The world's first UTV with power take off

Leading off-road vehicle manufacturer Polaris has announced the BRUTUS range, the world’s first purpose-built side-by-side utility vehicle with front-end Power Take Off.

Based on the Polaris Ranger, BRUTUS comprises three models – BRUTUS HD, BRUTUS HD HPT and BRUTUS HD PTO. The line was built to be the most versatile, most capable and most comfortable side-by-side utility vehicles ever created, enabling users to complete more tasks without spending more time and energy. The new BRUTUS models are specifically engineered for individuals and businesses that seek durable all-terrain vehicles.

The ability to operate several front-end attachments provides users with new levels of versatility, and ultimately, a cost-effective and more productive work solution.

The Pro-Tac™ attachment system, standard on the BRUTUS HD and BRUTUS HD PTO, delivers the capability to change from one attachment to the next quickly and easily. Creating levels of productivity never before seen in its class, a revolutionary, front-end PTO system on the BRUTUS HD PTO draws power directly from the vehicle’s engine. The high efficiency, mechanical PTO maximizes power to a line of purpose-built, out-front commercial attachments. Featured in the complete line of attachments are three PTO-powered attachments – angle broom, finishing mower and snow blower – and three hydraulically-powered attachments – snow blade, pallet forks and materials bucket. The BRUTUS models offer a 24-horsepower diesel engine with hydropneumatic suspension which delivers power and torque needed to get the job done. An innovative treadle pedal allows travel in forward or reverse without shifting gears, providing an ideal setup for commercial applications. BRUTUS vehicles provide a class-leading six inches of suspension travel, which combined with On Demand True All-Wheel Drive, allows for safe and comfortable transportation of passengers and cargo over virtually any terrain.

BRUTUS models are the first side-by-side utility vehicles that use a multi-link coil over De Dion rear suspension to deliver superior ride-quality. The rear suspension supports a 566.96kg (1,250lb) cargo capacity and minimizes suspension sag when fully loaded.

Global Turf Equipment (GTE) – the UK branch of the world’s largest independent seller and exporter of pre-owned golf course equipment – offers a supercar experience as a prize at SALTEX. Serving golf facilities in more than 80 countries worldwide, GTE offers owners, operators, and golf course superintendents substantial cost savings with finely-tuned pre-owned equipment specifically tailored to your course’s dynamics. GTE prides itself on its reputation for high-quality, low-hour, off-lease equipment.

GTE recently established an overseas partnership with County Mowers as part of its focus to take a larger market share of the European market. The brand new Smithco Spray Star 2000 was another SALTEX debutant; this dedicated spray vehicle features an ultra low-profile 757 litre (200 gallon) capacity tank, hydrostatic drive and a liquid-cooled diesel engine.

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The introduction of the BRUTUS product family is part of our commitment to offer customers innovative and relevant vehicles that best suit their needs,” David Longers, Polaris Vice President, Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) and ORV Engineering said. “Throughout our 60 years of engineering experience, strategic alliances with other industry leaders and our incredible network of dealers, we are able to provide the commercial market with the most productive, reliable and versatile vehicles.”

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Government Turf Equipment offers a supercar prize

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A new addition to the leading turf machinery distributor’s portfolio, Lely UK has exhibited TYM tractors at IOG SALTEX for the first time. On stand A37, as part of its Lely - Partners in Turfcare exhibit, which also includes Toro, and Solo outdoor maintenance equipment, Lely displayed a number of TYM tractors.

“TMY tractors are fast becoming the tractor of choice for golf clubs, sports stadiums, local authorities and landscape contractors,” says Jeff Auguske, turf products national sales manager at Lely UK. “There’s a wide range of models from 23hp to 100hp to cater for all needs, and we showed off the 23hp, 35hp, 43hp and 100hp units at SALTEX.”

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Carnoustie

What happened next?

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It was impossible to speak to Sandy Reid and Craig Booth in their recently refurbished maintenance facility without first acknowledging the elephant in the room.

The pair worked with John Philp MBE for many years before his retirement — a man credited with bringing The Open back to this most traditional of golfing venues, and was even honoured when the 11th hole on the Championship Course was named after him. But it was significant that, on the day of its renaming, John was quick to salute the efforts of the team who had supported him throughout his long tenure.

On a blazing hot afternoon on the East coast of Scotland, just days before The Open began 40 miles south at Muirfield, two of that team were keen to discuss their progress over the past 12 months. Sandy (Links Superintendent) and Craig (Head Greenkeeper of the Championship Course) were effervescent in their affection for Carnoustie — and honest about some of the problems they’ve had to deal with, problems which may surprise some.

I began by asking Sandy - a former curling champion and a scratch golfer - to define his role, a title which is normally the preserve of American greenkeepers.

He replied: “It’s the three Head Greenkeepers that run the courses - I’m basically the buyer! The Head Greenkeepers largely think for themselves so they’re in control of their own work, and primarily accountable for it too. As good as John was, when I was the Head Greenkeeper of the Championship Course I didn’t necessarily want him interfering with my work. Call it stubbornness if you like, but you don’t want constant advice. He was always there for guidance but you want to make the decisions yourself and learn from them. I therefore try to manage the Head Greenkeepers in a way that I like being managed myself.

“This way of working allows the Head Greenkeepers to plan ahead, not just for the day or the week, but for months in advance. In turn, this means the staff are more dedicated to the courses as the information from the Head Greenkeepers is more consistent. At least we try to run it that way!

“I’m not really that involved with, for example, setting cutting heights and other routine tasks, or what Craig, Steve Mitchell (Head Greenkeeper of the Buddon Links) and Colin Law (Head Greenkeeper of the Burnside) should or shouldn’t use as a fertiliser. I may give some guidance and help confirm their decisions but I don’t dictate what they should do. All three courses...
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run similarly anyway, with similar products and shared machinery.”

Sandy has been at Carnoustie since 1997 when he joined an Assis-
tant Greenkeeper after spotting an advert in a local newspaper, having spent time at nearby Letham Grange Golf Club. Craig joined as a trainee greenkeeper a year earlier, so with over 30 years at Carnoustie between them they are steeped in the culture of the place. They’ve also been involved with countless projects on the course – the latest an exciting redesign of some of the current par threes on the Buddon Links.

Sandy said: “FULL QUOTE The Buddon is seen as the third course and we wanted to strengthen it by lengthening the course and reducing the number of par threes. Over the years we’ve lost holes for various reasons and two holes have been made out of one, so we hope these changes will improve the challenge.”

Both Sandy and Craig readily admitted their fortune at having excellent resources at their dis-
posal. But they were equally honest about the problems they’ve had to overcome – mostly caused by intense periods of really heavy rain.

Sandy recalled: “There was a bad flood in September 1985, but it didn’t happen again until September 2009, and since then we’ve had floods of varying severity. We had water in the pump house which badly damaged our irrigation system and the halfway hut near our maintenance facility. However, the biggest problem was that our main access bridge to all three courses got washed away. Craig and I were 30 seconds away from driving over it when it collapsed in front of us. We had to live without that for six months until it was rebuilt and take different routes all over the place – and it’s a 340 acre site. It wasn’t until it was gone that we realised just how important it was.”

Craig added: “We’ve been looking at ways to either prevent the flood-
ing entirely or limit the damage. We’ve raised the 17th fairway, raised embankments, raised bridges and consulted with Angus Council to see if they can help us. We’ve also highlighted areas where we intend to install extra drainage because we’ve had to just pump the floodwater away – floods leave this layer of silt which water struggles to penetrate.

“I’ve been here since 1996 and there’s no doubt that over the last few years we’ve experienced more intense periods of really heavy rain. Before it would rain normally for a couple of days - but it’s the two or three hours of intense rain that causes problems. Flooding can be a problem, just as it unfortunately is at so many other courses in the UK, but I feel we’re making real progress.”

Sandy was quick to hail the work ethic instilled by John – and he looked back with great pride on the team’s preparatory work before The Open in 1999, which he was involved in as soon as he arrived. He said: “The intensity of the work and attention to detail struck me immediately. We knew we had got The Open so for two years beforehand we focused on the Championship Course with some big jobs such as renovating the third fairway. I loved it.

“I remember we felled trees behind the 15th and 16th to create mounding for spectators. We also built a new putting green, returned some of the rough as well as revet-
ing all the bunkers. All of the work has always been done in-house, we have the resources to do it and a supportive committee.

“The whole team do a great job, we’re a really hard and very passion-
ate about the area which comes through in the end product – we have three terrific courses here.”

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MACHINERY LIST

• 10 x Toro Triplex’s (6 x 3420’s & 4 x 3250’s)
• 2 x Toro Multi-Pro Sprayers
• 1 x John Deer Deck, 1 x Kubota Deck
• 14 x Tractors (Kubota and John Deere)
• 2 x Diggers
• 2 x Charterhouse Verti-Drains
• 3 x Kubota PTV’s
• 9 x Toro Ride-on Mowers
• 1 x Forklift
• 3 x Kubota RTV’s
• 7 x Toro Flex 21’s
• 5 x Toro GR1000’s
• 1 x Toro 3100
• 21 x Toro Workmen
• 1 x Toro Hydro-ject’s
• 1 x Kubota Deck
• 2x 3420’s & 4 x 3250’s)

THE MOWER THEY DON’T WANT YOU TO SEE.

The competition doesn’t want you to see the Jacobsen ECLIPSE® 322 riding greens mower. They can’t match its ZERO leak points. They can’t provide individual reel control to vary cut patterns. They can’t offer programmable frequency-of-clip from an LED screen. And they can’t get anywhere near the true hybrid fuel savings or legendary quality-of-cut. When it comes to the ECLIPSE® 322, the competition can’t do anything except hope you don’t see it. I guess we just ruined that for them, too.
Playing a **dual** role

Huw Morgan is both Club and Course Manager at Ashburnham Golf Club in South Wales - Laurence Pithie met up with Huw to find out more about his dual role.
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Huw Morgan is both Club and Course Manager at Ashburnham Golf Club in South Wales - Laurence Pithie met up with Huw to find out more about his dual role.
I first met Huw in 1988 when he was named ‘Young Groundsman of the Year’. At the time he was an aspiring Head Greenkeeper at Fairwood Park GC near Swansea before moving on to Southerndown.

From 1993, he spent 13 years at the Wildenerease course in Kent, gaining his HNC in 2001 and the Master Greenkeeper award a year later. In 2007 the opportunity to manage a top links course enticed Huw to Ashburnham as Course Manager.

His remit was to improve the condition of the course in time for the Home Internationals in 2010. He was assisted by a £120k investment in equipment, as well as an operational budget that would allow the level of expenditure to match increased expectations. Staff training was also a necessary requirement for the work that lay ahead.

The task involved a combination of turf improvement work, creating additional tees and renovating all 70 plus bunkers in under three years. All was going to plan when just prior to the tournament, the club found themselves without a Club Manager. Huw takes up the story. “There secretary/managers departed in five years with the latter resigning just ten weeks before the Home Internationals. “There wasn’t enough time to recruit a replacement and we needed stability when expectations were high, so I offered to fill the position for six months initially. I realised I would be stepping outside my comfort zone.”

Challenges

Huw continues: “By June 2010 when I started my dual role as both Course and Club Manager, the country and in particular this region of south west Wales was in full recession. However I could see the club’s potential and I had a passion to make it work, and thought it was a natural progression after 25 years in managing turf. I was to oversee the management of the course and a temporary greenkeeper was hired for six months to make up the shortfall in course work.

‘Finance, golf competitions and matches were managed by the club but I would be in charge of everything else. A steep learning curve followed to gain an understanding of tee booking and other computerised systems, as well as catering, while at the same time working with a new board of directors who had limited understanding of the running of a golf club. The early days meant that the members were not happy to see me in the office, nor were my greens staff.

‘I needed to be flexible, an effective communicator and have a thick skin - I also needed diplomacy to keep a cool head when faced with an irate member or customer! It wasn’t long before I realised that I needed to organise each day better and avoid tackling too many jobs at once. It was better to complete a smaller number of tasks before moving on.

‘I had to get a better grasp of computers and to work more closely with other staff, whether it was in the office, bar, restaurant or kitchen. What I brought to the club was passion, experience, understanding golfers needs and having a methodical approach to solving problems. This is something which most Course Managers are good at and I had to put this to good use on many issues ranging from blocked toilet drains to failed irrigation pumps.”

Decision Making

After Huw’s successful six months as interim club manager - which included hosting two major events – the club were faced with a dilemma. As is sadly the case with many clubs, membership numbers had decreased resulting in a significant drop in revenue. Ashburnham had a significant number of retired members with just 8% of the membership female, and very few members under the age of 30.

It was also noted that there was a reduced interest in competitive golf with friendly golf gaining the upper hand.

Visitor numbers remained steady, but two more courses opened nearby which affected Ashburnham. The reality was stark – the club could not afford to hire both a course manager and a general manager. Therefore the club retained Huw in his dual role but agreed the temporary greenkeeping position would not be filled for the forthcoming season. This meant Huw continuing to be in charge of the course, bar, catering and the professional shop, while being responsible to a board of six elected directors.

Working Progress

Now after three years as club manager, work generally follows a tried and tested routine. He said: “My day starts en route to the club with a brief telephone conversation with the Head Greenkeeper Paul Hopkins, who has over 25 years of experience.

“We discuss work past and present having previously agreed a monthly plan. I generally tour the course every two weeks although I try to squeeze in the odd game of golf with a member or board director to measure course playability. This works well at Ashburnham since much of the work is routine.

“After checking any messages, the real work begins – dealing with any club issues, booking, tee sheet bookings…and much more! Key member concerns tend to be depth of sand in the bunkers, length of rough, greens speed and the weather.

“It is also worth noting that since very few members have low handicaps, the course is set up more for their enjoyment as opposed to tournament condition. However, Ashburnham is a true links course with an emphasis on firm, smooth turf that encourages the ‘running’ game.”

The Course: Past and Present

Huw continued: “When I first started in 2007, we ran the course with six staff including myself.