WILL THE MOWER WITH THE MOST POWER IN ITS CLASS... PLEASE RAISE YOUR ARM

NEW AR722™

Nothing is more powerful than the all-new seven-gang AR722™ 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.

Industry support vital as floods test resolve

Watching the recent scenes of flooding around the country has been horrendous; it has had enormous impacts on many industries and yet again golf is adversely affected.

Whilst course closures at this time of year should not have too adverse an impact on the golf club business, the recovery work could be expensive and with golf still suffering the effects of the economic crisis, a faster start to the season would have been far more desirable. It has been heartening to hear that yet again greenkeepers have been helping their comrades with offers of equipment, support and manpower.

Sadly this further setback is likely to push more golf clubs towards redundancies or even closures. Now more than ever, it is vital that our members have a strong relationship with their employers, are in tune with the needs of the business and are seen as providers of innovative solutions rather than presenting problems.

The Association is here to help any member affected, don’t hesitate to contact your Regional Administrator for advice and assistance, the network of support in the industry and within the membership is excellent.

Following a vibrant BTME it was interesting to travel to America for the Golf Industry Show. There was definitely cause for further optimism with increased exhibition space sold and visitor numbers up. Our meetings during the week with fellow Associations and industry partners were all extremely encouraging.

It was a pleasure to spend time with the ten members who made up the annual BIGGA Delegation to the show courtesy of Berkhall and Company. They were a credit to themselves, their employers and the Association. I’ll like to take this opportunity to formally thank Stephen Bernhard and his company for his continued long-term support of this fantastic member development opportunity.

They picked up a host of contacts, expertise and knowledge from their trip. In fact, see page 20 to read how Tom Broomar secured a once in a lifetime opportunity to volunteer at the 2016 Ryder Cup.

The Delegation were not the only BIGGA members attending, there were scores of British greenkeepers in town as well as our many American and International members all taking advantage of the excellent educational conference put on by our friends at the GCSAA.

It was interesting to note that the GCSAA are focusing on the difficult transition from Assistant Superintendent to the top job. Adding ambitious Assistant Greenkeepers and Deputy Head Greenkeepers has long been a priority for BIGGA - but making the leap into the hot seat is still a daunting one for many. This month we carry a fascinating study of how Andy Pullen at North Wilts Golf Club has successfully managed the various challenges involved having recently taken this very step.

Enjoy the read.

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"Golf and trees don't mix" is an old saying amongst architects, but when Norbert Lischka MG was faced with filtration problems on his woodland course in Germany he set out to disprove it…

Falkenstein is one of the older courses in Germany as it was founded in 1906, but the course itself is somewhat younger. It was constructed by Colt and Harrison between 1928 and 1929.

Head Greenkeeper, Master Greenkeeper and BIGGA member Norbert Lischka has a long relationship with Falkenstein – nearly 20 years. When he joined he found a club debating many issues. The members were not satisfied with the push-up greens that consisted mainly of annual meadowgrass, although this was not the main problem which was bad drainage of the greens.

The greens had been built using existing soil with a very poor filtration rate. Norbert said: “It was three to five litres of filtration an hour at most. Several years ago some meetings were held in which the members were presented with the choice of a complete renovation or a partial improvement. The advisors we had at that time were split – two were in favour of a total reconstruction and two advised a gradual improvement!”

The members opted for a more gradual approach, for a number of reasons. The greens at Falkenstein are so uniquely undulating that this would have been lost during a complete overhaul. Furthermore this would have meant a lot of inconvenience for the golfers for a number of years.

APPROACH

Approaching the problems meant a combination of ‘drill and fill’, improving the light and air conditions around the greens and a sophisticated feeding programme for the grasses on the greens. Norbert also intensively tested the best combination of grasses in the woodland area of Falkenstein.

The greens were 100% annual meadowgrass with all its disadvantages, made worse by the combination of poor infiltration and the absence of significant light and air. He said: “Initially I tried to take control with the traditional bent plus fescue combination. After some years it became evident this had not been successful. The main cause was the lack of sufficient
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Above: The BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard & Co, sent a message of support.

I also attended various meetings with the GCSA, GEO and many of our sponsors amongst others. I have to say we were looked after superbly throughout the week by the GCSA. The hostility and friendliness we encoutered. As always, my thanks also to Bernhard & Co for their continued support.

At Chippenham, we’ve been closed on and off for the last few weeks and it’s currently a case of damage limitation. I’d like to get out and give everything a spike but it’s just been too wet. The main tasks have been pushing water away from the temporary greens to try and ensure some play is possible and reeding drains – not exciting but essential. It’s vital for us to remain open when we possibly can, as well as everything else we really value the money the new clubhouse generates here and obvious takings are severely hit when the course is closed.

From Florida to floods

It’s been a whirlwind start to my time as Chairman, and a real tale of weather contrasts as I enjoyed temperatures in the mid-eighties at the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, then had to don the wellies and waterproofs on my return home.

The BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard & Co, were a credit to the Association, they were professional, switched on and got on very well together. They also represented a real cross-section of clubs from across the UK and in just one example of what a superb development opportunity being a member of the delegation is, Tom Brearley met greenkeepers from Hazeltine National, the venue of the 2016 Ryder Cup, and may get the opportunity to volunteer during the tournament itself. What better advert could there be for getting involved?

I visited two golf courses in Orlando – Orange County National and Shingle Creek Golf Club. They were both pristine – Orange County National and Shingle Creek. They were both pristine – Orange County National and Shingle Creek. Orange County National and Shingle Creek.

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From Florida to floods

Firstly, it’s great for me to look back on a record breaking BTME with real pride. Very positive feedback has continued to come in from visitors and exhibitors alike and we can all now reflect on a hugely successful week for the Association.

It was the perfect way to start the year, and I look forward to catching up with more members and people within the industry over the next 12 months – you don’t always get the time at BTME, particularly as it was so busy this year!

It’s been a whirlwind start to my time as Chairman, and a real tale of weather contrasts as I enjoyed temperatures in the mid eighties at the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, then had to don the wellies and waterproofs on my return home.

The GIS was fantastic, and I sensed a similar buzz to that present at BTME. I think the turf industry worldwide has had enough of tales of economic depression and there’s a real sense of positivity returning to the industry. Although it seemed a little smaller in scale than my last visit in 2008, it was an excellent show with the varied exhibitors looking very busy – similar to BTME in many ways, even down to the Halls being particularly packed on the Wednesday.

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I visited two golf courses in Orlando – Orange County National and Shingle Creek Golf Club. They were both pristine – Orange County National and Shingle Creek in particular was brilliantly presented. Mind you, it must be easier to present a golf course when you have beautiful weather, dozens of staff and all the machinery you could dream of! The customer service was something else, we were welcomed by Shingle Creek employees when we drove in, in the car park, walking the course – in fact I think I met more people in the first ten minutes there than we have total staff at Chippenham!

I also attended various meetings with the GCSAA, GEO and many of our sponsors amongst others. I have to say we were looked after superbly throughout the week by the GCSAA, they also genuinely valued our input and my personal thanks go to them for the hospitality and friendliness we all encountered. As always, my thanks also go to Bernhard & Co for their continued support.

At Chippenham, we’ve been closed on and off for the last few weeks and it’s currently a case of damage limitation. I’d like to get out and give everything a spike but it’s just been too wet. The main tasks have been pushing water off our temporary rugby pitch, bowling green or football ground. At the very top level it’s not too bad as the resources are there but further down the line when you have smaller budgets, fewer staff and less machinery it’s a hard job, so everyone needs to pull together.

The course is greener than I’ve ever seen it at this time of year, everything is still growing. The course is greener than I’ve ever seen it at this time of year, everything is still growing so tough recently for all turf managers whether they’re looking after a golf course, rugby pitch, bowling green or football ground. At the very top level it’s not too bad as the resources are there but further down the line when you have smaller budgets, fewer staff and less machinery it’s a hard job, so everyone needs to pull together.

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coursemanager.chippenham@btconnect.com

or call us on 0117 918 7430.
GOOD MOVE FOR MASTER GREENKEEPER PHIL

One of BIGGA's Master Greenkeepers has been appointed Course Manager at Goodwood's two highly acclaimed golf courses.

Phil Helmn MG, former Golf Course and Estate Manager at Heythrop Park, and who featured in GI back in June last year, has taken the reins at the West Sussex venue.

Phil will be working closely with Andrew Brown, Head Greenkeeper at The Downs course, and Simon Berry, Head Greenkeeper of The Parks course, along with the rest of the greenkeeping team.

Phil's extensive experience includes the construction and grow-in of four courses. One was in Florida under the direction of Tom Mackenzie of Mackenzie and Ebert, The Watermark Club and finally Heythrop Park Resort. Phil's early career saw him work at Moorcamber Golf Club, Cumberley Heath and Collingtree Park.

He said: "I have been a greenkeeper all my adult life and I love my career choice. Goodwood is a quality brand and specifically the golf courses are highly ranked and revered. It will be a fantastic challenge to help Goodwood improve even further on its recent successes and ranking."

"Myself and the entire greenkeeping team have some big plans for the future so it's an exciting time to be here."

Phil joins Goodwood at a significant time as the James Braid designed Downs Course celebrates 100 years of golf this year, and to mark the occasion Goodwood will be hosting a number of high profile events throughout the season.

PHIL’S ‘TRACTOR AID’ TO FLOOD-HIT SOMERSET

A Course Manager who combines his greenkeeping role with his job as a farmer has ridden to the rescue of a flood-hit Somerset farmer after seeing his plight on TV.

Phil Rowbottom is a BIGGA member, head man at Woolley Park Golf Club and member of the National Farmers’ Union – and was moved by a TV interview with Somerset farmer James Winslade who has lost 800 acres of his 840-acre farm to floodwater, with the water chest high in his kitchens.

James managed to save his 500 cattle but had lost all of his cattle feed. So Phil joined forces with neighbour Andrew, an agricultural contractor, and loaded 25 tons of cattle feed on to their tractors. They then set off from Phil's proprietary golf club near Wakerfield, West Yorkshire, at 5am on February 13 to make the epic 225-mile journey to Bridgwater, which is at the heart of the badly affected Somerset Levels.

Travelling at a top speed of around 30mph, ‘Tractor Aid’ arrived 11 hours later to meet a grateful James at nearby Bridgwater market.

Phil said: "I’ve been watching the news for the last few weeks and saw what a mess the Somerset farmers are in. I saw an interview with James and you couldn’t fail to be moved by it, even more so as a fellow farmer. The water was chest-high in his kitchen and he has lost almost everything, and the pictures showed the only way he could get to his farm was by boat."

"I just thought as a fellow farmer, I could help him, and the thing he really needed was cattle feed... James’s feed which he had been storing over winter is now sitting in sheds, it’s terrible."

"I don’t have any cattle on my farm but I borrowed some feed from local farmers and set off. The support we had on the journey from the public has been fantastic, it makes me really proud."

Meanwhile the rest of Woolley Park’s greenkeeping team – Phil’s son John, Andy Seaman, Richard Thompson, Stuart Mason and Pete Colley – have been working to keep the course open despite 100ml of rain in January.

John said: “Golf and agriculture are inextricably linked as they are both so dependent on the weather. If golf courses are underwater for too long the grass rots, and it’s the same with crops in farming. We’ve been hit by the relentless rainfall as so many other golf courses have, but luckily our site drains well and is high up."

“With Phil’s and John’s help we’ve been kept busy with the tractor. We’ve made a few calls and mentioned ‘Tractor Aid’ on Twitter and it’s gone on from there. We felt Somerset had been neglected by the media so hopefully this has reminded everybody of the seriousness of the situation down there.”

Their amazing journey has caught the public’s imagination with Phil even being interviewed live on the BBC’s ‘One Show’, BBC Radio 2 and in local newspapers.

Phil featured in Greenkeeper International last June when we focused on his combined role as Course Manager and farmer. Woolley Park is a 27-hole facility, and the adjacent farm’s main function is drying and storing grain for local merchants and farmers.
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LIVERPOOL FAN IN OLD TRAFFORD CHARITY ABSEIL

A greenkeeper Liverpool fan is putting football rivalry to one side for charity, when he jumps 140 feet from the roof of Manchester United’s Old Trafford ground!

Paul Pearse, Head Greenkeeper at Warrington Golf Club, was undergoing a check-up in April 2012 when doctors noticed a lump indicating testicular cancer, and which had begun to spread. He was operated on within days, and after nine weeks of chemotherapy and a further two months of recuperation he was given the all-clear just past New Year.

Now Paul, who says he doesn’t like heights, is to plunge 140 feet from the 76,000 capacity stadium’s roof as a fundraiser for The Christie, a organisation which raises funds for vital cancer research and treats more than 46,000 patients each year.

Paul said: “I wanted to give something back so that other people suffering from cancer have a better chance to be as fortunate as I’ve been.

“I’ve been watching the news for the last few weeks and seen what a mess the Somerset farmers are in. I saw an interview with James and you couldn’t fail to be moved by it, even more so as a fellow farmer. The water was chest-high in his kitchen and he has lost almost everything, and the pictures showed the only way he could get to his farm was by boat.

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“Basically I would urge every bloke to check themselves regularly. As it happened my lump was found when I was having a general check-up, but if you do find something unusual go straight to your doctor, catching it early is so important.”

Phils’ ‘Tractor Aid’ to Flood-hit Somerset was featured in Greenkeeper International, a leading magazine for the golf course industry.
AIRBORNE CHALARA SPORES DEBATE AT CONFERENCE

A Conference* held in London appears to have ‘laid the ghost’ of long distance airborne travel of ascosporas of the ascomycete fungus Hymenoscyphus pseudaldanidius (imperfect or asexual stage Chalara fraxinea) to rest, while raising the possibility of another unexplored avenue of transcontinental movement for the fungal pathogens and disease.

Arguments in favour of long distance airborne travel of chalara ascospores from continental Europe and into Eastern England rely heavily on circumstantial evidence relating to the high concentration of reported disease outbreaks in East Anglia. The long distance movement and survival of completely different fungal spores in other parts of the world is used as supporting evidence.

The arguments used against rest on a clear mismatch between long distance airborne movement with the time line and distance lines of chalara outbreaks and spread of the pathogens across Europe over the last 20 years, coupled with the known high susceptibility of the ascosporas to UV [ultra violet] light and desiccation.

Speaking at the Frasback Conference, Dr Anne Chandelier presented detailed results from chalara spore trapping research carried out in Belgium which throw light on the situation. By trapping chalara ascospores using a vertical profile she showed spore concentration was thirty times higher at 0.5m than 3.0m above ground level. Lateral movement for the majority of spores was no further than 50m from the point of liberation.

Dr Chandelier showed that Chalara ascospores liberated from apothecia (chalara fruiting bodies) on fallen ash leaf stalks are concentrated at only 0.5m from ground level, indicating little opportunity for lift off into the atmosphere and subsequent long distance dispersal in air currents. Moreover any ‘high flying’ spores would clearly be exposed to correspondingly high levels of UV light and stronger drying out forces compared with the same spores close to ground level.

In these respects the Chalara fraxinea situation is completely different to that for Phytophthora ramorum the spores (ascospores) of which are released from infected leaves at the tops of tall larch trees. Defra’s claim that chalara ash dieback arrived in the UK via airborne spores from Europe is clearly questioned by these findings. Evidence supporting the airborne movement of viable chalara ascospores from continental Europe and into the United Kingdom would clearly equivocate Defra from accusations that they acted too slowly in banning the import of infected ash planting material. However, there appears to be one unexplored avenue of chalara entry into the UK and a corresponding avenue of ‘escape’ for Defra. Apart from the role of infected ash planting material, comments made by Dr Chandelier about infected ash leaf stalks being capable of producing apothecia (chalara fruiting bodies containing ascospores) for two to three years after leaf fall raises the spectre of another avenue of disease entry into the United Kingdom. Could infected ash leaf stalks attached to the wheels of European vehicles be responsible for spreading chalara ash dieback and providing a furtive and unexplored route of entry for chalara ash dieback into the UK?

After all this was considered to be the most likely mode of spread of horse chestnut leaf miner (Cameraria ohridella) across Europe and into the UK, with dead horse chestnut leaves containing live overwintering pupae adhering to the wheels and bodywork of transcontinental vehicles.

Be that as it may, you still have to explain why chalara ash dieback took almost exactly 20 years to move the 1000km from Poland to the Pue de Calais region of France and exactly what articulated lorry loads of wine from France, cheese from the Netherlands and bacon from Denmark were doing inside ancient East Anglian woodlands.

* FRASBACK is a 4-year action plan initiated in 2011 and funded by COST® (The European Cooperation in Science and Technology). Generation of a comprehensive understanding of chalara to produce practical guidelines for pan-European sustainable management of Fraxinus (ash) species are the aims.

Dr Tony Mahbub

Tributes to BIGGA Life Member Henry Fry

Everyone at BIGGA was saddened to hear of the passing of Henry Fry on 29 January, aged 84, following a brief illness.

A Life Member of the Association, he replaced his father when he became Head Greenkeeper at Clyne Golf Club in South Wales and was also BIGGA’s South Wales Section Secretary before his retirement in 1994. He was also a Chairman of the BIGGA, as well as a 25-year member of the British Golf Club Superintendents Association. Gareth Dunce, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Southdowns Golf Club in Bridgend, paid this tribute.

“Reserved and unassuming, Henry could be described as a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold – a gentleman, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold.”