Four seasons in one day

How Jim Brown and Paul McClearn cope with two metres of rain annually at The Carrick on Loch Lomond

Inside...

THOMAS’S TRAVELS
TORO Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Thomas Flavelle, on his trip to the States

Featured Inside...

ROYAL ASHDOWN FOREST
Laurence Pithie meets Chris Mitchell

ALSO INSIDE... VACUUM SWEEPER COLLECTORS : OPM
Simply Brilliant

The Jacobsen GP400 Diesel ride-on greens mower is full of brilliant ideas. To ensure superior turf conditions, our engineers included free-floating steerable cutting heads with Classic XP™ reels along with a complete Greens Management System including verticutters and groovers. To make the GP400 easy to use and maintain, they added a one-touch joystick for lift/lower, a swing-out centre reel, and onboard backlapping. Add some brilliance to your course with the GP400 ride-on greens mower from Jacobsen.

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Welcome from BIGGA

Mastering the UK climate

Firstly I’d like to thank all those BIGGA members who took the time to respond to the Greenkeeper International reader survey recently. This magazine is an important activity for the Association on many levels but its primary purpose is to be a true benefit of BIGGA membership. It was heartening to read a great deal of positive feedback in the survey but of more importance were the many excellent suggestions for ways to improve the quality and relevance of the magazine’s content. All these suggestions are being taken on board and some changes will start to filter into the publication from next month onwards.

April signifies the traditional start to the golfing season as the familiar verdant hues of Augusta National are beamed into our living rooms. This brings increased golfer interest alongside sometimes wildly ambitious course presentation expectations (see The Back Nine article on page 66). With winter still hanging over large parts of the UK as I write, these expectations will need to be managed even more carefully than normal. It is encouraging to see just how many greenkeepers are now being proactive on this front through the use of blogs, Facebook and Twitter as well as old fashioned methods such as newsletters and member gatherings. The industry needs events like The Masters at this time of year; they get golfers excited about playing the game after such a long winter. The challenge is to ensure they appreciate that Augusta-like perfection is largely unachievable in the UK climate with regular budgets.

To illustrate this point in this month’s magazine we hear how Jim Brown and Paul McClearn (see page 20) have set about dealing with the effects of over two metres of annual rainfall on their beautiful site by the banks of Loch Lomond. Major drainage, turf health and bunker reconstruction work have been implemented ensuring this busy facility is managed in a very natural way.

The Carrick at Loch Lomond, Course Manager Jim Brown (left) with Head Greenkeeper Paul McClearn (right)

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Only a few short weeks after BTME 2013 concluded and already the signs for 2014 are extremely promising. Following the very successful exhibition in January, sales for next year have been extraordinary with many of this year’s exhibitors increasing their stand space - making it tough to fit in those companies who want to be part of 2014 but weren’t present this year. The sales teams have done a great job in trying to accommodate everyone’s needs and it looks as though this early stage as though we may have all the available halls completely full within the next few weeks. The success of the last two BTMEs in particular has shown how important the exhibition and the associated education programme are for the industry. We are now working hard on the content for the ‘Turf Managers’ Conference and Workshop/Seminar Programmes, watch this space for details over the next few months.

Enjoy the read.
Jim Croxton, Chief Executive
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How the team at The Carrick on Loch Lomond have transformed the course

*26 Course management in a natural environment*
Laurence Pittie meets Chris Mitchell at Royal Ashdown GC

*30 Thomas’s travels*
Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Thomas Flavelle tells us about his prize trip to the States

*32 Open Support Team Q&A*
How we select the Support Team

*34 Photographic competition*
How to feature in our calendar

*36 Suck it and see*
Choosing the right vacuum, sweeper and flail mower/scarifying collector

*40 OPM to be targeted by aerial spraying*
Dr Terry Mahbetti reveals how the authorities are planning to combat Oak Processionary Moth

*44 It’s a WRAP*
Results of a survey on the use of compost on golf courses

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A chance for you to earn BASIS points

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**Aerial spraying**

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On the road with BIGGA

My hectic schedule has shown no signs of letting up over the last few weeks. I returned from the FEGGA Conference in Zurich and immediately headed straight to the Scottish Region board meeting. Not only was this very well attended - it was also very constructive. This was followed up by one of the Regional Roadshows which Jim Croston, Tracey Maddison and I have been involved in these last few weeks.

The roadshows are titled ‘Working together for the future success of BIGGA’ and the aim is to engage at a local level with Section and Region Committees to ensure that the Association’s plans and ambitions are more widely known and supported.

We believe it’s vital that we all work together to increase the profile and appreciation of the profession of greenskeeping.

The Scottish Roadshow was a very constructive exercise – as it also was in the Northern and South West and South Wales Regions – as it provided all parties with food for thought along with a clear understanding of how we can move forward.

It was then time for the Scottish Regional Conference in Dunfermline – and what a Conference it was. The programme was superb with some exceptional speakers and most importantly, over two hundred delegates in attendance.

Representatives from some of the finest golf courses in the world passed on their expertise, knowledge and opinions and I know feedback on their presentations was excellent, and this is no surprise now I’ve had the pleasure of enjoying them in full flow. I’d like to wish Grant Frogley at Roxburghe Hotel & Golf Course, Chris Haspell at Castle Stuart Links and last but not least John Bamforth at Trump Hotel & Golf Course, Chris Haspell at Castle Stuart Links and last but not least John Bamforth at Trump

The fourth roadshow was held in the Midlands Region with the final roadshow in the South East. In particular, the Midlands roadshow was an interesting day where it seemed my passion for the Association, and in particular my attempts to encourage members to play a part in its success, may have come across a little strongly. I make no apology for this and the chance to discuss it openly was very productive. I am passionate about the part members play in helping us promote BIGGA, after all, this is the key reason behind the roadshows. We need to shout about the role that BIGGA plays and the value of being a member.

Some members know some of these benefits very well as they’re currently celebrating being selected to work on the Support Teams for the BMW PGA Championship in May or The Open Championship in July.

Their work really is vital – to find out more about this and how the teams were selected turn to page 32. Many congratulations to those who have been selected and to those who haven’t, don’t be too disappointed – come back and try again next year.

Additionally, twenty other mainly young members have won a fantastic opportunity to be part of the Future Turf Managers Initiative made possible by Jacobsen. I am very much looking forward to meeting them all in Ipswich this month and witnessing the fantastic educational and mentoring opportunities on offer.

I was delighted to finally see some dry spring weather at the start of last month although sadly winter soon returned and much of the country has been badly affected by snow and strong winds. I know of one club in the South East who abandoned a tournament because the balls were being blown off the tees! Hopefully the weather will relent so we can get out and do some cutting on the courses, which is something we’re hoping to focus on at Teenside.

Over two hundred delegates were in attendance at the Scottish Regional Conference.

Contact details
Tony Smith
Chairman
Chairman’s Word
National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month
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Tony Smith
tony.smith48@ntlworld.com

Scottish Regional Conference in Dunfermline
NEWSDESK
The latest news from around the globe

FUTURE TURF MANAGERS - DELEGATES ANNOUNCED

The successful applicants for the inaugural Jacobsen Future Turf Managers’ Initiative have been announced by BIGGA.

Twenty greenkeepers from across the UK are now looking forward to an intensive two days of seminars and workshops covering a range of subjects designed to equip them for success in their future careers. These include in-depth courses on communications, budgeting, organisational politics, CV writing and interview techniques plus breakout sessions looking at other key subjects.

BIGGA and Jacobsen faced a tough decision selecting 20 names from all the candidates who completed an application form designed to find out more about applicants who completed an application and workshops.

To sponsor.

BIGGA’s Assistants Development Executive (Technical) Stuart Green added: “There has been an excellent response to the initiative, with 45 applications received. This makes the process of selection all the more difficult as we felt that all the applicants would have benefited. However, this is not the end of the journey for the successful applicants but the beginning of the next phase in their future turf manager careers.”

Many thanks to all who applied, and look out for coverage of the event in next month’s Greenkeeper International. For the full list of successful candidates please turn to page 14.

NEIL BAKER APPOINTED COURSE MANAGER AT LITTLE ASTON

Neil Baker has been appointed the new Course Manager at Little Aston Golf Club in Staffordshire.

He has been Course Manager at Tandridge Golf Club in Surrey for the last seven years and takes up his new post after working to bring Tandridge back to its original Harry Colt design roots.

He said: “My new position offers a career goal, and my main aim now is to help the club further enhance its very special golfing environment.

With its history and private members’ status, the course has been neglected so there is a lot to do, mainly presentation wise, and the par three course has been neglected so that needs an overhaul. I am determined to really make an impression here.”

BIGGA wishes David all the best in his new role.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES AT WOODSIDE

David Jones has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Woodside Golf Club in Clydeside – after a chance encounter in the Club Shop.

Three handicap David, who previously worked at Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club, turned up at nearby Woodside for a round, and ended up chatting to some of the family who own the course.

He found out they were on the lookout for an Assistant Course Manager so he sent in an application. David takes up the story: “I was keen to make the next step up in my career and make my own mark somewhere. I came up to them and thought I’d send in my CV for the Assistant’s role, but unbelievably to me the Head Greenkeeper had actually left so they interviewed me for that position.

It was really pleasing when they offered me my first Head Greenkeeper role here and it just goes to show how a conversation can lead you.”

The pay and play in Clydeside offers a 5,000 yard par 69 course, as well as a short par three course and driving range, and employs just two other greenkeepers as well as David.

He added: “I’ve been so busy I haven’t had a lunch break all my first week! There’s a lot to do, mainly presentation wise, and the par three course has been neglected so that needs an overhaul. I am determined to really make an impression here.”

BIGGA’s Scottish Regional Administrator John Young reports from a packed Scottish Regional Conference

Was it good planning or good luck? Neither, it was the quality of the speakers that drew a fantastic 210 delegates to the Scottish Conference on 5 March at the Carnage Conference Centre, Dundrennan.

Iain MacLeod, Conference Chair, welcomed delegates by promising an excellent array of speakers and providing details of the format for the day. He then introduced the first speaker, Ronnie Malcolm, who presented ‘The Role of the Modern Head Greenkeeper’, concentrating on the methods of management available to course managers and head greenkeepers to cope with current work pressures.

Grant Frogley from the Roxburgh Hotel and Golf Club then told his story ‘Taking the Next Step’, the journey he has taken over the last 12 months from being in a Deputy’s position to that of Course Manager.

Our final speaker of the morning was Chris Haspell, Head Greenkeeper at Castlet Stuart Golf Links. The audience were enthralled as they listened to the landscape problems experienced during the 2011 Scottish Open and the fantastic effort of the greenkeepers to get the course available for play on the final day - then to hear of the great success that was 2012! After lunch Andy O’Hara, Scottish Regional Chairman, stated his ambition of improving education opportunities for all and to make BIGGA a must join association. He then presented the Harry Diamond Award to the Scottish Student of the Year, Chris Watson.

The afternoon session provided technical presentations for the audience. Firstly Bill Lawlor from the Xact Group hosted a Q&A session on the importance of Health and Safety for greenkeepers. This was followed by Dr Christian Spring from the STRI presenting an excellent seminar on ‘Earthworm Control and Developments in Turfgrass Pesticides’.

Next up was John Bambury, Links Superintendent at Trump International Golf Links in Aberdeenshire. It was a very detailed presentation on the creation of the championship course and his team.

John also provided insight into the workings of the Trump Organisation and how he envisions BIGGA being part of this organisation. One highlight was when John explained the requirement to trim ‘35 acres of rough each fortnight’ – which drew an audible gasp from the audience.

Andy O’Hara closed proceedings by thanking our speakers and indeed the delegates for making the day extremely successful.

A special thanks was extended to Peter Boyd, former RA for Scotland for interrupting his retirement to provide support throughout the day.

Elspeth Couston from Greens Progress said: “I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and I felt that all presentations flowed together very nicely”. Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews Links Trust, added: “I haven’t been to all the conferences over the past five years but I thought this was one of the best I’ve attended.”

“There was a great variety of seminars and presentations - something for everyone”. Looking forward to 2014, an exceptional line-up is already being put together for the conference on Tuesday 4 March with Steve Chappell of Glenaigles booked to provide insight on the run up to the 2014 Ryder Cup. Look forward to seeing you there.

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Neil Baker has been appointed the new Course Manager at Little Aston Golf Club in Staffordshire. He’s been Course Manager at Tandridge Golf Club in Surrey for the last seven years and takes up his new post after working to bring Tandridge back to its original Harry Colt design roots. He said: “My new position fulfils a career goal, and my main aim now is to help the club further enhance a very special golfing environment.” With his horticultural and private field felling experience will be an added bonus. His knowledge of golf course frontage and the needs of the membership will be an asset. A spokesperson for the Club said: “We were very impressed with the professionalism of all the Course Managers we interviewed, however Neil was the clear choice. “We are sure he will lead the greening team so that we continue to have an outstanding golf course enjoyed by members and visitors alike.””

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NEWSDESK

The latest news from around the globe

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SOUTH EAST GOLF DAY

Play unfortunately had to be abandoned due to incessant rain on the Old Course at Walton Heath – but the terrible weather didn’t dampen spirits at the South East Golf Day.

Despite the great efforts and hard work by Alan Brochan and his team to prepare the Old Course, heavy overnight rain followed by more rain during the day forced members and guests of the course. They took refuge from the elements and enjoyed the refreshments kindly provided by Johnny Beck and James Watson of Sherriff Amenity at the 11th hole.

Competitors were able to enjoy the warm hospitality of the Clubhouse before over a hundred sat down to an early meal in the Holderness Dining Room. Chairman Tom Smith introduced BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton who thanked the Club for, as always, making us so welcome on the day before proposing the toast to Walton Heath Golf Club and their guests. This was followed by Captain Michael Vaines who welcomed everyone to the club.

This month’s featured blog is from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club in Kent, which will host the 2013 Amateur Championship and is one of four venues selected for Final Open Qualifying from 2014 to 2018. The blog was started by Assistant Links Superintendent James Bridge shortly after joining the Club last October. It is crammed with information and high quality pictures documenting the greening team’s work including rough management, tee platform renovation, bunker resetting and all manner of winter taking place on the course.

The Club has already seen several clear benefits from writing the blog. James says: “Take the over-spraying for example, we spent a good sum of money hiring an experienced line to do a specific task. Many golfers were asking what we were doing and why we were doing it. They were able to see the blog and get the information they required. We felt later we were able to post a picture of the results and we are confident that a good part of the membership now understand why we do what we do.”

“People are interested in the work we do and are proud of the course. We wanted to do something different to engage both members and non members of the club. We initially started the blog in order to introduce the microinjection method of oak wilt disease. This month’s post is from Tom輩 and could (for the moment) be spared. However, this does not take into account any developing issues with public safety which are currently controlled.”

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BTME TO BE EVEN BIGGER FOR 2014

Following the success of last year’s show BIGGA are gearing up for a huge BTME 2014, as it returns to a four hall exhibition with the world’s major machinery manufacturers preparing to head to Harrogate.

The Harrogate International Centre is sure to be bustling next January with the likes of John Deere, Toro and Ransomes Jacobsen, joining Kubota, RECO and New Holland at BTME 2014.

Many of last year’s happy exhibitors are also returning with many increasing their stand space. After a number of bookings over 85% of stands are already reserved with larger companies determined to showcase their latest products. BIGGA are pleased to welcome a whole host of returning exhibitors including Barness Mowers, Campey Turf Care Systems, Syngenta, Evrissa plus dozens more.

Jim Croston, CEO of BIGGA, said: “We’re delighted that the exhibition will once again feature four halls. This will allow us to both increase the number of exhibitors and attract even more visitors from all corners of the turf management industry.

“I’m particularly encouraged by the number of exhibitors who have already rebooked after last year’s show. Many have also increased their stand space which is a reflection of how they see BTME as the place to meet potential customers and do business.”

Discussing the success of BTME 2013, Croston continued: “This will be BTME’s 25th year and it’s becoming increasingly popular. The feedback we’ve received from exhibitors, buyers and guests has been extremely positive and we anticipate that returning to four halls next year will extend its appeal even further. It’s a very exciting time for everybody involved.

“Europe’s leading turf care exhibition – which next year begins on Tuesday 21 January at the Harrogate International Centre - showcases market leaders from all sectors of the turf industry, including artificial grass, course furniture, drainage, fertilisers and top of the range machines, to name just a few of the highlights.

BTME 2014 will also boast a terrific educational programme, with the extremely popular ‘Turf Managers’ Conference’ again returning to the week when the industry converges on Harrogate. There will also be more workshops and seminars throughout the shows. Continue to learn with a programme with a terrific range of knowledgeable and passionate presenters – keep an eye out for the confirmed speakers over the coming months.

BIGGA is urging anyone looking to reserve a stand to call now to avoid disappointment. There is still limited space remaining and places are being taken quickly. For your opportunity to exhibit at next year’s BTME 2014, contact Jill Rodham or Matt Wignall on 01347 833812 or 01347 833832.

SOUTH EAST GOLF DAY

Play unfortunately had to be abandoned due to incessant rain on the Old Course at Walton Heath – but the terrible weather did not dampen spirits at the South East Golf Day.

Despite the grey skies and hard work by Alan Brenchan and his team to prepare the Old Course, heavy overnight rain followed by more rain during the day forced members and guests of the course. They took refuge from the elements and enjoyed the refreshments kindly provided by Anthony Beck and James Watson of SHERIFF AMENITY at the 11th hole.

Competitors were able to enjoy the warm hospitality of the Clubhouse before over a hundred sat down to an early meal in the Holderness Dining Room. Chairman Tom Smith introduced BIGGA CEO, Jim Croston, who thanked the Club for, as always, making us so welcome on the day before proposing the toast to Walton Heath Golf Club and their guests. This was followed by Captain Michael Vaines who welcomed everyone to the club.

This was followed by a fascinating and humorous story experienced during his time as a member of the European Tour then entertained us with some fascinating and humorous stories experienced during his duties around the world.

The South East Region of BIGGA has organised another golf day for the following companies for their very generous sponsorship and help with this event: Amoeba Amenities Products, Blade Amenity, HSM Golf, CRM, Ernest Doe Power, Evrissa, Golf Mats UK, Grass Roots/Dryjekt UK, Syngenta Ltd, Ruby Taylor, SHERIFF AMENITY and Speedcut Contractors Ltd. Chive Sausage.

BLOGGING WITH ROYAL APPROVAL

This month’s featured blog is from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club in Kent, which will host the 2013 Amateur Championship and is one of four venues selected for Final Open Qualifying from 2014 to 2018. The blog was started by Assistant Links Superintendent, James Bridge shortly after joining the Club last October.

It’s crammed with information and high quality pictures documenting the greenkeeping team’s work including rough management, tee platform renovation, bunker recutting and all manner of winter taking place on course.

The Club has already seen several clear benefits from writing the blog. James says: “Take the overseeding for example, we spent a good sum of money hiring an experienced line to do a specific task. Many golfers were asking what we were doing and why we were doing it. They were able to see the blog and get the information they required. We’ve later we were able to post a picture of the results and we are confident that a good part of the membership now understand why we do what we do.”

Links Superintendent Chris Barnard added: “I think the blog was a great idea from James. It’s a very useful tool for keeping members informed about current projects on the course. It helps to answer many questions before they are even asked.

It also gives us more time out on the course to get through this year’s very busy winter projects.

“Our members are interested in the week we do and are proud of the course. We wanted to document and share with everyone exactly what we’ve been doing throughout the winter ahead of what will be a very busy season. James posted a link on the BIGGA bulletin board to see if anyone else was blogging. There were loads of positive replies and it seems a few courses have started blogs as a result. The Cruiser Bar and Carnoustie blogs are particularly interesting as well as a few others. Some other blogs have inspired us to possibly try adding extras like video footage. Perhaps our blog inspires other courses to start!”

We’re hosting the British Amateur Championship this year and the green staff are doing a lot of work ahead of it. 2013 will be a very exciting time for everyone at Royal Cinque Ports.”

Contact Steve Castle at steve.castle@bigga.co.uk if you think your blog deserves to be featured in GI.

ROGUE TRADERS CASH IN ON CHALARA CONFUSION

Reports from South East England suggest unscrupulous operators manoeuvring as professional arbiters and tree surgeons are scaring landowners into felling perfectly safe and healthy common ash trees. They are preying on already considerable fears generated by the national media storm over chalara ash dieback at the end of last year.

kent Trading Standards is the latest to warn on this development.

The national media storm appears to have abated for now, but some landowners with ash trees on their properties clearly do not require much persuasion to err on the side of caution as they see it.

Current information from DEPRA says no one will be forced to destroy ash trees unless they are young trees which are part of a recently planted site dedicated to chalara ash dieback disease. In these situations the Forestry Commission or another branch of the UK plant health authority will issue a Plant Health Notice. This effectively means that all mature ash trees could (for the moment) be spared. However, this does not take into account any developing issues with public safety which tree owners (or foresters) on trees with closely related symptoms) are clearly responsible for.

Such a threat to perfectly healthy fully grown ash trees from ‘cowboy’ operators shows the urgent need for PC and FERA to introduce the microinjection of systemic fungicide as a means of ash tree protection, so at least landowners have the option of protecting trees rather than pre-emptively felling them.

Finding a solution should not prove too difficult. North Americans have to deal with a potentially lethal disease of oak trees called oak wilt caused by a close relative of Chalara fraxinea (chalara ash dieback). Oak wilt is caused by a fungus called Chalara quercina. Oak trees in North America have been successfully protected (and in some cases cured) of oak wilt by injection of the systemic fungicide propiconazole, a member of the azole (sub group triazole) fungicides, and by mode of action described as a Recent Plant Disease (preventing biosynthesis) Inhibitor (DMI).

The fungicide is injected into the tree trunk by operators working at ground level and is subsequently transported to all aerial parts of the tree in the xylem (water conducting tissue).

There are other different triazole fungicides including tebuconazole which are used in a similar way to protect against and control oak wilt disease.

Dr Terry Mabbett
RJ National’s three-hole golf course, located at their European headquarters on the outskirts of Ipswich, has been re-certified by the Golf Environment Organization (GEO).

With this latest accolade, the RJ National becomes the first golf course in the UK to be awarded GEO Certified™ status for excellence in environmental performance for a second time.

Following his recent assessment visit, Keith Duff, an independent verifier accredited by GEO said:

“The creation of this small golf course, built and managed to good sustainability standards, has hugely improved the environmental quality of the area. What was once covered in cement and scrub, as part of an industrial park, is now an ecological asset.

“Good areas of semi-natural habitat have been created and are developing well, and there are plans for further biodiversity initiatives. Record keeping is exemplary, regulatory compliance is unblemished, and there are very high quality innovative communications, including newsletters and video blogs, to show others how the work is being done and what the benefits are.

“The quality of the playing surfaces is also very high, demonstrating well how playing quality and sustainable management can go hand in hand. I have no hesitation in recommending that this course should be re-certified.”

The unique three-hole golf course was the brainchild of David Withers, then managing director at Ransomes Jacobsen and now president of parent company, Jacobsen.

“With the support of some of our industry partners, our parent company Textron, and a tremendous team effort by everyone at Ipswich - spearheaded by Matt Le Brun, our former greenkeeper, the RJ National has been a great success on many levels,” he said. “The course is a great asset for testing machinery, showcasing the products we manufacture and is a facility to demonstrate our environmental leadership to distributors and customers. Hopefully our example serves as an inspiration - showing that creating and maintaining a sustainable golf course can be good for golf and good for business.”

GEO’s Chief executive Jonathan Smith concluded by saying:

“We are delighted that the RJ National has been re-certified, representing as it does, sustainability throughout their golf environment through a continued commitment to protect and enhance nature, while using resources efficiently and carefully.

“The reduction of waste and other pollutants benefits the surrounding community. Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all ecolabelling, affirming the important ‘continued improvement’ principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey, rather than a static level to achieve. We are delighted to note all the new activities undertaken in the last three years.

“This also demonstrates that GEO Certified™ can celebrate the achievements of all types of courses, from RJ National’s innovative short course to high-profile, internationally recognised facilities.”

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

Thanks to everyone who took the time to take the Greenkeeper International survey which was emailed to members. It’s vital that the magazine continues to evolve and improve to be another real benefit of BIGGA membership, and the survey has thrown up a range of suggestions, ideas and opinions.

We’re still going through your feedback and you will start to notice some changes resulting from this in future editions. There was also some particularly useful constructive criticism and observations which we’ve taken on board.

To take the survey, follow the link from our news pages or visit the education and training forum on the bulletin boards.

It will only take five minutes of your time, and we’ll publish some of the results in next month’s issue.

THE SOLUTION

Mogeton is a treatment for the targeted control of moss on golf course tees and greens.

Efficacy has been backed up by independent trial results conducted by STRI.
RJ NATIONAL THREE-HOLE COURSE BREAKS NEW GROUND

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It will only take five minutes of your time, and we’ll publish some of the results in next month’s issue.
I was recently bought a cushion with the words “Good Day Sunshine” written on it. This prompted me to look at the lyrics of The Beatles song of the same name where I found the words “I need to laugh, and when the sun is out, I’ve got something I can laugh about”.

Let’s hope the sun comes out soon and we can all start having a good laugh instead of looking outside and seeing persistent rain!

Future Turf Managers’ Initiative

By the time you read this article, the inaugural Future Turf Managers’ event will have taken place at the Ransomes Jacobsen headquarters in Ipswich. Jacobsen recognise the importance of preparing the younger generation of greenkeepers to take on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The FTMI has been designed to provide practical and professional development conference.

The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following a two-day event the candidates to pursue their career in turfgrass management qualification. Funding is available for those members who are undertaking a higher education qualification. Visit the website for further details: www.bigga.org.uk/education/funding-opportunities/

JACGEN

BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

The latest member to receive a scholarship is Ben Burhill for his Golf Course Turfgrass Management qualification. During the two-day event the candidates will concentrate on topics including communication, budgeting, organisational politics, CV writing and interview techniques as well as taking part in discussion group on subjects such as team management and alternative career paths. Supporting the candidates are five mentors who will work with the groups during the event and will continue to support them throughout the year.

The mentors are:

Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper, Gleneagles
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Jacobsen recognise the importance of preparing the younger generation of greenkeepers to take on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The FTMI has been designed to provide practical and theoretical learning experiences for greenkeepers who are undertaking a higher education qualification.

Applicants are free to discuss their career aspirations through this professional development conference.

The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. The group of 20 assistants and deputies were selected following application for Places on the role of Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager.

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Funding is available for those candidates who are undertaking a higher education qualification. Visit the website for further details: www.bigga.org.uk/education/learning-opportunities/
PESTICIDE APPLICATION UPDATE

We have all been waiting with bated breath for a National Action Plan – a document that each Member State of the EU has to produce to show how the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) would be implemented in their own country.

When all is said and done, the outcome for the Pesticide Application is disappointing. Due to the current economic climate, the Government was unwilling to ‘Gold Plate’ EU legislation.

We are now left with a diluted SUD where although training, education and storage are still given prominence, great leaps forward have not been made.

When it comes to accurate Pesticide Application, ALL operators must have gone through PA training to the required standard and should always be able to demonstrate good knowledge of calibration and understand the product they are using.

Too often, tired specifications are trotted out, only re-dated, and showing little understanding of what is happening in the weed control world. It is now awash with new formulations – Dichlobenil used to give medium longevity control of weeds at 150 kgs per ha. Now, the same level of control can be achieved using a thousandth of this amount – Flazasulfuron at 150 grammes per ha!

We are entering a new era for Pesticide Application, and we must all be armed appropriately to deal with the demands ahead. This will mean investing in people, equipment and associated training, which although expensive, ensures the job is carried out to the highest standard possible.

TADMARTON HEATH INVESTS IN ‘THE BEST’ TO GROW MEMBERSHIP

North Oxfordshire hidden gem Tadmarton Heath Golf Club has signed a new five-year agreement with Toro. This traditional private members club is investing in the new machinery as part of a ten-year course improvement plan to retain and grow membership levels.

Course manager Brian Owen – who recently celebrated 20 years of working at the club – is delighted with the arrival of the new fleet, which includes a Greensmaster TriFlex greensmower:

"The new machines will help keep us moving forwards – we want to achieve a lot more for this club."

TOP TIPS FOR GREAT GREENS

British Sugar TOPSOIL, the UK’s leading supplier of quality topsoil has teamed up with golf course expert Peter Jones to launch a new course management guide for the industry.

The eight-page technical guide called ‘The essential guide for the golf course industry’ is aimed at greenkeepers and course managers. It provides useful information and practical advice on using topsoil to improve course quality and performance, along with top tips on golf course management from industry expert Peter Jones.

British Sugar TOPSOIL is a fertile, consistent and traceable topsoil which is derived from prime arable soils to offer greenkeepers a sustainable topsoil solution. Possessing good nutrient and moisture retention properties British Sugar TOPSOIL is perfect for bunker construction projects and non-irrigated areas of a course.

The new guide is available to download from the TOPSOIL website: www.batopsoil.co.uk or by telephoning 0870 2402314.
PESTICIDE APPLICATION UPDATE

We have all been waiting with bated breath for a National Action Plan – a document that each Member State of the EU has to produce to show how the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) would be implemented in their own country.

When all is said and done, the outcome for the Pesticide Application is disappointing. Due to the current economic climate, the Government was unwilling to ‘Gold Plate’ EU legislation.

We are now left with a diluted SUD where although training, education and storage are still given prominence, great leaps forward have not been made.

When it comes to accurate Pesticide Application, ALL operators must have gone through PA training to the required standard and should always be able to demonstrate good knowledge of calibration and understand the product they are using.

Too often, tired specifications are trotted out, only re-dated, and showing little understanding of what is happening in the weed control world. It is now awash with new formulations – Dichlobenil used to give medium longevity control of weeds at 150 kgs per ha. Now, the same level of control can be achieved using a thousandth of this amount - Flazasulfuron at 150 grammes per ha!

We are entering a new era for Pesticide Application, and we must all be armed appropriately to deal with the demands ahead. This will mean investing in people, equipment and associated training, which although expensive, ensures the job is carried out to the highest standard possible.

TADMARTON HEATH INVESTS IN ‘THE BEST’ TO GROW MEMBERSHIP

North Oxfordshire hidden gem Tadmarton Heath Golf Club has signed a new five-year agreement with Toro. This traditional private members club is investing in the new machinery as part of a ten-year course improvement plan to retain and grow membership levels.

Course manager Brian Owen – who recently celebrated 20 years of working at the club – is delighted with the arrival of the new fleet, which includes a Greensmaster TriFlex greensmower.

"The new machines will help keep us moving forwards – we want to achieve a lot more for this club."

TOP TIPS FOR GREAT GREENS

British Sugar TOPSOIL, the UK’s leading supplier of quality topsoil has teamed up with golf course expert Peter Jones to launch a new course management guide for the industry.

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The latest products on the market reviewed

A new online Nozzle Selector will enable turf managers and sprayer operators to select the best combination of spray nozzle and water volume to optimise turf applications this season.

The simple tool, available at www.greencast.co.uk, enables operators to quickly select the intended spray target and the type of treatment or product being applied, to instantly see the appropriate XC Nozzle and water volume to use.

The Nozzle Selector covers the range of fungicides, herbicides and growth regulators, along with associated liquid fertiliser tank-mix combinations that can be included to improve turf health and vigour to counter disease risks.

Syngenta Turf Technical Manager, Dr Rimond Watson, highlighted the new XC Nozzles can allow operators to apply at lower water volumes than previously used. This can enable greater sprayer output for more timely application, reduce wear carried on greens and, most importantly, increase product retention on the leaf and, most importantly, increase weight carried on greens for more timely application, enable greater sprayer output previously used. This can allow operators to apply

The new XC Nozzle Technology has been engineered to deliver more consistent coverage across the spray boom when spraying slopes on golf courses, to counter the risk of drift to enable more spraying opportunities and incorporating exclusive design features to enhance all-round coverage of the turf leaf, to get the best possible results from every application.

Further tips provided in Dr Watson’s presentation and practical demonstration included sprayer calibration and nozzle height setting - along with advice on calculating the area of greens and fine-tuning sprayer filling to achieve more precise and accurate application across the course. All the techniques and advice offered by Dr Watson is available from the GreenCast website Application Zone. Thanks to Course Manager and Master Greenkeeper, Mike Rush, and the Ste Millen greenkeeping team for hosting the event and assisting with the sprayer demonstration.

AERATION BRINGS RUTLAND’S GREENS UP TO SPEED

Bitting alongside one of the largest man-made lakes in Europe, Rutland Water Golf Club offers the golfer 18 holes on the championship Normanton Course and nine par three holes on the Plantation course. The club did have standing water issues on greens, but following the acquisition of a Sisis Javelin Aer-Aid 1500, Head Greenkeeper, Dan Wen reports a dramatic improvement.

The tractor mounted Javelin Aer-Aid 1500 not only aerates with advice on calculating the

Dramatic improvements have been made to the fairways at Bunghil Valley Golf Club in Herefordshire last year using Multigreen, Elevate FE and Clipless from Headland Amenity.

Head Greenkeeper Steve Lloyd comments: “The course is on fertile, heavy clay which drains well and the greens were built from a local soil and sand mix. However, 20 years of top dressing and soil exchange using hollow tines have built up a good growing medium which gives an improved root structure for the turf. We have also reconstructed bunkers and tees over the years to make for more challenging play.”

Most recently the fairways came under the spotlight. The renovation programme began with hollow lining and deep aeration on the fairways before they were scarified in April.

“We then applied Multigreen temperature controlled release fertiliser, with Clipless growth regulator and Elevate FE. This completed liquid iron in a tank mix;” he adds. “Clipless helps control excess growth while the iron in Elevate FE prevents any yellowing on the edges of leaves and helps carry it into the plant. The results have been an impressive thickening up of growth on the fairways which has filled in the divots so that they look like a carpet.”

Steve comments that the combination of Multigreen, Clipless and Elevate FE is a highly cost-effective solution, which gives the fairways a rich green colour rather than the light green of a growth flush.

Tricure AD is another useful product, he comments: “We don’t have many high spots on the greens, but using Tricure AD ensures that there are no dry patches. It is used in combination with Turfcomplex biostimulant to keep the turf healthy, which is essential as our greens are relatively small and get a lot of use. These are fantastic products and we get great results.”

For demanding daily use, Kubota offers a powerful and versatile choice.

The Kubota range of groundcare machinery delivers outstanding performance, simple operation and legendary reliability.

From powerful and versatile tractors to high performance mowers, find out why Kubota is the practical choice for professionals.

Contact your local dealer to book a test drive today.

For further information or to find your local dealer: www.kubota.co.uk Tel. 01844 265 000
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Greenkeepers, sprayer operators and students in the south west of England had the chance to see the new Syngenta XC Nozzles in action and pick up some of the latest tips and information on spray application technology at the BIGGA Devon & Cornwall Spring Seminar, held at St Mellion Golf Club.

Dr Watson detailed how the new XC Nozzle Technology has been engineered to deliver more consistent coverage across the spray boom when spraying slopes on golf courses, to counter the risk of drift to enable more spraying opportunities and incorporating exclusive design features to enhance all-round coverage of the turf leaf, to get the best possible results from every application.

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NEW PRODUCTS
The latest products on the market reviewed

APPLICATION ADVICE AT BIGGA SEMINAR

FANTASTIC FAIRWAYS AT BURGHIll VALLEY WITH HEADLAND AMENITY

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Head Greenkeeper Steve Lloyd comments: “The course is on fertile, heavy clay which drains well and the greens were built from a local soil and sand mix. However, 20 years of top dressing and soil exchange using hollow tines have built up a good growing medium which gives an improved root structure for the turf. We have also reconstructed bunkers and tees over the years to make for more challenging play.”

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The tractor mounted Javelin Aer-Aid 1500 not only aerates with a vertical action, but also injects air into the root zone at a fast working rate, creating thousands of fissures.

Dan says: “Certain greens were holding moisture and it seemed that whatever action we took the problem persisted. The greens concerned were those where the thatch layer was thicker. We did our equipment research and our local dealer recommended the Sisis-Javelin Aer-Aid 1500. I was aware of the beneficial effects of injecting air into greens and the improvement in the quality of our greens was achieved very quickly. The moisture retention problem has disappeared and the greens are consistent, firm and dry.”
Four seasons in one day

There’s no getting away from it – the West of Scotland is beautiful, but extremely wet. How do the team at The Carrick on Loch Lomond, lead by Jim Brown and Paul McClearn, cater for thousands of corporate clients while battling two metres of rain annually?

Greenkeeper Profile

Name: Jim Brown
Position: Course Manager
Born: Keighley, 1 January 1965
Handicap: 18
Hobbies: Cycling
Favourite Sports Team: Keighley Cougars Rugby League

Name: Paul McClearn
Position: Head Greenkeeper
Born: Galway, 28 September 1974
Handicap: 13
Hobbies: Spending time with two sons, cycling
Favourite Sports Team: Ireland Six Nations Team
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As I drove towards The Carrick in glorious winter sunshine, little did I know I would soon experience the classic four seasons in one day – which is far from unusual in the West of Scotland.

The rainfall figures could be described as intimidating with last year’s 1890mm proving a relative respite after 2200mm in 2011. So it’s no surprise that the team at The Carrick (named after Doug Carrick, the Canadian architect who designed the course) are constantly challenged by drainage issues.

Jim Brown kick started a programme of improvements at The Carrick through his role as Group Golf Courses Manager for De Vere Hotels, before becoming Golf Course Manager at the heathland course. The first nine holes are played on open Lowlands while the second nine head into the Highlands close to the famous Loch before returning to the clubhouse.

Jim’s regular meetings with Head Greenkeeper Paul McElarn identified various serious issues on the course – namely drainage and turf quality on the greens, regularly flooded fairways and collapsing bunkers. As we toured the course, we are in turns basking in glorious sunshine then hit with wind and rain – which seems to sum up the local climate perfectly.

Yorkshireman Jim says: “Obviously we can’t control the rainfall but we can control how the golf course reacts and recovers to that rainfall. I began by inviting De Vere Hotels’ CEO (and avid golfer) here to show him the problem areas, and convince him that we needed investment. It was pouring down at the time which was perfect to illustrate the issues! We needed various pieces of machinery such as a sand bander, a large enough tractor to power that sand bander and a big enough top dresser to start to top dress the fairways to improve the soil properties.

“We also needed significant annual investment to purchase sand – we applied 220 tons to the greens last year and we were looking to secure another 800 tons to apply to problem fairways and approaches. If he agreed it meant we’d have to apply contrac-

wet layer were “basically drowning”. “A number of the greens were down to 60% grass coverage with algae forming on the surfaces. Historically Potassium nitrate would be applied as a form of nutrition but within a week after application the turf would be withering again. We had a heated old golf course with up to two inches of thatch on the greens – this led the greens to flood and ultimately turf saturation. With a change in nutrition and an improved aeration programme including winter applications of Evetria K-Step, we would try to build up a reservoir of nutrients in the high sand profile rootzone – this would help deliver good soil supplements when the turf required – even during the winter months. “If our success or otherwise would be measured by the quality of the greens throughout and after winter. As we enter spring it is widely accepted that turf quality on the greens, historically, have never been better with a good turf density and disease free – all without an application of fungicide, using good old-fashioned aeration.”

Paul admits that the greens were also his biggest headache. He said: “Over the last few years we’ve used large amounts of fertilisers on the greens, which is not what we want to do. Every spring we’d be battling to get the grass growing to get good coverage and ultimately recovery.”

They also managed to convince the club that a regular aeration programme needed to be put in place. Previous reluctance was down to the sheer number of golfers playing and an unwillingness to disappoint club management not only under stand the challenges we face, but also encourage us to continue the good work.”

The team now alternate 5mm and 8mm solid tining every month.

During July and November last year they hollow tined with 12mm hollow tines, the latter had to follow up with top dressing, allowing the persistent rainfall to pass through and drain away, as Jim says “aiming for a hydraulic conductivity of fresh air”.

They then introduced the Graden Sand Injector to physically remove thatch and inject sand, working on two greens at a time during the latter end of the growing season. This work is always communicated
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“...The first nine holes are played on open Lowlands while the second nine head into the Highlands close to the famous Loch...
to visitors and members alike through newsletters and golf sales campaigns.

Paul adds: “We’ve gone back to a very trusted, and dare I say old-fashioned form of greenkeeping. It’s now spring and the worst green has 95% grass coverage. The greens are draining and there’s good sward quality so we won’t have to throw them out on the course come bad, rain or shine.”

Even before Jim became Course Manager in February last year, Paul and his team began a major programme of improvements with drainage on the fairways. The sand banding within the fairways was a bid to get the water off the surfaces and create a positive interface with the drainage below.

Paul said: “When the 1800mm we had last year is classed as a dry year you can see why we had problems! Because it’s so wet, the organic matter in the top part of the fairway turf became quite thick and didn’t take the water, so we invested in a contractor to cut out 50mm channels of soil, take the soil away then back fill it with sand so we were creating 12 inch deep sand channels to interface with the drainage below.”

“We’ve bought our own chain trencher which involves a similar process to the sand banding. The rain comes, we know where the worst affected areas are on the course, it goes down the gravel drain, into the existing subsurface drainage then into soakaways. It then goes through a natural filtration system before flowing into the Loch.”

The next challenge was embarking on a huge renovation project concentrating on the course’s 122 bunkers. They were degrading and collapsing due to the amount of rainfall – and were poorly presented with the sand becoming contaminated. So they redesigned and returfed the existing revetted bunkers inhouse. Now they only require normal upkeep such as edging and replenishment leaving the greenkeeping team free to largely concentrate on other tasks.

The team also received feedback about a lack of definition to the semi-rough, so increased nutrition and fertiliser in these areas. They’ve constructed a brand new elevated tee at the stunning signature 14th hole which plunges towards the Loch. The next stages include installing further preventative drainage in the rough to complement the other drainage investment.

Jim adds: “We know how the golf course reacts to heavy rainfall and we’re delivering high quality green surfaces 365 days a year because ultimately that’s what the golfers care about. I’m not saying everything will be fixed in one go, it’s going to be a slow process, but these small successes all add up and fill us with enthusiasm for this season and the years ahead.

“Feedback from members, visitors and regular corporate golfing parties is that they’ve seen a significant improvement in turf quality, particularly on the greens, and they’re also pleased with the consistency of presentation throughout the year.

“The greens simply do not flood anymore, which is a huge success. Our focus now is the World Corporate Golf Final on 7 May. Some have suggested that taking on a four day high profile international golf tournament, at this time of the year, in this part of the world is a risk, but the greens are strong, the course is responding very well and we’re very much up for that challenge.”

For an excellent range of high quality fertilisers and seeds designed to meet the specific needs of the amenity industry, simply buy direct from the specialists at www.bshamenity.com...
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“On an advocate of simple greenkeeping practices but you have to adapt on the day to temperature and rainfall, manage it on the hoof. Many of our customers travel great distances to hold a corporate day here, so we have to do our best to get them out on the course come hail, rain or shine.”

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The 36 hole club at Royal Ashdown Forest dates back to 1888 when the Old Course was laid out by golfing enthusiasts on undulating land within the confines of the forest, a former medieval hunting area in south east England.

The ‘Royal’ title was given to the club five years later following a visit by the Duke of Cambridge who was a cousin of Queen Victoria.

Royal Ashdown is unique in many ways. There are no sand bunkers, it is registered as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the land is leased by East Sussex County Council.

Also, it’s governed by an independent body of Conservators to ensure that all land that falls within the confines of the forest is maintained within this natural environment.

As well as two adjoining clubhouses, a small pavilion exists for the benefit of the Artisan section, who in return for reduced annual membership fees and limited golf carry out fairway divoting work throughout much of the year.

But perhaps one of the most amazing aspects of the club is that the courses have been maintained by three generations of ‘Mitchells’ dating back to just after the end of WW2.

Chris was born and brought up on site, therefore greenkeeping and the love of the natural environment was a way of life since childhood, with an abundance of turfgrass knowledge passed down the generations.

Walking the course with him, it is clear he possesses tremendous knowledge of the flora and fauna throughout the site and how each forms part of the ecosystem within the 9.5 sq miles of forest, 60% of which is classified as open heath.

Chris was also one of the first greenkeepers in England to gain City and Guilds during the late 1970s which furthered his knowledge in turfgrass management.

Laurence Pithie travelled to the heart of Sussex to find out more from Course Manager Chris Mitchell about his working methods in managing Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club.
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Course management in a natural environment

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Course Characteristics

The Old Course has regularly played host to a variety of national amateur tournaments as well as being used as a Regional Open Qualifier. Despite the absence of bunkers, great use has been made of the numerous water courses that traverse the site plus the ridges, mounds and slopes, many of which are covered in heather. With the highest points of the course at over 600 feet, there are several vantage points offering magnificent views in all directions. The main trees within the forest are Oak and Birch, with Alder in the wetter valleys and also Scots Pines that were planted in the early 19th century. In possible grasses comprising Bent and Fescue mix freely with other native grasses such as Molinia or Purple Moor Grass, Field Woodrush, Ling and Bell Heather and Dwarf Gorse, with Bracken present in the more peripheral areas. The acidic nature of the soil contains varying mixes of silt, sand and clay throughout both courses and in general, drainage is fairly good. A smaller number of old clay drain tiles which were mostly installed in the 1960s still perform very well. The Old Course is by far the longer at just over 6500 yards whereas the shorter West Course is a tough challenge and requires a premium on accuracy from tee to green.

Fundamental Requirements

The management of the course falls under the auspices of the Conservators who have responsibility to maintain the majority of the area as open heath, because as a National Park it is open to the public. Chris has formed a good working relationship with them, largely working for a common goal and supported by the club who are in the process of drawing up a Course Policy Document, adding to their existing Environmental Plan.

So what does this mean in terms of turfgrass management and any restrictions placed upon the club? Chris explains: “In basic terms, no buildings or structures can be erected on the site, other than those which currently exist.

“Even the maintenance building that is on the tree line had to be built into the adjoining clubhouse and it’s barely large enough to accommodate the size of necessary equipment. Fortunately it is centrally located to both courses although the site extends over a large area. Water is provided to both greens and tees with new polyethylene pipe and cable being fitted to all main areas, replacing the 30 year old system. To ensure future water availability, an off-site reservoir was built last year which can store almost two million gallons of water. For many, this may seem insufficient, but I have rarely used more than one million gallons per course in any given year, such is the resilience of the turf. Water can also be pumped from various areas on the course which makes us virtually self-sufficient in terms of this valuable commodity.

“Turf maintenance is just one aspect of site management, since much work involves preventing tree and scrub encroachment, thereby increasing the amount of open ‘heather-clad’ heath. A key requirement for managing any site is resources, namely manpower and equipment. The formation comprises eight full time staff including myself, although some help is provided by the agricultural for divoting filling. Each member of staff needs to multi-task and this means being suitably trained and qualified; something which I believe is essential for this club to succeed. Also, without good and reliable equipment, the job would be impossible and we employ a qualified mechanic with a suitably equipped workshop, complete with Jupiter grinder. It means we have the right tools, when required, along with trained staff able to use them in a safe and efficient manner.”

Work Plan

Chris continues: “This is split into two distinct areas – fine golfing turf and the environment since both must be in harmony with each other. Members and guests need to understand that we act as custodians – the objective being to provide good, year round playing surfaces while preserving the natural environment in the most sustainable way possible. A balance and understanding is required by all who are involved with the management of the courses. This is what makes our club unique.”

Heather Regeneration

Chris continues: “The basic objective for the ‘Old’ is to maintain as much of the course as possible as heathland. This includes removing scrub vegetation such as bracken and birch saplings and to fell those trees which are regarded as being unimportant to the forest or the golf course.”

Bearing in mind that heather does not grow in the shade, the growth of trees needs to be controlled but in a manner that meets the requirements of both the club and Conservators. Heather regeneration is a key part of this agreed policy and after much discussion and trials they now use the following procedures...

- Cut and collect heather ‘brashings’ during December to early March from an area of the site previously agreed. A Ryetec flail and collecting use is used for this purpose set at 6ins.
- Prepare the ‘new’ designated area by clearing all vegetation down to a depth of anywhere between 3 to 5 ins. This includes any tree stumps removal.
- Once cleared and marked as safe, the grass is ‘scratched-up’ and the ‘brashings’ are spread over the area and left to nature. Rolling is optional.

- It can take up to 5 years to be successful, requiring adequate sunlight and protection from any traffic. Patience and communication are essential. There is always a quantity of dormant seed lying within the top few inches and this too can regenerate when the above vegetation is scoured clean.

Summary

Royal Ashdown is a unique golf club and frequently listed within the top 100 courses in the UK. It is maintained in a manner that befits this environment which is largely down to Chris and his passion to preserve the courses for future generations. With a lower than average labour input and minimal use of fertiliser, water and pesticides, it is clearly a course that is environmentally sustainable and economically viable, while offering firm and consistent playing surfaces for both members and guests.

As Chris concludes: “Without the support and understanding from the club and in particular the Club Secretary and Chairman of Green, the members, staff and the Conservators, the successful transition of the course from consisting of overgrown woodland to more open heath would not have been possible. There remains so much more to be achieved and it is encouraging to receive the support of those around us.”

Below: 10th hole is older on open heathland following previous scrub clearance

About the author

Laurence Pithie MG

Laurence Pithie MG was also invited to produce an article for this issue. He is a 17 years managing director of the golf course club, an RGC member and a Club Secretary. He has his own training and consultancy business in the area.

Laurence is grateful to Chris and Laurence for their time and help in producing this article.
Course Characteristics

The Old Course has regularly played host to a variety of national amateur tournaments as well as being used as a Regional Open Qualifier. Despite the absence of bunkers, great use has been made of the numerous water courses that traverse the site plus the rides, mounds and slopes, many of which are covered in heather. With the highest points of the course at over 600 feet, there are several vantage points offering magnificent views in all directions. The main trees within the forest are Oak and Birch, with Alder in the wetter valleys and also Scots Pines that were planted in the early 19th century. In possible grasses comprising Bent and Fescue mix freely with other native grasses such as Molinia or Purple Moor Grass. Field Woodrush, Ling and Bell Heather and Dwarf Gorse, with Bracken present in the more peripheral areas. The acidic nature of the soil contains varying mixes of silt, sand and clay throughout. A number of old clay drain tiles which were mostly installed in the 1960s still perform very well. The Old Course is by far the larger at just over 6500 yards whereas the shorter West Course is a tough challenge and requires a premium on accuracy from tee to green.

Fundamental Requirements

The management of the course falls under the auspices of the Conservators who have responsibility to maintain the majority of the area as open heath, because as a National Park it is open to the public. Chris has formed a good working relationship with them, largely working for a common goal and supported by the club who are in the process of drawing up a Course Policy Document, adding to their existing Environmental Plan.

So what does this mean in terms of turfgrass management and any restrictions placed upon the club? Chris explains: “In basic terms, no buildings or structures can be erected on the site, other than those which currently exist.

“Even the maintenance building and workshop on two levels had to be built into the adjoining clubhouse and it’s barely large enough to accommodate the range of necessary equipment. Fortunately it is centrally located to both courses although the site extends over a large area. Water is provided to both greens and tees with new polyethylene pipe and cable being fitted to all main areas, replacing a 30-year-old system. To ensure future water availability, an off-site reservoir was built last year which can store almost two million gallons of water. For many, this may seem insufficient, but I have rarely used more than one million gallons per course in any given year, such is the resilience of the turf. Water can also be pumped from various areas on the course which makes us virtually self-sufficient in terms of this valuable commodity.

“Turf maintenance is just one aspect of site management, since much work involves preventing tree and scrub encroachment thereby increasing the amount of open ‘heather-clad’ heath. A key requirement for managing any site is resources; namely manpower and equipment. The former comprises eight full-time staff including myself, although some help is provided by the artisans for divot filling. Each member of staff needs to multi-task and this means being suitably trained and qualified; something which I believe is essential for this club to succeed. Also, without good and reliable equipment, the job would be impossible and we employ a qualified mechanic with a suitably equipped workshop, complete with Jupiter grinder. It means we have the right tools, when required, along with trained staff able to use them in a safe and efficient manner.”

Work Plan

Chris continues: “This is split into two distinct areas - fine golfing turf and the environment since both must be in harmony with each other. Members and guests need to understand that we act as custodians – the objective being to provide good, year round playing surfaces while preserving the natural character of the course as sustainably as possible. A balance and understanding is required by all who are involved with the management of the courses. This is what makes our club unique.”

Heather Regeneration

Chris continues: “the basic objective for the Old is to maintain as much of the course as possible as heathland. This includes removing scrub vegetation such as bracken and birch saplings and to fell those trees which are regarded as being unimportant to the forest or the golf course.”

Bearing in mind that heather does not grow in the shade, the growth of trees needs to be controlled but in a manner that meets the requirements of both the club and Conservators.

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Maintenance

In brief, the main playing areas are maintained as follows: see table more to the Old Course.

Greens:

- Bent/Poa surfaces in varying amounts: indigenous native sods or drainage.
- OM content minimal, root depth good, OM and striped green shaded greens
- HOC Summer 4mm topdressing. Water stress – 50 tons per annum, 40 tons on West course.
- Fertiliser input: Max. 40kgs N per ha. Primo Maxx monthly Winer input minimum. Only when required, staying on the dry side.
- Fungicides: Spot treatment when required, staying on the dry side.

Tees:

- Bent/Fescue/Poa surface, depending on shade and size of area generally 10mm HOC 10mm all year.
- Fertiliser input: 60kgs N per ha. Topdressings per year with 11-5-5.
- Over-said twice per year with standard non-rye mix.

Fairways:

- Fairways dominated with varying amounts of Bent, Poa and fescues. HOC 14mm all year.
- No fertiliser or chemicals applied, just deep-living.

Semi-roughs

- Mostly ‘heather’ grasses, depending on the degree of wear and level of maintenance.
- No fertilisers or chemicals applied unless required.

Fertiliser input: 65kgs N per ha. Topdressings per year with 11-5-5.

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“Basic objective for the Old course is to maintain as much of it as possible as heathland”
I felt very nervous as I sat on the plane about to fly out to the States. On arrival I found myself waiting at a very cold bus stop, when a large pick-up truck pulled out of the hotel car park and the driver leaned out and offered me a lift - a big thank you to Mike Prescott from turf contractor Sportscape for that.

At first it felt strange to be back in a classroom, taking notes and revising for tests at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMASS). The college day consisted of two-hour lessons from 8am-5pm with subjects including Entomology, Pathology, Turf Management and Soil Science. I enjoyed listening to some very interesting guest speakers such as Bill Spence, Superintendent at the Boston Country Club which held the 1999 Ryder Cup.

I expected the American way of doing things would be totally different to ours, and in ways they are, maybe less environmentally friendly, but the biggest hurdle was learning the different grass names for the cool seasons grasses. The lessons were very informative covering topics new to me. Networking with the other students on the course was priceless – I discussed the different techniques they use as well as how their courses are run.

As a part of my prize I was lucky enough to attend the GCMA golf show in San Diego, I would be travelling there with Dave Canterbury - the Australian Toro winner. Unfortunately our flight to Chicago was delayed, and with only 40 minutes between flights I could see it was going to be tight. Firstly we headed in the wrong direction through the huge airport, but after a rushed chat with an official we turned around and ran back the way we came, just making the flight and collapsing back into our seats.

San Diego was like landing in a different country - it was warm and sunny with palm trees. That evening I attended the opening ceremony, with some very interesting speakers. After this I joined my tutor Jonathan Knowles for some dinner and explored a few bars around the Gaslamp Quarter. The show itself was very interesting, with lots of products that are rarely used in the UK, including big fans to improve air circulation. It was great to catch up with people I already knew but I also made many new people. I also managed to make time for a tour of the USS Midway Aircraft Carrier which was very interesting.

I knew the trip home was also going to be eventful when I discovered storm Nemo was forecast to dump three feet of snow on the east coast. Even though my flight from Philadelphia to Hartford was cancelled, I decided to take the flight to Philadelphia. On arrival I was informed that there would be no flights for two days which created a weekend in Philadelphia for me, and what a beautiful city it is. I then headed to Washington.

We began by visiting some of the local bars and restaurants and had some great nights out at basketball and hockey games. I was lucky enough to watch UMASS beat the number one seeds Boston College 5-1. It was a great atmosphere.

Unfortunately my trip to Boston got cancelled due to the snow, but the final leg of my trip went ahead - a visit to the Toro factories in Minneapolis. This was an amazing tour full of information about Toro as an employer as well as the products they produce. Standing at the start of the production line was very cool, as you looked down the line a shelf turned into a mower. I was now sad that the end of the trip was near.

I would like to thank Toro, Lely and BGGA for organising this award, as it gives an amazing opportunity for aspiring greenkeepers to progress their knowledge and careers. I had a fantastic time in America, making some lifelong friendships along the way, and these people made the trip so much fun.

It truly was a once in a lifetime experience, and I wish I could start it over again. I would strongly recommend to any enthusiastic greenkeeper who wants to stand out from the crowd and study at a highly recommended University while having the time of their life to consider the Toro award. I will never forget the experience that I had at UMASS and the people I met there.

TORO STAFF greenkeeper of the Year Thomas Flavelle tells us about a life-changing eight weeks in the States, his reward for scooping the coveted prize last September
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Applications for the 2013 award have been sent out to all colleges and training providers offering SportsTurf qualifications. To be entered you must be nominated by your tutor.

TOPO STUDENT OF THE YEAR

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Open Support Team Q&A

The chance to be a member of the BIGGA Open Support Team is one of the many benefits of BIGGA membership. If you were lucky enough to have been chosen, what can you expect at Muirfield in July?

The BIGGa Open Support Team members are an important part of the behind the scenes unit at one of the world’s greatest sporting events. It offers members the chance to follow in the footsteps of legendary golfers and learn from the greenkeeping teams at the UK’s top golfing venues – another real benefit of BIGGA membership.

We’ve had several queries over the years about the way the Team is formed and the various roles they perform at the Open Championship – so here’s BIGGa’s General Manager Tracey Maddison to answer your questions.

Q) How many BIGGa members applied to join The Open Support Team 2013?
A) We received over 100 applications with a wide range of ages, experience and geographical locations. We had applications from as far afield as Ireland, Sweden, Vietnam, Australia, USA and Germany.

Q) What process do you follow to select the Team?
A) It is quite a scientific process! We ensure that there is a core of people who have Open Championship experience in the Team to act as mentors for those who are involved for the first time.

Over the years the responsibilities of the Team have increased and the RA’s and the host club are keen that there are some experienced heads in the key roles during the week. As part of the process there is a guarantee that a certain number of first time applicants are selected as well as a good number of members who are engaged with BIGGA at Section level or through CPD. The Team are split into five groups or ‘pods’ with each having a Pod Leader who has good prior experience of the event.

Q) What do the Support Team do?
A) We've supported the existing greenkeeping team working at The Open venue itself and from their fellow Team members, and that can only help their daily work and future career.

Q) What do the Support Team do at open Support team 2012?
A) We received a terrific letter from Paul Smith, Head Greenkeeper at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club, after last year’s event saying how the team did a sterling job under very difficult circumstances – particularly overnight Thursday into Friday – which shows how vital the team’s work is. Paul also came into the BIGGA marquee on the Sunday to personally thank the whole team.

Q) How important is their role?
A) It is quite a scientific process! We look at every single application we receive thoroughly - it’s vital we have a good mix of experienced members, younger members and overseas members. It’s important to ensure that there is a core of people who have Open Championship experience in the Team to act as mentors for those who are involved for the first time.

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Q) What do the Support Team do?
There are a lot of early mornings! We have a team on the course from 4am every day from the Tuesday through to the Sunday, preparing the golf course alongside the home greenkeeping team working at The Open venue itself and from their fellow Team members, and that can only help their daily work and future career.

The Team are also on hand to deal with whatever the weather throws at us. Last year an enormous amount of rain fell unexpectedly during the Thursday night, so we got a bunch of extra guys out of their beds at 6am on the Friday to go and deal with the water in bunkers. When you think of the millions of people across the world tuning in just a few hours later, you appreciate how important this job is.

Also, I think it’s a huge educational opportunity. No matter where in the country or what course the members of the Support Team are from, they will always learn something – a new technique or a way of approaching a problem – from the greenkeeping team working at The Open venue itself and from their fellow Team members, and that can only help their daily work and future career.

Q) How important is their role?
We’ve supported the existing greenkeeping teams at Open Championships since 1984 now, and the team’s responsibility is increasing all the time.

We received a terrific letter from Paul Smith, Head Greenkeeper at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club, after last year’s event saying how vital the team’s work is. Paul also came into the BIGGA marquee on the Sunday to personally thank the whole team.

BTME 2013 at Harrogate saw the Baroess stand busy over all three days with the LM315 being a real focus of attention for all visitors!

NEW FOR 2013—THE BARONESS LM315 TRIPLEX GROUNSMOWER

More than 100 years of experience goes into the making of Baroess products, giving unrivalled cutting quality and the very lowest running costs.

For more than 20 years Baroess has been building the LM315 with our very own ‘hybrid’ drive system which minimises the amount of hydraulic lines by using cable drive to the cutting units.

Now available with a 21hp 3 cylinder diesel engine and offering industry leading light weight combined with outstanding traction, the Baroess LM315 is now available to view on your golf course.

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Photographic competition

How you can win our coveted members’ competition, and see your photography grace Greenkeeper International and the next BIGGA Calendar - following in the footsteps of recent winner, Craig Boath, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Carnoustie

Do you fancy yourself as a budding photographer? The competition offers you the chance to portray your course in a variety of BIGGA publications.

Our industry offers terrific opportunities for stunning photography across the year – and now is the time to send in the images you have captured from the autumn and winter (or from the recent late March influx of snow!).

The forthcoming weeks offer another chance to great spring and summer shots.

The competition is judged by a panel of experts including professional photographers Alan Birch and Eric Hepworth, and the winner will receive a framed image of their choice from Eric’s super selection of golf course photography (www.hepworthgolfphotography.com).

Two runners-up will receive an unframed print, and the final 12 will all be featured in next year’s calendar.

To enter, please send your images to comps@bigga.co.uk - the closing date is Friday 19 July – the second day of The Open Championship.

Please write “BIGGA PHOTO COMP 2013” in the subject header of your email, and label your entries with your name, club/college currently at, membership number and a brief caption of the course.

Images need to be high resolution and landscape shape, suitable for a calendar.

Please avoid reducing the file size as this will reduce the quality – we recommend one image per email if file size becomes an issue – or use a compression facility such as winzip or an ftp site such as www.mailbigfile.com.

There is no limit to the amount of images you can send us, but please identify three which you would like to be considered for the competition.

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Good luck to all entrants.

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Good luck to all entrants.
Suck it and see

Tractor powered vacuum, sweeper and flail mower/scarifying collectors cover a broad equipment base. Choosing the right machine to collect everything from leaves and litter through to clippings and even cores can be tricky. Here’s James de Haviland with key advice.

Although there are potentially a large number of tractor powered collectors to choose from, homing in upon what you actually want the machine to do makes selecting the right tool for the job easier.

Some models are designed more for hard surface work and do not have the necessary clearances within the machine to cope with large bulky materials such as leaves and grass clippings. Others have a hopper capacity that is suited more to dense ‘road’ type sweepings than material such as leaves.

Firstly a bit of a shortcut taking in the main machine types. These fall into two basic types - vacuum with or without a powered brush or flail systems and units with just brushes or flails. The most popular self-contained vacuum collectors include the Trilo models from the Grass Group. For golf courses, the company’s Trilo S4 now ranks as the top seller. At the heart of the S4 is the 850mm diameter turbine that provides the suction. It is designed to have enough power to draw even heavy debris into the 4m³ hopper. The main suction head has a working width of 1.80m and is complemented by a 5.0m long 250mm diameter wonder hose.

When considering the purchase of this type of model, it is important to match the machine to its intended application. For the most part, vacuum suction alone is perfectly adequate to collect grass clippings and leaves but you may want to consider a model that can be used to also carry out scarifying work or have a powered brush.

Moving on to tractor powered sweeper/flail collectors, there are a several makers and models to choose from, but they are sometimes hard to identify due to the emphasis that can be placed upon what they do. A good example is the Redexim Charterhouse Turf Tidy models. These versatile machines are sold as a de-thatcher and scarifier that collects debris as it works, as opposed to emphasis being placed on their abilities as a collector.

Offered with a choice of 1.50 or 1.80m working widths, the Turf Tidy 1310 and 1710 machines are supplied with multi-function scarifier heads with blades spaced at 18mm.

These can be user swapped for flats or a sweeper with four brush elements. Duties can include mowing, leaf collection or hard surface sweeping. Fitted with 2.50m and 3.00m3 high tip collector bodies, Turf Tidy units are designed for tractors of 25hp when just sweeping, 40hp being recommended for work with flats.

Another versatile machine is the Wessex ProLine STC flail collector. Fitted with a large diameter steel drum rotor with four rows of flats and two rows of draft paddles, it is designed to create suction for collecting the grass as it cuts or dealing with other debris, even in the wet. Offered in 1.2m and 1.8m working widths, the ProLine STC is semi-mounted to the tractor but runs on its own four wheels in work.

Wiedenmann UK collectors include the Super 500 and Super 600. These have respective hopper capacities of 2.5m³ and a significant 4.5m³. Again, these units combine a flail mower, scarifier and sweeper in one unit. To help reduce ground pressure, the Super 600 runs on four 23x10.5 pneumatic tyres. The hopper lifts via a parallel system so the hopper rotates to come in 1.2m and 1.5m working widths and are offered with the choice of a screen hopper bottom, enabling sand or top dressings to fall back onto the swept surface whilst retaining debris such as leaves. This sort of unit is useful when brushing in top dressing materials but also taking out debris such as leaves.

Wiedenmann's Charterhouse Turf Tidy machines are sold as a de-thatcher and scarifier to help feed into the 4m³ hopper. The main suction head has a working width of 1.80m and is complemented by a 5.0m long 250mm diameter wonder hose.
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Moving on to tractor powered sweeper/flail collectors, there are a few models that collect debris as it works, as opposed to emphasis being placed on their abilities as a collector. Offered with a choice of 1.50 or 1.80m working widths, the Turf Tidy 1310 and 1710 machines are supplied with multi-function scarifier heads with blades spaced at 18mm.

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be fitted with a choice of blades to suit the needs of individual machines. The RotoSweep has a flail rotor that can accommodate a wide range of blade types, including semi-mounted variants and front roller types, to help improve emptying. As with other similar designs, the action of the flails creates a vacuum to allow the collection and shredding of bulky material such as leaves.

The Imants RotoSweep from Campey Turfcare Systems is a purpose-designed system to remove surface debris from fine turf, to include cores, grass clippings, leaves and general litter. The dual-powered brush is claimed to cope with heavy debris and operate in less than ideal working conditions.

Campey Turfcare Systems have started to see increased interest in their Imants RotoSweep due to the inclusion of a vacuum collector that will also allow leaves to be cleared without investing in a different machine. You may also consider a mulching option or a vacuum collector. The key is to establish what you need to clear and collect, how the debris is subsequently handled and if you are looking to also work on hard surfaces. Understand what your priorities are and the right machine should choose itself.

How do you choose?

The models detailed are not intended to provide a definitive list of what is available, but they do give an idea of not only what’s on offer but also how the machines differ. Choosing the right machine is easier if you can set out clear priorities before buying. Different circumstances will impact upon performance too, word of mouth recommendations needing to be put into the context of individual machine usage.

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The essential workings of the Amazone Groundkeeper is much the same between the various models, the inclusion of two rows of paddles creating enough grit to lift and shift heavy and wet leaves. The flail rotor can accommodate a choice of blade types. One final point. This is not a buyer’s guide and does not list every sweeper collector on the market. Further, many rotary ride-on tractor mowers can be fitted with a vacuum collector that will also enable leaves to be cleared without investing in a different machine. You may also consider a mulching deck for this type of work. The key is to establish what you need to clear and collect, how the debris is subsequently handled and if you are looking to also work on hard surfaces. Understand what your priorities are and the right machine should choose itself.
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The Super 600 attachments via a draw bar to tractors 50hp and above. Options include rear lights, a front roller to help reduce the chances of scalping, a dethatching unit helping to ‘windrow’ debris and operate in less than ideal working conditions.

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A demonstration of the machines is well worth the effort. It’s no good selecting a machine to clear under 2mm or 3mm thick, scarifying blades. All these blades simply slot into place without the need for tools.

To advertise in GI contact Jill on 01347 833 812 or email jill@bigga.co.uk

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OPM to be targeted by aerial spraying

How aerial spraying in the South of the UK is bidding to halt the march of Oak Processionary Moth, writes Terry Mabbett

The message on the grapevine is that oak processionary moth (OPM) could at last be controlled by aerial spraying in the UK. After five years of dithering, the UK Plant Health Authorities appear to be learning a lesson, taking the lead from their counterparts in Germany and trialling aerial application of insecticide against OPM.

OPM (Thaumetopoea processio- nea) is moving mainly westwards and southwards from its initial twin infestations on oak trees imported from the Netherlands and planted in the London Boroughs of Richmond and Ealing during 2005/2006. A total of nine contiguous London Boroughs - Richmond, Ealing, Hounslow, Brent, Harrow, Harpenden and Camden - are now affected by OPM with 400,000 oaks estimated to be targeted. The infestation leapfrogged the Thames from its southern front at Hampton Court and into the Elmbridge area of North Surrey.

Two ongoing 'satellite' infestations, originating from later separate introductions of OPM on oak trees also imported from the Netherlands, are in the Pangbourne area of West Berkshire and the West Wickham area of the London Borough of Bromley. This latest infestation has spilled over into the neighbouring London Borough of Croydon.

Aerial spraying is not something done on the hoof with pilots leaping into cockpits wearing ten-gallon hats and shouting 'chocs away'. It requires thorough planning and regulatory hoops to be jumped through, especially since nearly all OPM affected oak trees in the UK are in urban and suburban areas.

Any aerial spraying operation will be carried out using helicopters fitted with Micronair AU700 atomisers. A Robinson 244 helicopter is being used for spraying in the London Boroughs of Richmond and Ealing.

About the Author

Dr Terry Mabbett is a disease, pest and weed control specialist with forty years international experience related to OPM larva behaviour and the canopy characteristics of oak trees, that must be understood and satisfied if the programme is going to work, irrespective of how nominally accurate aerial application might be.

Dr Mabbett has led the Biological perspectives section of this article. He is biosecurity advisor to the UK Plant Health Authorities and boasts 40 years’ experience in biosecurity policy and operations.

Spray timing is crucially important for several reasons. BT kills OPM larvae via ingestion and stomach action through larval feeding on the foliage. Consequently the target for spray droplets is the new oak leaves produced in spring, usually appearing from mid-April onwards with OPM larvae hatching sometime during the second half of April.

The twin synchronised starting points are therefore timing of oak tree re-sprouting and hatching of the L1 (first instar) larvae from plaques of insect eggs on small branches at the top of the canopy. Both are dependent on temperature. An early spring with higher than normal temperature should realistically see earlier synchronised oak tree re-sprouting and larval hatch, and vice versa.

Next thing to be established is when the larvae start to feed on bursting buds, young leaves and flowers. Is it immediately after hatching or sometime thereafter? If a contact insecticide is used spray operators would additionally benefit from knowing when larvae are most exposed to spray droplets by being, for instance, on the upper (adaxial) surface of oak leaves.

Synchronisation of aerial application with start of larval feeding is vital for another very important reason. Youngest small larvae (L1, L2 and early stage L3) are the easiest to kill with insecticide. The lower the larval body mass then the correspondingly lower dose of active insecticide ingredient is required to kill the larva.

Secondly this is the only time during the entire juvenile insect stage period that larvae will be permanently feeding on foliage in the outer shell of foliage at the top of the oak canopy where the bulk of spray droplets from aerial application will be deposited. Once larvae have successfully passed through the L3 (third instar) stage they are much bigger and heavier and correspondingly higher doses of insecticide required to achieve mortality.

OPM larvae in the late L3 to L6 stages spend progressively more time during the day on the trunk and main scaffold branches and increasingly in their silken nests. As such they are less likely to be feeding in on the outer canopy shell at the tops of trees where BT depos-
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Aerial spraying is not something done on the hoof with pilots leaping into cockpits wearing ten-gallon hats and shouting “chock away”. It requires thorough planning and regulatory hoops to be jumped through, especially since nearly all OPM affected oak trees in the UK are in urban and suburban areas.

Any aerial spraying undertaking will be carried out using helicopters to apply the biological insecticide Bacillus thuringiensis subsp. kurstaki (BT). Aerial spraying experts will carefully consider and calculate a comprehensive range of spray and formulation factors and parameters. These will include aircraft speed, height above the target, nature and concentration of the liquid formulation used, mean droplet diameter and droplet size distribution, spray volume and insecticide dose sprayed per unit area, as well as wind speed and wind direction on the day.

**Biological perspectives**

In addition, there will be key biological factors and requirements, related to OPM larva behaviour and the canopy characteristics of oak trees, that must be understood and satisfied if the programme is going to work, irrespective of how nominally accurate aerial application might be.

**Spray timing** is crucially important for several reasons. BT kills OPM larvae via ingestion and stomach action through larval feeding on the foliage. Consequently the target for spray droplets is the new oak leaves produced in spring, usually appearing from mid-April onwards with OPM larvae hatching sometime during the second half of April.

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Next thing to be established is when the larvae start to feed on bursting buds, young leaves and flowers. Is it immediately after hatching or sometime thereafter? If a contact insecticide is used by being, for instance, on the upper (adaxial) surface of oak leaves. Synchronisation of aerial application with start of larval feeding is vital for another very important reason. Youngest small larvae (L1, L2 and early stage L3) are the easiest to kill with insecticide. The lower the larval body mass then a correspondingly lower dose of active insecticide ingredient is required to kill the larva.

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OPM larvae in the late L3 to L6 stages spend progressively more time during the day on the trunk and main scaffold branches and increasingly in their silken nests. As such they are less likely to be feeding in on the outer canopy shell at the tops of trees where BT depos-
its are made, so they will become increasing difficult to reach by aerial spraying. Larvae start to develop the irritation hairs from L3 onwards, and last thing wanted is for thousands of dead larvae with still active stinging hairs falling out of oak trees after aerial application of insecticide. The window of aerial spray application opportunity is clearly quite narrow and generally closed by mid-May. Collection of biological data is standard practice when planning any spray programme against a lepidopterous (butterfly and moth) larval pest. Small groups of trees or even individual trees. Provided it is carried out when play is not in progress, golf courses appear to offer as good a place and opportunity as anywhere, within an urban or suburban area, to trial aerial application of insecticide against OPM. A number of golf courses are already being forced to use ground spraying equipment against OPM every year with many more at risk. BT is completely harmless to humans. It has been used for many years as a bioinsecticide in agriculture and horticulture to control lepidopterous larvae on a diverse range of different fruit and vegetable crops.

Collateral cost: aerial spraying against OPM

One question sure to be asked by today’s environmentally-aware greenkeeper is the extent of any collateral ecological damage from aerial application. Provided aerial spraying against OPM is well planned, well timed and carried out with the required precision any ecological fall-out should be minimal, and acceptable given the alternative of giving OPM a “clear run and free hand”. BT is specifically active against the larval stages of the Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and only via ingestion and stomach action. OPM larve have to eat BT covered oak foliage to pick up a potentially lethal dose.

No other class of insect or arthropod (e.g. woodlice) is affected. Only insects at potential risk are Lepidoptera which use oak as a larval food plant and only one native British butterfly falls into this category. Larvae of the purple hairstreak (Neozephyrus quercus) feed on pedunculate oak (Quercus robur) and sessile oak (Q. petraea) and sometimes Turkey oak (Q. cerris) and evergreen or holly oak (Q. ilex). Whether the purple hair streak at risk from sprays of BT will largely depend on timing of egg hatch and larval feeding and how this matches with that of OPM. However, ‘oddities’ in larval feeding behaviour indicate purple hairstreak could avoid significant collateral damage.

The female purple hairstreak lays eggs singly at bases of young oak buds in late summer. It prefers mature trees outside of dense woodland, and often isolated hedgegrow and landscape oaks with twisted and gnarled branches, just the sort of oak trees found on many golf courses. Eggs hatch which is synchronised with first signs of bud break. However, L1 (first instar) larvae do not start to feed from the outside but burrow into buds and stay there feeding safely until the first moult is complete. As larvae get larger and oak buds open, they spin silken protective retreats outside and feed only at night. During growth and development of the larva there are three moults prior to pupation. These idiosyncrasies may be enough to spare the purple hair streak from most risk and damage. Egg hatch and appearance of L1 larvae starts well before that of OPM with some British butterfly websites indicating the first half of March, which means up to 8 weeks before any OPM spraying can be contemplated. Situation for moths is more complicated in number at least. No less than 2400 different moth species have been recorded in Britain including 800 found regularly. In Northumberland over 50 different species of moth are recorded with either Q. robur or Q. petraea as a larval food plant.

However, the larval stage of many moth species is in June and July and well after any anticipated spraying against OPM. Last but not least is ‘His Majesty’, the male purple emperor butterfly (Apatura iris). Purple emperor butterflies are closely associated with oak woodland although the female lays its eggs on sallow, mainly gouty sallow (Salix caprea) and also called goat willow or pussy willow, growing at the woodland margin and along woodland rides. With sallow as the larval food plant the purple emperor should be safe. However, the adult butterflies drink oak sap and honey dew excretions from aphids feeding on oak foliage. Whether or not they could pick up BT in this way, and indeed whether BT would be infectious against the adult insect stage, is something which doesn’t appear to have been considered.

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Glenn Rayfield
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Philip Baldock
Ganton Golf Club, Yorkshire

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Collection of biological data is standard practice when planning any spray programme against a lepidopterous (butterfly and moth) larval (caterpillar) insect pest, but is easier said than done on a 20m tall oak tree than a 1m high cotton plant.

Nevertheless it needs to be done and clearly requires entomologists in MESSPs (cherry pickers) to see exactly what is going in the tops of oak trees infested with OPM. Longevity of BT on plant foliage is relatively short.

The product is applied as a water- dispersible granule and is therefore prone to wash off from the foliage by rainfall. Activity is also reduced by UV light levels which can clearly be high at the tops of tall oak trees. These factors, depending on spring weather experienced, may shorten the interval before a followup spray application is needed.

Aerial spraying trials on trees are ideally carried out on larger expanses of woodland and as such the majority of golf courses might not seem like the obvious place to start. However, word on the grapevine is that trials may involve fly necessity) spraying by helicopter of small groups of oak trees or even individual trees.

Provided it is carried out when play is not in progress, golf courses would appear to offer as good a place and opportunity as anywhere, within an urban or suburban area, to trial aerial application of insecticide against OPM.

A number of golf course are already being forced to use ground spraying equipment against OPM every year with many more at risk. BT is completely harmless to humans. It has been used for many years as a biopesticide in agriculture and horticulture to control lepidopterous larvae on dozens of different everyday fruit and vegetable crops.

Collateral cost: aerial spraying against OPM

One question sure to be asked by today’s environmentally-aware greenkeeper is the extent of any collateral ecological damage from aerial application. Provided aerial spraying against OPM is well planned, well timed and carried out with the required precision any ecological fall-out should be minimal, and acceptable given the alternative of giving OPM a ‘clear run’ and ‘free hand’.

BT is specifically active against the larval stages of the Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and only via ingestion and stomach action. OPM larvae have to eat BT covered oak foliage to pick up a potentially lethal dose.

No other class of insect or arthropod (e.g. woodlouse) is affected. Only insects at potential risk are Lepidoptera which use oak as a larval food plant and only one native British butterfly falls into this category. Larvae of the purple hairstreak (Neozephyrus quercus) feed on pedunculate oak (Quercus robur) and sessile oak (Q. petraea) and sometimes Turkey oak (Q. cerris) and evergreen or holly oak (Q. ilex).

Whether the purple hairstreak is at risk from sprays of BT will largely depend on timing of egg hatch and larval feeding and how this matches with that of OPM. However, ‘oddities’ in larval feeding behaviour indicate purple hairstreak could avoid significant collateral damage.

The female purple hairstreak lays eggs singly at bases of plump oak buds in late summer. It prefers mature trees outside of dense woodland, and often isolated hedgerow and landscape oaks with twisted and grafted branches, just the sort of oak trees found on many golf courses.

Eggs hatch is synchronised with first signs of bud break. However, L1 (first instar) larvae do not start to feed from the outside but burrow into buds and stay there feeding safely until the first moult is complete. As larvae get larger and oak buds open, they spin silken protective retreats outside and feed only at night. During growth and development of the larva three moults prior to pupation. These idiosyncrasies may be enough to spare the purple hairstreak from most risk and damage.

Rg hatch and appearance of L1 larvae starts well before that of OPM with some British butterfly websites indicating the first half of March, which means up to 8 weeks before any OPM spraying can be contemplated. Situation for moths is more complicated in number at least. No less than 2400 different moth species have been recorded in Britain including 800 found regularly. In Northumberland over 50 different species of moth are recorded with either Q. robur or Q. petraea as a larval food plant.

However, the larval stage of many moth species is in June and July well after any anticipated spraying against OPM.

Last but not least is Him Majesty, the male purple emperor butterfly (Apatura iris). Purple emperor butterflies are closely associated with oak woodland although the female lays its eggs on sallow, mainly grey sallow (Salix caprea) and also called goat willow or pussy willow, growing at the woodland margin and along woodland rides.

With sallow as the larval food plant the purple emperor should be safe. However, the adult butterflies drink oak sap and honeydew excreta from aphids feeding on oak foliage. Whether or not they could pick up BT in this way, and indeed whether BT would be infective against the adult insect stage, is something which does not appear to have been considered.

For more information including warning phrases and symbols refer to www.greencast.co.uk
As you will be aware, compost is produced from biodegradable organic waste such as garden clippings, grass cuttings and leaves as well as household kitchen waste.

The survey results show two in five of you make your own compost on site using grass cuttings and leaves collected around the course, and the mixes vary from 70% grass/15% leaves to 10% grass/80% leaves. One respondent mentioned using kitchen waste, while another uses seaweed and leaves and one clearly had his own special recipe: “grass, wood chip, cardboard, kitchen waste, dung, I look for a 45% green/high N content”.

Composting is a great way to recycle nutrients from green and food waste. It contains slow release nitrogen, potash and phosphorus, as well as trace amounts of magnesium and iron. Most of you who responded to the survey said you used your compost in flowerbeds as well as for turf top dressings and repair (or divot mixes). Some said they use compost on fairways, roughs or for landscaping around the golf course.

There are a number of uses for compost on the golf course. It can be blended with other materials such as sand to create reliable topdressings. It can also be blended with grass seed in divot mixes, and because compost contains nutrients and holds moisture effectively, it enables rapid regrowth of grass. The dark colour also absorbs heat from the sun, speeding up germination. It can be used to establish or renovate turf by applying a 25-50mm layer on the surface and then incorporating it to a depth of around 100-150mm. Once this is done, a seed bed can be established by lightly brushing seed onto the surface. The mixture of nutrients and minerals in the compost provides a stable, reliable and sustained base for rapid growth.

The amount of compost applied to a site will depend on the properties of the compost to be applied, the characteristics of the receiving course and what the final requirements are. When compost is produced on a commercial scale, it is often made from a combination of green waste and municipal household kitchen waste.

These composts are produced under controlled conditions so that microbial activity drives the breakdown of the material, and can then be used in a range of applications around the golf course. It was clear that many of you are happy to use compost, however half of you were concerned about the effects of using it on finer turfs such as on greens, and were particularly concerned about possible fungal diseases.

Some of you also raised concerns over the consistency, quality and possible health risks associated with using it. Comments included “the local supervisor couldn’t guarantee the quality. No temperature checks in place, rogue seeds getting through” and “local supplier doesn’t screen small enough, or risk of contamination if compost is not made properly.” These concerns are valid but can be avoided by using compost that is certified to the PAS 100 specification. This specification is a quality assurance scheme that puts in place a number of measures in the composting process to ensure minimum standards are met, to ensure the compost is safe and consistent. It includes restrictions on what materials can be used for composting or this reducing the likelihood of unwanted materials in the end product. It requires high temperatures to be consistently reached during the composting process, so that weed seeds are thermally destroyed, plus regular tests to ensure the product meets minimum quality standards.

Compost that meets the PAS 100 specification can also be screened to very fine particle sizes as low as 5mm and can be applied as top dressings both to fairways and greens.

Trials have demonstrated that using compost as a top dressing is just as effective as a traditional sand based topdressing. In fact, rather than increasing the prevalence of fusarium fungal diseases such as dollar spot, compost based top dressings have been shown to suppress them due to its slow release nitrogen.

Compost top dressings are best applied during spring or autumn. This helps to avoid run off and material loss during heavy rain. Periods of hot and dry weather should also be avoided as this may inhibit the level of incorporation of the compost into the underlying soil.

Many of you are aware of the benefits of using compost. We received comments such as: “this is a good way of controlling waste products on site and saves us money” and “improves soil biology and soil food web to reduce chemical reliance”. The environmental and sustainable benefits of using compost are clear. It recycles waste materials, helps reduce the need for artificial fertilisers and the addition of organic matter can help to improve soil structure. You can also save money too both by using your own compost and by using PAS100 compost.

Carnoustie Golf Links welcomes over 115,000 golfers a year and needs to maintain its courses to the highest standards. Following successful trials, the club took the decision to use quality compost in the repair and maintenance of the courses. Divot mixes comprise of 6mm grade compost at a ratio of 1:3 with sand which is then blended with seaweed meal and grass seed. The blend creates a material close to a sandy soil which offers moisture retention and nutrients. It has been found to provide a practical cost effective and sustainable alternative to the virgin materials used in the past - such as fensoil and fertilisers. Using locally sourced PAS 100 compost led to cost savings of up to 30% or around £13 per tonne as a result of the reduced haulage costs. In a trial conducted at Monifieth Golf Links, comparing divot mixes based on compost and fensoil, found that not only did the compost perform as well as the fensoil but also resulted in an annual cost saving of £1,480.

Some of you who responded to the survey are keen to use PAS 100 compost but either don’t know enough about it, or have struggled to find a suitable local supplier. We recognise these are issues that need to be addressed and are looking at ways to improve access to information.

A good practice guide is available on the WRAP website, providing information about how compost can be used successfully on golf courses. Also available is the Compost Suppliers Directory: compostsuppliers.wrap.org.uk This tool helps identify suppliers of compost and compost-based topdressing in your area. It will be updated over the coming months to include a wider range of suppliers who can deliver the most suitable products.

If you are interested in finding out more about the results of the survey, please contact lee.best@wrap.org.uk
It’s a WRAP

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The environmental and sustainable benefits of using compost are clear. It recycles waste materials, helps reduce the need for artificial fertilisers and the addition of organic matter can help to improve soil structure. You can also save money too both by using your own compost and by using PAS100 compost.

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“Two in five of you make your own compost on site using grass cuttings and leaves collected around the course”
Selective weed control

Graham Paul’s latest BASIS article looks at unusual turf weeds and how to identify them.

With spring weather hopefully around the corner, maybe it’s time to consider some strategies for selective weed control. In the UK there are over 50 species of broad-leaved weeds that can be found in mown turf.

Some species will be affected by mowing closer than they can tolerate, so these will only survive in more natural, less intensively managed areas. Coastal environments support a number of salt tolerant plants (halophiles) such as Buck’s-horn plantain (Plantago coronopus) and Thrift (Armeria maritima) that are not normally found inland. Soil type, pH and the availability of water will reduce the list still further.

The first step in selective weed control is to identify the weeds present. Starting with seaside plants, ‘bathed’ in the salty mists that pervade coastal habitats. Their ability to survive in this environment is due to a genetic adaptation that allows them to withstand conditions of high salinity. The salt mist coming from the sea will increase the levels of sodium chloride in the soil, which is then absorbed by the roots and accumulates in plant tissues. Abnormally high levels in plant cells will seriously affect the movement of water across cell membranes and as a consequence, growth is slowed or halted completely. This osmotic imbalance can cause the ‘stunted growth habit’ that some species exhibit in coastal regions or it can eliminate them altogether.

Three other weeds occasionally found in coastal turf include; Sea Plantain (Plantago maritima) a creeping perennial weed with stalkless fleshy leaves and pink flowers and lastly Sea Stork’s-bill (Erodium maritimum), which has simple lobed leaves and small pink or white flowers that rapidly lose their petals.

These species fall into the category of ‘unusual turf weeds’ and are relatively easy to control with most general purpose ‘selective herbicides’ but some products containing MCPA, mecoprop-P and dicamba at a rate of 3.5L/ha, such as ‘T-2 Green’ or ‘Re-Act’.

The common Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale) gets its name from the corrupted French description of the leaves (dents de lion – lion’s teeth) but natives of France may also know this weed by the name ‘pis en lit’ - a reference to bed wetting that myth tells us can result from picking dandelion flowers! Most people can identify a dandelion but there are several other lookalikes that produce a similar single yellow flower-head, which can fool the untrained eye when the weed is found in mown turf. The first of these; Cat’s-ear (Hypochaeris radicata) has fleshy, lobed, hairy leaves that (with a bit of imagination) resemble the ‘fight-torn’ ears of a tom cat! I have seen many different species of cat but never one with green ears! The flower stalk is quite different from a dandelion, being thinner, wiry and bearing a few scale-like dark tipped bracts.

Another dandelion flower ‘look alikes’ are the Hawkbits; Autumn Hawkbit (Leontodon autumnalis) and Rough Hawkbit (Leontodon hispidus). Rough Hawkbit is a very hairy plant in contrast to Autumn Hawkbit, which has more slender, often hairless leaves. Rough Hawkbit has un-branched flower stems whereas Autumn Hawkbit can have two or three branches in its flower stems.

These two Hawkbits can be controlled by with two applications of products containing MCPP, mecoprop-P and dicamba at a rate of 3.5L/ha, such as ‘T-2 Green’ or ‘Re-Act’.

The leaves are quite different from the dandelion but the flowers can appear similar when fully open because the red stripes are not visible from above. Mouse-ea Hawkweed is fairly easy to control with products containing 2,4-D, MCPA and mecoprop-P. Selective herbicide products are usually formulated from two or more active ingredients in order to extend the spectrum of control to deal with as many turf weeds as possible in one spray. Manufacturers try to match the weaknesses of one active ingredient with strengths of another, to create a ‘one product’ answer to weed control in turf.

However, due to the diversity of weeds found in managed turf situations, the quest for complete control has so far been elusive. Further...
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The first step in selective weed control is to identify the weeds present. Starting with seaside plants, ‘bathed’ in the salty mists that percolate coming from the sea will increase the levels of sodium chloride in the soil, which in turn absorbed by the roots and accumulates in plant tissues. Abnormally high levels in plant cells will seriously affect growth is slowed or halted completely. This osmotic imbalance can cause the ‘stunted growth habit’ that some species exhibit in coastal regions or it can eliminate them altogether.

Three other weeds occasionally found in coastal turf include; Sea Plantain (Plantago maritima) a creeping perennial weed with stalkless fleshy leaves and simple lobed leaves and small pink flowers and lastly Sea Stork’s-bill (Rhopalida maritima), which has simple lobed leaves and small pale pink or white flowers that rapidly lose their petals.

These species fall into the category of ‘unusual turf weeds’ and are relatively easy to control with most general purpose selective herbicides. These are a group of similar products that contain MCPA, mecoprop-P and dicamba such as ‘T-2 Green’, ‘Longbow’, ‘Relay’, ‘Re-Act’ or ‘T’2 Green’.

The common Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale) gets its name from the corrupted French description of the leaves (dent de lion – lion’s teeth) but natives of France may also know this weed by the name ‘pis en lit’ - a reference to bed wetting that myth tells us can result from picking dandelion flowers! Most people can identify a dandelion but there are several other lookalikes that produce a similar single yellow flower-head, which can fool the untrained eye and result in a useless application. The first of these; Cat’s-ear (Hypochaeris radicata) has fleshy, lobed, hairy leaves that (with a bit of imagination) resemble the ‘fight torn’ ears of a tom cat! I have seen many different species of cat but never one with green ears! The flower stalk is quite different from a dandelion; being thinner, wiry and about two times as long.

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Another dandelion flower ‘look alike’ is Mouse-ear Hawkweed (Philonella officinarum – formerly Hernicum pilosella) This perennial herb has long leafy runners and produces a rosette of grey-green leaves that have soft, dense, short white hairs on the underside and long stiff hairs on the upper surface. The florets have red stripes on the under surface.

The leaves are quite different from the dandelion but the flower stalk is quite similar when fully grown. These two Hawkbits can be controlled by with two applications of products containing MCPA, mecoprop-P and dicamba such as ‘T-2 Green’, ‘Longbow’, ‘Relay’, ‘Re-Act’ or ‘T’2 Green’.

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from early treatments may require a second spray.

The two species of Medick have similar shaped leaves and flowers to the Trefoils. Spotted Medick (Medicago arabica) has obvious dark spots on the leaves that easily separate it from all of the others.

Black Medick (Medicago lupulina), a perennial, can be distinguished from the yellow trefoils by its ‘micronate’ leaf tips. These are short, abrupt points on the end of the leaf mid-vein. The seed pods are kidney shaped and turn black when ripe.

Black Medick can be controlled with the general purpose products at the highest dose (where a range of rates is recommended) but retreatment may be necessary in some cases. Best control is indicated with the specialist herbicides suggested for the yellow trefoils. Spotted Medick may also respond to these recommendations but I could not find a label or other reference to confirm this.

Speedwells are members of the genus Veronica, which includes about 15 UK species, many of which are found in turf and will require specialist selective herbicides to control them. All speedwells have flowers with only 2 stamens but vary considerably by the leaf shape, size, hairiness and by the colour of the flowers, which can range from deep blue to lilac, with some that are almost white.

The more common varieties found in turf include; Slender, Ivy-leaved, Thyme-leaved and Germander Speedwell. The latter, Germander Speedwell (Veronica chamaedrys), has two opposite lines of long hairs on the stem and is notoriously difficult to control, with frequent reports from users of re-growth after 6 weeks of treatment with some products.

Other species occur in local environments and particular habitats such as Marsh and Heath Speedwell. Like the yellow clovers, if they are left uncontrolled by general broad spectrum herbicides, they can proliferate to the point that they dominate the sward. Most speedwells flower very early in the spring (March/April) so they are often difficult to control before the flowering stage.

The majority of speedwells can be controlled with specialist selective herbicides containing fluroxypyr, for instance; ‘Cabadex’, ‘Praxys’, ‘Swiftsure’ and ‘Trafalgar’. The dual purpose moss control product ‘Jewel’ that contains carbenzzone-ethyl and mecoprop-P will also give moderate control of speedwell species.

Speedwell - Ivy Leaved  

Tank-mixing to increase weed spectrum

In circumstances where the weeds present in turf include deep rooted or difficult to control weeds such as thistle, speedwell or yellow trefoil then it may be prudent to treat the area with a tank-mix to extend the capabilities of a general purpose product such as ‘Relay’ or ‘T-2-Green’ with another amenity approved product.

To achieve control of deep-rooted weeds, consider using a mix with a product containing 2,4-D amine, such as ‘Depton’. Difficult weeds, for example speedwell or yellow trefoil would require a mix with one of the specialist herbicides referred to in the relevant sections above.

In order to stay legal when tank-mixing it is important to stick to the following guidelines:

• Check with your supplier that the proposed mixture is suitable for the intended use. A supplier offering to support a mix should have tested it and will know if there are any compatibility issues or effects on the performance of the products.

• Note that when mixing two or more pesticides in a tank-mix all conditions of approval on all of the product labels and safety data sheets must be complied with.

• Any product in the mix is subject to a LERAP requirement, then this applies to the tank-mix as well.

“Most speedwells flower very early in the spring so they are often difficult to control before the flowering stage”
more, repeated use of products that leave some weeds uncontrolled can, over several seasons, lead to domi-
nation by these resistant species. Two weed groups spring to mind in this respect; the yellow clovers and the speedwells can both increase in numbers to the extent that the small flowers become highly visible, requiring specialist herbicides to remove them.

The yellow clovers are all members of the pea family (Fabaceae); three species of Trefoils and two species of Medick. These five spe-
cies can all be found in UK turf and are fairly difficult to control and even more difficult to identify! To distinguish between the three yellow trefoils look for leaf hairs, leaf size and the number of flowers in the flower head.  
• Hop Trefoil (Trifolium campestris) has sparse hairy leaves and has 25 to 40 flowers per head.  
• Lesser Trefoil (Trifolium dubium – also known as yellow suckling clover) has similar sized leaves to Hop Trefoil but they are usually hairless and there are between 15 and 25 flowers per head.  
• Slender Trefoil (Trifolium marianum – also known as Least Yellow Trefoil) has smaller leaves and flowers with only 2 to 10 flowers in the flower heads.  

The yellow trefoils are best controlled with specialist selective herbicides containing mixtures of fluoroxypryd such as ‘Cabadex’, ‘Praxys’, ‘Swiftsure’ and ‘Trafalgar’. The general purpose products will give some control but re-growth from early treatments may require a second spray.  

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The more common varieties found in turf include; Slender, Ivy-leaved, Thyme-leaved and

Self Assessment

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim BASIS points if the questions are answered correctly.
1) What is the term used for salt resistant plasties?  
   a) Halogenic, b) chlorophile, c) halophile, d) osmotope
2) Alongside the weed Autumn Hawksboat, which other member of this family was mentioned?  
   a) Blue Hawkbit, b) Smooth Hawkbit, c) Lesser Hawkbit  
   d) Mouse-ear Hawkbit
3) What term describes a leaf or leaflet with an abrupt point at the tip?  
   a) Periodate, b) styxate, c) dentate, d) mucronate
4) What characteristic do all Speedwells have in common?  
   a) Blue flowers, b) hairy leaves, c) they are all annuals  
   d) flowers have only 2 stamens
5) Yellow clovers found in turf are all members of which botanical family?  
   a) Figwort (Scrophulariaceae), b) Pea (Fabaceae)  
   c) carrot (Apiaceae), d) Rose (Rosaceae)

With the proposed mixtures reviewed, it is important to test the following guidelines:

• Check with your supplier that the proposed mixture is suitable for the intended use. A supplier offering to support a mix should have tested it and will know if there are any compatibility issues or effects on the performance of the products.

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• Any product in the mix is subject to a LERAP requirement, then this applies to the tank mix as well.

“Most speedwells flower very early in the spring so they are often difficult to control before the flowering stage”
Unfortunately due to work commitments I was unable to attend the Scottish Conference, by all accounts I missed out on a very good day with some great topics, well done to all involved with a maximum turnout on the day showing how highly this event is held in the greengrass keeping calendar each year. I would like to welcome and introduce Janie Martin (Gifford GC) as my guest to look forward to working with Janie over the next few years. Various events will be held in our section over the year with a possible course walk at Muckfield prior to The Open this year, and we are also looking at looking at a get together at Musselburgh Races with the possible date of May 24, first race at 6.15pm. By the time this report goes to publication I am sure the Masters will be on our screens with the golfing world expecting all the golf courses to resemble the magnificent Augusta track, a thought for the poor greenskeepers fighting the elements - snow, rain and cold winds.

It is good wishes to Alan Lawrie who has taken over as Head Greenkeeper at Royal Muislburgh GC - the section wishes you well Alan in your new role. We have had a good response for our spring outing to Sheshouses golf club which we will play in May and have 26 golfers (well 25 golfers and Charlie Allinson) looking to attend so we still have some space for any last momenters, just get in touch if you would like to attend. If any members would like to volunteer to write a piece for Golf Life or put something in the June newsletter, please get in touch with me. Jenny

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The visit to Loch Lomond has been cancelled as David Cole would prefer to conduct the tour at a more beneficial time for him and the club. David feels he can deliver a better talk when his workload is slightly reduced at the present time all guns are blazing to get things ready for the start of the season. November is off the agenda but members will be informed well in advance, thanks to David and Loch Lomond.

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Good wishes to Alan Lawrie who has taken over as Head Greenkeeper at Royal Musselburgh GC - the section wishes to welcome you well in your new position. Another section member in the news is Scott Davidson for Newmarch Golf Club who has had his application to the final 20 golf clubs selected for the 2012 Open tournament. Scott’s looking forward to a very intensive two day seminars at workshops and seminars at the Jacobsen Headquarters in Ipswich. By the time you read this report you will have your 200 club tickets and entry form so we still have some space for any latecomers, just get in touch if you would like to attend. If any members would like to volunteer to write a piece for this report do let me know and I will take care of the monthly report.

Scott Corrigan scottcorrigan@gmail.com or 07789098237.
SOUTH EAST

BIGGA

Football! A game played similarly to cricket, but the players’ intent is to introduce football into a hole with the foot, in the least amount of time. One of the players, John Paramour, entertained the 100 or so well turned out golfers on the 18th. He was adopted proportionally based on the full playing area. It’s taking place at Leatherhead GC anyway. Golf courses are starting to host these events, perhaps an Olympic sport of the future? No April Fool here, pictures are pending for FootGolf boots with adaptable striking angles enabling the foot-golfer to achieve longer drives when elevating the football with his boot. See you at a course attached to your ankle, whatever next!

MARK DAY

I was hoping to be writing this news piece on a Mark Day but the weather has gone off the mark so far during the month. Rain, however, will make smashing venues for a BIGGA competition. As ever, this is a great way to engage with Jim and the membership and to make BIGGA members feel part of a community. The second Mark Day event will be held at St George’s Golf Club in York on 18 March. Unfortunately, the day before the event, Mother Nature conspired to scupper things. It was just too wet to start the day and the rain had continued throughout the day. I am sure that you will join me in wishing him all the best (as we do?) bringing the weather with us to Wales, with whom, we have had enough rain today. Both courses would make smashing venues for a BIGGA competition.

ESSEX

15 members, sponsors and guests travelled down in very different conditions to Walton Heath early last month for the South East Regional Championships and Team Championship. The weather from Wales, with whom, we have had enough rain today. Both courses would make smashing venues for a BIGGA competition.

SAQAA show followed by some post event networking. On the day, the five-star Trump International on the away day will be limited to 100 or so well turned out golfers on the 18th. He was adopted proportionally based on the full playing area. It’s taking place at Leatherhead GC anyway. Golf courses are starting to host these events, perhaps an Olympic sport of the future? No April Fool here, pictures are pending for FootGolf boots with adaptable striking angles enabling the foot-golfer to achieve longer drives when elevating the football with his boot. See you at a course attached to your ankle, whatever next!

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Around The Green

BUCKS, BERKS & OXON

As we move into April hopefully spring will get underway as we welcome赛季 kicks in and courses get back to normal following the wash out that we all suffered this month. The Section’s first golf event will take place on the 17th April so please see the website for application forms, dates and times. An email will be sent out nearer the time so please make sure your contact details are up to date etc.

MID ANGLIA

I trust all are in good spirits despite another onslaught of the awful weather we have once again experienced this month. The poor run continues without any immediate sign of improvement on the horizon so hold your horses and a warm winter! The Section’s next event is a further visit to Essex. Alex Macindoe Course Manager at Newbury and Crookham was fortunate to attend the GCSCA Show in San Diego in the summer of John Deere. By all accounts the trip was a great experience taking in all the latest equipment and machinery on offer. Essex is also planning to have golf courses in the area so please be vigilant and take extra care with security measures.

SURREY

Footgolf! A game played similarly to golf, the player’s intent is to introduce football into a hole with the foot, in the least amount of strokes possible. The field may well be a golf course, but the distance between the tee and the ball would need to be adapted proportionally based on the full playing area. It’s taking place at Leatherhead GC anyway. Golf courses are starting to host these events, perhaps an Olympic sport of the future? No April Fool here, penalties are pending for FootGolf boots with adaptable striking angles enabling the foot to achieve a wider angle when elevating the football with his boot. Other sections are seeing a surge in these events, so watch this space.

SUSSEX

I would like to start my report with the news that Ian Gooling has been appointed as Head Greenkeeper at East Brighton Golf Club. Ian has worked at the club as Deputy Head Greenkeeper for a number of years. I am sure that you will all join me in wishing him all the best in his new role. Also to welcome to Sussex Nick Stevens who has just been appointed as Head Greenkeeper at Seaford Head Golf Club. Nick was previously the Head Greenkeeper at Burton and East Sussex Golf Club in Wales, which was Welsh Golf’s 150th anniversary competition. The field for this event was made up of golfers who listened to fascinating accounts of a chief referee at the US Open with Swiss precision to elevating the football with his foot striking angles enabling the foot to achieve a wider angle when elevating the football with his boot. Other sections are seeing a surge in these events, so watch this space.

ESSEX

15 members, sponsors and guests travelled down in very low numbers from Essex to Walton Heath early last month for the South East Section’s Spring Competition. As the morning progressed, drizzle turned to rain and the horizon could take no more, unfortunately shortly after 1.30pm play was abandoned. The insufficient weather meant that all at this venue and all others had to cancel their events and the section’s BIGGA competition! The Essex section would like to thank our Regional Administrator Chris Gough for arranging, yet another well supported day. In the past few weeks the section committee have held two meetings the first a conference call and the second a full meeting held at Little Channels. Matters discussed were the conference call for this month and education, the following this month’s events for the South East Section have been added to our calendar. Both events will be held at one of the venues booked.

KENT

I was hoping to be writing this report in April having a long overdue day at the Putting Green Open qualifying at Bromley GC. Neil is on the way north to his new role as Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Seaford Head Golf Club. Nick was previously the Head Greenkeeper at Burton and East Sussex Golf Club in Wales, which was Welsh Golf’s 150th anniversary competition. The field for this event was made up of golfers who listened to fascinating accounts of a chief referee at the US Open with Swiss precision to elevating the football with his foot striking angles enabling the foot to achieve a wider angle when elevating the football with his boot. Other sections are seeing a surge in these events, so watch this space.

KEEPS

Nature conspired to scupper the event had to be called off. Only after a prolonged deluge, nature conspired to scupper the event had to be called off. Only after a prolonged deluge, the key off in the lock of the hotel luggage compartment! Guests checking in at the hotel they were always at this venue and were well signposted to the Big Bay. One of the key events for this year is the Kent Cup, the US Open qualifying for the European Opens, The Ryder Cup and World Cup and professional champions. As you can see from the section events in the future.

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LONDON - MIDDLESEX

There’s not much else to report so I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors for their generosity this year. Your Fundraising Committee in the form of superb golfing, educational and other fun events for our members.

OUR MONTHLY CLUB PROFILE

Lighted the association’s vision for improving communication between HQ and its members and its members’ contribution to greening forward. They also plan to further improve the level of education, support and engagement of BBGCA members and to make the association a ‘must join’ organisation for the future. It enabled those who attended to engage with Jim and other BBGCA team and discuss issues and concerns that they had. The association’s strategy is changing, reflecting the different demands that the industry is putting on greenkeepers with the times, get on board or get left behind.

I am running this year for Leu- ther’s plan to further improve the level of education, support and engagement of BBGCA members and to make the association a ‘must join’ organisation for the future. It enabled those who attended to engage with Jim and other BBGCA team and discuss issues and concerns that they had. The association’s strategy is changing, reflecting the different demands that the industry is putting on greenkeepers with the times, get on board or get left behind.

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**Diary of Events**

**BIGGA welcomes the following new members**

**Scotland**

- Steve (Glenboig), SMG (Unlimited), Stowhill Golf, Falkirk
- Donald (Midlothian), Linlithgow Golf Club, Linlithgow
- Bob (Midlothian), Cambus, Linlithgow, Linlithgow
- David Black (Bathgate), St. Andrews Links Trust, Bathgate
- Steve Black (Bathgate), St. Andrews Links Trust, Bathgate

**Northern Region**

- Steven Curceta, Lea Hall Golf Club, Headingley
- Neil Armitage, Headingley Golf Club, Headingley
- Jamie Acton, Cleeve Hill Golf Club, Gloucestershire
- Lee Whittaker, The Mere Golf Resort & Spa, Knutsford
- David MacMillan, East Kilbride Golf Club, East Kilbride
- Jo Featherstone, Holcot Golf Club, Holcot
- Tim Baldwin, Amega Sciences plc, Afflfield

**Midland Region**

- Richard Stedman, Strelley Brook Golf Centre, Sutton-In-Ashfield
- Philip Cocks, Monkseaton College, St. Helens
- Jim Donegan, Netherfield Golf Club, Melbourne
- Stephen O’Brien, Sandford Ridge Golf Club, Warwick
- Andrew Cuffe, Lytham Green Drive Golf Club, Lytham

**South West & Wales**

- Luke Grounell, Britney Golf Club, Aylesbury
- Dan Reader, Whalley Range (Wigan), Wigan
- James Lumley, Sutton Green Golf Club, Sutton Green
- Tony Gadd, Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club, Mid-Surrey
- Ben Scrivener, Branchewood Golf Club, Branchewood
- Paul Harlow, Holley Wood Golf Club, Holley
- Gary Jackson, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, Sandwich
- Harry Jones, Myres Craig Ports Golf Club, Milton Abbey
- John Young, Minchinhampton Golf Club, Minchinhampton
- Ian Pemberton, Minchinhampton Golf Club, Minchinhampton
- Gareth Knight, Royal Portrush Golf Club, Portrush
- Dale Robertson, Duff House Royal, Duff House

**DIARY OF EVENTS**

**BIGGA Championships**

- April 10th - East Midlands Section Spring Tournament - Beedles Lake Golf Club
- April 11th - North West Section Spring Tournament - Lytham Green Drive Golf Club
- April 16th - South Coast Section Spring Tournament - Rendev Oil Golf Club
- April 17th - North East Section Spring Tournament - Hexwell Golf Club, Gateshead
- April 19th - East Anglia Section Golf Day - Ufford Park Golf Club
- April 23rd - Scotland, East Section Outing - Seabouses Golf Club
- April 23rd - North West Section Spring Tournament - Ball Bay Golf Club
- April 24th - South West Section Golf Day - Minchinhampton Golf Club
- April 24th - Northern Section Spring Tournament - Honesea Golf Club
- April 24th - Scotland Section Education Event - Royal Portrush Golf Club
- April 25th - Scotland, North Section Spring Outing - Duff House Royal

**Diary of Events**

**South Coast**

- With our weather patterns trying their best to destroy all our beloved links fairways we have a rugby team to be proud of even if it is kick and clap (Mr Kinley). Our biggest ever victory over England has made my last few days visiting my English golf club enjoyable...

**South Wales**

- Hopefully by the time you read this the sun will be shining with golfers in shirt sleeves. We have come in today to a covering of snow and wind chill -8, it can only improve!

**BIGGA Regional Conferences**

- **Midlands** - 6 November 2013, Forest Hill Golf & Country Club, Leicester
- **South East** - 2013 date and location tbc.
- **North- 7 November 2013 at Phoenix Sports Club, Rotherham.
- **South West & South Wales - 21 November 2013 at Oaktree Arena, Bristol.**

Contact Jane Jones - 01454 270850 / 07841 948110

**Contact Sandra Raper - 07866 360966**

**Contact Jane Jones - 01454 270850 / 07841 948110**

**Contact John Young - 07776 242120 or Email: johnyoung@bigga.co.uk**

**Contact Sandra Raper - 07866 360966**

**Contact Janice Owen - 01737 819343 / 07841 948140**
Around The Green

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Bever (Dunoon, SRU (Inverness), Student David Mc Cran, East Lothian Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper)
James Southwood, Royal Portrush GC, Assistant Greenkeeper
Arnold, Monk Links Trust, Assistant Greenkeeper

Northern Region

Steven Cavanagh, Links Hill Golf Club, Head Greenkeeper
Perri Green, Dunston Hall Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Cara Williams, Stockton Heath Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Alex Blundell, St. Andrew's Links Trust, Assistant Greenkeeper

Midland Region

Richard Brookes, Sherwood Golf Club, Secretary
Philip Cox, Markeaton College, Student
Mike Davies, Nailcote Hall Hotel & Golf Club, Technician
Barry Wray, Southwell Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Neil Armitage, Headingley Golf Club, Greenkeeper

South East Region

Luke Grinnell, Redhill Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Kerry Scott, Worthing Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Jane Polloch, Royal Mid-Sussex Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Alison Dawson, Sunningdale-Green Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Paul Hawksley, Woodford Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Irene Jones, Myor Creque Ports Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper

South West/South Wales

Rian James, Carmarthen Golf Club, Head Greenkeeper
Mike Border, Carmarthen Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Gavin Brooks, Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper
Gihan Jones, Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper

Overseas

Louise South, Pillman, Brazil, Student at Myor Creque Golf Club

Club. News and entry details on the section website.

Our new month’s officer Ben Newport outlined plans for an education program over the next few months with some exciting ideas, room of these as soon as they are arranged.

Richard Freeman announced that plans are well under way for the Toro (Lee) sponsored football tournament, team details will be announced on the website. So if you would like to please take the contact details from the website and get on the phone. The final is again at West Ham United’s ground 21st May for your diary, but unlike past years there will be some knockouts round to get through first. That’s all for this month more details next month on education, golf and the football.

www.essexbigga.co.uk 07764 862337 or at essexbigga@talk. talk.net
Arnold Phipps-Jones

SOUTH WEST & WALES

Maybe I spoke too soon last month but that silver of spring that was on the horizon has vanished. A few superlatives come to mind: arctic blast… brass monkeys… all I know is that when I arrived at the shed this morning it was -5C and that was before the wind chill.

Any of you who decided to go with an early season core programme must surely be in position and poised for soil temperatures to rise and get the season under way, it is all about positioning.

A successful day was had by all at the recent presentation and course walk event held by Chris Sealey and Chippenham Golf. All four presenters including myself, Jamie Acton, Andrew Hunt and Stephen Jack who came down from Barry overcame heavy naves and a Chippenham-wide power outage to present our audience of nearly thirty four talks on a wide range of subjects that seemed to keep everyone at full attention. Personally I really enjoyed the experience and I am sure that Adam, Stephen and Jaime did too, well done to my co-presenters!

Coming up on Wednesday 24 April is the Am/Am at Minchinhampton Golf Club which will be in fine spring form, make sure that entries are in promptly as there is sure to be high demand on this event at a great club and venue.

Following on, Wednesday 29 May is the Section v Nec- ritaries match at strumming The Manor House, Castle Combe, that one is sure to be a cauldron of competition.

Finally a welcome to new section member Nigel Thompson of Cleeve Hill Golf Club in Gloucestershire who has recently joined BIGGA, good to see new mem bers coming to see the benefits of the association.

Keep up the support, see you all at the upcoming Section days and keep the news coming in.

Jacy Goodchild (07994422295) jgoodchild@bigwood.org

SOUTH COAST

Hopefully by the time you read this the sun will be shining with golfers in shirt sleeves. We have come in today to a covering of snow and wind chill -8, it can only improve!

The annual seminar at Milton Abbey School was another huge success with 80 people treated to excellent speakers.

Sadly I was unable to attend because of family issues but I understand the food was also outstanding.

Thanks as always to Alex for the hard work in organising the event, thanks also to Joe Cooper and Milton Abbey school for allowing us to use their facility.

Last but not least our thanks go to the sponsors for the day Banks Amenity, Hurley Turf and E.G.Cole.

The first golf event of the year is on 16 April at the renowned Remedy Oak Golf Club, this will be very popular so if you haven’t booked your start time do so quickly. Contact Kevin Glass at glassy2003@hotmail.com, the cost is £35 and that must be received before the day.

As usual for our spring event Avoncroft will be the sponsors in memory of Colin (chally) White.

Several people have asked me about the Management Trophy which sadly I have to report that no one has come forward as sponsor. Hopefully this will be rectified and this very popular event will continue next year.

Here at Barton on the “sunny south coast” I can only say we survived an appalling winter, more days closed than ever before. No golf, no members coming in means one is spending money-hardy times. We have the last week managed to get out and punch holes in as many areas as possible, all I know is frost and a liquid feed and now things are looking up for the summer. The next thing will be bringing the bore hole back on line and primming the watering systems!

Hope you have a great Easter β will as I am off to Cuba with some warm sunshine and of course a light shower, see you at Remedy Oak on the 16th!

Tory Gadd

SOUTH WALES

With our weather patterns trying their best to destroy all our beloved golf club we have a rugby team to be proud of even if it is kick and clap (Mr Kinley). Our biggest ever victory of even if it is kick and clap (Mr Kinley). Our biggest ever victory

Our Spring seminar will again take place on April 24 at Royal Porthcawl GC sponsored by Countrywide Amenity, confirmed speakers are Steve Chappell Glennages, Mark Hunt Headland Amenity, Tillers Turf, Sports Metals and Environ banker. A great line up, I’m sure you’ll all agree, booking forms should now have been received but for extra bookings please contact Garret Knight on 07995 988512. Our spring tournament should have taken place at Fair wood Park by the time you read this so please read next month’s article for the results. Just before I leave congratulations must go to St.M Jenkins the new Head Greenkeeper at Carmarthen GC welcome back mate we wish you all the very best.

Keep enjoying the spring guys

Peter H.
People of all ages now use computers and mobile phones to promote themselves. This month David Golding, GTC’s Education Director, looks at how modern technology has opened up education for all levels of golfers.

The Internet is a fantastic resource to access knowledge and there is much more openness by organisations to give free information and help.

Golf is fortunate in that there is a coming together of the many bodies who have some role to play in promoting the game, maintaining standards and on and off the golf course, coaching and in the case of the GTC ensuring employers and greenkeepers have the best information available to educate and train their staff.

All of the GTC’s representative bodies, Associates and Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers have excellent websites which can be viewed via www.the-gtc.co.uk

One recent additional website offers employers and greenkeepers access to training courses, workshops and seminars dates and venues through an online calendar. England Golf has engaged many golfing bodies involved in organising training courses and www.greeneducation.co.uk is well worth a visit. All of the contributors including GTCC and BIGGA will be posting all events as they are developed.

The GTC’s Quality Assured Centres are all developing various learning platforms using the very latest technology and thankfully we are seeing many more as paper is getting replaced by online learning. The demand for hard copies of the GTC and BIGGA’s bulletin board is another example of how members across the world help share their experiences and knowledge which is a tremendous resource.

I know for something will replace the classroom with the hard copy books and handouts and the GTC fully supports that tried and tested method but nowadays the classroom can come to you.

Finally, the GTC has reviewed all of its learning materials, which were originally written by specialist subject authors in 2003/4, and is shortly to become available again in PDF format. A list of subjects, 18 chapters in total, and the authors who will shortly appear on the GTC’s website. This review project has been part funded by The R&A.

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Golf is very fortunate in that there is a coming together of the many bodies who have some role to play in promoting themselves. This month David Golding, GTC’s Education Director, looks at how modern technology has opened up education for all levels of golfers – but have not replace the tried and tested traditional methods of learning.

For some Centres and students the traditional methods of delivering courses towards the recognised qualifications are still the preferred option but more and more employers and students are considering the "on the job" delivery option. Either route to learn is fine by the GTC and we are very pleased as student registration numbers are still increasing annually – especially in the number of apprentices.

The GTC is also pleased to report the steady increase in student registrations on higher education courses, this again is mainly where online learning is a feature of the delivery model offered by the Centre.

Education and Training from Apprentice to the Degree, all with Government Accreditation, is a model Britain should be proud of and the students who have progressed through their careers by both vocational and HE courses and qualifications are now not only managing golf courses in Britain but across the globe.

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Greenkeepers Training Committee
David Golding, GTC Education Director, with a monthly update

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People of all ages now use Facebook, Twitter, Skype and other social networks. Access to computers and mobile phones have revolutionised to computers and mobile other social networks. People of all ages now use tested traditional methods of learning as some Centres now have online learning. At how modern technology has opened up education for all as some Centres now have online learning platforms using the very GTC and BIGGA will be posting visit. All of the contributors including some European Greenkeeping Educations like FEGGA, BIGGA and the -looking for support from organisa- Greenkeepers Training Committee, Quality Assured and European Greenkeeping -bodies, Associates and Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers have created websites which can be viewed via www.the-gtc.co.uk One recent additional website offers employers and greenkeepers access to training courses, workshops and seminars dates and venues through an online calendar. England Golf has engaged many golfing bodies involved in organising training courses and www. goldeducation.co.uk is well worth a visit. All of the contributors including GTC and BIGGA will be posting the GTC’s Quality Assured Centres are all developing various learning platforms using the very latest technology and thankfully I am saving many trees as paper is getting replaced by online learning. The demand for hard copies of Greenkeepers and Groundsmanship Training Manuals is reducing as some Centres now have online versions available.

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Many international delegates from golf developing countries are looking for support from organisations like FEGGA, BIGGA and the GTC. I will report in more detail on our supportive role through the European Greenkeeping Educa- tion Unit (EGEU) next month but my personal involvement has highlighted just how much smaller our community is now through the development and use of modern technology.

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Quick ‘Nine Hole’ Quiz
1 Who was controversially sent off against Real Madrid. But who did he 'lou' to be dismissed?
2 Jürgen Klopp is manager of which side who have reached the quarter finals of the Champions League?
3 Which striker scored a crucial late winner as Aston Villa beat QPR 3-2 in the Premier League?
4 Which football club play their home games at Griffin Park… which has a pub in all four corners of the ground?

CROSSWORD
ACROSS
1 Author of the campus novel Lucky Jim (8,4)
10 Study of speech processes (8)
11 Japanese martial art whose name means way of the sword (5)
12 Metrical foot of one short syllable followed by a longer one (6)
13 By population, the world’s largest city (8)
15 MP elected Labour leader after the death of John Smith (4,5)
16 Rhotacism-based nickname of a popular TV presenter (5)
17 Alcoholic beverages (5)
18 Sequence of numbers identifying a domain name (27)
20 In a similar manner (4)
22 Music (and its dance) (9)
24 Model of excellence (5)
25 Imaginary instrument (3,6)
26 Buckinghamshire ‘new town’, designated this in January 1967 (6,6)
27 Is it a feature the “on the job” delivery option.

DOWN
2 Inconsistently distributed (9)
3 Goddess of the earth in Greek mythology (4)
4 Final performance, swan song (4,6)
5 Canadian territory, focus of the 1890s Klondike gold rush (5)
6 Premiership football club founded as St. Mark’s (West Gorton) in 1880 (10,4)
7 Music streaming service based in London (originally in Sweden) (7)
8 Thin sliver of wood (6)
9 US artist noted for his novel Lucky Jim (8,4)
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Sudoku
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

Quick ‘Nine Hole’ Quiz
1) Which tennis player won the men’s tournament at Indian Wells?
2) Which Indian international cricketer recently scored the fastest ever Test century by a debutant against Australia?
3) Nigel Worthington was recently appointed manager at which football club?
4) Name the venues for the five Ashes Tests in England later this summer.
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Blinder Bunker goes from strength to strength

It has been an exciting year for the Sunningdale based company going from strength to strength with bunker installations and receiving great feedback from course managers across the country and Europe who have been dealing with difficult conditions and still experiencing perfect conditions in there blinder bunkers, that rake up, as if no rain has been falling.

More and more clubs are now returning for further installations of the bunker lining system that uses Environmentally approved rubber, graded to bridge with sand and mixed with a special binding agent to provide a strong flexible base able to withstand golf club strikes without damage to the liner, club or player whom no other liner can boast! The liner also has incredible drainage qualities and longevity.

The launch of the new Blinder Eco path has also been exciting and demand has been driven by course managers wanting a natural but hard-wearing solution that can be used alone or in a blend. The rubber is mixed for pathways that blends perfectly into the environment.

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This innovative finishing is hampered by lost hours fixing bunkers from heavy rain frustrating golfers.

Blinder & Bunker construction with a wide variety of experience in all aspects of golf course construction.

Blinder has been designed specifically to deal with all maintenance problems experienced by the course managers across the country and Europe who have been dealing with difficult conditions and still experiencing perfect conditions in their blinder bunkers, that rake up, as if no rain has been falling.

The strive for perfection and expectation on golf courses Blinder has been designed specifically to deal with all difficult conditions and still experiencing perfect conditions in their blinder bunkers, that rake up, as if no rain has been falling.

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All machines (unless otherwise stated) are subject to VAT, come fully serviced and a 90 day warranty National delivery available - Visit our website for more machines, photos and information
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I’m aware of what can sometimes go wrong in Committee and Board Meetings and I’d like to look at how the Greenkeeper/Manager can not only avoid the pitfalls, but start to take charge.

Last year, I attended an evening to recognise the environmental success achieved by a famous club in the South of the UK. About 40 delegates enjoyed several presentations charting the progress of various environmental initiatives and discussed the issues encountered along the way.

However, during the Q&As a visiting Secretary stood up. “This is all fine and good” he said, “but it’s only working well here because this club wants it to work. At my club, I’ve spent six months working with my Course Manager, Catering Manager and Pro to form an Environmental Policy for our club.

We dealt with everything; wildflowers and composting, re-use of waste cooking oil, disposal of cardboard and stationery, energy, lights - the whole lot. I presented it to the Committee, who gave it a quick two minute reading and then threw it out with the comment “the ruddy staff are starting to run this place!”

Another Secretary added. “That’s because some clubs are still not being run as proper businesses.”

He added; “At my Board meeting last week we had a twenty-five minute debate on the appropriate length of socks to be worn on the course this summer. Long socks, short socks, football socks, nylon socks, red socks, white socks – the list was endless – I tried to minute it, but we didn’t reach any firm conclusions.

“The next item on the agenda was the purchase of a £26,000 tractor, and that went through in less than a minute.”

Now this all set me wondering...my experiences as a volunteer director taught me that meetings don’t just happen. The Chairman and Managers’ inputs into the agenda are vital, and the agenda is the most important document.

Preparation is everything and disputes and discussions around anything remotely sensitive or controversial need to have been resolved well in advance. In other words, individual members of the committee often need to have been won over sensitively outside of the meeting by lobbying and discussion.

Let’s take another look at those two examples.

It’s not realistic to expect a far-reaching Environmental Policy be accepted and embraced by volunteer committee members ‘on the hoof’. This laudable policy making should, right at the outset, have involved the input of the Chairman of the Committee.

He must run it by every single member of his committee in advance of the meeting and iron out any sticking points or concerns. It should not have been included as an agenda item even for discussion, never mind a vote, until the Chairman was assured of the support of the meeting.

Likewise the socks issue is not an appropriate matter for a Board of Directors to waste valuable time debating at length during a formal meeting. The Chairman should have asked for notification on any issues which may require attention at least a month in advance.

When the dress code issue was flagged up, he would have had time to refer it straight to the General Manager, who would then be able to confer with a couple of other local clubs and source an appropriate existing policy. The easily reworded document is then circulated well in advance of the meeting for comment. Come the actual meeting, a new policy for the club, previously agreed and proven to have worked in a similar background, can be formally signed off without any undue delay.

Relieved of lengthy discussions over trivia, the Board then has the sufficient time and energy to properly consider the important tractor purchase. To summarise - the input of General Manager and Greenkeeper/Course Manager into the meeting agenda is vital.

“A secretary told me of a board meeting which featured a 25 minute debate on the length of socks to be worn on the course. The next item on the agenda was the purchase of a £26,000 tractor, and that went through in less than a minute”

Setting a suitable well-researched agenda with well-presented supporting information is critical to the smooth running and positive outcome of any Committee Meeting.

Discuss and resolve any remotely controversial matters with all committee members prior to the meeting to ensure there are no lengthy debates or nasty surprises.

We, the greenkeepers, need to identify our professional objectives for the meeting and work to achieve them. The Chairman will very soon recognise us as the professionals – because we make his job easier.
Recently, I’ve heard of many greenkeepers coming under severe pressure or even being made redundant, but I want to see the greenkeeper increasingly becoming regarded as the most important figure in the club structure; the person to who the club look to for leadership, especially in difficult times.

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**Mechanic/Greenkeeper**

**Saffron Walden Golf Club** requires a Mechanic/Greenkeeper to join its greenkeeping team. Applicants should possess the appropriate experience to carry out routine maintenance, repairs and servicing to the club’s large fleet of turf equipment. The ability to diagnose mechanical, hydraulic and electrical faults, and to keep accurate service records, is essential. The successful candidate will also be required to assist with golf course maintenance tasks. Any experience and qualifications in this area will be a distinct advantage but not essential. Salary will be in line with CGCS level 3 in this subject. We will actively encourage placement. The successful candidate will be prepared to continue studying to achieve NVQ qualifications to: secretary@safronwaldengolfclub.co.uk

Full Job Description can be supplied upon application.

Closing date for applications 12th April 2013.

**Greenkeeping Vacancy**

**PANNAL GOLF CLUB**

**SEASONAL ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER**

Pannal Golf Club, Harrogate, North Yorkshire

In line with our business needs and aims, we are looking to recruit an experienced Seasonal Greenkeeper from late April to late September 2013. Greenkeeping Certificates would be an advantage. Own transport essential.

**Working week 7.00am – 3.30pm Monday – Friday, together with some weekend overtime.**

Please send your CV to Neil Douglas, Managing Secretary at: Pannal Golf Club (Harrogate) Ltd, Folkloft Road, Pannal, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 1ES

Or by email: secretary@pannalgolfclub.co.uk

**Closing Date: 12th April 2013**

**TWO-YEAR SPONSORED PLACEMENT**

Ransomes Jacobsen Limited manufactures and markets a range of turf maintenance equipment for the golf course, municipal and professional lawn care markets. To demonstrate our products to new and existing customers, we have built a three-hole golf course, which is now in its fifth season.

We are currently looking to recruit a Greenkeeper on a two-year sponsored placement. The successful candidate will be responsible for the routine maintenance of the golf course and a 7-a-side football pitch, in accordance with our Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Policies.

As the ideal candidate you will have been working for at least a year on a golf course or turf maintenance environment, studying at NVQ level 2 or 3 in a turf or horticulture-related subject and be prepared to continue studying to achieve NVQ level 3 in this subject. We will actively encourage and support you in these studies and honour day-release obligations.

As the ideal candidate you will:

- Maintain and operating the water irrigation system to meet the seasonal growing requirements of the grass plant, whilst managing the resource by monitoring rainfall and forecast weather conditions
- Maintaining trial grass plots for our business partners
- Operating and maintaining machinery to the standards set out in the operators and maintenance manual for each piece of equipment
- Cleaning, preparing and storing each piece of equipment after use in line with the manufacturers’ recommendation to maintain its quality and precision
- Pruning trees, trimming hedges and cutting back shrubs, as required
- Assisting with customer visits, demonstrations and product training, as required
- Assisting with the test and trial of newly developed equipment

This could be your springboard to a successful career in the turf care industry, so if you’re looking to progress and are interested in this career opportunity, please send or email your CV to:

Carol Mellelieu, HR Director, Ransomes Jacobsen, West Road, Ransomes Europark, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1TY

Email: cmellelieu@tip.textron.com

**Vacancy for Assistant Greenkeeper**

Applicant should ideally have qualifications in the turf industry. It is essential that the individual is motivated and enthusiastic and will work under the direction of the Course Manager. Salary is dependent on qualifications and experience and candidates will be required to submit a detailed C.V. and attend an interview if shortlisted. For further information please contact Mr S Pugh on 0161 998 9278 (option 3)

Closing date 26th April.

Head Greenkeeper, Didsbury Golf Club

Ford Lane, Northenden, Manchester M22 4NQ

**Golf Course Head Greenkeeper**

Melton Mowbray Golf Club is a private members course opened in 1925 set in the rolling north Leicestershire county side. Arranged over 18 holes with a covered driving range and additional short game practice area.

We are seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated Head Green Keeper who must be qualified to NVQ/Work-based Diploma level 3 in Sports Turf Maintenance. You should also have PA1, PA2 and PA 6A qualifications in basic IT systems. The successful candidate should have at least five years experience of green keeping, with the desire to produce the course to a distinct advantage but not essential. Salary will be in line with CGCS level 3 in this subject. We will actively encourage day-release obligations.

An attractive, remuneration package will reflect the ability of the successful candidate. Please apply by email including your CV, and qualifications to: secretary@meltonmowbraygc.co.uk

Full Job Description can be supplied up on application.

Closing date for applications 12th April 2013.

Interviews will take place w/c 12th & 15th April 2013

**Recruitment**

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Contact Jill Rodham on 01347 833 812
Recruitment

Vacancy for Assistant Greenkeeper

PANNAL GOLF CLUB
SEASONAL ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER
Pannal Golf Club, Harrogate, North Yorkshire
In line with our business needs and aims, we are looking to recruit an experienced Seasonal Greenkeeper from late April to late September 2013. Greenkeeping Certificates would be an advantage. Own transport essential.
Working week 7.00am – 3.30pm Monday – Friday, together with some weekend overtime.
Please send your CV to Neil Douglas, Managing Secretary at: Pannal Golf Club (Harrogate) Ltd, Follifoot Road, Pannal, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 1EB Or by email: secretary@pannalgolfclub.co.uk
Closing Date: 12th April 2013

Mechanic/Greenkeeper

Saffron Walden Golf Club requires a Mechanic/Greenkeeper to join its greenkeeping team.
Applicants should possess the appropriate experience to carry out routine maintenance, repairs and servicing to the club’s large fleet of turf equipment. The ability to diagnose mechanical, hydraulic and electrical faults, and to keep accurate service records, is essential. The successful candidate will also be required to assist with golf course maintenance tasks. Any experience and qualifications in this area will be a distinct advantage but not essential. Salary will be in line with CGCS recommended rates.
Apply in writing with CV and a covering letter to: The General Manager, Saffron Walden Golf Club, Windmill Hill Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 1BX
Closing Date: 20th April 2013

Golf Course Head Greenkeeper

Melton Mowbray Golf Club in a private members course opened in 1925 set in the rolling north Leicestershire county side. Arranged over 18 holes with a covered driving range and additional short game practice area. We are seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated Head Green Keeper who must be qualified to NVQ/Work-based Diploma level 3 in Sports Turf maintenance. You should also have P1, P2 and P6A qualifications in the application of pesticides, chainsaw certificate desirable and knowledge of basic IT systems. The successful candidate should have at least five years experience of green keeping, with the desire to produce the course to the highest standards.
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Full Job Description can be supplied up on application.
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As the ideal candidate you will have been working for at least a year on a golf course or fine turf environment, studying at NVQ level 2 in a turf or horticulture-related subject and be prepared to continue studying to achieve NVQ level 3 in this subject. We will actively encourage and support you in these studies and honour day-release obligations.
Apply in writing with CV and a covering letter to: Jill Rodham, IPSO Ltd, Pannal Golf Club, Pannal Golf Club, Pannal, Harrogate, Yorks, HG3 1EB
Closing Date: 26th April.

TWO-YEAR SPONSORED PLACEMENT
Your springboard to a successful career

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The Back Nine
A column for writers and members to air and share their views on golf greenkeeping topics

As the golf season begins properly it seems many golfers will be struck by the highly contagious annual virus known as ‘Augusta Syndrome’. Scott Corrigan, Head Greenkeeper at Greenburn Golf Club, grabs his stethoscope and searches for a cure.

For golf course greenkeepers, Augusta National Golf Club and The Masters is a wonderful example of what can be achieved and created with unlimited resources.

I couldn’t even guess at their annual course budget – but I reckon Greenburn Golf Club could comfortably survive for the next century on what they spend in a year.

We’re now yet again approaching the start of a new golfing season which will inevitably be accompanied by the dreaded ‘Augusta Syndrome’.

As we emerge from the wettest year on record off the back of two very wet years previously, the golf industry around the world again looks to a single date during the second weekend in April to signify the Masters tournament as the unofficial start to the golfing season.

Ever since the Masters was first televised in colour in 1967, golfers have aspired to what they thought was the next best thing, an emerald green golf course to play on every week. We all know of golfers who race to Greenburn Golf Club to ‘have a practice’.

But as the average golfer settles down to watch the Masters on his 46inch widescreen HD television with the central heating on full, think of the struggling superintendent and his team at Augusta National who enjoy a mindblowing budget.

They have fallen in March here already). So this year, as spring approaches, I hope the golfers understand it’s as unpredictable weather that we need equipment and don’t forget the minimal manpower available.

Also bear in mind the issues that will inevitably be accompanied by the dreaded ‘Augusta Syndrome’. We are all aware of the issues that will inevitably be accompanied by the dreaded ‘Augusta Syndrome’.

So golfers - please spare a thought for greenkeepers in the real world who work tirelessly to produce the best courses possible with more and more restrictions imposed in the form of limited funds and reduced budgets, and with the minimal manpower available.

Also be fixed to:

• railway sleepers
• trolley ramps
• club entrance steps
• bunker steps
• footbridges
• walkways

Can you afford to ignore the slip dangers on your golf course?

GripClad composite anti-slip panels provide a hard wearing, long term safety solution for slippery railway sleeper steps, being resistant to spiked shoes, weather and chemicals.

Our affordable non-slip safety product for golf courses is proven to excel other methods. Installed as part of your golf clubs health and safety precautions it can help avoid slip accidents and potential liability claims.

We offer free advice with this easy to install product, that will far outlast all previous slip prevention methods. Unrivalled quality and durability means that our anti-slip panels can be installed and then forgotten.

A LASTING SOLUTION FOR ANTI-SLIP SAFETY ON THE TEE

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Ever since the Masters was first televised in colour in 1967, golfers have aspired to what they thought was the next best thing, an emerald green golf course to play on every week. We all know of golfers who race to watch the Masters, and rumour has it that last year Hollywood set designers were brought in to hide damage caused by the use of weedkillers. Granted, the pressures to prepare Augusta compared to the average golf course are immense.

But here’s an interesting exercise for you. Look up ‘Augusta National Golf Club’ on Google Maps to see it in its natural state, and when you zoom in you will find the true golf course. You’ll see grass that looks like natural grass, with bare patches and faded greens with dry ponds, a rather scorching appearance that people will not associate with the Augusta we know.

We greenkeepers love watching this tournament as much as not that the next golf fanatic, but the expectations placed on our industry after the Masters is enough to make many of us tear our hair out. So golfers – please spare a thought for greenkeepers in the real world who work tirelessly to produce the best courses possible with more and more restrictions imposed in the form of limited funds and reduced budgets, and with the minimal manpower available.

Also bear in mind the issues that come with working with ageing equipment and don’t forget the unpredictable weather that we need to work with. Eight inches of snow have fallen in March here already.

So this year, as spring approaches, I hope the golfers understand it’s as easy to install, an anti-slip safety product for golf courses is proven to excel other methods.

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A compensation claim can dwarf the cost of the solution, so why not pay a small price for peace of mind and contact Gripclad?

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Can you afford to ignore the slip dangers on your golf course?
There’s a reason why the best courses trust in John Deere: our mowers deliver unmatched cut quality, creating an ideal playing surface on tees, greens, fairways and roughs.

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