seminar at Ashburnham GC. Feedback I've received so far has been very good so I'm glad that people enjoyed it. So a big thank you to Huw Morgan MG and everyone from Ashburnham and to all the speakers.

Thanks go out from the section as well to Martin Townsend and Peter Holstrom, from Countrywide Turf And Amenity, for their sponsorship of the evening lectures again this year. I have learned my lesson about pre-



**John Pemberton**  
Chief Executive

The problem of exhibitions has raised its head again, this time thanks especially to the efforts of Pitchcare. As you may have read on my recent posting on the Open Forum section of the BIGGA Bulletin Board, Pitchcare's Managing Director, Dave Saltman, is brokering a move by the trade who demand a unification of BTME and SALTEX, with the new show taking place at a new venue, the one suggestion being the National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham.

Just who is represented in this broad use of the term 'Trade' we have yet to discover, but it is a matter of fact that a number of current exhibitors at either BTME or SALTEX have become unsettled and now seek change. This where the dilemma starts with no real consensus as to what suits the majority of exhibitors. The options floated are endless: an annual show; a biennial show; indoor; part indoor, part outdoor; at the NEC, elsewhere in the UK, retain BTME and SALTEX, before Christmas, after Christmas, to be run by BIGGA and/or the IOG, run by the 'Trade'.

But what of the visitors, what are they looking for and what will they support? Clearly the IOG and BIGGA have some serious thinking to do and perhaps we will need to do some in depth market research of our own.

I am pleased to confirm that Kubota (UK) Limited and Charterhouse Turf Machinery Limited will be the principal sponsors for the National Championship for the second year running. Their financial support in these difficult times ensures the viability of this popular event that this year will be held at the Berkshire Golf Club at the beginning of October.

I am working with the Board to produce a formal document on the Governance of the Association and this will be available shortly. The initial draft will be published in the Members' area of the BIGGA website and it will be built upon over the coming months. There will also be published full details of the Board and the Sub Committees and I hope that this will facilitate improved communications and a better understanding of how the Association works.

As the first three months of this year slip by, somewhat quickly it seems to me, then our attention in the golfing calendar turns to Augusta and The Masters. No doubt greenkeepers everywhere can expect the usual complaints as golfers compare the condition of their course with that of Augusta. You have my sympathy. Let's hope that we have a good Spring and Summer and then we may see some optimism emerging for the future welfare of golf clubs and the game.

Finally, keep an eye on the BIGGA website, the redesigned version is shortly to be released and will have many new features including enhanced security and the facility to make on line payments, including membership renewal.

**John Pemberton**  
Chief Executive



# Around The Green

dicting what some events will be like before they happen!

So I will have a full report on the Swalec Stadium talk and the Ffos Las talk in next month's GI. Weather, fire, crowd trouble and act's of God permitting!

Hwyl

Ceri Richards

celticceri@aol.com



## South West

Good day people, Firstly, let's get straight to business.....Laurence Pithie MG, was once one of Europe's busiest greenkeepers. This said Laurence still has a huge passion for his industry. Laurence, left Minchinhampton in 1992, went on to spend a number of years in America as Director of Maintenance for Crown Golf. During this time he had overall responsibility for the budgets, work programmes, equipment purchasing, national accounts and so so much more. During these years in the green-keeping world Laurence also surveyed over 100 golf courses, from countries such as Spain, Portugal, France and Ireland. Laurence spent this time to formulate plans and budgets along with recommendations to financial directors..... I must say, this is only a very small insight into what Laurence has given our industry, he has now moved on set up "Turf master one". Turf Master one is a personnel service which can help in both training and consultancy work. This takes me on perfectly to announce that Laurence will be presenting a workshop at Minchinhampton new course on April 15. What better person could give such a workshop. The workshop is titled PLANNING & BUDGETING, this will be aimed at people in or moving into a management position. This is the first of many to come, so watch out for others to follow.

Back at Minchinhampton, I turned up for work last Monday, stepped into the office to have the morning discussion with Paul and Dave. Paul looks up and says the machine will be here around 9am (deep drill machine, 18 inches), I thought to myself, thanks, just what I wanted to hear on a Monday morning.

However the machine turned up and we carried out the task covering three greens in four days in what could be by far the best weather we have had this year. For those of you who are unaware of this machine, it has 60 drill pieces being 18 inches in depth, when you first see the machine in action, I must say it is pretty impressive. We have done a number of greens over the years mainly on the Cherington course, and I have to say the improvement is pure brilliance.....trust me your not thinking that while carrying out the work though

Our Section's fixture list will be you shortly, I do realise that it can be difficult to attend some of these dates, but please make every effort come along to as many possible. You all know how good these events are and I'm sure you all enjoy catching up with everyone! Our first golf date will see the return of the greenkeeper amateur, look out for you invitation for this..... I'll look forward to seeing you there.

As always people please feel free to contact me with any short story you have.

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk

07732503855



## Devon & Cornwall.

At the time of reading this, our winter season of events will have been completed with our last meeting at Mullion Golf Club in March. It has been an extremely successful calendar of events and the numbers have been very healthy. A huge thank you from the section for all your support.

It was a very busy February for the Section starting with our Section meeting at Torquay Golf Club on Thursday, Feb 11. Even the "English Riviera" didn't escape the winter conditions with frozen soils and a biting cold wind. Nevertheless, Tim Martin (Head Greenkeeper) and the team provided an extremely tidy and well-presented course, which was enjoyed by the 65 strong crowd of attendees, 38 of which were led by Tim on an extremely interesting yet chilly

course walk. A very welcome "Carvery" lunch, enjoyed by all the attendees, was followed by a presentation by Laurence Pithie (Turfmaster One). Laurence, who is extremely well respected throughout the industry, gave an educational presentation on Effective turf management "Getting the Basic's Right!" The presentation showed photographs and case studies from Laurence's vast portfolio of experiences overseeing many courses through his career. Many thanks to Laurence from the Devon and Cornwall Section for finding the time and making the trip down to us. The Golf format for the day was individual medal, with three handicap categories receiving the prizes. Category 1 - Jason Brooks (Net 71), Category 2 - Steve Green (Net 69) Both from Torquay. Category 3 - David Daw (Net 65) from Porthpean. These three all qualify for a place at the National Championship at The Berkshire Golf Club, in October, paid for by the Section. The Stableford points winner for the day was Tony Hursey (39 pts). The day was an extremely successful one and many thanks to Torquay Golf Club for making everyone feel so welcome and providing such fantastic facilities. A big thank you to Tim Martin (Head Greenkeeper), Jason Brooks (Assistant Head Greenkeeper) and the rest of the team for all their hard work on the day and leading up to the meeting.

On February 17, 70 Greenkeepers and Sports Turf Managers from across Devon and Cornwall attended the second seminar jointly organised by the Devon and Cornwall Section and Duchy College. The theme of this seminar aimed at developing the audiences understanding of Greenkeeper management techniques and the resultant impact on golf and sports turf playing surfaces. In the morning session Steve Gingell, Regional Area Manager STRI, took the attendees through the principles of the STRI's "Disturbance Theory". Steve presented a detailed case outlining the balance and implications between turf maintenance operations and their results on named turf grass genera and species with their own individual and specific preferred growing and habitat requirements. The afternoon speakers developed this theme through taking a detailed look at

the soils, root zone and growing conditions needed by grasses. Andrew Turnbull, from Allturf Management, explained the function of sugars and carbohydrates within the plant and the consequences to the grass plant and the soil life in his lecture titled "Carbohydrates/The Brix of Life". Mark Atkins, from Soil Harmony, in his talk titled "Life Beneath Your Feet" developed this theme further emphasising the symbiotic relationship between the turf grass plant and the soil life.

On February 25 there was an "Environmental Policies" Workshop, held at the Duchy College. Mathew Worster, from Minchinhampton Golf Course, and this year's winner of the Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year Award, explained that he was employed as Environmental Officer within the Club as well as a Greenkeeper, allowing him to action the environmental policy, which has been in place for 10 years and has all round support from the golf membership. The second speaker was Graeme Gallimore, Launceston Golf Club Course Manager, who spoke about the early stages of writing and presenting his environmental policy to the Golf Club Committee for their approval. He had significantly less resources available than Minchinhampton Golf Club but had a long list of actions that he was keen to implement.

Colin Webber, Owner of Portmore Golf Club and Chairman of the Devon and Cornwall Section of BIGGA, was the final speaker of the day. He gave details of a number of environmental based projects that he had implemented and argued that it would be better to act voluntarily and all golf clubs would need to take this issue much more seriously in the future.

A big thank you to everyone who has been involved in putting together meetings, seminars and workshops this year. Special thanks to Graeme Gallimore, Colin Webber and also Ron Skinner and all at Duchy College.

As usual, I am always looking for stories and events to include in these notes each month. Please feel free to contact me.

George Pitts

Devon & Cornwall Section Secretary

07929 75401

gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com





# Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2010 can be found here...

## April

### Thursday April 8

Northern Region Seminar – "The Next Decade", Penrith Golf Club, Cumbria  
Peter Larter at [Petelarter972@aol.com](mailto:Petelarter972@aol.com) or telephone 07866 366966.

### Tuesday April 13

East Section Spring Meeting  
Kilspindie Golf Club, Longniddry  
Stuart Ferguson at [stuferg@btinternet.com](mailto:stuferg@btinternet.com) or 07961 630553.

### Wednesday April 14

Site visit to 2010 Ryder Cup Course  
Celtic Manor Resort, Newport, Gwent  
Steve Chappell at [chappell1124@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chappell1124@hotmail.co.uk) or 01269 822032  
Mob: 07970 980899

### Wednesday April 14

East Midlands Section Spring Tournament and National Championships Qualifier  
Erewash Valley Golf Club, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. Andrew de Wet at [biggaeast-midlands@hotmail.com](mailto:biggaeast-midlands@hotmail.com) or 07730 713895

### Thursday April 15

South West Section Budgeting and Financial Planning Workshop  
Minchinhampton New Course, Glos.  
Adam Matthews at [adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk) or 07732 503855.

### Wednesday April 21

Cleveland Section Seminar on Correct Blade Setting and Maintenance of your machines.  
Cleveland Section, Ian Pemberton on 07791 695768.

### Wednesday April 21

North East Section Spring Competition  
City of Newcastle Golf Club, Gosforth  
Jimmy Richardson  
[jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com](mailto:jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com) or 01914 135232  
Mobile 07500 528542

## Tuesday April 27

Ayrshire Section Spring Tournament  
Largs Golf Club, Largs, Ayrshire  
Derek Wilson at [derwlsn@aol.com](mailto:derwlsn@aol.com) or 01294 276177.

## Tuesday April 27

Surrey Section Texas Scramble  
Laleham Golf Club, Chertsey  
Ron Christie at [lazyassron@btopenworld.com](mailto:lazyassron@btopenworld.com) or 020 864 43061

## Tuesday April 27

Essex Section, Channels Golf Club  
Dominic Rodgers at [domrogers@talktalk.net](mailto:domrogers@talktalk.net) or mobile: 07929 205398

## Wednesday April 28

North Wales Section Spring Tournament  
Caernarfon Golf Club  
Jeremy Hughes at [jezpro69@aol.com](mailto:jezpro69@aol.com) or 01978 860109 Mob: 07876 776265

## Thursday April 29

West Section Spring Tournament  
Lanark Golf Club Gavin Jarvis on [jarvisgav@aol.com](mailto:jarvisgav@aol.com) or 01436 676976

## Thursday April 29

South West Section Spring AM-AM Meeting  
Woodlands Golf and Country Club, Almondsbury, Bristol  
Adam Matthews at [adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk) or 07732 503855

## May

## Tuesday May 4

Secretaries Golf Match  
Montrose Golf Links  
Peter Boyd at [p.j.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:p.j.boyd@btinternet.com) or 0141 616 3440

## Wednesday May 5

Surrey Section Spring Tournament  
Burhill Golf Club  
Ron Christie at [lazyassron@btopenworld.com](mailto:lazyassron@btopenworld.com) or 020 864 43061

## Thursday May 20

North Section Spring Tournament  
Deeside Golf Club Dale Robertson at [daleturnberry@aol.com](mailto:daleturnberry@aol.com) or 01651 863002

## June

## Wednesday June 9

North Wales Section V's North West Section Golf Match  
Carden Park Golf Club (De Vere)  
Jeremy Hughes at [jezpro69@aol.com](mailto:jezpro69@aol.com) or 01978 860109 Mob: 07876 776265

## Monday June 14

BIGGA Annual Golf Day  
Aldwark Manor Golf and Country Club  
Sandra Raper at [Sandra@bigga.co.uk](mailto:Sandra@bigga.co.uk) or 01347 833800

## Tuesday June 15

Surrey Section – Cresta Cup  
Hoebriidge Golf Club, Old Woking  
Ron Christie at [lazyassron@btopenworld.com](mailto:lazyassron@btopenworld.com) or 020 864 43061

## Thursday June 17

Scottish National Tournament  
Murcar Golf Club Peter Boyd at [p.j.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:p.j.boyd@btinternet.com) or 0141 616 3440

## Tuesday June 22

Essex Section  
Boyce Hill Golf Club  
Dominic Rodgers at [domrogers@talktalk.net](mailto:domrogers@talktalk.net) or mobile: 07929 205398

**More dates  
for your diary  
next month**





# Membership

**Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, this month, highlights a new initiative**

**While writing this month's column, and occasionally glancing out of the window for inspiration, I find myself mesmerised by a very lively robin flying around a tree in the distance, I then notice that the sun is shining through the branches and it finally hit me...**

Spring is here. I suspect I'm not the only one glad to see the back of winter. As Steve Beverly, from Immingham Golf Club, wrote in his East of England Section notes last month 'while the snow is nice to look at, the novelty wears off after a while...'. It sure does Steve!

Talking of Section notes (more commonly known as Around the Green), I would like to congratulate those who write the Section notes, I'm sure they will agree with me that it's not as easy as it looks. The difficulty is making the notes informative while being interesting at the same time.

Anyway, I enjoy reading them every month (yes I honestly do!); it is interesting finding out what members are up to. If you do have any news you would like to share, moving jobs, a special birthday celebration or any baby news then let your section secretary know so the news can be shared among your Section members through Around the Green. Contact details for all the Section Secretaries can be found on the BIGGA website, [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk), select 'Contact Us' from the top line and then click on 'Contact List' and scroll down.

As the golfing season gets underway so do the section events. Check out the new 'Diary of Events' page for details of BIGGA Section and Region forthcoming events.

## **Surrey Section Initiative – One year's membership of BIGGA FREE!**

The Surrey Section are offering the opportunity for young greenkeepers (aged 20 years or under) who have never previously been a member of BIGGA to get their first year's membership for FREE!

If you know a young greenkeeper, working in the Surrey area, who is attending college or is in formal training working towards NVQ Level 2, is 20 years or under and has never been a member of BIGGA, then tell them about this fantastic offer. The offer is limited to the first 10 applicants on a first come first served basis.

For information visit [www.surrey-bigga.co.uk](http://www.surrey-bigga.co.uk) to download an application form or contact section secretary Ron Christie on 02086 543061 Mob: 07778 170077.

## **New Membership Benefits**

We have been working hard at sourcing new membership benefits. The survey undertaken in Jan, 2009, showed that members were keen to find out more about personal health insurance, watch this space for more details.

On that note if any member has any suggestions for new membership benefits or services please contact us at [traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk).

## **Email Addresses**

Electronic mail, or email is the most frequently used service on the Internet. People can send messages any time, anywhere, they can send a message to multiple recipients, forward information to people without re-typing, email is fast, files can be attached including electronic documents, video clips, music and photos, messages can be distributed around the world very easily. Not surprisingly then that over two million email messages are sent every second!

But probably more surprisingly a recent survey highlighted that social network sites such as Facebook and MySpace are more popular than personal email.

To ensure you are kept up to date with information from BIGGA, make sure we have your email address on file.

Watch this space for more information on BIGGA and social networking.



## **Contact Details**

**Tracey Maddison**  
[traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk)

**Brad Anderson**  
[brad@bigga.co.uk](mailto:brad@bigga.co.uk)

**Tel: 01347 833800**  
(option 1 for Membership)

## **Regional Offices**

### **Scotland & Northern Ireland**

**Peter Boyd**  
**Tel: 0141 616 3440**  
**Mobile: 07776 242120**  
[pj.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:pj.boyd@btinternet.com)

### **Northern & Midland**

**Peter Larter**  
**Tel: 01476 550115**  
**Mobile: 07866 366966**  
[petelarter972@aol.com](mailto:petelarter972@aol.com)

### **South East**

**Clive Osgood**  
**Tel: 01737 819343**  
**Mobile: 07841 948410**  
[cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk)

### **South West & Wales**

**Jane Jones**  
**Tel: 01454 270850**  
**Mobile: 07841 948110**  
[janejones1@btconnect.com](mailto:janejones1@btconnect.com)



**Peter Boyd** **Peter Larter**



**Clive Osgood** **Jane Jones**

## **OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS**

(Full Members only)

**Personal Accident Helpline**  
02075 603013  
**Greenkeepers Legal Assistance**  
0800 177 7891  
**Greenkeepers Support Services**  
0800 174 319  
**Debt Counselling Helpline**  
0800 174319

## **Welcome to this month's New Members**

For more information on new members log in to the Members Area of the BIGGA website:

**[www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)**

...and select 'Welcome New Members' from the Menu on the left hand side.

## **Scottish Region**

Paul Armour, Central  
Kevin Peace, North  
Graeme Pearson, Central  
Les Rae, North  
Ryan Stirling, West  
Marcos Vich Roadhouse, Central  
Kevin Webster, East

## **Northern Region**

Travis Benedict, North West  
Lee Jones, North Wales  
Martin Jones, North Wales  
Wayne Lazenby, Sheffield  
David Lewis, North Wales  
Jake Petch, Northern  
Paul Ramsey, Cleveland  
Damian Roberts, North Wales  
Marc Wilcock, North Wales  
Iwan Williams, North Wales

## **Midland Region**

Paul Davies, Midland  
Nicholas Edwards, Midland  
Sam Hall, Midland  
Richard Haseler, Berks/Bucks & Oxon  
Matthew Height, East of England  
Paul Howard, Midland  
James Kirkby, Midland  
John Latocha, Midland  
Ryan Leightwood, Midland  
Liam Lewis, Midland  
Graham Pidcock, East Midland  
Simon Pigott, East of England  
Justin Waterhouse, Midland

## **S East Region**

Ross Austin, Essex  
Steve Chicken, East Anglia  
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Patrick Hobbs, Devon & Cornwall  
Jack Willis, South Coast

## **Overseas**

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# Assistant Profile

*Each month we take a light hearted look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...*

Gary is a darting superstar who has achieved something very few have...



**Name:** Gary Salisbury  
**Age:** 31  
**Club:** Burghley Park GC  
**Position:** Assistant  
**Nickname:** Gaz

**1. How long have you been greenkeeping?**

Started when I was about 5 as my dad is Head Greenkeeper but have been full time for eight years

**2. What was it about the career that attracted you?**

Working outdoors. The job had been in my mind since I was a child.

**3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?**

Probably a policeman

**4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?**

Construction work. You always improve the course

**5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?**

Changing holes. It's boring

**6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?**

Most clubs could do with more equipment and improved equipment

**7. Hobbies?**

Darts, football, golf and reading

**8. Favourite Band?**

Green Day

**9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?**

Tottenham Hotspur

**10. What is your claim to fame?**

I am the only person in the Stamford Darts League's history to get a nine dart finish and I am soon to be playing World Champion Martin Adams.

# What's your Number?

*Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...*

Maarten de Vroom, of Greentoi, comes under the spotlight...



**1. What is your position within the company?** Sales Manager

**2. How long have you been in the industry?** 40 years

**3. How did you get into it?**

I am originally a Landscape Architect and moved over to sales from there

**4. What other jobs have you done?**

Project Manager of a big landscape firm in Zürich.

**5. What do you like about your current job?**

The unique product for the golf courses, and the contacts in Europe, because we are selling the Greentoi in Europe.

**6. What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?**

Great changes, too many to mention.

**7. What do you like to do in your spare time?**

To play golf and travelling

**8. Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?**

The same profession with the same passion for what I'm doing.

**9. Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?**

I have many many friends in the industry

**10. What do you consider to be your lucky number?** 7

**11. Pick a Number** 32

*Maarten has picked Nick Darking of Charterhouse*

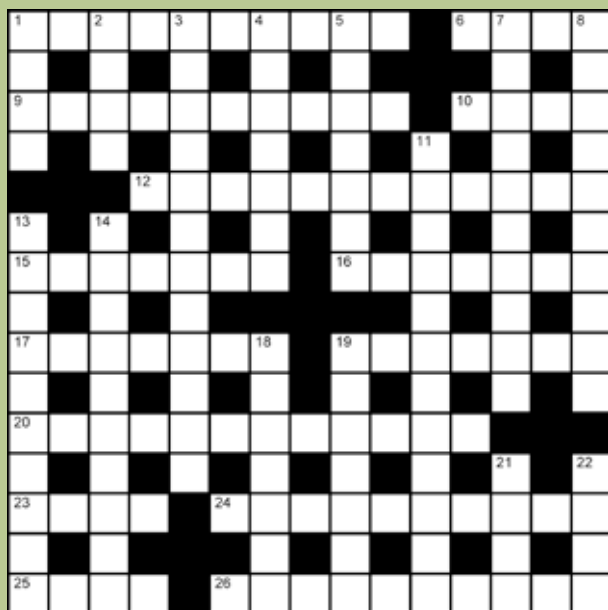




# in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors..

## CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

- 1 US artist shot non-fatally, two days before Robert Kennedy (4,6)
- 6 Egyptian goddess of motherhood and fertility (4)
- 9 Those who seek to overturn the decision of a court (10)
- 10 Judo training school (4)
- 12 Eisenhower's Vice-President (7,5)
- 15 Experiencing a sudden sense of danger (7)
- 16 Alfresco (4-3)
- 17 Subjected to a test (7)
- 19 The \_\_\_\_, three stacks of chalk off the Isle of Wight (7)
- 20 Actor who played Chekov in Star Trek (6,6)
- 23 Writers Kingsley or Martin (4)
- 24 Driven by lust (10)
- 25 Greek nymph who died, leaving only her voice (4)
- 26 The scientific measurement of the positions and motions of celestial bodies (10)

### DOWN

- 1 Football club from Amsterdam (4)
- 2 Deceive (4)
- 3 The most nominated film director in US Academy Awards history (7,5)
- 4 Arrived at (7)
- 5 Canadian province that includes Toronto (7)
- 7 The largest city in South Dakota (5,5)
- 8 A blushing crow for example, or a well-boiled icicle? (10)
- 11 Before noon (4,8)
- 13 Director of Frankenstein and Bride of Frankenstein (5,5)
- 14 A small, tropical marine fish, typically brightly coloured (10)
- 18 Small East African antelopes (3-4)
- 19 More wanting (7)
- 21 Michael \_\_\_\_, Labour Party leader, 1980-83 (4)
- 22 Catch sight of (4)

## QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ - Master the Masters

1. Who has won the most Masters titles and how many has he in his collection?
2. Who are the only people to have retained a Masters title?
3. Who holds the record for the most consecutive appearances in The Masters?
4. Who holds the record for the most appearances in the Masters overall?
5. Who famously holed a 235 yard 4-wood on the 15th hole for an albatross to hunt down and ultimately defeat leader, Craig Wood, in 1935 – the shot that was heard around the world.
6. Phil Mickelson has recorded the most birdies during a Masters. Is it 20, 23 or 25?
7. Which club did Sandy Lyle use from the bunker on the 72nd hole to set up his wonderful winning birdie in 1988?
8. How old was Tiger Woods when he became the youngest ever winner of The Masters in 1997 – to nearest year and number of months.
9. What is the lowest 18 hole score round Augusta National during The Masters?

## MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

		7		4				B	5	1
	B		8		9	7			A	
A			4			B			C	
				6				3		4
5		C			B	8	1	A		
							3	8		
			B	9						
		9		3	6	2		8		C
C		5					7			
	2			3				C		9
	7			C	4			B	6	
B	C	1				9		2		

		3				7				
				8				9		6
			7	2	6					
2				9				6		
9		4						8		5
	1					4				2
				9	1	4				
7		1			2					
				5				3		

## SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.

**Puzzle Answers on page 59**



# Thatch

**Many of you have heard of THATCH, many of our greenkeeping woes are centred on thatch. Whether it's preventing thatch, removing thatch or even removing the cause of thatch, it's an important factor throughout the golf course world. But what exactly is it? And why is it such an issue?**

In simple terms thatch or organic matter is the waste material of the plant. This is similar to fat or cholesterol in the animal world. If this is not prevented or controlled a build up of thatch can occur and similar to fat or cholesterol you will become unhealthy with a host of problems on your hands:

- Pest and disease – excessive thatch creates the perfect environment for many little critters.
- Winter Playability – wet thatch will produce softer,

spongy ground conditions. This will have a negative effect on the ball roll, bounce & speed. In severe cases the result may be unplayable surfaces and loss of revenue.

- Summer Playability – during dry spells, thatch can become water repellent (hydrophobic) and this can make the ground very dry and hard. In severe cases, a loss of grass can occur (dry patch).

- Plant health – the plant health will suffer resulting in more fertiliser, chemical and water usage. A vicious circle!

## The role of aeration.

The key to healthy turf is without doubt air. A good aeration plan is integral to thatch control. Aeration is like exercise; the more exercise we do the more our 'fat' decreases, the healthier we get, the better we feel. In the plant world this is the same.

We often talk about the living things in soil, well in truth, the

living things below our feet actually live in the air spaces in the soil. Aeration provides the air that helps all the beneficial organisms living below our feet, in turn those guys break down our unwanted thatch, root structure improves and here lies the foundation of a healthy grass plant.

## Hollow time

This is similar to liposuction, physically pulling the fat or thatch out. This also provides the greatest amount of air in the soil and is a great way to exchange the unwanted thatch with free-draining top-dressing.

## Drainage

Good drainage is integral, if the soil is wet and waterlogged those beneficial air spaces

are filled with water, if it's full of water then we have no air, and no air means no life. Many times greenkeepers are pressurised into aerating during the wet winter months.

Whilst this can work on free draining sites, on poorly drained areas this can create more problems. Those lovely holes soon get filled with water and the air is pushed out. Again no air... no life!

At times aeration is an unpopular operation, but without this operation your course will suffer.

A healthy course will not maintain itself; similar to our own health we require food & water in moderation, plenty of exercise and air.

So the next time your greenkeeper is aerating the greens, think of the positives, think of the benefits and think about supporting.

# committee corner

A new series aimed at offering information and advice to those golf club members who are elected to Green Committees



## in the shed answers

### QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Jack Nicklaus, with six.
2. Jack Nicklaus ('65 & '66) Nick Faldo ('89 & '90); Tiger Woods ('01 & '02)
3. Arnold Palmer with 50 1955-2004
4. Gary Player with 52
5. Gene Sarazen
6. 25, 7, 7-iron,
8. 21 years and three months
9. 63 – Nick Price (3rd round '86) and Greg Norman (1st round '96)

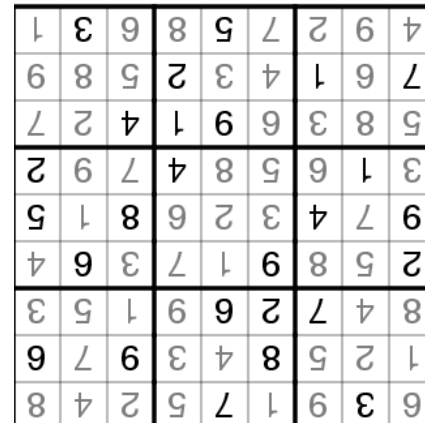
### CROSSWORD



### MONSTER SUDOKO



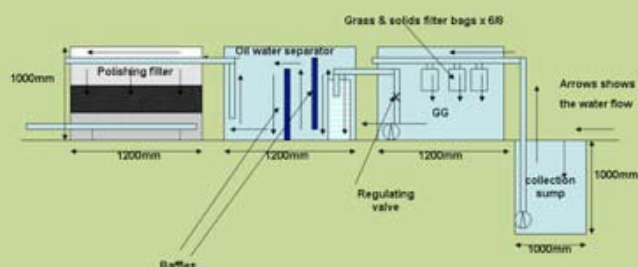
### SQUIGGLY SUDOKO





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## The Grass Grabber Flow Diagram



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# Recruitment

## Trainee Amenity Specialist

Sherriff Amenity is the specialist amenity division of Agrovista UK Ltd. We are the leading supplier of turf care and amenity products in the UK.

We are currently looking for a trainee amenity specialist, based in the South West of England, to join our team. This challenging opportunity is a technical sales role in which you will develop and maintain business in your trading area by offering sales support and technical advice to new and existing customers.

Our comprehensive training programme provides professional support, leading to a BASIS qualification, in addition to a full commercial skills training programme. To succeed, not only in our training programme but also as an amenity specialist, you will need to be self motivated, able to work on your own initiative, demonstrate commercial awareness and have a flexible approach towards working in an industry where seasonal fluctuations frequently dictate the working pattern.

Knowledge of the fine turf and amenity industry, along with industry recognised qualifications, would be advantageous but not essential as full training will be given.

This role also offers an excellent package including company car, contributory pension scheme and 25 days holiday plus Bank Holidays per annum.

To apply, please forward your curriculum vitae and covering letter to [gill.turton@agrovista.co.uk](mailto:gill.turton@agrovista.co.uk), alternatively call our HR department on 0115 921 8427 for more information.

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## SUNNINGDALE GOLF CLUB

### 1st Assistant Greenkeeper

Sunningdale Golf Club wishes to recruit a 1st Assistant Greenkeeper to assist in raising and maintaining the World Class standards required at the Club.

The candidate should have:-

- NVQ 3 or HND/C or equivalent
- PA 1, 2 and 2A
- CS 30,31 preferred
- Over 5 years practical experience in turfgrass maintenance and golf course construction techniques
- Experience in working within a large team
- Supervisory management experience preferred
- International experience preferred

Sunningdale is dedicated to achieving truly World Class standards:

- European venue for the Open Championship, International Final Qualifying
- Old Course ranked at No. 33 in the world (Golf Magazine)
- New Course ranked at No. 19 in the U.K. (Golf Monthly)
- Investors in People Bronze Award

Applications, with full CV, should be sent to:

Julie Watts, PA to the Secretary  
Ridgemount Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire SL5 9RR  
e.mail [juliew@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk](mailto:juliew@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk)

Closing date for applications: Friday 22nd April 2010



## OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT

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Enthusiastic, motivated and experienced, you will join the existing green keeping team at Chingford Golf Course.

Appropriate green keeping qualifications are essential as well as experience in a similar position, you will be capable of leading, motivating and managing our experienced green keeping team along with producing and maintaining high standards of work.

Able to use tractors, mowers and other golf course equipment, you will be a good team player and fully conversant with modern green keeping methods. A full UK driving license is also required.

You will join on a residential basis living in City of London local accommodation.

To apply online or download a pack, please visit [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/jobs)

Alternatively, please contact the Corporate Recruitment Unit on 020 7332 3978 (24hr answerphone) quoting reference OS044. A minicom service for the hearing impaired is available on 020 7332 3732.

Closing date: 12 noon 21 April 2010.



The City of London Corporation is committed to Equal Opportunities and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.



## South Herts Golf Club

### Course Manager

An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced and ambitious Golf Course Manager to assume responsibility for the management of the club's 27 holes and practice ground.

Established in 1899 South Herts occupies an undulating site of 147 acres in north London. The facilities include the 18 hole 6429 yard Vardon course, the 1582 yard par 3 Rees course, a practice ground with covered driving bays and a warm-up and short game practice area. The Vardon course has hosted the regional pre-qualifying for the Open 11 times and is renowned for its firm, fast greens.

During the last four years the Vardon course has benefited from a major modernisation programme under the guidance of architect Ken Moodie and the Club will expect the successful candidate to play a leading role in implementing further improvements.

As well as possessing the necessary qualifications (NVQ3) and being fully conversant with the relevant health and safety and environmental legislation affecting golf course management, candidates should be able to demonstrate:

- Extensive experience of managing a parkland course with predominantly annual meadow grass (but USGA specification) greens
- The ability to plan construction projects and execute them in-house or via the supervision of external contractors as appropriate
- The ability to manage and motivate a team of qualified greenkeepers
- The ability to prepare and manage annual budgets and contribute to the preparation of longer-term capital expenditure plans
- Good negotiating skills
- A knowledge of machinery maintenance
- A dedication to high standard of detailed presentation
- A willingness to be "hands-on" when required.

The position offers very good employment conditions, salary is negotiable.

Please apply with cv and covering letter to John Charlton, Secretary, by email:

[admin@southhertsgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:admin@southhertsgolfclub.co.uk)  
Tel: 020 8445 2035

South Herts Golf Club  
Links Drive  
Totteridge  
N20 8QU

Closing date: April 30th 2010





## The West Sussex Golf Club

Experienced Greenkeeper Required



We currently have a vacancy for an experienced greenkeeper. Start date June 2010. Applicants should be ambitious, reliable, hard working and highly motivated with a proven track record. The successful candidate will ideally already possess the following skills:

### Qualified to NVQ 2

**PA1,2 and 6a Spraying Certificates, Chainsaw Certificate, Good Team Player, Knowledge of Health & Safety, Knowledge of Irrigation Systems. Ability to produce and maintain a high standard of work.**

(Pictures & details of our course can be found on our website [westsussexgolf.co.uk](http://westsussexgolf.co.uk))

An excellent remuneration package is available for the successful candidate. Closing date for applications 30th April 2010.

Please apply in the first instance to the Secretary, The West Sussex Golf Club, Golf Club Lane, Wiggonholt, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2EN or email: [secretary@westsussexgolf.co.uk](mailto:secretary@westsussexgolf.co.uk)



### Irrigation Service Engineer required for expanding Service/ Maintenance Company.

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## Golf Course Green Keeper

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Leicester City Council are looking to recruit two enthusiastic and experienced Green Keepers to join our existing team in maintaining and developing their municipal parkland course at Western Park. Park Services work to achieve the required high standards expected by both club members and casual players, therefore it is essential you have a NVQ Level 2 in Turf Management, or equivalent qualification, or sufficient relevant experience in Golf Course green keeping maintenance and course preparation. Pesticide application certificates of P.A. 1 - 2 and 6 are desirable. The successful candidates need to be self motivated, reliable, have the ability to work within an established team, and work on the weekend rota as required.

For more information about this position, please contact Dave Flavelle on 0116 254 8432 • **This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check**  
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Tony Hawes, Course Manager, Potters Bar Golf Club





# On the Soapbox

A vehicle to let people within the industry express their point of view, this month with Dean Cleaver of FEGGA

**During the last two years I have spent many hours attending meetings at which the growth of the game is discussed.**

**Let me start by saying that I am not negative towards this challenge and it should be taken seriously with the focus of introducing new people to this wonderful game that millions already enjoy.**

This challenge differs from country to country and while the new emerging countries are truly growing a game from the very beginning and without any history, which certainly has many advantages.

If you look at the more established countries the challenge differs considerably.

For these countries such as the UK, I really do not believe they are losing golfers, golf clubs may be losing golfers and there are numerous reasons why, and these need to be seriously addressed by golf clubs in terms of service and customer relationship skills.

They also need to move closer towards today's modern person, this young person who fits into modern society and believe or not is a very normal person and wants to play golf.

There are some very good examples of clubs that have changed and adopted a new business model and have benefited greatly and in the case of my own golf club gained many extra members during the last year.

I also think that golf clubs can really gain from looking at some of the good leisure clubs that are available today, offering a great experience in a modern environment and coupled with the service expected today.

Today's person does also not necessarily want to join a golf club, but play where they want and when they want. I appreciate that this creates challenges with budgeting and ensuring golf clubs maintain a healthy turnover, but offering the right product coupled with good customer service will meet the needs of today's golfer and tomorrow's new golfer.

There are also some great examples of what golf clubs are doing in countries like Sweden that can and are being successful with member clubs. One real area of success is local clubs coming together and offering golf at each others' clubs at a reduced rate at certain times of the day.

This gives variety and a much wider golfing experience for their members. They also welcome non golfers into their facilities to enjoy the restaurant and allow these people to experience what golf can offer, and it works, I have seen it.

Returning back to the new emerging golfing nations we also have a responsibility to grow the industry to support growing the game, otherwise we risk the problems we have had in countries such as Sweden and Finland, where the result is not enough trained professional greenkeepers to maintain this growth.

There is still evidence of this today and when looking at some of the more prominent positions in Sweden, there are still non-Swedish greenkeepers managing these golf courses. This is not sustainable and not the answer to dealing with the problem.

**I have seen reductions as clubs make cost cutting exercises and this really makes little sense when looking at the future and the long-term success of its business**

Good education and investing in providing the skills for people to manage and maintain our golf courses is the answer and to bring out the vision that many of these people have will enable innovative business planning to ensure sustainable growth and development for the future.

In the economic downturn that we have experienced during the last year, this was certainly a time for maintaining and increasing the investment in education and training, it's a small percentage of a budget, but one that has huge benefits.

I have seen reductions as clubs make cost cutting exercises and this really makes little sense when looking at the future and the long-term success of its business.

The Czech Republic has a great model to look at, they have developed and grown a game for their own people to take up.

They have designed and built golf courses to meet the challenges of people playing the game for the first time. They have been developing an industry that has grown to support the game.

They currently have 82 golf courses with 46,000 players, of which they have 15% of this number being juniors.

They have grown a tremendous Greenkeeper Association having currently 200 members and are developing good education and working closely with the Agriculture College in Benesov developing standards based on the egeu Standards ([www.egeu.org](http://www.egeu.org))

One final thought, as we all know golf can take at times too long to play, especially in the busy world we now seem to live in.

I have recently come back from Iceland, where they have a total population of 320,000 and during the last year have increased their golf player numbers by 5% and currently have 50,000 playing golf, of which 30,000 playing five times or more per week, a success in itself, but of the 65 golf courses in total, 50 are nine hole courses, interesting thought.



Dean Cleaver,  
Executive Officer of the Federation of European  
Golf Greenkeepers Association, (FEGGA) and  
Past Chairman of BIGGA.

*Dean Cleaver*

The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International



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