Asian Turf Seminar

Registration is now open for the March 14 to 16 Sustainable Turfgrass Management in Asia 2011 conference. Visit www.asianturfseminar.com for more details or download the PDF registration form here.

The seminar will take place at the Jaxa R&D Center in Tokyo, Japan. The conference will bring together experts from the region to discuss the latest in sustainable turfgrass management. The seminar will feature lectures, workshops, and a trade show. The registration fee is $250 for early bird, $300 for regular, and $350 for late registration.

Teeing Off for Health and Safety

Golf Course operators and employees are the latest from the local business community in County Durham to have benefited from a free health and safety awareness raising seminar. The day-long event was held at Chester-le-Street Golf Club.

T&R for Golf

The seminar was attended by golf course operators and employees from across the region. The seminar was designed to provide practical information and guidance on health and safety best practices.

UK & Ireland Golf Market Shrinks

A new golf industry survey has revealed a 4% decrease in the number of players in the UK and Ireland over the last year. The survey reveals that Europe’s golf market as a whole has experienced significant growth since the 1990s and the number of golfers has more than tripled in the last 25 years, with golf course supply doubling in the same period. However, across Europe, while the number of registered players grew by 5% annually until 2005, KPMG’s research suggests that since then, demand growth has slowed down to 1% per year, and the current global economic pressures affecting many European countries have taken their toll, with nine countries suffering a decrease in participation over the past 12 months.

The report also recommends the need for more playable courses, six and nine hole developments, which will comfortably sit alongside championship-length courses to encourage new entrants to the game and offer affordable, accessible family-friendly services.

Turkey is highlighted as one of Europe’s success stories where a ‘Junior Golf League’ initiative has proved so popular that it is now being rolled out nationwide. The report also recommends the need for more playable courses, six and nine hole developments, which will comfortably sit alongside championship-length courses to encourage new entrants to the game and offer affordable, accessible family-friendly services.

The seminar will combine expert practical tips and information followed by an open forum. This conference is presented by the Thai GCSCA and Asian Turfgrass Center for the Thailand Golf Association, with support from The R&A.

DENNIS MOWERS FOCUS ON GRASSCUTTING EQUIPMENT

Following on from a successful series of seminars in 2010, Dennis Mowers is now focusing its attention on the specific needs of Cricket groundsman. Hosted by Uxbridge Cricket Club, in conjunction with Denis and cricketworld.com, the specialist seminar will take place on Thursday, February 10 (9.30am registration).

The seminar will combine expert practical tips and information followed by an open forum. Among the impressive line up of speakers is Argus Fraser, former England and Middlesex fast bowler, now Managing Director of Cricket at Middlesbrough County Cricket Club; Host Groundsman Vic Demain, Stuart Kerrison, Head Groundsman at Essex County Cricket Club; and Paul Taylor, Deputy Head Groundsman at Northamptonshire County Cricket Club.

Turfgrass Education

Seeding and fertiliser application will be addressed by Craig Seeding and fertiliser application will be addressed by Craig

For more information, contact Scotts Professional on 01473 201106 email prof.sales@scotts.com www.scottsprofessional.co.uk

When it comes to nutrition, Sierrablen delivers, month after month.

Scotts understands that every penny of your budget has to deliver right now.

One application of Sierrablen controlled-release fertilizer delivers premium quality on demand nutrition for up to nine months. Its proven Poly-S and PACE resins coated technology helps turf managers across the world save time and money producing strong, healthy turf. For more information, speak to your Scotts Technical Advisor or visit www.scottsprofessional.co.uk

Month 7

Month 8

Month 9

For more information, contact Scotts Professional on 01179 201166 email prof.sales@scotts.com www.scottsprofessional.co.uk

A New Concept in Raking

The Sandglider rake was conceptualised by Terry MacKay after his many frustrations with the standard of rakes on his frequent visits to bunkers on golf courses around the world. Rakes were often broken, bent, missing teeth and generally pretty awful. Being a design engineer and former owner of a precision engineering company, Terry decided to design a rake which would address all the problems he had encountered. Almost five years later, SilverTree Products Limited is ready to launch Sandglider onto the market.

“Teeing Off for Health and Safety” seminar will include expert practical tips and information followed by an open forum. This conference is presented by the Thai GCSCA and Asian Turfgrass Center for the Thailand Golf Association, with support from The R&A. For more information, visit www.asianturfseminar.com.
A momentous year comes to a close

The year 2010 was rather a momentous one for me - as it may have been for you. Some of you started the old year with a steady job and prospects, but unfortunately may not be starting the New Year in the same happy situation.

For many greenkeepers the old year was a year of change and adjustment; a year of difficult challenges but also, I hope, some welcome support.

I am grateful to my family, and my friends in the industry

This past year I have cause to be very grateful to my wife and my two sons for their support. I am grateful also to my good friends in the industry, my fellow BIGGA Board members, the hard working BIGGA staff and all our wonderful volunteers.

I am particularly grateful to Mincehampton Golf Club for permitting me to have a considerable amount of time away over the last two years, and of course I want to thank all my staff for their hard work and support in 2009 and 2010.

At the AGM in 2010 I spoke out of the heart in my acceptance speech. My personal view, after a year as Vice Chairman, was not a completely positive one. I felt the weight of accusation that the Association completely positive one. I felt the weight of accusation that the Association was only actually able to train and develop a relatively small minority of its members over most past years.

Now some may argue that because we offer training and development of our members, our job is somehow done.

However, our mission is to 'triumph through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession'.

Focus on the things that will make a difference

Looking back over 2010 I hope that I have been reasonably successful in fulfilling another ambition - that the Board is a clique made up of individuals with limited interest and aspirations of the rank and file BIGGA member.

If you have any doubts about the ambitions of Board members I just ask that you give us a fair chance to prove otherwise. This month, for example, sees the first Development Seminar for Assistant Greenkeepers, former FOC at Harrogate Week. If successful, this will be run out in the Regions.

In 2010 I have also been motivated to help the Board that I serve to focus on the things that will make a difference, and I am hoping my successor will allow me to support him to deliver a number of fronts going forward. Currently on my ongoing agenda:

- Our relationships with our trade partners and other Associations
- 2. Member engagement in our services, particularly through uptake of CPD
- 3. Support for our volunteers
- 4. The CEO Succession
- 5. Governance of the Association
- 6. Re-alignment of the organisation
- 7. Advancement of the greenkeeping profession

So what is now happening in BIGGA House?

I suspect that many of our members will have concerns about staff changes at BIGGA HOUSE. Let me assure you that all of the hard working members of the HQ team and the Regional Administrators, are highly valued by the Board.

Indeed, HQ staff are already making bigger contributions to Board meetings. In doing so there are enhancing their contribution to BIGGA's delivery of its mission.

Meanwhile, the CEO and Board are working very closely together to manage the transition period to ensure a smooth and comprehensive hand-over of the business. This is a very important phase which will require John's full focus. To that end, Tracey Maddison (Currently Head of Membership Services), will take the role of Acting General Manager until such time as a new CEO is appointed.

There will be a huge “farewell” for John Pemberton at Harrogate 2011, and I hope members will take the opportunity to personally visit the House to thank John for his contributions over the years. Keep an eye on the website for details.

The subject of Trade Shows continues to catch the eye

The subject of Trade Shows continues to catch the eye of the industry press. Let me again assure you that the BIGGA Board continues to be at the very core of discussions about the future of Harrogate Week.

Continued on page 55

The bio-inspired Syngenta Contact fungicide active for turf, fludioxonil, will offer a novel action that effectively explores targeted disease spores.

Syngenta Research Biochemist, Dr Andy Corran, says that new fungicide mechanisms of action are incredibly rare and extremely exciting opportunities to develop new disease control strategies.

“Originally inspired by the naturally occurring antimicrobial compound of some soil bacteria, fludioxonil works in an entirely different way to the standard and traditional fungicides – which opens up new opportunities,” he told greenkeeping professionals during a turf disease briefing at the Syngenta Jealott's Hill International Research Centre, in Berkshire.

Andy explained that, when fludioxonil locks onto targeted disease spores, it upsets the osmotic balance within the cells and effectively tricks the pathogen into absorbing water. The result is that the spore rapidly swells until it - quite literally - explodes. This happens so quickly there is no time for the spore to develop mycelial growth into the leaf, thus preventing damage to the surface.

He also highlighted that fludioxonil only binds to a specific protein of targeted turf disease spores, so beneficial soil microbes that have different protein structures will not be affected.

Syngenta Technical Manager, Dr Simon Watson, added that fludioxonil not only targets disease pathogens on the leaf surface, but has the same effect on Puccinia disease spores in the thatch layer and the soil surface.

“The disease threat is ever present in the thatch layer, living on decaying matter and waiting for the right conditions to flare up,” he warned.

JCB has been awarded one of the largest British Army machine orders in its 65-year story.

The order for 236 machines will be delivered by the end of this month. The contract is for 324 JCB 4CX backhoe loaders and 98 JCB 436EHT wheel loading shovels. The backhoe loaders are made at JCB’s World HQ, Rocester, and the wheeled loading shovels at JCB Hortonslo, Cheshire.

The machines will be predominantly commercial with minor enhancements such as NATO green livery, personal weapons storage inside the cab, conveyor lighting and increased wading ability.

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Continued on page 55

Chairman’s Word

As he writes his final column as BIGGA Chairman 2010, Paul Worster audits his motivations and aspirations

Crashing Pilot Hits Bunker

Barely an hour after he crawled out of a damaged plane on a Corona golf course, pilot Richard Hemsworth said he was so surprised by the sight of the green that he failed to take the final shot coming up as I flopped up an ace. It stuck up on me,” said the 63-year-old.

The plane landed on the undulating sixth fairway, which crests just before the green – and the sand trap.

When Richard turned to avoid the green, the little two-seater literally fell into the trap.

The emergency landing avoided the two-story homes that border both sides of the fairway. The damage to the golf course was minimal, a club spokesman said.

“He was the most courteous crash pilot. He managed to avoid the homes,” said General Manager, Mike Kim.

“We combined a lot of magic to avoid the sand trap, but nothing that can be repaired.”

Contact+ On Target for Effective Disease Control

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“The disease threat is ever present in the thatch layer, living on decaying matter and waiting for the right conditions to flare up,” he warned.

“The additional thatch and soil activity of fludioxonil, compared to standard contact fungicides, explains why it’s described as contact+.”

“Fludioxonil will change the way we think about disease control, by reducing disease spore numbers and lowering the risk of infection,” added Simon.
The year 2010 was rather a momentous year comes to a close. A momentous year comes to a close.

I am grateful to my family, and a steady job and prospects, the further accusation that they working HQ staff could be open to change, and I had also heard a completely positive one. I felt the weight happen appeared to diminish.

However, our mission is to strive through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession.

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Continued on page 55

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How does the GTC intend to engage more employers, in what, for many, is a natural ongoing process, staff?

Perhaps for readers, it would be timely to remind you of who is represented around the table of the GTC and why there is a GTC, when there is BIGGA. BIGGA clearly represents the greenkeepers and the Home Unions, EGU, NGU and GUW collectively represent over 2300 British golf club employers.

With a representative from the four bodies above plus Donald Steel, as the independent Chairman, and John Holliday as its Finance Director, it is a relatively small Board and one which is committed to promote greenkeeper training at every opportunity.

The GTC also has financial support for its work from the PGA European Tour and a special project grant from the R&H.

A closer relationship with organisations including BIGGA, CMAE, PGA and the GCMA has to be good for the game and this partnership will strengthen the work the Home Unions look to establish Golf Education Groups.

The meetings I attend to discuss the work of the GTC are typically attended by various employers and Training Providers who offer formal and informal courses for our sector. Quality has to be the benchmark the GTC Quality Assured Scheme.

A forum for the sharing of every body’s efforts if having developed a range of qualifications (standards) only for the delivery of these is of poor quality.

It is a challenge for the GTC to maintain the Assured Scheme but with BIGGA and the Home Unions and the GTC totally committed to the scheme we will be promoting these Centre and Training Providers at every opportunity.

It is the Home Unions, through their Golf Services Committees, who are now leading the drive in educating the golfer on the important work Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and the greenkeeping staff carry out.

Articles written by Master Greenkeepers are now appearing in the newsletters of the Unions and County Unions and will also be better informed of the options for greenkeeper training which can then be shared with the clubs within their county.

We can promise you that there will be an increase in promotional materials and information to both employers and greenkeepers explaining just what is available.

The GTC website will be maintained to give the latest information on standards, qualifications, apprenticeship schemes, courses and Quality Assured Scheme.

www.the-gtc.co.uk

One important area of training the GTC is keen to promote is the role of the Education Scheme during the New Year is that of short courses or “bite-size learning” to use a slice of education jargon.

Qualifications will be delivered by the QA Centres but we see an increasing role for the GTC’s Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers, who offer short courses and workshops aligned to the National Occupational Standards (NOS).

A menu of bite size learning options will be prepared, from which employers and greenkeepers will be able to choose the course or workshop to meet their needs.

Some well respected names and companies have for the GTC’s QA Criteria including Jon Atkin Associates and MG Turf Master One and the STRI. We trust more will come on board shortly as the QA Training Providers will complement the work of the QA Centres.

In summary, refer to the GTC website for all the latest information or qualifications and opportunities to learn through Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

Call the GTC on 01474 838640, email david@the-gtc.co.uk or is it really 12 months since many of you have been able to make the annual pilgrimage to Harrogate?

Please come and speak to us on stand C12.

January 2011 and a whole new year to go at! A new year always promises new starts and new opportunities. The Learning and Development Department’s resolution is to roll with the changes. What will your’s be?

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week

Harrogate Week gets the year underway with the Continue to Learn programme running from Sunday 16 to Thursday 20 January, delivering almost 150 hours of education. All indications are that Continue to Learn is going to be busier than ever, with record numbers of bookings received for the workshop programme.

Much interest has been shown in the Seminar Programme, especially The Ryder Cup and The Open Championship, both of which above all signs of being standing room only.

Tuesday 18 January

Update on UK Proposals for Implementing the EU Sustainable Use Directive

Efficient Nutrient Technology STRI - Part of the Winning Team

Improving Turf Quality

Ure: the Future of Turf Management

Integrated Lake and Pond Management - Innovative Aquatic Solutions

Ryder Cup/Cynara

Why Electricity Generation Makes Economic Sense for Your Business

Preparing the Old Course for the 2010 Open Championship

Public funding is the Bonusticket that Extends Early and Late Season Growth

Phytomin Providing Innovative Disease Management and Application

Bunker Erosion: A Sustainable Solution to an Age Old Golfing Problem

Wednesday 19 January

Linking Fuel Savings to Reel Maintenance

Overseeding with Bentgrass the Pro’s and Pros

The West Course at Wentworth - Three Steps to the Nation’s Coated Seed Delivering Species Transition on the Golf Course!

Course Manager to Club Manager - The Challenges

Aeration on Golf Courses

Green Up Your Greens

Integrated Management of Dollar Spot

Environmental Management of your Golf Course with the Latest Technology in Chemistry

Nature’s Solution to Greenkeepers Problems - Soil Fertility Explained

Introduction to Synthetic Sports Surfaces

Turf in the Sustainability Era

Working on Your Own at a 9 Hole Course

Thursday 20 January

Woodfuel Energy that Grows on Trees

Simplified Access Control for your Golf Course

The New EU Water Directive and its impact on Turf Managers

Utilising Foliar Fertilizers to optimise Green Programming

Energy Efficient Irrigation

Sponsors.

The funding provided by the Learning and Development Fund provides unemployed and disabled golfers with the opportunity to train in horticulture. The programme includes practical training leading to qualifications in Golf Management, golf club employers.

Contact Details

Contact Details

www.bigga.org.uk

Find the Personal Development Zone

For full information visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk/education/

Sponsors is used to

Finding the Personal Development Zone on Stand C22 on Tuesday 18, Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20 January.

Rachael and I look forward to seeing you in Harrogate and wish you health, wealth and happiness for 2011.
The GTC is funded by:

- The funding provided by the European Union (funded through the Lifelong Learning Programme)
- Employers
- Greenkeeping and Horticulture Industry
- Funding bodies (The R&A, European Tour, PGA)
- Educationalists
- Sponsors
- The GTC is an education provider that receives funding from all these sources.

the-gtc.co.uk

In Brief

David looks forward to the New Year and how the GTC will develop and promote its new network of Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

Continuing to Learn

The GTC is keen to engage more employers, in particular golf club employers.

How does the GTC intend to do this?

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Almost 300 of the UK’s and Europe’s leading grounds care experts from both the professional and volunteer sector and guests honoured the expertise, dedication and passion of the country’s grounds professionals at the IOG Industry Awards.

The ceremony at Cardiff’s SWALEC Stadium recognised the expertise, dedication and passion of the country’s grounds profession at the IOG Industry Awards. Experts from both the professional and volunteer sector were acknowledged for their outstanding achievement in every aspect of groundscare – from grassroots pitches to major prestigious venues, and it highlighted the progress of the grounds profession.

The main winners were:

- Professional Sports Ground Management Team of the Year – the Alex R Millar Award
- Groundsman’s Groundsman of the Year:
  - Nicholas Staff, Otley College, Suffolk
- Lifetime Achievement Award:
  - Iain Main, Buxton & High Peak
- Iain Main has been a key figure in the golf industry since the 60s. He is the driving force behind the Northern Region Groundsman of the Year and has been instrumental in the development of the grounds profession in the region. His contributions to the industry are immeasurable.

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The ceremony at Cardiff’s SWALEC Stadium recognised leadership, innovation and outstanding achievement across every aspect of grounds care – from grassroots pitches to professional stadia, including all types of public and private sports venues, and it highlighted the progress of young/student grounds professionals as well as product development and employer considerations.

The main winners were:
- Professional Football Grounds Management Team of the Year – the Alex R Millar Award: Manchester City Football Club.
- Groundsmen’s Groundsman of the Year: Iain Main, Burton University’s S уверен Sports Park.
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Keith Royce
- Most Promising Sports Turf Student of the Year: Nicholas Staff, Olney College, Suffolk.
- Young Groundsmen of the Year: Nick Phillips, Tottenham Hotspur FC.

**“Reel-Good” turn out for Crocodile Open Day**

Crocodile Golf Products held its most successful Open Day to date, when over 40 greenkeepers, agronomists, service engineers and students toured the factory to see the quality and manufacturing of its growing range of cylinder mower blades and bottom blades.

Greenkeepers were able to leave the temporary greens behind and meet for coffee before being introduced to the manufacturing capabilities of this long-established engineering firm. Originally started in 1874 as a manufacturer of sugar cane harvesting knives and farming machetes, the company has developed the same cutting edge technology to make cylinder lawn-mower blades, bottom blades and rotary blades to fit original equipment as well as a wide range of replacement parts to fit both greensmowers and fairways lawn mowers.

Managing Director, Ian Marshall, commented that the demise of the automotive industry within the West Midlands has required considerable diversification and the manufacture of this type of product has provided a perfect opportunity for growth, particularly at a time when everyone is trying to make savings.

**BAR Trio from Barenbrug**

New from Barenbrug is BAR Trio, a 100% fescue blend specifically designed to provide the superior salt tolerance required by links courses.

Part of the 2011 BAR Range, this latest product launch is the result of Barenbrug’s extensive research and development commitment to finding a salt-tolerant sports blend especially for golfers.

Following a pilot project in 2009 at Northumberland course Goswick Links, the BAR Trio mixture synergy has been perfected in trials across the UK and Ireland in order to provide the shoot density, plus disease and salt tolerance. This links courses so often struggle to achieve.

BAR Trio contains a blend of Barenbrug slender creeping red fescue – 40% Viktorka, 30% Barcrown and 30% Barpearl.

**Bucking the Trend**

Norwich-based, P&R Hydraulics is bucking the trend of manufacturing and distribution companies struggling to achieve growth during the current economic climate.

P&R has experienced significant growth in the last 12 months of trading. Since taking the decision to purchase Hydraulics Direct in January of last year, the company has not only seen a considerable increase in its revenue but also its export business.

“Many small companies would not choose to acquire a new business during the worst recession we have seen for a generation. However, the opportunity presented itself to us and despite the obvious challenges we felt the time was right for us to grow our business and expand into a new market sector, turf care equipment,” said Sales Director, Richard Howard.

In addition, the company is expanding by taking on additional floor space for its manufacturing and repair operations in Norwich.

There are also plans to increase the current workforce during 2011 to ensure customers continue to receive excellent service and support despite the increased workload.

Members of the P & R Hydraulics team from left to right, Glenn Jordan, David Elliott, Justin Gill, Richard Howard and Maria Barham-Brown.
Turfgrass management in Southeast Asia

Micah Woods gives an insight into a different type of turf management

At Bangkok, the average high temperature never drops below 31°C, and the average low temperature is always more than 20°C. As I write this, it is the end of this year’s rainy season, when in an average year about 1200mm of rain will fall at Bangkok from May to October.

At Singapore the average annual rainfall, spread more evenly throughout the year, is closer to 2400mm! Compare that with London and its 600mm average annual rainfall, or Glasgow with its 900mm, and one quickly realizes that Southeast Asia may be a salubrious location for a holiday, but it is quite a different (and challenging) place to manage turfgrass.

When I first visited Southeast Asia in 1999, I saw that there were many golf courses here, but essentially nothing in the way of greenkeeper education, or turfgrass research, or independent advisory services for greenkeepers or golf clubs. In 2006, I started the Asian Turfgrass Center with the goal of providing some of those services, and I also promised Scott MacCallum that I would write an article about greenkeeping in Southeast Asia. Greenkeeping in Southeast Asia is so different than in Britain, and I thought a description of some of these differences may be of interest to the readership of Greenkeeper International.

What Grasses Are Used on Golf Courses

The primary grasses used here are hybrid bermudagrass, (Cynodon dactylon var.); manilagrass (Zoysia matrella), seashore paspalum (Paspalum vaginatum), and broadleaf carpetgrass (Axonopus compressus). For someone accustomed to the grasses of more temperate regions, these tropical grasses appear quite coarse, but these are the grasses that are adapted to regular mowing in this type of climate. One doesn’t find much in the way of open meadow in Southeast Asia. The climate vegetation here would be a tropical rainforest, so to maintain turfgrass on golf courses takes a different mentality than in other parts of the world. The goal here is actually to keep a vigorously growing sward. Because of the climate, if the growth of the grass is allowed to slow, other plants will invade, and quickly.

The amount of water and fertiliser used on courses in Asia is considerably more than would typically be used in Europe. This is because of the different grass types used, the twelve month growing season, and the need to keep the grass growing to prevent it being overtaken by less desirable species. For nitrogen, in Southeast Asia, the average golf course would use 400 to 600 kg N/ha on greens, and perhaps 200 to 400 kg N/ha on fairways and roughs. And when it comes to water, there is a high evapotranspiration (ET) rate because of the sun intensity close to the equator, and during dry weather the daily ET is about 7mm per day. Some types of grass can survive with deficit irrigation at less than full replacement of ET, but when that happens growth will slow, so only a very skilled

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greenkeeper can manage the turf under those conditions, carefully controlling the growth rate of the desired grass species while carefully monitoring the potential invasion of weeds that could overtake the turf if it is allowed to stop growing.

**Average Crew Sizes**

When it comes to the number of employees working on the maintenance crew in Southeast Asia, I don’t think there is much relation to the numbers at golf courses in other parts of the world. There would tend to be at least 30 or 40 people working at the average 18 hole facility, with it not uncommon to have more than 50 people working at one course. In August I visited a course in Thailand that had 70 employees on the course maintenance crew. And you may be aware that many golf courses in Asia require the players to take a caddie.

Each course may then have 100 or more caddies, and these caddies are sometimes used to supplement the work of the maintenance crew, perhaps pulling weeds or collecting leaves or other debris from the course during times when they are not otherwise engaged.

**Cost for Golf Course Maintenance**

The money required to maintain a golf course is quite variable, but it would tend to be more than in temperate climates due to the year-round growing season and consequently more mowing and fertiliser and Labor and irrigation required. Labor costs vary considerably, with minimum daily wage at Thailand being about $4 per day, and with a Head Greenerkeeper at Thailand drawing a salary of about $900 per month. The Labor costs on a golf course in Southeast Asia would tend to be relatively low, but the fertiliser costs and fuel costs may be high, because golf course owners like to see the entire grounds green and trimmed and cleaned.

**The Environment or Golf?**

There is certainly a different perspective on the environment from Europe to Asia. I was at a pub in Edinburgh a few years ago and I somehow came into conversation with someone about my employment in the golf industry. And the conversation soon turned to something along the lines of “but don’t they use a lot of chemicals on golf courses, and don’t they use a lot of water, and aren’t the golf courses located in rather remote places, and don’t people drive large vehicles out to the golf courses, and aren’t the parking lots of the golf courses filled with so many large vehicles?” That type of concern is, I think, somewhat prevalent in Europe and also in North America, but in Southeast Asia the mentality is different. In Thailand or Vietnam or the Philippines, where only a small percentage of the population owns an automobile, the wish to have an automobile and the convenience that would provide certainly trumps any concern about the environment. At an average golf course in these countries, there would be perhaps 40 employees working on golf course maintenance, and three of them would own an automobile, with the rest going to work on foot or by bicycle or motorcycle.

The climate of Southeast Asia is great for a holiday, but not for routine work when one must get to work by bicycle or motorcycle, and it is understandable that one would want to have a better quality of life and a car or truck. And when we pass vast expanses of rice fields and see workers spraying insecticides and herbicides with no protective gear, we may cringe a bit, but that is commonplace in Southeast Asia.

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