

## Velvet Bent: Not the answer

I would like to take issue with the article in the April issue of Greenkeeper International in which we were told that velvet bent is the 'in' grass. In my view it makes extravagant claims and displays little knowledge of greenkeeping.

Can I also point out that *A. capillaris* is the old specific name for *A. tenuis* browntop (the new name was substituted in 1918! ref. Beard).

*A. canina* is indeed a lover of (very) wet soils. It was rejected many years ago, before New Zealand and Oregon browntops formed a reliable seed source for a better grass. If you think this is an opinion and not a fact, let me quote Professor Vargas (not unknown to some of your readers) on the subject, relating to Kingstown velvet bent, of which Avalon is only an improved strain.

"Velvet bent (Kingstown) lacks the disease resistance and competitive ability necessary to make it a

desirable turf grass species. It is even more susceptible to disease than Pennncross; is not very tolerant of high temperatures and has a tendency to lie flat in summer time thus making an undesirable putting surface. It simply will not compete with *Poa annua*, which eventually will take over".

Advice to feed velvet bent more and especially to LIME(!) greens will be regarded by all greenkeepers as very dubious.

In short velvet bent is emphatically not the answer. *A. canina* has been tried and found wanting for at least 65 years. A comparison could be made with Pennncross which was considered to be the answer to all our prayers, more than a decade ago. It certainly is not now, nor indeed its successors.

J.H. Arthur,  
Budleigh, Salterton

## Welsh Open at Celtic Manor

Celtic Manor, in Newport, South Wales is to host the Welsh Open for at least three years from next year, as the first step towards its new 7,450 yard Wentwood Hills course becoming a contender to host the 2009 Ryder Cup.

The new course was opened by Wales' new First Minister Alun Michaels following an exhibition match between Ian Woosnam and this year's Ryder Cup Captain Mark James.

Director of Golf at the Resort is Jim McKenzie who was recently promoted to the post having previously been Course Manager.

## New features for Pattisson's aluminium hole cup

H. Pattisson & Co, which has recently become a distributor for the Standard Golf range, has launched a new aluminium hole cup.

Sporting a new and improved design the new hole cup is a copy of the polymer bogey hole cup with anti mud features, while a new and improved hole club is available is available in plain and white lined.

For further information Tel: 01494 79 46 46.

## Re-election for Howard Swan

Howard Swan has been re-elected as President of the British Institute of Golf Course Architects for the forthcoming year with Jeremy Pern as Vice President.

"I look forward to a second year as President and, with our Committee, the progress that we shall be striving to make to advance the profession and the

Institute throughout Europe and elsewhere in the year to come," said Howard.

The most important issue facing the Institute in the year ahead is the possibility of a merger with the European Society and the French Architects' Group and the debate will continue towards a coming together in the Millennium.

Another example of  
perfect spacing

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