

St Andrews Bay Agreement

Yamaha Motor (UK) Ltd have signed an exclusive three year contract to supply the St Andrews Bay Golf Resort and Spa, St Andrews Scotland with over 40 Yamaha Golf Cars.

St Andrews Bay will take delivery of their fleet of Yamaha Ultima 48-volt electric golf cars and petrol service vehicles in June and July this year.

World Congress

The four World Scientific Congress of Golf will take place at St Andrews in the week immediately following The Open Championship at Muirfield.

Among the topics which will be discussed are golf course construction, turf grass breeding, pests, biotechnology and golf environment while the week will also include golf at Kingsbarns, as well as an alternative Ryder Cup, a three club tournament and a range of other social activities.

Further information, including a booking form can be obtained on the World Scientific Congress of Golf Trust website: www.golfacts.org

John Deere Championship tees off

Twenty-six golf clubs will be taking on the challenging Brabazon course at The Belfry in August, having won their regional qualifier in the inaugural 2002 John Deere Team Championship golf tournament.

The competition is being well supported by BIGGA regional administrators, and is likely to raise over £9000 to support the Association's educational activities - John Deere will be donating £25 for every British team entered at the qualifying stage.

Each winning team from the regional qualifiers - consisting of two members of the club's board or committee, plus the club professional and greenkeeper - goes through to the Great Britain and Ireland national final at The Belfry on August 19, a month ahead of the Ryder Cup, to play for a place in the world final at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA in November. Teams will be joined at The Belfry by a representative of their local John Deere dealer. By the end of May, 15 regional qualifying tournaments had been completed, involving 207 British and 55 Irish teams - with the host club's team winning in four. Another 11 of



The photograph shows a team member teeing off at the 2002 Team Championship regional qualifying golf tournament organised by John Deere Midlands dealer Henton & Chattell at Cotgrave Place Golf Club in Stragglethorpe, Nottingham, in May, which attracted 23 teams - the biggest entry to date - and started with breakfast at John Deere Limited's headquarters in Langar.

these dealer organised competitions are due to take place in June and July, with over 190 more teams planning to take part.

Winning golf clubs so far include Currawest from Loughrea in Co Galway and Thurles from Co Tipperary in Ireland; Ardglass from Co Down in Northern Ireland; and in England, Boothferry in East Yorkshire; Bowood Park from

Camelford in Cornwall; Carden Park in Cheshire; Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire; Felixstowe Ferry in Suffolk; Glen Lodge, Bawburgh in Norwich; Pryors Hayes from Osocroft, Chester; Ramsdale Park from Calvaton, Nottingham; Rodway Hill from Highnam, Gloucester; Sherborne in Dorset; Wheatley in Doncaster; and Windmill Village in Coventry.



Address letters to: **Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**, or email them to: scott@bigga.co.uk

That Old Chestnut

When Duncan McGilvray wrote his original letter late last year, he hoped for a response and he's had some. However he also knows the vast majority of the membership never even read it, as witnessed at a recent seminar at Carden Park.

It's that old chestnut apathy again. Look at the job section and throw the magazine to one side. Well at least we have a mag and that's because we have an Association, one that was formed by determined men for the betterment of us all. Look how far we've come in such a short time. BIGGA was formed at exactly the right time as the laws were starting to get more stringent and some would say restrictive, but in reality they are being put in place to safe guard us in what is becoming a litigious society.

Look at the amount of maintenance facilities there are now compared to five years ago - a bit different to sheds I would say. Why? Legislation and the BIGGA informing us of it that's why and that's just one example.

It's also good to see BIGGA and GTC together about time!

Education will always be the key to professionalism but nowadays it's as much to do with legality as it is to do with practicality and when it comes to the law apathy and ignorance are not an option.

Dave Goodridge, Denbigh GC, Clwyd, Wales

A need for Ken's Key Skills Corner

After reading the responses to Ken Richardson's article on grammar basics, I feel that I must respond in Ken's defence. I simply fail to understand why Ken has been attacked.

Those attackers are obviously unaware of the fact that one in four adults in the UK have some kind of literacy problem (Government figures). For representatives of the industry to state that none of its members need this kind of support is simply blinkered and ill informed.

I work with many young (and often older) Greenkeepers who require extensive support in Literacy and Numeracy. Some of these students do not know how to form a sentence or produce a simple letter using standard layouts.

I often spend several lessons at the start of each academic year teaching students the basics of the metric sys-

tem so I can cover areas such as calibration later in the course.

Many students do not know how many millilitres are in a litre or how many square metres are in a hectare.

Those of you who are now thinking that this is because they have learned the imperial system can forget it, as most students have no concept of the imperial system at all.

I have extensive contacts within Further Education Colleges and they all report similar problems.

One of the fastest growing areas of provision in F.E. Colleges is for basic skills and must serve to indicate the scale of the problem in all sectors of UK industry. The government has invested heavily to raise standards of I.T., Application of number and Communication skills.

Indeed you may have noted the recent television advertisements

encouraging people to seek help in improving these key areas.

For Greenkeepers to accuse Ken of dumbing down is outrageous, how are we expected to encourage people to seek help if they perceive that they are stupid and should have learnt these skills when at school.

Those with high levels of literacy who find such articles condescending should simply ignore them and get on with their own lives and not interfere with those who try to offer some small degree of help to others.

I would like to end by saying, "Well done Ken", I hope you continue to offer support to those in our industry who are academically less able and in doing so raise the standard of education for all.

Andrew Wight, Lecturer in Greenkeeping Studies, Oaklands College, St. Albans Herts

Controversial bunker issue receives response

Andy Law's article "Shifting Sands" in May's Greenkeeper International raises some controversial issues.

Firstly, why must bunkers be visible? There are bunkers all over the world with blind bunkers: does this mean that they are architecturally flawed? And what of pot bunkers on our links courses that are basically holes with sand in the bottom?

Secondly, I cannot agree that bunker sand should "be light in colour". May I suggest that the current desire for light sand was sparked by the high profile television coverage of American venues such as Augusta National. (Incidentally, this also increased the pressure on greenkeepers for faster and faster greens.)

Up until about 20 years ago, there

were very few inland golf courses in this country with light coloured sand. Personally, I would like to see a return to tan coloured sands which are not only less obtrusive, but conceal contamination better than light sands, and at the same time remaining perfectly visible to the golfer.

Richard Andrews, Highgate Golf Club, London

It never rains – it pours!

Last year, the Greenkeeping Support Team at the PGA Volvo Championship really earned their free shirt and cap in 2001 by slog-ging it out in 80 degrees plus. This year they were warm enough but mainly because they carried out their duties (as well as a rake and a squeegee) wearing waterproofs. It precipitated down!

Saturday wasn't too bad, pretty wet but interspersed with sunny spells, but Sunday. Let me tell you about Sunday. The first ominous sign was when Craig Small, from Chris Kennedy's Greenkeeping Team, delivered 30 squeegees to our tent.

At first it seemed that Chris had been over cautious, early matches were returning with the squeegee being reported as "something extra to be carried and never to be used".

Wishful thinking if ever I heard it! Sure enough it rained steadily for a while and then came the first down-pour. Not too bad, just a hailstorm turning nicely to torrential rain. The greens however were up to it and only minimal work with the squeegees was needed. Play continued without a problem for about half an hour or so and then came the second tremen-

dous downpour. Greens started to be awash, bunkers started to flood. Chris Kennedy and his Staff were magnificent. And so were the Support Team, no panic, just hard work at a speed. All available Members (those who had finished their matches) and anyone else available in our tent was armed with a squeegee and dispatched to distant parts of the course to drain bunkers and to keep the greens playable. I would add at this point that there wasn't one single moan, even though wives and girlfriends were abandoned and everyone got on with it and helped.

The results stand for themselves, despite such rain the Championship finished more or less on time and the viewing public were hardly aware that there had been such problems. A brilliant achievement all round and I know that the PGA European Tour Tournament Director, David Garland, as well as Course Manager, Chris Kennedy, would like to use these columns to pass on their appreciation to the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team. Well Done!

Derek Farrington, South East RA

In agreement with Ronnie

Having read Ronnie Bunting's article on environmental management in the April issue of Greenkeeper International I felt compelled to put pen to paper. I was particularly interested in Ronnie's comments about fusarium and that "leaving it alone" may be an option. I would like to say that leaving it alone is indeed a very good option. I have not sprayed fungicide on my greens for five years on the basis that it is a very expensive, harmful to the essential and beneficial micro organisms and labour intensive.

Ronnie is spot on in pointing these aspects out.

Once the decision to spray no fungicide had been made my club committee were informed and since then support has come from the club's agronomy advisor. What I have observed is that when fusarium attacks come they have become less damaging with every passing year. I believe a sensible maintenance programme has had a strong impact, however, I also believe that the turf on my greens is fighting back and its natural immune system is getting stronger each year. What I do know is that, yes, my greens are left scarred but no more scarred than had I sprayed fungicide upon noticing the first disease patch. Because, as most of us know, if you haven't sprayed before you see the first few patches

you're only going to spray a curative treatment on your attack and this will not prevent scarring.

You can argue that your scarring will not be so widespread, but maybe, if you leave the disease alone and let the green's natural defences work it may become strong enough not to need chemical support. It is an important point to remember, you can only prevent scarring if you apply preventative treatments and this means spraying well before any sign of disease.

Don't be frightened of fusarium, leave it alone and be assured, greens do recover on their own and a sound maintenance programme does ensure as quick a return as possible to full grass coverage.

Andrew Phillips, Head Greenkeeper,
Glynhir GC

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