Turf Science goes Live

Over 100 greenkeepers, turf managers, agronomists and golf club managers attended the first ever Turf Science Live, held at the STRI at the end of July. The event, included an innovative approach of live demonstrations of some of the latest developments in turf agronomy.

Organised by Syngenta, Scotts Professional and STRI, the practical topics covered ranged from surface conversion techniques, demonstrated by Keith Kennett, to establish desirable fine grass species on greens, to management of environmental features around the golf course for increased biodiversity value and application techniques to get spray treatments on target. The new format gave the opportunity for small groups of greenkeepers to engage in active discussion and debate on the merits and potential for different techniques.

Six Stations were set up on the trial fields with another in the STRI laboratory with a huge marquee acting as base and catering centre. The weather held off but for a small shower and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day which featured several breaks between Station visits and opportunity to network with colleagues.

NEW GTC QUALITY ASSURED SCHEME ON THE WAY

The GTC has contacted its entire current network of Approved Training Providers, mainly Further Education colleges, inviting them to apply to join a new GTC Quality Assured Scheme. Following the recent announcement that an agreement has been reached with City & Guilds Land Based Services (formerly NPTC) to offer from 1st September 2010, jointly branded Work Based Diplomas (WBD’s), the GTC is now looking to direct golf club employers and greenkeepers to Centres that have met a criteria designed to ensure quality education and training programmes match the standards within the Work Based Diplomas. The GTC is currently looking to have a similar agreement with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

This year’s Captain at Chippenham, Quentin Grandison, has served on the Greens’ Sub Committee for four years and was it his idea to run the Sealey’s Revenge - a fun competition, allowing me to set up the course just the way I wanted it!

After several meetings when some of my more extreme ideas were discounted, we came up with a final plan. The surprise for me was that Q insisted I play in the competition and present the prizes. That would give our members the opportunity to ‘abuse’ me face to face rather than through the committee.

The course was set up with:
• Pins on steep slopes with greens rolled up to ten times (we managed to get several up to 18-19 on the stimp meter). Some were so severe I had to put in a winter hole to get the ball in (up to 20 off the green). The 12 hole (Par 3) is near our shed so there’s always machinery parked which annoys the ladies, so we parked a Cushman right in front of the green, complete with an Indian mannequin in the back dressed in a high-visibility jacket, helmet and ear defenders!
• Tee markers were placed behind trees (particularly for the Captains as he is left handed), tee markers moved forward to give our members the opportunity to ‘abuse’ me face to face rather than through the committee.

The course was incredibly tough and I was threatened and my parentage questioned. I asked for refuge in the ladies’ locker room but was informed that I would have to hand over the bag and my bag-mate as well! I was offered ear defenders!

The downside is that they want me to do it again next year so I’ll need to invent alternative way of ruining their game. Chris Sealey

Headland at Headland

Headland has boosted its technical sales force with the addition of Darren Hatcher, who takes responsibility for serving current customers and developing new business in Hampshire, Dorset and West Sussex. Following 10 years in greenkeeping, and the post of Course Manager at Alveston Golf Club in Hampshire, Darren and his wife took a year out to travel the world, before joining Headland’s distributors, Sheriffs Amentry for six years on the area’s covering now.

“I was familiar with Headland products and wanted to focus exclusively on them,” he explained.

“I also wanted to become more knowledgeable technically and Headland is one of the most agronomically advanced companies around.”

Headland’s Sales Director Andy Russell says that Darren’s greenkeeping and on-the-road experience make him the ideal candidate for the job.
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This year’s Captain at Chippenham, Quentin Grandison, has served on the Greens’ Sub Committee for four years and it was his idea to run the Sealey’s Revenge – a fun competition, allowing me to set up the course just the way I wanted it!

The course was set up with:
- Pins on steep slopes with greens rolled up to ten times (we managed to get several up to 18-19 on the stimp meter). Some were so severe I had to put in a winter hole cup as it was the only way to get the ball in the hole.
- We placed huge logs on the 2nd green for players to putt around.
- We also installed two large Blue tarpanianas in the 18th bunker to make two ponds, complete with yellow plastic ducks.
- Holes cut on collars so they had to putt for increased biodiversity value and application techniques to get spray treatments on target. The new format gave the opportunity for small groups of greenkeepers to engage in active discussion and debate on the merits and potential for different techniques.
- Station visits and opportunity to thoroughly enjoy the day which featured several breaks between Station visits and opportunity to network with colleagues.
Eighty years on from the first lawn mower, the products of Bernhard are still in use today. This is Steve Hasell, the longest serving member of the company – and the longest serving employee in the UK. He started in 1982 and is still going strong today. Steve has had a fantastic career. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Steve Hasell has decided to call it a day. This has been a lifetime of work for Steve and a huge passion. He has spent the last 35 years working for the company, starting as an apprentice in the 1970s. He quickly rose through the ranks and became a Senior Technician, then a Foreman, and finally a Manager.

Steve has been involved in every aspect of the business, from the design and manufacture of lawn mowers to the sales and customer service. He has been a great mentor to many young people who have joined the company over the years, and has always been there to help and support them.

Steve has always been passionate about his work, and has never taken a day off due to illness. He has been a great role model for the team, and has always been willing to go the extra mile for the company.

The company will be holding a farewell party for Steve later this week, and everyone is invited to come along and say goodbye. Steve has always been a popular figure in the company, and everyone will be sad to see him go.

Thanks
Just a note of thanks, I am very pleased with the article on my lifetime achievement. On reading what you have written memories flooded back of many, many people in the far flung edges of Argentina, who gave me great encouragement and assistance.

Without their know how we might still be struggling in the dark ages in which our education was going in those days.

I know you could not include others in what you write but names like Gordon McMillan, Charlie Crossan, Margaret Hamilton and Colin Urquhart of Woodburn House, and Mike Taylor and Carol Barr of Edwina, all flood through my head. Many many say thanks and include Margaret’s regards she was a very fair person of her and in the Garden of Eden.

Kindest regards, Cecil George
30 Years with Bernhard

Tony Sheppard, Production Supervisor with Bernhard has just celebrated 30 years with the company.

Tony began his career with Bernhard as a 16 year old apprentice with Attenton & Ellis as a fitter/ turner. Two years later Tony was in the assembly shop building Express Dual graders.

“When I first moved in to the assembly shop in 1982 we were building 48 Express Dual graders a year, by 2008 we were building 11,47 Express Dual a year,” said Tony.

Greg Spray, Marketing Manager, commented, “We want this to be an informative and fun day for customers using our equipment and also for those who might be considering using it. As well as the guided Factory tours, we’ll also be holding product demonstrations and there’ll be the opportunity to meet and network with other industry professionals.

“The central theme of the Open House is to meet our industry partners including the AEA, CMAE, IOG, BIGGA, FEPPA, STPI, GRO, Scotts, Syngenta, Bernhard, Rain Bird, Ryno, Turfco and Smithco together with our own Parts, Customer Care, Retail and Cutting Edge Training stands.

“We will be providing a BBQ lunch and there’s a ‘Nearest the Pin’ competition on the 1st hole of our golf course with the opportunity to win an E-Z-GO golf cart should one of the guests achieve the first Hole-in-One on the course.

An eclectic mix of bands will provide music throughout the day and there will be some fun stands that will test accuracy, hand-eye co-ordination and dexterity!

All professionals from the golf sector and those involved in the maintenance of fine turf are invited to meet and network with other professionals.”

Thanks

Just a note of thanks, I am very pleased with the article on my life in education etc. On reading what you have written memories flood back in my head, many, many people in the then Scottish Colleges who gave me great encouragement and assistance. Without their know how we might still be drowning in the many ways in which our education was going in those days.

I know you could not include others in what you wrote but names like Gordon MacMaster, Charles Crossan, Margaret Hamilton and Colin Uniat of Woodhouse House, and Mike Taylor and Carol Bedford of Elmwood House, all flood through my head.

Many many thanks and include Margaret’s regards she was a lovely person of her and in the Garden of Elmwood.

Kindest regards,

Cecil George

Steve takes a Bow

All good things must come to an end. Just recently we have learned that a well known face in our industry believes that now is the time to down tools and say goodbye to a role that he has loved for over 37 years. Steve has decided to call time, and enjoy life a little more. It all started from a background in farming for Steve, that, and an HND in Agricultural Engineering. Steve wanted to move home to his county to get married. This is when he applied for a position at Cannington. It has to be said that Steve has had a fantastic career. During his 37 years, Steve has taught many students, from Agricultural Students to Horticultural Students, and even the greenkeepers, as these courses became more popular. Steve says that his greatest pleasure is meeting everyone who attended Cannington College; from the far flung edges of Cornwall to the northern edges of Scotland – and beyond.

This is especially rewarding for Steve, when he sees many faces. Steve would like to thank everyone for making his 37 years feel so special and wishes everyone the very best during their own careers.

Mark Matthew, South West Section, BIGGA
My personal thanks

Much has already been written about the recent Open Championship and recognition rightly given to BIGGA volunteers and staff who worked so hard – both on the course and behind the scenes. It was my first time at St Andrews and what a memorable experience. I am pleased to add my personal thanks to everyone on the Team which once again helped raise BIGGA’s profile.

Great life in greenkeeping

My favorite moment was introducing Cecil George’s Lifetime Achievement Award during Friday lunchtime in the BIGGA marquee. It was fantastic that so many of Cecil’s old friends as well as so many of our younger people took time out to be there. It was a powerful combination of ‘old-guard’ and ‘young-guns’ – all with a single purpose – to recognise Cecil’s great life in greenkeeping. I don’t know Cecil very well so I brought in a two who did – Elliott Small and Walter Woods.

In a witty aside, Cecil upon being informed that it was Walter who would be making the presentation was heard to mutter “Och, it’ll be better if Elliott makes the presentation in front of the old so-and-so for a change!” As Elliott was listing some of Cecil’s many achievements, it struck me just how much difference he was making to the game he was so passionate about. I don’t know if all of this would have been possible if Walter had not stepped in at the last moment. He was a lone influence on the education of greenkeepers, by taking the lead, we can far better directly influence any number of key issues.

By doing so we will not only enhance our individual standing but also that of the greenkeeping profession.

In this type of activity, this profession will only grow as big as the greenkeepers we have. My personal thanks to everyone on the Team and the entire stock, trade, brands and companies who have supported BIGGA in both of these events for many years. The IOG and BIGGA have a shared vision and are working together to promote golf course management.

We will protect and enhance everything that BIGGA members want from their Association

It was decided that both BIGGA and the IOG would be represented on a Steering Group, which, in conjunction with Pitchcare and the EA, would look at the future direction of both shows, and to adopt an objective and business-oriented approach to them.

BIGGA participates in this Steer- ing Group because it is far better to take part in essential, if difficult, discussions than to avoid them. We will absolutely protect and enhance everything that BIGGA members want from their Association by forging closer links with others such as the IOG or the EA if this will help us to advance the interests of golf course management.

I need hardly remind you how important HTML can help you in advancing your career; networking with like-minded professionals, sharing knowledge and experience, as well as improving your knowledge through extensive educational seminars. You can update yourself on the products, services and developments within the industry, by meeting with the suppliers who choose to exhibit. By exhibiting the trade provides valuable, vital and hugely appreciated support to BIGGA, and I would encourage you to support the companies that support you in this way.

We would urge you all to ensure that you make full use of this event. This brings me back to the need for all of us to take every opportunity to empower ourselves and advance this great profession.

Myerscough College held their presentation of awards ceremonies over two days in July. The ceremonies saw many students presented with outstanding achievement awards, rewarding their efforts over the duration of the course. This year saw eight Sportsturf students given awards as the top students on their courses.

Paul Cook, from Woking, won the Martin Jones Award First Prize for his work on the BSc (Hons) in Sportsturf and Golf Course Management Degree. For the FdSc Sportsturf Degree; David Golding, from Southport, won the Ernest Jacobsen Award First Prize; Robert Clare, from Clitheroe, won the Jacobsen Turf Machinery Practical Award. The group picture shows the Four Degree students (from left to right), Paul Leach, Paul Cook, Robert Clare and David Golding.

Turfmech Machinery has acquired the design, manufacture and marketing rights to the John Deere Turfline kits developed originally by Scottish company, iPowerPower Ltd, for fitting to the John Deere 4000 and 6000 Series tractors.

Turfmech is also excited about the acquisition because it gives the company a way of expanding its reach in the UK and potentially overseas. The kits fit the John Deere 4000 and 6000 Series tractors and can cost up to £4,000.

The kits are sold via John Deere dealers in the UK and Ireland, with the country’s largest dealer having signed a contract with the company for the kits.

The kits are also available through John Deere’s dealers in the US, where the company has a large customer base.

The kits are designed to help contractors and groundskeepers to improve the appearance of their turf, with a number of designs available to choose from.

In addition to the John Deere kits, the company also sells kits for other makes of tractor, including the John Deere 4000 and 6000 Series tractors.

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