



Welcome

MANY THANKS

Well, thanks for that. Another Harrogate week has come and gone and from what we hear from those who attended - exhibitors, visitors, speakers, press - a great week was had by all. And I say "thank you" because without any one of the human ingredients in the mix, Harrogate wouldn't be the success, you have told us that it has been.

But how do we judge success? In this day and age, with accountants perusing the bottom line with fiendish enthusiasm, how do you come to an assessment that something has been worth doing, and will be worth doing again whether you are an exhibitor or in one of the many categories of visitor?

Of course, there is the anecdotal evidence, by far the most interesting to everyone. Tales of successful deals struck; of successful friendships struck indeed; packed halls; answers to agronomic problems uncovered, all provide the sort of gossip we love to hear. But while we are always delighted that "the mood in the Halls and seminar rooms is positive", it is very much a subjective measure, not likely to sway the bean counters in Accounts Departments or Golf Clubs up and down the country.

No, what is needed are hard and fast facts to make a persuadable, unambiguous case for the success of BTME & ClubHouse, the Continue to Learn programme and all that surrounds Harrogate in the third week in January.

Well, we can oblige thanks to information gleaned from the statistics gathered during the week. Sure, filling out the forms can be a pain but it does let us come up with facts that are relevant.

- The international flavour can be highlighted by the fact that 25 different countries, excluding the home nations, were represented, travelling from five different continents.
- 25% of visitors attended Harrogate for the first time.
- The breakdown for British visitors was South 23%, Midlands 24%, Scotland 15% and North 38%, indicating that Harrogate attracts people from all corners of the UK.
- Other than golf, 15 industries were represented, including local authorities; farms; private estates; theme parks; showgrounds; football; racecourses, tennis clubs and polo fields.
- 35% of those who attended had the power to approve and purchase while a further 26% were in a position to influence approval.
- 10% of those who attend spent up to 25% of their annual budget at the Harrogate show. 15% spend up to 10% of their budgets while a further 38% spend up to 5% of their annual budget.

Compelling figures, I'm sure that you agree. We're particularly delighted that the work we have carried out to widen the visitor base and attract more decision makers to Harrogate is beginning to reap rewards.

That can only strengthen BTME & ClubHouse in the years ahead, thus ensuring that BIGGA can continue to fund the education, professional development and general benefits for its membership.

Of all those who did attend Harrogate 2004, perhaps the most welcome visitor was Neil Thomas' wife, Elaine, who despite Neil's serious illness, managed to maintain the family link to the week.

Thank you for coming, Elaine.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

R&A'S BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The R&A's new website offering best practice guidelines for golf course management throughout the world is to be launched this month. There are to be two events marking the launch of this major development for the world of golf; one in the UK on Wednesday February 18 at The Belfry and the other the following day in Brussels. Access details to the new site will be posted on the R&A's website, www.randa.org, to coincide with the launch.

The R&A's golf course committee has developed the website which offers best practice guidelines on all aspects of golf course management and development, from the clubhouse and management

structure to construction and maintenance.

This professional advice and information, which is provided free of charge, will be of great assistance to golf associations and federations, golf clubs, greenkeepers, architects, planners, government agencies, non-government environment agencies and other relevant groups, and is supported by extensive links to expert organisations who can provide further assistance to those in search of help.

For further information contact Steve Isaac, Secretary to the golf course committee on 01334 460000 or e-mail steveisaac@randagc.org.

ROYAL APPOINTMENT

Avoncrop Amenity Products Limited, suppliers of Turf Management Products,

based at Sandford, Winscombe, North Somerset and Bracknell, Berkshire have been granted the honour of a Royal Warrant of Appointment as a Tradesman to The Queen.

"We are very proud to be associated with this award having supplied The Royal Household for over five years with Grass Seed Mixtures, Fertilisers, Composts and other Horticultural products for the Gardens and Lawns," said Rod Feltham, Managing Director.



PHIL JOINS ALLEN



Following their recent take over of IBEA Power Products Limited, Allen Power

Equipment have appointed Phil Price (53) as Product Manager for the IBEA range and Area Manager for all Allen

products for North Wales and the Western side of central UK.

Phil will bring to his new role many years experience in the industry and his unrivalled knowledge of IBEA products will ensure he is in great demand from his new dealer base.

Phil is married with two daughters and lives in Shrewsbury.

MOVING NORTH

In a bid to offer a nationwide service White Horse Contractors has launched White Horse Contractors (Northern) Ltd with an office in the North Yorkshire market town of Thirsk.

This expansion of the company's operations will provide the opportunity to tap-in to a real and attractive market much more cost effectively. The new company is a subsidiary of White Horse Contractors which means they will be able to maximise the skills and resources of the Head Office which has been operating for over four decades.

Jim Crabbe, a senior Contracts Manager will be leading operations at the company's new office. Since joining White Horse, he has proved his ability

in the development of new markets.

Thirsk was chosen as it is within easy access of the A1 and exactly 200 miles from the company's head office in Abingdon, allowing good strategic and logistic links.

The new company has identified key markets such as local authorities, local education authorities, sports clubs and golf clubs not to mention private clients.

It will undertake all sports turf construction, earthworks, drainage and maintenance as well as environmental works and water engineering.

White Horse Contractors (Northern) Ltd can be contacted Tel: 01865 736272.

NEW WEBSITE FOR GREENKEEPERS

Established in September 2003, golfmanager.co.uk is website/portal aimed at greenkeepers, club secretaries & managers.

The site provides a quick, easy and comprehensive alternative to the many books, fliers, papers, magazines and mail-outs that the club's decision-makers have to wade through, in order to locate a product, service or information.

The core of the site is a comprehensive suppliers section which has contact details and links to websites of many companies for both golf course and clubhouse.

There are also over 200 additional links to golf/information websites and portals – all accessible with one click from the Home page.

The screenshot shows the 'GOLF MANAGER' website. At the top, there are links for 'Contact Us', 'About Us', and 'Terms & Conditions'. Below this is a main heading: 'Welcome to a new Website/Portal for golf's decision makers and administrators. Managers, Secretaries, Greenkeepers & Committee members can access many pages of suppliers details, golf web links and general information. Please contact us if you have any ideas or information that will enhance the site.' Below this heading are several categorized sections: 'General Golf Links' (listing various .co.uk, .net, and .org domains), 'Media' (listing BBC, Sky, and other media outlets), 'Clubhouse Suppliers Directory' (listing services like Accountancy Software, Air Conditioning, etc.), 'Websites & Links' (listing various golf-related websites), 'Associations' (listing various golf associations), and 'Course Suppliers Directory' (listing services like Irrigation, Fertilizers, etc.).

WELL DONE DENNIS



A presentation was made recently to Northern Section President, Dennis Cockburn, for services to the Section and importantly the Northern Section Committee for over 20 years unstinting service.

After trying his hand at a number of different careers he settled on greenkeeping, during which time he served as Head Greenkeeper at Courses

such as Branshaw, Keighley, Colne and Silsden Golf Clubs.

Dennis has helped and trained many greenkeepers under him over the years and it is no surprise that quite a lot have gone on to be head greenkeepers themselves.

They all owe him dearly for the invaluable knowledge and skills that he passed on to them (and he reminds them of this all the time).

Dennis is well into retirement, however he still continues to be active within the section and it is for this which he has been honoured.

A WELCOME RETURN

John Deere have welcomed back Alec McKee who is returning as Managing Director of their UK and Ireland operations.

Having joined John Deere in the UK in 1972 as a trainee territory manager, Alec has successfully undertaken a succession of increasingly important positions within the organisation. At the end of 2000, he was appointed as Vice President, Worldwide Marketing, based in Kansas.

During 2002, Alec transferred to Moscow, and was responsible for establishing a presence in the market and implementing John Deere's strategic

business plan for Russia.

He replaces Clay Sherrill, who is returning to the Deere Company's world headquarters to take up a key position, responsible for implementing the company's customer focus initiative and to support strategic planning activities.



NEW ROLE FOR SIR MICHAEL

Sir Michael Bonallack is to succeed Mark H McCormack as the new Chairman of the Official World Golf Ranking. The Official World Golf Ranking was devised and created by Mark H McCormack who was Chairman of the World Ranking Board until his death last year. His company, IMG, has been responsible for managing and producing the weekly Ranking, which is now endorsed by the four Major Championships and the six Professional Tours making up the International Federation of PGA Tours, since the Ranking was first introduced in 1986.

DAVID WHITAKER MG



Sports Turf Consultants UK Limited is a new company headed by David Whitaker MG.

David started his career as a trainee greenkeeper in West Yorkshire in 1977, and quickly worked

through the ranks to head greenkeeper before moving abroad to gain experience in Europe.

He returned to the UK in 1989 to take up the post of Course Manager at the prestigious Wisley Golf Club where he achieved Master Greenkeeper Status and remained for 13 years.

"I have been concerned for some time by the ever increasing challenges and demands placed on our younger greenkeepers, and the lack of available support within the industry," said David.

"While there are several reputable agronomists with specialist skills, I intend to offer technical assistance based on 25 years of practical experience."

David can be contacted on 01932 700609 or dave.whit@ntlworld.com

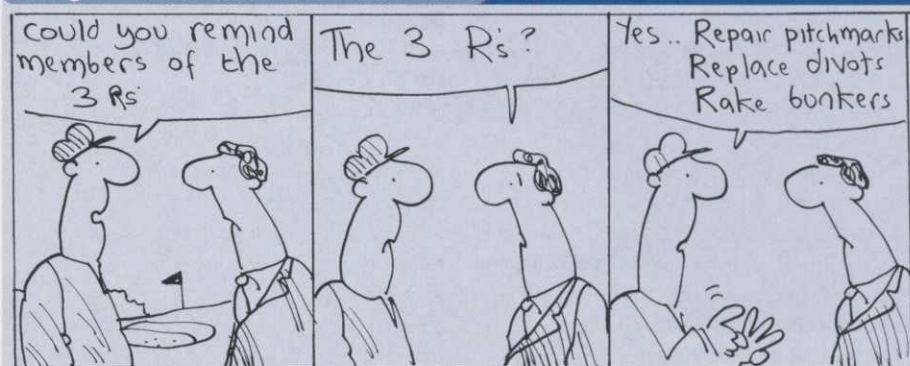
NEW NAME

As from this month Boughton Loam Ltd will be trading under the new name of Boughton Turf Management. The company will still be part of Boughton Loam Ltd, but the change of trading name is designed to bring the three depots that the company now operates in Kettering, Iver Heath, and Derby under one common trading name. Previously, the Iver Heath and Derby depots had traded as 'Turf Management Systems'.

This decision is designed to build upon expansion of the business during 2003, following the acquisition of the turf care maintenance division of 'Mitchell Hire Ltd', and the planned expansion of the Iver Heath and Derby operations during 2004.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR ETESIA

In order to facilitate the growth and expansion of its UK business, Etesia has made changes to its management structure in this country and has also taken on two new area sales managers.

The new UK team is headed by former Area Sales Manager, Les Malin, who has been promoted to UK General Manager based at the company's headquarters in Warwick.

All matters relating to management of the UK operation will come under his control and he will be responsible for overseeing the planned growth of the company in this country through increased turnover and expansion of the product range.

Taking over the position of UK Sales Manager is Colin Plumb. Having worked on territory for Etesia for six years, Colin's vast knowledge of the company's range, plus his experience in building a solid dealer network, provide a firm foundation for his new role.

Two new personnel join Etesia's UK team. Ian Collington has been appointed Area Sales Manager in charge of the North of England and the Midlands. while Richard Williams, joins the company as Southern Area Sales Manager.

NOEL MACKENZIE



Noel MacKenzie has launched his own golf course agronomy and management consultancy.

Sports Turf Consulting is an agronomy and golf course management consultancy seeking to promote advanced

greenkeeping techniques for the benefit of greenkeepers and their courses/clubs.

Noel has a proven career record being one of the few agronomists with significant hands-on experience in sports turf/greenkeeping combined with an academic training in agronomy, ecology and management.

He has worked for record ADAS, STRI, Grass Science and TurfTrax.

Sports Turf Consulting will offer a range of bespoke systems to assist clubs on this front to support greenkeeping personnel and their managers. The scope of this support is multi-faceted involving technical agronomy and, where required, management system analysis.

Sports Turf Consulting, Tel/fax: 01285 641825 nm@sportsturfconsulting.co.uk www.sportsturfconsulting.com

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

IOG CONFERENCE

Celebrating 70 years since its formation, the IOG has chosen Dublin to host its National Conference from April 2-5, 2004.

The choice of Dublin is exceptional for the IOG in that it is its first venture outside the UK. The conference venue in Malahide to the north of the city is close to Dublin International Airport as well as major road and rail networks.

The conference programme will interest a wide range of delegates with the papers and study tours featuring pioneering venues and diverse topics.

The subjects represent many of the challenges facing our industry with papers on increasing pitch playability in The Netherlands, creating a seedbed at 1000m above sea level in the Cairngorms and are synthetic surfaces the way forward?

The study tours are also of great interest with visits to Croke Park, the GAA National Stadium; the



Kildare Golf and Country Club and the parks of Fingal County.

For further information visit the following websites www.thegrand.ie and www.visitdublin.com

For delegate bookings please telephone the Institute of Groundsmanship on 01908 312511.

LELY APPOINTMENT



Lely UK has appointed Simon Squires to manage its Toro Irrigation and Otterbine water management products business.

He takes over from Graeme Francis, who moved to become

managing director of Toro contractor Par 4 Irrigation, in Ripon, Yorkshire.

"I'm delighted to be given the opportunity to head up the Toro Irrigation and Otterbine team at Lely. It's an exciting challenge," said Simon.

"My priorities are to develop relationships with

new and existing installation contractors and explore new, untapped markets."

Simon is responsible for all sales, service and warranty-related business for both company's product lines. He is already working closely with Lely's contractor group and is continuing to develop their alliance to achieve greater market penetration of the products.

With 13 years' experience in the irrigation industry, Simon joined Lely in 2002 after its appointment as distributor for Toro Irrigation. Lely was subsequently also appointed as exclusive UK distributor for Otterbine water aeration systems, fountains and other associated water management products in 2002.

URI TAKES DELIVERY

"It's the best tractor we've ever had," said paranormal practitioner and TV personality Uri Geller, about his recently delivered 24 hp John Deere X495.

Equipped with a 48 inch mid mounted rotary deck, rear 3-bin power-flow collector and Lewis front end loader, the tractor is used around the grounds of Uri's house in Berkshire.

According to the Doomsday Book, the house is located on an ancient spiritual site. This tradition is carried on today with a pyramid-shaped retreat within the grounds.

Each year, many people arrange to visit Uri to gain inspiration and motivation from the power of positive thinking. With such a high throughput of visitors, the grounds around the

pyramid have to be maintained to a professional standard.

Uri's household received operator training from Wokingham-based John Deere dealer Golf and Turf Limited.

Uri takes his turn using the tractor and says, "It's easy to drive and well built, and the green and yellow colour combination is strong but relaxing."

