



Welcome

A POSITIVE MONTH FOR GREENKEEPING

It's not often that greenkeeping is in the news for positive reasons but the praise which filled the newspapers and television screens for Royal St George's during the Open Championship was genuine and a real credit to Head Greenkeeper, Neil Metcalf, and his hard working team.

The course was firm and fast running and looked as you would hope a links course would look. The hard bounces, some cruel, some occasionally kind, presented golfers, more used to golf of the target variety, with all sorts of conundrums. Despite this players expressed their admiration for the course... if not always the pin placements.

This was even more of a surprise as players love to make birdies and most loathe grinding out the pars and only one player, Ben Curtis, managed to better Mr Par and then only by a single shot.

Speaking of Ben Curtis, whose father incidentally is a Golf Course Superintendent, he reminded me a little of Tom Watson in 1975 who was a virtual unknown when he arrived at Carnoustie and defeated Jack Newton in a play-off before going on to have a spectacular career. It would be fair to say that Curtis wasn't merely a virtual unknown, he was a complete unknown playing in his first ever Major and odds of 80-1 could still be snapped up on Sunday morning but I don't suppose the bookies were swamped. However he appeared to have some of Watson's unassuming demeanour and unflappable approach to the game.

Whatever, I'm sure there is a Hollywood producer even now looking at turning it into the latest golfing movie to join the illustrious list of Follow the Sun, Caddie Shack, Tin Cup and Happy Gilmore.

The fact that Curtis was a long shot winner is certainly not a reflection of the golf course. Davis Love said of Paul Lawrie and Carnoustie that the 1999 Open got the Champion it deserved. He was wrong in every respect. Lawrie has won two big tournaments since and Carnoustie is proud of its position as the toughest course on the Open rota, if not the planet.

Using Davis' logic, Royal St George's didn't identify the best player but the long list of superb players, including himself and Tiger Woods, who could and perhaps should have won defeats that argument.

It was also a great week for the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team which each year is becoming a more integral element in the Championship. This year an advanced party went out at 4am to rake bunkers before the start of play each day taking pressure off both the home team and the R&A who knew the job would be done to the highest standard.

On a final note it was great to see the aforementioned Tom Watson winning the British Seniors Open at George Brown's Turnberry to rekindle memories of his epic Open win over Jack Nicklaus in 1977.

Who says golf can't produce fairy stories?

Scott MacCallum, Editor

LONG SERVICE



George Newson

George Newson, Head Greenkeeper at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club, retires this month after 41 and a half years service with the same club.

As you might imagine George has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Felixstowe and hands over to John Houston, who has been working in harness with George for the past couple of months.

"Felixstowe has been a good club to work for and when they could afford it, they looked after us proudly. Now Felixstowe has got some of the best facilities in the country," he told the local paper, in a full page feature it did on his impending retirement.

"It's always been a friendly club and I've always been welcome in the clubhouse just like any other member."

George got the job in 1962 by chance when he was in the local pub listening to the club pro and the steward commenting on the state of the course.

"I'd had a few beers and I told them I could do the greenkeeper's job with my hands tied behind my back. Three days later I received a letter asking me to go for an interview and afterwards I was offered the job," said George who had worked on a farm prior to moving into greenkeeping.

"It's been a labour of love," said the man who played for 30 years off a handicap of five.

John Houston began his career at Ratho Park near Edinburgh and worked for Jack McMillan at Bush Hill Park before moving to Dorking GC as Head Greenkeeper. He has since been head man at a number of clubs including Addington Palace, Royal Blackheath, Fulwell and Dore and Totley.



John Houston

NATIONAL TURFGRASS FOUNDATION CONFERENCE

Following the success of last November's National Turfgrass Foundation Conference at Southport, the Foundation have again joined forces with Cranfield University at Silsoe to produce an even bigger event with a greater diversity of topics and speakers. This year's 'In Pursuit of Excellence' Conference will again be held at the Southport Theatre and Floral Hall Complex, and will run from November 3-6.

Martyn Jones and Louise Clegg, founders of the NTF and organisers of the Conference, said that the Conference has been designed as two programmes running in parallel to each other and delegates are free to move between the two depending on the topic selection of their choice.

This is the largest programme to date and will feature 38 speakers, sharing their vast knowledge and experience on 43 topics. Something for everyone and at an affordable price is definitely the theme for the event. With an impressive line up of speakers from a range of European countries and the USA, the conference should prove to be a winner with a wide range of turf managers.

Appearing alongside some of the most revered professors, researchers, and agronomists will be a number of notable BIGGA members. Duncan McGillvray, Potters Bar GC; Kerran Daly, MG, Gog Magog GC; Ian McMillan, Queenwood GC; Stuart McColm, Kingsbarn GC, and Wendy O'Brien, Carden Park Golf Resort, will be sharing their knowledge for the benefit of delegates. BIGGA Vice-Chairman, Andy Campbell, MG, CGCS; Walter Woods, BEM, and Jack McMillan, OBE., will also be inputting their

style and experience to the proceedings in their capacities of Session Chairmen.

Presentations cover a diverse range of subjects, including recent research conducted at Newcastle upon Tyne University into enhancing drainage rates by the use of electrokinetic geosynthetics, and details of a UK golf green construction specification. The effects of biostimulants on soil microbiology and composting as a management tool are other highly topical subjects. Maximising green speed while minimising damage, and rootzone/topdressing compatibility will be of particular interest to some greenkeepers.

"Those who have attended similar programmes will be aware of the tremendous knowledge that can be gained, not only directly from the presentations but also from socialising with the speakers and fellow delegates during out-of-conference hours. Greenkeepers will also have a marvellous opportunity to discuss aspects of 'Golf Greenkeeping throughout the World'. A panel of Course Managers, Superintendents and greenkeepers from numerous countries in Europe and North America will be talking of their experiences in different climatic zones; with contrasting budgets, and varying legislative constraints," said Martyn.

For further details of the Conference and accommodation contact Martyn Jones on Tel. +44 (0)1995 670675 or Louise Clegg on +44 (0)7879015921 or email NTFoundation@aol.com.

Email press releases and new product updates to: scott@bigga.co.uk

DISEASE MANAGEMENT DIFFICULTIES IN SWEDEN AND THE NETHERLANDS

Greenkeepers realise that fusarium patch is one of the most common diseases on north European golf courses and that a severe attack can leave disfiguring scars which will affect the quality of putting surfaces. They are also well aware that of the common grasses found on greens, annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*) is the most susceptible to this disease.

The vast majority of golf greens in northern Europe contain a significant proportion of annual meadow-grass, even though most will have originally been established with bent (browntop or creeping) and fescue grasses. This reversion has often been due to a combination of mismanagement at some point in their history (often forced on greenkeepers by the habit of golfers interfering directly with management of courses, the pressure from ignorant committees with their constant demands for greens that are soft and green), local environment influences (e.g. shade and drainage) and increased playing pressure.

Over the years, fungicides have provided a safety net for greenkeepers but recent EU Directives have placed far more stringent controls on their employment and in certain countries these Directives have been interpreted in such a way that the use of fungicides on golf courses has been effectively banned, eg. as is the case in the Netherlands, to public places in Denmark (on which approximately 50% of their golf courses are

situated) and in Sweden where courses fall into special environmental designations.

Earlier this year Tim Taylor and Nick Park of the R&A's Golf Course Committee went on a brief fact finding tour of Sweden and the Netherlands to see examples of what can happen to annual meadow-grass dominated greens hit by disease on sites where the use of fungicides is totally prohibited. The images arising from this trip should focus the attention of everyone involved in golf course management, including golfers who utilise courses, and make us all realise that without the back up of fungicides, alternative strategies will have to be adopted to provide sustainable golf green management.

The consequence of this damage is more anguish for greenkeepers and golfers, an even shorter playing season in situations where this is already an issue and, more worrying, the temptation to bring about a more rapid recovery through the application of extra fertiliser and water, which will undoubtedly exacerbate the diseased incidence the following autumn and winter.

The R&A Golf Course Committee are in the process of developing best practice guidelines and a research strategy, involving consultation throughout Europe, in an attempt to provide answers to problems such as these which will be facing greenkeepers worldwide in years to come. Regular updates on their progress can be found on the Course Management pages of the R&A website, www.randa.org.



RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

As part of BIGGA's ongoing commitment to Employers throughout the UK we can now inform you of recent Immigration law changes effecting UK employers and adding to the depth and breadth of the labour market.

Over 40,000 Antipodeans, (Australians and New Zealanders), enter the UK each year on a Working Holiday Scheme. This scheme traditionally allowed people under the age of 28 to enter the UK and work to supplement their incomes.

Until now this scheme was restrictive to people wishing to pursue a long term career path. From today these restrictions have been lifted on the type of work that can be undertaken, allowing people to

follow their chosen career path and work for the full two years of their visa. Also, the age limit has been raised to 30.

The changes create more flexibility for employers to retain these workers. After working in the UK for 12 months with a company, this experience can count towards to a UK work permit.

A work permit is issued to allow an individual to stay with an employer and reside in the UK for a period of four years, and can lead on to residency.

The bottom line: UK employers will now be able to secure a long term commitment from antipodean staff, and invest in their development.

LAST CHANCE

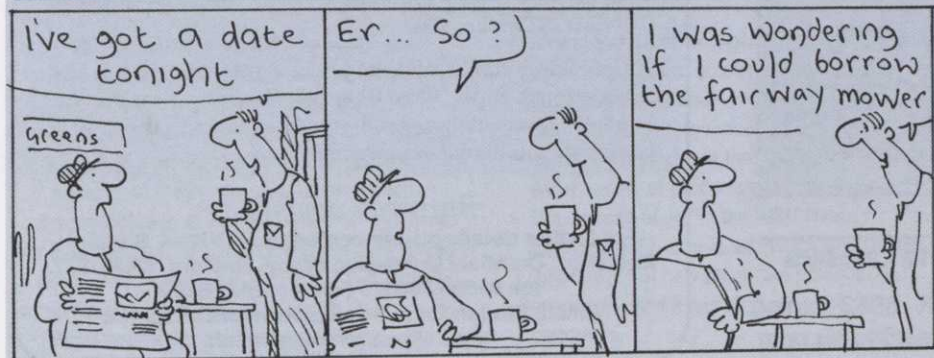
Anyone who has not yet entered this year's National Championship, sponsored by the Greenkeeping Supply Company, to take place at Coxmoor and Hollinwell Golf Clubs on 6 & 7 October, and who wishes to do so should contact BIGGA HOUSE as soon as possible to request an entry form. Entries are strictly limited to 100 and places are allocated on a first come first served basis.

MIDLAND SNOOKER

"The Nigel Tyler, of Alpha Amenity, Snooker Evening" run by the Midland Section was held at that infamous venue, "The Perfection Snooker Club", at Stirchley, in Birmingham. Not only did Alpha Amenity stand the players an extensive buffet, they were also gracious enough to afford the Lights, and prizes to boot. On the evening there were 17 players of which was eventually, after some fiercely contested battles, whittled down to two for the final: Robert and John Tomlin with John emerging the victor.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year www.tonyhusband.co.uk



UN-SUNG HEROES - GIVE THEM A BREAK

Terrain Aeration are to acknowledge the scores of un-sung heroes among greenkeepers and groundsmen.

Nominated by you, as a practising member of either profession, the lucky winners - one greenkeeper and one groundsman - will receive the hire of a village house in the South of France for the week of their choice, plus £150 towards travelling expenses.

Judged by a panel of three, Gordon Child, BIGGA; Derek Walder, IOG and Tim Lodge, STRI, the winners will be announced at BTME 2004, in time for them to prepare for their unexpected holiday.

The judges will not necessarily be looking for outstanding turf care skills (there are awards for these already), but individuals who have shown outstanding dedication either to their jobs or the welfare of their colleagues, and whose contribution has made a significant difference to the quality of working life, at their particular work place.

Application form can be obtained Terrain Aeration at Saltex.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Bill Lawson, a doyen of the greenkeeping industry and former Course Manager of Heswell Golf Club on the Wirral, has just celebrated his 70th birthday and has the wishes of his many friends as he enjoys his septuagenarian years.

ALISDAIR MACLAREN

Unfortunately I have to report another loss to the greenkeeping fraternity with the untimely death of Alisdair Maclaren at the age of 60. Alisdair was a stalwart member of the Scottish Region where for many years he was the Education Officer and in particular the North Section where he was Chairman and Education representative.

Originally from a farming background Alisdair moved into greenkeeping in the Speyside Area looking after the 9-hole course at Nethybridge. At one point he was running three nine-hole golf courses in the area as well as building the par-3 course at Grantown-on-Spey called Craggan. Despite these commitments he always made time to attend education meetings on behalf of the Association and never missed Regional Section meetings.

Coming from a well-educated background he easily immersed himself in education ways with all its abbreviations. SILC, VQ's, HNC's etc. and as Chairman of the college industrial liaison committee was one of a few good people in our Association that have assisted in moving greenkeeper education forward.

Alisdair and his partner, Pat, moved to New Zealand in February 2002 where they bought a small holding with some livestock and he also worked as a manager within the sports industry.

Our sympathies and thoughts go out to Pat in New Zealand and Alisdair's family over here at this sad time.

Iain MacLeod
Board Of Management (Scottish Region)

NEW MANAGER

Countrywide has appointment Martin Townsend as their new Turf and Amenity Sales Manager.

Martin Townsend joins Countrywide from Scotts UK, with a wealth of knowledge in the industry stemmed from his early days in the 1970s as an apprentice cricketer and groundsman at Lords Cricket Ground. From 1976 until 1989 Martin held posts of Head Groundsman and Head Greenkeeper.

He then moved into the Amenity Distribution side of the industry, a natural transition for a man who is always up for a challenge, during this and

subsequent roles. Following 10 successful years as a Technical Sales Manager working predominately in the south west of the country Martin joined Scotts UK Professional four years ago as Senior Sales Manager for the South West, South Wales and the Channel Isles.

Martin's remit is to build a sales and distribution Turf & Amenity business that will run along side and compliment the portfolio of Countrywide's products and services available throughout the midlands, southern England and Wales.

Superior Golf Club Cleaning Machine The Black Diamond Golf Club Polisher is now available in Europe

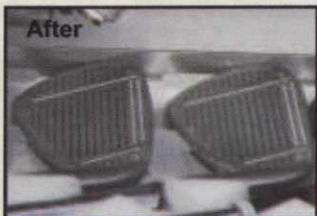


The CLUB POLISHER™ is a fully automated machine, designed to accommodate up to 10 irons in a single cycle and operates in less than 90 seconds!

- Industrial machine
- High pressure water – no brushes
- 10 irons cleaned at once
- Fast – less than 90 seconds to complete
- Cleans the grooves completely
- As good as new results
- Not only clean, but polishes the clubs
- Another profit center to the golf facility
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- Its easy!! Its affordable



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- Ten, two week short courses provide training in specific areas – 'Sports Surface Playability', 'Mechanisation for Sports Surfaces', 'Irrigation and Drainage'.
- Over a maximum of five years you will complete all ten plus a research project which can be carried out at your own venue.
- We can also offer a one year full time course. Apply now to start in October 2003.

Supported by the Institute of Groundsmanship, British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Football Association as well as other leading professional bodies and industrial organisations.

Bursaries available

For further details please contact Sue O'Neill, Student Enquiries, Cranfield University, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4DT.

Tel: 01525 863319 Fax: 01525 863399

Email: StudentEnquiries.silsoe@cranfield.ac.uk

www.silsoe.cranfield.ac.uk

SUNSHINE ON LEITH!

PETER BOYD REPORTS ON THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Scottish National Championships took place over the Kintyre Course at the Turnberry Hotel on the Ayrshire coast, home to our National Chairman George Brown in June.

The Kintyre course has undergone major changes and now ranks with the very best in the country and during 2003 will be host to another major event the British Seniors Open and in 2004 it will be one of the qualifying courses for the Open at Troon.

With 80 competitors taking part the course was in immaculate condition. With the first players due to play at 10am, play looked in doubt when literally the heavens opened up and we experienced horrendous conditions, rain everywhere, the greens were flooded and the fairway's in some cases completely under water, but credit to Martin Lothian, Jimmy Johnstone and their staff who worked tirelessly to get play started. Play soon got under way and with the overhead conditions improving greatly and the usual sea coast breezes this made the playing of the course very difficult, but never-the-less there were some excellent scores returned, none more so than David Leith, from St Andrews, who posted the winning score of 71 and was Scottish Champion for 2003 winning the SGGA Challenge Cup.

The Friendship Trophy for the Best Nett went to Paul Conway of Alyth with a score of 72.

The prizes were presented by George Brown, Chairman of BIGGA who welcomed everyone to Turnberry and hoped that everyone had enjoyed the experience of playing over the Kintyre Course. Archie Dunn the Scottish Chairman on behalf of the competitors thanked George and the Management of Turnberry for hosting the event.

Results:

SGGA Challenge Cup Scratch Scottish Champion. David Leith, St.Andrews, 71. Friendship Trophy Best Nett. Paul Conway, Alyth, 72; Ransomes Trophy First Class. 1. James Manuel, Goswick, 73 (BIH); 2. Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes, 75 (BIH); 3. Paul Murphy, Downfield, 75. Pattison Trophy Second Class. 1. Richard Mullen, Oldmeldrum, 73; 2. Craig Pennyquick, Winterfield,



The prize winners



Scottish Chairman Archie Dunn presents George Brown with a memento



David Leith with the trophy

76; 3. Ian Donaldson, St Andrews, 78; STRI Trophy Third Class. 1. Joe Bell, Millport, 77 (BIH); 2. Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead, 77; 3. Colin Scott, Glasgow, 81. Dick Aitken Trophy Best Head Greenkeeper. Iain MacLeod, Tain, 73. M & M Trophy Best Assistant. Richard Love, Kilmacollm, 73. Souter Trophy Best Apprentice. Edmund Wood, Glasgow, 77. SIGGA Trophy Best Veteran. Duncan Gray, Pines, 75. St Mungo Cup Team Trophy (Best four nett scores)

Central Section, David Leith, St.Andrews, 71; Paul Conway, Alyth, 72; Paul Murphy, Downfield, 75; Archie Dunn, Auchterarder, 76. Total 294.

Patrons. Kevin Brunton, Greentech. Nearest the Pin. Iain MacLeod, Tain. Qualifiers National Championship. David Leith, St. Andrews and Paul Conway, Alyth.

NOVOZYMES BIOLOGICALS

Novozymes Biologicals has announced the acquisition of Roots Inc., a leader in the development and application of organic based fertilizers, mycorrhizal fungi, biostimulants, and micronutrients for the turf, ornamentals, horticultural, landscaping and agricultural markets. This acquisition is effective June 19th, 2003.

Novozymes Biologicals, part of the Danish company Novozymes A/S, world leader in enzymes for industrial use, has been developing and selling a range of biological products for the Turf Industry as well as the Home & Garden sector.

Roots and Novozymes believe that this

consolidation will provide many benefits to the market, including:

- A combination of technologies and products from both companies to accelerate new product development efforts.
- New manufacturing processes, equipment and know how to increase the ability to supply a wider variety of products and product forms.
- The creation of an "in the field" Field Development Group to accelerate Novozymes introduction of new plant care products and provide improved technical assistance to customers.

The acquisition of Roots reflects Novozymes' strategic commitment to the plant care market with a goal to greatly increase the use of environmental friendly products, to reduce dependency on chemical fertilizers and pesticides while delivering high quality compounds to the market.

Best example is Novozymes' EcoGuard Biofungicide, a novel fungicide for control of fungal diseases that has recently received US EPA approval for use on turf and nursery corps in February 2003.

Novozymes' research and development team has already initiated several key "synergy projects" designed to bring new product technology to the market.