In 2005 we made history introducing ‘it’. 
In 2010 we made history again introducing ‘them’.

Offer!* 
For a limited time E-Cut Hybrid Mowers are now at the same price as hydraulic mowers.

John Deere Exclusive E-Cut Hybrid Fairway & Greens Mowers. 
It’s the fifth anniversary of E-Cut Hybrid technology and the honeymoon’s not over. These ahead-of-their-time mowers offer the consistent cut only electricity can deliver. Save up to 30% on fuel and end hydraulic-leak anxiety forever. And only John Deere offers this award-winning** option for both greens and fairways. All John Deere E-Cut Hybrid mowers are equipped with revolutionary Quick Adjust cutting units. 
Consider us part of your team.
Freephone 0800 085 25 22

Déjà vu, all over again

There is a genuine feeling of déjà vu around the country at the moment. Wasn’t it this time last year that the country was covered in snow and Christmas proved to be a real endurance test for anyone wishing to get about over the festive period?

Well here we are again. As I write we’ve had Siberian conditions for three whole weeks and rather than seeing the end of it we are awaiting another wave of the extremely cold stuff. 
A White Christmas looks great on the Christmas cards, but not quite so great when you have to live, or travel, through it.

We can, however, still hope for a balmy spell in January for Harrogate Week but, whatever the conditions, I know it will perform its regular role, of providing the industry with a boost at the start of the year.

There can be no doubt that those who attend Harrogate, in either a visitor or exhibitor capacity, get so much out of it and I do have genuine sympathy for those who don’t have the capacity, get so much out of it and I do have genuine sympathy for those who don’t have the necessary budget to attend this year.

We all know that money is in short supply and futures are uncertain. What it means is that many people who would have loved to take advantage of the regular career and company networking opportunities or events. Options expressed are our own but please note these are published entirely on the basis, and responsibility is accepted for such information, which cannot be accepted for other publications, unless otherwise stated. Any such information is in the public domain.

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And there is some light on the horizon for the new generation of player beginning to do equally well. The benefits that brought to the game were huge and golf clubs were swinging places to be. With the new generation of player beginning to do equally well it would be great to see such enthusiasm for golf resurface.

Lee Westwood has achieved the previously unthinkable feat of knocking Tiger Woods off the top of the World Rankings - the first Brit since Nick Faldo in ’94 to reach such a heady position, while there are five players from these shores in the World’s top 10, Westwood, Graeme McDowell, Paul Casey, Luke Donald and Ian Poulter, with Rory McIlroy just outside at 11th and, boomy Brit, Ernie Els, at 12th.

Put that together with the stunning victory in the Ryder Cup, at Celtic Manor, McDowell’s magnificent win in the US Open, at Pebble Beach, and - let’s claim a bit of credit as well for - Martin Kaymer’s win in the USPGA Championship, at Whistling Straits, and we have enough reason to expect that the popularity of golf is on the up.

Remember the golden age of the 90s when we had Seve, Sandy, Nick, Wosnirk and Bernhard all playing at their absolute peak?
The benefits that brought to the game were huge and golf clubs were swinging places to be. With the new generation of player beginning to do equally well it would be great to see such enthusiasm for golf resurface.

So we do have some justification for a bit of optimism.

A happy new year to you all.

Scott MacCallum 
Editor

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You all will be missed, but you can rest assured that we will welcome you back with open arms in 2012, when hopefully signs are a little more positive.

And there is some light on the horizon for the golf business and it comes in the shape of the wonderful form of the British golfers over the last 12 months.

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Turfgrass management in Southeast Asia

Micah Woods highlights the many differences of golf course management in Thailand and Singapore.

The architecture of grass and green speed

Tim Lodge sales his bathroom cabinet to illustrate his point.

On the beach

Murray Long describes how bunkers are built at Sunningdale Golf Club.

Earlier southern summer scorcher

Dr Terry Mabbutt looks at the knock-on problems that can be brought about by stressful weather conditions.

Every one a winner

Richard Stuttard, of the STRI, reveals the winners of the 2010 Golf Environment Competition.

Behind the scenes at an exhibition

Jim Cook finds out what it takes to organise The Ultimate Turf Management Exhibition in Europe.

The anatomy of... Graden Contour Sand Injection

James de Havilland turns his attention to a machine which has made a big impact on British greenkeeping in recent years.

An insight into turfgrass management in Southeast Asia

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End of an Era

It was the end of an era recently when the last G-Plex III ride-on greens mower rolled off the Ransomes-Jacobsen production line at the Ipswich manufacturing facility.

This was the 3,536th G-Plex built in Ipswich since production began in the UK, back in 1998. Previously the first incarnation of this ever popular mower, the GP160, was built at the Cushman plant in Lincoln, Nebraska in the USA.

Dom La Bella, Team Leader on the G-Plex production line, who has been involved with every machine that has come down the line in the past 12 years commented:

“Very proud of the team that builds them and it’s a sad day to see a real stalwart of greens mowing disappear. “Mind you, we have now changed the line to take the new GP400, which is the replacement for the G-Plex and this is a machine that has taken all the best features of the old mower and added new, modern systems to provide better functionality and operator comfort. We’re confident that we’ll be producing just as many over the coming years.”

Dom La Bella, Team Leader

Dave’s a Pop Master

David Fellowes, Head Greenkeeper at Costa Mer Woods GC, in Solihull, won the daily Pop Master Quiz on Radio 2 on Tuesday December 7.

Quiz nut, Dave, also specialises in music, science and nature and other “weird things” scored an impressive 30 out of 35, only missing out on two very obscure questions, to win his head to head, before successfully earning a second win.

Dave added: “To have produced over 3500 units is a great achievement, a majority going to the USA. I am especially as around 40% are units is a great achievement, especially as around 40% are expected around the world with a majority going to the USA. I am very proud of the team that builds them and it’s a sad day to see a real stalwart of greens mowing disappear.”

“It will be the first time in 35 years that an outside team of architects has studied the Royal Jersey layout. “One of the key aspects of TPL’s work will be to ensure the course is still a fair test of golf, particularly when you consider how advancements in equipment and golf ball technology over the past 10 years have significantly influenced how far all levels of player hit their shots.”

End of an Era

Thomson Perrett & Lobb golf course architecture practice founded by five times Open Champion Peter Thomson with partners Ross Perrett and Tim Lobb, has been appointed by Royal Jersey Golf Club to carry out an audit of the Channel Island golf course and make recommendations to enhance the playing strategy.

Tim Lobb, TPI, principal, said: “The history and traditions of Royal Jersey GC are of paramount importance to us and are a key consideration as we undertake our work over this famous links course.”

Among TPI’s objectives at Royal Jersey is the improvement of the bunkers. Design work begins this month with the team working closely with the club’s Head Greenkeeper, David Crawford. David commented: “Thomson Perrett & Lobb are a natural choice for Royal Jersey Golf Club. Not only were they recommended to us and then, subsequently, gave a very detailed proposal, but there were also sentiment reasons attached to our decision.

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2011 BIGGA Scottish Conference on March 1st

The 2011 BIGGA Scottish Conference will take place at the Carnegie Conference Centre, Carnegie, Dunfermline on Tuesday 1 March 2011.

Speakers include Jim McKenzie, Course Superintendent, Celtic Manor; Simon Watson, of Syngenta, and Jonathan Harmer, of Farmura. Other speakers include Chris Kennedy/Jack McMillan, The Wentworth Club, Clive Nottingham, Hunters Grinders and finally Chris Haspell, Castle Stuart Golf Links. Tickets cost £35, which includes tea/coffee on arrival, tea/coffee and pastry at the mid morning break and buffet lunch.

Full details and booking forms will be available and posted to members in Scotland and forms can be obtained by contacting Peter J. Boyd, Regional Administrator. Tel: 01341 616 3440 or email: pj.boyd@btinternet.com

BIGGA Support Team

BMW PGA Championship Wentworth, May 26-29

Volunteers are required for the 2011 BIGGA Support Team at this year’s BMW PGA Championship at the Wentworth Club on the above dates.

All or any one day would be greatly appreciated.

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BIGGA SUPPORT TEAM BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP WENTWORTH, MAY 26-29

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A great chance to see at close hand the extensive work that goes into the preparation for a major European Tour Golf Championship.

No accommodation is provided. For more information please contact Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk Mobile 07941 948410 or 01737 819343.
ELECTRIC GATORS ARE TRIED AND TRUSTED

One of the National Trust’s flagship properties, Cliveden House in Buckinghamshire – once the family home of the Astors and later more famously associated with the Profumo affair – has a newly expanded fleet of John Deere TE electric Gator utility vehicles, supplied by dealer Golf & Turf Equipment of Wokingham in Berkshire.

Use of electric vehicles is now particularly advocated across the Trust, because of their environmental advantages in reducing both noise and fuel consumption. The TE Gators are used every day by Cliveden House Head Gardener Andrew Mudge and his garden and estate maintenance teams, covering 80 acres of amenity grass and borders, as well as the catering department for moving supplies around the public outlets on site.

“I’ve owned and used many other types of electric vehicles over the years but the TE Gators are truly outstanding,” says Andrew. “We now have three road going models in all the fleet, which has effectively replaced our previous 4x4 vehicles, and on average we only need to recharge the vehicles once or twice a week.

“Once the staff got used to driving a Gator instead of a 4x4, they loved it,” adds Andrew. “It’s the first choice now for most jobs, transporting materials such as compost, small tools and equipment. You can easily load up a lawnmower too, using the tipping load bed, and it will easily pull our woodchipper along the roads and main pathways.”

South East Region Conference

This year’s South East Regional Conference was hosted by the Sussex Section at Plumpton College, East Sussex. Section Chairman, Rob HUDSON, introduced the excellent speakers who covered a varied range of subjects on what proved an interesting and informative day, with some wide ranging and valid points being made during question time at the end of the day’s proceedings.

Speakers on the day were: David BLACKBURN, Head of Horticulture, at Plumpton College; Jack McMillan MBE, who gave us a fascinating insight into the recent changes on the West Course at Wentworth; Charles Henderson who introduced the STRI programme on organic matter management and Martin Ward, of Exmoor, on using electric Gators for early and late season growth.

After a substantial lunch Simon Macdonald, from Scorts, spoke on turf maintenance and disease control, followed by Kevin Haly MG who highlighted the attention to detail in the fairway areas that make the difference on a well presented golf course.

At the end of the day the Chairman thanked all the speakers for their presentations. He also thanked members of the Trade for their support of events in the Region and Sections throughout the year, and the team at Plumpton College who looked after us so well on the day.

Links Superintendent Leaves Trump Course

Paul O’Connor, appointed last year as Links Superintendent at the controversial Donald Trump golf course currently under construction, near Aberdeen, has left his job. Reports in local media suggest that Paul, who was previously at Carnoustie Links, was dismissed for refusing to be part of a “campaign of intimidation” against people who had refused to sell their land to facilitate the project.

According to the press reports Paul refused to follow orders to build a huge mound of earth behind the home of one of the local residents. It is understood an employment tribunal is to meet.

Rebrand for Limagrain

Limagrain UK has re-branded its professional seeds portfolio as Limagrain Grass, reflecting the global nature of its parent company’s business. Heritage ranges such as Newtons, Nickerson and Sharpes ranges, the LB brand now encompasses cereals, maize, chaffed rape, grass and beans, vining peas, sugar beet, fagaceae, root and leg plant varieties, together with environmental and conservation crops.

Limagrain UK is the local agricultural and amenity seeds operating company of Group Limagrain, an international co-operative group specialising in agricultural and horticultural seeds, plus cereal products.

Group Limagrain employs more than 6000 people: over 1200 research, has subsidiaries in 38 countries, sells in over 100 countries and has an annual turnover exceeding €35 billion. It is owned by its 3700 farmer members.

The company has a heritage of seedmanship, combining more than 24 names such as Sharpes, and Sinclair McGill.

Formed in 2005, Limagrain UK embarked on a five-year, £3 million investment programme which has modernised the company’s systems and production facilities, together with its breeding and technology systems.

MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

Seven members of the Club Managers Association of Europe (CMAE) have joined an elite band of individuals who have gained the Certified Club Managers (CCM) qualification.

The Club Managers passed the seven hour examination, which focuses on 10 key club management disciplines, including financial, leadership, facility and food and beverage management, to join just 15 CMAE members to achieve the qualification.

They are: David Cook CCM, Barhull Golf Club, Surrey; Tristan Hall CCM, Aldwickbury Park/Redbourn Golf Clubs, Hertfordshire; Andy Campbell CCM, Baronsman-Jacobson Regional Manager Scotland and Ireland; Jim Callaghan CCM, Bothwell Castle Golf Club, Glasgow; Padraig Flattery CCM, Artery Golf Club, Galway; Christopher May CCM, Emirates/Orchid Creek Golf Clubs, Dubai, UAE; Mark Anderson CCM, Secretary/Chief Executive Officer, The Lansdowne Club, London.

The seven became the latest Club Managers to pass the CCM examination, a qualification recognised as the global industry benchmark. The CCM is open to suitably experienced managers who aim to become the best in their business and wish to develop their careers.

“Congratulations to those who achieved the highest recognition available in their profession,” said Jerry Kilby, CMAE Chief Executive.

“They are now one of 15 CMAE members who have achieved the qualification since its European launch in 2007, and join many other colleagues in the USA and Canada, where the qualification has been established for many years.”

Plugging a Hole in the Market

Jeremy Parkman, former greenkeeper and inventor of “Bunker Plug,” has been appointed Technical Sales Executive at MJ Abbott, providing a direct link between golf courses and the ground breaking product.

“At this time of year, bunker maintenance is unquestionably one of the biggest headaches for Course Managers and Greens Staff and is often one of the most complained about areas of any course. Bunker Plug is an extremely efficient and very cost effective solution to the problem of flooding. Simple and efficient, quick and easy to fit with a host of other advantages, Bunker Plug is liked by Greens Staff because it eliminates pumping and associated problems, while improving playability,” said Jeremy, who was a greenkeeper at Dale Hill GC, in Kent, until recently.

With new attachments for surface drains and other problem areas on the course being launched at Harrogate Week 2011, Bunker Plug is proving more and more popular on courses around the U.K. and with plans to launch in Europe and the U.S.A., the future looks bright.

MJ Abbott, Sole Distributors of Bunker Plug, say the innovative product deserves its place on any course.
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“Since we bought our first electric Gator three years ago, we’ve found them to be very reliable machines, and there’s only been a problem with one battery terminal in all that time,” says Andrew Mudge. “We now have three road going models in all the fleet, which has effectively replaced our previous 4x4 vehicles, and on average we only need to recharge the vehicles once or twice a week.

“One of the staff got used to driving a Gator instead of a 4x4, they loved it,” adds Andrew. “It’s the first choice now for most jobs transporting materials such as compost, small tools and equipment. You can easily load up the tipping load bed, using the tipping load bed, and it will easily pull our woodchipper along the roads and main pathways.”

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One of the National Trust’s flagship properties, Cliveden House in Buckinghamshire – once the family home of the Astors and later more infamously associated with the Profumo affair – has a newly expanded fleet of five John Deere TE electric Gator utility vehicles, supplied by dealer Golf & Turf Equipment of Wokingham in Berkshire.

Use of electric vehicles is now particularly advocated across the Trust, because of their environmental advantages in reducing both noise and fuel consumption. The TE Gators are used every day by Cliveden House Head Gardener Andrew Mudge and his garden and estate maintenance teams, covering 80 acres of amenity grass and borders, as well as the catering department for moving supplies around the public outlets on site.

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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 be held at the Hangzhou International Expo Centre and will bring together turfgrass managers, industry officials and researchers from across Asia to discuss the development of turf in the region. The conference will include a pre-seminar workshop on vehicle safety which covered topics such as lone working and risk assessment, as well as practical demonstrations including safe use of green keeping vehicles and machinery, safe use of pesticides, safe-use of mobile machinery such as grass cutters and administering of First Aid. As well as council officers, demonstrations were delivered by representatives from the HSE, St. John’s Ambulance, Jon Allbutt Associates and Tors.

Teeing Off for Health and Safety

Dennis Mowers Focus On Grounds Management

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

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 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 9% annually until 2005, KPMG’s research suggests that since then, demand growth has slowed down in the second half of the decade to 1.2% 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.

Turfgrass Management in Asia 2011 conference. Visit www.asianturfseminar.com for more details or download the PDF registration form here.

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 one day, golf themed event took place at Chester-le-Street Golf Club. It was organised to help golf course employers and employees comply with their legal responsibilities relating to health and safety at work and help reduce accident and ill-health rates.

Organised by Durham County Council’s Safety and Occupational Health Team, the day concentrated on safety issues such as lone working and risk assessment, as well as practical demonstrations including safe use of green keeping vehicles and machinery, safe use of pesticides, safe-use of mobile machinery such as grass cutters and administering of First Aid. As well as council officers, demonstrations were delivered by representatives from the HSE, St. John’s Ambulance, Jon Allbutt Associates and Tors.

Shown above, Jon Allbutt participating in an outdoor workshop on vehicle safety which covered topics such as stability on slopes, vehicle safety features and using the right equipment for the job.

A New Concept in Raking

The Sandglider rake was conceived 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.

“Tees are an advantage to the rake, in existence and construction means years of careful life while retaining an pleasing appearance after exposure to all types of weather,” said Terry.

“It is easy to use and can be pushed or pulled to equal effect. Dry sand is effortless to work and the surface finish superior to a conventional rake. Heavy wet sand is always a problem for a flimsy rake but Sandglider copes,” he explained.

A final redesign of the rake head has virtually eliminated any build-up of sand in the coil and in any event a tap on the ground clears the build-up immediately. The surface finish on wet sand is superior to that of a conventional raked.

Having no teeth means Sandglider will not damage bunker membranes. Sandglider will be priced much the same as any good quality rake available from reputable dealers, under £20 but with a longer lifespan.

For further info contact Terry MacKay on tdm@silvertree.co.im (Tel.+44 (0)1624 852183)