

Jemima
Puddleduck
saves
thousands
for golf club

NEWS



When a 10,000,000 gallon lake at the Lambourne Golf Club in Burnham, Bucks, cracked as a result of the hot weather, greenkeepers took a leaf out of Beatrix Potter's book, bringing in "Jemima Puddleduck" and 22 of her friends.

In just three weeks the paper-white Aylesbury ducks, halted a 20,000 gallon a day leak and reduced the cost of repairs from

£75,000, for draining and lining the lake, to just £80, the price of an electric fence to keep foxes at bay.

"A time honoured country tradition has beaten all modern technology," said John Millen, Head Greenkeeper for ClubPartners International Plc which owns the course. "Aylesbury or 'puddle' ducks, as they are often known, have been used to maintain farm

ponds for centuries. In hot weather, the sun dries out the banks and leaves thousands of tiny cracks along the bank through which the water seeps away. Puddle ducks, with their big feet, keep the shore wet and compress tiny bits of mud into the cracks, cementing all the holes."

Staff and members at the exclusive club have put forward Jemima's name for the August Employee of the month award.

"She'll probably be the first duck in history to win a recognition award from a Plc but we don't see why not. She's down on the payroll for a sack of premium quality corn each month and has worked hard on several important areas including ecology, conservation, economy and good member relations - even if it did take a little gentle persuasion to convince her that a ball which landed near the shore once was not, in fact, an egg."

Jemima's prize for her efforts is a beautifully framed certificate by the lake and her own nesting box on the small island, well away from the danger of troublesome foxes.

● Pictured: John Millen with the ducks which saved the day.



■ GTC Chairman Bob McLaren presents NVQ assessor certificates to the Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers from the North Wales golf clubs who have all successfully achieved the D32/D33 assessor units.

The presentation took place at the Welsh College of Horticulture in Mold.

The GTC has recently become a registered centre to offer National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications and all enquiries should be directed to the GTC Education Unit based at Aldwark Manor, York Tel: 01347 838640.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Otterbine/Barebo Inc., the aeration and water quality management product specialist, has announced that Rainbird Europe has been awarded the Otterbine distributorship for France and North Africa. "We're very proud to welcome Rainbird Europe to our distribution team. It an excellent company which enjoys a fine reputation," said Charlie Barebo, President of Otterbine.

■ Eamonn Wall & Co has appointed John Nicholson as Associate Consultant based in Durham. He is a keen ecologist with specialised knowledge of tree pests and diseases and is currently writing a book about trees on golf courses. He has undertaken studies in golf ball damage and its effect on tree health resulting in a knowledge of which species of tree are resilient to damage.

■ Nigel Tyler has been appointed Technical Sales Representative to the Amenity Division of County Crops Ltd. He was previously employed by Rufford Top Dress Supplies Ltd. He will cover the Midlands area.

■ Geoff Whalley has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at the shortly to open Mobberley GC.

■ Ian Greenfield, Head Greenkeeper at Goodwood GC, has retired after 28 year's service.

■ Applications are now being accepted for Pennsylvania State University's two year Turfgrass Management Technical Programme for the class beginning September '96. The application fee is \$35 and the deadline for applications is December 31, '95. Application forms can be obtained by calling United States 001 814 865 8301 or by writing to: Turfgrass Management Technical Program, The Pennsylvania State University, 306 Ag, Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802-2601.

Michael is Britain's most wanted man

By Andrew Vaughan

This year's drought had many repercussions for most golf courses, not least the size of their water bills. As the privatised water suppliers in England and Wales now address the many years of under-investment in infrastructure the cost of water will undoubtedly rise with forecasts of three and four fold increases in the next few years. (Scotland soon to follow?)

"Pay as you use" is perhaps the tip of the iceberg, as it is not unreasonable to expect the most heavy water users to pay a premium for the quantities required, and golf courses must figure amongst them.

The solution to the problem is undoubtedly under your feet. Surveys in Scotland have shown that private ground water sources supply 13 million litres per day for a variety of uses, including chemical and manufacturing industry, foodstuffs, agriculture, as well as domestic consumption. In 1978/79 ground water provided 78 million litres per day (of a total supplied of 2800 million litres per day) – a drop in the ocean.

After complying with the various planning requirements, the next problem is how to find the water. Large numbers of dry bore holes indicate that it is not as easy as simply drilling a deep enough hole. Several golf courses have overcome this by calling on the services of a water diviner, Michael Cranfield of Dollar, Cen-



Michael Cranfield: Dowser

tral Scotland Tel: 01259 742744.

Mr. Cranfield, 72, has been dowsing since the age of 13 when he learned he had the knack from a naval commander experimenting on his parents' lawn in Sussex. Over many years he honed his skill by practising on various farms he visited while selling animal feed for Quaker Oats, and on retirement, took up water divining as a recreational occupation.

Due to advancing years, he prefers to pre-survey the particular site using a map on his dining room table. He then sweeps over the map with a crystal pendulum ("but a rusty nail would do"), which when passing over a likely site swings round and round.

After finding as many "hot-spots" as possible, he then checks the site using the well known

hazel dowsing rod, and has found the map surveys surprisingly accurate. The many years of experience also allow him to judge the depth and flow-rate of water present.

Any sceptic cannot be left unimpressed by his strike rate of 98.5% for over 450 clients. However, perhaps his most important skill is that he pinpoints exactly where the borehole is to be located, which could involve hitting a two foot wide target, 300 feet down.

Farmers make up 70% of his work load (often dairy farms that require regular and vast quantities), and to date only 12 golf courses have called on his unusual services. Undoubtedly this situation will change when clubs realise the potential rising cost of water usage, and the relatively quick payback period for installing your own bore-hole and pump. In some instances, the capital cost has been paid back after just three years.

Mr. Cranfield does not expect to be travelling the length and breadth of the country for many more years, but hopes that his dining room table will continue his amazing success rate well into his 80s, that is if the water companies don't outlaw him first!

■ Andrew Vaughan is a golf course woodland design and management consultant with Eamonn Wall and Co based at 15 West Burnside, Dollar, Clackmannanshire, FK14 7DE, Tel: (01259) 743212.



Art editor gets mower out of The Open

Keith Jones, Art Editor of Golf Monthly magazine, winner of the Great BIGGA Bunker Competition at The Open in St Andrews earlier in the year, was presented with his prize at Saltex '95 by Kim Macfie, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter.

The competition was run in the Media Centre at The Open and asked journalists to predict how many bunkers the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team would rake during the course of the Championship. The final figure was 700 with one more coming in the play-off and Keith predicted 684 thus depriving Andy Farrell, Chief Reporter of Golf Weekly magazine, who had won each of the first three daily prizes with his uncannily accurate predictions only to be wildly wide of the mark on the Sunday. The final daily winner was Mike Kern of the Philadelphia Daily News.

Keith won a Hayter Harrier lawnmower valued at £600. He is pictured, left, receiving his prize kindly donated by Hayter from Kim Macfie as BIGGA Chairman Barry Heaney looks on.

Swedish study trip

A group of 18 Swedish Head Greenkeepers is visiting Scotland this month to investigate the art of greenkeeping in the Home of Golf.

The group, gathered from the Swedish Greenkeepers Association will be visiting Fife and taking in the Alfred Dunhill Cup as well as visiting links courses in the area and studying how the education of greenkeepers is undertaken at Elmwood College in Cupar.

One stop shop gears up for autumn

Wokingham-based Grass Roots is gearing up for a busy autumn as it caters for the needs of the greenkeeper. The one-stop shop for everything from turfcare consumables, machinery sales and service to furnishings and maintenance means the greenkeeper doesn't have to spend time shopping around for individual suppliers.

The company guarantees a definite time of arrival for any order and a daily 2.5% retrospective discount with be offered until the order is confirmed. The office is open to quote and take orders from 7am to 9pm six days a week and they can be contacted on Tel: 01734 771185 Fax: 01734 785116.



Excellence in golf awards at Gleneagles



The Gleneagles Excellence in Golf certificates and bursary awards have been presented to seven Higher National Diploma golf management students following their one year placement at Gleneagles.

Peter Lederer, Gleneagles' Managing Director, and Andrew Sunaway, Sales and Marketing Director of Ransomes the scheme's sponsors, presented the awards in the company of David

McInroy, Scottish Grass Machinery, and Robert McLaren, Chairman of co-sponsor the Greenkeepers Training Committee.

Stuart Green, Reaseheath College, was top student following practical, theoretical and project assessments by a panel consisting of James Kidd, Gleneagles Golf Developments, Martyn Jones, Myerscough College, Dennis Mortram, Reaseheath College, Tracey Samways, Gleneagles' training

officer, and Scott Fenwick, head greenkeeper on the King's course.

Stuart received a cheque to include a trip to the Golf Course Superintendents Association conference and show in Orlando, Florida, next year.

Other recipients of Certificates of Excellence and bursary awards were Jeff Hardcastle, John Kelsey, Keith Ratcliff, Lisa Gifford, Margeir Vilhjalmsson and Simon Crawford.

The 1995/96 scheme is to be extended with students representing nine UK colleges and one from Brisbane, Australia, who for the past year has been seconded to Shoal Creek Golf Club, Alabama.

The sponsors are committed to a three year bursary award and financing a research library at Gleneagles for the benefit of students and existing golf course operational staff.

Go-Karting is sponsorship for greenkeepers with a difference

New for 1995 is a Greenkeepers' sponsorship with a difference. This month, a six-man karting team, competing in the 250cc class for national honours, will carry the Barenbrug colours.

The Barenbrug/Grass Roots Go-Kart team are getting ready for a winter of competition on their recently-acquired pro-karts, in preparation for a summer of higher profile championship racing.

The upcoming competition events won't be quite as glamorous as the summer championships but they will provide the team with invaluable, practical experience.

The six-man team, pictured, comprises of four golf club Course Managers - Cameron McMillan, Stockley Park; Gavin Kyle, Sutton Green; Phil Chiverton, The Buckinghamshire and Stuart McMillan, Leatherhead; one Managing Director - Jamie Bennett, of Grass Roots, and one Head



Greenkeeper - Tony Kyle, Stockley Park. It is Cameron who has assumed the duties of managing the team and developing it into a cohesive and unbeatable unit!

Selection for the team was determined strictly on racing merit. Those who were fastest

on the single-engine karts were allowed to progress to double-engine, pro-kart trials. All six team members are now holders of pro-kart licences and are currently practising on the two pro-kart machines which the team took delivery of at the end of August.



If you're not already a member

...it must be because you're not aware of the many benefits of membership.

If you want to know what they are, you need to get hold of a copy of November's issue of *Greenkeeper International*. If you can't wait until then, ring Janet on 01347 838581 for more information.

BIGGA - IT'S ABOUT YOU

Selsdon Park scoops promotion's top prize

The Farmura stand at SALTEX '95 was the venue for the presentation of a brand new Hardi AMK 300 Tractor Mounted Sprayer to Selsdon Park Hotel Golf Club, Surrey, winner of the Blazon Spray Pattern Indicator 'Better-Way-To-Spray' promotion.

Selsdon Park Managing Director, Michael Sharpe and Simon Osborne, Head Greenkeeper, attended the presentation and received their prize from Barry Heaney, Chairman of BIGGA and the Association's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

Ten runner up prizes of Hardi RY2 20 litre knapsack sprayers were also awarded and these were won by: Lockerbie GC, Royal Dornoch GC, Old Thorns GC, Wyboston Lakes GC, Tewkesbury Hall GC, Singing Hills GC, Stapleford Abbots GC, St. Margarets GC, Royal Dublin GC, and Sheffield Wednesday FC.

All clubs participating in the promotion received a free "Caution - Spraying in Progress" sign



At the presentation: from left, Richard Fry, Barry Heaney, Simon Osborne, Neil Thomas and Michael Sharpe

to inform on the activity taking place.

Commenting on behalf of promotion sponsors, Richard Fry said, "This is the third year that the promotion has been held and it continues to encourage an

increasing number of clubs throughout the country to experience the many benefits that can be gained through the use of Blazon spray pattern indicator in their spray management programmes."

Middlesex course is all set to open

The new Stanmore Park driving range and nine hole par-3 course in Middlesex should be completed by the beginning of this month (October).

Covering an area of 9.2 hectares, the project has been designed by Martin Gillet and constructed by Golf Landscapes Ltd for Delaport (Park Lane) Investments, which already owns Redbourne GC and Aldwickbury GC.

A feature of the Park's construction is the installation by Golf Landscapes of an extensive drainage system and the carpeting of the site with a sand blanket of 3,800 tonnes – as much as would normally cover a full 18 hole course.

The combination of sand blanket and drainage system ensures that the site is free draining for uninterrupted play throughout the year.

Golf Landscapes has also launched a new brochure highlighting the company's range of activities. Get your copy from Mark Dunning on 01277 373720.

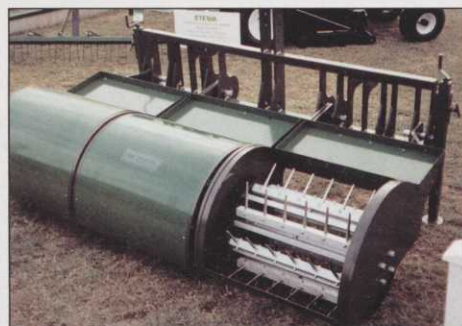
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