



Welcome

WHAT IS IT ABOUT GOLF?

As I write the BBC are running a series of programmes in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of their Sports Personality of the Year Award with a view to identifying who is the Best of the Best.

Most sports are represented. Football by Bobby Moore, Paul Gascoigne, Michael Owen and David Beckham. Not, surprisingly, by George Best, who was beaten into second place by Princess Anne one year. Motor Racing has John Surtees, Stirling Moss, Jackie Stewart, Nigel Mansell (twice) and Damon Hill (twice). Athletics has more than any other, including reigning champ Paula Ratcliffe, David Hemery, Seb Coe, Steve Ovett, Liz McColgan, Daley Thompson, Linford Christie, Steve Cram and Jonathan Edwards among others. Cricket has Jim Laker, David Steele and Ian Botham. Boxing is represented by Henry Cooper (twice), Barry McGuigan and Lennox Lewis. Tennis has Ann Jones, Virginia Wade and Greg Rusedski. Even skating has John Curry, Robin Cousins and Torvill and Dean.

The point I'm getting at is that golf is very poorly represented. In 49 years golf has only had two winners, Welshman, Dai Rees in 1957 and Nick Faldo in 1989. Now bearing in mind that golf is a truly global game and is one of Britain's most successful sports, with players consistently in the world's top ten, not to have won more than Henry Cooper, a European but never World Champion, on his own is quite bizarre. Not only that, it's fewer than tennis, in which Britain have more often than not been a laughing stock, and fewer than figure skating. I'll repeat that. Figure Skating! It's shameful.

Tony Jacklin won The Open in '69 and the US Open in '70, and was the best in the world for a short time but in '69 Ann Jones won it and in '70, Henry Cooper. Sandy Lyle won The Open, the first Brit since Jacklin, in '85 and became the first Brit ever to win The Masters in '88, but in those two years it went to Barry McGuigan and Steve Davis.

For one reason or another golf doesn't catch the public's imagination. Class ridden; sexist; harmful to the environment; a prime candidate for the fashion police are all charges laid at the door of the Royal and Ancient game but much of it is down to false public perception and dare I say, lazy journalism.

I was listening to Radio Five Live a couple of weeks ago and the game was again coming in for a hammering. They had a woman from the Campaign to Protect Rural England and gleefully loaded the gun for her. The pro golf side of the argument was heavily weighted against. It's the same with the "Mickey Mouse" educational courses for which golf also takes a pelting.

A positive message must be put about or eventually we'll be forced to form support groups, along the lines of Golfers' Anonymous, to ease our way through life.

"My name is Scott MacCallum and I am a golfer."

Scott MacCallum, Editor

EX-GREENKEEPERS JOIN HEADLAND

James Watson and Steve Crosdale, both former greenkeepers with a total of 24 years experience in the industry behind them, join Headland Amenity as Regional Technical Managers.

James has responsibility for South East England, including South London, Surrey, Sussex and Kent, while Steve Crosdale takes East Anglia and North London including Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.



▲ James Watson

Andy Russell, Headland's Sales and Marketing Director said that the creation of these two new posts is indicative of the way the company is growing. "We've never had full time regional managers in these areas and we need to give more support to our distributors on the ground. James and Steve will be responsible for sales and technical support to both end user customers and distributors."

Steve, a practising greenkeeper for the last 10 years, has always been interested in the technical

side of the business, as well as the practical.

"This position provides the ideal opportunity to concentrate on this area and help customers achieve the best possible results from a technical perspective," he said.

James, whose father retired as a Course Manager in December, and who practised the profession himself for 14 years before moving into sales a year ago, says that he needed a new challenge but wanted something where he could use his experience built up on golf courses around Europe.

"This way I could take a leap of faith but I didn't have to leap too far," he explains. "I'm familiar with quite a lot of Headland's products, having used them myself in the past, and I like the fact that we are a flexible, forward thinking company that can respond rapidly to customer needs."



▲ Steve Crosdale

TURNER GROUNDCSCARE OPENS NEW MIDLANDS DEALERSHIP

Turner Groundscare is to open a new dealership in the Midlands to sell and service John Deere's full line of professional, golf & turf and domestic equipment, including 5010 Series utility tractors.

This follows E T Breakwell's recent announcement that it will be closing down its groundscare dealership in Solihull in the New Year. The new Turner's branch will cover Staffordshire and the West Midlands, including Birmingham, Coventry and Nuneaton; dealers Henton & Chattell and Parks & Grounds Machinery will now take on the whole of Leicestershire and the Rugby area respectively, in addition to their existing sales areas.

This will be Turner Groundscare's fourth John Deere commercial & consumer equipment (C&CE) dealership, joining branches in Bedfordshire,

Buckinghamshire and Cheshire. The first was established 10 years ago in Tarvin, near Chester.

Initially six staff, including Breakwell's salesmen Kevin Wise and Robert Page, will be based at the new branch. This will operate alongside the established Mitchell Diesel Group engines business Central Diesel at Erdington Industrial Park, off the Chester Road in Birmingham.

Temporary sales and service support will also be provided from the Turner Groundscare branches at Tarvin and Bledlow until the new business is completely operational on April 1. Plans for development of the premises include a new showroom for domestic equipment, as well as dedicated parts and service departments and workshop facilities.



Joey Ibbotson, John Deere Territory Manager (Left) ▲ greets Brian Spruce, of Turner Groundscare

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MASTERLY

The third annual EGU Greenkeeping Master Class last month gave the 90 delegates an ideal opportunity to feed their minds as well as see the superb set-up at Woodhall Spa, both on and off the golf courses.

The programme, chaired by Colin Spurr, Chairman of the EGU Golf Services Committee, and organised by Neil Cockbill, started with a paper from Steve Isaac, Secretary of the R&A Golf Course Committee, on the European Perspective on Pesticide Regulations.

Steve was followed by Stella Rixon, of the STRI, who gave an update on the Institutes' research into biologicals.

Management and Communications was next on the agenda with an "interactive" presentation involving the delegates hosted by Kerran Daly, Courses Manager at Gog Magog Golf Club and Duncan McGilvray, Course Manager, at Potters Bar GC.

The evening saw a superb dinner, hosted by the EGU, with the guest speaker, Eddie Seaward, Head

Groundsman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, who gave a speech which contained real moments of hilarity but didn't disguise the fact that his job is one of the more pressurised and stressful in the fine turf industry.

The second day was kicked off by Andy Newell, Head of Turfgrass Biology at the STRI, who gave two statistically based papers, looking at Grasses for Golf and which variety is best suited to each time of the year.

He was followed by Andy Cole, Senior Agronomist at PSD Agronomy, who gave a very interesting paper on green speed. Andy revealed that in the 1970's the average greenspeed in the USA was between 5' 6" and 7' 6".

Last up was Tim Earley, Managing Director of Waste2 Water Europe Ltd, who highlighted the dangers of falling foul to recently introduced regulations relating to wash off water pollution and demonstrated the benefits of his product on Peter Wisbey's recently installed Woodhall Spa unit.



SCOTTISH MODERN APPRENTICE AWARDS

Three Greenkeepers from across Scotland were among the six finalists in the recent 'Scottish Land-based Modern Apprentice of the Year Awards 2003'.

Kevin Jackson, a greenkeeper at Troon Municipal Golf Course took second place, receiving a special achievement award in recognition of his commitment and positive attitude to learning.

George Mitchell, of Newmacher Golf Club, and Fraser Cochrane, of St Andrews Bay Golf Club and Resort, also received certificates of achievement at the evening award ceremony hosted by Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based Sector.

Eligible candidates from across Scotland competed for the award, representing a range of land-based industries including greenkeeping, floristry, agriculture and equine. The award is designed to reward Modern Apprentices in Scotland who have demonstrated a commitment to training, gained knowledge in a specialised land-based subject and supported others as part of their personal development.

Around 800 individuals are currently following a Modern Apprenticeship in the environmental and land-based sector in Scotland. Over 300 have completed since 2000.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



75 YEARS AND STILL GOING STRONG

Next year STRI celebrates 75 years in the turfgrass industry. To mark this milestone the Institute is planning a programme of events which will run throughout 2004, starting with a celebration launch at the BTME and ClubHouse Show in Harrogate in January.

All four issues of the International Turfgrass Bulletin magazine, along with the STRI's website, will carry special features highlighting the key developments and major achievements in the industry from 1929 to present times, alongside the regular editorial.

The October Bulletin will be increased in size to act as a commemorative record for the 75th Anniversary. Over the years STRI's unique position has enabled close ties to be formed with many eminent individuals and organisations throughout the turfgrass world. They will be inviting editorial from some of these key players for inclusion in this issue, to reflect the past and future of the sportsturf and amenity sectors worldwide.

To coincide with the publication of this commemorative edition, the STRI are also holding it's official celebrations in October around our 'Open Day' on Wednesday 6th, followed by a dinner in the evening.

A special logo has been created to mark the event, which will appear on all literature over the next 12 months.

ACQUISITION FOR AITKENS

Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd has acquired R.E. Rushbrook and Son.

Rushbrooks have been trading in Bramford, Suffolk since 1912. Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd purchased this family business in November.

Colin Rushbrook will continue in his present role, as Technical Sales representative for Aitkens Sportsturf. Aitkens are taking the opportunity to increase their coverage of the UK and to continue Rushbrooks level of service along with increasing the range of quality products available to the customer. Aitkens and their partnership in Avoncrop Amenity Ltd now mean that they have national coverage of the UK mainland.

