

Birdwatching 'Ryder Cup' sparks interest

Europe took on the USA in a special bird watching competition – on golf courses late last month. This ecological twist to golf's traditional transatlantic rivalry was billed as the first ever "Bird watching Ryder Cup". It was one of a number of green initiatives leading up to the 1997 Ryder Cup matches to be held at Valderrama, Spain, in September.

The competition proved a light hearted way to focus attention on the fact that properly designed and managed golf courses can provide important habitat for wildlife. It also provided some useful information concerning what species of birds are actually using golf courses.

Following the Ryder Cup format, a team of 12 European bird watchers on golf courses throughout Europe challenged a team of 12 Americans on prime sites in the US. Over the 24 hour period, each team member scoured a particular golf course with the task of observing as many bird species as possible. The team collectively scored the highest total won. However, to allow for America's naturally richer bird life, the European team had a handicap – they only had to find five species to match every eight species scored by the USA team.

Among the list of European golf courses competing in this event were famous names such as St Andrews, Falsterbo in southern Sweden and San Lorenzo in Portugal.

The premier site was none other than Valderrama, where local naturalist Martin Jacoby had the honour of spearheading Europe's bid to outwit the Americans. A site which is home to over 100 bird species, Jacoby thinks of Valderrama as "a nature reserve in which people play golf".



Lessening the burden

A new deal between Kubota and ING Turfcare Finance means that a new range of finance plans is now available to Kubota customers.

Called Kubota Credit, the joint finance venture is designed to provide finance solutions for compact tractors, ride-on mowers and implements.

Rene Orban, Sales Director,

Kubota (UK) Ltd said: "We believe this new scheme will satisfy the funding needs of Kubota users and owners operating in four distinct areas golf turfcare, estate management, amenity management and landscape and growing."

Pictured is Rene Orban, (right) and Bob Wilson, of ING Turfcare Finance Ltd.

Two golf courses in Hungary and one at Bled in Slovenia made up Eastern Europe's contribution to the team. These were important sites because more species occur in eastern countries than western ones. Another key location was the magnificent Domain Imperial set in wooded parkland on the shores of Lake Geneva at Gland, Switzerland.

Both teams had non-playing captains – David Stubbs for Europe and Ron Dodson for America.

Prior to the big day David revealed that the Americans would start as favourites. "They have chosen pretty wild places but we have some very good sites of our own. I think people will be surprised just how many species of birds will be found on these golf courses. It is only to be hoped that the Americans have not found a Tiger Woods with binoculars."

■ Stop press: Europe won by 347 (including handicap) to 237. Full story next month.

FLYING DIVOTS



■ Karen Smith who has worked for Jacobsen E-Z-GO Textron as a freelance for the last three years has

been appointed Marketing Manager of the company.

Peter Bell Managing Director of the UK Division of Jacobsen E-Z-GO Textron commented, "As a Sales and Marketing organisation we are delighted to announce the appointment of Karen Smith as Marketing Manager for the company. We believe that the role of marketing is of key importance to the long term development of the various brands we provide as a company."

Karen graduated from Cardiff University with a degree in business Studies and has worked within the horticulture, amenity and golf market in a marketing and PR role for over seven years.



■ Peter Clark has joined Charterhouse Turf Machinery as Product Manager of the new Connoisseur range of products. He has over 20 years experience within the trade promoting such products as Poulan, Alpine, Solo and Dolmar Chainsaws.

■ Ruud Francissen, who has been a Board member of Charterhouse for the last four years and Managing Director of Redexim BV has retired.



Ruud, as he is widely known, introduced the verti-drain on to a world market after it had been developed by Dutch contractor Aaron deRidder.

■ Leigh Siddon, Collier Turf Care Distributors Ltd's Sales Representative for East Bedfordshire, North Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, South Lincolnshire, East Northamptonshire and part of Suffolk has passed his Amenity BASIS exam.

Collier's has also appointed Daren Smith as Sales Representative for Norfolk and parts of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

Tribute to Gerald Haynes

On April 18 Gerald Haynes, Course Manager of the Hartbourne Country Club, Herts died. He was 52.

Gerald had fought an unrelenting battle against a lung illness for a number of years. In this time never once did he lose his dignity, his passion for his work or his sense of humour.

I only knew Gerald for a relatively short time but will always remember him for his unbiased

honesty and natural talents as a greenkeeper and manager. He had supported greenkeeper education for many years through student placements and it is surely a fitting tribute to him that a great number of young professionals owe their knowledge to working with him.

Gerald was laid to rest close to the family home in Powys, Mid Wales, a spot chosen by himself, to be near the two great loves of his life, his family

and the countryside of the area.

Gerald leaves two fine sons, Richard and Martin and a widow, Susan. On behalf of them I would like to thank the staff and members of Hartbourne GC for the support over the years.

I am sure all those who knew Gerald will be saddened by his untimely demise and our thoughts are with Susan for the future.

Pete Bradburn