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The only way is up
Hawkhurst GC, in Kent, is this month’s Golf Course Feature.

Turf Set to Suffer
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**Content Section**

The only way is up

Darren Child, Course Manager of Hawkhurst Golf Club in Kent, has been using as a mantra since he took over at the nine hole village course last February.

And it would be hard to argue as, when Darren took over, the course was certainly in the gutter, but not necessarily looking at the stars – to paraphrase another acclaimed philosopher and wit, Oscar Wilde.

The course had just gone into administration. The Head Greenkeeper and his part time assistant had to go as part of the old regime. The Administrator had taken what worthwhile machinery was to be had in the ramshackled building which masqueraded as the maintenance facility.

The club had struggled for a number of years, being propped up by the club’s owner, who was spending anything up to £50,000 each year, to bail the club out on salaries, overheads etc. The membership had also dwindled from a relatively robust 400 to just over a 100. It was then that the owner understandably felt that the situation was not sustainable and that, while he would be happy for the club to continue, he would no longer bank roll it, and so things came to a head.

Looking into a genuine abyss, the Club Professional, Peter Chandler, and one of the club’s squash members, James O’Reilly, decided, despite the less than rosy outlook, to try and make a go of the club.

It was to this situation that Darren arrived. A man who had earned his greenkeeping stripes at Walton Heath, under Clive Osgood and latterly, Ian McMillan, and a former junior member of Hawkhurst, Darren Scott MacCallum visits a golf club which so nearly went out of existence but which is now well on the road to recovery.
Man City Man Flies out to Italy

Agronomist Bruce Jamieson and his 16 year-old daughter, Alice, completed their sponsored 210 mile four day cycle ride from Hartley Wintney early last month.

Bruce and Alice have so far raised over £41,000 for their local St John's Church, which is hoping to build a community centre.

“I would certainly do it again, but it was hard work. On the first two days we rode for 51 and 57 miles respectively but the third day was 94 miles, many of them uphill,” said Bruce, who enjoyed the 10 mile final stint into Paris and the Eiffel Tower, behind a support vehicle.

The 44 people who completed the trip raised over £40,000 for the Church but contributions can still be made at www.justgiving.com/Bruce-and-Alice-Jamieson

Victorious at Norrie Whytock

On Thursday, 19 August, we made our way to Auchterarder Golf Club for our annual Norrie Whytock Team event for the Sections in Scotland, hosted by Bayer.

Auchterarder Golf Club was in superb condition. Our congratulations to Archie Dun and his staff for the presentation of the course. It was a pleasure to play.

On to the event itself. After last year’s momentous win the Ayrshire Section were looking to retain the trophy but this was not to be. Due to the good weather, the scoring was the best we have seen for several years with some excellent scores being returned. In third place with 100 points was the West Section. In second with a great score of 104 was the Central Section team comprising Derek Scott, Souvenir GC; Andy O’Hara, Leven Links; Tom Adams and Charlie MacDonald, both Crieff GC.

However the winner, with a total of 105 Stableford points was the team from the East comprising Stuart Ferguson, Dunias Parks; George Oliver, Murrayfield GC; Alistair Holmes, Seahouses GC, and finally Scott Corrigans, Greendburn GC, who lead the way with a fine individual score of 40 points, the best of the day.

Winning Captain, Stuart Ferguson, thanked Bayer and Kenny Liddell, Scottish representative, for their sponsorship and support. The Scottish Chairman, John Godles, was also in attendance and endorsed Stuart’s comments. Our thanks once again, go to the Captain and Committee of Auchterarder GC for the courtesy and facilities. Thanks also to David Smith, Managing Secretary, for his assistance in organising the tournament.

We look forward to returning to Auchterarder Golf Club in 2011 and hope to see you there.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

GIVE NATURE A HELPING HAND

Do you want to encourage more birds onto your course? Enhancing the natural look of your property could bring in golfers who are after more than just a good playing experience. The R&As Birds and golf courses: a guide to habitat management, can help you do just that. Its 90 lavishly illustrated pages contain a wealth of guidance on managing habitat for birds and other wildlife. Links, heathland, grassland, downland and parkland courses are all covered, with advice on woodland, hedgerow, scrub and wetland management for birds.

The book was written by Keith Duff, retired Chief Scientist at English Nature, (and an advisory member of The R&As Golf Course Committee) and Nigel Synes, habitat management specialist at RSPB.

Peter Dawson, Chief Executive of the R&A, expressed his delight in working closely with the RSPB on this publication, “I encourage all golf clubs to think about how they can put this guidance into practice on their property.”

Golf courses, if managed sympathetically, can provide a safe haven for some species of birds that were once widespread but that have declined rapidly in recent years. The R&A and its Open venues are playing their part by, for example, managing grassland rough to encourage ground nesting birds such as the Birds of Conservation Concern Red Listed skylark.
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210 Mile Trip to Paris for Charity

Barenbrug UK’s Jayne Leyland recently took Manchester City FC’s Grounds Manager, Roy Rigby, on a finding visit to Italy to give him an insight into the latest research and developments in grass seed solutions for the sports turf industry.

Jayne and Roy journeyed to Landlab, in Quinto Vicentino, near Vicenza, where the independent turfgrass research centre is working on grass synergy and bio-diversity systems with Royal Barenbrug Group.

Roy and his team are charged with achieving the very best playing surfaces possible. As such, Roy is keen to use and trial cutting-edge seed solutions as a key part of his programme across the club’s Eastlands stadium, Carrington training ground and Platt Lane academy sites.

And with Roy’s expertise also in demand in the United Arab Emirates – where club owner Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan has asked him to advise on Abu Dhabi Football Club’s pitches and his personal grounds – he found the Barenbrug trials being conducted at Landlab of particular interest and practical relevance.

“The level of investment at Manchester City means I am in the unique and privileged position of being able to actively seek out the latest sports turf solutions to trial and use at our grounds,” said Roy.

“The Landlab visit was really useful – the water restitution and warm/cold season grasses trials will certainly benefit my work in Abu Dhabi. It’s given me lots to think about in terms of uses back home too – first of all, I plan to start an exciting trial with Jayne at one of our Manchester grounds next summer.”

Roy Rigby, centre, with Landlab’s Dr Adrianno Altissimo and Barenbrug UK’s Jayne Leyland on his recent trip to the Italian trials site

Do you want to encourage more birds onto your course? Enhancing the natural look of your property could bring in golfers who are after more than just a good playing experience. The R&A and RSPI joint publication, “Birds and golf courses: a guide to habitat management”, can help you do just that. Its 80 lavishly illustrated pages contain a wealth of guidance on managing habitat for birds and other wildlife. Links, heathland, grassland, downland and parkland courses are all covered, with advice on woodland, hedgerow, scrub and wetland management for birds.

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GIVE NATURE A HELPING HAND
GI NEWSDESK

The Course Care Cup

A popular annual event took place recently at Highcliff Castle Golf Club. This was the 13th time that the Wessex Secretaries met the South Coast Greenkeepers to take part in this close fought contest sponsored by Course Care.

With honours even before this particular event much was at stake but, on a beautifully sunny day, the greenkeepers were successful (3½ to 1½) and presented with the trophy.

Here we see Kevan Glass, Course Manager at Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club, receiving the cup from Course Care’s Managing Director David Mears.

Golf Club Histories at the EIGCA Library

The EIGCA has been actively searching out the publications of golf clubs over 100 years old for the past five years for its library. These provide a valuable insight into the early years of golf and the work of pioneers such as Harry Colt, James Braid and Alister MacKenzie. This part of the collection now stands at over 400 volumes. For clubs embarking on their own history, it is a useful starting point as there is a great variety in the form and content of these books.

The 19th century was a period of extreme change throughout Europe as we moved from a rural society to an urban one. By the end of this period there emerged a new leisurely class of people with money to spend. Now, golf had been played for many centuries before but that the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th saw a growth of interest in the game never seen before or since. Over 500 golf clubs were established in England alone during that period and 300 in Scotland.

The EIGCA is interested in the beginnings of these clubs. Many of them are considering renovation work to coincide with their centenary celebrations and are looking at the original layouts and their designers for information.

Based on the library of the British Institute of Golf Course Architects, and substantially augmented since, initially with a grant from the RSA, the EIGCA Library collection contains the writings of many of the great masters in the field, such as Harry Colt, H M Wethered, George Thomas, as well as the works of more modern gurus like Geoff Shackleford, Robert Muir Graves and Michael Hurdzan. We have facsimile copies of many books published in the first part of the 20th century, such as The Links by Robert Hunter and Bernard Darwin’s Green Memories. There are guides to courses throughout the world and many works exploring the environmental impact of golf. And we have practical guides to irrigation and greenkeeping which detail the techniques available to the industry today.

The club histories are listed in the Library’s catalogue which can be viewed on the Institute’s website at www.eigca.org/library.php. Non-members may borrow our books for a small fee, and are welcome to visit and view the collection. Please email me on librarian@eigca.org. Sue Stranger, Librarian European Institute of Golf Course Architects.

Chelsea Show Off New Star Signing

Having finished top of the Premier League last season, all eyes are on Chelsea now the new season is underway. And to keep Stamford Bridge in perfect playing condition, the stadium’s Assistant Head Groundsman, Kevin Fowler, knew just what the club needed—a Toro ProCore 648 pedestrian aerator.

“I’ve actually been wanting this machine for years,” Kevin says of it. “It’s a good machine that does exactly what it says on the tin.”

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European Institute of Golf Course Architects.

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European Institute of Golf Course Architects.
From Kerry to Kent, and from seven regional airports, Wiedenmann UK welcomed over 130 dealers, representatives and prospective customers to a series of three demonstration days recently. A total of 25 machines from its fleet of turf and ground care equipment were available for testing at Wiedenmann’s show field, next to its Glasgow Airport HQ.

With eight Terra Spikes lined up side by side, visitors were able to appreciate first hand how continuous product differentiation and R&D investment has enabled Wiedenmann to develop patented technology to deep aerate and decompact turf.

David Rae, Wiedenmann UK’s Managing Director, told the audience: “We are known for our Terra Spikes aerators but increasingly customers are discovering our range of mowers, collectors, conditioning and commercial machinery. “This is your chance to get behind the controls and see everything up close.”

Photographs show one of eight groups at Wiedenmann’s series of Open Days.

Charterhouse Turf Machinery proved that its strong presence and longevity extend well beyond the groundcare sector when two members of the company won this year’s CrucialBall Rally in Europe. Dressed in kits and driving their very own version of the famous Dukes of hamish’s ‘General Lee’, Richard Heywood and Curtis Alist, along with their friends, Steven McClal and Darren Ayling, bazed a trail from Belgravia to Monte Carlo via Strasbourg and Lake Como, finishing off in Nice.

However, there was more to the rally than a once-in-a-lifetime driving experience, the ‘Dukes of Scotland’ raised £4500 for The Scottish Society for Autism. The cash will be used to help children and teenagers at The Clipperton School in Paisley who have special educational needs.

GI NEWSDESK

Wiedenmann UK Hosts Series of Open Days

New Chief Executive for Links Trust

Euan Loudon, 54, who currently Chief Executive of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, will take up the role of Chief Executive of the St Andrews Links Trust early next year.

The Trust manages and maintains the seven public golf courses in St Andrews including the Old Course and The Castle Course.

A former assistant promotional officer, he joined the army in 1971 and quickly rose through the officer ranks. He commanded the 1st Battalion, The Royal Highland Fusiliers and in his first appointment, in the rank of Major General, he was General Officer Commanding the Army’s 2nd Division and Governor of Edinburgh Castle.

In 1991, he was appointed General Officer Commanding the Army’s 2nd Division and Governor of Edinburgh Castle. In 1991, he was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle. In 1991, he was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle. In 1991, he was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle.

Photographs show one of eight groups at Wiedenmann’s series of Open Days.

In other words, those who go that extra mile without any thought of reward. The winners will be announced at Harrogate, having been judged by representatives from BIGGA, the IOG and the STRI, and will receive holiday vouchers, a framed certificate and a cheque for £200.

Nominations are invited from anyone in the industry (not immediate family) and nomination forms will be available to download from Terrain Aeration’s blogsite www.terrainaeration.co.uk

Harry Diamond Remembered

The Harry Diamond Quaich was again played over the Belleisle Course, Aviary. Weatherwise, one would have thought that the heavens had opened up and had concentrated their centre on Belleisle.

Backed up by a “Gale Force” wind, sweeping down from the Cumnock Hills, the brave and fearless men, women and children were standing on their respective tees awaiting the Ann Moxon to start off this year’s Harry Diamond Quaich.

Again this well supported competition had a full and overflowing entry sheet.

Considering that the Belleisle Hotel was closed due to a lack of patrons, the whole Diamond family were involved in the presentation of prizes on the table.

The whole Diamond family were involved in the presentation of the golf and the apex Golf and the Harry Diamond Quaich was presented by Harry’s wife, Jessie.

The winners were H. Russell, P. Tasker, P. Watson and A. Graham who had a remarkable score of 96 points, magnificent golf considering the weather.

The family wish to thank all who donated prizes on the table. The whole day was a credit to Harry’s memory and depicts just exactly the high esteem in which Harry was held by the Aviary gallery.

The presentation of prizes closed with a vote of thanks for the staff involved in running and arranging the ever successful Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich.

Clyde George

Unsung Hero Celebrates Anniversary and Opens Eighth Awards

One of Terrain Aeration’s current Unsung Heroes, Keri-Jarman of Moor Park Golf and Country Club, was on hand at Saltex to help celebrate the company’s 10th anniversary and open nominations for this year’s awards.

Now in their eighth year, the Unsung Hero Awards are open to any Greenkeeper or Groundsman, deemed to be outstanding in his or her dedication to the industry, whether it be help and support given to colleagues, extra effort in the face of adversity or sterling, solid performance over and above the call of duty.