A Stirling success

The crucial relationship between greenkeeper and architect revealed

Inside...

PITCHMARKS
Educate your members with our poster

MILES BETTER
How a young Course Manager has transformed Llandudno Maesdu

ALSO INSIDE... IRRIGATION: OPERATION POLLINATOR
Nothing is more powerful than the all-new seven-gang AR722T™ contour rotary mower from Jacobsen. With a massive 48.6 kW (65.2 horsepower) Kubota® turbo-charged diesel engine, the AR722T powers its ultra-productive 3.15 metre (124-inch) width-of-cut without slowing down.

The AR722T glides over ground contours and climbs hills with ease – thanks to the exclusive SureTrac™ four-wheel drive traction and weight transfer control. See for yourself why the powerful and productive Jacobsen AR722T contour mower is at the head of its class – call your local Jacobsen dealer today.

Overcoming the wet at Wentworth

The 2014 European Tour season finally reached these shores last month when the BMW PGA Championship took place at Wentworth. Rory McIlroy claimed a notable victory, amazingly his first professional win on European soil, coming out on top of a stellar leaderboard on a fascinating final day. The event was plagued with heavy rain and storms, leading to suspensions of play and delayed starts.

The greenkeeping team led by Kenny Mackay and Graham Matheson worked wonders and were ably supported by the BIGGA Support Team who, for the first time, match raked on all four days as well as assisting the on site crew in preparing the course and dealing with the inclement weather. I heard many tales of 15 hour days but tellingly they were told with pride and good humour.

We are grateful to all the volunteer greenkeepers who gave up their time to support the tournament, it is a credit to this industry to see so many qualified and experienced greenkeepers willingly volunteering their services in this way. It was a great team effort all round and played a huge part in ensuring that the paying and watching public were able to witness such an enthralling tournament.

On the subject of teamwork I am delighted that Everris have committed to sponsor the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy in 2014, details of which are on page 8. This event provides a fantastic opportunity for Course Managers or Head Greenkeepers to spend time with senior decision makers from their club as a team in a competitive environment. Five qualifying events lead to a final at the excellent Frilford Heath Golf Club and I look forward to seeing which club will be crowned the 2014 Golf Management Trophy winners.

Whilst it would be far too glib to state that simply taking part in a golf tournament leads to a perfect team ethos within a club, it is clear that golf clubs that do have a team approach to management are better equipped to make effective decisions and produce a consistent, excellent product for their customers.

In an ideal world all golfers would be a part of the extended course management team, caring for the course, replacing divots and repairing all their pitchmarks. Sadly this isn’t always the case and pitchmarks in particular cause a major issue for greenkeepers and golfers alike. We at BIGGA will be getting behind the second National Repair Your Pitchmark Day in August of this year, which began as a Twitter campaign in 2013 and gathered surprisingly strong momentum.

Enclosed within this edition is a poster for club noticeboards demonstrating the correct pitchmark repair method that we hope will bring further attention to this campaign and encourage golfers to do their bit for the course.

As always this magazine also contains numerous articles about BIGGA members, by BIGGA members and for BIGGA members. Enjoy the read.
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Jim Croxton, Chief Executive
A Stirling success

Stirling Golf Club has initiated a ten-year development programme. Course Manager James Lindsay is working closely with Swan Golf Designs to achieve a better golf course. Howard Swan outlines the plans, the reasons behind them and explains why a close and harmonious relationship between greenkeeper and architect is so important.

HOW TO REPAIR A PITCHMARK

Take your ball mark repair tool and insert the prongs into the turf at the edge of the depression. Do NOT insert the prongs into the depression itself, but at the rim of the depression. Then push the edge of the ball mark toward the centre, using your ball mark repair tool in a gentle twisting motion. This is where golfers who try to repair ball marks usually mess up. Many golfers believe the way to fix a ball mark is to insert the tool at an angle, so the prongs are beneath the center of the crater, and then to use the tool as a lever to push the bottom of the ball mark back up even with the surface. Do not do this! Pushing the bottom of the depression upward only tears the roots, and kills the grass.
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**PICTURED:** James Lindsay

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**30**

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**CONTENTS**

- Greenkeepers Training Committee
- Industry Update
- Around the Green
- Membership News
- Newsdesk
- Chairman’s Word
- Welcome from BIGGA

---

**REGULARS**

- A Stirling success
- A holistic approach
- Miles better
- Beesy does it
- Genetically modified turfgrass
- Bad vibrations
- Choices, choices
- John Deere
- Greenkeepers Training Committee
- Buyers’ Guide
- Recruitment
- @BIGGALtd

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**FEATURES**

- How a young Course Manager and his team have transformed an unusual course in North Wales
- The crucial relationship between greenkeeper and architect revealed

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**GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL**

- British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association
May was a momentous month for me and everybody at Chippenham – the culmination of seven years of blood, sweat and tears as our course redevelopment was completed.

As I've mentioned in previous columns, we've built four brand new holes and modified another three to improve the course layout and extend it by 600 yards. The initial plans were drawn up in 2007 and I feel like the project has taken up several years of my life!

In these situations, you find out how good your team really are. The expectations both from myself and of course the members were extremely high. It's a huge responsibility and the key was to ensure that these new holes were up to the same high standard as the rest of the course when they opened.

Achieving this took a great deal of forward planning, a lot of communication with our committee, strong and effective team management and a coordinated and professional team effort. I'm delighted to say that it all came together perfectly and the team were up to the task.

On the weekend of 17/18 May we held a Members' event with 200 members playing the new course layout on Saturday, and even more members and guests playing on the Sunday.

The feedback on the new holes was fantastic, everyone I spoke to was very positive.

The fabulous weather was a real bonus. It was perfect for the whole weekend, really bright sunshine with a cooling breeze. It's no exaggeration to say if we had held it the weekend before it would have been a disaster as that weekend was incredibly windy with heavy showers resulting in branches, twigs and blossom everywhere. It was a huge relief that conditions played their part in such a successful weekend.

I'm very proud to see everybody's hard work come to fruition. We worked several 12 hour days and I did 14 on the Friday.

On Saturday, after a 5am start, I played in the competition with the members. I know that many of you have been just as busy at this extremely busy time for turf managers.

“We all know it's a tough job, but I'm sure you get the same feeling of satisfaction in a good job well done”
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Away from Chippenham I headed over to Bowood for the Everris Turf Reward event. This is a great initiative for greenkeepers, groundsmen and their employers and I would like to thank Everris for their support. I’m pleased to see the events touring a wide range of clubs across Great Britain and Ireland from Dublin to Wentworth to Loch Lomond.

This month I also presented a ‘So You Want To Be Promoted’ seminar at Chipping Sodbury Golf Club with John Keenaghan, which was a great success, and as this goes to press I will have visited the aforementioned Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship.

As I’m sure you all know we have a larger BIGGA Support Team than usual offering a wider range of assistance to Kenny Mackay and all his team, and I’m very much looking forward to meeting them. I know they will gain so much from the experience.
BERNARD AND BIGGA TEAM UP

Bernard’s team of trainers have visited Scotland as part of a series of workshops in conjunction with BIGGA. The workshops presented to greenkeepers, club managers and mechanics are designed to inform and advise – and offered the opportunity for delegates to pick up CPD Credits.

The workshops, held at Royal Aberdeen, Turnhouse and Dundonald Golf Courses and Elmwood College covered a range of subjects including the setting of cutting units, reel maintenance, grinding and the benefits of correctly setting cutting units.

Wille Nield, himself a former greenkeeper at St Andrews Links and now Bernard’s man in Scotland, said: “We have been very pleased with the feedback that we’ve had from these seminars. It is vitally important for busy greenkeeping staff to be able to set units quickly and efficiently. There is always something new to learn and judging by the comments we received afterwards, even the oldest dog can learn new tricks!

“Good players notice the quality of the surface not just in terms of how it plays, but how the place looks. An exceptional shine on the course shows up the definition in the greens. As there’s no dead tissue, the green retains its colour and plays faster and more evenly.”

Ben Taylor, Bernard Training Manager, began the seminars. He commented: “I introduced the delegates to the company and product, including the technicalities of angles, attitudes and details of cutting units. After a short presentation we went into the workshop where we ran through all features and benefits and demonstrated exactly what makes this machinery unique across the world. We then demonstrated how to sharpen quickly and efficiently.”

David Grey, First Assistant at Ladybank Golf Club, and former Bernard Delegate, said; “This was a fantastic in-depth presentation which detailed the importance of maintaining sound sharp units and the many consequences of failing to regularly do so.

“It was very interesting learning the various angles and how vital these are to achieve the perfect finish.”

Stuart Green, BIGGA’s Learning & Development Executive – Technical, added; “CPD is a vital tool in a turf professional’s career toolkit.

“It’s essential that greenkeepers update their skills, keep abreast of changes in legislation and maintain an awareness of current industry trends to benefit themselves and their employers. BIGGA offers its members the opportunity to record their CPD through an online system and reward them for their efforts.”

BIGGA GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY LAUNCHED

Now’s your chance to enter the inaugural BIGGA Golf Management Trophy, sponsored by Everris, which features matches across the Regions and Sections in England this summer.

The format is on a first come, first served basis with the cost of £99 per team. This includes coffee and a bacon roll on arrival, the two course meal afterwards. The format is Stableford. Dates:

29 July – Midland Region - Stableford. Dates:

20 August – South West Section - Chippenham Golf Club
11 September – South Coast Section - Parkstone GC
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For more details please contact Regional Administrators Sandra Archer @ 07866 366966 (Sandra@bigga.co.uk) or Tracey Harvey @ 07849 481110 (tracey.harvey@bigga.co.uk)

BIGGA’s Regional Manager for South West England this summer.

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AERIAL BLITZ AGAINST OPM RETURNS

Aerial application of insecticide over West Berkshire in May 2013 against oak processionary moth (OPM), and reported first by Greenkeeper International in April 2013, will be repeated in May 2014 said the Forestry Commission in a surprise announcement.

Given the future created by last year’s aerial spraying of the biological insecticide Bacillus thuringiensis subasp. kurstaki over Herridge’s copse and Bloom’s copse near Pangbourne, this year’s blitz on nearby Sulham Woods, also a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) appears strange to the layman, and especially since no OPM nests were found in Berkshire in 2013.

The action is apparently based on the capture of five male adult moths in late summer 2013 during a routine pest monitoring exercise using pheromone traps.

PC says this does not necessarily mean a viable breeding population of OPM is still present in the Pangbourne area but that there remains eradication of the pest a last resort in an operation as to why another round of aerial spraying, when last year’s operation clearly failed to the try.” In 2013 PC admitted they were unsure as to whether there were actually any pest insects in the treated woodlands and whether Conservation branded the operation a ‘Wedgehammer to crack an nut’.

And what about the even stranger decision taken this year to spray just very small part of a single wood called Sulham Woods, in the same general area as last year (to the south of Pangbourne) but this time nearer to Tilehurst on the western outskirts of Reading.

Male oak processionary moths are strong fliers with flight distance capabilities of up to 25 km, which means they could have exited nests and mated with females over a potentially extensive area.

It is now over one year since the May 2013 aerial application, it was placed with no sign of the results being made public by PC. In January 2014 PC asked someone who was operationally involved in the ‘trial’ if he was privy to how it went. He had asked to see the results but was told he would have to go through the Freedom of Information Act to retrieve them.

I thought he was joking until I discovered that a Pangbourne resident had already used the Freedom of Information Act to find out why Natural England had sanctioned aerial spraying of an SSSI oak woodland in the first place, and especially since most conservation organisations thought the environmental and ecological risks were a ‘no brainer’.

According to BBC Berkshire, the Freedom of Information request revealed how Natural England had sanctioned aerial spraying of insecticide despite believing that it would not eradicate the insect pest, and also believed it would have “a very significant impact” on other species of moths and butterflies in the area.

Natural England stated in their reply to the Freedom of Information Act that “it will be very difficult to achieve eradication with a single application, but which is possible using more powerful chemical insecticides like diflubenzuron (an insect growth regulator) and deltamethrin (a pyrethroid insecticide acting through contact and ingestion). These insecticides are used in ground based spraying against OPM but are not licensed for aerial application.

UK plant health authorities are apparently keeping the results (if any) from these trials’ very ‘close to the chest’. It will probably take another ‘brave soul’ to make a Freedom of Information request to secure the findings for general viewing and scrutiny - any volunteers?

Dr Terry Mabbett

40 YEARS FOR DAVE AT CHIDWELL

BIGGA member Dave Maceney has celebrated a 40-year stint as Head Greenkeeper at Chidwell Golf Club.

Dave began his greenkeeping career at 15, assisted eight years at Royal Birkenhead before joining Chidwell – a parkland course close in the Haydon area of Liverpool - which was established in 1912.

He heads a five-strong greenkeeping team with a seasonal member joining in the summer.

He said: “We don’t have major events here but we’ve had many county matches down the years and we’re proud of our work here.”

“Dave has reconstructed 16 of the 18 greens with work on the remaining two coming up, and all the work is always done in house.”
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FC says this does not necessarily mean a viable breeding population of OPM is still present in the Pangbourne area but that there remains eradication of the pest a key priority as to why another round of aerial spraying, when last year’s operation clearly failed to do the trick.

“In 2013 FC admitted they were unsure as to whether there were actually any pest insects in the treated woodlands and Butterflies Conservation branded the operation a ‘hedgerow massacre’.

And what about the even stranger decision taken this year to spray just very small part of a single wood called Sulham Woods, in the same general area as last year (to the south of Pangbourne) but this time nearer to Tilehurst on the western outskirts of Reading.

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According to BBC Berkshire, the Freedom of Information request revealed how Natural England had sanctioned aerial application of insecticide despite believing that it would not eradicate the insect pest, and also believed it would have ‘very significant impacts’ on other species of moths and butterflies in the area.

Natural England was right to think a single pair of BTk sprays will not have eradicated OPM in 2013, even if present in the treated woodland, but for entirely the wrong reasons.

Spraying BTk as a stand-alone measure is essentially a pest management tool rather than a pest control tool and requires repeat applications over a number of years to achieve pest eradication if at all.

If the capture of five male adult moths in 2014 shows one thing it is that aerial spraying with BTk in 2013 failed to eradicate OPM; so why should the same treatment prove any different this year. And especially since there is no hard evidence of pest presence in the woodland earmarked for spraying this year.

BTk is a biological insecticide lacking the potency and persistence generally required to achieve eradication with a single application, but which is possible using more powerful chemical insecticides like dihexanormus (an insect growth regulator) and deltamethrin (a pyrethroid insecticide acting through contact and ingestion). These insecticides are used in ground based spraying against OPM but are not licensed for aerial application.

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“Last year we accepted 16 of the 18 greens with work on the remaining two coming up, and all the work is always done in house.”
Steve Castle travels down Boulby-Potash mine to discover more about a vital ingredient for golf course fertiliser

I’m three quarters of a mile beneath the ground, six miles out under the North Sea, and a bit of a miner, strolling only because of dim torchlight and his orange uniform, is tucking into a bunch of Daisy-she Dunksers. Just another average Tuesday afternoon for the intrepid turf journalist.

The location is the east coast of Yorkshire and I’m watching on, as workers at Boulby Potash mine operate a huge machine which is printing potash ore from the earth. The mine is run by Cleveland Potash Ltd – a wholly owned subsidiary of Israel Chemicals Ltd – and I’m on site to discover more about the beginning of the fertiliser production process.

Potash is the common name for potassium chloride, and Boulby Mine produces over half of the UK’s annual supply – from a staggering 2.4 million tonnes of potash ore a year.

This dark, warm and dusty atmosphere eventually leads to the production area of polyhalite, a different seam, some 140m beneath the potash – which contains potassium sulphate, calcium sulphate and magnesium sulphate. This polyhalite, a unique, organic mineral, is the key ingredient of Everris’s ProTurf fertiliser – which we would learn more of later.

After an informative briefing from our guide Neil Rowley, we don the all-orange overalls worn by the miners.

This features an oxygen self-rescuer which converts CO to CO2 if smoke inhalation occurs (clingy to the belts we wear in case of fire).

We file into a small, dark lift which then plunges at surprising speed beneath the earth. We then walk through piles of silver dust before we reach a Ford Transit which will shuttle us -45 minutes to the face where the mining is taking place.

The vehicle travels through the darkness. One of my colleagues compares the landscape to a Terminator film. It does almost seem post-apocalyptic. The roof is low and it’s stuffy and warm - around 12C - as the Transit rattles along a path of compacted dust in the gloom.

I’m astonished at how far we have to travel. There seem to be no obvious points of reference, with only the odd safety refuge point and mechanical station to be seen. It’s hard to imagine that this is someone’s daily commute.

At the face we meet several miners, who are happy to chat about their work. Some of the workforce began as coal miners before joining Boulby, and all have several years of experience as a necessity to allow them to work at the face and operate the huge, complex and potentially highly dangerous machinery.

As well as potash, Boulby produces between 0.5 - 0.8 million tonnes of rock salt annually, which is the crucial substance which de-ices UK roads.

The result of all this labour and expense goes into ProTurf - a high impact fertiliser with a combination of controlled release and conventional release of nitrogen designed for use on all outfield turf areas.

The polyhalite ensures all macro nutrients are delivered in one application, and rates are flexible due to the small granule size.

It’s been a fascinating experience as I’d never before considered the sheer scale of the technical and human operation required to produce this substance which then goes into fertiliser.

From this wet, and environment comes the building blocks for the fine turf we see on fairways, tees, surrounds, approaches and lawns. All things considered though I’m happier to view the North Yorkshire coastline from a more traditional vantage point above ground.
The latest BIGGA member benefit to come under the spotlight is the Lifestyle Counselling Helpline and Online Support Service – which has been upgraded and is now available to all members, and their immediate family living at the same address.

Trained advisers can help with a range of problems from practical everyday matters to sensitive or emotional issues. The specialists will help members deal with personal relationship problems, problems with colleagues in the workplace and other issues affecting their general wellbeing.

Counsellors and information specialists are also trained to help members with practical problems like debt.

The helpline is complemented by a comprehensive online information and support service, through which members can access information and advice on a range of issues and problems which often impact on everyday life.

Topics are diverse and include relationships, childcare issues, consumer issues, stress and health and fitness. Information is updated regularly by a team of experienced counsellors and information specialists.

The Lifestyle Counselling Helpline can be contacted by ringing 0844 770 1036 (Calls to 0844 phone numbers cost up to 5p a minute from a BT landline at all times of the day and up to 40p per minute from mobile phones. Depending on your mobile network, call charges may be higher on pay-as-you-go than on a pay monthly contract).

The Online Support Service can be accessed by visiting www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst where you will be asked to enter a username and password, enter BIGGA (remember: use capital letters) for both.

All the details can be accessed in the Members’ area of the BIGGA website – visit Member Services/Lifestyle Counselling Helpline & Online Support Service. Also on that page is information on ‘New You’ - a website which promotes a fresh approach to health and wellbeing. There are also separate links to websites on stress management, health and safety, depression, bullying, relationships and bereavement care.

All these benefits are for you to take advantage of, and we’re also keen to hear feedback from members who have used these facilities.
The benefits of being a member of BIGGA far outweigh not being a member. In the coming months, we will look at some of the six sections of the On Course Field Guides.

The Field Guides are funded from the L&D fund. Firstly, let’s make this clear - Field Guides are free to all members, that’s right - FREE! Non-members can purchase a copy but it will cost £25. As an added bonus, 1 x CPD Education credit will be available for completing the quiz.

This month we will look at the newest section, Protected Species. The section consists of four areas:

- Legislation
- European protected species
- Nationally protected species
- Other species of conservation concern

The following are two examples of the content of the Protected Species section.

**Smooth Snake (Annex IV Species) - Introduction to the ecology of the smooth snake**

The smooth snake is a non-venomous slender snake, now confined to the South East of Dorset, South West Hampshire and within a small area of East Hampshire and West Surrey. It is represented almost exclusively on dry lowland heathland. Smooth snakes normally emerge during early March, giving birth to live young in August/September. Snakes may take four years to reach sexual maturity. Smooth snakes have undergone serious decline due to a loss of habitat through agricultural intensification and development, through a reduction in habitat suitability, i.e. habitat fragmentation, shading, scrub invasion, fires etc.

**Legislation**

The smooth snake is strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Habitats Directive where it is listed under Annex IV of the Regulations. Under the legislation it is an offence to capture, disturb, injure or kill smooth snakes and/or to damage or destroy their breeding or resting places.

**Factors likely to impact on the smooth snake**

Activities likely to contravene the legislation would be ground works through areas used by foraging or basking snakes, loss of south-facing banks, removal of materials used by resting snakes, i.e. deadwood, rubble, etc., and renovation of buildings involving excavation. A major threat to this species is the ongoing loss of our native heathlands.

**Activities likely to contravene the legislation**

- New build
- Modifications to buildings
- New roads
- New paths
- New vehicles
- New machinery
- New vegetation management
- New water management
- New drainage
- New electricity
- New gas
- New telecommunications
- New services
- New footpaths
- New fencing
- New watercourses
- New ponds
- New ditches
- New heathland
- New scrub
- New hedges
- New trees
- New shrubs
- New vegetation

These are just two examples of the content of the Protected Species section.

**Contact the Learning & Development team at BIGGA House for more information.**

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**Individual Contributors:**

- Dawn Tennyson MA, Chris Lucas MA
- Andrew Carpelan MA, LCMA
- Jonathan Swift MA, LCMA
- Joint BIGGA Partners
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- Rachael Duffy, L&D Manager
- Stuart@bigga.co.uk
- Rachael@bigga.co.uk

**Collaborators:**

- Nick Gray, Steve Dixon
- Emily Soar, Michelle Beach
- David Barker, Jaey Goodchild, Michael Beaton, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid
- Steven Smith

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Opportunities for management

Golf courses can contribute positively to the future conservation of this species. A number of golf courses do support smooth snakes. Their conservation can be enhanced by the provision of deadwood, i.e. log piles, stockpiled brush (equation fires), careful scrub and bracken control, working under a strict management programme, and appropriate restoration and management of lowland heathland to maximise a strong habitat patchwork vegetation mosaic.

Increasing the extent of heath on the golf course could involve surveying to find all areas being managed unnecessarily, it may mean managing to control natural succession.

Opportunities could start by increasing more heath vegetation on the sides of the trees. Also ensure that gorse is managed as discrete groupings, rather than one contiguous belt to reduce fire risks.

Bats (All Species) (Annex II and Annex IV) - Introduction to the ecology of bats

There are 17 species of bat known to be breeding within the UK, all of which are protected by law due to the massive declines in their number. Bats are flying mammals that, as well as requiring a constant source of water, feed almost exclusively in the UK on insects. Bats require a diverse range of habitats, from grasslands through to scrub, linear hedgerows, trees and waterways including ponds. Bats will hibernate and roost in the crevices of trees, in buildings and within Ivy that often grows in association with trees.

They require different conditions for summer roosting to winter hibernation and/or breeding. In the winter, the main requirement is constant humidity and temperature, and thus they will tend to hibernate in deeper crevices. For breeding, summer warmth is vital and they will use a different aspect on a tree for this purpose.

Bats require a variety of insect prey and thus use hedgerows as navigational landmarks for their nocturnal flight paths. Woodland margins and hedgerows are, in effect, linear features (corridors) for bats, enabling commuting from one area of the countryside to another. Water bodies are particularly important for bats in providing midges and flies, and also for drinking. The Daubentons’s bat is one species that is heavily dependent upon aquatic habitats.

Legislation

All UK bats and their roosts are protected by European and national law, which for all countries within the UK can be summarised as follows:

- It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat (or a group of bats) in a roost.
- Damage or destroy a bat roost, even if unoccupied.
- Possess or advertise bats dead or alive.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

In court, “wilfully” will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/ injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action will most likely have.

Factors likely to impact on bats

Bats have declined as a result of hedgerow loss, indiscriminate tree removal and particularly the removal of dead standing trees.

Building renovation can also result in a loss of breeding and roosting habitat. Work is generally undertaken without any surveys being carried out and without consideration to any mitigation.

Opportunities for management

On golf courses the woodland fringe, the marginal rough and associated grasslands, ponds, etc. are all extremely important features and will help considerably in the conservation of our native bat population.

There are 17 species of bat resident within the UK (almost a quarter of our mammal species).

Encouraging and conserving bats on a golf course would best be achieved by avoiding, where possible, the use of pesticides (particularly insecticides), planting structurally diverse woodland margins, increasing the grass and rough contribution (marginal and ecology rough), managing for wildflowers, leaving deadwood (particularly standing), leaving Ivy (by is not a parasite and will not kill trees to which it is attached), and creating small ponds or marsh areas from which to drink and to encourage insects.

Prior to any work on property or trees, it is imperative that a bat survey is carried out by a suitably qualified ecological consultant.

Even after works have been consented, if there is potential for bats then as part of the mitigation a bat handler should be engaged onsite to deal with any bats dislodged during any works. It is illegal to handle a bat without an appropriate licence.

These are just two examples that can be found in the Protected Species section.

Next month:
The identification of Trees and Shrubs on the Golf Course.

Part 2 of the survey continues next month with a focus on Species section.

Credit for correctly answering these questions

www.surveymonkey.com/s/ProtectedSpeciesCPDQuiz

Which habitat can the smooth snake be found most commonly in?

- How long do they take to reach sexual maturity?
- Which act protects the Smooth Snake?
- Which of the following is a cause of a decline in Smooth Snakes?
- What can be done to improve habitat?
- What family of animals do bats belong to?
- During hibernation what type of environment do they prefer?
- Which type of food do Daubentons’s bats prefer?
- Which of the following has an impact on the bat’s habitat?
- What should you do before working on properties/trees on the course?

TO THE MANOR BORN

Congratulations to Rhys Neville, greenkeeper at Celtic Manor, who is the latest student to be awarded a BIGGA Higher Education Scholarship supported by Jacobsen worth £1,500.

Rhys will attend Elmwood College to study his Higher National Certificate in Sportsturf.

EARN 1 CPD CREDIT FOR CORRECTLY ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS

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- What should you do before working on properties/trees on the course?
New Holland’s popular range of Boomer Compact tractors features five Boomer models producing 23hp - 46hp, complimented further by a segment leading three model 41hp - 51hp Boomer 3000 range with EasyDrive™ continuously variable transmission.

This complete eight model Boomer offering delivers powers spanning 27 - 51hp with a range of specifications: from entry-level get-on-and-go simplicity right through to features which will satisfy the most comfort conscious and efficiency demanding customers.

Owners are able to tailor their Boomer’s transmission to suit their individual needs. The Boomer 25 model is available with a two range hydrostatic transmission, whilst Boomer 30, 35, 40 and 50 models can be equipped with a three range variant or a mechanical Synchro-Shuttle.

These transmissions offer jump on and go simplicity together with the convenience of outstandingly smooth shuttling. For customers who demand even more precision and comfort, the award-winning EasyDrive™ continuously variable transmission on the Boomer 3040, 3045 and 3050 models is unique in the segment and has brought big-tractor ease of operation to the Boomer range.

The chain belt drive enables infinite speed adjustment up to 30kph. This allows operators to precisely adjust their speed to the task in hand, whilst reducing in-cab noise and enhancing operator comfort. Braking is smooth and steady and automotive-style cruise control enables operators to maintain, fine tune or resume working speeds. Furthermore, an advanced reactivity setting means operators can adjust acceleration and deceleration to suit their individual driving style or application.
Dennis helps Brazil prepare for World Cup

Leading British manufacturer Dennis Mowers has won a prestigious order to supply over thirty G860 34” professional cylinder mowers, complete with a range of interchangeable cassettes, to help prepare all twelve stadia at the forthcoming World Cup.

Supplied through the company’s dealer Greenext, who are based in Sao Paulo, the turf maintenance machines will be used.

The manufacturer worked closely with Greenext and the three contractors who were chosen to maintain the facilities. The G860 machine complete with an eight-bladed cutting cassette and tungsten tipped verticutter was then specified as one of the key turf maintenance pieces of equipment.

With a rich heritage of producing professional mowers which are renowned for their quality of cut, performance, reliability and versatility, the Dennis G860 has six quick changeover cassette options. Prior to the majority of the machines arriving in Brazil, sales managers Toby Clarke and Ewen Wilson, gave a number of comprehensive practical demonstrations to the contractors and their operatives explaining pitch presentation with height of cut, frequency, mowing stripes, machine adjustment and safe operation.

RIO PITCHES READY THANKS TO DLF TRIFOLIUM

With a few weeks before kick off in Brazil the pitches are in good shape and fit for play. The pitch preparations have included overseeding with a top performing perennial ryegrass mixture from DLF TRIFOLIUM, parent company of the UK’s Johnson Sports Seed.

DLF TRIFOLIUM Export Manager Jan Gottlieb, and General Manager Maxime, Santiago Barsi, took a tour of some of the Brazilian stadiums and training centres in early May.

“We have been working on this event for 3 years in close cooperation with grass specialists and the contractors responsible for the pitches.

We are in no doubt that this World Cup will present top class grass pitches,” said Jan Gottlieb on his return, confident that the pitches will be ready for the World Cup matches in summer 2014.

EASY ORDERING WITH SHERIFF AMENITY

Sherriff Amenity is proud to announce the launch of a new website at www.sherriffamenity.com.

The new site not only incorporates a new clean design which is easy to navigate but also includes more product information than ever before.

As part of the website, a Customer Order Portal has become integral to the new design, which was officially launched at BTME. A more extensive news section with video content complete the new look.

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The Customer Order Portal is compatible with a wide range of devices including mobiles and tablets, and is accessible through a link on the new Sheriff Amenity website, ensuring that groundsmen and greenkeepers, who are existing Sheriff Amenity customers and have registered their details, can place orders as and when they need them – all in real time.

Kevin Whitty, Sheriff Amenity’s marketing manager, said: “We are delighted with the new website. We had very positive comments from our soft launch at BTME.

“There is something of value and interest for every groundsmen or greenkeeper visiting our site from its depth product information to material data sheets and our popular BASIS technical updates.”

For further information, or if you would like to register for the Customer Order Portal please contact Sheriff Amenity on 01638 721 888 or visit www.sherriffamenity.com. For more news and insightful views, you can follow Sheriff Amenity on Twitter @SherriffAmenity
KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON SUMMER DISEASE THREAT

Throughout summer there is always the risk of fungal turf disease – prolonged wet weather can introduce Fusarium, but more commonly, greens can be threatened by Anthracnose and Red Thread. These two infections are classic results of nitrogen deficiency. The obvious cultural solution in these cases is to apply a fertiliser, however reduced fertiliser use can be influenced to a degree by the feature list on a given golf course.

Bayer’s Technical Manager Dr Colin Murmford explains that when applying a nitrogen based fertiliser, greenkeepers need to be conscious that the application will potentially slow the greens up.

“Fertilisers will stimulate more growth during the day and this faster growing grass will slow the ball.”

“Is a course approaching a tournament feature, a cultural approach to tackling an infection such as Red Thread, may not be desirable, then it may be preferable to use a fungicide.”

Bayer’s fungicide range offers both protection from these summer fungal infections as well as good rotation as part of an Integrated Disease Management (IDM) approach.

“Bayer’s fungicides cover three of the five fungicide chemical groups. Using fungicides from the different chemical families ensures good rotation of active ingredients which fits into an IDM perfectly.”

He adds that in the height of summer, Interface® offers optional versatility.

“Interface® can be used at any time of the year, so it’s a good staple and is active on six of the most common turf diseases, including Red Thread and Anthracnose. Its innovative StressGard™ Formulation Technology also boosts the turf’s defences in high stress conditions.

SHERRIFF AMENITY LAUNCH WORLD’S FIRST DUAL DISC PLATE SPREADER

Following positive comments at HTMS earlier this year, Sherriff Amenity are pleased to announce the launch of the Duo, which is the only spreader available on the market to feature two dispersal plates for a highly accurate spread pattern. The patented double spreader plates of the Duo Spreader provide the market’s best, broadest and most accurate spread pattern which is not only time saving but also money, because it only requires one pass.

The Duo Spreader has an ergonomic handle allowing the user alternate grip for both comfort and also features a third wheel which helps balance the spreader no matter what weight it is carrying. It also means that the angle of spread is extremely consistent. Made from corrosion-resistant powder coated stainless steel, the dual levers allow independent opening and closing of both sides.

The Duo Spreader has a finely graded scale, allowing greenkeepers and greensman to control the exact dosage. The extra handle also makes it easy to lift.

“The new Duo Spreader is designed to provide the ideal solution for cost effective and extremely efficient application method in virtually any sport or managed amenity turf scenario,” said Mark Fysh, of Sherriff Amenity. The Duo Spreader is available exclusively throughout the United Kingdom from Sherriff Amenity.

For further information, please contact Sherriff Amenity on 01638 721 888 or visit the website: www.sherriffamenity.com

WIEDENMANN CORE RECycler DEMO DAYS A HIT

The revolutionary Core Recycler from Wiedenmann UK is set to cheer up admirers up and down the country as it begins a series of demo days from now until the end of summer. Over 60 customers of dealer Ernest Dow and Sons at the Bennington and Esther branches were among the first to see it in action last month at Brocket Hall and Pulweli Golf Clubs.

The Core Recycler makes an immediate impact, saving labour, reducing top dressing volumes and hugely speeding up the process that follows aeration.

With dual functions it collects all cores from the surface and then recycles them really efficiently and effectively using a series of adjustable sieves. Indigenous soil, sand and organic material is then recycled back to the surface and in most cases, more than 60% of the cores is saved where previously it would all have been wasted.

Wiedenmann GmbH’s joint managing director, Jurgen Wiedenmann, attended Dow’s Easter event which was staged at Pulweli Golf Club, Middlesex and commented that seeing nine Wiedenmann machines in action at once made him feel immensely proud.

He said: “It was really good fun and informative and seeing the way individual Wiedenmann machines like the Terra Spike aerator, the Mega Blower and the Terra Rake co-ordinated and came together as a team to support the Core Recycler made a genuine impression.

“It was a very real insight into the vast impact they can have on the health and maintenance of a golf course. As their duties unfolded it wasn’t just like watching a demo it was more like watching a show.”

GUARANTEE A PERFECT CUT THIS SEASON

With the grass cutting season in full swing, it is vital turf managers are up to the challenge of frequent cutting techniques to continually produce the best possible ‘off-cut’ appearance on the golf course.

For all those operating Toro machinery, replacing old worn cutting cylinders with new units from the Genuine Toro Parts range is the only way to ensure the perfect fit and function needed to ensure the mower’s superior quality of cut. That’s according to distributor Lely UK, who says fitting a genuine Toro cylinder, against an inferior ‘fit-and-part’, is the only guarantee clubs have when it comes to producing a consistently-accurate cut with no turf damage.

Whether operators choose a 5, 7, 8, 11 or 14-blade cylinder to replace or upgrade old ones, Toro cylinders don’t just make tall grass short like many ‘fit and part’ inferior quality parts, they guarantee a crisp, finer cut right down to 2.5mm.

Genuine Toro cylinders deliver a highly precise cutting motion, which cuts the grass blade ends cleanly away, ensuring healthier growth, smoother turf and the best playability.

Lely says that using genuine Toro cylinders saves time, too. That is because, by investing in a cylinder that fits perfectly, operators are spared the time-consuming job of grinding the cylinder to reduce abrasive wear between the blade and bedknife.

Dan Dubas, from sales and marketing for Toro at Lely, comments: “To ensure you are cutting to the best your machine’s ability, there’s a simple and easy test to check the cylinder’s performance. ‘The paper test’ involves running a strip of paper through the cutting and if it produces a clean cut, your cylinders are fine, if it’s anything less than perfect, it’s time to reground or replace.

And the only way to guarantee superior performance in form, fit and function is to opt for genuine Toro Parts. But investing in the best doesn’t necessarily mean it’s the most expensive option. Toro cylinders are competitively priced and provide excellent value.”

CHUCK GREIF PROMOTED AT JACOBSEN

Chuck Greif, the former Director of Sales for Jacobsen’s Eastern regional of the USA, has been appointed Managing Director, Asia Pacific. He is an industry veteran created by Alan Prickett’s recent move to head up the Ransomes Jacobsen operation in Ipswich. With almost 30 years in global sales management roles, Chuck is a respected industry veteran. He began his career in the turf grass industry in 1998 when he was appointed National Sales Manager at John Deere’s golf and turf products division before being appointed International Sales Manager in 2000. He left in 2004 to join cleaning solutions group Alfred Karcher as Vice President of their commercial products division before beginning his career with Textron in 2005 as Director, Product Development at E-Z-GO in Augusta, GA.

In 2009 he joined Jacobsen as a Regional Sales Manager and was promoted to his former role as Director of Sales for the Eastern Region in 2012.
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Lely says that using genuine Toro cylinders saves time, too. That is because, by investing in a cylinder that fits perfectly, operators are spared the time-consuming job of grinding the cylinder to reduce abrasive wear between the blade and bedknife.

Dan Dusbas, from sales and marketing for Toro at Lely, comments: “To ensure you are cutting to the best of your machine’s ability, there is a simple and easy test to check the cylinder’s performance. The ‘paper test’ involves running a strip of paper through the cutting unit. If it produces a clean cut, your cylinders are fine, if it’s anything less than perfect, it’s time to regrind or replace.

And the only way to guarantee superior performance in form, fit and function is to opt for genuine Toro Parts. But investing in the best doesn’t necessarily mean it’s the most expensive option. Toro cylinders are competitively priced and provide excellent value.”

**CHUCK GREIF PROMOTED AT JACOBSSEN**

Chuck Greif, the former Director of Sales for Jacobsen’s Eastern region of the USA, has been appointed Managing Director, Asia Pacific. He began his career in the turfgrass industry in 1998 when he was appointed National Sales Manager at John Deere’s golf and turf products division before being appointed International Sales Manager in 2000. He left in 2004 to join cleaning solutions group Alford Karcher as Vice President of their commercial products division before beginning his career with Textron in 2005 as Director, Product Development at E-Z-GO in Augusta, GA.

In 2009 he joined Jacobsen as a Regional Sales Manager and was promoted to his new role as Director of Sales for the Eastern Region in 2012.
Miles Todd and his team have transformed the fortunes of Llandudno Maesdu Golf Club in 12 months. Steve Castle travelled to the unusual part-parkland, part-links in North Wales to find out how a Course Manager in his mid twenties has made such an impact.

Llandudno Maesdu combines two hugely contrasting courses in one. One side is lush parkland, but the second part stretching towards the Irish Sea is more of a links.

Miles Todd – a Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year runner up in 2011- joined this intriguing set-up in April last year. From the very beginning, it was clear it would be a challenge. We toured the links part of the course on a misty day on the North Wales coast as Miles explained why.

“When I came here the course was below standard. The greens were poor. There was a big thatch problem and a big variation in grass species throughout the sward.”

To reduce the thatch levels, Miles devised a new comprehensive aeration and topdressing programme.

He explained: “I’m a believer in little and often when it comes to aeration and dressing. Greens were micro tined at 8mm twice a month followed by a dressing of straight sand. Our aim was 20 tonnes per month throughout the season.

“Sarrel rolling and star slitting were carried out at the beginning and end of the season, followed by a heavy dressing of one tonne per green.”

The team verticutted greens up to three times a month to refine and reduce unwanted rye and Yorkshire fog which had crept in. This work also reduced the build up of organic matter and kept the surface as true and quick as possible.

Miles continued: “Fertiliser and water inputs were kept to a minimum. A 3.0.3 had already been applied before I started. An 8.0.0 was applied twice through the season and the last granular of the year was a 3.0.3 in October. Liquid feed, seaweed and iron were all used to trickle the greens along.

“A wetting agent programme was also put in place. The result of this work has dramatically improved the playing surface, thatch is diluting and the root system is thriving.”

This season we are using the Symbio Compost Tea system which will work in conjunction with our aeration and topdressing programme to reduce thatch levels, encourage finer grasses and reduce our fertiliser and fungicide inputs.”

So that explains how the greens have been transformed. But what other issues needed addressing?

“There was no definition on the course. The fairways were straight edged with no shape, so we changed the height of cut and let the rough grow a bit to achieve some definition. The pathways needed redefining too.

“Some construction had been attempted near a pond, but the area around it had been damaged during the work leaving bare clay. So that area had to be rotavated, topsoil put in then overseeded. The grass did take a while to grow because we had such a cold spring last year, which wasn’t ideal weather for me to start with!

“The bunkers also needed work, they hadn’t really been maintained. Members complained there was no sand in them, so we had a good rake around and discovered all the sand had compacted at the back of the bunkers – the sand had never been redistributed or ‘fluffed up’. This also posed drainage issues and a couple even had algae in them.

“When I came in the committee handed me a ‘to do’ list! A lot of it was pie in the sky – they were good ideas, but first we needed to get back to basics. I had to convince them that we did have so much potential...
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here, but first it was essential to improve what we had. We had some potentially great features such as ponds and ditches but they hadn’t made the best of them.

Just days after Miles joined, an official from the Golf Union of Wales arrived to view Llandudno Maesdu with the prestigious Aberconwy Trophy just weeks away - and warned him they were in danger of losing the competition due to the poor state of the course.

He said: “It was a case of getting everything in as good a shape as we possibly could. The official returned a couple of weeks before the Trophy in July and could see we had made some progress, and agreed we could stage it on the proviso that everything would be up to scratch next year. We continued to make steady improvements and successfully held the LGU Seniors Home International in September.”

Miles heads a team of four with a seasonal greenkeeper added to the team in summer. It’s clear there is plenty of competition for golfers’ attentions in the area. Llandudno Maesdu is so close to North Wales Golf Club that the two are only divided by a small railway line which trundles along the West coast, and the much-heralded Conwy Golf Club is a mere three miles away, so it’s essential for the course to be in excellent shape.

Another issue which Miles confronted head-on was poorly maintained machinery.

“The bearings had gone on some of the machines, and no grinding had been done. We didn’t have time to do repairs as we were concentrating on the course so we had to spend quite a lot of money on servicing. We now look after the machinery ourselves and have already cut the maintenance budget by £4,000 which says it all – that money can be reinvested in the course.

“If we have a major problem, we’ve got a good relationship with the dealer Major Owen and they can usually get here the same day. Also, we keep records of the machinery maintenance we carry out so if something goes wrong, the club knows it’s not due to neglect.”

In April, I spoke to Stuart Imeson, the 22-year-old Head Greenkeeper at Dunstanburgh Castle Links, to discover how he coped with a senior role at a relatively young age. So what is Miles’s view on this?

“I was Course Manager here at 25 and I think at that age you’ve got to prove yourself twice as much. Some of the committee said to me straightaway “you’re too young”. That got on my nerves, especially...
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for the first few weeks, and you feel a bit undermined. I asked them to trust me and give me time, and the team and myself would prove that we knew what we were doing.

“We’ve made gradual improvements but honestly, we haven’t achieved anything like our potential yet. We have to keep moving forward because when I’ve visited other courses, it’s clear to me that standards are improving everywhere as the market is currently so competitive. I like playing golf at other courses and think it’s very important not to cocoon yourself in your own course, you need to keep up to date with what other greenkeepers are doing and compare your methods to theirs.

“Everyone here is now on our side, they can see what the greenkeeping team are doing and have faith in us all, they know we’re an enthusiastic team.

“We’re young and we want to prove a point. The members are complimenting the lads now, whereas before if they did speak to them it was generally a complaint. The feelgood factor is returning.”

Miles admitted he left school with no real idea of his career path although he favoured the outdoor life. He played golf at Bryn Morydd Golf Club (which has since closed) and this led to a seasonal greenkeeping position. He then moved to Rhuddlan Golf Club while studying a National Diploma in Horticulture at Northop College.

After four months at Rhuddlan – a heavy parkland course - he was offered a full-time role, and switched his studies to an NVQ Level 2 in Sports turf.

Miles recalled: “I worked my way up to Deputy at Rhuddlan. I learnt so much and had a good relationship with Course Manager John Morris, but there’s only so much you can achieve as Deputy, I needed to progress and this place was nearby so it was ideal.

“I had the standard worries about moving up to Course Manager. You know if you don’t succeed or something goes wrong, it’s your head on the block. But to improve yourself you have to step out of your comfort zone.

“You have to lead by example, I go out and demonstrate what I want the team to do so there are no misunderstandings, and I don’t ask anybody to do something I wouldn’t be prepared to do myself.”

Miles was nominated for Toro Student of the Year 2011 by Jenny Pitt, his tutor at Deeside College, and finished as a runner-up overall.

He credits this experience as a turning point in his career.

“I used to struggle with my confidence a bit, particularly when talking to older, more experienced greenkeepers.

“But it reassured me that my career was heading in the right direction and it gave me belief that I was doing the right things.”

Miles is a talented footballer, and next season will be playing in the second tier of the Welsh football pyramid after helping Denbigh Town FC to promotion. After my illuminating visit to North Wales, I’m convinced that he’s well on the way to restoring Llandudno Maesdu to the big league.

Follow the work of Miles and his team on Twitter @MaesduGolfClub.
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A holistic approach to irrigation

In the first part of a two-part article, Adrian Mortram from Robin Hume Associates argues the case for a holistic approach to turfgrass irrigation with a nod to greenkeeping methods from the past.

BTME is arguably the best turf management event existing anywhere in the world. It is a time to seek out the new, look back to the past, meet old friends and start new friendships. In modern parlance it is the perfect place for networking.

Sitting at the dining table with my father and a group of dear friends, there was also a young man who had won a scholarship from BIGGA to attend BTME by writing an essay on why he wanted to be at the show.

The conversation was eclectic, fast and furious, but almost all was about grass, and not the alternate resource - water.

Subterranean aquifers should now be replenished but hydro- logically it would appear there is a finite amount of water which can fall as precipitation, does this winter deluge mean drought in the near future? If so, should we not in the long-term be harnessing this precipitation when it is available? Should we not be considering water farming in some degree whether it is by trapping excess drainage or harvesting run-off from hard standing areas, cut pads and roads?

Average rainfall figures quoted in the media can be misleading and cloud our judgement. Even though in some areas rainfall has been average for the time of year in others for instance the north east of Scotland, it has been below average. Yes, the pattern of rainfall seems to be changing with heavier falls of rain in greater deluges in shorter periods of time. Irrigation data was originally based on agricultural crops when a drought was assessed when the soil moisture deficit reached 30mm, equivalent to a ten day period without rainfall.

Greenkeepers of the past would look for signs of imminent drought by observing footprinting, the distinct depressions in the turf caused by the stress of foot traffic, often observed as the sun began to dip in the sky, or the subtle changes in colour of the bent rich sward indicating water stress or wilting.

Older tools for changing the hole cup exposed the root core for inspection giving hidden clues as to the depth of rooting and the water availability in the rootzone; daily switching of the early morning dew could provide up to 1mm of free water, almost one third of the daily requirement.

Aeration - both surface and sub-surface, plays a huge part in the effective management and use of water resources. Surface aeration by verticutting or scarifying helps remove excess water absorbing organic matter in the surface of the sward and sub-surface aeration, by whatever method, allows oxygen and water to penetrate into the rootzone increasing the root biomass of the turf.

This encourages a deeper rooting sward and a greater soil reservoir capacity. These are all tried and well-tested methods to improve the efficiency of water management in the rootzone.

More recently there has been considerable improvement in the use and efficiency of wetting agents and these are extended not only as a benefit for hydrophobic turf but to encompass and encourage the uptake of moisture from dewy turf. Research and breeding of drought resistance in turf cultivars has gained prominence, as has the selection of cultivars with better natural colour.

Over-fertilising and excessive water regimes can lead to a more dominant vivid green colour, but what is colour? Is the colour of the sward to be dominated by the shades of colour on our television screens, or are the natural muted colours of our fine grasses in the UK to be the norm?

Do I see the same shade of green as the next man when it is still early spring in the UK with little or no growth? Turf managers are not looking for a yield from their turf, only sustainable balanced growth, as the next man when it is still early spring in the UK with little or no growth?

The Colour of the Sward by Canon Bill Griffiths, BTME 2014, 16th - 18th January, Harrogate
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The conversation was eclectic, fast and furious, but almost all was about grass, and not the alternate meaning. Irrigation and the efficient usage of water was a huge subject. Your irrigation system is probably the biggest single investment your golf club will ever make and it must be used to its very best.

This two part article will look at what we, as greenkeepers and course managers, did in the past and how we can use these traditional skills and add new techniques so we are capable of advancing in the future to make the best use of our most precious resource - water.

Subterranean aquifers should now be replenished but hydrologically it would appear there is a finite amount of water which can fall as precipitation. Does this winter deluge mean drought in the near future? If so, should we not in the long term be harrassing this precipitation when it is available?

Should we not be considering water farming in some degree whether it is by trapping excess drainage or harvesting run-off from hard standing areas, car parks and roads?

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A holistic approach

A holistic approach to turfgrass irrigation with a nod to greengreening methods from the past and course managers, did in the past and how we can use these traditional skills and add new techniques so we are capable of advancing in the future to make the best use of our most precious resource - water. Every drop of water counts, whether verticutting or scarifying water resources. Surface aeration effective management and use of water, almost one third of the daily water requirement.

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Greengreening methods from the past and course managers, did in the past and how we can use these traditional skills and add new techniques so we are capable of advancing in the future to make the best use of our most precious resource - water. Every drop of water counts, whether verticutting or scarifying helps remove excess water absorbing organic matter in the surface of the sward and sub-surface area, by whatever method, allows oxygen and water to penetrate into the rootzone increasing the root biomass of the turf.

This encourages a deeper rooting sward and a greater soil reservoir capacity. These are all tried and well tested methods to improve the efficiency of water management in the rootzone.

More recently there has been considerable improvement in the use and efficiency of setting agents and there are practices in place not only as a benefit for hydrophobic turf but to encompass and encourage the uptake of moisture from dew. Aeration - both surface and sub-surface - plays a huge part in the effective management and use of water resources. Surface aeration whether verticutting or scarifying helps remove excess water absorbing organic matter in the surface of the sward and sub-surface area, by whatever method, allows oxygen and water to penetrate into the rootzone increasing the root biomass of the turf.

A knowledge of soil structure and the movement of soil water also has a considerable impact on the efficient use of water. During
this winter most soils/rootzones will have been waterlogged, when all the available air within the soil/rootzone, the pore spaces, is saturated with water.

As water drains away under the influence of gravity, the soil/rootzone reaches field capacity, when the pore spaces are fully charged with air and the capillary pathways fully charged with water.

This may be considered the initial point from which irrigation is calculated, though irrigation should not be calculated to bring the soil/rootzone back to field capacity. If this was the case, any natural precipitation would ensure the soil/rootzone back to field capacity.

Let us also look at the factors which cause grasses to lose water, the factors which affect evapotranspiration. They are solar radiation (the amount of light or sunshine), temperature, wind and humidity. Most of these are difficult to control, at least economically. However they can be assessed and these assessments can be used to calculate different rates of irrigation for differing situations.

Simply put, a plateau green in an exposed position on a links course will dry out quicker than a sheltered green situated within the dunes. But even this scenario is not simple, as the former will be cooler than the latter when temperature rather than wind may be in control. A modern weather station may assist, but will not give the complete answer. Soil moisture sensing equipment will help to assess sensitive areas.

Referring back to this article’s introduction, I mentioned that we were sat around the dinner table when much of this conversation took place.

There present sat an old friend with considerable experience of installing and maintaining irrigation control systems, his comment was on many return visits to golf clubs the controllers have remained unaltered from their original setting.

We have the technology, so why is it not being used? Is education lacking? Well for the past several years BTME has put on workshops looking at the management of water on the golf course and this year there was a workshop looking at grasses, soil and fertilisers.

In the second article, I hope to explore some of the issues raised and discuss the use of modern technology in an attempt to solve some of the problems. Many of the answers are in the use of modern technology, but not all, and an all-round approach as always should be considered the best.
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Irrigation must take into account the rate at which a soil/rootzone absorbs water, if the application rate from an irrigation sprinkler system is greater than the infiltration rate of the soil/rootzone, then run-off will occur. Infiltration rate is relatively easy to measure, by using a double ring infiltrometer, and the rate of infiltration can be affected by such variables as compaction and slope (contour).

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A modern weather station may be considered the best.

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Win an iPad

How you can win an iPad in our revamped Photography Competition

BIGGA members can win an iPad in this year’s Photographic Competition – and for the first time you can submit smartphone images.

Many BIGGA members take stunning course photos on their mobiles – and these entries are now encouraged as we move to producing a desktop calendar for the first time.

We’ll also be giving members the chance to pick the winners. A panel at BIGGA House will whittle the entries down to the best 24, then you will be able to pick your favourite through a survey on our website. The 12 leading entries will be included in the calendar and the winning image will win an iPad, plus a large framed version of their image.

We continue to welcome photos taken on digital cameras. The images will be displayed at a 16:9 ratio. If you are taking your shot on a mobile phone, please ensure it’s taken on the highest resolution setting.

To enter, please send your images to comps@bigga.co.uk with ‘BIGGA Photo Comp 2014’ in the subject field. Please include your name, the club you work at and your membership number. Also, please state which course your photo was taken at to allow your picture to be considered. Entries are limited at five per person.

The closing date for entries is Friday 18 July 2014.
In the picture

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Beesy does it

Bob Taylor, Head of Ecology and Environment at STRI, updates us on Operation Pollinator and visits two courses where BIGGA members are making a real difference.

Operation Pollinator is designed to reverse the plight of bumblebees and pollinating insects in the UK and Ireland by creating valuable new habitats in out of play areas of golf courses.

Its aim is to establish pollen and nectar rich habitats on up to 500 golf courses to provide the essential food sources and nesting sites for pollinating insects - including bumblebees and other important wild bees.

Operation Pollinator provides a framework of knowledge, expertise and experience to assist with the successful management of wildflower habitats in out-of-play rough, alongside the conventional management of the golf course.

The inaugural Operation Pollinator Award, run by The Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and Syngenta, was held during BTME. After long deliberations North Foreland Golf Club in Kent were awarded the top prize.

The Award aims to highlight the plight of our native pollinators which are undergoing massive declines due to loss of the countryside and changing weather patterns. Moreover, just like the Environment Awards, it is hoped the award will be used as an industry platform allowing us to demonstrate that far from being a selfish use of the landscape, golf is a positive contributor to biodiversity and the conservation of both species and habitats, some of which owe their very existence to the presence of the golf course.

Operation Pollinator will give recognition to golf clubs that are committed to the conservation management, and which have successfully created pollen rich habitats on golf courses leading to an increase in pollinating insects.

So what is North Foreland doing that is special?

The sites chosen at the club, a 36-hole facility on the Kent coast, had been unmanaged for over 30 years allowing deep ground ivy to take over and compromise the former chalk grassland. Site selection was due to it being largely out of play with limited foot traffic.

The results of the grassland management improvement work have seen a major transformation with the rough now alive with flying insects, moths, butterflies and grasshoppers. Bee activity within bee hotels has resulted in a gradual species increase and much enhanced environmental and ecological value. From the work taking place at North Foreland, it is clear that this is a long term project with lots of future potential.

Course Manager Dan McGrath MG fully understands and appreciates what works best in the course environment. The seed selected by him indicates that he has an implicit understanding of what grows well on the course and how it blends in with the rest of the course to provide an enjoyable, colourful and inspiring environment for members and visitors alike.

There are an increasing number of golf clubs working to develop pollinator habitat, building upon their experience and gaining direct and indirect benefit from the conservation management opportunities.

Some clubs are also realising business opportunities from the initiative.

The finalists for the award included:
- Carnoustie Golf Links Management Trust
- St Andrews Links
- John O’Gaunt Golf Club
- Dundonald Links
- Harlaxton Common Golf Club

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- St Andrews Links
- John O’Gaunt Golf Club
- Dumbarnside Links
- Harbury Common Golf Club
The range of work is diverse. At one club, this work may involve simply recognising the plight of our pollinators and getting members to tie in with the need to leave areas of grassland, whilst at another bee houses are being erected and considerable effort is being given to creating flower rich grasslands.

So how does a club get started?

Simple – call STRI and discuss the range of opportunities that are available. Identify areas of grassland that can be set aside and managed to optimise pollinator interest. A management programme will be required highlighting management techniques including the sowing of appropriate wild flowers if needed. It will be essential that the flowers present provide a nectar or pollen source throughout three of the seasons.

Ensure good overwintering habitat which is essential if species are to fully utilise the habitats present. Dead wood including log piles, fallen wood scattered on the ground and arid wood are essential – not only for overwintering – but those specialist invertebrates that live in dead wood which are important in pollinating our flowers and grasses.

John O’Gaunt are well underway with the pollinator conservation work and are so advanced they are using the seed heads collected from the first established areas to develop new areas of grassland around the course.

Do not rely on even neat and attractive areas - tall herbs including umbellifers and species of labiate in out of play areas should be encouraged. This may appear untidy to some but nature is not always tidy; these areas are often vital and will support species that are dependent upon them.

Communication is likely to become a main part of the programme and can take many forms. North Foreland are using beer mats in the bar printed with the Operation Pollinator logo, this is a great way of getting members and visitors aware and involved. Some clubs such as the London Club and Minchinhampton have installed signage alongside grassland areas which in turn have been specially developed next to public rights of way. This is a great way to get ramblers aware of the positive conservation work being implemented on the courses.

I would like to thank all of the golf clubs for entering, I am confident that working together we can all make a positive contribution to the conservation of our countryside and all that is in it.

There are probably many clubs just starting out perhaps feeling that they haven’t done enough but as I have found on visiting these clubs that they are doing far more than they think. They would not just starting out perhaps feeling that they haven’t done enough but as I have found on visiting these clubs that they are doing far more than they think. They would not only prove worthy contenders of this new, prestigious award, but by joining in they become part of a growing network of similar like-minded clubs.

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**About the Author**

As STRI’s Head of Ecology and Environment, Bob is one of the most experienced ornithologists in the world. He has developed a number of management techniques for grassland management and the environment. Bob’s work takes him all over the UK and Europe. He has been responsible for the development of management techniques for grassland, and a number of grassland management projects. Bob is the custodian of the landscape to take the lead as positive custodian of the landscape, and ariel wood are essential - not only for overwintering - but those specialist invertebrates that live in dead wood which are important in pollinating our flowers and grasses. 

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**Operation Pollinator Awards**

The Operation Pollinator Awards is open to all UK and Ireland clubs implementing the Operation Pollinator programme. Operation Pollinator guidelines and advice has been developed specifically for golf courses in conjunction with STRI and is available through Syngenta. Please do your part by registering your interest with Syngenta carolinel.carroll@syngenta.com or with me at STRI bob.taylor@strit.co.uk. We will notify you when the application form for 2014 is available. Award entries are judged by STRI.
OPERATION POLLINATOR

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He sees major opportunities 

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It's time to help greenkeepers win the battle against pitchmarks. Here are the often reported statistics about them:

"A pitchmark repaired within 10 minutes of being created will fully recover within three days. A poorly repaired pitchmark or one left for a day before being repaired will take over a week to heal.

"On average the number of ball marks made on greens by a golfer per round is eight. Assuming only 130 rounds are played daily on your course, your greens receive 1040 impressions daily, 31,000 per month or more than 374,400 per year."

In recent years the issue of pitchmarks – always prominent in the turf management industry - has become an even hotter topic. Social media now has a big part to play as many greenkeepers use it to show off their courses or gain advice from fellow turf experts as well as keeping members and golfers informed. Recently a growing number of greenkeepers and golf clubs have been tweeting pictures of unrepaired pitchmarks on their greens and venting the frustration that goes with them.

Some golfers must wonder why pitchmarks are so frustrating. Greenkeepers strive to provide fast and true greens and unrepaired pitchmarks make the greens bumpy and patchy as well as taking up valuable time repairing.

My interest in the topic was heightened after seeing a Twitter conversation last year between Dave Collins (@greenkeeperdave) and Julie Vesely (@golfclubnbeds). They were discussing pitchmarks when they came up with promoting the idea of 'National Repair Your Pitchmark Day" and set a date for 14 August 2013. The day was a great success, many golf clubs got involved as well as a few celebrities - South African cricketer and keen golfer AB de Villiers and Bradford City FC. Hundreds of other social media users retweeted the event.

So what did the day involve? Apart from the massive campaign on Twitter, and at their golf courses, some greenkeepers gave out pitchmark repairers at their clubs and explained the importance of these to golfers going out that day. Another day is planned for 14 August this year to hopefully raise even more awareness. Here at West Chiltington, which is a parkland course in West Sussex, we will be putting up posters around the club and will be maximising exposure on Twitter, Facebook and our website.
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to get people talking about it.

National Repair Your Pitchmark Day is all about raising awareness. It is about reinstating etiquette back into golf in an educational and fun way, rather than being patronising. Last year’s event helped by getting people talking about the issue, and if only a handful of golfers improve their etiquette it’s a start. They should hopefully pass this on to their playing partners and any new golfers to give them some ownership of the courses they play.

We need to get golfers thinking about the care of the course as part of their game. For some it is in-built but for others it simply isn’t, though most would tell you they tend and repair greens incessantly if you asked them!

This was certainly confirmed when we asked the members at West Chiltington, to fill out a short, anonymous questionnaire featuring just three questions based on pitchmarks. 188 members replied.

1 Do you repair your Pitchmarks? Unsurprisingly, 99% said yes!

2 Would you repair a pitchmark made by someone else? Again, unsurprisingly, 94% said yes.

3 How often do you repair Pitchmarks? 56% said they repaired pitchmarks 80-100% of the time, with 36% claiming they repaired them every time. Just 10% said they repaired them 0-10% of the time.

The aim is to get golfers in the frame of mind where repairing pitchmarks is as important to them as holing out or filling in their scorecard after every hole. It is an old line trotted out by greenkeepers, but one of the things we try to impress upon our members and visitors is that we are not the only stewards of the course and that we all play a part in its presentation and standards.

Often this is a difficult message to convey especially to our more cynical customers.

If we can all teach one new golfer how to repair a pitchmark then that’s hundreds of golfers who will help us out in the future.

A good way to get golfers on board is to provide free repairers or stock some of the huge variety carrying a logo, ones that members can display with pride.

A good relationship between golfers and greenkeepers is vital for understanding the problem and working together to improve the course.

Getting captains on board will help to get the message across if they mention it in their regular speeches, and after recent meetings we have arranged pitchmark repair social events.

At West Chiltington we are constantly encouraged to speak with members to improve relationships and understanding both ways. We regularly meet with the different sections and speak at their AGMs as well as answering questions they have about our latest project whilst out on the course. Not everyone reads the latest newsletter on the website so face to face communication with golfers is still very important, in fact in my opinion it can’t be beaten.

We have our own Twitter account @westchiltgreens to keep members informed of daily work we carry out and to publish pictures of the course as well as information on pitchmarks, bunker raking and all types of course management. We hope that by involving the members and through giving them a sense of ownership, pitchmark repairs and other small acts will become a regular part of their game.
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Conventional plant breeding continues to advance grass varieties with genetic traits for enhanced plant performance in managed turf grass but genetic modification (GM) could steal a march.

Access to and use of genetic material in conventional grass plant breed is limited to DNA (genes) within the genus (e.g. Agrostis) and perhaps within the wider grass family (Graminae) depending on the level of genetic compatibility and hybridization with other genera. With GM ‘the world becomes an oyster’ in the quest for DNA for insertion into the grass genome using a technique called ‘gene transfer’. GM puts genetics into a whole new arena by opening up new avenues for scientists to explore and exploit using an apparently infinite spectrum of DNA.

Genes can now be accessed from literally anywhere and everywhere, from rats to roses, and inserted into grass genomes for phenotypic expression of new desired traits. Difference between the standard and modified genotypes is miniscule and is separated by a single gene. But the new phenotype will be completely different with an ability to overcome the pinpointed problem (for example a specific pest or disease or environmental conditions), whichever was the specific target factor for genetic modification.

Potential upsides and downsides of GM turf grass

Universal potential benefits of genetic modification appear as wide as the gene bank in the broader plant and animal world. Grass plant resistance to specific insect pests and plant pathogens such as chafers, cutworms and Microdochium nivale (Fusarium patch disease) immediately springs to mind.

Design and development of grass genetically modified for non-allergenic pollen is well advanced. Australian researchers have genetically modified perennial ryegrass (Lolium perenne) and Italian ryegrass (Lolium multiflorum) which do not trigger an allergenic response (hay fever) in humans. Though clearly not applicable to grasses used on tees and greens, where regular low-cut mowing removes the ability of grass plants to flower, this GM avenue could prove interesting for grasses used to seed rough areas.

With increasing interest in bee-friendly areas where the rough grass species are as important as the wild flower seed selection in securing ‘bee friendliness’ of the sward composition and therefore high pollination levels, genetic modification of rough grass species could be of interest.

It all sounds easy and the mechanics of genetic modification certainly are for appropriately qualified scientists with state of the art instrumentation at their fingertips. The real and sometimes seemingly insurmountable problems arise from public perceptions fuelled by hyped up media coverage and scare stories about ‘Frankenstein foods’. This has helped to build a strong anti-GM lobby with a large measure of public support.

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UK. Virtually no attempt had been made to carry the public along and get them on board. I can remember attending conferences on biotechnology in the early 1980s including GM where the only journalists were scientists from research publications and other ‘learned’ journals. The net result was blanket public distrust for GM in all its forms including grasses used in sports and amenity turf.

But many fears expressed about genetic modification of food crop plants, including members of the grass family – wheat, rice and maize - simply do not apply to sports turf because no human being is going to eat the genetically modified biomass. The only animals likely to do so are insect pests like chafer grubs, small wild mammals like rabbits and wild geese grazing greens and tees in spring for that early sward.

However, there are factors presenting real or perceived environmental problems whether the GM plants are grown for human food and animal feed or used as a component of living sports surfaces. Primary factor is the escape of GM material and movement with subsequent introduction of non-GM plants and germplasm of the hybrid seed thus produced.

GM turf grass pushes on

Further development of GM Agrostis stolonifera was blocked but this did not deter the manufacturer (the seed company Scotts of Maryland in Ohio State and now called ‘Scotts Miracle Gro’) which is testing a new genetically modified turf grass in garden lawns of a small number of its employees during this 2014 growing season. The employees are testing a Poa pratensis (Kentucky bluegrass) genetically modified to withstand glyphosate in the ‘Roundup’ product developed, manufactured and marketed by Monsanto.

In January 2014 the Columbus (Ohio) Gazette said “If no one beats Scott’s to the market it will be the first producer of what it calls ‘enhanced turf grass’.” Quoting Scott’s they said the grass (GM Poa pratensis) is designed to grow slower, require less mowing, be easy to keep weed free and to require a lot less water. GM turf grasses look set to make their mark in North America but obtaining approval in the EU, the US and Japan is highly unlikely to happen but is just the sort of scenario bound to happen in the UK.

The employees are testing a Poa pratensis (Kentucky bluegrass) genetically modified for high salt tolerance would be of interest to coastal golf courses (Picture courtesy Kenny Liddell)

More research is needed to determine what impact on aquatic wildlife like fish might be expected or even likely. The fear that GM turf grass could cause harm to marine life or coastal golf courses is not only misplaced but has no basis in science.

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Critics of the whole GM concept pointed to the perennial nature of Agrostis stolonifera claiming its persistence year after year actually poses more scope for escape, establishment and spread than for agricultural crops like maize (an annual grass) albeit a very large one which is replanted as seed every year.

Others referred to numerous close relatives of A. stolonifera, like A. capillaris (colonial or browntop bentgrass), A. canina (velvet bentgrass), A. castellana (Highland bentgrass) and other truly wild bentgrasses which with hybridise and exchange the gene for glyphosate resistance. Research findings at the time reported hybridisation between creeping bentgrass (A. stolonifera) and other Agrostis species at frequencies of six hybrids thousand.

Others were concerned because the gene conferring glyphosate resistance did not originate from another green plant but from a bacterium.

Be that as it may, of an Agrostis stolonifera resistant to glyphosate herbicide becoming commercially available would have meant green keepers establishing pure stands on greens, tees and fairways which could then be sprayed with glyphosate to kill all ‘contaminating’ broadleaf weeds and rough grasses like timothy (Poa pratensis). Even other unwanted ‘fine’ turf species (e.g. Poa annua) would find their way into the sward one way or another.

The downside for greenkeepers would clearly have been the end of mixed turf grass species awards because anything other than the GM Agrostis stolonifera would be killed by the herbicide spray. Also grass clippings from the GM creeping bentgrass sprayed with glyphosate would be potentially toxic to other grasses and therefore requiring special handling and disposal.

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Others referred to numerous close relatives of A. stolonifera, like A. capillaris (colonial or browntop bentgrass), A. canina (velvet bentgrass), A. castellana (Highland bentgrass) and other truly wild bentgrasses which with hybridise and exchange the gene for glyphosate resistance. Research findings at the time reported hybridisation between creeping bentgrass (A. stolonifera) and other Agrostis species at frequencies of six hybrids thousand.

Others were concerned because the gene conferring glyphosate resistance did not originate from another green plant but from a bacterium.

Be that as it may, of an Agrostis stolonifera resistant to glyphosate herbicide becoming commercially available would have meant green keepers establishing pure stands on greens, tees and fairways which could then be sprayed with glyphosate to kill all ‘contaminating’ broadleaf weeds and rough grasses like timothy (Poa pratensis). Even other unwanted ‘fine’ turf species (e.g. Poa annua) would find their way into the sward one way or another.

The downside for greenkeepers would clearly have been the end of mixed turf grass species awards because anything other than the GM Agrostis stolonifera would be killed by the herbicide spray. Also grass clippings from the GM creeping bentgrass sprayed with glyphosate would be potentially toxic to other grasses and therefore requiring special handling and disposal.

GM grass pushes on

Further development of GM Agrostis stolonifera was blocked but this did not deter the manufacturer (the seed company Scotts of Maryland in Ohio State and now called ‘Scotts Miracle Gro’) which is testing a new genetically modified turf grass in garden lawns of a small number of its employees during this 2014 growing season. The employees are testing a Poa pratensis (Kentucky bluegrass) genetically modified to withstand glyphosate in the ‘Roundup’ product developed, manufactured and marketed by Monsanto.

In January 2014 the Columbus (Ohio) Gazette said “If no one beats Scott’s to the market it will be the first producer of what it calls ‘enhanced turf grass’.” Quoting Scott’s they said the grass (GM Poa pratensis) is designed to grow slower, require less mowing, be easy to keep weed free and to require a lot less water. GM turf grasses look set to make their mark in North America but obtaining approval in the EU, the US and Japan is highly unlikely to happen but is just the sort of scenario bound to happen in the UK.
traits which are beneficial and safe in turf grasses could create serious problems in the natural environment. This will become clearer in the following case study featuring Agrostis stolonifera as the first grass species to be genetically modified for a specific application in managed turf.**The great GM grass escape**

The first work on genetic modification of a turf grass started around the year 2000 and produced a GM Agrostis stolonifera (creeping bentgrass) resistant to glyphosate, a systemically acting total herbicide which normally kills all green plants whether they are broadleaved weeds or turf grasses. It did not receive general public attention until 2006 when the press, including New Scientist magazine, reported how scientists had found this GM trait in the wild. The grass had been designed and developed for easy-to-manage pure swards on golf courses but had escaped its managed turf niche and moved into the wild up to 3.8 km from where it was being trialled in the north western US state of Oregon, and before securing full USDAs (United States Department of Agriculture) approval. Nine GM ‘absconder’ plants were identified. GM material had apparently escaped and established through pollination of non-GM plants and germination of the hybrid seed thus produced.**Critics of the whole GM concept pointed to the perennial nature of Agrostis stolonifera claiming its persistence year after year actually posed more scope for escape, establishment and spread than for agricultural crops like maize (an annual grass) albeit a very large one which is replanted as seed every year.**

Others referred to numerous close relatives of A. stolonifera, like A. capillaris (colonial or browntop bentgrass), A. canina (velvet bentgrass), A. castellana (Highland bentgrass) and other truly wild bentgrasses with which it can hybridise and exchange the gene for glyphosate resistance. Research findings at the time reported hybridisation between creeping bentgrass (A. stolonifera) and other Agrostis species at frequencies of six hybrids thousand. Others were concerned because the gene conferring glyphosate resistance did not originate from another green plant but from a bacterium. Be that as it may, of an Agrostis stolonifera resistant to glyphosate herbicide becoming commercially available would have meant greenkeepers establishing pure stands on greens, tees and fairways which could then be sprayed with glyphosate to kill all ‘contaminating’ broadleaved weeds and rough grasses like timothy (Phleum pratense). Even other unwanted ‘fine’ turf species (e.g. Poa annua) would find their way into the sward one way or another. The downside for greenkeepers would clearly have been the end of mixed turf grass species awards because anything other than the GM Agrostis stolonifera would be killed by the herbicide spray. Also grass clippings from the GM creeping bentgrass sprayed with glyphosate would be potentially toxic to other grasses and therefore requiring special handling and disposal.**GM grass pushes on**

Further development of GM Agrostis stolonifera was blocked but this did not deter the manufacture (the seed company Scotts of Marysville in Ohio State and now called ‘Scots’ Miracle Gro’) which is testing a new genetically modified turf grass in garden lawns of a small number of its employees during this 2014 growing season. The employees are testing a Poa pratensis (Kentucky bluegrass) genetically modified to withstand glyphosate in the ‘Roundup’ product developed, manufactured and marketed by Monsanto. In January 2014 the Columbus (Ohio) Gazette said “If no one beats Scotts to the market it will be the first producer of what it calls ‘enhanced bluegrass’.” Quoting Scotts they said the grass (GM Poa pratensis) is designed to grow slower, require less mowing, be easy to keep weed free and to require a lot less water. GM turf grasses look set to make their mark in North America but obtaining approval in Europe and especially the UK may prove a much harder proposition. Not particularly due to scientific concerns in the EU, but general concerns articulated by the press and taken on board by broad swathes of the public. Risk scenarios put forward against GM plant species are almost as varied as the gene transfer options offered to molecular biologists. Just imagine this invented scenario – ‘A bent grass (Agrostis) genetically modified for resistance to Fusarium Patch was approved and widely taken up by golf courses across the UK. The gene conferring resistance was sourced from rhubarb and scientists said the ‘rhubarb gene’ caused the cells of the GM grass to manufacture a chemical that isolated leaf infections by Microdochium nivale. But the GM grass proved highly attractive to chafers grubs causing a population explosion and untold damage to golf courses throughout the country. Foxes had a field day feeding on the chafers grubs but the chemical, transferred unaltered from chafers grubs to foxes, made these urban wild animals highly aggressive with reports of attacks on people all over London and other towns and cities throughout the country.’ It clearly sounds contrived and is highly unlikely to happen but is just the sort of scenario bound to be used as an argument against, should development and approval of GM turf grass ever seem likely to happen in the UK.
Bad Vibrations

John Ross, former Course Manager and Master Greenkeeper, is now working to improve health and safety in the turf management industry. This month he turns his attention to the common ailment of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome — which is actually classed as a disease.

The effects of vibration causing ill health and injury in the workplace are clearly understood. So much so that Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) has been listed as a prescribed disease in the UK since 1985 and is covered in RIDDOR2013(8) as being an occupational disease. Its occurrence must be recorded by the person designated responsible for managing health and safety in the workplace and reported to the HSE.

So what is HAVS, how do we recognise it and how do we manage in order to prevent it?

HAVS is caused by the continuous use of vibrating machinery and affects nerves, muscles, joints and blood vessels. Symptoms appear in the vascular system which involves the tips of fingers going white (blanching), or the neurological system, which includes numbness and tingling of the fingers and a reduced sense of temperature or touch. Attacks in the early stages of the condition are not continuous and you do not have to be using vibrating equipment for the symptoms to manifest despite the fact they have been caused by that equipment, simply working in cold conditions is enough to trigger the symptoms.

When this occurs and the cold body subsequently warms back up an exaggerated return blood flow can occur that will lead to a throbbing of the fingers and the fingers going red and feeling extremely painful. HAVS is an exaggerated return blood flow of the fingertips and the fingers can occur that will lead to a throb of the fingers going red and feeling extremely painful and numbness of the fingers and the fingers can occur that will lead to a throb of the fingers going red and feeling extremely painful.

Managing HAVS

Exposure to vibration is regulated, and these regulations place a duty on the employer to either eliminate vibration at source, or to lower exposure to as low as is reasonably practicable. What eliminate at source means is taking physical contact with the vibrating equipment out of the task (using a remote control) or do not undertake the task (those that bank really need streamlining?).

However where it cannot be eliminated (yes that bank does need streamlining!) eliminate at source means introduce organisational and technical procedures appropriate to the activity and to apply MHSWR1999 (4) The Principles of Prevention.

So what do the regulations say?

As vibration is a workplace hazard, any employer exposing their staff to vibration must conduct a vibration risk assessment. Like any risk assessment it is a tool that enables the manager to record what controls are in place, whether they are sufficient or not, and if any improvements needed. The risk assessment should determine who is exposed, the magnitude of exposure and the duration of exposure for all equipment. It should also identify vulnerable workers (those with early symptoms of HAVS) and young workers developing bodies who are more susceptible to Musculo Skeletal Disorder.

“You cannot manage what you cannot measure” is a well-known adage. Vibration can be measured because it is an oscillation around a fixed point and is measured like noise, in amplitude the extent of oscillation and frequency (how often it occurs).

In mechanical terms the measurement is expressed in Metres per second sq (m/s2), knowing the vibrating levels of machinery is the starting point to implementing procedures.

The amount of vibration you can be exposed to is subject to CVWR05 (4) Exposure Action Values (EAV) and Exposure Limit Values (ELV). The EAV is the amount of vibration over which the employer has to take action. The ELV is the maximum amount of vibration an employee can be exposed to in a day, these are both measured over an eight hour working period so is referenced as (A8). Unlike the regulations for noise Personal Protective Equipment is given no consideration.

Those values are an EAV of 2.5 m/s2 (A8) and an ELV of 5 m/s2 (A8). The data for these levels is provided by the manufacturers of the equipment and is published within the operators’ manual. We must bear in mind that this is a measurement taken as factory new, and that equipment deteriorates, gets damaged, and is not always maintained as it should be.

In mechanical terms the measurement provided by the manufacturer also does not consider wear and tear, service requirements, damaged parts, or blunt blades - all of which add to the vibration exposure. This means that any employer exposing employees to vibration also has a duty to measure to determine actual vibration levels.

Once vibration levels are established it is easy to put in place procedures that keep exposure levels below the ELV, the easiest way of doing this using a points system introduced by the HSE. Points are awarded to a vibration magnitude per hour, if the points tally for the day reaches 100 you have reached the Exposure Action Value and must take action, if the point tally reaches 400 you have hit the Exposure Limit Value that exposure cannot exceed.

Using the HSE Vibration Exposure Points Calculator we can see that equipment with a vibration magnitude of 5 m/s2 can be used for eight hours before the ELV is reached 50X8=400 exposure points.

I know from experience as a Course Manager, that much equipment greenkeepers and groundsman uses reaches the EAV, and some reaches the ELV, so we need to know what the duty of the employer is when those levels are reached. Those duties are shown in the table inset right (EAV).- Find other equipment that is less dangerous.

Managing vibration is relatively easy once exposure levels have been established. The easiest way to do this is to put a timeframe on how long a piece of equipment can be used for, take into consideration breaks and rest periods and rotate tasks amongst the team all to ensure that points are experienced and some reaches the ELV.

- Identify the reasons for that limit being exceeded and modify measures to prevent it being exceeded again.

EAV - Reduce exposure to below the limit value immediately.

ELV - Reduce exposure to below the limit value immediately.

- Find other equipment that is less dangerous.

- Choose the most suitable piece of equipment for the task but with the lowest exposure levels.

When purchasing equipment consider the vibration magnitude as part of your purchasing policy and buy the most suitable piece of equipment for the task but with the lowest exposure levels.

- Establish what HAVS and what the symptoms are, and tell them to report to you immediately if any symptoms are experienced and maintain equipment and ensure that it is set up correctly.

John Ross MG

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The effects of vibration causing ill health and injury in the workplace are clearly understood. So much so that Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) has been listed as a prescribed disease in the UK since 1985 and is covered in RIDOR2013(8) as being an occupational disease.

Its occurrence must be recorded by the person designated responsible for managing health and safety in the workplace and reported to the HSE.

So what is HAVS, how do we recognise it and how do we manage in order to prevent it?

HAVS is caused by the continuous use of vibrating machinery and affects nerves, muscles, joints and blood vessels. Symptoms appear in the vascular system which involves the tips of fingers going white (blanching), or the nervous system, which includes numbness and tingling of the fingers and a reduced sense of temperature or touch. Attacks in the early stages of the condition are not continuous and you do not have to be using vibrating equipment for the symptoms to manifest despite the fact they have been caused by that equipment, simply working in cold conditions is enough to trigger the symptoms.

When this occurs and the cold body subsequently warms back up an exaggerated return blood flow can occur that will lead to a throbbing of the fingers and the fingers going red and feeling extremely painful. HAVS will be triggered by vibrating equipment for the symptoms to manifest despite the fact they have been caused by that equipment, simply working in cold conditions is enough to trigger the symptoms.

If exposure to vibration continues then the symptoms will spread further up the hand and can even affect the thumb, sufferers will experience joint pain (Carpel Tunnel Syndrome) reduced muscle strength and permanent nerve damage. In turf management the equipment that can lead to HAVS is hand held power tools and hand guided power tools. HAVS does not appear overnight, it is a chronic condition that studies have suggested may take up to ten years to appear on the body subsequently warms back up symptoms.

Managing HAVS

Exposure to vibration is regulated, and these regulations relate to the work to be done and the effects of exposure including the replacement of equipment to the lowest exposure levels. When purchasing equipment you should:

- Find other products that meet the requirements. Equipment that suits your needs may be available.
- Choose equipment that suits your needs and buy the most suitable piece of equipment for the task but with the lowest exposure levels. HAVS can be reduced by using equipment that is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Provide employees with instruction on HAVS and what is being done to minimise exposure.
- Implement a programme of health surveillance for employees with HAVS.
- Establish ‘Compliant Equipment Greenkeepers’ for the site, with the site manager being responsible for the implementation of the plan.
- Have a duty to measure to determine what the symptoms are, and tell them to report to you immediately if any symptoms are experienced.

Once vibration levels are established the simplest form this can be done is using a point tally for the day. Some reaches the ELV, so we need to know what the duty of the employer is when those levels are reached. Those duties are shown in the table below (EAV).

For the data for these levels is provided by the manufacturers of the equipment and is published within the operators’ manual. We must bear in mind that this is a measurement taken as factory new, and that equipment deteriorates, gets damaged, and is not always maintained as it should be.

In mechanical terms the measurement is given no consideration. The measurement provided by the manufacturer also does not consider wear and tear, service requirements, damaged parts, or blunt blades - all of which add to the vibration exposure. This means that any employer exposing employees to vibration also has a duty to measure to determine actual vibration levels.

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ELV

Reduction in vibration levels below the limit value immediately identify the monitors that are not being exceeded and modify measures to prevent it being exceeded again.
A Stirling success

Stirling Golf Club has initiated a ten-year development programme. Course Manager James Lindsay is working closely with Swan Golf Designs to achieve a better golf course. Howard Swan outlines the plans, the reasons behind them and explains why a close and harmonious relationship between greenkeeper and architect is so important.
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Working together

It is always an exciting time for any golf course architect to visit a new project, particularly one at an established members’ club. A club that calls on an architect’s services may be looking to improve its layout, the condition and presentation and, ultimately, the performance - financially and otherwise - of its course.

However, we are repeatedly faced with a club that has clearly made short-term decisions regarding improving the course - possibly due to several changes of committee and the personnel within. The president’s legacy and/or the captain’s mark are so often left behind long after they have departed, and become an integral part of the design of the golf course whether they are good or bad. They then remain as an example of the personal involvement of the enthusiastic non-professional in the course.

This ‘Do It Yourself’ approach inevitably leads to wayward evolution of the course. There is far too much focus on tiny details because those making the decisions are simply too close to the action. Getting things right in the way the course is redeveloped needs to be in the hands of the professional architect who can assess and evaluate the design of the golf course.

The professional greenkeeper can then take that assessment forward into a practical execution.

So, what is the plan at Stirling?

Stirling Golf Club has formed a Course Development Group to give the desired improvement works a sense of consistency over the ten-year period. Autumn this year is likely to see a woodland andlandscape management programme to recreate the indigenous character of the course.

This will be accompanied by three of four holes being rebunkered in accordance with the overall plan. This will be a fine start and will demonstrate to the membership the extent of the improvement which can be achieved without massive disruption, without massive capital cost and be the basis upon which subsequent years’ works can be built and expanded, given that the resources are available to do so.

A technical audit of the old irrigation system is going to be made and there will also be some modest field drainage improvements.

The renovation programme is then likely to consider the redesign of some greens and tees to improve the routing as well as more bunkering.

A holistic view

Moving on, it is vitally important that a holistic view is taken of any course at one point in time and from this analysis, made objectively by the architect, recommendations for its future development follow.

That holistic view needs to encompass:

The course’s overall design - its length, its balance, its rhythm, its flow, its variety, its challenge, the orientation of its holes, the variation from its flights of tees for the differing standards of play.

The course’s safety - so often taken for granted, a problem may not be addressed until it is too late. You need to think about potential hazards on the margins of the course, and the proximity of the players on the course to each other when positioning greens and tees. Too close and you have a problem.

The performance of the greens - their shape, size, contour and the number of pin positions they have to spread wear and tear, their orientation to create an improved strategy of play, their entry and exit points, the featuring in their surrounds, their drainage, their bunkering

The performance of the tees - their size to ensure that wear and tear is managed relative to the way the flights are played by members and visitors alike, their shape and their profile

The performance of the bunkers - location, contribution to strategy, size and shape, playability, their technical performance in terms of drainage, both internally and in the shedding of water externally, sand quality, colour, depth and, some would argue most importantly, their aesthetic value

In each of these considerations, the ongoing maintainability of the
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In each of these considerations, the ongoing maintainability of the
components has to be a vital consideration.

The performance of the various infrastructures of the golf course such as:

- Its drainage - the shedding of water, the collection of water, the speed of recovery from rainfall
- Its traffic management - the movement of feet, of two wheels, three wheels and four wheels, whether it be players or the greenkeeping team, needs to be considered and optimised in convenient routings.

This ensures speed of play is sustained and wear and tear is not allowed to develop in the playing area.

- Its irrigation, not just how water is applied and what kind of system that is and where the sprinklers are, but a consideration of water consumption, from where the water is sourced to where it is stored
- The setting of the golf course in its natural environment - the management of the tree stock.

Not just endless planting exercises but balanced management, looking at areas around greens and tees to allow adequate air and light circulation. Planned and structured new planting of appropriate, indigenous species to enhance the landscape quality and character.

- The resourcing of the greenkeeping effort and the accompanying presentation of the course - the shaping of greens to be consistent with the length of hole and the type of incoming shot. The framing of each green with collars and surrounds of increasingly graded heights of cut at ratios to maximise their differentials.

Hopefully, this type of exhaustive approach will provide any club with a blueprint for the future, by which the golf course might be operated.

This should lead to the production of a comprehensive Course Policy Document.

James Lindsay, keen to see the course at Birling improved in the short-term and long-term, is looking forward to working with the golf course architect in a collaborative approach to the task in hand.

However, no matter how good that approach might be, the membership need to be kept informed with the whole renovation programme.

So what is required from the greenkeeper to keep the membership on side?

Amongst other things - courage in your convictions, careful management to minimise disruption, information being given in the right form at the right time.

Above all - communication; from the architect and the greenkeeper. If this communication is unsuccesssful, the membership will not be on board and it is doomed to failure without their support.

It has always been my view that helping the greenkeeping profession to understand more about what golf course architects strive to do and the basis upon which they try to do it will always bear fruit and over 25 years of design and renovation seminars and workshops at BTME that has always been the intent.

Understanding more means a better result.

about the author

Howard Swan is one of Howard Swan, a long-serving professional golf course architect, has been involved in the renovation of over 30 courses in America, and 3 courses in China, from Scotland to South Africa. He is a member of the Golf Course Architects Association, and the Greenkeeping Consultants Association. He has been a presenter at BTME for many years.

The setting of the golf course

- Its traffic management - the movement of feet, of two wheels, three wheels and four wheels, whether it be players or the greenkeeping team, needs to be considered and optimised in convenient routings.
management of the tree stock.  

whether it be players or the  

two wheels, movement of feet, of two wheels,  

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components has to be a vital con  

ARCHITECTURE  

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is applied and what kind of system  

the playing area  

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convenient routings.  

• Its traffic management  

• Its drainage -  

• Its irrigation,  

The performance of the vari-  

ing forward to working with the  

short-term and long-term, is look-  

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ation of a comprehensive Course  

the golf course might be operated.  

a blueprint for the future, by which  

approach will provide any club with  

their differentials.  

If this communication is unsuc  

the architect and the greenkeeper.  

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- and over 25 years of design and  

try to do it will always bear fruit  

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what golf course architects strive to  

doesn't mean that it will or can  

- and over 25 years of design and  

Over 25 years.  

has been a presenter at BTME  

Assured Training Specialist and  

education, being a GTC Quality  

Consultants' Association.  

Institute of the British Institute  

He is a Past President of the  

son, William, for the last ten.  

father for 20 years, now with his  

worked on over 400 projects in  

Over 40 years and he has  

professional golf course  

Europe's most senior  

Howard Swan is one of  

about the author
Choices, choices...

Natural hardwood signs or PVC timber signs? This used to be an easy decision: natural hardwood was chosen for its top quality image, whereas plastic was ideal where budget mattered more than presentation.

Then Eagle’s new Eagle-Plex arrived and its innovative chemical structure led many club and course managers to see a black-stained oak sign, whereas it was in fact Eagle’s new and realistic PVC timber material. We sort out the strengths and misconceptions in pursuit of clarity.

Natural Timber

Presentation:
Widely agreed to be the best material for a natural setting like a golf course, with a range of stains to suit different environments, e.g., links, heathland, parkland etc, has the edge when it comes to attracting sponsors looking for quality exposure.

Design:
Hardwood timber can be made to any design specification, and Eagle’s standard range is comprehensive. Bespoke requirements are encouraged as Eagle have their own machining and finishing plant.

Substrate:
The experience gained in operating and managing their own timber plant has led to the utilisation of Iroko hardwood – which has proved to be the most stable of timbers for all outdoor situations, well able to last 25 years even if in contact with the ground.

Graphics:
Natural timber signs looks great with all substrates, zinc, granite and aluminium. Engraved and paint-filled course information is also very distinctive.

Maintenance:
The Teknos two coat system has reduced maintenance needs dramatically. The Teknos base coat chemically impregnates the skin of the timber, forming a perfect base for the top, water-based coat, ensuring far longer lifetime.

Eagle-Plex

Presentation:
Eagle-Plex’s appearance is highly realistic with its ‘wood grained’ finish. Eagle-Plex signs and furniture are only available in black, but this still suits any course environment. Certainly good enough for sponsorship requirements.

Design:
PVC Timber has to be moulded, but Eagle have a large range of profiles available ensuring different sizes of sign frame which cannot be differentiated from old Oak.

Substrate:
The raw material is shredded and subjected to iron separation and made ready for injection moulding. The required volume of plastic material is poured into an Eagle mould and brought into the desired shape by hydraulic pressure to avoid warping. The results create super strong profiles ready for any environment, however harsh.

Graphics:
Like natural timber, Eagle-Plex works and looks great with aluminium plates. This option is not as size sensitive and therefore larger structures are very cost effective.

Maintenance:
None, other than ‘keep it clean’ with an occasional wipe with a damp cloth.

Installation:
Just make the holes for the posts and set them in concrete. All hardwood timber posts are sleeved with re-enforced plastic to maximise their protection.

Sustainability:
Genuinely sustainable hardwoods can only be sourced from certain licensed countries. Eagle takes great care that only officially licensed Iroko is used from forests where the trees that are cut down are being replaced accordingly.

Cost:
Due to the cost of sustainable hardwoods and the need for well equipped craftsmen to maximise the resulting furniture/signs’ appearance, the cost is higher than PVC timber.

Installation:
Eagle-Plex can simply be concreted into the ground and it will last forever.

Sustainability:
The Eagle-Plex product is 100% eco-friendly. Being chemically inert, Eagle-Plex signs cannot contaminate the environment in which they are utilised.

Cost:
As you’d expect, PVC Timber is significantly cheaper than natural hardwood, and with zero-cost maintenance, it’s ideal for those who want both presentation and cost-effectiveness.

Anything else?

Guarantees
Both products have the ‘Eagle Performance Guarantee’ which ensures all products are of the highest quality. Feel free to ask Eagle about their guarantees in relation to hardwood and Eagle-Plex signage.

Take the Eagle signage test
So, with all that to think about, do you think you know quality timber when you see it, or can you tell the difference between Eagle-Plex and black stained oak? In fact your best decision is simple: call Eagle on 01883 344 244, see both types of signage material for yourself, and make up your own mind as to which type best suits your own course and clubhouse signage needs.

Of course, Eagle’s team of experts will be happy to bring these samples round to your club, take you and your committee through their respective merits, put you in touch with other highly satisfied customers of Eagle in your area, and help you arrive at the best decision for your golf club and course.
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John Deere get to grips with greenkeeping

Weekly groups of dealer salesmen, golf and turf specialists and service technicians have been effectively simulating what a greenkeeping team would be doing on the course each day, alongside detailed product training on John Deere’s new greens, fairway and rough mowers (pictured right) and new pedestrian aerators for 2014, which have their public launch in July (see separate panel).

Each day starts at 7am, and involves a mix of practical indoor and outdoor training on the course maintenance equipment (pictured B), including machine set up, optimisation and operating procedures, safety requirements and product sales challenges.

In addition, an agronomy management presentation and a review of cultural practices plus a course walk are conducted with each group by experienced consultant and BIGGA’s first Master Greenkeeper Laurence Pittie of Turf Master One Ltd.

Finally, after each mowing assignment has been completed, the dealers have to wash down the machines in the yard before reviewing the day’s activities.

“The Golf Ready programme gives us all the opportunity to look at the fundamentals of product operation and servicing, as well as introduce the new season’s products and do hands-on training in a real-life situation,” says John Deere's turf division manager Chris Meacock.

Look out for more exciting news from BIGGA and John Deere in the July issue of Greenkeeper International – a new collaboration that will likely see one lucky member from each BIGGA region getting the opportunity of a lifetime in 2015... watch this space!
On the road again

John Deere’s new and improved mowers and aerators for 2014 can be seen at around 17 golf course locations throughout Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland from early July onwards. Details and venues were still being finalised as Greenkeeper International went to press, but free places at each John Deere Golf Roadshow 2014 event should be booked in advance by contacting your local John Deere professional golf & turf dealer, or the company on Freephone 0800 085 2522.

Visitors will be able to hear about and operate the company’s latest machines, including brand new and improved mowers for greens, tees and surrounds, fairways, roughs and semi-roughs, as well as two new pedestrian aerators that have been redesigned from the ground up. Also on show will be the latest hybrid electric technology E-Cut mowers and John Deere’s unique Quick Adjust (QA) cutting units, which are designed to produce a higher quality finish on golf courses and other sports and amenity turf areas.

The QA cutting units feature a unique Speed Link system for extremely quick height of cut adjustment (picture D). This technology effectively allows the reels on an entire fleet to be accurately set in the time it previously took to adjust the height of cut on just one mower, so allowing significant savings to be made in both time and operating costs.

Limited’s turf division manager Chris McAlindon.

“It also means our dealers can really understand and appreciate the full range and importance of the greenkeeper’s role and responsibilities, and the critical role they play in the successful management of any golf club. We’re very grateful to the management and greenkeeping staff at Morley Hayes for providing us with the facilities and support to deliver this type of training.

“John Deere continues to be fully committed to our established nationwide dealership network, in order to to sell and support the full professional golf & turf product range to customers and deliver a first-class service – this year’s Golf Ready programme has proved to be a very effective and valuable way to reinforce the dealer’s existing expertise and knowledge.”

Deere’s new and improved mowers and aerators for 2014 can be seen at around 17 golf course locations throughout Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland from early July onwards. Details and venues were still being finalised as Greenkeeper International went to press, but free places at each John Deere Golf Roadshow 2014 event should be booked in advance by contacting your local John Deere professional golf & turf dealer, or the company on Freephone 0800 085 2522.

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Events Coming Up

Central
A joint event by Erinvilla, Jubilaeun and Syngenta called Turf Science Live is taking place on Tuesday 10 June at Fairmont St Andrews although spaces are strictly limited. If anyone is interested then they must contact the organisers at syn.events@syngenta.com.

East
The Section also paid a visit to ETL in Stirling which attendees found very informative seeing around the lab. Most of those were asked to supply a soil sample and Sharon Bruce and her team carried out various tests on what was submitted. Thanks to Sharon and the team and it may be possible for us to stage another visit in the future for those unable to attend.

West
Scottish outing is at Renfrew GC on 12 June and as hosts a good turnout is expected. I would expect Fraser to have the course in tip top condition.

News

Central
Congratulations to Gary Douglas of Pymyard GC on winning an Oakmont 2016 US Open polo shirt. This was donated by Mike McCormick, the Deputy Superintendent at Oakmont when he gave a seminar back in March which we then raffled between all those who attended that seminar. The Committee have also agreed to trial relaxing the dress code for future golf events. Members will no longer require to change into a jacket/tie after the golf. Jeans/denim and trainers remain unacceptable.

The workshop/seminar on reel set-up and sharpening held on 14 May and organised between the Section and Bernhards was well supported with over 25 members attending and thanks go to everyone who assisted with that, including Elmwood College for the use of the facilities.

Most of our information is sent out by email and also appears on the BIGGA Central Section Facebook page. However, over 50% of the section members have still not provided us with a valid email address and there are still a considerable amount who don't follow us on Facebook so you are missing out on all notification of what is coming up in the Section.

Details of what is coming up and reports will also appear on the Scottish Region website as well as the Central Section website.

South West
Keep an eye out for a mail shot regarding this year's Patron events or anything else for Around the green...

South Coast
If you're not receiving emails about events as they come up in our section can you please email the

Scotland
Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...

Touquet in France. Gary Semple, course supervisor at the Castle Course at St Andrews who is leaving to become Deputy Course Manager at Williamwood GC in Glasgow. Kevin Webster is inviting Leven Links to become Head Greenkeeper at Saline GC near Dunfermline. We wish them all the very best in their new roles.

Meanwhile, Donald Gardner has retired from Broomie Golf Club and Simon Connah, currently the Deputy Course Manager on the Old Course at St Andrews Links, has completed 25 years' service with the Trust and he's only just turned 42!

We had a healthy entry for our Spring outing at Kinghorn GC. Thanks to everyone from the Greenstaff, Caterers, PJ's Golf Trust and the Trade. The results, with the first round of the 2014 Pairs competitions can be found on the Central Section website.

The Section also paid a visit to ETL in Stirling which attendees found very informative seeing around the lab. Most of those were asked to supply a soil sample and Sharon Bruce and her team carried out various tests on what was submitted. Thanks to Sharon and the team and it may be possible for us to stage another visit in the future for those unable to attend.

Elmwood College are on the lookout for old equipment, mowers etc which the students could refurbish and renoate. If anyone is willing to help then please contact Stuart Mackier on Stuart.Mackie@mmu.ac.uk.

North
Our Spring outing this year was at Moray Golf Club on 1 May and a great day was had by all the 57 members who attended. Everyone agreed the course was in top condition so our special thanks go to Course Manager Kevin Thomson and his team.

Prize winners:
McLaren (Royal Aberdeen). Class 1:3, Jonathan Duggan (Deeside) 2
Richard Johnstone (Nairn Dunbar) 1. Jim McCormack (Kerrintuair).
Scratch runner up: Adam Lindsay (Peterculter), winner: Kevin
Thomson (Moray). The committee would like to thank all the members
and the trade for their continued support.

West
Firstly can I apologise to Jim Caldwell at Sandyhills GC for stating
he had left the club last month. This is not the case, please understand
that it was an innocent mistake.
Kerr Rowan has moved from Randurly Castle to a 36 hole complex
in Sweden just outside Malmö and I hope he enjoys his new job in a
beautiful country although the winter weather can be extreme. Camp-
bell Wallace of W ashaw GC is unwell and I hope he is getting better,
the section wishes you all the best.
Results from the spring outing:
Scratch: John Dale (Dundrennan) 70. Class 1:1 William Lewis
(Williamwood) 39pts. 2 Brian Hillen (Drumplerhill) 35. 3 John Brown
(Braemore) 35. Class 2: Craig Whyte (Kilapog) 37pts. Barry McCulloch
(Whiteraigers) 36. Brian Leige (Cardross) 34. Class 3: Bobby
McDougal (Rodrigov) 37pts. Michael Mastron (East Kilbride) 31. Scott
Reid (East Kilbride) 30. Longest drive: John Dale. Nearest pin: Brian
Hillen.
36 players took part and enjoyed a really well presented golf course,
\(\text{Gi}n\) of the month by the 10th
and the team and it may be possible for us to stage another visit in
our new-look notes pages...
All the latest news from your Section,
around the green...
Northern

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...

Events Coming Up

Northern
President Day at West Bradford on the 18 June 1pm tee off. If you wish to play please text yourself or the section phoner. I’m away from Friday 13 until the day of the comp so if you’re leaving it late please use the section phoner. We will give final numbers on the Monday 16 so please be aware if you cannot after Monday you will have to pay because we still get billed! Thank you.

Finally if any of you guys fancy having one of our events at your place please let us know and we will do our best to get there next year.

Cleveland
I know it’s a bit early but we have a venue and a date for the Autumn Tournament. It will be at Redditch Golf Club on Tuesday 14 October, usual cost, £16, so book now to avoid disappointment.

The inter section match against the north east section and east of Scotland will be played at Whitley Bay Golf Club on Wednesday 25 June. If you are interested in playing give Pembo a ring on 07791 148957.

News
Northern
Our first fixture of the season was the Spring comp at the fabulous Waterton Park in Wakefield. A lot of withdrawals meant an average turn out but that did not spoil the day we had great weather and a fantastic golf course to play. David and his lads produced at tough but great course for us and all agreed it was a pleasure to play. From the secretary to the bar and catering staff we were made very welcome and finished off with a first class dinner.

Scores: Division 1: 1 Btu Mason 71, 2aron Schenckie 72, 3 Andy Stow 74 and Riddo Byers (Club Captain), Division 2: 1 J Huish, 2 J Rowbotton. Nearest pin: David Griffin, Andy Slingsby. Trade: T Baldwin

Finally from Waterton - can’t forget Sandra Raper who is a godsend and can’t thank her enough for all her help and of course looking after the old boy (Danny). We now have a Facebook page so log on and check out those photos!

Cleveland
Where is the year going! Before we know it we will be knee deep in snow and praying for a little sunshine. Conditions out there are great for growing rough. I’ve put my tin hat on and gum shield in ready for all the early season complaints that the rough is too thick. It seems like all I have done for the last three weeks is cut if I swear I can see it growing behind me. Here this time of year on a parkland course, no time to talk just get your head down and cut! Thank god for PGAs.

There has been a lot of movement in the section with Gary Fraser moving from Rockcliffe Hall to take up the position of Deputy Head at Wynyard Golf Club.

The spring tournament at Saltburn Golf Club was a massive success with 22 people attending which is one of our best turnouts in a while. Results:

0-9 holes: Paul Ventrice 38pts, Martin Woods 35, Paul Legg 32 (back 3)
10-18: 1st Warlow 37pts, Spoggy 34, D Avery 33
19-28: 1st Pemberton 24pts, J Thompson 21
Per 3s: A Reed, Trade winner Simon Holmes 37pts.

North Wales
The spring tournament took place at Rhuddlan Golf Club on 30 April a great day was had by all even though the weather did try it’s best to test play. Best gross went to Dave Austin, best nett went to Simon Ashford, both now qualify for the national championships later in the year.

The North Wales v South Wales match took place at Royal St David’s on 14 May and happily home advantage paid off with an impressive 3 and a half / 1 and a half win to North Wales, well done lads!

Thanks to Sponsors

Cleveland
Thanks to all the Spring Tournament sponsors – the main event sponsor was Loyd, Akbar Wathers has again done us proud. Thank you for all the running around you do for us it is much appreciated. I would also like to thank Tim, Turfkeeper and Northern Lubricants for sponsoring prizes and making sure no one went home empty handed!

North Wales
We would like to thank Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the North Wales team in the North v South match.

Welcome New Members


Around the green

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

Mid Anglia

The Summer, Autumn, Winter Golf day venues for 2014 are still to be confirmed so will get the dates out as soon as all are agreed and I have all the information. Alternatively more info will be on our Facebook page.

East Midland

We have a visit to Leicester City Football Club during the first week of July courtesy of Funds. The Summer Competition is to be held at Luffenham Heath Golf Club on Wednesday 23 July. Booking forms will be available via the BIGGA website under events and emailed to all section members who have updated their email addresses at HQ.

Midland

We have a visit to Edgbaston Cricket Club on 2 July and our next Golf day is on 23 July at North Worcester Golf Club.

News

East Midland

The East Midland Section held their Spring Tournament at Market Harborough Golf Club where the Section could not have been made more welcome by Chris and the team, so thanks to them for a great day. The overall winner was Nigel Colley and as a very rewarding prize Nigel was then elected as Chairman of the Section by the new committee the following week. The committee extend their sincere thanks to Greg Skinner and Nick Miles for their hard work over the last three years as Chairman and Section Secretary and hope to build on the solid foundations they have maintained.

Congratulations go to Ben Cumberbatch who will take up his role at Comber Golf Club at the start of July.

Midland

A beautifully presented Trentham Golf Course was the venue for the re-scheduled TOBO BIGGA Midland Region Team Challenge sponsored by Oakley’s. Pictured above are Ray George of Oakley’s presenting the trophies to the overall winners, Chris Toms, Mark Whittle and Dan Scott representing Wolburn Golf Club. Dan thanked the sponsors, hosts and Association for organising another great day.

Thank you to all the Golf Clubs who were represented in the competition.

The Midland Section held their Spring Tournament at Otton Golf Club and enjoyed a challenging round of golf with thanks to Mark Smith and his team at the club.

The overall winner was Adam Halifax with 41 points.

Thanks to Sponsors

Mid Anglia

A massive thanks to our Sponsors of the section for 2014. They are: Rigby Taylor Ltd, ALS, Headland Amenity, Avoncrop Amenity, Farmura, Tuicknells Machinery.

We thank you for your continued support with funds towards the Mid Anglia Section. Banks Amenity also sponsor our Golf of the Year Trophy again this year so once again your support means a lot and please consider these suppliers for your requirements the coming months and beyond into 2014.

If you feel you may be interested in sponsoring Mid Anglia Section in 2014 please contact a committee member for details.

East Midland

Thanks to the sponsors of the Spring Tournament - Banks Amenity, Headland Amenity and Toro Lely UK.

Midland

Thanks to Oakleys for sponsoring the Regional Team Challenge. Thanks to Graham Hall of Redtech, main sponsor of Spring Tournament.

Welcome New Members

Events Coming Up

London

Summer Tournament at Hendon on Wednesday 6 August. I know Jason has already started the course preparation!

Surrey

27 June Cresta Cup West Surrey GC
17 September Hansley Common GC Section v Trade
30 September Surrey Bowl Final at Fashfolds G&AC
4 November England v Scotland Hansley Common GC
19 November Match v Secretaries at The Berkshire GC
19 December Turkey Trot Tont Guildford GC

Wednesday 10 September a social evening and quiz night will be held at The Cricketers Pub in Chobham starting at 7pm. Teams of 4 will be challenging each other in a quiz night where non BIGGA members will be made very welcome. Cost of £15 per head includes food with entry and the opportunity to compete for prizes if you can access the grey matter. Merrist Wood College seminars in November and December are planned.

Also 2 free day courses in Chainsaw, Cross Cutting and Felling are planned for late Autumn under the guidance of Mark Brewer. If any members are interested and require more information in participating Scott Roberts can be contacted via the Surrey website.

Essex

Next date for your diary: Essex Trophy at the Warren Golf Club. Tuesday 5 August.

News

London

The spring tournament was played at Northwood Golf Club on Monday 12 May and the course presentation was of high quality. Thanks to Wes Walker and his team. Results:

3 Martin Dearlove 34pts, 2 Kane Stone 34, 1 Paul Simpson 35. All qualify to play the wonderful Lipbrook in the National tournament.

Congratulations to Jack Sims on becoming the Head Greenkeeper at Chiltern Hills Golf Club.

Finally well done to Lee Cox, Adam McColl and our Chairman Matt Plested as without their hard work none of this would be possible.

Surrey

Murray Long is leaving Sunningdale GC and is taking a new position with Ferndown GC. Many thanks for your support with all the course walks for the section, wishing you the very best in Dorset.

Epsom GC 1st May Team Texas Scramble Results:

1 Team Turfnaire 57.2pts, 2 G.Ogihle, R.Jackson, M.Lawrence, T.Ewell 58, 3 G.Stewart, L.Birch, Mo Bah, T.Broady. Longest Walk and oldest players of all time award went to Paul Weston, Brian Willott, David Searles and Phill Rowland.

Nearest Pin Ron Christie and Long Drive Nick Pariss.

Essex

Just the results of the Summer Trophy at Stock Brook Manor to report this month. A fine warm day greeted the 24 members, sponsors and guests. Our thanks go to our host Terry Peachey, proprietor of Stock Brook for the courtesy of the course and to Adrian Cornell and his team of greenkeepers for the excellent condition of the course. The undulating greens certainly caught out quite a few of the guys.

Our thanks to the sponsors who helped fill our raffle table and to the chef Steve and the catering staff who served us so well. I don’t think anyone went home not having enjoyed the day and the meal afterwards. Results:

1 Stuart Rogers 45pts, National Qualifier, 2 Ian Nicholas 38, National Qualifier, 3 Ross Sturridge 36 c/b Guest Prize: Dominic Slatter 27. Sponsor/trade Prize: Steve Baish 34 Nearest the pin 4th: George Grimes. Nearest the pin 11th hole: Ross Sturridge.

Thanks to Sponsors

London

Thanks to Spring tournament sponsors AT Olivers, their reps James and Glen, Sherriff Anserity for a great halfway house well done Johnny Beck, and the other companies for supporting the day!

Welcome New Members

Scott Weale, Greenkeeper. Hampton Court Palace Golf Club, Andrew Hughes Head Greenkeeper, Coombe Wood Golf Club, Charlie Ellis, Student, Hadlow College, Terry Akeroyd, Student, Hadlow College, Conor Young, Assistant Greenkeeper, Coombe Hill Golf Club.
Be BIGGA’s number one

How you can enter the BIGGA National Championship, kindly sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, at Liphook Golf Club, Hampshire on 6-7 October. You can win £500 worth of vouchers.

Hotels nearby include Champneys Forest Mere, Old Thorns Manor Hotel, The Georgian House Hotel...

Fill in the form below to book your spot...

BIGGA National Championship 2014, Liphook Golf Club, October 6-7 • Entry Form

Please select the relevant category:
- Full Member
- Affiliate Member

The entry fee of £90 includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

Name
Address
Post Code
Mobile
E-mail
Membership No. 
Handicap: 
BIGGA Section
Golf Club

Payment method (please tick)
- I enclose my cheque made payable to BIGGA Ltd for £90
- Please debit my Mastercard / Switch / Visa / Delta card with the fee of £90

Card number
Start Date
Expiry Date
Last 3 security digits
Issue No. (Switch/Delta only)

Signature
Date

Or E-mail your details to: rachael@bigga.co.uk
Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

Deadline for entry is 5th September 2014.

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for the first five over 36 holes in the gross category. The top three in the nett competition will also receive prizes. After each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. There will also be various nearest the pin and longest drive competitions, featuring prizes.

The entry fee of £90 includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.
GREENKEEPING PROFESSIONALISM - THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

In 1989, when David Golding commenced his role as BIIGA’s Education Director, the then Board of Management agreed to the development of a week-long Management Course to be held at its then new Headquarters, Aldwark Manor.

Amongst the tutors invited to train Head Greenkeepers and Deputies was management guru Frank Newberry.

Thousands of greenkeepers have benefitted from Frank’s training and hundreds have received his personal support over the 25 years of his involvement with our sector.

Frank said: “The biggest change for me over the years has been the ongoing increase of BIIGA’s education and training provision.

“They have provided a massive expansion in the services and education they offer to their members.

“It seems a lifetime ago since the first week-long Management Courses were held at BIIGA’s Headquarters, yet the vision by the then staff and Board of BIIGA has been developed, improved and rolled out through the annual gathering in Harrogate, as well as regional and section events.

“I prepared for the inaugural management courses by visiting a variety of golf clubs ranging from a high profile resort to proprietary owned and a private members clubs.

“I found a common problem at all of these venues: the Head Greenkeepers were all very committed, passionate individuals and very competent in maintaining their golf course but lacked the confidence and skills to deal with staff and employer issues.

“The majority of employers wanted their Head Greenkeepers to be able to improve their supervisory and management skills whilst understanding that their work on the course was the number one priority.

“In other words, the employers wanted the best of both worlds and I think that is still true today.

“So how could we reach those people who were not attending college-based courses?

“Seminars, workshops and conferences arranged by BIIGA have benefitted hundreds of those individuals who have taken the opportunity to improve their ‘off course’ skills.

“Presentations - to Green Meetings at events - have changed enormously over the years with technology being used more and more.

“However, body language, the style of presenting and preparing for any type of meeting also needed addressing.

“Over the years there have been many wonderful examples of how individuals’ lives have changed both on and off the golf course through the training they have received.

“I am very proud to have been part of the trainer team selected to help improve not just the communication skills of greenkeepers but hopefully have, in some small way, improved the professionalism and changed the perception of many, that greenkeepers, at all levels, are far more than grass cutters!

“We must continue to offer the fun, informal method of learning and BIIGA have clearly become best placed to keep this type of learning available.

“Regarding CPD, my view is straightforward – it should be compulsory i.e. compulsory professional development.

“So, please take advantage of any education and training available and employers also, encourage your staff to engage in CPD as the business will, without doubt, benefit from the new skills the staff gain by attending an event with ‘off course’ training on the agenda.”

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL
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Irritech Limited
Independent irrigation consultants

Irritech Limited are independent irrigation consultants who offer a complete irrigation consultancy package including appraisal of existing irrigation systems through to full design/project management of new irrigation systems installation, ensuring that the client gets the best product specification for their particular project.

Currently Irritech have 56 projects in 17 countries and with an office in Dubai, this gives the company an unparalleled expertise in the industry. Projects range from the design of a new irrigation system for Chelsea Football Club (Stamford Bridge) to the upgradation of the irrigation system at Royal Jersey Golf Club, completion of a phased upgrade at Beverley Racecourse to the upgrade of the irrigation system at Ramsdale Park Golf Club. For further information email: info@irritechlimited.co.uk

Water conservation is key to all projects and all Clients, and on a majority of projects soil moisture sensors are now included, these coupled with PC based control systems can offer savings in excess of 25% over baseline irrigation system water usage figures.

With water cost increasing, these savings implemented with Irritech’s borehole designs/lake design specifications can make a client self-sufficient in water. Typically an average borehole can offer a payback over its capital cost within 3–4 years. Recent projects that include borehole installations include South Staffordshire Golf Club, West Kent Golf Club, and Ramsdale Park Golf Club.

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GUIDE
BUYERS’}

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Recruitment

Sunningdale Golf Club wishes to recruit a Courses & Estate Manager. The candidate should have:

- Over 10 years' practical experience in turfgrass maintenance and golf course construction techniques
- Experience in managing a large team
- Tournament experience preferred
- International experience preferred
- NVQ level 3 or HND or equivalent
- PA1, PA2, PA6 and 2A
- CS 30 and CS 31 preferred

Sunningdale is dedicated to achieving World Class standards:

- Venue for the Senior Open Championship 2015
- Venue for the Open Championship International Final Qualifying 2004 - 2013
- Venue for the annual Sunningdale Foursomes Tournament played since 1934
- Old Course ranked at No 22 in the world (Golf Course Architecture Magazine)
- New Course ranked No 53 in the world (Golf Course Architecture Magazine)
- Investors in People Silver Award

Please apply in writing or email with full CV and covering letter to:
Clare Livingston, Administration & HR Manager, Sunningdale Golf Club, Ridgemount Road, Sunningdale, Berks SL5 9RR
clarel@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk

Closing Date for Applications: 6th July, 2014
www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk

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Chislehurst Golf Club is a Private Members Club founded in 1894 with an 18 hole parkland course steeped in history.

The Club is seeking to appoint an experienced Greenkeeper / Mechanic to add to our current highly skilled and qualified team.

We are looking for an enthusiastic, hard working Greenkeeper who is also able to carry out day-to-day maintenance and repairs to the fleet of course vehicles. You should be highly motivated and able to work as part of a team and undertake all aspects of golf course maintenance and general mechanical upkeep. Mechanical qualifications would be beneficial but not a necessity.

Ideally you should be PA1, PA2 or PA6 qualified with spraying and chainsaw certification.

The successful applicant will have at least three years greenkeeping experience, preferably with a keen interest in golf, and will be encouraged to undertake further training to progress within the industry.

Salary is negotiable depending on experience.

Please forward your application with your CV and covering letter, to include current salary and benefits, by e-mail to coursemanager@chislehurstgolfclub.co.uk for the attention of John Hunnisett, Course Manager to be received by Friday 6 June.

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Royal Cinque Ports GC currently has an opening for a 1st Assistant Greenkeeper.

Candidates will have:

- Minimum of 5 years links experience
- Education level of NVQ/SVQ 3
- Knowledge of maintaining top level courses to the highest standards
- PA1, PA2 and PA6 essential
- A high level of competence with modern greenkeeping equipment
- Good team working and technical skills
- Ability to deputise for the Links superintendent and his Assistant in their absence
- Preferred but not essential qualifications in driving and chainsaw

A competitive salary and benefits package is on offer. Please apply in writing with your CV and covering letter by 8th June 2014.

chris.barnard@royalcinqueports.com

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EXPERIENCED GREENKEEPER

A vacancy exists for a Greenkeeper.

The candidate will have a minimum of 2 years experience, be hard working and reliable. Qualified to NVQ level 2 an advantage as would be PA1, PA2 or PA6 qualifications.

A working knowledge of Health & Safety at a Golf Club would also be of advantage

Please apply in writing with a full CV to:
Doug Penny, Course Manager, Upminster Golf Club
114 Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 1AU
or email coursemanager@upminstergolfclub.co.uk

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Our favourite tweets this month...

St Andrews Links @TheHomeofGolf
Seasonal staff being trained on applying fertiliser to specific areas yesterday on the @JubileeCourse

greenkeeping @LancasterGc
10th hole @GolfLancaster it’s a great day for golf

The Mind Factor @TheMindFactor
Take some time out and read our latest newsletter - Is there REALLY a SECRET?

Gavin Steed @greenkeepergav
Just gotta love summer.......@BIGGALtd @coastalvalleygolf @CoastalGolfGreenkeepingE"f

Grant Burton @grantburton121
@BIGGALtd morning sunrise at the 2nd green on Northumberland GC

Martin Lowe @MartinLowe77
Repairing range fencing high above "P" @PacheshamGolf @BIGGALtd

Landscape & Amenity @LAPUMagazine
Story of the Day is that nominations are now open for the 2014 @the_iog industry awards
A new page featuring the best Tweets and pics from the industry – don't forget to tag @BIGGALtd to give yourself a chance of being featured!

Seasonal staff being trained on applying fertiliser to specific areas yesterday on the ‪#JubileeCourse‬ greenkeeping ‏‪@Lancastergc‬ 10th hole ‪@GolfLancaster‬ it's a great day for golf

The Mind Factor ‪@TheMindFactor‬ Take some time out and read our latest newsletter - Is there REALLY a SECRET?

Grant Burton ‪@grantburton121‬ @BIGGALtd morning sunrise at the 2nd green on Northumberland GC

Martin Lowe ‪@MartinLowe77‬ Repairing range fencing high above ‪#pacheshamgolf‬ . ‪@BIGGALtd‬

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Applying fertiliser on the Jubilee Course @TheHomeofGolf
Summer at Colne Valley Golf Club @greenkeepergav
Sunrise at Northumberland GC @grantburton121.jpeg
Repairing range fencing Pachesham Park @MartinLowe77

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