Inside...

A DAY IN THE LIFE
Steve Castle visits Immingham GC

TURNING JAPANESE
A look at Japanese Knotweed

Fril your boots
GI visits Sid Arrowsmith at Frilford Heath, host to the BIGGA National Championship 2013

Also Inside... UAE Courses : BASIS : Grinders : GIS
GP400 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 groomers. To make the GP400 easy to use and maintain, they added a one-touch joystick for lift/lower, a Management System including verticutters and groomers. To make the GP400

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WELCOME FROM BIGGA

Justin Rose’s serene march to the US Open title was a fabulous story on so many levels; the fulfilling of precocious teenage promise, redemption following the traumatic 21 missed cuts that blighted the start of his professional career, overcoming the huge crowd favourite and the imperious Hogan-esque ball striking down the stretch.

For the Merion Golf Club Superintendent it was also a career defining triumph. The weather did its worst, which seems to be the case so often these days – particularly in the days leading up to the start of the tournament. But Matt Shaffer and his team presented their classic golf course beautifully and it tested the world’s best players to the absolute limit. When the rains came down various commentators opined that the course would be defeasible and that the winning score would be double digits below par, in the end though the sub 7,000 yard challenge defeated all comers. Watching Rose strategically plot his way round to become the first English winner for 43 years and make it the third British triumph in four years was a huge thrill.

The golfing circus now moves on to Muirfield where Course Manager Colin Irvine and his regular and volunteer teams will prepare another world-class layout, the best in many people’s eyes, for a superb field of players. I hope the weather is substantially kinder for Colin but that we do get a good coastal breeze to make it a true Open test.

Either way the BIGGA Open Support Team are ready to play their part in the ongoing success of The Open Championship. I look forward to welcoming the successful candidates luck in the process. May I wish all students of the bewildering array of titles that serve our industry it is clear that we must listen to your views. Please feel free to feedback to us any comments you may have on the recent changes or any other area.

Elsewhere in these pages we unveil a new look to Around the Green which I hope meets with your approval, our reader survey highlighted the importance of this ‘grassroots’ element to our magazine but also raised a number of valid points in terms of style and presentation. As we strive to make this publication the most relevant and informative of the bewildering array of titles that serve our industry it is clear that we must listen to your views. Please feel free to feedback to us any comments you may have on the recent changes or any other area.
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Colin but that we do get a good coastal breeze to make it a true Open test. Rose blooms as The Open looms

Enjoy the read.

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO
Managing golf courses in the Arabian heat

Laurence Pithie travels to a sweltering United Arab Emirates to discover how greenkeeping teams cope with soaring temperatures.

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Steve Castle’s latest greenkeeping shift at Immingham Golf Club.

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The official monthly magazine of British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.
Managing golf courses in the Arabian heat

Laurence Pithie travels to a sweltering United Arab Emirates to discover how greenkeeping teams cope with soaring temperatures.

Fril your boots!
Find out why there’s a treat in store for entrants to this year’s BIGGA National Championship at Frilford Heath Golf Club

Become the next BIGGA Champion
How to enter the BIGGA National Championship 2013

A day in the life
Steve Castle’s latest greenkeeping shift at Immingham Golf Club

Turning Japanese
How lethal injection is the best way to tackle Japanese Knotweed

Golf club politics
David Bancroft-Turner’s realistic and hard-hitting view on how to manage club politics for your gain

Managing golf courses in the Arabian heat

Laurence Pithie travels to a sweltering United Arab Emirates to discover how greenkeeping teams cope with soaring temperatures.

Bracken ruin?
Our latest BASIS article looks at the positive and negative aspects of bracken – and how to control it

At the grindstone
An introductory guide to grinding, with key questions answered by an expert

A helping hand
How a Geographic Information System (GIS) can assist many aspects of day-to-day greenkeeping

The official monthly magazine of British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association
All roads lead to Muirfield

Chairman’s Word
National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

I was glued to the coverage of the US Open this month and was naturally delighted to see a British player claim the crown.

The moment I saw Justin Rose deservedly lifting the trophy, I realised that all eyes now turn to Muirfield for the next major and started to get excited about The Open.

Other than BTME, I feel The Open really is the year’s highlight for us and our best chance to showcase the Association as yet again dozens of our members from across the UK and the world have the unique opportunity to work on the Support Team.

I know from experience how valuable the Team’s work is and I’m sure that once again they will provide hugely professional, committed support for the venue’s existing greenskeeping team.

It’s an extremely intense week, with some incredibly tired members around by the Sunday night, but it’s so rewarding on both a personal and professional basis. It’s these sort of opportunities that I’ve repeatedly mentioned as one of the huge benefits of IGBOA membership.

From my point of view, as well as getting involved with the Support Team, it’s my chance to meet countless other industry bodies, turf professionals and all manner of old friends and new faces who will be attending - I can’t bear.

It will also be a proud week for me as it marks a year in my post as Chairman – which has flown by - and that neatly brings me on to some news regarding the board. Regrettably, Gary Cunningham has resigned from his position as Board Member for the Midlands Region due to his current employment status. I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank Gary for his terrific commitment, energy and enthusiasm whilst on the Board and wish him all the very best for the future.

I’m sure he will continue to be a prominent and well-respected figure in the industry. Steve Mason, Course Manager of Stocks Golf Club in Hertfordshire, has taken his place on the Board and I look forward to working with him.

After 12 months in the role as Chairman I feel it’s the perfect time for me to reflect. It has been a busy time including the conclusion of a difficult restructure at HQ and the implementation of our Business Plan.

With the right team at IGBOA House now in place and our business affairs in a more robust state the Board has the opportunity to focus more on the long-term future of the Association, delivering better benefits to membership and really making the industry stronger for the next generation of greenkeepers.

The last few years have been a big challenge for the Association and whilst there are still some major issues for individual members, some of which are worsened by the volatility of both our climate and economy, we have laid the foundations for a more successful future and feel that we are on track towards our ultimate aim of becoming a must-join Association.

I know this is not the case for the whole of the UK, but generally I sense the weather is behaving itself with not only dry spells but also some of the sunshine that was so sadly lacking last year.

The courses that I’ve seen recently seem to finally be growing and flourishing and we can only hope this signals the arrival of a proper summer.

You could argue it’s been six or seven years since the last summer worthy of the name.

Next month I hope to be reflecting on the BTME aside, I feel The Open really is the year’s highlight for us, and our best chance to showcase the Association.

The last time we were there in 2002 so I’m not counting my chickens just yet!

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BIGGA SEMINARS AT SALTEX

BIGGA are staging a whole day of free education presentations at this year’s SALTEX (Sports Amenity & Landscape Trade Exhibition) at Windsor Racecourse - with CPD credits available for those attending.

The BIGGA Golf Education Day on Wednesday September 4 will appeal to greenkeepers at courses of every size and type and will focus on drainage, bunkers, composts and disease management.

The day will start with ‘Greens Drainage - Mission Possible’ presented by Andy Wood, Course Manager of Robin Hood Golf Club.

He will outline a workable solution for transforming soil-based greens with deep thatch and black layer, highlighting the methods used to solve drainage problems on troublesome greens.

Stuart Yarwood MG, Course Manager of Lymn Golf Club, will then discuss ‘Sand Traps to solve drainage problems on courses of every size’ and disease management.

Simon will highlight how an integrated approach to disease management can reduce the disease pressure, improve turf health and enhance the performance of fungicide applications.

New findings on disease management will also be presented along with practical advice on how to deliver smooth, disease-free greens right through the high risk autumn and winter periods.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton, said: ‘BIGGA is delighted to once again have the opportunity to work with our friends the IOG and bring top-class greenkeeper education to the SALTEX experience. I hope many of our members take the opportunity to attend the seminar programme.’

‘BIGGA’s revamped CPD programme launches on July 4 so it is great that SALTEX provides the chance for our members to improve both their knowledge and their CPD profile. I hope many also take the chance to view the exhibition; the turf industry is a constant provider of innovation, and opportunities like SALTEX where new products and services can be seen at first hand are always a benefit.’

One BIGGA CPD credit is available for each seminar and a CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar. Visit www.iogsaltex.com for full details.
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Stuart Yarwood MG, Course Manager of Lyme Golf Club, will then discuss ‘Sand Traps and Money Pits’. He will look at managing and constructing golf course bunkers on limited budgets, while revisiting the past to shape our future. Stuart’s presentation will also include the art of compost creation and its role in greenskeeping.

The schedule is completed by the joint Keerwits/Syngenta presentation ‘Go In Green…Come Out Clean’ as Dr Simon Watson, Syngenta Turf and Landscape Technical Manager, points out how winter disease on golf greens is particularly problematic: since there is little turf growth in the winter, disease pressure, improve turf health and enhance the performance of fungicide applications.

New findings on disease management will also be presented along with practical advice on how to deliver smooth, disease-free greens right through the high risk autumn and winter periods. BIGGA CEO, Jim Cruston, said: “BIGGA is delighted to once again have the opportunity to work with our friends the IOG and bring top-class greenkeeper education to the SALTEX experience. I hope many of our members take the opportunity to attend the seminar programme.

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CHRI$$ ROARS OFF INTO RETIREMENT

Keen motorcyclist Chris Mitchell has retired after working at Maidenhead Golf Club in Berkshire for 45 years. Chris – currently a 13 handicap golfer – joined the club in 1968 as an apprentice greenkeeper, then moved on to assistant and first assistant before taking the Course Manager position ten years ago.

The club have promoted two of Chris’s former colleagues with Barry Gardiner assuming the mantle of Course Manager and Mark Sweeney the new Deputy. Barry Gardner assuming the role of Chris’s former colleagues with Barry Gardiner assuming the mantle of Course Manager and Mark Sweeney the new Deputy. Chris said: “I’ve really appreciated the support of the club, the members and management in providing the resources to do the job to the best of my ability.”

He added that one of the highlights of his time at Maidenhead was when the members clubbed together to pay for a much-needed full course of winter disease on golf greens leading to dissatisfied golfers.

This, he says, can impact the playability of greens right through to the spring period and take the chance to view the nearby wedding venue.

Jan Beech, HEAD Greenkeeper at the Club, attended the nuptials and confirmed a good time was had by all.

GEMCEN KEEPERS VICTORIOUS

Ashley Wood Golf Club played host recently to the 17th Annual Course Care Cup, this year with the secretary’s boat for a winner.

Good weather and a fine course ensured good golf with the day thoroughly enjoyed by all. Despite huge efforts the Secretaries could not prevail and the greenkeepers took the trophy again winning three matches to two. Thanks from all were extended to Highspeed Group Ltd for sponsoring the event.

Highspeed Group’s Area Manager Paul Dyter presented the trophy to Tony Godd, Chairman of BIGGA South Coast Section.

TRO$$ MOWE$$ AT THE HART OF WEDDING

A greenkeeper at Newcastle-under-Lyme Golf Club is so attached to his Toro mower – he took it to his wedding.

Dawn Hart tied the knot with sweetheart Stephanie on a glorious June day. He took the opportunity to be pictured with his Toro Greensmaster 3250, which was specially transported to the nearby wedding venue.

Jan Beech, HEAD Greenkeeper at the Club, attended the nuptials and confirmed a good time was had by all.

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JIMMY READ RETIRES

Jimmy Read (above left) has retired from his position of Head Greenkeeper at Hunstanton Golf Club. Jimmy spent 37 successful years at the Championship links, 34 of which were as Head Greenkeeper. Jimmy’s son Peter is currently Acting Head Greenkeeper. Club Secretary Bob Carrick said: “He has overseen many amateur competitions over the years and is proud to leave the course in superb condition. He has seen great changes in the course as part of the recent development work masterminded by Martin Hawtree and Gordon Irvine. All members and staff wish Jimmy all the best for his retirement and we would like to thank him for his tireless work over the years.”

JIMMY READ RETIRES

Ben Blampied-Smyth. Ben has used some spectacular pictures from the Head Greenkeeper at Royal Jersey Golf Club - Ben Blampied-Smyth. Ben has used some spectacular photography of the links course in tandem with pages of in-depth greenkeeping information, all set out in a clear and attractive format. Ben said: “As a fairly new Head Greenkeeper it’s allowed the members to get to know me professionally. It’s also been extremely helpful when I’ve changed maintenance practices to inform the members why I’m changing things and the benefits of these changes.

“For the greenkeeping team as a whole it has hopefully allowed the members to get to know the team better. It’s massively improved communication to the members in terms of why certain procedures are necessary, what is involved in carrying out the procedure, timescales and potential inconvenience.

“In my first year we had TPG Thomson Perrett A lob golf course architects do an audit of the course. My first winter program involved implementing some of these changes to the course which I hope are fairly major. The blog became very important to a lot of members to keep them up to date with these changes and how they would improve the course long term.

“This winter we also carried out changes to three holes from the TPG proposal and started upgrading our irrigation system which is a massive investment for the club. Again we were able to inform and educate the members on this works via the blog. See for yourself at http://royaljersey.getrenewed.com

BIGGA SCOTLAND TRIUMPH (BUT ONLY JUST!)

It didn’t look promising for golf to be played as the weather was quite nasty in the morning but thankfully the annual match against the Scottish Section of the GCMA went ahead at Douglas Park Golf Club on Wednesday 8 May.

Although a strong team from the region was assembled, the GCMA managed to win 5 points to our 4 following the completion of the day’s play. However, the region managed to retain the trophy thanks to a walkover result for the final game. The board would like to thank all members of the team for taking part.

On accepting the trophy, Chairman Aye O’Hara (shown left with Derek Scott) praised the course manager Drew McKenzie for the excellent presentation of the course on the day particularly considering the weather.

BIGGA'S DOUBLE ACE

BY GEORGE! BIGGA LIFE MEMBER’S DOUBLE ACE

Former BIGGA Chairman George Brown recorded two holes-in-one in the space of ten days – and was rewarded with two exclusive Hugo Boss watches! Seven handicap George, 74, began his winning streak by hitting a four-iron into the cup on the 160 yard 6th at Turnberry’s Kintyre course during a seniors competition.

He followed this up with an ace in a medal competition on the 175 yard 11th at the Ailsa course – and he is now the proud owner of two Hugo Boss Watches because the luxury brand is rewarding club golfers with a special timepiece for every hole-in-one recorded during official competitions.

All official competitions are recorded on the HowDidiDo system, so anyone hitting a hole-in-one between April 15 and October 31 can claim a watch. George, former Course Manager at Turnberry, has now taken his career total of aces to nine.
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As before, this section will highlight the many benefits BIGGA membership gives you, but will feature you, the members. We want to hear your stories and experiences – so whether you’ve found a new job through BIGGA, got help through our Legal Helpline or Lifestyle Counselling, worked at a high-profile tournament or even won a golf competition we want to hear from you!

BIGGA Support at the BMW PGA Championship

This month we focus on the superb work of the BIGGA Support Team who assisted Kenny Mackay and his team during the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth.

Due to print deadlines we were unable to fully cover their efforts last month so here are details from a testing week which featured a row between two of the sport’s leading lights, erratic weather and a young Italian winner celebrating a testing week which featured a row between two of the sport’s leading lights, erratic weather and a young Italian winner celebrating a high-profile tournament or even some brilliant golf and a wonderful presentation in particular and the use of different rakes. The bunkers were so consistent with one inch of sand on the face and three inches on the bottom. Each one must have played exactly the same. “I met some amazing guys from other golf clubs and have kept in contact with, along with the Wentworth team who made us feel so welcome.”

Phil Worth, Greenkeeper at The Mere Golf Resort & Spa, said: “Thank you for a brilliant four days for me.”

Kevin Armstrong, Head Greenkeeper at John O’Gaunt Golf Club, echoed Joe’s thoughts. James Briggs, Greenkeeper at East Sussex National Golf Club, said: “I had an amazing time and also gained so much from this experience. I will definitely apply again next year.”

Other Useful Numbers

Full Members only

Personal Accident Helpline
0800 26 36 462

Assistance in the event of Legal
Assistance
0800 177 7891

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0800 177 7892

www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst

www.elainejones.co.uk

Assistant Profile

Name: Michael Llong
Age: 25
Club: Littlegate Golf Club
Position: Greenkeeper
Nickname: Bruce

How long have you been greenkeeping?
8 years

What was it about the career that attracted you?
My dad is a greenkeeper and I used to go to work with him in the summer holidays.

Which task do you most enjoy doing?
Hand cutting. The aesthetics of a hand cut green, approach or tee can’t be beaten.

Which task do you least enjoy doing?
I don’t think there is one.

What one thing would improve the greenkeepers’ lot? To be recognised for the hard work that goes into maintaining a golf course and not just be seen as a grass cutter.

Hobbies?

Which team do you support?
England cricket team

What is your claim to fame?
With any luck being on the Assistant Profile.
BIGGA Support at the BMW PGA Championship

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“We had an amazing time and got involved in opportunities like I had never got up to before,” said Joe Dormer, Greenkeeper at The Mere Golf Resort & Spa, said: “I had a fantastic time meeting Kevin Armstrong, Head Greenkeeper at John O’Groat Golf Club, and even some sunshine on occasions.

“I met some amazing guys from other golf clubs and have kept in contact with, along with the Wentworth team who made us feel so welcome.”

Phil Worth, Greenkeeper at The Mere Golf Resort & Spa, said: “Thank you for a brilliant four days at Wentworth. It was a fantastic experience and a real eye opener for me.”

Kevin Armstrong, Head Greenkeeper at John O’Groat Golf Club, added: “I had a fantastic time meeting some new faces and get to see some brilliant golf and a wonderful course. I will definitely apply again next year.”

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Name: Michael Llong
Age: 25
Club: Littletown Golf Club
Position: Greenkeeper
Nickname: Bruce
How long have you been greengreening? 8 years
What was it about the career that attracted you? My dad is a groundsman and I used to go to work with him in the summer holidays.

If you weren’t a greengreenkeeper what would you be? A farmer or a job involving animals.
Which task do you most enjoy doing? Hand cutting. The aesthetics of a hand cut green, approach or tee can’t be beaten.
Which task do you least enjoy doing? I don’t think there is one.

What one thing would improve the greengreenkeepers’ lot? To be recognised for the hard work that goes into maintaining a golf course and not just be seen as a grass cutter.

Hobbies? Woodwork, golf.

Which team do you support? England cricket team.

What is your claim to fame? With any luck being on the Assistant Profile.

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A NEW DAWN FOR BIGGA CPD

As of 1 July 2013, the BIGGA CPD Programme is changing. Using feedback from members, the programme has been revamped to allow greater flexibility, more ways to get credits and enhanced recognition.

The new structure will be a three-year rolling programme rather than an annual programme, allowing members the flexibility to fit their professional development into their own timeframes.

The value of a credit has risen to one per hour of education plus the time spent on professional development. The programme has been expanded.

The CPD scheme officially launched on 1 July. There’s a reminder of this below – for much more refer to Stuart Green’s articles in the previous two magazines.

We’re also very pleased to announce the speakers for the BIGGA seminars at SALTEX 2013 – CPD credits are available for attending (page 65).

TAKING STOCK

Hadlow College has appointed Anthony Stockwell as a full-time Greenkeeping Assessor to work alongside their team, which includes some of the most experienced individuals within the industry.

Anthony gained his BSc (Hons) in Greenkeeping and worked for both The New Zealand and London Golf Clubs. He’s currently working with a Premier League football club and studying with Penn State University towards his Masters in Turfgrass Management.

Hadlow can offer Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships as well as stand-alone Diplomas at Levels 2 & 3. All are delivered as much as possible in the workplace.

Level 4 is being set up, which they will be able to offer in the not too distant future.

Experienced assessors at Hadlow visit learners in the workplace every five weeks.

The assessors guide the learners through their qualifications, delivering on-going training and assessing practical skills. Apprentices do need to attend seminars, workshops, seminars, workshops, seminars, workshops, which are held every five weeks.

The Government have confirmed further support for FTMI in 2014 following the fantastic success of this year’s Future Turf Managers Initiative. Jacobsen will be running this worthwhile programme again in 2014.

With topics ranging from budgeting and finance to CV writing and interview techniques over the three days, this is a wonderful opportunity that a aspiring turf manager should consider applying for.

The quality of the training and feedback from the delegates proved just how valuable they felt the programme was. Keep an eye on L&D News for further details.

ANDY’S REASON TO CELEBRATE

Congratulations to Andy Rees, Deputy Course Manager at North Harris Golf Club, who has achieved his Higher National Certificate in Golf Course Management from Elmwood.

Andy will officially graduate following a ceremony later this year.

JACOBSEN CONFIRM FURTHER SUPPORT FOR FTMI IN 2014

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The value of a credit has risen to one per hour of education plus the type of activity that can be claimed for has been expanded.

A NEW DAWN FOR BIGGA CPD

The launching pad for Gold Key Silver Key Individual Members:
Hayley Parry, Ben Doherty, Stuart Green, Nick Gray, Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn
Silver Key Individual Members:
Sami Strutt, BIGGA's Learning and Development Manager, and Development Manager connected.

We’re excited about the new developments to the CPD programme. Member feedback has been important in helping us to shape the new programme and we feel that the enhancements that have been made will make CPD more attractive and attainable for our members. We’re now concentrating on making the process of registering CPD credits less cumbersome – watch this space!

For more details on the new programme and how you may be affected by the changes we have created a Frequently Asked Questions section on the website that can be found at http://www.bigga.org.uk/education/continuing-education/.

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NEW INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

The European Tour has taken a further significant step forward in the promotion of sustainability in golf, sport and events through European Tour Green Drive.

This is a new initiative to support and showcase environmental and community action across the organisation’s operations, venues and tournaments.

With a reach across over 45 countries, the Green Drive initiative has the potential to make a real impact both on the community action across the organisation’s operations, venues and tournaments.

Speaking at Wentworth during the BMW PGA Championship, European Tour Chief Executive George O’Grady expressed his commitment to the initiative.

"The European Tour has long recognised the commitment to the initiative. The European Tour provides a platform for governments and companies to showcase their own policies, corporate responsibility and technologies in the unique arena of professional golf."

The European Tour Green Drive has a strong long-term ambition based on continual improvement and is built on a credible foundation of policy, guidelines, programming and industry ecolabel from initiative partner GEO.

Jonathan Smith, Chief Executive of GEO, added: "This exciting initiative will help a diverse range of people and companies linked to The European Tour to get even more involved in credible sustainability action. There is an opportunity for every venue and tournament, and we’re ready to support as they get involved and help the initiative grow."

The latest turf industry news from around the globe

RT MAKE DOUBLE APPOINTMENT

Rightly Taylor have announced two appointments to their sales team. Mark Whiting (above) has been appointed to the position of Sales Director, and will assume responsibility for the implementation, direction and coordination of the company’s sales strategy across the whole spectrum of the sports, amenity and landscape industries.

Working closely with his team of regional sales directors, Mark brings a wealth of sales experience to this role.

Tito Arana (below) has been appointed to the new role of Business Development Manager. Tito will assume responsibility for identifying and developing new market and business sector opportunities with the objective of achieving new revenue streams for the company. Tito is Basis qualified and has a wide range of experience within the amenity industry.

DEEP AERATION FOR FREE DRAINING GREENS

Opened for play in 1896, Maidenhead Golf Club has obviously evolved over the intervening years, but it is still based around its original construction.

This means the greens have not been constructed to modern standards but are essentially constructed on natural clay over gravel base.

Over the years, the clay has formed a moisture-retaining base that needs careful management to prevent greens becoming waterlogged.

A loan of a Redexim Verti-Drain, from Charterhouse Turf Machinery, that worked down to a greater depth than nine inches, has had a marked impact upon improving the speed at which water drained from the greens.

Course Manager, Barry Gardner, above, said: "We have already seen an improvement in how the greens drain since using the new Verti-Drain, but we can only use the machine at its full depth when our norminals allow. We are an extremely busy course, so will need to time deep aeration accordingly."

"It’s not that the Verti-Drain causes a difficulty to remedy heave after an aeration pass at maximum depth," Barry is keen to point out, "it’s just that more aggressive aeration will cause some disruption to the surface and the green will take time to settle."

ONE SPRAY, COMPLETE CONTROL

Cold and wet weather during the early spring slowed the growth of grass and without the competition weeds have become established. However, with moisture in the soil and warmer temperatures, excellent control can now be achieved with the use of Greenor.

Greenor achieves effective translocation into the roots ensuring a more thorough kill of the root occurs and a greater level of seed control.

The product provides excellent results against a wide range of weeds, including daisies and both white and yellow sucking clovers but really comes into its own in swards containing rougher, more difficult to control species.

Following application, the active ingredients of Greenor rapidly penetrate the plant through the leaf surface and move deep into the root system. Once absorbed, they cannot be washed off and are readily translocated around the whole of the weed, including the roots.

This unique formulation increases herbicide activity, resulting in a more thorough kill with lower amounts of active ingredient.

A new Wiedenmann Terra Spike (C08i) HD was the stand-out choice when the team at Keddleston Park Golf Club, Derby needed a new aerator. After a visit to BTME in Harrogate and a very thorough on site demonstration, the deal was struck.

Head greenskeeper David Leatherland, who has held his post for over 35 years, said: "For lots of reasons the C08i HD just suited us – its slim car type of course – our greens are built on sand with everywhere else clay-based, and the fit with our tractor. It was simply the right one."

"Since its arrival at the end of May, its main focus so far has been to pencil line all greens which we plan to do on a monthly basis." James Robson, Area Sales Manager at Wiedenmann dealer, Heron’s & Chatell, said: "Keddleston Park is both an exceptionally well-tended and busy course so the versatile (C08i) HD fitted in. It’s wide combines high coverage with precision and really will do what they require."
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This is a new initiative to support and showcase environmental and community action across the organisation’s operations, venues and tournaments. With a reach across over 45 countries, the Green Drive initiative has the potential to make a real impact both on the quality and credibility of the TOUR and its events, and as an example and inspiration.

Speaking at Wentworth during the BMW PGA Championship, European Tour Chief Executive George O’Grady expressed his excitement and support for the initiative. He said:

“The European Tour has long recognised the importance of environmental stewardship, resource efficiency and positive community engagement for golf. “We’re very proud of the staging of The Ryder Cup and our significant investment in GEO (Golf Environment Organisations) since 2006. Developing Green Drive across The European Tour is an important step further. “We look forward to working with our many venue, staging, media, government and commercial partners to make a genuine contribution, and adopt a leadership position in sustainable sport”. The First Partners to come forward as leaders in their support of Green Drive are Royal & Cumnor, with Trito as a Sponsor.

European Tour Group Marketing Director Scott Kelly added: “We’re very grateful for this early support – which matches the ET’s own continuing investment in sustainability, and which enables us and GEO to ensure the quality and credibility of the initiative. The European Tour provides a platform for governments and companies to showcase their own policies, corporate responsibility and technologies in the unique arena of professional golf.”

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Fril your boots!

The BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota is heading to Frilford Heath Golf Club. Steve Castle discovered why players can expect a treat in rural Oxfordshire.

PROFILE
Name: Sidney Arrowsmith MG
Role: Course Manager
Born: Wigan, 22 October 1953
Handicap: 9
Hobbies: Gardening, walking, watching sport
Favourite sports team: Manchester United
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An increased prize fund...the chance to play on a course which hosts European Tour qualifying a week previously...picturesque heathland surrounded by rare flora, fauna and wildlife...what further incentives do you need to enter the 2013 BIGGA National Championship?

Most of the impressive 700-acre, 54-hole complex is a Site of Special Scientific Interest – so while you're hitting over the pond and dodging the greenside bunkers on the par three 9th, or attacking the long par five 10th, you may catch sight of a red kite, woodpecker or some of the rare orchids.

Pilfield Heath was first awarded European Tour qualifying three years ago – a real feather in the club's cap. The qualifying – and the BIGGA National – take place on the Red Course with the Green and Blue courses remaining open throughout. Course Manager Sid Arrowsmith was quick to insist that nothing radically changes during the qualifying at 7.45am, yet sun missed the second cut out and we took the turf iron out to take them down – it made my day! So we missed the second cut out and we took the turf iron out to take them down to 10.5.”

The team follow identical aeration programmes on each course. They micro hollow tine twice a year – usually in March and then in July or August, and aerate deep in the top several inches. Since the greens are a blend of Agrostis grasses and poa annua – and the vast majority are natural heathland greens. We've tried to produce better performing greens by reducing organic material – thatch – then diluting it with pure sand so the greens become firmer, faster and improved. The thatch coverage has never been bad but it's just been a little more than I would ideally like.

“We've also started using a Clegg Hammer as well as the stamper and moisture meter to check the smoothness, trueness and firmness.

“The Clegg Hammer measures impacts on the surface which gives you a firmness reading. We got some readings of 120 which was too hard so we aim for 100 – really firm, fast greens.

Last year at the European Tour qualifying the greens were running at 11 and we were asked to slow them down – it made my day! So we missed the second cut out and we took the turf iron out to take them down to 10.5.”

The height of cut remains the same on all three courses, five assistant greenkeepers on each and two full-time mechanics.

So what else can BIGGA members bidding to win the first prize of £250 – and the BIGGA Challenge Trophy – expect?

“It is a very stern test of golf – a true heathland challenge. There are lots of obstacles such as gone just off the fairways which can really hurt you. You’ve got to hit long and straight, it’s a demanding 6,912 yards. There’s a lot of risk and reward golf – if you want to take the big stick out and try and get the distance there are birdie opportunities.

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“Some may think it’s daunting to host these events, but we run at a high standard all the time so for a European Tour event it’s not as if we have to lift it up by, say, 25% - we’re always at tournament standard so it just requires a bit of fine tuning.

“This may mean double cutting on a morning with a double or single iron but nothing too major. The height of cut remains the same at around 2.5mm.

“October is a challenging time of year to host prestigious events, because of course the light is limited in the morning and in the evening.

“There are 240 players starting the qualifying at 7.45am, yet sunrise is at around 6.45am so we’ve only got an hour to work on the course, so we try and do as much work as possible the evening before.

“To help direct most of our available resources to the Red Course.

“It’s all about the team ethic. I’ve got some wonderful guys here who have never worked anywhere else – we have a Head Greenskeeper on each of the three courses, five assistant greenskeepers on each and two full-time mechanics.

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“But, if it doesn’t quite come off you will be heavily penalised. It’s a varied challenge from hole to hole.”

Sid explained the changes they’ve made in a bid to regain the Red Course’s place in the Top 100 Courses in the UK list. They have built new tees, put in some new bunkers and replaced old sand with new in others, as well as putting drainage sumps in some of the sand traps.

He added: “The greens are a blend of Agrostis grasses and poa annua – and the vast majority are natural heathland greens. We’ve tried to produce better performing greens by reducing organic material – thatch – then diluting it with pure sand so the greens become firmer, faster and improved. The thatch coverage has never been bad but it’s just been a little more than I would ideally like.

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The team follow identical aeration programmes on each course. They micro hollow time twice a year – usually in March and then in July or August, and aerate deep with the aid of a machine they’ve recently purchased called GP Air. This is basically a sparrow which has compressed air pumped into it.

“It’s then plunged into the turf and shatters the soil underneath, allowing quick and easy drainage.”

Sid explained that over time, the silt particles in the greens migrate down to 10.5.

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Sid explained that over time, the silt particles in the greens migrate down to 10.5.
machine ‘blasts’ this layer to help the infiltration.

The site also features acid grassland and ancient fenland, and some of the older trees were felled recently to rehydrate the fenland. In turn, this encouraged natural flora and fauna to return, which allowed various species to flourish. Burrowing wasps, rare beetles, treecreepers, huzards, red kites and kingfishers can be spotted by the more eagle-eyed golfer.

Lancastrian Sid worked at various courses in the UK before becoming part of the team constructing Golf D’Apremont, a course 40km north of Paris. He was then Head Greenkeeper at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland before joining Frilford Heath in February 1994. He turns 60 this year – so what advice would he give young greenkeepers?

“It’s absolutely vital to keep abreast of all issues, developments and changes – whether they be environmental, technical or mechanical. I achieved my Master Greenkeeper Certificate in 1997. It’s not made me a better or a worse greenkeeper – I did it for my own personal CPD.

“The whole picture is important – the way you dress, portray yourself at meetings and social events, how you speak to the members…if you want respect you have to conduct yourself in the right manner.

“I never stop seeking ways to educate myself further and keep improving. I remember going to BTME, sitting with the likes of Walter Woods, Jack McMillan and George Brown and just letting their knowledge rub off on me.”

Sid and I then headed up to the clubhouse balcony which overlooks the 18th green, and his thoughts returned to the BIGGA National. BIGGA members hoping to follow in the footsteps of current champion Oly Browning can play two rounds of golf plus dinner on the Monday evening for just £90. There are prizes for best gross and nett scores plus various prizes for nearest the pin and longest drive.

“I’m looking forward to hosting the guys even though I’m sure some of them will be picking holes in elements of the course!

“That’s natural for greenkeepers and I’m looking forward to meeting them all. I’m also playing in it so we’ll see what happens there!”

See you in October.
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See you in October.
A day in the life

Six months after his first greenkeeping crash course in Cheshire, Steve Castle joined the team at Immingham Golf Club the day before a major event with hundreds due to attend. What could possibly go wrong?

Back in November I experienced my first proper day in the life of a greenkeeper at Lymm Golf Club which featured digging drainage trenches in torrential rain – so I was extremely pleased to see the sun shining brightly as I headed for Immingham Golf Club, near Grimsby in Lincolnshire.

The club’s four greenkeepers – Steve Beverly, Robin Portess, Rob Bemment and Malcolm Holden – arrived well before I turned up at 7am to continue preparations for the next day’s Charity Golf Day, with 130 people expected to play.

My first impression was that the parkland course – which opened in 1975 as a nine-hole venue before being extended to 18 holes in 1985 – genuinely looked superb, taking on a vibrant green hue in the sunshine.

However, I quickly discovered there was still much hard work to complete behind the scenes to fine-tune the course ahead of one of its most important days of the season.

Head Greenkeeper Steve said: “It’s vital to have the course looking its absolute best. As well as the money that will be brought in on the day, we want to convince some of the players to return and ultimately to become members. It’s all about word of mouth, if they tell people they’ve enjoyed it and it’s a first-class course more and more people will come and play here.”

It would be no exaggeration to say the club exists on a shoestring budget, and have had to deal with problems ranging from disastrous floods to vandalism. It’s been a challenging time for Scouser Steve who joined the club from Cleethorpes Golf Club (where he was Deputy Head Greenkeeper) in 2006.

“In June 2007 this area suffered horrendous flooding. We had 331mm of rain that month, to put that in context the next highest since I arrived was 154mm in June last year. Part of the course is below sea level and that flooded very badly, and it’s clay-based so the water had nowhere to go. Everyone described it as a once-in-a-lifetime month, I just hope they’re right!”

My first task was to help Steve empty the bins and ball washers next to the tees, and we began just yards from the impressive clubhouse. He then paused to point out a strange track running through a bunker. I was bemused until he wearily explained the cause.

“Someone’s cycled through this. We’ve really suffered with vandalism. We’ve had flags stolen or chucked in the pond and greens dug up – but what can you do? We have CCTV, but we can’t put a huge fence around the entire course. Everyone has to do their bit!”

As we worked our way around the course he showed me how to trim the holes – exactly the sort of task I did not appreciate as a casual golfer before I joined BIGGA but am now well aware of. It was clear attention to detail was absolutely vital as the club sought to convince many of the next day’s punters to return.

This brought us on to the inevitably thorny issue of money in an area which is one of the least prosperous in the UK.

Steve confided that the team had to take a pay cut at the height of the club’s financial problems in 2010, and the newest machine the club owns is a five-year-old Toro Groundsmaster 7210. He added: “You have to balance out the cost of continually repairing against the cost of new machinery. These machines are expensive to buy new so generally we all muck in and repair them when something breaks.”

After lunch in the shipping container which doubles as a mess room, Steve risked letting me loose

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“Machines are expensive to buy new so generally we all muck in and repair them when something breaks”
on parts of the course. I attempted to mow the 18th green with a Ransomes Jacobsen Greens King 6, but sadly it failed to lift the mower up quickly enough and took a bite out of the side of the green – something I stupidly replicated later on a tee box. I’ve definitely still got some way to go in my greenkeeping education.

My favourite machine was the Toro Groundsmaster 7210. It’s controlled with an unusual (to me) pair of hand-held levers. This took a little bit of time to adjust to, but within a few minutes I was confidently driving it around and having more fun than was strictly necessary.

Later, Steve and I spent much of the day painstakingly taking the club’s 44 bunkers. He showed me the correct technique – and also showed me how to take the soil temperature, something he does every day – before he continued on the financial theme.

He said: “At BTME I heard a greenskeeper say he’d spent £7,000 on a single bunker. That’s fair enough if you’ve got the money but that’s a different world to us. A couple of members were very keen to praise the course despite the harsh economic realities. Comments included ‘it looks and plays fantastic’, ‘these lads are doing a great job’ and ‘it’s the best course in the area’. I’ve been made well aware that IGGA members feel their tireless work is sometimes unappreciated by many golfers at their clubs, so it was refreshing to hear this positivity. The only complaint I heard was that Immingham – with its tough par threes and fours, some blind tee shots and undulating fairways – was too hard! Steve says: ‘It is a tough course and probably doesn’t get the credit it deserves. Like any course if you take care with your course management – and hit it down the middle the green – you won’t end up in trouble!’

I then noticed that a window on the second floor of the clubhouse was being repaired. I feared another sad tale of mindless vandalism until Robin started laughing, and tried to explain how one visiting golfer had managed to whack a ball through it while practicing in a net far below. He said: “He must have accidentally hit it back off the iron frame, it’s sailed just past his head, shot 20 feet up and gone through the window. It was like CSI Immingham the next day with us all trying to work out how he’d done it.”

All in all, a hugely enjoyable and informative day and I left knowing I’d discovered a hidden gem of a club.
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Ian Coote 
Royston Golf Club, Herts

"From what I have seen, using Qualibra would mean I may only need to irrigate once a week – a big saving in time and money."
Glenn Rayfield 
Felstedwe Ferry Golf Club, Suffolk

"Where we had sprayed Qualibra there has been a marked and sustained improvement in sward quality."
Philip Baldock 
Ganton Golf Club, Yorkshire

AERATION PROGRAMME

Steve says: "We have two 'maintenance weeks' when aeration and heavier top dressing is carried out, with routine aeration regularly carried out throughout the year. The greens maintain slightly higher levels of thatch than we'd ideally like, as a mixture of hollow coring, solid tining and verti-draining is carried out.

The greens are said treated at 3-4 week intervals depending on the golf calendar using a mixture of 3mm and 14mm tines at varying depths. They are fed using granular fertilisers from spring to autumn and liquids in winter. We use lawn sand in the spring, 2-0-9 in summer and 3-0-22 in the autumn. We're trialling two different types of bio-stimulants which comprise sugars and seaweeds amongst other elements.

"We've reduced fairway verti-draining due to the high cost of fuel, and fairway scarification is required but unfortunately is not financially viable."

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Qualibra Deeper thinking

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Invasive weeds are damaging and difficult to control but Japanese knotweed, the general name given to a group of species belonging to the genus Fallopia (family Polygonaceae), and native to Japan and parts of China, stands head and shoulders above the rest. In their native Asian range they are primary volcanic colonisers and generally far less vigorous because plant growth is kept in check by co-evolving natural enemies and pathogens.

The species of Japanese knotweed usually found in the UK is Fallopia japonica var. japonica, introduced from Japan two centuries ago. Japanese knotweed continues to destroy ecosystems and urban infrastructure and is one of few herbaceous weeds requiring direct placement of herbicide inside the plant to ensure quick complete control.

The introduction of Japanese knotweed as an ornamental plant into early Victorian gardens must have seemed like a good idea at the time but it has left a huge and growing weed legacy. Capacity for vegetative spread in situ through enormous fast growing and resilient rhizomes, made easier by the very nature of its favoured riparian and urban environments, is the secret of Japanese knotweed’s success.

Dense growing stands restrict access for riverbank inspections and increase flood risks through large quantities of dead stems and leaves washed into rivers and streams. Attempts to remove established stands from riparian areas can cause instability in river banks and increase the risk of soil erosion. Urban site infestations cause considerable damage to hard surfaces. With stems that can penetrate concrete tarmac, no barrier to Japanese knotweed. The severity of Japanese knotweed is clear to see from the legislation used to limit spread and damage. It’s scheduled under the 1961 Wildlife and Countryside Act making it an offence to plant or cause it to grow in the wild. It is also classified as ‘Controlled Waste’ under the Environment Protection Act (1990) and must be disposed of on a licensed landfill site in accordance with the Environment Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

A multi-faceted weed

Red-coloured, spear-like aerial shoots emerge in spring - reaching 30cm by April and forming a massive foliar canopy two to three metres tall by summer’s end. Plants produce large numbers of white flowers in summer but barely any viable seed, probably due to UK climatic restrictions on sexual reproductive development.

Above ground stems die back and dry out in autumn, but overwintering rhizomes (underground stems) are so fast growing, all pervading and consuming that nothing else stands a chance - even during the only ‘knotweed-free window’ during late autumn and winter. Dead stems and leaves decompose very slowly to form a deep litter that prevents the germination of other seeds.

Failure to produce viable seed is more than compensated for by a fast growing and robust system of rhizomes allowing Japanese knotweed to exploit and dominate environments through vegetative propagation.

Rhizome systems may extend up to 3m from the parent plant and to a depth of 3m. Rhizome fragments as small as 0.7g can generate new plants and pieces of fresh aerial stem will grow shoots and roots in soil or water. Plants achieve up to 3m of aerial growth and 6m of rhizome growth in a single growing season.

New shoots arise from the tiniest pieces of rhizome and cut stems, all very much in evidence. Large growing stands can finish off the leaves but rhizomes survive and produce new stems. The only sure and safe way to dispatch Japanese knotweed is by placing a systemically acting herbicide (most usually glyphosate) into the plants by injection of intact standing stems low down and at the most appropriate time of the growing season.

Target area is the lower part of the aerial stem to minimize the distance for downward translocation into the rhizome system. Best time is

Herbicide application

Application of herbicide is the only sure and safe way to manage Japanese knotweed but this is easier said than done due to the sheer size and resilience of its rhizomes. A number of herbicides are effective against Japanese knotweed but due to how much and for how long depends on the application technique used. Application technique will ultimately determine the success of chemical control against Japanese knotweed.

Spraying with contact herbicide will burn off the leaves but rhizomes survive and produce new shoots. The only sure and safe way to dispatch Japanese knotweed is by placing a systemically acting herbicide (most usually glyphosate) into the plants by injection of intact standing stems low down and at the most appropriate time of the growing season.

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Turning Japanese How lethal injection is the best way to tackle Japanese knotweed – one of the most invasive weeds you will come across
from late summer through autumn when rhizomes become sinks for soluble food and nutrients which is translocated downwards from the leaves before these senesce and fall off. Injected systemic herbicide is subject to this same strong basipetal (downward) translocation into the rhizome system which is subsequently killed.

**Death by lethal injection**

Japanese knotweed’s hollow stem is its ‘Achilles Heel’. Professional stem injection applicators designed and dedicated to control of hollow-stemmed weed plants such as Japanese knotweed are available.

Stem injectors used to control Japanese Knotweed include:

- **‘Injectordos’** from Micron Sprayers at Bromyard, Herefordshire.
- **UK Injection Tool** from Stem Injection Systems at Stockport, Cheshire
- **‘Stem Master’** from Nomix Enviro at Andover, Hampshire.

The advantages offered by the stem injection technique focus on effectiveness, ease of access and use and all round safety for operators and the environment.

Use of these relatively lightweight and small applicators mean operators can access and treat the most dense stands of Japanese knotweed. By providing a closed delivery system the technique can be safely and effectively used at any time including during rainfall. The closed highly targeted delivery system means there is no danger of product escaping into the environment to damage nearby plants. Also, by delivery of a measured dose into the hollow stem, the injection technique can usually achieve ‘death by lethal injection’ in one application.

Stem injection does a truly ‘inside job’ on Japanese Knotweed and is used with good effect on other invasive weeds such as Himalayan balsam and Giant Hogweed which also have hollow stems. Stem injection in something most golf courses can carry out using their own resources. However, taking into account equipment, expertise and safety – including the need for an appropriate operator’s licence if application is made near water and safe disposal of any debris - then employing the services of a specialist company advertising this expertise may turn out to be the most convenient and effective option.

**Complete Weed Control offers a specialist contract service for the eradication of all problem weeds, wherever they appear including:**

- Total weed control – hard, soft and gravel surfaces
- Selective weed control – for control of broadleaf weeds in grass
- Aquatic weed control – marginal, submerged and floating weeds
- Chinese control – in turf, plants and trees
- Grass growth control – retardation of grass growth in all areas
- Insect control – in turf, plants and trees
- Fertiliser application – liquid or granular
- Moss & algae control
- Root control – tree, shrub and control and control of bracken and other weeds with hollow stems
- Disease control
- Grass growth control
- Insect control

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Experience plays a major factor in successful treatment. Knowing when and how to apply the appropriate product can speed up eradication and save time and money. All work is undertaken adhering to strict health & safety guidelines.
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- Weeds of fine lawns
- Korean LNT 6DT

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about the author

Dr Terry Mabbett

Dr Terry Mabbett is a disease, pest and weed control specialist with forty years international experience covering research, advisory and journalism. His current fields of focus are professional turf and alien insect pests and pathogens of Britain’s native and naturalised trees.

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Are you frustrated with constant political bickering at your club? Here’s David Bancroft-Turner with a realistic and hard-hitting view on how to manage it all.

Golf Clubs are like any other formalised groups of human beings – where there are three or more gathered together, thou shalt have politics.

1. Do you know which one is right and which is wrong? We don’t find it helpful to argue which is right and which is wrong. We will just end up arguing. The key question is: DO YOU KNOW WHICH ONE IS HAPPENING AT YOUR CLUB?
2. Do you know how information flows in and out of the Club? You and your Club…
3. Do you know how you are perceived by the others? It’s not a question of personal bluster or political ambition. It’s about...
Golf club politics

Are you frustrated with constant political bickering at your club? Here’s David Bancroft-Turner with a realistic and hard-hitting view on how to manage it all.

Golf Club politics – surely there aren’t any? Members come together to enjoy and share the game that they all love, barfing old and new friends, eating and drinking at the game that they all love, doesn’t it? Various shots that were great.

Are you frustrated with constant political bickering at your club? Here’s David Bancroft-Turner with a realistic and hard-hitting view on how to manage it all.

David Bancroft-Turner has written with Bettish for every week. You should be ready to read David’s articles. He’s an excellent writer, his articles are insightful, and you’ll benefit from reading them. If you want to improve your golf game, his articles are an excellent place to start.

7. Do you have the key people in your Club and what are their REAL agendas?
8. Are you connected with the people who have access to the power in the Club?
9. Are you connected with the people who have access to the Club? Are you connected with the people who have access to the power in the Club?
10. Do you really believe that the politics need to be managed?

The staff restaurant for 55 minutes waiting for him to turn up and then accidentally bumped into him, he asked me to join him for lunch which gave me the opportunity to tell him how brilliant I was (in that British way again of course). Skilful or manipulative? Your choice!

The point being I was relying on the formal processes in the organisation to look after me when actually it was the informal processes that I needed to learn and to make sure I am tapped into as much as possible.

That was my first lesson about politics – do not rely on what they tell you are the processes for making decisions – the real way your organisation works is via the informal processes. So, less of babbling and me, let’s get back to you and your Club. Take a look at the questions inset left.

Any answer which is ‘No’ to any question gives you a plan of action. An answer of ‘To no question’ 10 means you have no hope. If you don’t believe that politics need to be managed, there is nothing I can do for you. Apart from giving you any respect for making a decision that is going to be really tough for you and your career in the future. But hey, good luck!

If you’ve decided that you need to become more involved in Club politics then the question is what do you do next? Here are some ideas for you to think about:

• Find out from colleagues, members and trusted friends who have power in your Club and develop excuses to connect with them. Connect is the key word here. Speak for talk to them, listen to them, have a chat, find out what is going on in their mind etc.

• Ask your boss about his or her agendas and what they really want out of working at the Club

• Network (meet, talk, bump into), have a chat, whatever you want to call it) with people that you don’t know. Introduce yourself and be interested in what they think about the Club

• Learn the four different personality preferences that exist and practice saying the same thing in four different ways.

“Golf Clubs are like any other formalised groups of human beings – where there are three or more gathered together, thou shalt have politics”

Think back on times that have gone well and not so well – what can you learn from them?

Practice managing the key political skill of ‘Time and Place’. Know when to raise an issue and learn when to keep quiet – the best politicians interact with their audiences in the right way at the right time.

Stop avoiding people you don’t like – the best politicians interact with everybody, otherwise they are not going to have the vital information that they need.

Start to use the informal processes that exist – identify them, where do they happen, when, who and what is covered? How do you do that is being watched by others but also ‘How’ you do it.

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Managing golf courses in the Arabian heat

Greenkeepers are all too aware of the problems caused by excess water – what about the issues posed by heat? Laurence Pithie travelled to a sweltering United Arab Emirates to find out.
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Greenkeepers are all too aware of the problems caused by excess water – what about the issues posed by heat? Laurence Pithie travelled to a sweltering United Arab Emirates to find out.
The UAE is a federation of seven Emirates or principalities, the capital and largest being Abu Dhabi. Gaining immense revenue from oil, areas of the desert have been transformed as investment has been used to create a modern city and infrastructure consisting of golf courses, marinas, sporting arenas, race tracks and so on.

Travelling within the UAE is relatively cheap, thanks to fuel costs that the western world can only dream of. Filling the car for £10 is quite a novelty along with the seven lane Sheikh Zayed highway that bisects Dubai.

The UAE’s population of almost 8 million inhabitants, 2 million of whom live in Dubai, is served by 19 golf courses, albeit with some nine hole layouts.

The Emirates Majlis course was the first grass course in 1968 followed by almost one each year until the downturn in the global economy took effect.

Most of the newer courses are integrated into larger housing communities or linked to hotels that help guarantee success.

Fortunately this market is again on the increase and Dubai reputedly enjoys one of the highest hotel occupancy rates in the world. Peak season is from October to April with annual roundage varying from 20,000 to 60,000.

Some of the more popular sites are also floodlit, allowing golf to be played until midnight as darkness occurs much earlier throughout the summer than in the UK.

Winter temperatures are around 20C, whereas summer temperatures are frequently above 40C and therein lies the considerable challenge of keeping the turfgrass alive, especially when rainfall is negligible.

THE GOLF COURSES

I visited several courses with Richard Crocombe, BIGGA International Member and Course Superintendents Professional Manager for Orient Irrigation in Dubai.

The majority of courses I explored were designed by Harradine Golf, making best use of the flat desert landscape and enjoyable for all levels of golfer.

Along the coastal fringes of the UAE where the golf courses are located the land largely consists of dune sand which is high in salt content, of a fine particle size and prone to wind blow in the form of sand storms. The warm season grasses consist of either Bermuda or Paspalum although some high end courses oversowed with cool season rye in the winter on tees, fairways and semi-roughs for other tournaments or presentation.

Drainage to greens is standard and on the fairways, this can range from soakaways to piped networks. Fairway drainage is important in order to allow efficient irrigation water to move through the profile as quickly as possible, thus avoiding the build-up of high sodium levels.

Treated Sewage Effluent (TSE) from adjacent housing communities, hotels or from the municipality is widely used for irrigation purposes.

On the Jebel Ali resort course, an on-site desalination plant provides clean drinking water for the hotel, apartments and clubhouse which is then recycled as TSE for the golf course and hotel grounds - good use of this precious commodity.

At the height of summer up to 12mm of water will be applied each night to replace the amount lost in ET. This equates to over 1 million gals (4,543m^3) of water per night being used per 18 holes.

Compared to the amount used on a typical UK course this equates to just two nights watering!

More than three nights without water in the summer would place the turf under serious stress. Whereas northern European courses tend to have around 400Ha of natural turf, a typical course in Dubai will have well under half that amount due to water availability.

Apart from narrow strips of semi tough, all external areas are of a desert landscape and are managed as such. Great use is made of biennials for similar reasons, with washed sand sourced from the dunef or imported silica sand from neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

GREENS

Most newer greens are of a good standard. There are currently no courses being built in the UAE and the key challenge with greens is to manage salinity levels within the build-up with applications being 'little and frequent' namely every week but depending on the time of year.

Aerifying and top dressing practices are similar to the UK but with far more verti-cutting and light scarifying required. Insects are more of a problem than disease, with leaf feeding cutworms, army worms and root feeding white grubs being the chief pests followed by nematodes.

The key challenge with greens is to manage salinity levels within the build-up by regularly flushing or drenching the greens to force downward movement of salt accumulation. The other main challenges are to control thatch and firm up surfaces to well over 11 feet for tournaments.

The latter has higher heat and salt tolerances which gives it an advantage over Bermuda, but it has to be managed more aggressively to combat thatch levels. In both cases, superb putting surfaces can be attained with mowing heights varying from 2.5mm in summer to 3.5mm in winter.

Root depth typically varies between 75 and 150mm in depth with GM levels dependent on thatch control measures. Green speed averages around 9 feet for visitor play to well over 11 feet for tournaments.

Mowing is by walk mowers only with up to 14 cuts per week; this in addition to ‘furf ironing’ 3 times per week. Fertiliser input is considered compared to the UK, since these are ‘hungry’ grasses and growing all year round.

Nitrogen input can vary from 350 to 500 kgs/Ha per annum, likewise Potassium, whereas Phosphates levels are low. All greens tend to receive high levels of Calcium (variably sourced) to combat the sodium build-up with applications being ‘little and frequent’ namely every week but depending on the time of year.

MANAGEMENT

All courses in the UAE require intensive labour, with 18 staff for every nine holes being the norm. Around 20% of the time is taken up managing the peripheral desert landscaped areas which involves weeding, trimming, pruning and watering.

These areas vary in style and can range from palm trees to lower growing shrubs that can tolerate the heat of the desert sun. Presentation and attention to detail such as bunkers and cart path edging is intensive, especially with prices of up to £200 a round.

Most Superintendents are either British, Australian or Kiwi, with the rest of the crew from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.
The UAE is a federation of seven Emirates or principalities, the capital and largest being Abu Dhabi. Gaining immense revenue from oil, areas of the desert have been transformed and investment has been used to create a modern city and infrastructure consisting of commerce, retail, residential and tourism, not to mention golf courses, marinas, sporting arenas, race tracks and so on. Travelling within the UAE is relatively cheap, thanks to fuel costs that the western world can only dream of. Filling the car for £10 is quite a novelty along with the seven lane Sheikh Zayed highway that bisects Dubai.

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On the Jebel Ali resort course, an on-site desalination plant provides clean drinking water for the hotel, apartments and clubhouse which is then recycled as TSE for the golf course and hotel grounds - good use of this precious commodity. At the height of summer up to 120m of water will be applied each night to replace the amount lost in ET. This equates to over 1 million gals (4,545m3) of water per night being used per 18 holes.

Compared to the amount used on a typical UK course this equates to just two nights watering!

More than three nights without water in the summer would place the turf under serious stress. Whereas northern European courses tend to have around 400gpa of natural turf, a typical course in Dubai will have well under half that amount due to water availability.

Apart from narrow strips of semi-rough, all external areas are of a ‘desert’ landscape and are managed as such. Great use is made of barriers for similar reasons, with washed sand sourced from the dunes or imported silica sand from neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

GREENS

Most newer greens are of a good size throughout the UAE, being largely built to USGA standards or similar. Either local ‘red’ or ‘sweet’ sand is used for construction or imported silica sand. pH levels are generally high, often between 7.5 and 8.0. Bermuda TifEagle or TifDwarf are the most common grass types, although newer courses are switching to Paspalum Sea Sea varieties or Paspalum TE.

The latter has higher heat and salt tolerances which gives it an advantage over Bermuda, but it has to be managed more aggressively to combat thatch levels. In both cases, superb putting surfaces can be attained with mowing heights varying from 2.5mm in summer to 3.5mm in winter.

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Aerifying and top dressing practices are similar to the UK but with far more verti-cutting and light scarifying required. Insects are more of a problem than disease, with leaf feeding curwmoths, army worms and root feeding white grubs being the chief pests followed by nematodes.

The key challenge with greens is to manage salinity levels within the root zone by regularly flushing or drenching the greens to force downward movement of salt accumula- tion. The other main challenges are to control thatch and firm up surfaces and to maintain this during the peak winter season when the growth rate is relatively slow.

MANAGEMENT

All courses in the UAE require intensive labour, with 18 staff for every nine holes being the norm. Around 20% of the time is taken up managing the peripheral desert landscaped areas which involves weeding, trimming, pruning and watering.

These areas vary in style and can range from palm trees to lower growing shrubs that can tolerate the heat of the desert sun. Presenta- tion and attention to detail such as bunkers and cart path edging is intensive, especially with prices of up to £200 a round.

Most Superintendents are either British, Australian or Kiwi, with the rest of the crew from India, Paki- stan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

“Winter temperatures are around 20C, whereas summer temperatures are frequently above 40C and therein lies the considerable challenge of keeping the turfgrass alive, especially when rainfall is negligible.”
On some of the larger properties, the deputy may also be from the ‘west’. Staffing structures are very different to that of the UK and it is fairly common for the majority of staff to be limited to just a few different tasks, such as bunker raking, fairway mowing or hand watering. Language can be a challenge but most will have a basic understanding of English since it is the second language throughout the UAE.

Superintendents need to have good management and organisation skills when working with large crews as well as a sound agronomic understanding of managing warm season grasses and the aspects of salinity. This is not something that is likely to be encountered in the UK.

Just surviving in temperatures in excess of 40°C is a challenge in itself! Whereas grass has to endure these temperatures 24/7, at least staff and golfers can take periods of shelter in air conditioned buildings or cars.

It was a strange experience to witness about 30 staff suddenly appearing in a fleet of run-arounds late in the morning and after quick refreshments, discovering that they had all gone to sleep for about an hour in adjacent housing accommodation. I’ve never seen a maintenance compound with so many people so eerily quiet!

SUMMARY

Managing golf courses in this environment is indeed a challenge, with turf wholly reliant on receiving water, which in the heat of the summer, may not always be available in sufficient quantities.

Superintendents working in the UAE require a high level of skill and dedication, often working six days a week or more.

The rewards and experience gained can be high and everyone I met during this time had produced golf courses to a high standard in turf quality and presentation.

about the author

Laurence Pithie MG

Laurence Pithie MG, a graduate in turf science at Writtle College, has an impressive CV having worked as an agronomist, golf course designer and in the tea and coffee industries. Laurence has now returned to his home southern England and is using his expertise in turfgrass management at his local golf club.
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Bracken ruín?

Graham Paul’s latest BASIS article looks at the invasive fern bracken and how to control it

Bracken is a rhizomatous species of fern belonging to the Dennstaedtiaceae family that are characterised by large, highly-divided fronds. Fossil records show that it’s been around for 55 million years and has enjoyed worldwide distribution.

Originally classified as a single species Pteridium aquilinum, bracken has now been reclassified into about 10 species. It’s a survivor – able to adapt to a wide range of climates and conditions, so it needs to be kept in check for the benefit of the environment, wildlife and those farmers whose livelihood depends on grazing livestock on clean pastures.

In this article I shall look at the plant; how it spreads, its positive and negative attributes and measures available to control it.

There are about 12,000 species of fern that belong to the plant kingdom group Pteridophyta. They reproduce by spores rather than by flowers and seeds and have an alternating life cycle but, like flowering plants, they do have a vascular transport system (xylem and phloem), roots, stem and leaves (known as fronds). Once established bracken will spread and colonise an area with fronds sprouting directly from the rhizomes growing much nearer the surface (see Figure 1 on page 42), from which the bracken fronds emerge in late spring from the underground rhizomes. The first shoots are often referred to as the ‘runners’ or ‘fiddlehead’ stage as they resemble a shepherd’s crook or the curved end of a violin.

The underground root system for bracken consists of thickened storage organs found deep in the soil that are attached to thinner underground rhizomes. The first shoots are often referred to as the ‘runners’ or ‘fiddlehead’ stage as they resemble a shepherd’s crook or the curved end of a violin.

Bracken thrives in most habitats except for deserts and poorly drained land, occurring in all parts of the world except Antarctica. In the UK it was originally an inhabitant of woodlands, moorlands and lowlands but today it can also be found in upland regions, where the removal of large areas of trees to make way for sheep pastures has allowed it to become more invasive.

Bracken tolerates soils with a pH ranging from 2.8 to 8.6 and is found growing in the saline mists of coastal areas, although a combination of high winds and salt can cause scorching of the young fronds. Cold inhospitable climates can cause scorching of the young fronds. Cold inhospitable climates can cause scorching of the young fronds. Cold inhospitable climates can cause scorching of the young fronds.

Production of spores takes place in the sexual stage involving the spores. These are microscopic and produced in structures known as ‘sori’, located in a linear fashion on the undersides of the fronds. These young fronds have a covering of bronze coloured hairs and are easily damaged by late frosts. The emerging shoots develop into large triangular fronds, each growing directly from the rhizomes and forming dense thickets. The fronds may grow up to 2.5m or more in height.

One of these involves the release of allelopathic chemicals into the soil. These are antagonistic molecules that discourage other plant species from taking root and may remain in the soil long after the bracken has been removed. Allelopathic chemicals, together with the dense shading canopy produced by the fronds and deep litter on the surface from several years of decaying bracken, will make it difficult for other vegetation to get established again even after total loss of cover by fire damage.

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Looking at some of the positive characteristics of this plant, it has provided man with a source of food the immature fronds have been eaten as a delicacy after thorough cooking to remove toxins. The deeper rhizomes that contain stores of starch were used in baking by some cultures in remote parts of the world and both fronds and rhizomes have been used to brew beer.

However, medical authorities and toxicologists advise against consuming any part of the bracken plant as it is known to contain substances toxic to humans and animals. Today bracken is still har- vested in parts of the UK to make commercial composts.

Bracken can offer the right conditions of shading and humidity to support several plants normally found in woodland areas such as wood anemone, bluebell, — the immature fronds have been eaten as a delicacy after thorough cooking to remove toxins. The deeper rhizomes that contain stores of starch were used in baking by some cultures in remote parts of the world and both fronds and rhizomes have been used to brew beer. However, medical authorities and toxicologists advise against consuming any part of the bracken plant as it is known to contain substances toxic to humans and animals. Today bracken is still har- vested in parts of the UK to make commercial composts.

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Once established in a new area, bracken will dominate and squeeze out the existing vegetation by a combination of tactics. One of these involves the release of allelopathic chemicals into the soil. These are antagonistic molecules that discourage other plant species from taking root and may remain in the soil long after the bracken has been removed. Allelopathic chemicals, together with the dense shading canopy produced by the fronds and deep litter on the surface from several years of decaying bracken, will make it difficult for other vegetation to get established again even after total loss of cover by fire damage.

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In cooler climates, bracken is a deciduous plant dying back completely in the autumn and sprouting again in late spring from the underground rhizomes. The first shoots are often referred to as the ‘rouster’ or ‘fiddlehead’ stage as they resemble a shepherd’s crook or the curved end of a violin. The underground root system for bracken consists of thickened storage organs found deep in the soil that are attached to thinner underground rhizomes. These young fronds have a covering of bronze coloured hairs and are easily damaged by late frosts. The emerging shoots develop into large individual triangular fronds, each growing directly from the rhizomes and forming dense thickets. The fronds may grow up to 2.5m or more in height.

Production of spores takes place in the autumn – usually in October. The spores ripen from July to August but are not released until the autumn – usually in October. A single frond can produce several hundred million spores but many do not survive to become new bracken plants, as successful development of the sexual stage of the life cycle is dependent on frost-free conditions with adequate moisture, and without fungal attack on the germinated spores. These spores that do germinate will eventually form a small immature sporophyte stage to complete the life cycle but, due to the size, these are rarely seen.

Once established in a new area, bracken will dominate and squeeze out the existing vegetation by a combination of tactics. One of these involves the release of allelopathic chemicals into the soil. These are antagonistic molecules that discourage other plant species from taking root and may remain in the soil long after the bracken has been removed. Allelopathic chemicals, together with the dense shading canopy produced by the fronds and deep litter on the surface from several years of decaying bracken, will make it difficult for other vegetation to get established again even after total loss of cover by fire damage.

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chickweed-wintergreen and common dog violet. The presence of dog violets and bracken on south-facing hillside provides a valuable habitat for the pearl-bordered fritillary – a rare butterfly listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. This is also an important habitat for reptiles, such as adders. Two British birds, the whinchat and nightjar, have adopted bracken as their preferred habitat as it provides good cover and a degree of protection for their young. Some other birds such as the skylark, lapwing and yellowhammer use thick bracken as a protected feeding site. Where bracken has invaded moorland it then excludes many bird species that are common to this habitat. Apart from the invasive characteristics of bracken the main negative aspects of this plant are its poisonous properties when consumed by man and other animals. Bracken may poison some grazing animals although they will normally avoid it when alternative food is plentiful. It is in times of hardship that sheep may suffer blindness and cattle can get severe stomach ulceration from consuming significant quantities of the plant. Raw bracken contains the enzyme thiaminase, which can cause a vitamin deficiency in horses, leading to a condition known as ‘staggers’. The young emerging fronds contain the most toxins with levels decreasing as the plant matures through the season. The discovery of carcinogenic substances in the spores and in the plant tissues of bracken is a major concern. The microscopic spores are readily spread by wind that might blow them towards nearby human habi-

ditions, whilst decaying bracken can release a carcinogen known as ‘ptaquiloside’ that can leach into water supplies. Factors that are now being linked to the high incidences of oesophageal and stomach cancer in many areas of the world where bracken is abundant.

Control measures

Ecologically, a small amount of bracken can be a benefit to the biodiversity of an area. However, the other side of the argument suggests that the careful removal of bracken will encourage displaced species to return, which is ultimately more beneficial to man and to wildlife. Mechanical methods of control include:

- Damaging the fronds by partially cutting or bruising each stem several times. This can be repeated through the summer as the fronds grow back and if such treatments are maintained for several years, it can have the effect of reducing the reserves of the underground rhizome system causing a gradual weakening of the growth.
- Use of broadcast to tramp down the fronds. The animals must be provided with sufficient food (hay) to safeguard them from grazing the bracken. This can open up the ground and allow frost to penetrate the soil and damage the rhizomes. This method is not usually applicable to amenity situations.

Chemical control

- Glyphosate – e.g. Roundup Profactive 450®. Bracken should be treated after the frond tips are fully unfurled, but before senescence. Apply using a suitable sprayer depending on the situation and take care to avoid treating desirable vegetation.
- A knapsack sprayer or weed-wiper may be most suited to difficult and remote sites. Before choosing glyphosate for bracken control, the user should make sure there are no valuable plants or wildlife sheltering under the cover of the fronds.
- Asulox e.g. Asulox is probably the best chemical treatment for bracken control as it is selective for ferns.

General use of this active ingredient was withdrawn completely in 2012 by the EEC. However, UK emergency approval was granted came into force on 20 May 2013 when it will last for 120 days. It will allow ‘Asulox’ to be advertised, sold and used solely for the control of bracken and will have a new label putting restrictions on the methods of application and dose rate.

Full label details will not be available until the approval start date but some details have been released by the Chemical Regulators Directorate in a special briefing. For details see www.brackencontrol.co.uk/Documents. Application through weed-wipers and drift sprayers will not be allowed under this emergency approval.

The Bracken Control Group intend to make further requests to the CRD for subsequent years bracken control, until a decision can be made on a more permanent approval.

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) According to the fossil records, how long has bracken been on this earth?
   a) 12 million years
   b) 300 million years
   c) 50 million years
   d) 350 million years

2) What is the approximate altitude limit for bracken in the UK?
   a) 600 feet
   b) 12000 feet
   c) 3000 metres
   d) 600 metres

3) What is the name given to the structure on the bracken frond that bears spores?
   a) root
   b) sporangia
   c) archesporial
   d) sporoglyph

4) What is the name given to the carpogonium that has been isolated from bracken?
   a) Cycoxospore
   b) Phenacetin
   c) pyrapoide
   d) eltoposide

5) How long will the emergency approval of Asulox last?
   a) 12 months
   b) 120 days
   c) 2 years
   d) 6 months

Less is more
chickweed-wintergreen and common dog violet. The presence of dog violets and bracken on south-facing hillsides provides a valuable habitat for the pearl-bordered fritillary – a rare butterfly listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. This is also an important habitat for reptiles, such as adders. Two British birds, the whitethroat and nightjar, have adopted bracken as their preferred habitat as it provides good cover and a degree of protection for their young. Some other birds such as the skylark, lapwing and yellowhammer use thick bracken as a protected feeding site. However, where bracken has invaded moorland it then excludes many bird species that are common to this habitat. Apart from the invasive characteristics of bracken the main negative aspects of this plant is its poisonous properties when consumed by man and other animals. Bracken may poison some grazing animals although they will normally avoid it when alternative food is plentiful. It is in times of hardship that sheep may suffer blindness and cattle can get severe stomach ulcers from consuming significant quantities of the plant. Raw bracken contains the enzyme thiaminase, which can cause a vitamin deficiency in horses, leading to a condition known as ‘staggers’. The young emerging fronds contain the most toxins with levels decreasing as the plant matures through the season. The discovery of carcinogenic substances in the spores and in the plant tissues of bracken is a major concern. The microscopic spores are readily spread by wind that might blow them towards nearby human habi-

“ Apart from the invasive characteristics of bracken the main negative aspects of this plant are its poisonous properties when consumed by man and other animals”

Figure 1

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   a) 600 feet
   b) 12000 feet
   c) 1000 metres
   d) 600 metres

3) What is the name given to the structure on the brackers front that bears spores?
   a) spore
   b) sporangia
   c) arachnoid
   d) sporophyll

4) What is the name given to the caruncle that has been isolated from brackers?
   a) Cyclosporine
   b) Phanaentric
   c) paucisulcoid
   d) Kioptoside

5) How long will the emergency approval of ‘Asulox’ last?
   a) 12 months
   b) 120 days
   c) 2 years
   d) 6 months

6) How soon can we expect to see brackers control as it is selective for ferns.

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• Use of herbicides to translocate the fronds. The animals must be provided with sufficient food (hay) to prevent them from grazing the brackers. This can open up the ground and allow frost to penetrate the soil and damage the rhizomes. This method is not usually applicable to amenity situations.

Chemical control

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For further information including warning phrases and symbols please refer to the product label.

*GREENOR is a trade mark of Deaville Applications Ltd. Always wear personal protective clothing. This equipment applies only for the UK based applications. It may not be a product available before use.

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There’s more...

The micro-emulsion of GREENOR has a low odour. Weeds do not exhibit that burnt appearance as GREENOR will not scorch the leaves.

It has a unique safety to fine turfgrasses, even on worn patches that have been recently re-seeded.
Have you ever wanted to know the benefits of grinding but were too afraid to ask? Ben Taylor, Technical Training Manager from Bernhard Grinders, gives you a guide to the practice and answers key questions.

**What is grinding?**

Do we know what we fear? Do we know the health benefits of grinding turf? These are just some of the questions the greenkeepers of the world have been asking, and they are not afraid to ask. Ben Taylor, Technical Training Manager from Bernhard Grinders, gives you a guide to the practice and answers key questions.

**The importance of an even reel**

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**Grinding – read on for the answers**

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**The bedknife**

The bedknife is the most important part of any cutting unit and although it looks simple, it is actually a very complex piece of steel. When you have your fair cut (if you have any! the hairdresser doesn’t just take the scissors and cut randomly away at your hair. What they do is use one hand to hold on to the hair, at equal height and present the hair into the scissors.

The bedknife in a cutting unit is the hairdresser’s hand. It gathers the grass and holds it in position until the blade comes around to cut the grass evenly.

The bedknife is not just a flat piece of steel that needs to be sharp to cut grass. In fact, the bedknife is only sharp as a by-product of why you actually grind it. The main reason for grinding a bedknife, is to create or maintain two angled faces on it, which make the difference as to whether the grass is cut or not.

The first of these, the “top face” angle, is ground on the top of the bedknife as its name suggests. It is a negative angle which slopes backwards, away from the actual point of cut on the unit. This is ground to allow the grass to evert away from the point of cut and then clear from the grass coming into the mower. The degree of angle required varies, depending on the size and condition of the grass being cut.

Obviously the clippings from a golf green are tiny and only require a very small angle. Once this angle becomes worn and therefore creates a narrower gap, the grass isn’t ejected correctly and hangs around the cutting area, clogging the point of cut and therefore not allowing the incoming grass to be cut clearly and leaving a bad finish.

This is the point at which the untrained operator would “tighten” the cutting unit down, bringing the red and bedknife closer together to try and improve the cut. What they are actually doing is wearing the bedknife angle even more, closing the ejection gap even more and making the whole process worse.

The second angle is known as the front face angle. If the bedknife is the most important part of the mower, then the front face is the most important part of the bedknife, so good maintenance of this is critical.

The front face is simply a ground level even face on the front of the bedknife. It’s there simply to push the grass up evenly and stand it up in front of the red blades as the cutting unit moves forward. This is the hairdresser’s hand-delivery.

The front face needs to be flat and even. If the face becomes worn or rounded, which it will do over time, the grass will not be presented evenly toward the cutting blades of the reel.

It is essential that this front face is maintained so it can carry out its job correctly. This can be done with a file, a facing tool or with a precision grinder while renewing the angle on the top face.

**The cylinder**

Often overlooked are the reasons we spin grind the reel. Yes it is to make each blade sharp, but it is also to make it cylindrical and even. There is no point having all the blades sharp, if only every third blade cut because they are not all even.

**Spin or relief?**

Spin grinding puts the cutting edge on the leading (front) edge of the cylinder blade and makes the red cylindrical and even. Relief from friction between the bedknife and cylinder is also essential. A no-contact set gives relief from this friction, whereas a red ground blade takes metal from the back of the cylinder blade so there is less metal to come into contact with the bedknife, also reducing friction.

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**Translation**

Fuel reduction into mower life, engine wear, fewer parts to be replaced and so on – and it soon becomes clear that the benefits are very attractive to the bottom line profits of the course. Not only do you create fewer emissions, but you create fewer emissions, which means that a greater demand for food, which often means more fertiliser and water too.

Both these are very costly to supply and to deliver.

“Would you have the budget” is the cry we hear constantly, but sharpening need not cost the course money.

Savings come from two main areas – agronomic and mechanical. Agronomically speaking, clearly a reduction in the use of water, fertiliser, fungicide and top dressing can be a massive gain for the club.

Not only are these expensive consumables reduced but also the labour costs of handling the materials, electricity to pump the water and places to store the chemicals can all be drastically reduced.

Mechanically, trials at several training colleges have demonstrated fuel consumption reductions of between 17% and 21% massive in today’s competitive climate.
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**What is grinding? Do we need it?**

How can blade sharpness affect the health of turf? These are just some of the key questions many turf professionals ask about grinding—read on for the answers!

Any agronomist or Master Greenkeeper will tell you that a sharp blade cuts cleaner. In fact you don’t have to be an agronomist to know that. We have all used a blunt knife at some time or another, and we know how it cuts and tears at whatever we are cutting, be it bread, hair or grass. The simple truth is a clean cut is just that. Clean. Surgically sharp mowers slice cleanly through grass blades, severing the tissue cleanly and present the hair into the scissors. These ripped and ragged blades are damaged tips has to be replaced. Your cutting machine will tear at the grass leaving uneven and poorly cut blades.

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**Who are we?**

Bernhard Grinders are well known for their build quality and long life. Always evaluate the speed, ease of use and accuracy provided by our machines, but now add the life expectancy of fifteen years of owning Bernhard grinders can be less than £300 per month.
Have you ever wondered where your drains, irrigation, utilities actually are? You should know their correct locations—virtually everything else at a golf club is documented so why not everything on and under the golf course itself?

When contractors have left your golf course has the work been accurately documented? Technology can be a huge turn-off for some but it can make a big difference at your club even with the minimum of time and effort.

There has never been a better time to use technology as a helping hand out on the course—and in any weather. GIS (Geographic Information System) is software that belongs out on the golf course where it matters. When set up correctly you will be amazed what can be achieved when combined with GPS (Ground Positioning System). GIS uses satellite technology to fix a position anywhere on earth. There are many software systems for greenkeepers that help with many aspects of modern golf course management, but there are few that focus in on the most important asset—the physical golf course.

What differs with GIS is when combined with a rugged GPS tablet it offers a true field-to-base solution for greenkeepers to tackle head on many problems and tasks out on the course. When it rains you go out with it and plot surface water GUR. When you install that drain or irrigation go out and get dirty with it and plot the trench. When you re-contour that cutting template go out and plot it because it now has a different area value! Ask your golf club for any old paper maps, plans or data that can be imported into the GIS, turning paper to data.

There are many instances where GIS can be a very practical tool for the modern greenkeeper. What your golf club will like about GIS is that it offers them a central hub of golf course information that outlasts any greenkeeper or committee. Therefore offering consistency for your golf club’s sustainable future. For example your trade contacts, course guide companies, drainage and construction contractors and architects may already be using GIS to help them document their course, and plan their extensive drainage extension and upgrade programme.

Course Manager Mike Williams said: “We began by installing the freeware system which mapped the contours of the course, and then approached a surveyor with this data to discuss the location of drainage solutions. We’re likely to take it to the next stage which involves plotting drainage sites using GIS.”

GIS offers a central hub of golf course information that outlasts any greenkeeper or committee

Golf Course Consultant Ian Phythian explains how a Geographic Information System (GIS) can assist many aspects of day to day greenkeeping, from irrigation to health and safety.
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For a free consultancy you can contact Ian Phythian Golf Course GIS Analyst on 01482 669913 or 07983 815671 gipsystem@gmail.com

About the Author

Ian Phythian has worked in greenkeeping for 15 years and golf course construction for five years. He has worked in the UK and Australia, and more recently has been involved in promoting awareness of GIS technology for the golf course industry. For further information please visit the web site at www.gipsystem.co.uk

GIS at Glamorganshire

Following last year’s heavy rainfall, The Glamorganshire Golf Club (above) explored GIS to help them document their course, and plan their extensive drainage extension and upgrade programme.

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Fix it -
With "GIS fieldcraft" you can log all the surface water in real time to all your cutting templates even the green. You can even geo-tag the problem area with the built in compass or your geo-tag function on your mobile phone. Either option will show the location of the image in your GIS. Saved as a layer in your GIS you have exposed and documented important intelligence of your golf course.

Measure it –
You can use the measure function to accurately measure distance and area in metric.

Find it –
With "GIS fieldcraft" you can log all the surface water extra by sharing data - reading off the same hymn sheet if you like. This could open up all sorts of data transparency and sharing opportunities. This can only be beneficial for you and your golf club. The result - using GIS will equate to saved time and money in the future for your golf club. Here are some of the key benefits of GIS:

Adaptable
GIS can be set up for 9-45 holes.

Health & Safety
Locate all your risk assessment areas like using GIS to plot wet and dry routes for your machinery there.

Professionalism
Using GIS you have your golf course literally in your hand, take it to your meetings.

Accurate
Updated area values for all your cutting templates. Geo tag photographs fixing the image to a location then display them in their correct location on the GIS screen.

Output
Produce a detailed print out of your entire course. Useful for Golf club owners, secretaries, greens chairman, course managers, greenkeepers and trainees.

Do you have a course policy document?
Golf club officials are considering GIS as part of a course policy document so the GIS can be the central hub to all activities present and future including the golf course infrastructure and an archive source.

The GIS is very good at organising the various feature groups I like to call modules. I have named up to 25 other modules to cover every aspect of greenkeeping using GIS - importantly they are GPS active.

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Smooth transition of office
Imagine your course manager leaves, if not documented much information about the course goes too. Using GIS this results in a smoother transition of office saving valuable time.

Central hub of information
Now is your chance to collect old paper to data maps, install them into the GIS system, and start to move forward with all the previous data viewable in one safe place! GIS will become your single most important data map over time.

Total field-to-base solution
Plot surface water, find it, log it, measure it, and drain it, save money.

Professional integrity
Accepts industry standard survey grade data. GIS has the integrity to handle your golf club's future.

Environmental benefits
We are experiencing frequent extremes in the weather. The golf course infrastructure is expected to cope at both ends of the spectrum. Irrigation needs to be documented for repairs and maintenance. Drainage needs to be located for maintenance and for adding new drainage too. GIS with GPS enables you to do this.

The Environment Agency have a DataShare scheme which is GIS friendly enabling users to access additional US datasets such as gas, water, electric grids and up to date flood risk areas for the whole of the UK.

This information could be critical for your golf club, especially if your location is near water.

Quantum GIS
There are many GIS to choose from ranging from expensive professional systems to low cost and even ‘freeware’ systems that have the same professional integrity to accept survey grade data.

One such freeware is Quantum GIS.

With no download and licence issues to worry about this is the perfect introduction into GIS.

Ordnance Survey Open Data free mapping
Ordnance Survey Open Data is free of charge to order by post or to download from their website. This mapping data covers the UK and provides the background mapping layers including, every lake, stream, building forest, road vector layers as well as the familiar OS street level maps in different scales.

Rob Andrews from Ordnance Survey said: “OS OpenData allows free access to a range of detailed Ordnance Survey datasets. The accurate and up to date products provide an ideal mapping backdrop for users to plot additional features, including drains, greens, bunkers, tee positions and access points. Through OS OpenData users can also access a new terrain dataset which accurately displays the 3D landscape of the land.”
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Smooth transition of office
Imagine your course manager leaves, if not documented much information about the course goes too. Using GIS this results in a smoother transition of office saving valuable time.

Central hub of information
Now is your chance to collect old paper to data maps, install them into the GIS system, and start to move forward with all the previous data viewable in one safe place! GIS will become your single most important data map over time.

Total field-to-base solution
Plot surface water, find it, log it, measure it, and drain it, save money.

Professional integrity
Accepts industry standard survey grade data. GIS has the integrity to handle your golf club’s future.

Accurate
Updated area values for all your cutting templates. Geo tag photographs fixing the image to a location then display them in their correct location on the GIS screen.

Output
Produce a detailed print out of your entire course. Useful for Golf club owners, secretaries, greens chairman, course managers, greenkeepers and trainees.

The GIS is very good at organising the various feature groups I like to call modules. I have named up to 25 other modules to cover every aspect of greenkeeping using GIS - importantly they are GPS active.

GIS and GPS and may welcome the opportunity to offer your golf club extra by sharing data - reading off the same hymn sheet if you like. This could open up all sorts of data transparency and sharing opportunities. This can only be beneficial for you and your golf club. The result - using GIS will equate to saved time and money in the future for your golf club. Here are some of the key benefits of GIS:

Adaptable
GIS can be set up for 9-45 holes.

Professionalism
Using GIS you have your golf course literally in your hand, take it to your meetings.

Health & Safety
Locate all your risk assessment areas like using GIS to plot wet and dry routes for your machinery there before you start.

Environmental benefits
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Events Coming Up

Central - Next educational event is at Elwoodon 23 July where John Kaminski of Penn State will be giving a talk on the recent Open at Merion GC. A flyer will be sent out shortly and details are on www.biggincentralsection.org.uk. The recent talk by Mike Janson on communication skills unfortunately was poorly attended with only 9 people present. Thanks to those who did come along. We appreciate that Elwoodon isn’t the best venue for everyone but it’s difficult to get a golf club with a private room on an evening during the golfing season.

East - The Willie Woods Trophy will be played at Mortonhall GC on 21 August, this tournament is played in a Fourball better ball format.

North - The next event is the Norrie Whytock Trophy at Auchterarder on 15 August so if you had a good round at Duff House Royal you might get a call. Robert is unable to make the event so he has asked myself Dale Robertson to Captain the team. I will be in touch with the other three members in due course to see if we can get a winning team together.

News

Central - Earth moving is well underway on the new course at Feddicknab by St Andrews which is calling itself the St Andrews International Golf Club. It will be interesting to see how the planning application for a new Links course between Elle and Leven materializes over the coming months.

Congratulations to Paul Tevtondale on his recent hole in one at Archer GC. Paul hit a sparking 3 iron at the 154 yard 16th on his way to scoring 69 in the Links Championship qualifying. Good job it was downhill Paul, well done.

Congratulations also to Gary Tough from Letham Grange on winning the Angus Country championships at the 30th time of trying. Okay, I know Gary’s a North section member but he works and plays most of his golf in the south of Scotland. Unfortunately, neither Paul or Gary did so well in the Scottish Greenkeepers Championships at Laoghi where Kenny Mitchell was the only winner over a very enjoyable course which was in superb condition.

Good luck to everyone who has events coming up, the teams at Muirfield for the Open, Castle Stuart for the Scottich, St Andrews for the Wee’ens and everywhere in between, whether is your Pro Am, Club championship or Open day. Let’s hope the weather is kind to everyone and we see some great examples of well-prepared golf courses.

North - An Educational Seminar was held at Dornoch Golf Club and this was attended by over 15 people mainly from the Dornoch, Tain and Brora area. I am sure they all enjoyed the day and hopefully we could have more in the future.

It was good to see section members making the long journey to the Scottish National Tournament at Laoghi Golf Club. Thanks to Billy Cameron, Jim McComb, Gary Teaglach and Pat Alas for their company. I would also like to say a big thanks to Course Manager Alex Barr and his team for a really well presented golf course with superb greens.

West - Best wishes to David Cameron who was going for a fine operation recently so I hope all went well. David Gall junior has been unsettled recently and I would like to pass on my best wishes to myself and all on the committee hoping he gets better and his treatment is a success.

Ryan at Ayr Brown hope your knee is better quickly after all the work on it, no more footy for you, and I hope Mike Donnies wife is allowed back in the country after getting her passport stolen while on holiday in Greece.

Section cutting was held at Buchanian Castle GC the first time I’ve played it and I think a first for an outing which is excellent. I just wish more clubs could volunteer their services. The course was in great condition for the time of year although the recent rains had caused a few soft areas like us all.

Ronnie Mills and his staff are to be congratulated for their efforts unfortunately Ronnie couldn’t attend but Mark his assistant fitted in handily, the warm welcome and service was first class and the club are to thanked for all their assistance.

The results (which you can see in the ‘Results’ section) have been on the blog for a few weeks now along with other information and I would encourage all members to keep up to date by visiting the site regularly, congratulations to our Chairman for his hard work in posting the information.

The outing was attended by 43 people - only 35 played but this is good and I would encourage more members to come along and play, have a chat about the weather and discuss the different courses and methods of presentation.

The other event was the annual match against the secretaries which was held at Douglas Park GC, a great day was had by all in attendance and the final result was a draw meaning the greenkeepers retain the trophy. Thanks to Mr Drew and his staff for the course presentation and the club for allowing us the use of their facilities.

Events Coming Up

North East - The summer stabilised competition for Percy Wood is on 21 August NOT 17 August as previously mentioned. Booking forms will be sent out to all members.

Northers - The invitation day at Wetherby on 12 August NOT 19 August as quoted in last month’s notes. The Sheffiled match up is at Howley Hall on 31 July.

North Wales - Apologies to everyone who was looking forward to playing in the North Wales North West match at Lymn GC but the fixture had to be cancelled, further information as to whether it will be rearranged has not made it to me yet but keeping our Facebook group or the main BIGGA website events area for updates. The North Wales v South Wales match is at North and Ynyslais GC on 26 July. I believe we do have a team but if you want to check or be on stand by please contact Rhys Butten contact details on your fixture list.

Welcome New Scotland Members

Gregor Mackintosh, Greenkeeper, Turnberry Hotel & Golf Course
Scott Thompson, Greenkeeper, Strathmore Golf Centre
Antony Burnett, Greenkeeper, Balnagask Golf Club
Robert King, Assistant Greenkeeper, Mornahul Golf Club
Kyle Cruickshank, Greenkeeper, The Gleneagles Hotel & Golf Courses
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Lewis Fraser, Assistant Greenkeeper, Fairmont St Andrews
Lauren McWilliams, Greenkeeper, Loch Lomond Golf Course
Craig Darling, Greenkeeper, Renaissance Club
Neil Hog, Greenkeeper, Bruntfield Links Golfing Society
Paul Miller, Affiliate Member, SRCU (Elwood)
John Bowens, Greenkeeper, The Golf Club House Elle Nigel Buchanan, Greenkeeper, Drumoig Golf Club

Results

West - Outing at Buchanan Castle. Scratch prize; Gregor Mackintosh (Cardinax) 71; First class winner; Stuart Taylor (Klaagov) 73; Second Chris Prior (Bannrock) 76; Third Douglas MacInthos (Cathka) 75; Second class winner; David McBride (Vale of Leven) 35 ibh; Second Brian Leaque (Vale of Leven) 35; Third, Jack Stewardsk (Balnagask) 34.33. Third class winner, John Burr (Cardross) 37; Second Gareth Rodriers (Fairways) 30; Third John Steele (Buchanans Castle) 25; Visitor prize Robert Hart (Banff) Nearest pin 4th, John Burr; Nearest pin 8th Chris Prior.

Thanks to Sponsors

East - Thanks to Musselburgh Race for their recent hospitality afforded to our section at their last race meeting, unfortunately we had a low turnout on the night, but everyone had a good time and we look forward to a repeat of a pre-race drink at Mortonhall thanks to Shiao Cunningham’s substantial winnings!

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Northern Movers & Shakers

Central - Lee Strutt has resigned from the Committee. Everyone would like to thank Lee for his contribution over the past few years and will gladly accept his offer to help out at events.

East - Congratulations to John Watson at Deer Park who has taken over as Course Manager with Stuart Cruickshank now taking the role of General Manager, the section wish you all the best.

New section members this month are Craig Darling (Renaissance) and Neil Hog (Bruntfield Links), welcome aboard guys.

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Thank you to everyone who has worked hard to make the event a success for all the members.

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**Results**

**Mid Anglia** - Results from Spring Golf Day and National Qualifier held at Bedford & County GC.

1. Butler 36
2. Keys 36
3. Drinkwater 36

**South East** - Results from Spring comp and National Qualifier; Division 1 nearest the pin, nobody! With notable praise to Pete Smith for showing the Division 1 qualifying team for providing us with the course in fantastic condition.

1. A Butler 36pts, 2. G Bruce 34, 3rd O Browning 33 with nearest Pin winners L.Owen and A. Butler. Our thanks go to Geoff Fenn and his team for providing us with the course in fantastic condition which was enjoyed by all who attended on a lovely day.

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**Events Coming Up**

**BB&O** - Summer Comp at Caversham Heath GC near Reading, 1 August. Shindlered with coffee and bacon rolls, free range balls and two course buffet dinner afterwards.

**South East** - After a successful opening, Corinthians Golf Club (formerly Fawkham Valley Golf Club) will be hosting a Foot Golf event in mid to late July. A good turnout of 27 for the Sussex section’s spring competition and national championship qualifier at the Dyke Golf Club. Although a challenging wind was blowing a good day was had by all.

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**Around the green**

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**News**

**BB&O** - Andy Ewence, Course and Grounds Manager at the Buckinghamshire GC, is looking for support staff for the Ladies European Masters held on 26-28 July live on Sky.

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Mid Anglia - Summer Golf Day at Brookmans Park GC on 6 August. Get your entries in atp to avoid missing out on this popular pairs event.

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Mid Anglia - The Centurion Golf Club in St Albans/Hendel Hempstead is very close to opening and looks to be a very fine course and a real challenge of golf so looking forward to its late summer opening.

Movers & Shakers
Mid Anglia - Congratulations to Neil Carter for being appointed as Head Greenkeeper at Mentmore GC - all the best for your role.

Results
Mid Anglia - Results from Spring Golf Day and National Qualifier held at Bedford & County GC. 1 A Butler 36pts, 2 J Hancox 34, 3 O Browning 33 with nearest Pin winners L. Owen and A. Butler. Our thanks go to Geoff Fenn and his team for providing us with the course in fantastic condition which was enjoyed by all who attended on a lovely day.

Thanks to Sponsors
Mid Anglia - Our long running supporters of our excellent calendar, now in its 6th year, this month is sponsored by North Staffs Irrigation Ltd. Please consider them for both your irrigation and drainage requirements. Email: NISRigation@jcom.co.uk. Tel: 01785 812 706.

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A new look Around the green
Based on feedback from the recent GI survey, we’ve refreshed and improved this section of the magazine.

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (Steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 10th of each month.
Events Coming Up

South Coast - Forthcoming events Army GC 4 July. Match v Bilton in Spain GC on 26 September. Autumn Tournament at Mee Valley GC on 9 October and our Christmas Turkey trot at Weymouth Park on 10 December. As always let Tony Gadd know if you are available to play in the match. News from the committee, we are planning a separate event for our section's patrons: 1pm tee off. 2:30pm course walk with Julian the Head GK. All to sit down for a meal afterwards and jacket required - all paid for as a goodwill gesture by our patrons. The first two will be nominated by match captain and last year's winners. The first two will be entered into the BIGGA National Championship. The quality of greenkeeping now available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry.

Golf Course Managers should ensure that their staff are trained to the highest standards. This is done for the benefit of all. The next event is a presentation made to Jane Lewis (Regional Administrator) in recognition for all the work she has done for the Region and for the Section. Accommodation, a meal and golf at St Mellion has been arranged for June along with some gifts on the day. On behalf of the Section, I would just like to thank Jane for all the work she has done. She is most fondly thought of by the Section and will be greatly missed. Thank you Jane and best wishes for the future, we look forward to catching up with you.

Thanks to Sponsors

Devon & Cornwall – Thank you to Everris and Reel Grind South West for sponsoring the event at The Point; to the Yorkshire Golf Course Care for their ongoing support of the annual match against the secretary; South Wales – Many thanks to all our section's patrons and HQ who contributed to a fantastic prize pool for the Summer Tournament's participants.

New South West & Wales Members


New International Members

Kevin-John O’Sicardi, Brian O’Toole, Mark Holland, Paul Desmond Corn, Sean Kingman, Robert Kelly, Conor Ciaran Walsh, Michael O’Day, Adam Pleban, Steven O’Leary, Francesco Sal, Colin Robertson, Duncan Martin, Paul Collins, Shane Morgan, John De Cuer, Alan Poynter, Allie Cunning. Stan Lloyd in the Republic of Ireland, Mark Fuller, International Member, The Connecticut Golf Club, USA, Ray Dubly, Affiliate Member, Trap Turf Equipment, Australia.
We are again sponsoring a place to RTME, this is open for anyone to be nominated. Send your nominations along with merit and reasons to Alex McCombie at southcoastsecretary@gmail.com. This can be anyone to put your thinking caps on! Finally, I had the pleasure of playing in the Basingstoke Bowl in early June, a truly great day, well done Colin and his team the course was at its best.

South Wales - Congratulations to Ian Kinley and his staff at Royal Porthcawl GC on hosting the fantastic Speedy Wales Seniors Open. The event was a huge success and I shall be back another year for a home victory.

Following our Summer Tournament at Kingsdown Golf Club on 12 June in weather conditions that truly sorted the men from the boys our Section representatives for the National Tournament in October have been selected. Net winner was Lee Whyte from Boswood GC and gross winner was Paul Garland from Lansdowne GC, well done men and good luck at Frilsh Heath. Mention must be made of second place net Darren Musham and second place nett Barry魔术奇.

Welcome to new section member James Carash who joins us from Cricklade Hotel Golf Club.

Movers and Shakers

Devon & Cornwall - At Polwarth, a presentation was made to Jane Jones (Regional Administrator) in recognition for all the work she has done for the Region and for the Section, Accommodation, a meal and golf at St Mellion has been arranged for June along with some gifts on the day. On behalf of the Section, I would like to thank Jane for all the work she has done. She is most kindly thought of by the Section and will be greatly missed. Jane thanks and best wishes for the future, we look forward to catching up with you.

News

Devon & Cornwall - Last event was at The Point at Polzeath, North Cornwall. Superb weather added to a great day. The course was in good condition, thanks to Tom Collings (Head Greenkeeper) and his team. Winning the golf was one of the team, Mike Ellis who went on to represent the Section on the National Championships. Thank you to all.

South Coast - The annual match against the secretaries was held at Ashley Wood GC, where we were again triumphant with a 3 to 2 win. Thanks to Ashley Wood for hosting the day and a particular thanks to Mark Sharwood and his team for presenting the course in excellent condition. Results of the Summer tournament will be in the next issue.

Events Coming Up

South Coast - Forthcoming events Army GC 4 July. Match v 8 West at W North GC on 26 September. Autumn Tournament at Mees Valley GC on 9 October and our Christmas Turkey trot is at Wyckwood Park on 10 December. As always let Tony Gadd know if you are available to play in the match.

News from the committee, we are planning a separate venue and mini seminar for the AGM away from a golf event. This will be in early November, the venue and speakers to be confirmed.

South Wales - Patrons Cup 4 July Radiy GC 1pm tee off 3.30pm course walk with Julian the Head GK. All to sit down for a meal afterwards and jacket and tie required - all paid for as a goodwill gesture by our patrons. The first two will be entered into the BIGGA National Championship.

28 July match at Borth and Ynyslas GC teams to be selected. Net winner was Lee Whyte from Bowood GC and gross winner was Paul Garland from Lansdowne GC, well done men and good luck at Frilsh Heath. Mention must be made of second place net Darren Musham and second place nett Barry魔术奇.

Contact your Section correspondent with news,
HADLOW COLLEGE

Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 OAL
Contact: Mike Dodd 01732 853163
www.hadlow.ac.uk

City & Guilds work-based qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 in Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship and Landscaping for apprenticeships for all ages. We also offer a range of short courses, such as Health & Safety, COSHH, Chainsaw and Pesticide Application.

Additionally full and part-time courses (post GCSE through to degree level) are available in horticulture and a variety of other land-based subjects.

Oaklands College offers on-demand, on-line learning in City and Guilds Levels 2 and 3, BTEC National Horticulture, BTEC Higher National Horticulture, Sports Turf Management and Landscape Design throughout the South East.

In addition we provide on-demand work-based apprenticeships at Levels 2 and 3. Full-time courses on offer include Level 2 in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management and Horticulture Entry 2 for Level 3. We also offer short courses for PU1, 2 and 3.

GTC QUALITY ASSURED CENTRES AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

A full list of GTC approved training providers can be obtained from the GTC. The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) are continually reviewing the approved status of centres and training providers offering greenkeeper training courses.

For more information contact the GTC on: 01347 838640 or visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk

REASEHEATH

Nantwich, Cheshire CW6 6DF
Contact: Gareth Phillips 01270 613226
enquiries@reaseheath.co.uk
www.reaseheath.co.uk

- Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Science and Management - open to students with an HND or Foundation Degree

Warwickshire College

Sports Turf Apprenticeship

Study at: Pershore or Moreton Morrell Centre, and day-drop
Qualification: Intermediate/Advanced Apprenticeship in Horticulture, specialising in Sports Turf
The apprenticeships in Sports Turf Management have routes in groundsman and groundkeeper. Apprenticeships are a great way for students to earn and learn, and are available to employers for their trained and skilled staff. Short courses are also available at both sites, covering NVQ Levels 2 and 3.

For more information on apprenticeships and training opportunities, please contact Helen Dickson
Contact: Helen Dickson 0121 569 3186  or 07956 318307
Email: hdickson@warwscol.ac.uk

BE SEEN HERE

Your training provider could appear here, as a training provider in our next edition of Greenkeeper Training Guide.

Get in touch with our Sales team on 01347 833800 to find out more
Quality Assured

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

This month David looks at why and how British educated and trained greenkeepers are still very much in demand worldwide and how international students are still looking to attend British colleges. Plus, how the GTC is now helping golf developing countries

It gives me great pleasure to attend British colleges. Plus, how the GTC is now helping worldwide and how international students are still looking to develop apprentices to become the future custodians of golf courses. Course Managers, Deputies and in fact all levels of greenkeepers have more access to knowledge and qualifications, as online learning becomes so much more accessible. A Degree in Sports Turf Surfaces is no longer just a dream for many greenkeepers, it is a reality. The internet has obviously helped and communication across the world of greenkeeping appears to be going from strength to strength.

Having mentioned the formal qualifications, it must not be forgotten that the two key elements - knowledge and experience - are the very foundation which underpin any education structure. Through my involvement in advising an increasing number of countries within my role as Standards Director to the European Greenkeeping Education Unit (or will soon become, Greenkeeper Training Europe), it is apparent that with very few exceptions, many countries as yet have no formal greenkeeper education system. Some countries do not have a greenkeeper association, however, the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers’ Association (FEGOA) supports those established Greenkeeping Associations in Europe and is also helping countries where golf is developing to start an association.

FEGOA, as a founder member of EGA, also plays an important role, with former EGA Chairman Paul Worster, now a FEGOA Director, offering to assist the younger Greenkeeping Associations. It is apparent in many countries that Greenkeeping Associations have little or no support from their Golf Federation or Union to promote greenkeeper education. This is something that the European Golf Association (EGA) are currently looking to address and Richard Heath, the General Secretary to the EGA and the EGA Board, is looking at how best they can support their affiliates.

Thankfully there is no such problem in Britain with The GTC established as the organisation where BPGA and the British Home Unions meet to discuss all aspects of greenkeeper education, training and qualifications. It is a success story and one we are sharing as a blueprint with other countries.

Ultimately, it is the golf club employer who benefits most from having well trained staff and to have the major employer bodies around the table with the professional body for greenkeepers certainly has great benefits for both clubs and greenkeepers alike.

The Government still looks to employers to take the lead on establishing Occupational Standards for their particular sector. What follows are funding incentives such as apprenticeships allowances which in Britain have benefited many employers and greenkeepers over the years. In summary, British trained and educated greenkeepers are operating in many countries and the sharing of best practices amongst golf organisations, associations, education establishments and companies within the sector must bode well for the future standards of golf course maintenance and management.

For all the latest information on greenkeeper education, training courses visit the GTC’s website: www.the-gtc.co.uk

“Turf college lecturers are now working closer with Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers to develop apprentices to become the future custodians of golf courses”

Quick ‘nine hole’ quiz

1) Name the 12 players who represented England in the 2005 Ashes.  
2) Which League Two side play pre-season matches against the likes of Blackpool, Sheffield United and Huddersfield?
3) Which American tennis player was kicked out of Wimbledon in 1995 for verbally abusing an umpire?
4) Which Sheffield-based tennis player won last year’s Men’s Doubles at Wimbledon with partner Frederik Nielsen?
5) Which cricketer scored 766 runs in the last Ashes series?
6) Name the two tennis players involved in the record match at Wimbledon which ended 70-68 in the final set.
7) Who are the reigning County Cricket champions?
8) Name the five venues for this summer’s Ashes.
9) Who is the current Australian cricket captain?
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For over four decades MJ Abbott Ltd has expanded its scope of works to incorporate the installation of land drainage and irrigation systems, golf course construction and renovation, natural and artificial sports ground construction and maintenance and the installation of water supply and distribution systems.

Thru steady growth, the company has evolved to become one of the UK’s leading specialist sports contractors. These specialist activities are carried out by directly employed staff to provide our clients with a comprehensive service based upon quality and reliability.

We have provided services to a variety of satisfied clients over the years. Examples of clients from the private sector for whom we have acted as principle contractor would include De Vere Resort Management, Ralph Trustees Ltd and many privately owned golf clubs including The Belfry, Sunningdale, Forest Pines, The Grove, The Carrick Loch on Lomond, Wentworth and Celtic Manor.

The Company is pleased to offer the following services:

- Golf Course and Sportsground construction – projects will be completed by directly employed staff and company owned machinery.
- Golf Course and Sportsground grow in and maintenance – we employ several sports turf experts who have grown in many golf courses and sports fields. We can offer a maintenance service tailored to the needs of the client.
- Land drainage – we own specialist trenching equipment operated by experts in this field.
- Irrigation systems – we will design, supply and install irrigation systems based on the client’s requirements and budget.
- Water supply and distribution – we can design, supply and install potable water systems, foul water pumping and treatment systems, borehole prognosis and installation.
- Service support – we have a team of mobile engineers who are on call to provide emergency back up should a water supply system fail.

Traditionally drainage and Lytag banding of greens and fairways

**INFORMATION ON OUR SERVICES**

- Lakes and Reservoirs
- Bunker Remodelling
- Drainage
- Green and Tee Reconstruction
- Golf Course Construction Services
- Lytag banding
- Turf and Trees
- 1m soil coring
- 1m air injection
- 10" drill aeration

**CONTACT**

Tel: 01449 673783

Email: sales@huxleygolf.co.uk

www.huxleygolf.co.uk
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- Trade counter, pump sales and service. Web sales and product support via our on line store www.mjabbottdirect.co.uk

MJ Abbott Ltd

AERATION

- Turf and Trees
- Air injection
- 1m air injection
- Air excavation
- Lytag banding
- Sand slitting

ALL WEATHER SURFACES

- All Weather Surfaces For Your Golf Club
  - Pathways
  - Golf Mains
  - Forecourt Mains
  - Putting Greens
  - Accessories
  - Ensure the course is playable all year round.

BUNKER CONSTRUCTION

- Traditional drainage and Lytag banding of greens and fairways

CONSTRUCTION

- Golf Course Specialists
  - Golf Course Construction
  - Remodeling & Renovation
  - Full Maintenance
  - Sportsground Construction

DRAINAGE

- Look at the latest... Second Hand Machinery... for sale
  - www.bigga.org.uk/classifieds

DRAINAGE SPECIALISTS

- DESIGN & INSTALLATION
  - PRIMARY SYSTEMS
  - SAND SLITTING
  - GRAVEL BANDING

GOLFCOURSE MACHINERY

- Full colour, please call Jill on 01347 833 812 or email jill@bigga.co.uk

Irrigation

- Full 6 months from as little as £250 for a FULL 6 MONTHS, full colour, please call Jill on 01347 833 812 or email jill@bigga.co.uk

The Company is pleased to offer the following services:

- Golf Course and Sportsground grow in and maintenance
  - Professional Tee, Golf Course tees, putting greens, pathways, paths, cart tracks and lawns professionally designed and installed.

- Golf Course and Sportsground construction – projects will be completed by directly employed staff to provide our clients with a comprehensive service based upon quality and reliability.

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Teddy Taylor TURF RENOVATION EQUIPMENT
- Lakes and Reservoirs • Cart Paths
  - Lakes and Reservoirs
  - Cart Paths

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- Sportsturf Drainage Specialists
  - Golf Course - Sportsfield Drainage
  - Construction
  - Installation
  - Annuity Maintenance
  - Larger Golf Courses & Country Clubs
  - Full irrigation
  - Full Maintenance
  - Full System Installation
  - Pumping & Valves
  - Full System Management

- Full Colour, Please Call Jill on 01347 833 812 or Email jill@bigga.co.uk
Photographic competition

How can we win our coveted members’ competition, and see your photography grace Greenkeeper International and the BIGGA Calendar 2014, following in the footsteps of recent winner – Craig Boath, Head Greenkeeper of the Carnoustie Championship Course

Are you a BIGGA member and do you fancy yourself as a budding photographer? The competition offers you the chance to portray your course in a variety of publications, with the winner receiving a full course feature in GI.

Our industry offers terrific opportunities for stunning photography across the year – and now is the time to send in the images many of you have captured from the autumn and winter. The forthcoming weeks also offer another chance for 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 superb selection of golf course photography (www.hepworthgolfphotography.com), as well as one of your own entry. 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 the 31st July 2013.

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 (at least 30cm wide at 300dpi) suitable for an A3 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 seek permission of the club before sending your entries – we are sure they will be delighted with the potential coverage.

Only BIGGA members are eligible to enter. Good luck to all.

BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX 2013

The Grandstand, Royal Windsor Race Course

Wednesday 4 September 2013

BIGGA is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2013.

10.15 am – 11.15 pm
Greens Drainage - Mission Possible
A workable solution - Transforming soil based greens with Deep Thatch and Black Layer at Robin Hood Golf Club. Discover the methods used and the solution to training troublesome greens.
Presented by Andy Wood, Course Manager, Robin Hood GC.

11.30 am – 12.30 pm
Sand Traps and Money Pits
This session will look at managing and constructing golf course bunkers on limited budgets, whilst remaining the past to shape our future. It will also include the art of compost creation and its role in modern traditional greenkeeping.
Presented by Stuart Yarwood MG, Golf Course Manager, Lymm Golf Club.

1.00 pm – 2.00 pm
Go In Green…..Come Out Clean
Winter disease on golf greens is particularly problematic since there is little turf growth to allow recovery and for scars to heal. This can impact the playability of greens right through into the spring period leading to the disqualification of golfers. An integrated approach to disease management can reduce the disease pressure, improve turf health and enhance the performance of fungicide applications. New insights on disease management will be presented along with practical advice for how to deliver smooth, disease free greens right through the high risk autumn and winter periods.
Presented by Dr Simon Watson, Syngenta Technical Manager, EAME Turf and Landscape.

BIGGA CPD Credits
- 1 CPD credit is available for each seminar.
A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.
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Quick ‘NINE HoLE’ QUIZ ANSWERS:
1) East Stirlingshire
2) York City
3) Jose Mourinho
4) Oxford United
5) Lee Martin
6) Peterborough
7) Teddy Sheringham & Ole Gunnar Solskjær
8) 13
9) Chapman

puzzle page answers
The Back Nine

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

Last month Justin looked at the perils of social networking. Now in the second part of his educational look at the medium, he considers content and the increasing influence of Twitter and Facebook.

The first question I'm usually asked when I speak about blogging is “How much time does it take?” The answer depends on your preference on what information you want to get out.

Remember more and more people get information in bits and pieces to their phone or tablet. So if you post a ten page document on soil respiration and throw in a few Latin names you are likely to lose your audience, plus it is going to be a big commitment for you to write.

Try to keep the posts short and to the point and better yet add some pictures. A picture is worth a thousand words. It will definitely help your members and guests understand better how a machine goes across the greens, or how you are dealing with a layering problem in the greens.

The other fear that superintendents have is content. Here are a few topics that seem to keep the blog flowing and still get some variety:

• Projects – Application, renovations, drainage...
• Employee spotlight – Take a person on the crew and give the members an idea of who they are and what they have done.
• Frequently Asked Questions – Talk about things that people have come up to you and asked you about, and why you do these things.
• Environmental – Golf course superintendents are stewards of the environment, promote your practices that conserve and reduce.
• Did you know – Explain a more complicated topic that is behind the scenes.

New content will keep your followers interested and also understand more about your profession. Instead of the golfers yelling at one of your guys to get out of the way, they might know a little more about that staff member and introduce themselves. They can better understand your work and issues on the course.

Twitter is another way to blast information out with short messages. This is a good way to direct members and guests to your blog and post live information like weather, project info, course closure etc.

If the golf shop wanted to get involved as well it could be a good avenue to post deals on rounds or specials on equipment.

When I first got involved in Twitter I didn’t really know what I was going to post and if anyone would really care.

Now a few years later I have gathered quite a few followers and it has become a great resource for me to post quick bits of info to inform our membership about what is happening in real time. It also has doubled as a good place to learn more about turf management.

I follow other superintendents that post information about their practices. I can ask quick questions and get fairly quick responses from many different people.

Now onto Facebook and Google+. These are both borderline time suckers. Facebook can be a great tool to connect with many people - after all, 72% of the UK uses Facebook.

That means for every ten people that play your course or that are members, seven of them are updating their Facebook status and it may be about your course.

Facebook seems much more personal, can become a shrinkhole for time and I feel it’s better for revenue seekers like the golf shop.

Google+ on the other hand does have some value.

The instant upload from your smartphone’s camera makes it easy to post pictures and the hangouts can be ideal to do meetings with other superintendents in your area or across the globe.

This is becoming more popular and ideal to get advice or new ideas for your course.

Social media can become confusing if you don’t keep it simple.

You can end up wasting your time posting to several accounts with the same information or not gain traction if you fall behind on posting content.

Keeping your investment to a blog and Twitter is a great start. These two go hand in hand and can be updated quickly and provide a lot of information to your golfers. Use Twitter for instant information and your blog for more detailed presentations.

If you keep these two accounts simple and to the point, you should be able to keep your time commitment to a reasonable level.

Remember, you don’t want to get stuck wasting your time. You just want to increase your communication and visibility.

For every ten golfers on your course, seven of them are updating their Facebook status and it may be about your course.

The views expressed within this column are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International.
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I follow other superintendents that post information about their practices. I can ask quick questions and get fairly quick responses from many different people.

Now onto Facebook and Google+. These are both borderline time suckers. Facebook can be a great tool to connect with many people – after all, 72% of the UK uses Facebook. That means for every ten people that play your course or that are members, seven of them are updating their status and it may be about your course.

Facebook seems much more personal, can become a sinkhole for time and I feel it’s better for revenue seekers like the golf shop.

Google+ on the other hand does have some value.

The instant upload from your smartphone’s camera makes it easy to post pictures and the hangouts can be ideal to do meetings with other superintendents in your area or across the globe.

This is becoming more popular and ideal to get advice or new ideas for your course.

Social media can become confusing if you don’t keep it simple.

You can end up wasting your time posting to several accounts with the same information or not gaining traction if you fall behind on posting content.

Keep your investment to a blog and Twitter is a great start. These two go hand in hand and can be updated quickly and provide a lot of information to your golfers.

Use Twitter for instant information and your blog for more detailed presentations.

If you keep these two accounts simple and to the point, you should be able to keep your time commitment to a reasonable level.

Remember, you don’t want to get stuck wasting your time. You just want to increase your communication and visibility.

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