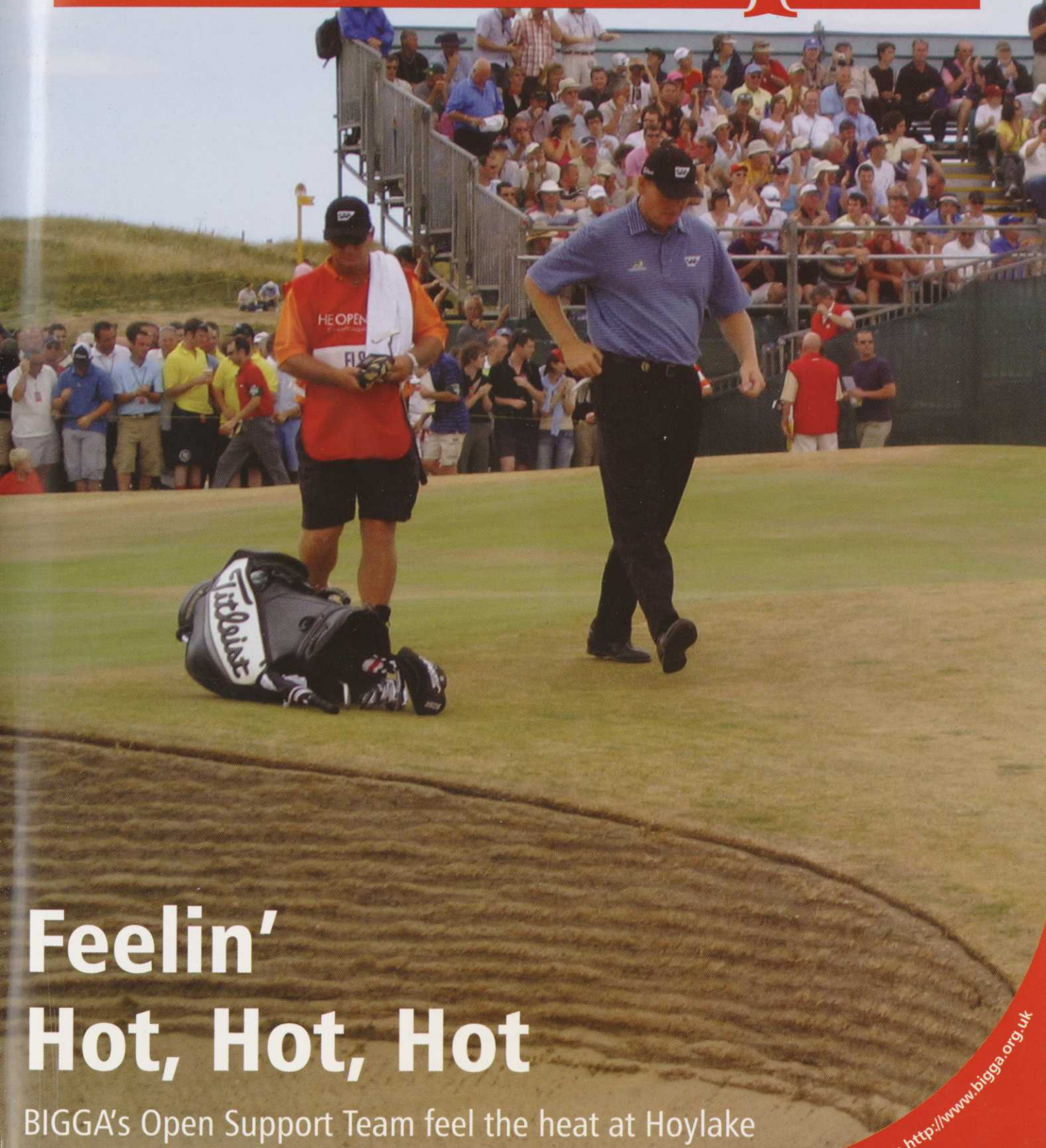




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Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £42 per year, Europe and Eire £55. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

ISSN: 0961-6977

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When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Cover Photograph by Brad Anderson



Welcome

A JOB WELL DONE

I'd like to start this month's column by paying tribute to Craig Gilholm and his team at Royal Liverpool Golf Club, who produced an Open venue in the true links traditional of the Championship.

What struck me when I arrived was the colour. The course was the colour of straw while the tightness of the fairways would have given handicap players nightmares. Obviously the weather has a huge part to play in producing this but it takes someone of genuine links pedigree to harness the conditions and produce the goods.

Craig only took over as Head man last June and it is a credit to him that he was able to carry on the work of Derek Green in such a seamless fashion. Sure, Craig did things his own way but he was only able to do so because of the foundations put in place during Derek's tenure.

The R&A were delighted with what was produced, as they were with the work of BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team, which had to work like never before. It was the first time that the team had prepared bunkers before the start of play as well as divoting at night and while it put everyone involved under additional pressure, the pleasure of seeing a job well done, was all the greater for everyone involved.

The Open now has a larger rota than even before with more recent venues like Turnberry now joining with the older venues like Carnoustie and Hoylake, which have returned after periods on the sidelines. These three have never all been on the rota at the same time.

It means that with St Andrews established with its five year cycle, we have Muirfield, Royal Troon, Carnoustie Turnberry, Royal Lytham and St Annes, Royal Birkdale, Hoylake and Royal St Georges likely to rotate on more or less a 10 yearly cycle.

That provides the variety golf supporters enjoy and also gives more Course Managers the opportunity to prepare a golf course for the greatest annual golf event on the worldwide calendar.

It would be nice to see that rota extended still further but the demands of an Open Championship grow and grow and certainly push quality golf courses like Royal Dornoch, Saunton, Royal Porthcawl and Royal County Down out of the reckoning. The compromises that would be involved in hosting an Open there would be too much for television, sponsors, players and spectators, never mind BIGGA's Support Team, and render then unsuitable.

Hoylake was certainly stretched by these demands, with the exhibition tent on two sites within the golf course and parking at a premium and it was only through the desire of Wirral Council and the local people who embraced the Championship like never before, that make it a success.

And with Tiger Woods emerging as the Champion the course can claim to have identified the best golfer and that is all you can ask of a golf course.

So well done Craig and the guys. You deserve all the praise that has come your way.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The second series of seminar/demonstration days organised by SISIS Equipment Ltd, takes place in September.

Best of Both Worlds, aims to consider the benefits of both natural and synthetic turf playing surfaces, and how to get the best from them.

An interesting day is guaranteed with keynote speakers Martyn Jones and David Rhodes talking about: Achieving Effective Soil Aeration and Planning and Maintaining Synthetic Sports Surfaces.

The programme also includes: Choosing the Right Grass Cultivars and Mixtures, Turfgrass

Nutrition, Artificial Turf – Another Option. Working demonstrations of the newest techniques in the mechanical maintenance of natural and synthetic turf surfaces will be presented by SISIS Equipment and TYM Tractors.

Dates and venues: September 19 - Radley College, Abingdon, Oxon; September 20 - St. Albans School, Herts and September 21 - HSBC Sports Club, Beckenham, Kent.

The day is free of charge with a light lunch provided. Details are available from Lynn Hilton: publicity@sisis.com or phone: 01625 503030.

DROUGHT STRICKEN GOLF CLUB

As have many golf clubs in south east England, Woodcote Park GC has been hit by a drought order. The club takes its environmental responsibilities seriously and has invested in a Course Care ClearWater washpad recycling system, a road tanker and extra water storage tanks.

Secretary Adrian Dawson, explained that water needed for the course is being brought in from an approved grey water source using the tanker. The washpad area was not a concern however as the Course Care ClearWater system, recycles water and can be used throughout the drought order to provide effective wash-off for all the greens machinery.



GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

Northern Region Golf Management Trophy day was held at Sandiway GC on July 11.

26 golf clubs entered the competition, which was played in beautiful, sunny conditions, on a testing course, which had been superbly prepared by Course Manager Brian Taylor and his staff. The hospitality of the staff at Sandiway was excellent, and all had a very enjoyable day.

The format of four man teams, comprising of a greenkeeper - who is a member of BIGGA and three

golf club officials playing a Stableford, with the best two scores on each hole to count, has proved a popular event for many years. The winning team was Gay Hill GC with 82 points, led by Course Manager Paul Woodham. Close runners up were Fairhaven and Bury GC's with 80 points - with Fairhaven claiming second place on countback. Nearest the Pin was won by Mark Nelson, Course Manager at Renishaw Park GC and Longest drive by Bob Thompson, Secretary at Fairhaven.

TOP OF THE CLASS

Former Plumpton College students are to feature in an article for the Times Education Supplement after finding successful employment.

The students studied agriculture and are now employed within the farming industries, having gained relevant qualifications and work experience, while still at College.

For college enquiries call: 01273 890454 or visit: www.plumpton.ac.uk



COLLEGE PREPARES ELAINE FOR MALE-DOMINATED ROLE

Female greenkeepers are a rare find but Hadlow College, near Tonbridge, is well on the way to helping Elaine Kelley to achieve her realistic ambition. Elaine always knew she wanted an outdoor career and is about to complete a work-based learning course, which should result in an NVQ level 3 in Sports Turf Management.

This is not the first time Elaine has turned to Hadlow College, Kent's leading land-based college. She originally enrolled for day release courses in agriculture, and then worked in the dairy farming industry in both the UK and New Zealand.



18-hole golf course, not far from her home at Caterham, Surrey.

Much of Elaine's NVQ level 3 training is project and assignment based. Elaine attends courses at the college's main campus in Hadlow that will qualify her to use pesticides in accordance with the Environment Protection Act.

After four years, she still hasn't met another lady greenkeeper! This has, however, certainly not put her off. "Lady members of the golf club seem to enjoy having a woman on the greenkeeping team and they often want to chat and ask questions in a way they never do

with the men", she explained. "I would eventually like to be Head Greenkeeper at a nine-hole golf course or Assistant Head at an 18-hole course. Meanwhile, I would describe my job satisfaction as being 100%!"

Visit Hadlow College at: www.hadlow.ac.uk

MANAGEMENT OF DROUGHT STRESSED TURF

Following a successful seminar in May entitled "Stress Management in Turf", two seminars, one at Bishop's Stortford GC, Essex and the other at Hoebridge GC, Woking, Surrey, on "Management of Drought Stressed Turf" were held in July.

With the continued drought, particularly in the South East, joint organisers, Avoncrop Amenity Products and Scotts Professional, wanted to provide turf managers with up to date ideas on how to manage drought stressed turf.

With temperatures reaching the 30s during the run up to the seminars, they attracted delegates from all types of sports facilities - predominately golf clubs - along with local authorities, bowling and football clubs.

The presentations were designed to help people understand how to develop grass plants with the best chance of survival in drought conditions. Chris Briggs stressed how important it is to ensure the plant develops the largest possible root system, enabling the foraging for water but also for starch storage for use during recovery.



With water restrictions currently in place in some areas it is imperative that all precipitation that falls onto the ground enters quickly before it evaporates, wetting agents such as H2Pro help to make soils very water receptive - maximising water utilisation.

Fertilisers with high salt levels can exacerbate drought intolerance of the turf plant by raising the salt levels of the soil solution, causing the plant difficulty in absorbing water and nutrients into the roots. Foliar feeds are better suited to drought conditions and applied little and often.

Scotts Professional and Avoncrop Amenity Products, are keen to see these types of seminars are ongoing in order to help turf professionals cope with drought conditions by providing practical solutions to turf management.

NEW DEPOT MANAGER

Richard Steele has been promoted to Rolawn Depot Manager at Birtley. Richard, 27, joined Rolawn as Depot Assistant at their York branch one year ago.

Prior to Richard joining Rolawn, his previous experience included working within the retail and hospitality sectors. Richard enjoys playing cricket, snowboarding and following most sports.



CLEARING UP FAST

Helping to reduce the time and staff needed to de-thatch the greens at the Worcestershire GC by more than 50 per cent, Turfmec TM1 walk-behind vacuum collectors use a rotating brush and powerful vacuum to get results.

Nestling peacefully in the lee of the Malvern Hills, Worcestershire GC was founded in 1879, making it the oldest club in the county and one of the five oldest in England. Although a number of the greens on the parkland course have been rebuilt over the past 50 years, six date back to the early years of the last century.

While offering a challenging finish to their respective holes, the greens at Worcestershire GC have no underlying drainage system, resulting in the build-up of compaction and thatch over the years, which is now being actively tackled by Head Greenkeeper Graeme Clarkson and his staff.

"Previously, it took five men around five days to complete the work across all 19 greens. There was one man on the Graden, two with back-pack blowers and two picking up and disposing of the removed thatch. Following the arrival this spring of the new TM1, we are able to finish the job in two days using just two men," said Graeme.



The TM1 clearing scarified material from the 16th green at Worcestershire Golf Club

NEW RECRUIT IN SALES

Sam Honeyborne has joined Countrywide Farmers (CWF) as Turf & Amenity Area Sales Manager, covering South Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Somerset.



Having previously worked for CWF as an Agri Trade Sales Specialist, Sam has extensive knowledge of the full range of CWF products and services, featuring agricultural, energy and country lifestyle products, including clothing and footwear.

NEW WEBSITE

Tycrop Manufacturing, have launched a new website designed for turf maintenance professionals.

Dedicated to Tycrop's turf maintenance equipment for golf courses, sports turf and playing fields, the website provides an in-depth look at each of their five flagship products.

For more information on Tycrop visit: www.tycropturf.com

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Bio-tech solutions company Symbio, have pulled off something of a recruitment coup by bringing Kevin Munt back to the Turfgrass industry as Sales Manager. With a 25 year history in golf maintenance, development and operations, Kevin's past employers have included industry luminaries: Royal Dornoch GC, The Wentworth Club, John Jacobs Golf Associates, Kajima (UK) Engineering and Buckinghamshire GC. In 1985 Kevin was a member of the steering committee for the formation of BIGGA.



Munt commented: "I have been considering a return to the golf course maintenance industry but wanted to ensure that it was with a company that worked in support of greenkeepers and sustainable course management practices. Symbio meets those criteria and I am looking forward to helping them aid the movement to greater sustainable golf in the UK and Europe."

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN LAND-BASED INDUSTRIES

The Cannington Centre for Land-based Studies at Bridgwater College, one of the UK's premier centres of vocational excellence for greenkeeping and sports turf management, has signed an agreement with equipment manufacturers Ransomes Jacobsen, to suit the requirements of the college.

Over £200,000 worth of equipment has been delivered and will be used by the grounds staff team to maintain their nine-hole, 18-tee golf course; the college gardens and by students in the sportsturf faculty. The equipment includes walk-behind mowers, ride-on greens, tees and fairway machines; diesel-powered turf utility vehicles, tractors, an aerator and a turf cutter.



Ransomes Jacobsen will be sponsoring two student awards: one further education and one higher education, providing branded clothing, as well as participating in student development by supplying workshop manuals, operator training materials and undertaking tutorials both at the college and at their training facilities in Ipswich.

HEAT TURNS SAHARAN

Omar, a single-humped camel, shocked golfers as he lolloped across the course at Bletchingley.

Making a document about the drought, Channel 4 had transported the camel from a zoo in Chipping Norton to help illustrate the programme.

Although Bletchingley has its own private reservoir, the Surrey greens were still showing signs of scorching from the sun as Omar was led across the course.

DEALER DINNER

This year's Garden Machinery Dealer Dinner will be raising funds for the Wood Spoon Society. The raffle, with prizes donated by Briggs & Stratton, Countax, Hayter, Honda and Stihl, is expected to raise between £2,000 and £3,000 for the Charity, which supports children and young people challenged by mental, social and physical disadvantages.

COMPOST KEEPS PLANTS DISEASE FREE

A report has concluded that compost made from recycled garden or food waste can protect plants and turf against soil-borne diseases.

The review involved study of recent research into 49 different turf and plant diseases, and was carried out over a four month period by the University of Warwick, for WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme). The review focussed both on container based and field based experiments. It found overwhelming evidence that the addition of compost made from garden or food waste can suppress a range of wilts, rots and turf grass diseases.

Using data from previous container experiments, the study highlights that mixing compost into soil or peat to a level of 20 per cent or above enables good microbes to fight off common pathogens. 74% of the data reviewed, demonstrated a suppressive effect and showed that the average level of disease suppression was highest for wilts caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* ff.sp.

Examining field trials data, there was also evidence foliar pathogens, such as bacterial leaf spot on radish (*Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *armoraciae*) and powdery mildew of barley (*Erysiphe graminis* f. sp. *hordei*), can be suppressed by amendment of peat or soil with compost. The research illustrated that compost amendment can

successfully suppress diseases caused by *Fusarium* species, provided that compost application rates of at least 100 tons/ha are used.

The study also shows that different types of composts are effective against different diseases of turf grass. For example, top-dressing with green waste compost has been shown to control *Pythium* damping-off and *Rhizoctonia* brown patch, and may give control of dollar spot but is less effective in controlling red thread. Furthermore, the review highlights a possible trend that composts intermediate in age (about 12 to 15 months after composting started) appear to be more reliably suppressive than 'immature' (less than six months old) or 'very mature' (more than two years old) composts.

The report concludes there is a large potential market for compost in vegetable and ornamental crop production, turf grass top dressings and amateur gardening, providing end-users in those sectors can be convinced of its reliability as a weapon against plant disease. Demonstrating such benefits will also help reduce dependency on chemical fungicides – a significant selling point for professional growers and amateur gardeners.

To access a full copy of the report, or for more information on compost, visit: www.wrap.org.uk/organics

SUMMER OFFER

To help you cover up this summer BIGGA have added two styles of cargo beanie hats to its merchandise range.



The Cargo Beanie is made from 100% cargo nylon and has an elasticated draw cord size adjuster with toggle. It also has a towelling sweatband and a mesh lining for extra comfort. This beanie is available in Navy with a Stone trim or Stone with a Navy Trim.

The Textured Pocket Beanie is made from 100% textured cotton and comes with a side pocket. One size fits most. This beanie is available in Stone or Navy.



Both hats are available for the special offer price of £5.99 (normal price £7.99), BIGGA logo hats are available for £7.99 (normal price £9.99).

Your club logo or any other wording can be stitched onto the hats. Ring Rachael Duffy for further details. To order call Rachael Duffy on 01347 833800.



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The ABER® prefix is a registered trade mark of Germinal Holdings Limited, the parent company of British Seed Houses Limited.

PARTNERSHIP

Nigel Nangreave, the man behind UK Bamboo Golf Tee and long term Green Tee Campaigner, has recently been offered a partnership as Sales and Marketing Director, for Staffordshire Towing Systems, a company producing a revolutionary multi-positional Tow ball System. A UK invention, UNI-BALL, has had a number of test units ordered out to various organisations.

GOING FOR GREEN



In the run up to The Open Championship, golf clubs throughout England had been working as part of a scheme aiming to bring about real benefits for nature and wildlife conservation.

Established in 2002, the English Golf Environmental Advisory Service (EGEAS) has seen over 180 golf clubs receive specialist ecological advice tailored to suit both the golfing and conservation needs of the course.

Often seen as a selfish and sterile land use, golf courses have previously received little positive attention from conservationists. However, with around 1,900 courses in England covering some 110,000ha of land, they do provide the potential for significant and tangible benefits for the countryside.

Through detailed and practical advice, provided by specialist Golf Course Ecologist Lee Penrose of the Sports Turf Research Institute, the EGEAS has assisted golf clubs in developing over 150ha of new grassland and heathland habitat, planting 16,000 new trees, and restoring or creating nearly 200 new wildlife ponds.

All golf clubs accepted into the scheme have been revisited in order to assess the progress they have made. Those clubs who displayed a real commitment to conservation have been accredited and since received framed certificates from the County Golf Unions.

Greenkeepers and Golf Club Managers, are recognising the positive role conservation can play in developing a high standard golf course that provides habitat for birds of all sorts.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

Leven Links played host to the Scottish National Tournament on June 22.

The prize list was as follows: SGGG Challenge Cup - Brian Heggie, Piperdam GC, 69; Friendship Trophy, Best Net - Martin Lothian, Turnberry Hotel, 81-17-64; Ransomes Trophy, First Class - Kenneth Mitchell, St.Andrews Links, 75-5-70; 2. Steve Sullivan, Craigie Hill, 77-5-72; 3. Brian Aitken, Largs GC, 77-4-73; Pattison Trophy, Second Class - William Caswell, Caird Park GC, 84-14-70; 2. Trevor Harris, St. Andrews Links, 81-10-71; 3. Michael Carson, Caird Park GC, 81-9-72; STRI Trophy, Third Class - Scott Davidson, Hazelhead GC, 102 24-78 (BIH); 2. Donald Gardener, Scoonie GC, 102-24-78; 3. Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead GC, 100-21-79; Dick Aitken Trophy, Best Head Greenkeeper - Paul Murphy, Downfield GC, 76-5-71; M & M Trophy, Best Assistant - Kenny Stirling, Kingsbarns,

72-1-71; Souter Trophy, Best Apprentice - Keith Burgon, Goswick GC, 78-5-73; SIGGA Trophy, Best Veteran - Elliott Small, retired, 82-11-71; St.Mungo Trophy, Team Trophy (best four net scores) - Central Section; Brian Heggie, Piperdam GC, 69; Kenneth Mitchell, St.Andrews Links, 70; William Caswell, Caird Park GC, 70; Paul Murphy, Downfield GC, 7 - total: 280.

Patrons - Gordon Howat, Souters Sports, 82-9-73; Qualifiers National Tournament, Scratch - Brian Heggie, Club Piperdam GC; Handicap - Martin Lothian, Turnberry Hotel.



DRAINAGE STANDARDS SET

The Land Drainage Contractors Association (LDCA) launches their informative booklet, 'Guidelines for Sports Turf Drainage Installation', in time for Saltex 2006.

"This booklet is a vital tool for all those looking at installing or upgrading their drainage system," said Secretary of the Association, Bruce Brockway.

For more information visit: www.ldca.org or call: 01327 263264.

KEEPING GREENS GREEN

Reigate Heath GC spent £2,500 on a water tanker to bring 4,000 gallons a day from the nearby Buckland quarries.

A number of other golf clubs have taken advantage of the free, non-drinking water supply from a spring at Pains Hill, Limsfield Chart, as a way of beating the drought.

R&A INVESTIGATE SUSTAINABLE GOLF COURSES

The R&A Golf Course Committee is funding two projects looking into different aspects of sustainable course management.

The first is investigating the firmness of putting surfaces and fairways. Using the Turf Thumper, a device developed by the USGA, at six courses in the UK, the intention is to produce guidelines on the acceptable ranges of firmness for links, heathland and parkland courses. The participating clubs are Royal Troon and Renfrew in Scotland, Conwy (Caernarvonshire) in Wales, Trentham, Ganton and Alwoodley in England. The Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) is managing this project and will report the outcome in autumn 2007. The firmness of a green is one of the most important characteristics contributing to turf health, green speed and trueness.

The second project will be monitored over four years and will consider the process of developing firmer, leaner greens and thereby, improving their sward composition. In the UK, soft, thatch-ridden

putting surfaces tend to be dominated by annual meadow-grass, which is the grass found on golf turf most susceptible to common and disfiguring turf diseases and climatic stresses. Five clubs in England (Cold Ashby, Farnham Park, Knowle, Leek and Wilmslow) have been selected to take part in this project, all having addressed thatch issues (if they were present) and in an appropriate condition to promote the more desirable turfgrasses, i.e. the fine fescues and browntop bent. STRI will assess the species composition of selected greens at each of these courses at the start of the project and at the end of a three year programme of maintenance, which will include overseeding with fescue and browntop bent.

The purpose of these projects is to provide technical support to those managing golf courses and it is intended that, on completion of the research, the results will be written up and posted on The R&A Best Practice website: www.bestcoursegolf.org

TRADITIONAL GREENS RESCUED

A Hertfordshire Head Greenkeeper has seen his 18-hole parkland course televised, less than three years after being advised to dig up his greens.

Neil Faubel, who joined East Herts GC in 1988, becoming Head Greenkeeper in 2003, has watched conditions on his traditional, clay based, push-up greens deteriorate over the years. "When I took over most of our greens were poor quality putting surfaces," he says. "They were not rooting and had

sulphur programme for the whole year, and with Neil's approval, suggested Multi K mini prill as a spring starter applied at the end of March, followed by Greentec Organic applied at the end of April. During the summer we switched to Trisert KS Liquid mixed with Seamac seaweed extracts as our main feed, applied once a month with the last application in August."

Given the history of winter disease problems, Crosdale felt that rather than stop feeding the greens in autumn, which had previously been the case, the sward needed to be strengthened. "At the end of September we applied Multigreen Mini, a controlled release, high potash, low nitrogen formulation, backed by Liquid Turf Hardeners applied in equal proportions in October, November and December."

Soil samples are regularly taken in February when fertiliser content should be either non-existent or minimal, with leaf analysis carried out in June/July.

Meanwhile Neil was being advised by various turf consultants to dig up his greens.

"Last year the club were going to dig up four greens and start again which would have cost us around £100,000" he says. "I found that following our new autumn feeding regime the grass stayed in leaf until January or February and as time went on Fusarium was less of a problem. The greens have improved year on year, scaring has grown out over the winter and in spring we've had no marks which meant no over seeding. We've also gone into the winter with better grass quality. I'm not saying this would work with everyone – every course is different, but this year for the first time our club chairman has received letters praising the course."

At the beginning of July, East Herts GC hosted The Western Homes PGA three day event, screened by Sky Sport.



Steve Crosdale (left) and Neil Faubel (right) at East Herts GC

poor grass coverage. We couldn't get through a winter without heavy attacks of fusarium and each spring we had a weak grass sward as a result."

During his first year in his new job, Neil stepped up the aeration regime. "There was a root break four inches down on the sand layer because the roots didn't want to go into the clay beneath," he continues. "We did, and do, a lot of aeration and top dressing, pencil tining every two weeks throughout the year when conditions are right."

Having witnessed widely differing approaches by the two previous Head Greenkeepers, Neil decided to shop around for his nutritional programme. Headland Amenity's Steve Crosdale visited the club and took soil samples from six greens. "Looking at the results, the soil had a very high sulphur content, a very high iron content, and was low on all the major nutrients," he says. "Based on this evidence I put together a reduced

CONTINUED GROWTH

Grass seed specialists Barenbrug, have strengthened their sales team with the appointment of Neil Pettican.

Neil, who will be based in Norwich and cover East Anglia, joins Barenbrug with a vast array of academic and practical experience having worked in the sportsturf industry for the past ten years. After graduating from Cranfield University with a Masters degree in Sports Surface Technology, Neil worked as a Golf Course Manager and Groundsman.



Barenbrug UK Sales Manager James Ingles (left) and Neil Pettican (right)

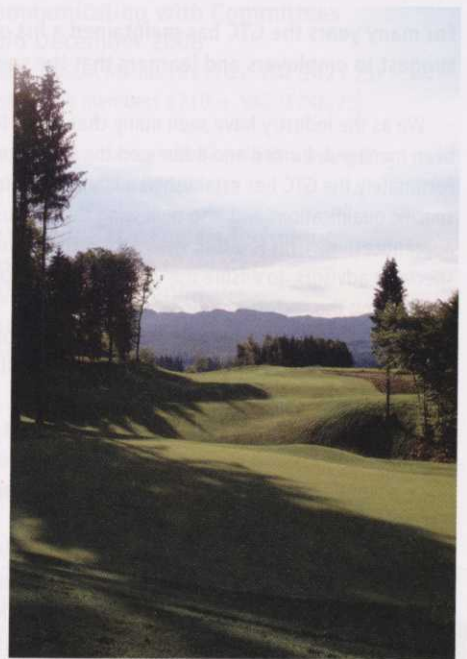
OTOCEC OPENS ITS DOORS

Slovenia's ninth golf course opens its first nine holes for play this July.

Lying in the south east of the country, close to the Croatian border, large greens, stunning mountain views and varied tee locations have created a memorable design.

Designed by Ljubica Jovetic of Swan Golf Designs, Howard Swan's design practice has been strongly represented over the past 10 years in the former Yugoslavia, having been responsible for the design of Croatia's only two modern golf courses.

The building of the second nine holes will commence next year.



PGA EUROPRO TOUR

Peter de Savary's Bovey Castle will play host to golf's brightest young stars this month, when the PGA EuroPro Tour arrives at the club and sporting estate.

Since its major renovation two years ago, the Castle's Old Course has grown in stature and reputation for its beautiful setting on Dartmoor National Park and its challenging championship par 70.

The EuroPro Tour will arrive to give the 'Tiger Woods of tomorrow' the opportunity to gain the necessary experience of competitive golf and the European Tour circuit.

The EuroPro Tour has grown in size over the past four years and in 2005 offered a prize fund of over £1 million.

Bovey Castle Head Professional Richard Lewis said: "This is another feather in the cap for the Old Course - which is now widely recognised for offering one of the most enjoyable yet challenging rounds of golf in the UK."



MONITORING MATTERS

One of the GTC's main responsibilities is to monitor the delivery of education and training programmes for the greenkeeping sector.

In this article, David Golding the GTC's Education Director, explains how some of his contacts help him to ensure the quality of education and training is to the industries required standards.

For many years the GTC has maintained a list of Approved Training Providers, mainly agricultural and horticultural colleges where we suggest to employers and learners that the specialist greenkeeper courses are best delivered.

We as the industry have seen many changes in the way colleges have been managed, funded and addressed the Governments skills agenda. Fortunately the GTC has established a leading role in both developing turf specific qualifications and also reviewing the various qualifications and apprenticeships. This is a task where the GTC's technical committee adds specialist advisors, to ensure the vocational and more academic qualifications are meeting the sectors requirements.

One overall consideration through all of this groups work, is to make sure the awards relate to employment or occupational standards to use the official jargon!

We are very fortunate to have so many contacts that willingly join us and their input is invaluable. If I was to start naming them I might just happen to leave a name out and that would be unfair, so I would rather just say that the GTC do really appreciate your input.

This working group has to work within a framework established by the Lantra Sector Skills Council and Awarding Bodies such as the National Proficiency Test Council (now part of the City & Guilds Group) and the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA). It is at these meetings that the standards are discussed and now more often than not, approved due to the wide consultation process that our sector has established.

The GTC representing both the golf club employers and greenkeepers can now confidently state that we are in a prime position to ensure the content of the Sports turf vocational qualifications as well as the more college based HNC/D and Foundation Degree are as we require them. What is also very refreshing, is how the colleges, private training providers and Universities, such as Cranfield truly welcome industrial input through liaison meetings. I know that as part of the Inspection process these establishments have to show where they have industry "partnerships" and again these types of liaison meetings have been a feature for our sector since the sixties. There are some excellent personnel working for the training providers who are in regular contact with me often to support our efforts to ensure the standards within the qualifications are maintained. These people are often working either within a college or on the road, trying to implement vocational qualifications, often operating within an establishment system, which they know is far from ideal.

All I will say is that the loyalty you show to the turf sector is certainly appreciated by myself and without your tip-offs, positive feedback and overall commitment to the standards of turf courses my job and the aims and objectives of the GTC would be so much more difficult to achieve.

The GTC does feed your comments into the appropriate meetings and whilst it may take a little time, we more often than not do get a result!

The official verification and inspection of Approved Centres, is firmly the responsibility of the Awarding Bodies and the Inspectorate, but again we have forged an excellent relationship with the key personnel who operate on behalf of our sector.

All in all we do keep our eye on the ball most of the time, however we need you to work with us to ensure quality provision is available and when you feel the GTC can investigate a problem through its advisory network or indeed where excellent provision is available, please let us know.

My work with Ken and Sami at BIGGA also is great assistance, especially when the Student of the Year interviews are reviewed. It is very encouraging each year, when they report that the students who are both enjoying their work and making most progress in terms of qualifications, is when their Course Manager AND employer are involved in their training programme. If only this was the norm! Sadly too many learners on golf courses are let down by their "bosses" who still do not think that it is their job to train and educate staff!

Regular readers will know that while I do have a problem with this negative attitude and while I fully understand the current day pressures on Course Managers, I honestly believe that by becoming more formally involved in staff training you and the employer benefit tremendously and this is borne out by the students themselves. The important factor to remember in the whole concept of vocational qualifications, is that they are designed to be work-based and aimed at training staff to agreed national standards so who better to "control" the standards than Course Manager assessors? So many course managers, having attended assessor-training days, say the A1 qualification only formalises what they have been doing for years! Yes!

Many assessors feed in to me or via the GTC Liaison Officers information relating to the delivery of all the various sports turf awards. This is priceless to the GTC.

Please be reassured that the GTC will continue to work to maintain and where standards slip, improve the system for the benefit of the learner and the employer but please be part of our "honorary" advisory network, as we need your help.

Please feel free to contact the GTC on, Tel: 01347 838640
or email: david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC is supported by:





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For details, please contact Ken Richardson on 01347 833800 or via ken@bigga.co.uk

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Education Update

Ken Richardson explains why the Education Department have been so busy this last month.

I hardly seem to have been in the office lately. I spent all of last week 'on the road' doing the interviews for the TORO Student of the Year Competition. I always travel over 1000 miles but three of this year's candidates added to the miles, as one drove back from a holiday in North Wales to Manchester for his interview then back to Wales, one flew from Majorca to Manchester and then back to Majorca - leaving his wife and children 'on the beach' and a third returned from Sri Lanka for his interview in the Midlands.

TORO Student of the Year 2006



37 candidates were nominated for this year's competition from a total of over 3000 greenkeeping students. They ranged from those just entering the industry from school, to those entering the industry as a second or third career.

Delegates to this competition, come better prepared each year and it is not easy for the judges to choose the eight candidates that will go forward to the National Final in September.

Sunday, July 2, saw me flying to Edinburgh Airport where I was joined by Ian McLeod to judge the Scottish candidates. A long day of judging was followed, a flight back to Leeds/Bradford and a night at home before I was up early to drive to Manchester Airport to judge the Northern and Irish candidates. I was joined at Manchester by: Sami Collins, Warren Beavan and Trevor Chard from TORO. After a late afternoon finish, I set off for Hemel Hempstead via a massive thunderstorm in the M1 Road Works at Luton.

Wednesday was judging day in the South East where I was joined by Master Greenkeeper Lee Strutt and John Pike from TORO. The next stop was Cheltenham where Gavin Robson joined John and I to judge the candidates from the South West and South Wales on Thursday. Then it was back in the car to dive to Peterborough where Peter Mansfield from TORO joined Gavin and I to judge the candidates from the Midlands.

Next it was time to select the eight National Finalists.

They are: Barrie Lewis and Kenneth Gilroy from Scotland; Stephen Eager from Ireland; James Billington from the North; Michael Emptage and Stephen Stroomer from the South East; Abigail Crosswood from the South West and South Wales and Graham Brumpton from the Midlands. Congratulations to all eight Finalists.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition



The judges at STRI have finished their initial judging and are busy visiting clubs around Britain to determine the prizewinners. More details will appear in the next issue of Greenkeeper International.

Regional Training Courses

BIGGA continues to support education and training in the Regions and the following courses have been arranged at Gay Hill GC in the Midland Region:

Sit In ATV - 4 October 2006

Cost to BIGGA Members £60 + VAT (£70.50)
Cost to non members £160 + VAT (£188)

Chainsaw Maintenance & Cross Cutting - 6/7 November 2006

Cost to BIGGA Members £225 + VAT (£264.38)
Cost to non members £325 + VAT (£381.875)

Communicating with Committees - 5/6 December 2006

Cost to BIGGA Members £110 + VAT (£129.25)
Cost to non members £210 + VAT (£246.75)

The following course will be held at a tree felling location in Staffordshire

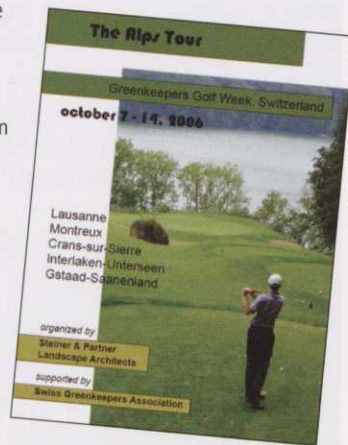
Chainsaw Basic Felling Techniques (up to 200mm in diameter) - 8/9 November 2006

Cost to BIGGA Members £205 + VAT (£240.88)
Cost to non members £305 + VAT (£358.375)

For more information please contact Sami Collins on: 01347 833800.

The Alps Golf Tour

You may have read about a proposed Greenkeeper's Tour of the Alps in the April edition of Greenkeeper International. Some more information about this educational, as well as enjoyable tour, is given below. Further details will be published in future editions of this magazine.



CHALK GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR GOLF COURSES

September 12 2006 - Epsom Golf Club, Surrey

A seminar to explore the best practice in chalk grassland course management. Guest Speaker - Lee Penrose, Ecologist Sports Turf Research Institute.

Seminar Fee: £30

For further details and to book your place contact Aimee Jones on: 020 8770 4203 or email: aimee.jones@sutton.gov.uk

Rachael and Gemma would like to welcome 54 new members to the Association and put the spotlight on the Personal Accident Insurance scheme.

Membership Update

Personal Accident Insurance

Personal Accident Insurance cover, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year is provided for all Greenkeeper members of the Association. Members are covered not only at work but also at home, on holiday or during leisure activities if they sustain an 'Accidental Bodily Injury' that causes, death, permanent or temporary disablement.



The policy does not cover illness or disease not resulting from an accident or injury, any naturally occurring or degenerative disease/illness, or any gradually worsening condition such as arthritis or osteoporosis. The policy offers the following:

HOSPITALISATION: If an accidental bodily injury is sustained and you are admitted to hospital the company will pay £25 per full 24 hours up to a maximum of 52 weeks.

TEMPORARY AND TOTAL DISABLEMENT: After the first 28 days of any period of incapacity the company will pay £35 per week for the first 12 weeks of benefit and then £45 per week thereafter up to a total maximum benefit period of 104 weeks.

MEDICAL EXPENSES: If an accidental bodily injury is sustained and medical expenses are incurred, reimbursement will be paid up to 25% of any amount paid under the schedule of benefits up to a maximum of £10,000.

DEATH BENEFIT: If an accidental bodily injury results in your death then a death benefit of £7,500 applies.

FUNERAL EXPENSES: Incurred as a result of a death following an accidental bodily injury up to a maximum of £2,500.

LUMP SUM PAYMENTS: If an accidental bodily injury results in Permanent Total Disablement you will receive a sum of money up to £7,500.

A copy of the full schedule of benefits is available in your membership folder, alternatively you can contact the membership department for a replacement.

To make a claim please call 01277 251000 and ask for Michaela Edwards.

WIN THE ULTIMATE FERRARI EXPERIENCE

Ever wanted to get behind the wheel of a Ferrari? Well now you can! Drive a Ferrari 328 and F360 or drive a Ferrari F355 with an opportunity to drive a single seater. The prize also offers the chance to put a Land Rover through its paces on an off-road course or drive an MG on the track. The experience also includes a full safety briefing with training laps in a hot hatch and the day finishes with a high-speed passenger ride.*

To enter the prize draw to win this fantastic prize all you have to do is introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA. Make sure your name goes on their application form as the person who referred them and we will enter your name in the draw. Remember the more new members you refer the more chances you have to win!

It doesn't stop there either, if you win the Rally Driving experience then the New member you referred also receives a RED LETTER DAY VOUCHER that can be used on an experience of their choice on a range of at least 20. Typical experiences include Snow Boarding, Zorbing or Capoeira.

The draw will take place on the 16th October 2006 and the winners will be announced in the November edition of Greenkeeper International.

Call either Rachael or Gemma today on 01347 833800 to request a new member application form or fill out the slip on the outer cover of this magazine.

*Choice of activity is dependant on which location is booked. A full manual driving licence is required. The minimum age for this experience is 18.



BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

David Cowan, East
Andrew Keith, West
Paul McCormack, West
William McMeikan, Ayrshire
Christopher Ormiston, East
Ian Scott, Ayrshire

NORTHERN REGION

Alan Ainscough, North East
James Billington, North West
Michael Cooper, Northern

MIDLAND REGION

Paul Baker, Midland
Vaughan Bednall, East Midland
Paul Harden, BB&O
Frank Whittle, Mid Anglia
Christopher Withers, Midland

SOUTH EAST REGION

Stephen Burroughs, Essex
Chris Dodds, Surrey
Stuart Morley, Surrey

Richard Penson, Surrey
Andrew Royall, Surrey
Kyle Smith, Essex
Mark Solomans, Essex
Simon Watkins, London

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Shane Bennett, South Coast
Martyn Bennett, South Coast
David Bodger, Devon & Cornwall
Mark Brewer, Devon & Cornwall
Colin Brewer, Devon & Cornwall
Thomas Clements, South West
Malcolm Conduct, South Coast
Andrew Gogan, South Coast
Matthew Graham, South Coast
Steven Jones, South Wales
Christian Pink, South Coast
Andrew Wheadon, Devon & Cornwall

STUDENT MEMBERS

Dean Bridges, London
Raymond Bridgewater, USA

Craig Roberts, North West
Radoslaw Suchomski, London

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Barry Dolan, East Scotland
Carol Dutton, Northern
Stephen Fell, Northern
David Green, South East
Mark Gunter, South Coast
Andy Russell, Mid Anglia
Clive Williams, East Midland

CORPORATE MEMBER

Julie Wall, Midland

GOLDEN KEY MEMBERS

David Broad, East Midland
Andrew Burns, East Midland
David Chinn, East Midland
Tony Cox, East Midland
Robert Dunk, East Midland
Guy Gibson, East Midland
Lucy Mitchell, East Midland

AUGUST'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a monthly draw to win a £10 Music Voucher. Our congratulations go to Alan Elliott of Clandon Regis Golf Club.



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YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

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

Letters

Congratulations to Nick

What a pleasure it was to see a picture of Nick Bisset, in the GTC News. How it brought back happy memories of committee meetings of the GTC, way back in the days when, we as greenkeepers with some future outlook for our profession, held the GTC meetings at Askham Bryan College. Nick was stuffing theoretical knowledge into the heads of the few enlightened assistant greenkeepers, whose clubs had the foresight to send them to college. Nick held the GTC committee together for many years.

I can't remember where the money came from to run the GTC but somehow through perseverance and dealing 'quietly-quietly' with awkward committee members, he pulled the strings in the right direction. The one thing which is still clear in my mind, was the Certificate of Registration – Conditions of Registration:

1. Employment of the greenkeeping staff at a golf club or a public course for at least six month's prior to registration.
2. Undertaking to attend course approved by the training committee.
3. Membership of the BIGGA.

I pulled out my old folder on the GTC and saw that Nick's title in those days was Administration and Secretary – unpaid of course. All your friends in Scotland Nick, and that includes greenkeepers, wish you all the best as Chairman of the Technical Committee (we know it makes sense).

C H George

New Grass leaving its mark on Spain

Malcolm Huntington, a freelance golf writer from York, recently visited Gran Canaria for a golfing holiday, it was there he discovered the remarkable transformation of the greens - thanks to a virtually unknown type of grass - at Campo do Golf in Maspalomas.

It is more than 10 years since I first visited Maspalomas in Gran Canaria, the venue for two European Tour events won by the Swede Jarmo Saridelin in 1995 and by Jose Maria Olazabal in 1997.

I have returned each year to find that the greenkeeping team were always struggling with the same problem - how to find a solution for keeping the club's greens in good condition in the face of changing temperatures.

Greenkeepers in Britain have had problems of their own with recurring diseases, so they will be sympathetic to the problem, which has faced Juan Bosch General Manager at Maspalomas, who has had overall charge of the golf club for the past 17 years.

Juan has been to a number of conferences in the United States to learn more about warm weather golf - but for 15 years was no nearer to finding the answers - until he discovered a new type of grass.

Let Juan take up the story. "When I first came to Campo de Golf 17 years ago, the greens were made of Bermuda, but we always struggled with it because it hibernates in winter and the amount of traffic on the course meant that the greens became sandy and there was hardly any grass to be seen.

"I switched to Pencross, but that didn't solve the problem because we are a pay and play course and I couldn't close the course for the minimum of 45 days which was needed for the change.

"In the summer of 1998 there were water restrictions. We use re-cycled water - about 500,000 cubic metres a year - the local parks needed water for their plants and trees. The result was that our greens were burned for two or three years.

I had first heard about Paspalom at a conference and when someone mentioned it again at another meeting in Cadiz, I began to seek out some facts and after talking things over with several experts decided, as an experiment, to make our 15th green from spindles (roots) of this grass.

"I ordered boxes and boxes of it and I have to say that for me Paspalom has been a miracle because it has solved all our problems in winter and summer. It is not affected by the seasons and we use fewer chemicals and less water. It's not fussy about quality of water either and puts up with everything, even a little salt from the sea winds.

"We were so pleased with the outcome that all our greens are now Paspalom and as you will have seen they are 100 per cent better."

I can certainly vouch for that with the truly magnificent practice putting green next to the excellent clubhouse restaurant, the best I have seen anywhere in the world, being as fast and true as a snooker table.

In the Shed

Greenkeeper International brings you 'In the Shed', a puzzle page to keep you entertained when the weather forces you in or for when times are slow.

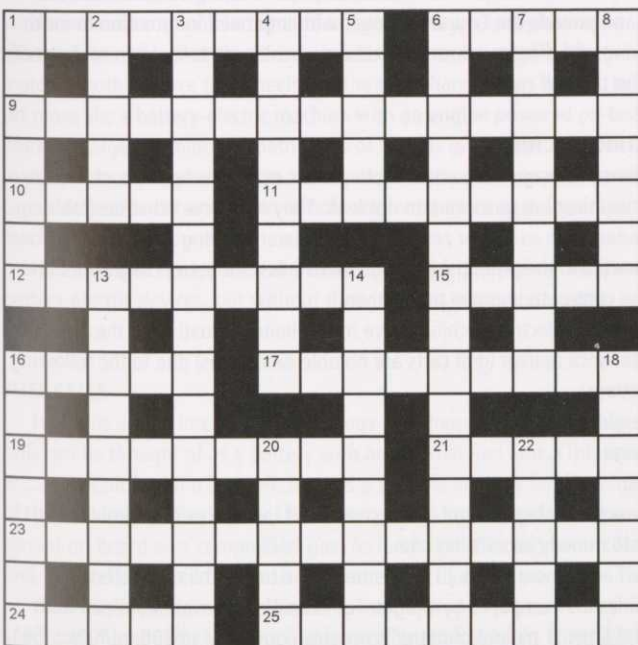
CROSSWORD - Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 Immediately (9)
- 6 Hindu social class (5)
- 9 Unimportant (2,2,11)
- 10 Poem or piece of music depicting rural life (5)
- 11 Diversify (6,3)
- 12 Sir Alan ---, playwright who wrote A Chorus Of Disapproval (9)
- 15 Constellation which contains Betelgeuse (5)
- 16 Colloquially, one's local area (5)
- 17 Northamptonshire town between Wellingborough and Corby (9)
- 19 Street in Covent Garden, location of the Theatre Royal (5,4)
- 21 Keep watch over (5)
- 23 Indicator of a person's salary potential (7,8)
- 24 Enchantress, femme fatale (5)
- 25 Road safety device, "sleeping policeman" (5,4)

DOWN

- 1 US state, home of the Everglades (7)
- 2 Characteristic of a liquid (5)
- 3 Mischievous titular character of a Mark Twain novel (11,4)
- 4 Austrian city, popular ski resort (9)
- 5 Carrion-feeding African dog-like mammal (5)
- 6 Religious movement centred on Canterbury (6,2,7)
- 7 Greek holiday island noted for its volcano (9)
- 8 English soccer club which has a church within its boundaries (7)
- 13 One who gains victory by force of arms (9)
- 14 Gothic cathedral of Paris (5,4)
- 16 British band, reached number 1 with House Of Fun (7)
- 18 Childish encouragement to horse (5-2)
- 20 Black hornless breed of cattle from Scotland (5)
- 22 Farewell (5)



ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 58

ANAGRAM

Recently lost to Sri Lanka.

CAN MEET HATTRICK LEGEND

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Don Budge was the first to do it in 1938. Who is the most recent player to have won a career Grand Slam?
2. Andy Cole was the first player to score five goals in a Premiership match, against Ipswich Town in 1995. Who in 1999 matched his feat against Sheffield Wednesday?
3. From which bridge does the Oxford/Cambridge boat race start?
4. By what name is Edson Arantes do Nascimento better known?
5. In which type of wine has all the sugar been converted into alcohol?
6. How many events are there in the decathlon?
7. Which English premiership team are known as the gunners?
8. Which alcoholic drink uses the slogan "No nonsense?"
9. What is the real name of the darts player known as 'The Power'?

SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

5	9		1		3	4		8
6	4	8						5
	3						9	
			4	5				
7		6				1		9
				9	1			
	7							3
3						9	6	4
8		9	3		4		5	1

Supplied by www.dailysudoku.com

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Look closely at the pictures below and try and spot the difference between them. You should be able to spot six!



The Changing Role of Technology in Golf Course Equipment

Predicting the future has proved to be a perilous profession - at best. There are many examples of 'sure things' that have not panned out or unexpected successes that seem to come out of nowhere. The future, by its very nature, is dynamic and ever-changing and a myriad of influences can affect its outcome.

*Continue
to learn*

The same rule applies when predicting technological advances. Simply having technology available does not ensure it will be broadly implemented - it has to be desirable and functional. Technology always has and will continue to be driven by people's needs. Often, new emerging technology is a different (yet better) way to solve an old problem.

A Golf Course Manager's basic needs, include understanding plant health, better management of water resources, improving productivity, managing labour and being a responsible steward of the environment. If new technological applications address these needs better than an existing approach, then technology has a good chance of success. If the application is simply different or if it introduces other problems that are more time-consuming, it is likely to fail.

Rarely does technology burst on the scene overnight - it is usually a gradual process, which occurs after the initial invention. For example, while the computer was invented in the 1940s, its use has only recently become widespread. This is often the case with new technology - once created, it quickly evolves into a functional form used by a small group of customers categorised as early adopters. Then, it is refined and improved until it is accepted (or in demand) by a much larger group.

Often, new technology evolves and is used to solve problems other than its original intent.

When it comes to assisting professional turf managers in their day-to-day tasks, there are many technologies being pursued. This article will touch on just a few of them.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Water continues to become a more valuable resource. In many parts of the world, watering restrictions limit the timing and amount of water that can be used to irrigate a golf course. Generally, water quality is diminishing. For example, effluents, which increase salinity, are being used for irrigation. Consequently, the cost, availability and water quality are becoming a major factor to deal with.

Managing water is a critical job for the Course Manager, and, for the most part, irrigation water is not managed precisely. Traditionally, water schedules are set via minutes of run-time versus dispensing only what the plant needs. (This is comparable to running your home heating or air conditioning for ten minutes every hour, regardless of the outside temperature.) If a golf course were flat, had homogenous soil throughout and micro-climates did not exist, this method would be suitable. However, this is not the case.

Today's irrigation control systems, frequently incorporate digital maps of the golf course to help control individual sprinkler heads. Evaporation-transpiration (ET) devices are currently available to assist in calculating how much water is lost on a daily basis due to current weather conditions (eg, sunlight, humidity, wind, etc.) While these tools help manage water over a broad area, more precise technologies are being pursued.

The future of turf irrigation is likely to revolve around precision turf

management, a closed-loop or supervisory-based method of identifying what a small area of turf requires and being able to precisely supply the amount of water, nutrients or chemicals needed to that area. Some of the technology used to accomplish this will include: more sophisticated irrigation heads and controllers; accurate digital maps of the golf course; global positioning systems (GPS); remote sensing and in-ground moisture sensors. For example, soil moisture probes, which measure moisture



Evapotranspiration (ET) weather station

content at varying depths, could be deployed at multiple sites around the golf course to report on a specific area's moisture state.

Another new technology, called remote sensing, uses near-infrared (NIR) spectroscopy, which can detect plant stress before the human eye can. For example, NIR sensors mounted on a fairway mower with a GPS could monitor plant health while mowing and report via wireless radio to a central computer. The greenkeeper would receive a colour-contour picture of the turf on each of the fairways. The central computer would then assimilate this data and provide the Course Manager with improved information to make watering and disease-treatment decisions, which are tailored to each specific area on the golf course.

ELECTRIC MACHINES

Course Managers are attracted to electric machines because of two key qualities: they are quiet and do not leak. They also have other desirable attributes, such as low or zero emissions, fewer wearing parts, higher efficiency and the potential (through electronics) for better diagnostics and precise control to improve productivity.

However, electric machines have made limited inroads into the turf maintenance market (golf carts are notable exceptions) due to the following restrictions:

- Weight
- Range
- Cost

New technology cannot be successful if it introduces new problems in order to remedy an existing one.

Turf equipment needs to be gentle on the turf and battery-electric machines are hampered by weight. For example, the work obtained from just 3.8 litres (1 gallon) of petrol is roughly equivalent to 300 to 400kg (661 to 882lb) of lead-acid batteries. This weight issue can restrict the daily range

By Jack Gust

of operation and has limited battery-electrics to the lower power applications on a golf course, such as small utility vehicles, golf carts and, to a certain degree, greensmowers and bunker rakes.

Further, unlike petrol/diesel machines that can be quickly refueled, batteries also need a long time to recharge and cannot be deployed for unscheduled tasks (eg, replacing a machine in repair) or occasional tasks, which require higher energy (eg, Verticutting).

Fortunately, new technology, such as advanced batteries, hybrid electrics and fuel cells, are becoming available to address these limitations.

ADVANCED BATTERIES

Advanced battery chemistries, such as nickel-metal hydride (NiMH) and lithium polymer, can significantly extend the runtime of battery-electric machines to make them more viable. NiMH batteries are extremely durable (potentially lasting the life of the machine), and can deliver up to twice the runtime of an equivalent weight of lead-acid batteries. Lithium batteries, commonly used in cell phones and digital cameras, are capable of delivering up to three times the range of lead-acid batteries and are relatively inexpensive. Either of these advanced battery technologies could vastly improve battery-electric products, such as electric greensmowers or bunker rakes.

Currently, both of these battery technologies are prohibitively expensive in larger sizes, but their costs should come down as they are gradually applied to other industries. Unfortunately, the turf industry itself is not large enough to drive the commercialisation of these advanced batteries. Their use will need to become prevalent in other higher-volume applications, such as forklifts or automobiles before they become affordable for turf products. It is difficult to predict how rapidly this will occur.

HYBRIDS

Hybrid-electric vehicles, particularly hybrid-electric automobiles, which combine electric motor and engine-based power sources, are frequently in the news.

There are two categories of hybrids: parallel and series. Parallel-hybrids, which are most common in the automotive industry, use sophisticated electronic transmissions that decide whether to use the engine, electric motor or both to drive the wheels. On the other hand, series-electric hybrids act more like a battery-electric machine with an engine powered on-board battery charger. Common to both types of hybrids is a smaller engine sized to deliver enough power for the average load with a battery pack (or ultra-capacitors) sufficient enough to handle any intermittent peak loads the machine might encounter.

Hybrids allow the creation of machines offering many of the attributes of battery-electric devices, but without their inherent range and weight limitations.

FUEL CELLS

Fuel cells are an interesting technology, also frequently in the news. Fuel cells can be thought of as a battery with an external fuel tank. (This is not an accurate depiction of a fuel cell, but it is a suitable analogy for the purpose of this discussion.) The fuel for this 'battery' is hydrogen, and it is typically carried on-board as a compressed gas. As long as the hydrogen tank has fuel, the fuel cell can continue to produce electricity at full power.

Electricity is produced by a fuel cell when hydrogen passes through a special membrane to encounter oxygen on the other side. As a hydrogen atom passes through this cell, its electron is stripped off and collected, which



Hybrid riding greensmower prototype

is used for power. This hydrogen ion proceeds through the membrane and encounters oxygen on the other side. Here, it combines to produce water, which flows out of the exhaust as a mist. Simply increasing the oxygen flow to the membrane via an air pump produces greater electric power output.

While a fuel cell appears to operate much like a battery, in many ways it is similar to engine-powered equipment. A fuel cell requires a radiator for cooling, a fuel tank for the hydrogen, as well as hoses and pumps, etc.

ELECTRONICS

It doesn't take a psychic to predict the use of electronics will proliferate on the golf course much as it has done in the rest of modern society. However, it is more difficult to predict just how it will be used.

Electronics are critical in achieving water management control and electric-machine technologies previously described. It is integral to the sensors, displays, wireless and GPS technology envisioned for precision turf management. Electric machines require microprocessor-based controllers to distribute power to the drive wheels and cutting units.

Electronics will allow the design of 'smart' equipment - machines offering enhanced performance and diagnostics through the use of on-board electronics. This technology, often dubbed 'drive by wire', uses a computer to help the operator more effectively operate the equipment. For example, it could sense the speed of the machine and automatically adjust the optimum reel revolutions per minute (RPM).

It's not too far-fetched to combine drive-by-wire technology with GPS positioning to create an autonomous machine (ie, a robot). These machines are able to accurately mow straight lines to within a few centimeters and are even capable of mowing at night.

Electronics can also assist in maintaining turf care machines. Wireless hour meters can automatically radio the machine's hours to a central computer in the service bay, whenever the machine is near the maintenance shed. This information will save time and help plan routine care. Upon reading the machine's ID with a scanner, a touch screen at the technician's workbench can allow immediate, fingertip access to the parts look-up and maintenance instructions.

These are just a few of the advanced and exciting technology in the works for future golf course equipment. While it is difficult to predict when and which ones will ultimately become commonplace, it is safe to say maintaining the golf course of tomorrow will be different from today.

Jack Gust is an R&D Chief Engineer for the Center for Advanced Turf and Technology, at The Toro Company, Minneapolis, USA.

Course Feature

On the Up

Scott MacCallum visits Burton Golf Club, which through vision and hard work of members and staff, is going places... it's also hosting this year's National Championship.



Burton Golf Club, in Derbyshire, is thriving. There is a waiting list for membership; competitions are oversubscribed, with golfers even scrambling to get their names down for the following year's event, and money is being invested to improve facilities for both member and staff alike. Oh, and they will be welcoming BIGGA members for the National Championship, supported by Ransomes Jacobsen, at the beginning of October.

The root of this success, as is so often the case, can be traced to some committed and far sighted people both from within the membership and on the staff.

John Haley became Chairman of Green three years ago and a few months later Gavin Robson joined the club as Course Manager and since then the giant strides have been made.

"When I took on the Chairman of Green role, unhappy members were button holing me and asking what I was going to do about this and what I was going to do about that. I didn't even know what hollow tining was. To me it sounded like something a musical instrument would do," said John.

"Now I don't get moaning from the membership, only constructive criticism and that's great."

So what magic dust was scattered to improve the club's fortunes? Well, magic didn't come into it. Just good old fashioned greenkeeping and an imaginative use of club resources.

"Before I started the job I played a few rounds and walked the course by myself and the first thing I did when I arrived officially was define the

fairways and put in a bit of shape," explained Gavin, who had previously been at Lingdale Golf Club.

"I sat the staff down and we had a good chat about what I wanted and outlined my ideas for course maintenance and presentation," said Gavin, adding that he has been extremely impress by the qualities and commitment his team has shown over the last two and a half years.

An intensive aeration programme was introduced and the condition of the course turned around. But more than that, the membership noticed the green staff out of the course much more which, in itself, made the next phase of the club's development an easier sell to the members.

"The maintenance facilities were pretty antiquated. They were prone to dampness and flooding, while the mess room was only eight foot by six foot, for five of them. The workshop wasn't too bad but couldn't cope with more than only large piece of machinery," explained John, who added that the main machinery store was damp and in the event of a fire there was no way the kit could have been removed safely.

"This is the 21st century and the days of green staff doffing their caps





and sitting in a wooden hut should be long gone. From my previous life in business I know that it is important that staff are properly looked after - if you have a happy more contented workforce you are more likely to get results," said John, who added that it coincided with the need for a new irrigation system, with its computerisation requiring a secure dry environment.

Having determined that improved facilities were a necessity it was then agreed that repair wasn't a viable option and the prospect loomed of persuading the membership that £250,000 should be spent on greenkeeping facilities.

"With Gavin having got to grips with the course and results starting to show the members' attitude towards the greenkeeping staff was much more positive than it had been. They could see Gavin and the team working out on the course and it was a chance for me to say that we've got to give Gavin and his team what they need to conduct their business properly."

They also showed those who expressed an interest around the existing facilities and to a member they returned convinced of the need for a rebuild.

"We had around a dozen come over and they tended to be among the more influential members - some of whom were of the opinion that the existing units were only 10-20 years old and shouldn't need replacing - and they all came back convinced of the need for change and passed that view on to others," said Gavin.

A small committee was set up to look at the project and some groundwork revealed that they were looking at estimates of around the £180,000 mark. As it turned out the figure turned out to be closer to £250,000.

"We owned a greenkeeper's cottage at the back of the course which the modern day Course Manager tends not to want, so I proposed that we sell it to fund the new maintenance facility. This is what happened," said John.

The club called an Extraordinary General Meeting to approve the project, attended by around 100 members, and during the meeting people with relevant skills were identified as useful for the work that was to follow.

"One member who had been a Site Manager, said that we should have a Site Manager to oversee the work and I approached him after the meeting and he agreed to take on that role. He has been a rottweiler, here every day apart from holidays, and he did it all for nothing," said John.

Having initially produced drawings themselves to give them an idea of cost the committee passed the work on to a professional architect whose plans turned out to be similar to the original plans

Designing and building the new facility was made slightly more complicated by the fact the site was sloping, which meant the main administration, mess room, workshop element was on two levels with the workshop taking the lower tier.

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Course Feature



"Funnily enough, the fact that it was split level didn't add significant money to the costs, although I had feared that it would," said John, who will be Burton's Captain next year, although he hopes to retain his Chairman of Green role as well - "I'll be up here even more than I am at the moment," he laughed.

Work began on February 4, when one of the old units was knocked down and as we spoke, in early July, there was around four weeks to go until completion.

"We were due to finish around the end of May beginning of June but the difficulty of coordinating time tables of contractor and sub-contractors, and one slight amendment to the plans, slowed the process down," said Gavin, of a delay which is by no means Wembley Stadium standard.

Elsewhere, a new group, the Strategy Committee on planning ahead for the year 2012 on three fronts - course, clubhouse and membership.





"At a lot of clubs developments tend to be ad hoc and this can cause problems when members are surprised, particularly on how much it costs. So what we've done, is look at all areas of the club and examine areas of potential development," explained John.

"For example, next year we are going to employ an architect to review the course and whatever recommendations he makes we'll budget for in the year 2008. We'd like to be able to add length for certain competitions - hopefully an Open qualifier one year - and look at reintroducing the many bunkers which were filled in during the '60s to save on maintenance costs.

"Between the architect's inspection and any work that he recommends we'd like to improve our practice facilities by adding a covered four bay driving range and practice greens, chipping areas and bunkers etc.

"My view is that if you don't keep developing you will fall behind," said John.

And falling behind is something that Burton Golf Club certainly isn't.

"We have become generally regarded as the best club in Derbyshire and our income from societies, competitions and green fees has doubled in a year."

The club hosted BIGGA's scratch match against the Combined Services last year so heroically won against the odds by our boys, and it will again welcome BIGGA members in October for the National Championship.

"Since January every job I've done on the course, I've found myself thinking that greenkeepers are going to be looking at this in a few months' time. Prepping a course for them is going to be fun," said Gavin, while always aware that Burton's members are going to be looking out for any special touches he adds for his own but doesn't for them!

"The club feels it is an honour for him to host his own Association's Championship but if he suddenly produces a course different to what we've seen I know I'll be asked questions by members," added John.

But Gavin does have a few tricks up his sleeve.

"Three or four of the lads from East Midlands Section are going to rake bunkers for me - a mini support team if you like and Burton's members will give me a divotting party. The pressure will be on and it will be a challenge," he smiled.

He will no doubt be more than happy to show any BIGGA members around his new facility during the Championship. It's just another example of the pride the staff and members have for their club.

Anyone interested in playing in BIGGA's National Championship on October 2 & 3 should contact Sarah Norris at BIGGA HOUSE, Tel: 01347 833800 email: sarah@bigga.co.uk

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600 Greenkeepers

John Haley pens his own thoughts on Burton Golf Club and his role as Chairman of Green



Just over three years ago I was appointed Chairman of Green at my Club, with a mandate to re-energise the Head Greenkeeper and his staff as the Course - one of the best in the County - was looking tired and below the standards our Members had come to expect. Unlike all my predecessors I made no pretence that I understood the finer art of Greenkeeping, I just thought I could use my motivational skills and the Greens team's expertise would do the rest.

How wrong I was! Within two months, one member of the greens staff had a serious accident on the course; one broke his ankle playing Cricket; his brother tore ligaments playing Soccer; the trainee disappeared; the Health and Safety Executive swarmed all over us; the Irrigation system finally conked out and we had an undetected leak that cost us half our water supply! In addition we had just had the driest winter/spring for many, many years.

There was also the small matter of 600 plus members, all experts in successful maintenance of Golf Courses (As there is little difference between a 20 square foot back lawn and a Golf Course Acreage!) wanting to know what I personally was going to do about it and why, despite all the aforementioned problems, the Course was not yet to the same levels as Augusta!

Well, to cut an ever lengthening story short, the Head Greenkeeper decided the time had come to move on (his Deputy having already left to take up a Head Greenkeeper's position) and the recruitment process started. We had a very good response to our advertisement and out of 35 applicants drew up a shortlist of six. I should say at this point that the recruitment process was left to myself and the Club President and our selection only needed the rubber stamping of the rest of the Club Board.

If I am honest, our eventual appointee was not top of the list before the interviews commenced but was clearly the best candidate at the end of the process. Now this is where I know you will all, particularly those from the Midland Region, be surprised, if not shocked, that this candidate was none other than Gavin Robson!

Moving the clock forward two years and our course is now considered not only a very good test of golf but in magnificent condition and considered the best in Derbyshire and up with the best in the Midlands (other clubs members views who have played the course, not only ours). How has this been achieved? By a lot of hard work; putting together a very professional and skilled team; motivating them; a hands on approach;

proper training of staff and a very professional knowledge and expertise of the art of Golf Course Management.

This is what Gavin has brought to the Club and although he has achieved this in a very short space of time, he and we, are not resting on our laurels but continuing to develop and give Gavin the resources to achieve this.

So what have I brought to the "party"? Well I now know my Hollow tining from my verti draining but not much else. I see my role as the go between the Greens Committee and Gavin but do not allow any interference in how he manages his team or the work they do. Gavin and his team are the Professionals and should not have interference from the other 600 Greenkeepers in the club. As I said to one of our members who used to work in the coal industry, if the Head Greenkeeper at the local course came in and started telling him how to dig coal he would have told him what to do... Why do members of golf clubs think they are different when it comes to Course Management?

Of course I listen to what members say and any ideas they have are always discussed with Gavin and many have been acted on, but I believe the excellent relationship I have with Gavin is I let him get on with the job because that's what he's paid to do. I truly believe that if more clubs had the confidence to let their Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers get on with the job, with a minimum or no interference, most courses and clubs would be all the better for it. So come on all you Chairmen of Green stop interfering and see the results for yourself!

So finally, where is this course that's so good? Its Burton-On-Trent (which is actually just inside Derbyshire) and many Greenkeepers/Course Managers, will get the chance to play it in October because the BIGGA National Championships are being held here this year. We look forward to seeing you then and with no pressure on Gavin seeing for yourself the quality we now have.

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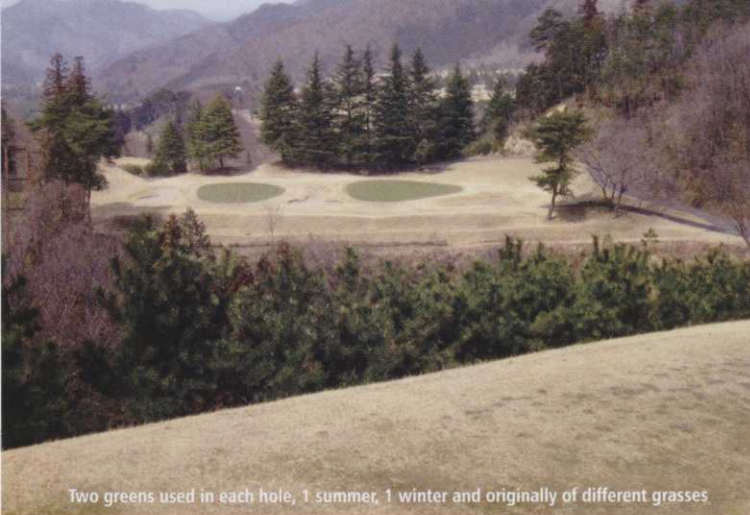
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Two greens used in each hole, 1 summer, 1 winter and originally of different grasses



A mowing challenge, to say the least

Turning Japanese: Part 2

Laurence Pithie MG continues his insight into managing golf courses in Japan.

Following the 'bubble burst' in 1991/92, a number of foreign banks stepped into buying the assets and then forming golf management companies during the late 90s. Most courses in Japan are proprietary owned and only a handful remain as original private equity clubs. Two banks or investment companies in particular, currently own or operate around 200 courses, spread throughout the length of Japan. There are many smaller groups although the majority are of single ownership. Today, the majority are operationally sound, but cannot repay the debt, at least in the short term. It is a few of the golf courses operated by the management companies Pacific Golf Management (PGM) and Accordia Golf, that I had the opportunity and pleasure of visiting. Both companies have extensive office facilities in Tokyo, the former occupying the 33rd floor of Atago Green Hills Tower with magnificent views over the city. Just recently, PGM were floated on the Japanese Stock Market and their market value exceeded 'city' expectations as they continue to expand.

Most of Japan's courses are situated in central and western Honshu. Although the soil type varies, the main types are clay, shale and basaltic rock. Rainfall is plentiful and Japan has an abundance of fresh water, thanks also to its lakes and rivers. Drinking water is also of good quality. Irrigation is generally only a three month requirement from July to September, but recent summers have been hot and dry. The typhoon season with tropical storms is a late summer, early fall occurrence and considerable damage can occur. One course in Hokkaido lost 4,000 trees last year during one such storm.

Grass type is mainly the native Zoysia, a warm season grass that is the dominant species throughout most of Japan. Bermuda Grass is favoured in the more sub-tropical Okinawa, whereas Kentucky Blue (Smooth Stalk Meadow Grass) is grown in Hokkaido to the north, as the desired cool season grass. Virtually all courses now have bent grass greens - Penncross being by far the most prominent. Hollow coring is usually carried out once or twice per year and top dressing is carried out every few weeks except after the coring operation - this is largely for thatch control and to ensure ample root development. The two main types of Zoysia are the finer leaved Korai, used on tees, collars and fairways and the broader leaved Noshiha, used in the semi-roughs and surrounds, which is slightly more cold, tolerant. Zoysia is less aggressive than Bermuda and requires less nutrient and water. It has a lignin content within the leaf structure, therefore sharpness of cylinder reels is essential for maintaining a clean cut. Semi-roughs are mown at 35 to 40 mm and there are no deep rough areas, only woodland, bamboo and other forms of vegetation.

The topography of many Japanese courses is extremely undulating and mowing steep banks and slopes is a considerable challenge. Far more areas are mown in Japan than would be tolerated in the UK regarding Risk Assessment and safety. A ride-on rotary mower with a very low centre of gravity and produced in Japan called a Baroness GM1600, is an essential item of equipment on many courses. Having seen some of the slopes and banks regularly mown, the word 'kamikaze' springs to mind.



LP & some greenkeeping staff, finishing their shift at 4pm on a Saturday

The growing season is six months long, mainly May to October. For the remainder of the year, Zoysia lies dormant and the Bent has minimal growth. The high temperature and humidity during late summer is the stress period for both turf and the Course Manager known as the Greenkeeper or Keeper, pronounced 'kee-pah'. Fairways are mown on alternate days and semi-rough about every four days during peak season. Low grade agricultural fertiliser is locally produced and readily available in Japan and it is widely used on fairways, surrounds and roughs on the older courses. Newer courses and these operated by PGM and Accordia tend to favour the coated or controlled release products that are mainly imported from the USA. A mix of granular and foliar feed products are used on the greens, similar to that in Europe.

Chemicals are mostly produced in Japan with pre-emergent control of weeds being probably the chief requirement. Bugs such as beetles, cutworms and to a lesser degree mole crickets all require varying degrees of control. Fungal diseases such as Brown Patch, Pythium, Dollar Spot and Anthracnose are the most common but all can be controlled with the appropriate pesticide. A particular problem is the Pine Tree Nematode, which leads to the death of these trees. This is becoming more of a problem on many courses since mono stands of pine trees on golf courses are fairly common.

Top dressings are generally sand only and most of this is available in Japan although not always of high quality. Some is imported from China in barges but the cost can be quite high. In general, costs are much the same as in the UK in spite of transportation problems to many parts of the country.

Staffing levels are higher than in the UK but lower than pre 1992. A typical 18-hole course will have around 12 to 14 full time staff plus a couple of part time workers, often women to help with the mowing and general landscaping work. Prior to the downturn, it would not be uncommon for clubs to employ over 20 full time staff per course. Salary levels are similar to those in the UK although living costs are higher. As a result there is a shortage of labour since there is considerable competition from manufacturing, commerce and other areas of the service industry, all with greater financial rewards. Most, if not all staff, are salaried although one of the management companies had introduced hourly paid staff. There is no formal turfgrass education in Japan, other than that provided by the vendors or occasionally held seminars. Few have attended college in the US and there is only a limited sharing of knowledge and information. Agronomic skills are in short supply and there are no Greenkeepers Associations. Only a handful of outsiders or 'Gaijins' are employed, usually either American or Australian since language is a major challenge.

Overall, budget costs are much higher than in the UK and generally vary from £350,000 to £475,000 for labour and operational costs. This of course is a reduction on pre-1992 costs!

The maintenance buildings and compounds I visited were quite generous in size albeit getting old, but that would tie-in with the down-turn in 1992 and the limited investment since then. Equipment also tended to be old but in recent years the level of new equipment mirrored the growth in golf and the overcoming of past debt problems. Both Toro and Jacobsen have a significant presence in Japan although there was a lot of ride-on equipment and trucks that were produced locally. Environmental considerations were generally some years behind that of the UK and Europe and legislation tended to follow that of the US but many years later. A common sight was the amount of trash and junk lying around the compounds or drives and there seemed little control on the storage of fuel. With regards to irrigation, Rainbird and Toro appeared to have cornered the market.

Some of the stranger aspects of Japanese courses include the use of two greens. This dates back to the earlier days when summer greens were composed of Korai and winter greens of Bent. Both greens would be of equal size, about 350 sq m and each with standard bunkering. Since the knowledge of maintaining Bent grass greens through the hot and humid summers improved, there was no need for this practice to continue. All newer courses have one green as normal. Another peculiar aspect is that some courses have lights mounted on 40 foot high poles, thus allowing play to continue on the closing holes during darkness. Moving daylight hours as in Europe may be a cheaper option but this is Japan. Another course visited had a magnetic cart track whereby the golf cart could be remotely controlled. It was a strange sight to see a small cart with four bags of clubs being controlled by a female caddy holding a remote control unit some 20 meters away. All the caddies were also covered up from head to toe to prevent the risk of sunburn. Their job was also to repair divot marks and hand out and clean clubs to each of the four players during the round. Playing 18 holes at a private club is also different in Japan. It is



Excessive and steep faced bunkering with labour and cost implications

quite common to play nine holes then come in for lunch before tackling the back nine, although early bird and twilight play is on the increase with uninterrupted stops. At many of the more private clubs, a shower then communal bath would be the norm before ending the day with dinner and sake.



Light tower on a closing hole to guide the golfers home

Any significant new constructions such as additional holes or a cart barn for example, would require the land to be blessed by two Shinto priests in an hour long ceremony. Sake would be poured over piles of sand placed on each corner of the site to be constructed and representatives of the contractors and clients would attend this ritual. Japan after all is a mix of commercialism and spiritualism.

The main challenges facing the Greenkeepers in Japan, are probably managing the Bent Grass greens through the summer stress period. Mowing can be a challenge on some courses but a common problem appeared to be with tree management. There appeared to be too many closely planted pine trees that restricted air movement and caused various shade problems. Spending around 15k on this and landscaping work around the clubhouses was common on the courses visited. The Japanese have a love of trees and most courses I visited had a mix of flowering cherries, red acers and the

inevitable azaleas, which are a native species. Like many US designed courses, bunker maintenance and upkeep was another considerable challenge and would certainly require a large labour input to maintain sand on some steep bunker faces. Within the golf industry there is a resistance to change and productivity levels are probably lower than those in the UK. Honouring traditions and employment loyalty have mixed benefits and overall there is probably a suspicion of change. Japan was a country closed off to the rest of the world during the Shogun empire for over 250 years. In summary, the courses I visited were of a standard between those in the UK and in the US albeit, with at least double the staffing levels and budgets to match. However, the costs of most products are somewhat higher and with many being imported.

It is a fascinating country to visit and the hospitality that my wife and I received throughout our visit was second to none. Golf is played worldwide and it is interesting to see how others manage their golf courses and overcome the challenges faced. My visit to eight courses and these subsequent articles would not be possible without the assistance of Mike Heacock, Simon Doyle and Scott Kusumoto. Their help and information was greatly appreciated. Sayo-nara.

Who'd be a Greenkeeper?

by Paul Cook

Okay, I admit it. Deciding to drive to Neil's stag weekend was probably not the best decision I'd ever made! Driving there was a relaxed two and a half hours, driving back was something else altogether. It's late, very late and I'm suffering that kind of exhaustion only alcohol and sleep deprivation can bring. The prospect of a couple of hours sleep, tops, raises the question "Why? Why do I carry on being a Greenkeeper? Why not get myself something more civilised, a job that allows me to sleep until seven or eight?," oh how my body aches for sleep. My mates will all be sleeping on the plane home and they don't have to be at work until half eight, nine even. Who in their right mind wants to get up at four in the morning. Note to self "Must get another job."



New South Wales GC, Sydney Australia.
Paul (left) with Course Superintendent,
Gary Dempsey

Snippets of conversations over the weekend begin percolating my thoughts, I remember my feelings as I'd listened to the others talk about their jobs. Difficult to describe but it had been a feeling of satisfaction, almost of smugness and I don't mean that in an unkind way. Perhaps snugness might be better, a sense of belonging, belonging in the work I do.

They'd all done better than I had at school. Don't get me wrong, I'd enjoyed my school days with these same friends, having great fun, getting up to no-good - you know, the usual stuff young lads do. But I hadn't enjoyed studying - I'm not the academic type. The only thing I'd been interested in and achieved any success at, was sport - I left school with only one GCSE to my name... in PE! And now, I'm passionately interested in Greenkeeping and I'm achieving... hmmm, perhaps there's a link there don't you think?

Most of my mates had gone off to college or university and while they hadn't necessarily known what they wanted to do they did seem to have some sense of direction.

Me? Well I'd had no idea what I wanted to do... minimum GCSE's equalled minimum options. I chose to go to college to study tourism and almost from day one I knew it wasn't for me. I stuck it for a year before dropping out, only to find myself right back where I'd started, except now another year older. Not good!

Time to do some serious thinking, I bought a smart suit and went to

work for my mother as a data-input clerk while I sorted out my life. Evenings and weekends I'd be on the golf course - golf was my passion, I wasn't half bad either. My folks encouraged me to seek out what I wanted to do and go for it rather than just do something because I could. They believed everything would work out in time.

When I first saw the advertisement for an apprentice Greenkeeper, something clicked. I recalled the British Masters at Collingtree where I'd done two weeks work experience in the Pro Shop prior to the tournament and had a brilliant time. I asked the Head Greenkeeper if he needed any help for the tournament and that's how I got my first taste of Greenkeeping - and I loved it. I loved everything about it, not just being in a golfing environment but prepping bunkers until they were perfect and most of all those early morning starts. The smell of grass, sunrises, early morning mist - magic! Reading the advertisement again something stirred in me, I applied, got the job and on day one knew I'd made the right decision - I just knew this was the job for me!

Now, seven years later and driving home, I realise that as I'd thought of that first day in my first job I'd no longer been aware of my aching body, my tiredness, my throbbing head... still have another hour's driving to get home but feeling good.

It feels good too to remember how my parents had got up early to take me to the golf course, we'd shared those early mornings, ferrying me backwards and forwards every day, weekdays and weekends alike.

Buckingham Golf Club is a very mature parkland course not far from Silverstone where we lived. My apprenticeship included day release to do the NVQ course at Moulton College, Northampton, and hey-ho what do you know, here learning and studying was somehow different, it wasn't a chore or difficult. I got on well, got my spraying certificate and my boss at work gave me good reports. So there I was doing a job I loved and experiencing real success for the first time in my life.

The course lasted two years and half way through the second, a guy who'd worked at Buckingham and had seen and liked my work, rang up and offered me a job - in Austria.

The college were really helpful and fast tracked me through the final part of my course to get NVQ level II and two months later I was off to the mountains.

Golf Club Adamstal has to be seen to be believed! This course is unique, built up a mountain with greens ranging from 500 to 900 metres above sea level. Stunningly beautiful and inspirational in the way mountains are.

A long way from home and all things familiar and with not a word of German to my name, my learning curve had suddenly gone vertical, as steep as the mountain itself. This is where I cut not only my Greenkeeping teeth but I almost had my foot cut off in a freak and rather gruesome accident involving a mower and a very narrow mountain path.

Four months later, after bone and plastic surgery, I was back at work, facing the task of visiting the site of the accident and overcoming any residual anxiety. Over the next three years I knuckled down to learn my craft, I also learned about a different culture, a different climate (six feet of snow covers the course during the winter months) I dedicated myself to being the best I could be, took pride in my work, set myself high standards and came to realise what a great profession I was in and that I loved this work. Always in beautiful surroundings, working with nature, working at dawn and dusk in the mountains, is an experience beyond description. Sights, sounds, smells, all combining into an experience that transcends thoughts and words - and all this is part of my job? What other job could possibly give me this experience? I smile to myself, remembering how this rambling had started with me asking myself why I did this work... Doh!

In the winters when the course was closed I'd take myself off to Kitzbuhel, one of Austria's most famous and vibrant ski resorts. Daytimes would find me on the ski slopes for a run or two or snowboarding and with a total lack of respect for my liver - working evenings and weekends in a bar. Female company had been scarce in the mountains, here in the bar it seemed barmen were a bit of an attraction (babe-magnets).

One winter I went to New York to do a one month course on Turf Grass management at Rutgers University - my first experience of intensive study. It required full concentration and although it was hard work I thoroughly enjoyed it and it whet my appetite for more. This year, I swapped snowboard and goggles in Austria for surfboard and shades in Australia.

Three months work at New South Wales Golf Course, only number 34 in the world's top courses! I wanted a different experience of Greenkeeping and a links course - in the southern hemisphere and suffering a drought was about as different from mountains, snow and ice as I could find. I left Austria at minus 10 degrees and arrived in drought stricken Sydney - a searing 30 degrees.

This course was in a different league to those I had so far experienced and served to confirm my intention of eventually having a job on one of the world's top courses. By the ocean and with a rustic charm, this is a superb course with facilities second to none - shortly before I arrived the 18 strong Greenkeeping team had moved into a purpose built state of the art complex.

There's something about doing a job really well, where standards and expectations are high, that I find appealing, I really do believe in that old maxim "if something's worth doing it's worth doing well". And you know what, here I was just another pair of hands, I didn't have the responsibilities of being First Assistant as I had back in Austria and it didn't matter... here I was, on the other side of the world, raking bunkers, mowing greens, being obsessive about achieving the highest standards of work and getting that same feeling, that moment of just being there doing my work as well as I know how, learning my craft, perfect!

It's seven years since I began my apprenticeship and today as Assistant Head Greenkeeper at Fohrenwald Golf Club, home of the Austrian Ladies Open, I have my foot set firmly on the management ladder.

I'm almost home now in more than one sense. Just a few more miles to go and I'll be in bed to snatch those few precious hours of sleep before the alarm calls. Just a few more weeks to go and I'll be back in the UK, going to university. I'm going to get myself a degree - Turf grass science.

Pulling up outside my flat, turning off the engine, I'm relaxed and content. I don't want any other kind of job, I know that no matter how bad I might feel in the morning, no matter how much I don't want to wake up, no matter how much I want to roll over and go back to sleep, I know that as soon as I get to work breathe in the air - whether its frosty, misty, raining or sunny - look around, pick up my golf cart and head for the golf course. I know there'll be that moment when I'll get that feeling, you know the one, the one I had on that first day, in that first job, that feeling that is beyond words, that feeling that lets me know this is the life and the job for me - the best job in the world, I wouldn't change it for anything.



The fifth hole at Adamstal GC, Austria

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Lateral Thinking

Rob Donald makes a case for the installation of drainage at a time when standing water seems like a luxury item!

It is difficult to imagine the need for drainage during the balmy summer months and indeed among reports of the driest winters on record, diminishing aquifers and countrywide hosepipe bans. Despite the logical opinion to the contrary, there is no better time to consider drainage installations than in the middle of a dry summer. Cast your mind back to how your fairways looked last time there was some 'proper' wet weather, try and recall the grumbling golfers, the migrating members and the inactive course staff and then consider the benefits that drainage could offer your club.

The principals of drainage remain constant whatever the season. Drainage is installed with the objective of removing surplus water from a designated area and discharging it to a positive outfall, a collecting area or an area of low value. A drainage installation should have physical properties that enable water to be collected and then conveyed through a network to a point of ultimate discharge. Good drainage of a golf course is now becoming a requisite as the expectations of the modern golfer often require year round access and playability.

Drainage can, of course, be entirely natural, free draining soils (often sandy) allowing rapid permeation into similarly free draining sub-strata; this however is not often the case. Large areas of the United Kingdom are covered with slow draining clay deposits, a legacy from the last ice age. These deposits are often found to extremes, in areas of very high population density, for example the Thames Valley. In this instance drainage does not occur naturally, intervention is required in the form of an installation.

The requirements of a golf course in terms of drainage are not as extreme as the requirement of, say, a winter sports pitch (rugby, football), the golfer is less inclined to tee off at 3pm on a wet Saturday afternoon when the referee is blowing his whistle to commence a football match. The installation however should be constantly functioning, removing excess soil water efficiently.

A golf course drainage system should effectively remove surplus water from the fairway, green, tees and bunkers, allowing the benefit of year round access and, equally as important, the management of turf culture. A golf course that is inadequately drained will limit the sward development:

- Reduction in soil temperature is caused because the water in the soil pores has a higher heat capacity than the air with which it replaces. This results in a reduced sward growth and effectively a shorter growing season.





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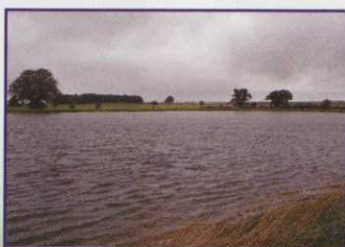
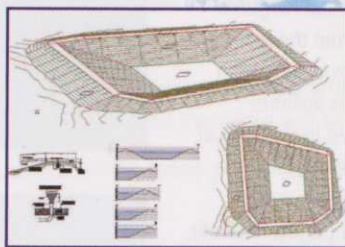
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- The consequential lack of aeration restricts root development, thereby limiting the nutrient uptake and leading to drought susceptibility, which ultimately results in a weak sward prone to disease and physical damage (divotting/rutting).
- Water logged soils interfere with the desirable micro organic life, which in turn may lead to a reduction in the rate of decomposition of organic matter, the result is anaerobic conditions with black layer and thatch.
- The soil structure will suffer when soils are waterlogged, as any mechanical activity will accentuate the liability of compaction and smearing.
- Finally the effectiveness of fertilisers and herbicides is reduced as the nutrient uptake is limited and the potential for leaching is increased.

Drainage design is typically separated into two components;

Primary drainage is the term used to describe the pipework infrastructure on a fairway which typically comprises a main drain with laterals connecting into it at appropriate intervals. The orientation of the main and laterals is determined by the topography of the course, however consideration should be made for the presence of irrigation pipework and the disturbance to the fairway that a main drain and associated lateral junctions would have. Typically therefore, a main drain is run adjacent to the fairway with junction positions within the rough, the laterals being more discreet are installed within the fairway itself.

A green is likely to be drained during construction and would typically have a 'herringbone' system installed, this provides for the efficient collection and removal of drainage water from the green, within the green formation (often a basin).

Bunker drainage will again comprise of pipework running through the lowest areas of the feature and connecting into the fairway drainage. Prevention of sand ingress is paramount to the efficiency and longevity of a bunker drain and the design should adequately address this issue.

Secondary drainage is often described as a bypass system. This refers to the ability of surface water generated through heavy rainfall, to be directed via a surface system into the pipe drainage network, thereby bypassing the topsoil. The systems available are known as sand slitting, gravel banding/grooving and to a certain extent vertidrain and mole ploughing.

These operations when correctly specified, situated and installed can have a marked effect on a primary piped drainage installation and extend it's efficiency.

To conclude, the design and installation of a golf course drainage scheme, whether during construction or within an established facility, requires experience and expertise. Drainage it is fair to say, is not rocket science, however incorrectly installed drainage schemes often result in an inefficient or dysfunctional system with an extensive remediation requirement. Only specialist consultants and contractors should be approached for both design and/or installation phases of any significant project.

Rod Donald is Managing Director of White Horse Contractors Limited: Lodge Hill, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 2JD. Telephone: 01865 736272 or email: whc@whitehorsecontractors.co.uk



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A Home Win

The Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day, at Aldwark Manor, produced its usual blend of sun, fun and golf, but on this occasion local knowledge seemed to have played a more than usual influence on the result.



Elaine Thomas and Richard Whyman present the trophy to Aldwark Manor's Manager



Toro 2 came very close

The event has always been blessed with a range of golfer you don't find at an Open Championship. Low handicappers mixing with those who are a tad less proficient meaning those who have strolled out to take in some of the golf spend time applauding and ducking in equal measure, and Aldwark Manor's own team displayed the benefits of fielding players with a range of handicaps in the fourball best two scores to count - three on the par-3s - format.

Mark Nesbitt (20), Lady Captain Jenny Stacey (20), Alastair Grindley (Scratch) and Mike MacLean (4) dovetailed beautifully to amass 98 points, with perhaps the highlight being six points on the notoriously difficult stroke index 17th, where both Jenny and Mike produced nett birdies to make huge strides on the field.

Indeed that proved the difference between winning and being runner-up as the Toro 2 team did well on the same hole but collected one point fewer. Toro, with Richard Owens (6), John Hewson (16), Adrian Kitchinson (19) and Russell Moody (15), gathered a massive 50 points on the inward nine and would have won on countback.

Third were perennial Golf Day favourites and former winners Lincsgreen 1, consisting of Rob Welford (2), Less Howkins (5), Graeme MacDonald (4) and Peter Owen (16), who produced yet another fine performance for 93 points.

Danny Chamberlain, of Rigby Taylor 2, won the Longest Drive with a stunning blow down the 8th, while Allan Russell, of 3M, proved the deadliest from the tee with Nearest the Pin on the 18th.

As ever, the prizes were presented by Neil's widow, Elaine Thomas, who was presented with flowers from BIGGA Chairman, Richard Whyman.

With the ceremonies completed the assembled players were treated to an Aldwark Manor barbecue.

RESULTS

1. Aldwark Manor 98
2. Toro 2 97
3. Lincsgreen 1 93

Longest Drive	Danny Chamberlain
Nearest the Pin	Allan Russell



Lincsgreen put up their usual fine effort



Allan Russell was the dead eyed dick



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GROUND CARE



Feelin' Hot! Hot! Hot!

It may have taken 39 years for The Open Championship to return to Royal Liverpool Golf Club - better known as Hoylake - but members of the BIGGA Open Support Team will remember the week for much longer than that.

The straw colour, which greeted everyone when they stepped through the gates, was evidence of a long dry spell in the weeks before the first ball was struck and it provided the sort of links conditions for which the R&A craved. The week itself witnessed temperatures not experienced in the UK for many a long while. Indeed smoking warnings were regularly posted and it was a great relief to everyone that "bush fires" were avoided.

It was in these boiling conditions that Links Manager, Craig Gilholm, and his team had prepared the course and it was in these conditions that BIGGA's Support Team worked harder than any Support Team has done in the past.

For the first time ever the 60 strong team prepared bunkers prior to the start of play, raked bunkers during matches and divoted the courses in the evening after play stretching resources to the limit.

The demands increased with R&A Chief Executive, Peter Dawson, and Championship Chairman, Martin

Kippax, requesting flat raking whenever possible and this was achieved on the two rounds - 2nd and 3rd - which avoided overnight thunderstorms. This proved to be a delicate and difficult task, given the rakes provided to tackle the job, and doubled the time estimated to complete the work. However, it all proved worthwhile with the team receiving compliments for the quality of their work and no major issues with the players.

Off course also proved a memorable occasion for the team, dining morning and night in the imposing Anglican Cathedral, which neighboured the John Moore's University campus were the team was billeted, while the quality of the nightlife in Liverpool, when the team had the opportunity to take advantage, was never in doubt.

Craig, who took over at Hoylake following the sad passing of Derek Green, was quick to pay tribute to his team who had worked tirelessly over the previous five years to ensure that the course met the demands of the



A Support Team member in action

Feelin' Hot! Hot! Hot!



Final round action



Richard Matteson, USA

modern day professional and it was a tribute to him that he was able to build on the wonderful foundations laid by his predecessor.

If proof were needed you can say that Hoylake was able to identify the finest golfer in the field with Tiger Woods chalking up his 11th Major victory, another one closer to the record of 18 held by Jack Nicklaus.

Tiger was glowing in his praise for the course, explaining that it was great to have a course which could be played in so many different ways. He chose to find the fairways with irons, leaving him short of many of the bunkers and with longer approach shots and who can argue!

Snippets

NEW JOB FOR O'LEARY

David O'Leary visited The Open the day after he parted company with Aston Villa and through his friendship with Lee Westwood acquired an armband to get himself inside the ropes - I know! He spent some time in conversation with Support Team member Paul Eddlestone and was caught on camera by some of the photographers who managed to make it look as though O'Leary was the man in possession of the rake!



Ernie Els on the 5th



RAKING IT IN....

DAVID O'LEARY has just made a mint leaving Aston Villa and our picture makes it look as if he was raking it in at Hoylake yesterday. At least he probably found the battle for the Claret Jug more fun than his time with Deadly Doug.



Gary Cunningham with Tiger on his final match



Billy Merritt gets close to the action



Chris DiMarco



The Wednesday evening Bunker Masterclass proved very informative.

Photo by Colin Denny



Craig Gilholm (right) has a chance to share experiences with Ewan Grant, Head Greenkeeper at St Andrews who was in the same position the previous year.

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Derek Green, who worked so hard to enable Hoylake to be returned to the Open rota but who sadly died before he could see it, was remembered during the week when his old friend Bill Lawson organised a small meeting in the BIGGA Marquee. Attended by Derek's son, Richard, Hoylake's Chairman of Green, Nick Peel, Craig Gilholm, John Pemberton, Scott MacCallum and BIGGA Past Chairman Andy Campbell, Derek's memory was toasted and a few stories shared of Derek and his outstanding work.

DAY ONE FANATICAL FANS

A member of security's mobile went off as Simon Kahn was over his putt, he missed and two of his fans went after the security man, grabbed his phone and threw it in the long grass. Information supplied by Open Support Team Member Steve Beverley from Cleethorpes GC.

OUT OF BOUNDS

Nick Dougherty, on the 10th hole of tee, hit out of bounds only to hear a woman shout, "Your ball is in my garden" and then throw it over the fence at the marshal. Information supplied by Gavin Robson from Burton-on-Trent GC.

BIG BULLY

A spectator shouted at Ernie Els, "Come on Ernie, oh, and by the way, your wife said you need to lose some more weight." Information supplied by Colin Denny from Heaton Moor GC.



Photo by Colin Denny

DAY TWO PUTTER SAVED PAR

Jim Furyk used only his putter to get out of a green bunker on the 5th and saved par. Information supplied by Fredrik Seeger from Sweden.

HE JUST COULDN'T RESIST A MR WHIPPY

Sergio Garcia departed for areas unknown only to appear later eating an ice-cream, having held up play for about five minutes. Information supplied by Richard Matteson, USA.

WHEN YOU'VE GOTTA GO...

On the 8th hole Darren Parris was using the players toilet, when a child started rocking it, shouting "Hurry up, hurry up!" Information supplied by Mark Ellis, Spain.

DAY THREE GOOD WORK

Greg Owen didn't find sand until playing his 50th hole of the championship, clearing nearly three rounds without hitting a single bunker.

TOUGH GAME

Todd Hamilton complained about the pin positions claiming they were "Too hard". Information supplied by Keith Scruton, member of the BIGGA Open Support Team.

IT'S GOT TO BE PERFECT

On the 14th fairway bunker, Casey and Khan were in the same left side bunker. Khan played out first then Casey requested Khan's caddie smooth out the footprints made by Khan. Casey played his shot and failed to get the ball out. Information supplied by Mark Ellis from The Millbrook GC.

THE GREAT BIGGA BUNKER COMPETITION

Members of the BIGGA Open Support Team entered our competition to guess the number of bunkers that would be found each day, and in total, at the Open.

Winner of day one was Paul Johnson from Hankley Common GC who guessed 350 - the actual amount being 352. Friday's winner was Jonathon Evans from Carden Park GC, the number of bunkers visited was 353, Jonathon guessed closest with 367. Kevin Hodges from Longniddry GC, who estimated 188 bunkers would be hit on Saturday, was the winner on day three. 183 were actually hit.

Iain MacLeod, member of the BIGGA board was overall winner of the BIGGA Bunker Competition. He estimated that 1093 bunkers would be hit over the four days - good guess Iain - 1092 were actually found.

Winners of the daily competition received a half bottle of whisky and the overall winner received a bottle of whisky.

BIGGA Bunker Stats

	1995 St. A's	1996 Ly'm	1997 Troon	1998 B'dale	1999 C'stie	2000 St. A's	2001 Ly'm	2002 M'field	2003 St.G's	2004 Troon	2005 St A's	2006 Hoylake
Bunkers	112	185	84	117	115	112	197	148	106	93	112	96
Rd 1	214	501	344	355	539	148	557	359	388	393	252	352
Rd 2	201	577	272	406	468	164	547	372	405	371	203	353
Rd 3	130	269	107	226	202	65	224	175	149	148	100	183
Rd 4	156	271	136	153	265	71	257	169	181	185	121	204
Total	701	1618	859	1140	1474	448	1585	1078	1123	1097	676	1092

Trailer Buying Tips

There are many things to take into consideration when buying a trailer, this article offers some sound advice to ensure you make the best possible purchase.





AVAILABILITY OF SPARE PARTS AND ACCESSORIES

If you plan to keep your trailer long term, always check the availability of spares for the trailer before you purchase. Can the manufacturer guarantee spares for your trailer in ten years time? Are parts and accessories for your trailer reasonably priced? How quickly can parts and accessories be sourced and how far do you need to travel to find them?

SERVICING

Your trailer should be serviced regularly to ensure optimum performance. It is worth checking if your nearest service centre or workshop is within reasonable travelling distance of your home. Trailers, just like cars, must meet the legal requirements on tyres, brakes and lights.

WARRANTY AND CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Ensure your trailer, if bought from new, comes with a warranty and check what it actually covers. You should also check that there is a customer support service available to deal with any queries or questions you may have.

SECURITY

Invest in a coupling lock and wheel lock to deter thieves and for additional peace of mind and always insure your trailer.

RE-SALE VALUE

It is useful to research the re-sale value of the trailer. If you are planning on part exchanging or selling your trailer in a few years, its depreciation and re-sale value should be taken into account before purchasing.

TOWING

It may be worth testing a particular make or model of trailer before you purchase, to test how it feels to tow. There are various trailer hire companies that will offer daily or weekend trailer hire.

It is essential that you have the appropriate vehicle to tow your choice of trailer. You will need to refer to your vehicle manufacturers handbook for your vehicles towing capacity.

If you passed your driving test after December 31, 1996, you will not automatically have category B+E on your driving licence, which allows you to tow trailers up to 3500kg. Without this category you will be restricted in the weight of trailer you can tow without taking an additional test. Go to www.dvla.gov.uk for further details.

Do not overload your trailer - it is not only illegal but may affect the stability of towing and could compromise the safety of you and other road users.

PURCHASING SECOND HAND TRAILERS

If purchasing a second hand trailer, it is recommended that you note the serial number of the trailer and contact the manufacturer to confirm that the seller is the registered keeper before you purchase, the manufacturer should maintain a database of registered owners to help reduce theft. The manufacturer may have been informed by the police or the original owner if the trailer has been stolen. For a charge, The National Plant & Equipment Registry (TER) can also cross reference the Police National Computer (PNC) for reported stolen trailers.



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Products shown: RTV900 (above), ZD28 (below left), L3200 (below right)

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- Sep 7th ▶ Oatridge College, West Lothian
- Sep 12th ▶ Newark Showground, Nottinghamshire
- Sep 14th ▶ National Stud, Suffolk
- Sep 19th ▶ Sandown Park Race Course, Surrey
- Sep 21st ▶ Royal Bath & West Showground, Somerset
- Sep 26th ▶ Worcester Rugby Club, Worcestershire



For further information contact your local Kubota dealership or call: **0800 023 1111** or email: **kubotalive@kubota.co.uk**



www.kubota.co.uk

Just to prove a utility vehicle can offer ATV rivalling abilities, this six-wheeler is running two up, with full weather protection thrown in for good measure. There is also room for a load in the cargo bay on the back too. A machine like this, with prices from around £7,300, offers a lot more for the money than a top of the range ATV.



All Terrain Vehicles - Worth another look?

James de Havilland weighs up the pros and cons of ATVs.

For a large number of golf courses, a utility vehicle with a petrol, diesel, electric or even LPG fuelled power unit remains the default personnel transport tool. ATVs now come in variants with platforms, diesel power or even as road legal 'quadricycles'. Is this enough to make them worth considering as an alternative?

Do a few simple sums. Take a box stock petrol working ATV in the popular 350-400cc size range. Opt for a two-wheel drive manual model such as a Honda Foreman 350, buy a trailer to go with it and the combination will weight in at under £5,000. For a similar amount of money, a petrol utility vehicle, such as the Kawasaki Mule 600, has room for two and comes with a 180kg capacity load platform as standard.

Spend a little more and well respected entry level utility models - specifically targeting the 'golf' market - offer even more. Take the E-Z-Go MPT1200G from Ransomes-Jacobsen. Again offering two seats and a healthy 363kg cargo bay capacity, this simple tool again makes an ATV seem costly.

A further twist is the fact that an ATV 'rider' should wear a helmet. Although course risk assessment may deem this unnecessary, the word 'helmet' and 'ATV' are considered by many to be linked.

At this stage, it is easy to see why ATVs have struggled to make much of an impact as working tools on golf courses. Add the fact that there has mostly been only the choice of petrol models - LPG conversions excepted - plus restricted choice when it comes to platform equipped units, and it is case closed for ATVs. You may as well stop reading now.

Before you do however, there are a few twists and turns that may make keeping an open mind worthwhile. First up are 'quadricycles'. In simple terms, these are ATVs homologated for road use. Fitted with road legal lighting, indicators and being allowed to carry a pillion passenger, these machines have taken Europe by storm. In France, the 'quadricycle' market is put at 40,000 units a year.



At the sober end of the utility ATV scale are machines like the Kawasaki LVF300. Available in both two and four wheel drive versions, this five speed manual model is the ideal type of working bike. Simple, easy to use and light enough to nip around on without causing damage, these models are priced from around £3,900 and will tow a decent 300kg

All Terrain Vehicles - Worth another look?

In the UK, these machines are also starting to sell well. Seen as a safer alternative to a motorcycle, a 'quad' can be used as a ride to work machine by anyone with a car driving licence. What is more, this same machine can also be used off road, just like a 'normal' ATV.

A course separated from its driving range, for example, by a short road trip could find this type of machine a useful tool. Then again, a road legal Kubota RTV or similar would arguably be more useful, particularly in cab form with room for two and a flashing beacon to help other road users see it.

If the 'quadricycle' argument fails, how about diesel power? This is not a new idea, Polaris having produced its own in-house diesel in the late 1990s with the company's then UK importers, EP Barrus, offering its own D-Bat models before that. In six-wheeler form, with load bay at the rear, these latter machines did sell to a few courses.

For several years, independent ATV maker Diesel Quads has been producing a diesel ATV, the Diablo. Currently powered by a meaty Yanmar 850cc power unit, these CVT transmission models are produced in limited numbers in North Wales. They cannot be compared to a mainstream petrol ATV for refinement, but their simple build could well appeal.

It is also worth pointing out that it is possible to buy an ATV with a rear load platform. This type of machine is again, not new, with Yamaha starting the ball rolling with its now long deceased Pro-Hauler back in the 1980s.

Polaris also offered its aforementioned six-wheeler models up until a few years ago too, its role having since been taken over by the six-wheel Ranger utility. So if you want a load platform, current choice is limited to machines that can include Can-Am, formerly Bombardier, Outlander TX models.

Although ATVs continue to struggle to take on utility vehicles that does not mean they will not fit into some equipment buying patterns. As always, an open mind could well see an ATV providing useful service.



Massey Ferguson had yet to announce details of its diesel powered ATVs at the time of writing. As it stands, the company offer a range of what it brands AgTVs, these models having a SpeedRack system that enables attachments, including load platforms, to be added without the need for tools. A 400cc road legal CVT automatic MF400 is priced at £5,300 plus VAT

A nice sunny day, no need for a coat and a quick run across the dunes to check a problem on the ninth green. Do this job on an ATV, and you should wear a helmet. A definite minus in the eyes of many potential ATV buyers. But how many utility vehicles have as much pep as the pictured Yamaha Kodiak 450? This £5,800 machine will pull nearly half a ton and accelerate far faster than most will ever need ▼



▲ Entry level utility units include the E-Z-Go MPT1200G from Ransomes-Jacobsen. Simple, economical and well proven, this type of tool combines a light footprint with a versatile rear load area. An ATV will struggle to compete unless the terrain turns nasty or rutted tracks are in the job mix



Although it looks just like a conventional ATV, this 'quadricycle' from Taiwanese manufacturer Kymco, is fully homologated for road use and, on its third birthday, will need an MOT just like any other road vehicle. With a sticker price of £3,159 (exVAT) the pictured, MXU300RL is well priced for a 270cc machine, but as a working tool it is best viewed as a motorised pair of legs



A cargo box can be fitted to a number of ATV models, but don't expect massive capacity or dimensions. The Can-Am Outlander Max will only carry around 95kg, its high load height also working against it. But fit a trailer as well, and the package starts to make more sense. A 650 Outlander, which is a really powerful ATV with easily enough torque to handle a capacity load, will cost from £6,800



Agricultural users have long asked for a diesel powered ATV, this sector accounting for the bulk of utility bike sales. The Diesel Quads Diablo 850 answers this call, the machine having a dual range CVT automatic transmission and selectable 4WD as standard. It could well appeal to course managers looking for an economical alternative to a utility vehicle, with a price of around £6,500

Another road legal quad, this time showing the other extreme of the power scale. Powered by a fuel injected 760cc V-twin, the Polaris Sportsman 800EFI, weighs in at an eye watering £7315 before VAT. It will get to places that will leave many a utility vehicle stranded, but courses with this demand are few and far between

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SALTEX 2006

Like BTME & ClubHouse, held every January in Harrogate, all Saltex displays focus on labour and money saving products for the effective maintenance and management of turf and sports surfaces.

More than 15,000 visitors attend the annual three-day event at Windsor Racecourse, Berkshire, where approximately 400 exhibitors display the latest developments in fine turf and sports surfaces; turf maintenance equipment; landscaping; contractors; commercial vehicles; outdoor leisure and facilities and estate management, as well as software and security equipment.

Launched in 1938 as a grounds care show, IOG Saltex has grown in size and stature to cover every aspect of open space management. The show covers every open space profession from groundsmen and greenkeepers to play officers, architects, designers and surveyors.

The Machinery Dealer Village, where dealers and distributors from manufacturers of turfcare machinery and equipment will be able to display their wares, is the latest exciting new feature planned for this year's show. The Dealer Village is designed to enable visitors to inspect and compare a wide range of grounds care machinery and equipment from around the world in one special, dedicated area on the Windsor showground.

The national final of the Skills Challenge Landscape Skills Competition is to be held at Saltex again this year and more finalists than ever will be competing for a possible place at the WorldSkills Competition in Japan, 2007. Four teams of two people will be expected to complete a pre-determined seven metres by seven metres landscape project, from scratch during the three-day show.

The show is open from 9am until 5pm (Tuesday and Wednesday September 5 and 6) and 9am until 4.15pm on Thursday, September 7.

Visitors to IOG SALTEX can register now for their free entry badge at: www.iogsaltex.co.uk or can call the Visitor Hotline on: 0870 429 4524 to order free visitor tickets.



HOW TO GET TO SALTEX

SALTEX is hosted at Windsor Racecourse, which is accessible from the M4, M25, M3 M40 motorways.

BY ROAD:

From the M25:

Leave the motorway at Junction 15, where you'll join the M4, heading west.

From the M4:

Westbound - leave the M4 at junction 6, follow the brown signs for Windsor Racecourse or yellow AA signs for IOG SALTEX 2005.

From the M4:

Eastbound - leave the M4 at junction 8/9, follow the brown signs for Windsor Racecourse or yellow AA signs for IOG SALTEX 2005.

BY BUS:

Windsor Express bus number 700 connects London with Windsor. They depart from London Victoria Green Line Coach Station and you alight at Maidenhead Road, a short walk from the Racecourse.

BY RAIL:

You can travel by rail to Slough station from Paddington or the South West, or to Windsor Riverside & Eton station from London Waterloo. There will be a shuttle bus running from near Windsor Riverside & Eton station to and from the exhibition site every day.

In addition, the IOG has introduced a water taxi service for visitors travelling by public transport.



Where are you on the sustainability ladder?



Asks Steve Isaac, Assistant Director of Golf Course Management at The R&A.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

The R&A Golf Course Committee has defined sustainable development and management as: Optimising the playing quality of the golf course, in harmony with the conservation of its natural environment under economically sound and socially responsible management. Achieving this is a constant challenge for everyone and there is always the opportunity to become increasingly sustainable. In other words, it is possible to keep climbing the sustainability ladder.

TAKING THE FIRST STEP

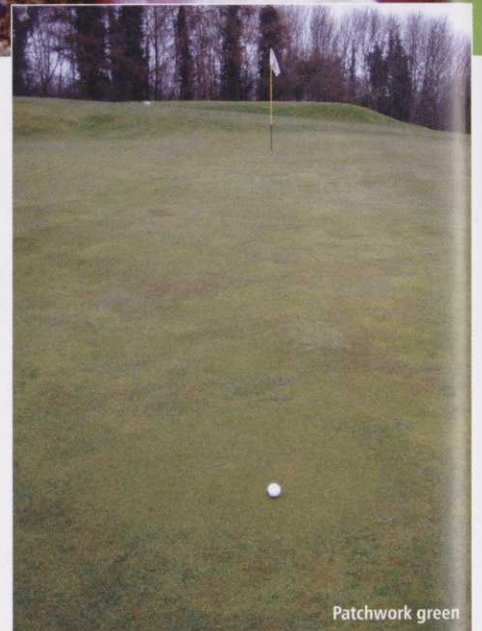
In these terms, the foot of the ladder represents surfaces on the verge of being unsustainable. These will be, for example, greens in heavy shade that support soft, water retentive thatch, dominated by annual meadow-grass, which suffer from disease scarring for months on end, seed head production for months on end and closure over much of the winter - even on occasion through the summer, after heavy precipitation.

Thatch and shade create a poor environment for growing any type of turf

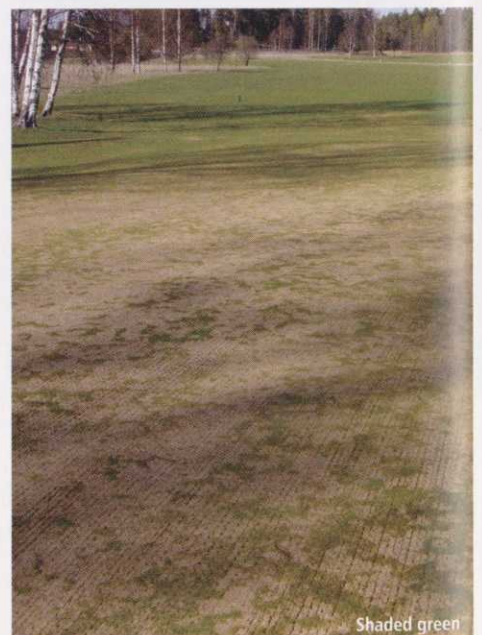
In such a scenario, reconstruction might be considered the only option and a relatively quick way to clamber up a few rungs of the ladder. For those unable to afford this approach, maintenance operations such as coring, deep scarification and top dressing can develop firmer and drier turf, which will be able to take play for more of the year.

Even when you have firmed up the green, if severe shade remains then unhealthy, turf will prevail - prone to disease, heat stress, frost retention and winterkill. Removing trees, even limbs, is rarely popular but in such instances it is either the green or the timber. It is possible to sensitively thin out to gain sufficient light and air movement without clear felling, retaining an attractive backdrop, but without the shadow of death.

Keep working to produce firmer surfaces and it is likely that browntop bent will start to creep into the green, often from the perimeter in. Many who claim to be managing soil push up greens are in reality, after decades of top dressing, working with modified sand profiles with a water retentive base. A reduction in feeding and watering will help continue the trend towards the finer grasses and overseeding may speed up the process - provided you are able to resist the temptation to shave the grass down in a misguided attempt to gain pace. The only long term



Patchwork green



Shaded green

result of this approach will be weak meadow-grass, prone to more disease, heat and cold stress and moss ingress. As the bent slowly increases, the green may well look like a patchwork quilt before the different grasses begin to blend together, as shown in the image opposite.

BEWARE OF VERTIGO!

Once the quantity of bentgrass has developed to produce an even mix of the two grasses, achieved on drier and leaner greens, you may even start to see the odd patch of fine fescue appear to local high spots and drier bunker sand splash zones. This is the signal to start heavy overseeding and to make a further, perhaps more dramatic, cut in fertiliser input. The success of such a programme will also rely on raising the routine cutting height to at least 5 mm - a move which often deters this step towards the top of the sustainability ladder but, if the process is achieved gradually over several years, it can be done without disrupting the quality of the putting surface you present. Indeed, as the proportion of browntop bent and fescue increases, excellent pace can be achieved at a higher cut.

The one thing you must avoid if you manage to reach the heady reaches of the upper rungs, is a return to the environment from which you have come. Pumping on fertiliser and water and lowering the cutter blades, will only result in a much more rapid descent down the ladder. And remember to keep those trees under control.

Remember, the further down the ladder you are, the more reliant you will be on fungicides and irrigation water. Given the uncertainty over future supplies of both, this is not the way to guarantee a sustainable future for the course.

So, the seven steps up the sustainability ladder can be summarised thus:

It is possible to take a breather as you make the climb. Rungs might be missing - blocking further progress if the environment you are trying to grow a better green in cannot be improved. After decades of low inputs and intensive cultural management promoting thatch reduction and compaction regulation, there will be understandable grief if your greens continue to sit towards the bottom rung of the ladder. In this regard it is vitally important that you make some assessment of the potential of each green at the outset of the programme. Steps one to three are, probably, the most disruptive in terms of affecting the quality of the playing surface - thatch removal cannot be achieved without impacting surfaces. For many, this process is not the easy option. Set realistic goals over a sensible period of time and regularly reassess where you are on the ladder and whether it is feasible to continue the climb.

From annual meadow-grass, through a mixed sward to fescue/browntop bent

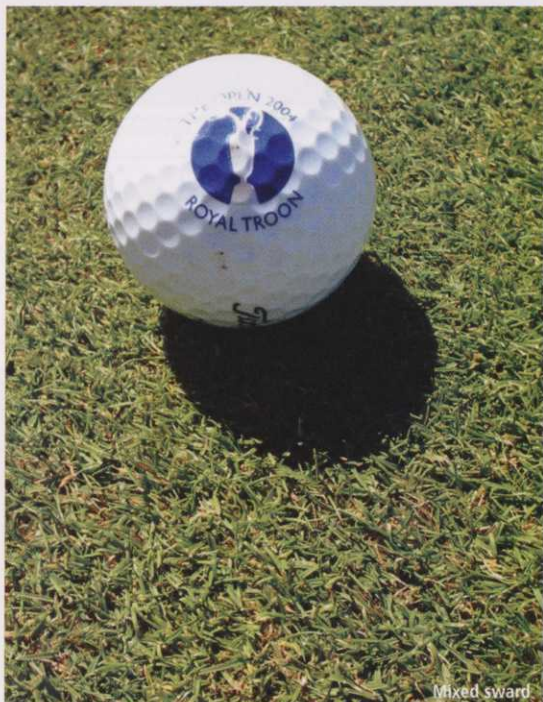
Virtually pure fescue stands, may only be possible from a new construction. Fescue/browntop bent greens may not be attainable by all who care for more mature greens - though these should be the target for those managing links and heathland courses where these species dominate through the green. However, soft, disease-prone annual meadow-grass greens should not be tolerated and everyone should be able to make progress from the bottom rung. It may not be possible to eliminate annual meadow-grass, but the ideal is to reduce it to insignificant levels.

Measuring progress can be achieved through recording changes in species composition, reduction in playing days lost to frost or rain, decreasing fertiliser, water and pesticide inputs. The R&A is in the process of developing tools to quickly and accurately assess the proportion of each grass in the sward, the firmness and resilience of the putting surface and its smoothness. It is all very well bringing about a change in grasses and reducing costs (both economic and environmental) but there has to be the added value of better playing condition over the year and you need the means to measure these. Developing firmer and smoother greens through 12 months will provide this desirable result and we are working to produce tools to assess these aspects of performance.

Climbing the sustainability ladder is all about improving the golfing experience - providing better value for money, better year round playing surfaces and, at the same time, reducing the environmental impact of course management. However, it requires the commitment and support of the club so as not to shake the ladder as you attempt your ascent.



Fescue bent



Mixed sward



Seeding Poa

NEW PRODUCTS

PORTABLE PUTTING COURSE

A miniature putting course, suitable for installation both outside and indoors, has been added to Huxley Golf's collection of golf practice, teaching and playing aids.

Known as Mini Links, the fully portable system enables from one to 18 different putting "holes", to be set up in minutes on any firm, level surface. To add variety and more of a challenge to a putting round, Huxley Golf can supply removable hazards (known as props), which are placed between the start point and the pin cup on each Mini Links "hole".

Mini Links can be viewed on-line at: www.huxleymodulargreens.com or by phoning Huxley Golf on: 01962 733222.



TURF GROWTH COVER

Covertech Fabricating Inc's new multi-purpose turf growth cover, Supreme-Green, accelerates germination and winter protection.

Made of tough, woven, non-coated polyethylene material, Supreme-Green also boasts rapid growth and encourages root development.

For more information visit: www.covertechfab.com

DRAIN BELT

Installing long lasting, effective, subsurface drainage on a golf course continues to cause greenkeepers and golf course management perpetual problems.

Drain Belt is a new, unique drainage system not susceptible to furring, sludge or blockages and is maintenance free.

For more information visit: www.drainbelt.co.uk



NEW GENERATION ROUNDUP HERBICIDE

Featuring Monsanto's state-of-the-art Transorb formulation technology, this new Roundup herbicide works within the plant, allowing more herbicide to be absorbed by the leaves and delivered to the roots more rapidly.

As well as being recommended for the control of annual and perennial grasses and broad-leaved weeds, Roundup ProBiactive 450 has approval for aquatic weed control in or alongside watercourses, for stump application to woody species, and for a wide range of forestry applications.

REPUTATION FOR INNOVATION

Etesia is launching another "first" for the industry with their new Hydro 100 Diesel ride-on rotary mower.

The low decibel levels ensure operator comfort and prevent noise pollution, especially on noise sensitive sites.

Two models in this range are being launched at Saltex - the BLHP with hydraulic high-lift emptying of the grass collector, plus, the ground-emptying BLSP with optional high-tip grassbox.

For more information Tel: 01926 403 319.



3320 Compact with new cab

COMFORTGARD CAB

Designed and built by John Deere, the new ComfortGard cab is available for the company's 3020 and 4020 Series compact utility tractors, equipped with eHydro transmission.

Less noise and more comfort are the main benefits of this new, fully integrated cab, which offers a host of big tractor features to help maximise operator productivity.

For more information visit: www.johndeere.co.uk



A TURF FOR ALL SEASONS

Rolawn have refined their Medallion turf with a new seven cultivar mixture.

Benefiting from superior appearance, wear and disease resistance, the turf is designed to deliver optimum performance in the changeable British climate.

SPRAYING ON SPORTS TURF

The McCormick G Series compact tractor-based sprayer boasts sophistication and precision spraying.

Quads are mainly used for weed control spraying on pavements and other hard surfaces, whereas the McCormick compact tractor tackles off-road locations, such as sports turf, public parks and golf course tees, greens and approaches.

Typical operating speed is 7-8kph, so the 300-litre tank has enough capacity for the spraying outfit to cover a lot of ground with each fill.



McCormick G Series compact tractor, used by Amenity Contract Services for sports and amenity turf spraying



TERRAIN GETS SIDE TRACKED

Terrain Aeration launches Side-Tracker, designed and built by MD David Green, specifically to treat hedges, low growing shrubs and closely spaced rows of trees.

Side-Tracker will be joined by Terrain Aeration's full complement of machines at Saltex 2006 and visitors can expect daily demonstrations.

For more information call Terrain Aeration on: 01449 673783 or visit: www.terrainaeration.co.uk

UPGRADED NOZZLES

New Golf Sprinkler Upgrade Nozzles fit all Toro 730 Series Sprinklers. The quality of F.C.I. nozzles will reduce watering times, saving water and energy and resulting in lower maintenance costs.

Visit: www.fcinozzles.com or: www.uicorp.net for more information.



WATER RECYCLING SYSTEMS

Keeping up with the demands of legislation is the theme for Course Care, at Saltex 2006. The company will be featuring their latest ClearWater, low cost, washpad water recycling systems, bunded fuel stations and petrol storage solutions.

Drought Orders mean washpad recycling is becoming a must for many, as they seek ways to keep machinery clean. A ClearWater system is an ideal solution and those in areas covered by Drought Orders can, of course, use a ClearWater system.

For more information call Course Care on: 0845 600 3572 or visit: www.course-care.co.uk



Effective wash-off using a typical ClearWater installation

NEW TRAILER SYSTEM

The Sentinel plant trailer and load management system, designed and manufactured by Bradley Doublelock, is said to represent the biggest step forward in the towing industry in over 40 years.

Due to a series of accidents, highly publicised towing misdemeanours and the recent strengthening of both health and safety regulations and corporate manslaughter legislation, companies are becoming increasingly aware of the need to ensure the correct position and distribution of loads on trailers.

Sentinel has improved the safety and compliance characteristics of small plant trailers.



NEW RANGE OF WETTING AGENTS

Quench wetting agents are a new tool in the fight against Dry Patch on amenity turf grass. The unique surfactant system in Quench, binds to water repellent materials in the soil, this bond gives it long lasting properties and with programmed applications can give season long control of Dry Patch.

For further details visit: www.sherriffamenity.com or call: 01638 721888.

ECONOMIC GREEN ZIZZOR

Trilo have added an electric 15 gang cylinder mower - the Green Zizzor, to their range. Thanks to the reels being electrically driven, the power requirement is only 70hp - very economic for its size.

The Green Zizzor is made using high quality John Deere ESP 30" 8 bladed reels, available as fixed or floating reels.

For more information on the Green Zizzor, or any mower in the Green Clipper range, visit: www.trilo.co.uk



News from the Chief Executive

Congratulations to Craig Gilholm and his team at Royal Liverpool for a very successful Open Championship. The pressure was certainly on him, although you would never have known that when talking to him! I am sure you will agree that the course was a good showcase to the golfing community and clearly demonstrated that courses do not have to be green and lush to be of the highest quality. This Open must surely have played into the hands of the R&A and helped them get across the message regarding their pursuit of 'Best practice'. Congratulations and thanks are also due to the members of the BIGGA Support Team that were in action at Hoylake. They were certainly far more involved than in previous years and their contribution to the success of the event was appreciated by the R&A.

As promised I tried to resolve the issue of entry to the Open for BIGGA greenkeeper members, however my contacts were all preoccupied with the tournament and it was agreed that I would meet up with them in September for a general de-brief.

After much deliberation the Board has decided to apply for membership of the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA). As a member of FEGGA we can develop much more interaction with the other greenkeeping associations within Europe and as FEGGA grows in stature, it should develop the due recognition that it deserves, and will need, in order to represent the industry on a pan-European basis. Much closer to home we continue to investigate the development of working partnerships with other bodies, the latest being the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA). It is hoped that we can form an alliance to develop and promote the activities of both organisations, especially at Harrogate 2007. The absence of the major machinery manufacturers at Harrogate next year is still a cause for concern. They are adamant that they can no longer afford to support two shows every year, however they are keen to continue to provide funding for education and special projects. Regrettably some of the smaller companies are 'sitting on the fence' waiting to see how the show develops and so have not yet rebooked. It's not all bad news though. Many exhibitors continue to support the event and some have taken the opportunity to increase their space allocation, additionally we have recruited some new exhibitors and hope that in the near future we will be in a position to announce a major new name to Harrogate.

Plans for the development of the BIGGA website are well under way and Scott MacCallum has already had meetings with four potential design companies.

Over the coming weeks, my colleagues and I will be taking the opportunity to attend some of the region and section golf events and we look forward to making the most of the opportunity to discuss the affairs of the Association with you. We are always looking at how we can provide a better service to members, if you have any constructive ideas then please share them with us!

John Pemberton

SCOTTISH REGION

East

The Scottish National Tournament was held at Leven Links on June 22. I understand the Course Manager Andy O'Hara and his team, presented the course in excellent condition - knowing Andy you wouldn't expect anything else! The only winner from the East Section was Keith Burgon from Goswick GC, who scooped the Apprentice Prize with a score of 78-5-73. Once again the turnout from the East was poor, with only 12 in attendance. Hopefully next year will see an improvement in numbers with our Section acting as hosts. Our thanks go to Peter Boyd and to my old friend Neil Mitchell, for their efforts on the day.

The Scottish Golf Environment Group held their annual awards ceremony at the Westerwood Hotel on June 29. Four Scottish clubs were given the following award SGE Environmental Excellence/Golf Environmental Europe Awards: Ratho Park (East); Coatbridge (West); Macdonald Cardrona Hotel Golf and Country Club (East); Brighthouse Bay (Dumfries and Galloway).

We have two members on the move this month with the Deputy at Ratho Park, Gordon McRae, moving to Leven Links to work as Deputy to Andy O'Hara. Moving to Ratho to take over the Deputy's position is Billy Hudson, who has recently been working as Headman at Whitehill House GC in Rosewell.

Finally, Musselburgh GC held their first pre-open qualifier on July 5. The course came in for rave reviews from both R&A officials and competitors alike, which is a credit to all the hard work put in by Tom Shepherd and his team. Due to a delay caused by lightning and a play off involving 10 competitors, play did not finish until 9pm. This made it a long day for greenstaff who had started at 5am!

Until next month.

Mike Dooner

North

How's it going fellow greenkeepers? The weather is improving with some decent sunshine and rain to give the golf course some much-needed growth. I don't know about anyone else but the early part of June was still pretty cold and I would say that the growth was about three to four weeks behind last year.

The Scottish Championships at Leven GC went well, with some good scores on the day. In the main it was good weather and the golf course was a credit to Andy O'Hara and his staff, it was in excellent condition throughout. It's never easy when your peers turn up and look at your work but the course was congratulated by many on its condition (great bunkering by the way). The Scottish Champion for this year is Brian Heggie, from Piper Dam GC, who scored an excellent 69 points.

The Open Championship will have come and gone by the time you read this but I would like to pass on belated good wishes to Craig Gilholm and his team for their first Open Championship. Enjoy the experience and make those guys suffer on the links.

Murcar GC will have hosted a Challenge Tour event in early July, so I will mention how it went in the next issue.

I spoke to Bob Mackay at Aviemore again and he mentioned some severe vandalism that had been done to his second and 18th green and some areas on a fairway and practice tee. This was generally obscenities written in three foot high letters, across the main part of the green, which

resulted in a total kill of the grass. This is very unfortunate for Bob and his staff as the course has just opened and looks spectacular. Hopefully the culprit will be caught, a £10,000 reward has been put up by the owners of the hotel for any information, which leads to a conviction.

David Sinclair, who was Deputy to Hamish Steven at Cruden Bay GC, has left the profession to try something new. David has been in the job a long time and will be a loss to the Section. Hamish will miss David, as he was a valued member of his staff who he could rely on at all times. Dean Mitchell has been promoted to Deputy under Hamish and we wish him all the best for the future. Another of the Cruden Bay staff, Gareth Evans is leaving to try pastures new. I walked the Cruden Bay course with Hamish and was very impressed with the condition and presentation overall. Hamish has increased the fescue content in his greens with minimal watering, feeding and a high height of cut throughout the year. The results already show this is working well with a definite increase of finer grasses throughout the sward. Keep up the good work Hamish - it's a pity the Huns won't make as much progress as you this year. Hail Hail.

That's about it folks, keep the mowers sharp and the members happy - if you can.

Cheers.

Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC

West

Welcome to this month's report. I apologise for the lack of reports over the last two months but I've had other commitments.

After a cold start to the season the weather has picked up well with only a couple of days rain during late May/early June - long may it continue.

On April 25 we held our spring outing at Bearsden GC. There was heavy rain during the build up to the tournament but the weather was not bad on the day, with some sunshine in the afternoon. It's not easy preparing your course for the early part of the season especially when there's 40/50 greenkeepers coming to play. Well done to John Brown and his team, the course was first class, the greens were in great condition for April. Our thanks to the Captain and committee for allowing us courtesy of their course and use of their clubhouse.

The annual Greenkeeper v Secretaries match was held at Renfrew GC this spring. The secretaries won for the first time since 1998, many congratulations. A big thank you to my own club for allowing us use of the course and facilities.

The Greenkeeper/Greens Convenor match was held recently over Sandyhills GC, Greenock GC were the winners with Hugh Logue and his convenor. Once again thanks to Richard Aitken and Scottish Grass Machinery for sponsoring the event and to Jimmy Caldwell and his staff for the fine condition of the course.

I attended the Scottish National Tournament at Leven Links GC during June and must congratulate Andy O'Hara and his staff for the first class condition of the course, it was a fantastic day and the sun was shining. Once again our Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, arranged everything and the day ran smoothly. Well done to all the helpers and congratulations to the winners.

A warm welcome to new members: Steven Wilson, Renfrew GC, Richard Cuthbert and James Keith Cowglen, Michael Baxter, Colville Park GC and Paul Mc McCormack Kirkhill GC.

The Fairways group held their open day during May at their base, at Inchinnan. I must congratulate them on a first class demonstration and presentation. The weather was terrible but the organisation was great. The range on show was first class with a wide range of companies taking part, their service area is very impressive and they have plans to upgrade. If you

have not been up its worth a trip. To David Rae, Gordon Mc Murdo and Richard Green, thank you on behalf of the Section.

Congratulations to my good friend John Barr, who has been appointed the new Head Greenkeeper of Cardross GC. At present John is at Ranfurly Castle and starting at Cardross in August. Hope you have many happy years at your new course. Davy Gall is retiring from Cardross.

A quick reminder that our Autumn Outing is at Hags Castle on September 27. We plan to have our annual night out during late November, dates will be available as soon as possible, the venue still needs to be arranged but if anyone has any ideas please get in contact. It's always a good night so if you haven't been try to come along this year.

The results from the Drimsynie die hards spring competition were: 1. Robert Bruce; 2. Fraser Ross; 3. John Brown.

Once again we had a great time up in Argyle, many thanks to all those in attendance and to Bryce Houston for his hospitality.

I look forward to seeing everyone in the autumn.

Fraser Ross

07970366355

NORTHERN REGION

North West

A great day was had at the summer tournament at Morecambe GC. The condition of the course was fantastic and the weather magnificent, I can't say the same about my golf though. The winners were: Adam Kellett, from Lancaster GC - who reckons he has not won anything before - he beat Paul Hogan on a card playoff. The guest prize was won by Mike Crabtree who is also a member at Morecambe. Longest Drive was won by Bert Cross and Nearest the Pin had no winner as nobody landed a ball on the green.

My roving reporter tells me that the Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Preston Fulwood GC, namely Andy Merry, has been promoted to Head Greenkeeper. Good luck to you Andy. As always, if anyone has any news or just needs a little bit of advice, please contact the Secretary Bert Cross on: 0151 724 5412 or myself on: 0151 289 4625. If you are on the world wide web my email address is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk.

Chris Sheehan

Northern

Well, it's the start of July and is it just me or is anyone else getting fed up with the heatwave we're having at the moment? Strimming in 30 degrees heat is just not fun!

On June 14 we ventured up to Ken Christie's course, Northcliffe, to play this years Presidents Day Tournament. I'm not sure whether it was Ken or one of his staff who changed the holes before our arrival but they certainly had a sense of humour! The results for the day were as follows: Division One: 1. Dave Collins; 2. Stewart Mason; 3. Rob Gee. Division Two: Presidents Prize - Roy Armitage 1. Adam Speight 2. John Watts 3. Derek Chew. Division Three: 1. Dave Thackray 2. Lee Graham 3. Ken Christie.

Our thanks to Ken and the staff at Northcliffe for a fantastic day. Thanks also to Tito and Boxer Chemicals for sponsoring the event and supplying much needed support to the Northern Section. Your help is much appreciated.

Over the past couple of weeks I have been lucky enough to play in two large events, held in the region. The first was the BIGGA Annual Charity Golf Day held at Aldwark Manor, which, apart from the occasional rain

shower, was a fantastic day, thank you to the staff at BIGGA for setting up and running the event.

The second event was held at Hornsea GC to celebrate the retirement of Head Greenkeeper, Roger Bielby. Roger had been at the club for over 25 years and, as I am sure all 200 players on the day would agree, that the course was a credit to Roger and his hard work over the years.

Please don't forget that this year's Invitation Day is to be held at Scarcroft GC on August 23. It will be a 10.30am shot gun start, all those wanting to play should let me know as soon as possible.

Last, but by no means least, the results of the Northern v Sheffield match. The match was played at Halifax Bradley Hall (which needs a few more steep hills!) and needless to say the trophy has got our name on it for another year, with the Northern Section running out 4-2 winners on the day. Thank you to Mike Brear and Rigby Taylor for sponsoring and organising the event, the lads from Sheffield for making the trip up, the lads from the Northern Section for winning again and to Alan Court and everyone at Bradley Hall for another fantastic day.

Adam Speight

16a Hodgson Fold, Myers Lane, Bradford BD2 4EB

Tel: 01274 638366 Mobile: 07739 319060

Cleveland

Not too much to report this month. The dry spell continues and the wetting agent flies out of supplier's doors. However, we shouldn't twist should we? Seriously though, I know some of the courses have been slow in getting good growth on the fine turf areas of courses - a very wet start to the growing season followed by a mini drought in April, a wet May and another severe dry spell. The grass doesn't know what's going on!

The autumn outing will be at Dinsdale Spa GC on Wednesday, September 20. Please arrive at 9.30am - tee time is from 10am until 11am. As members haven't been turning up at previous outings Pembo requires a £5 deposit. Please send it to: Ian at Bedale GC, Leyburn Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 1EZ.

Staying on the sporting front, Pembo is trying to organise a couple of friendly football matches against neighbouring Sections. (No fighting Baz Zidane!) The Northern and North East Section are being contacted for fixtures. Any Cleveland Section members who would like a game, should contact Ian on the numbers listed below. Ian is hoping to get some top venues for the games!

Don't forget - any news to: El Prez on 07831 214879

Ian Pemberton: 07989 508878 home: 01642 316416

Terry Charlton

Sheffield

On July 5, we had our annual golf match against the Northern Section, held at Bradley Hall GC in Halifax. Unfortunately, once again, we lost to them by the score of 4-2. The results were as follows: D Chappell and S Pickering lost 2 down; R Needham and A Unwin won 6 and 4; S Pigott and D Brownlow lost 1 down; S Dye and N Maltby lost 3 and 2, K Clarke and A Whittington won 1 up, A Bunting and K Ashton lost 1 down. I'm sure you all enjoyed the day and well done for representing the Section! I am sure we will triumph next year, when it will be held in our Section at Hickleton GC.

Congratulations go to our Secretary Chris Astle and his wife Karen, on the birth of their baby daughter Isabelle, good luck to you all for the future!

John Lax

North Wales

Congratulations to David Lewis at Conwy GC, Chris Peddie at Wallasey GC and their respective greenkeeping teams for hosting the Open Championship Local Final qualifying rounds. It's fantastic to have had this event in our region and to have these great golfing venues in the North Wales Section. My notes are going into the magazine ahead of play at Hoylake, so a full story in next months edition and a final good luck to everyone involved in the BIGGA bunker support team.

Huw Roberts from Henlle Park GC is the proud father of baby boy, William. Congratulations to him, wife Janet and big sister Emily.

Over at Northop GC, I have been told Dan Hayes has not been well recently, we wish him a speedy recovery. Also Andy Peel from Bull Bay was examined and they thought he had contracted pleurisy, but later found it was a dodgy meat pie he had eaten from the chippy that got stuck.

At Sandiway GC last month was the BIGGA golf management trophy. All reports of the course were nothing but praise, so well done the Brian Taylor and his team and why didn't any of the local teams win? The winners were Gay Hill GC from the Midlands. A good day was had by all.

That's all for this month, my organiser tells me it's time to book your hotel room at Harrogate again for January 2007. With less than six months to go, I always get phone calls in early January asking 'can you get me a room somewhere?' and I say there isn't any, you should have booked it back in August last year.

See you next month.

Mesen Cyrmu

Andrew Acorn

MIDLAND REGION

Midland

Well I've done it again, well my father has! Yes, the same venue at Hopwood for this year's Annual Angling Match on September 11. Those who attended last year shall, I hope, reiterate my obvious excitement at such an exclusive opportunity. The format shall be as last year, for those who missed out, standard match practices for the competition. To follow there shall be prize giving and a free buffet in the summer house of our most gracious host Mr.Perks (Proprietor of Rubery Building Supplies). Numbers are limited, to book your peg and for further information call me on: 07908 421 015.

Now for the boring golf, (I jest). Our Christmas Tournament is to be held at Broadway GC on December 8 at 10am. Our thanks to the club for their courtesy. Looking forward to seeing you Cedric.

It's hoped that we will produce a calendar for 2007 again, by the grace of our sponsors. If you would like to see one of your photos featured on the calendar then get snapping. Why not show-off your baby in its best light, or share a humorous moment. Please be aware of others feelings, be careful and dignified. I shall inform you of were to send your entries in future notes.

It gives me great pleasure to inform that Dave Gibbons (Rocky) has managed to con the lovely Cheryl Broadbent into becoming his better-half. The reception was held at Aston Villa FC - 50,000 chicken and chips must have cost at least a week's wages. We all wish you both the greatest of happiness together for the future.

Well I wish it was warmer. Never mind, it's perfect for fly-mowing. Sorry to those who have to carryout such duties, but by perhaps taking advantage of the many subsidised and indeed some free education courses

ran by the Section and BIGGA HQ, more interesting skills can be learnt and utilised.

Training and education - We are busy making arrangements for a range of training events scheduled for the autumn/winter. Courses arranged so far include: Lantra All Terrain Vehicles (October 4 at Gay Hill GC) £60 + VAT; Lantra Chainsaw crosscutting & maintenance (November 6, 7 at Gay Hill GC) £225 + VAT; Lantra Basic tree felling techniques (November 25, 26 at Huntingdon, Cannock) £205 + VAT; Bigga Communicating with Committees (December 5,6 at Gay Hill GC) £110 + VAT. For further details and booking forms please contact Paul Woodham on: 07880 734197 or Sami at BIGGA HOUSE.

Places are limited, so please book early. If you have other training requirements, please contact Paul. We may be able to assist with arranging a course in your local area. We are also hoping to generate enough interest to run A1, L12 courses and the Professional Development Award. For those who are not already aware of the PDA, the course was successfully run last year and those who attended the course found the training, delivered by Frank Newberry, invaluable in their personal development. These courses are funded through the ESF and are free subject to eligibility. Please let us know if you are interested in any of the GTC courses. Further details can be obtained either by contacting the GTC or Paul.

Gay Hill GC will be hosting The Bigga Midland region seminar on November 16. A programme of events is in the process of being put together so please look out for further details.

Sean McDade

East of England

First of all, many apologies for the lack of reporting of late - all blamed on a combination of moving house and being extremely busy, as I know you all are. What a start to the season it's been! With the usual hard work comes all extremes of weather - heavy rains to start and now so dry you dare not flick a fag butt!

Bringing things up to date, I will start with the Golf Day at Peterborough Milton. No apologies this time for the pin positions, they were the only ones we could make use of due to the weather, although thankfully the weather did pick up for the day. My sincere thanks go to the Board of Directors and Members of Milton for granting us courtesy of the course. Our thanks also go to the sponsors Toro, Colliers, Lambes & BLEC. All very much appreciated. As for the results, suffice to say, it was a good job Les had his truck with him to carry home all his prizes. Well done Mr Howkins and well done to Jaime Hibbert for giving him a run for his money.

The East of England Tour then moved onto Elsham and Nigel had the course in superb condition - even though he lost half of his putting green to the marquee. Good tactic mate, stops them practicing! It certainly paid off, with Nigel taking the Honours and Gary Cooper taking the Trade Prize. Normally Gary's golf is a bit like mine (not worth mentioning), but credit is due here. Well done. Good luck also goes to Gary for his new venture as an independent supplier (STG Supplies) - you would think a man of his age would know better.

The East of England was well represented at the Neil Thomas Golf Day, with two teams finishing in the top four. Congratulations.

Now is the time to be thinking about Winter Seminars and the subjects under discussion. Anybody with thoughts and ideas, talk to a committee member or give me a ring on: 07974 816927 or email: allan@jaxbaby.plus.com

Finally, I would like to wish Steve all the best on his new position as Course Manager at Immingham.

Allan Jaxbaby

BB&O

"In this forest of great trees lies Burnham Beeches Club, whose course has a setting of dignity and beauty which could hardly be surpassed." These were the words of Tom Scott, veteran Golf Writer and Editor. Founded in 1891, Burnham Beeches GC is situated on the edge of the Thames Valley, in South Buckinghamshire, with the old town of Beaconsfield to the north and the Burnham village to the south.

On July 5, the BBO held the Annual Summer Tournament at Burnham Beeches GC and the Section were faced with a day of unsettled weather that constantly challenged the golfer but also produced a winner of the Gem Rose Bowl. The results were as follows: 1. Justin Lee, Southfield GC, 44 ps; 2. Carl Small, Ellesborough GC, 34 pts; 3. Sid Arrowsmith, Frilford Heath GC, 33 pts. Nearest the Pin was won by Jon Kubota Ryan and Longest Drive by Jake Humes from Southfield GC. The John Deere Putting Green Competition was won by hop-a-long himself, Carl Small and Mark Ely took the trade prize with 37 pts.

Sid Arrowsmith presented Head Greenkeeper Lee Bishop, with a cheque for £50 to aid of the Captain's Annual Charity Fund.

A warm thank you goes to our sponsors for the day Clive Parnell and Gary Tait from Gem Professional, and Burnham Beeches GC for courtesy of the course as well as the excellent gastronomic delights served by the Chris the Steward and the Burnham catering department. The course was in tip top condition, a credit to Lee Bishop and all the Burnham greenstaff for their efforts in preparing the course which was a pleasure to play and much appreciated by all.

The next event on the agenda is already upon us with the Autumn Invitational to be held at Studley Wood GC on August 11. There are still a few places available for a last minute entry. Please contact Jon Scoones: on 07880 550 380.

Looking forward to a change after 15 years at Beaconsfield GC, Chris Lillitou has joined the staff at Burnham Beeches GC. We wish him all the best with his new job.

Eric Kinlon from the Buckinghamshire GC has joined the first time dad's club and from everyone at the Section, congratulations to you all.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events you only have to call John Scoones on: 07880 550 380.

Mark Day
mark@day.fm

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

Wednesday, July 5. I would like to pass onto Sutton and East Surrey Water the many words of thanks that I have heard in my recent travels, from all the drought order affected golf clubs in Surrey.

That done, it's time for a report on the Surrey Section Golf Day, at Surrey Downs GC, on June 22, sponsored by Ernest Doe. Unfortunately I could not be present as I had to attend a wedding ceremony in the West Indies. Tobago, renowned for its semi tropical climate, had somehow escaped the Sutton and East Surrey Water Company's drought order and its two golf courses were spraying water like there was no tomorrow.

The many, heavy but short, downfalls of rain were a welcome relief from the glorious sunshine and kept the rain forest interior with its picturesque waterfalls and streams a lush and vivid green just like English golf courses



Peter Boyd
SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND
 Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

in the old days. Photos are available online at: www.tropicalbeauties.co.com.

Back to Surrey Downs, and my Assistant Reporter's report.

Tony Kyle, Course Manager, must have had his team working 24/7 to get his course into the pristine condition that welcomed so many Surrey greenkeepers on that sun drenched day in June. The hospitality shown by Surrey Downs GC was fantastic and included a barbeque that Keith Floyd would have been proud of.

The day was an overwhelming success and the winner of the Cresta Cup was Roger Tydeman with 37pts. Les Salmon was runner up with 36pts, with Andy Gatland, 34pts coming up the rear. It was a pity that Roger was unable to stay for the meal and prize giving, but his water source had been vandalised that afternoon and his devotion to duty meant that his quarter pounder beefburger and sausage were hastily devoured by some other deserving greenkeeper.

Longest Drive belonged to Dave Gibbs and his mighty Wurlitzer and Nearest the Pin winner (who cannot be named for reasons best known to my sub reporter) is asked to contact me so his name can appear in next month's edition.

Dave Searles, who was bravely trying to beat the course record, failed due to a slight mishap on the 18th hole. Unfortunately he managed to find his ball so the record for the most balls lost in one round, remains intact.

Hard luck Dave.

Brian Willmott

Kent

After a hectic start to the summer - coping with the usual prolific growth of every blade of grass on the course, things slowed down and everyone started worrying about water shortages. It was refreshing to be able to escape from it all for a brief respite at the idyllic Mid-Kent GC, for our summer meeting.

Again, a strong Kentish contingent of like-minded souls turned out to play the comparatively short, yet deceptively difficult course superbly presented by Lee Sayers and his team. After first being treated to a hearty ploughman's lunch to prepare us for the ensuing battle that lay ahead, we made our way to the first tee. An ability to keep the ball straight is a definite plus point around the course, which proved to be the downfall of many hoping to be in the prizes. On a day when the temperature just seemed to keep rising, Vic Maynard patrolled the course on his drinks wagon admirably providing sustenance to the lost and weary souls as they made their way round. Many thanks to Vic and to Ernest Doe and sons, for their generosity with the drinks and some of the prizes.

Results as follows: 1. Tony Neve, Chislehurst, 37 pts; 2. Adam Marrable, Chislehurst, 34 pts; 3. Gary Branchett, Tenterden, 33 pts. Trade Prize was won by Neil Pullen on 30 pts, who also collected the Longest Drive award. Nearest the Pin prizes went to: John Fullager, Peter Leaves and John Millen.

It was a cracking day at Mid-Kent, rounded off perfectly by a lovely three course meal in the refreshingly air-conditioned clubhouse.

Thanks again to Lee and all the team at Mid-Kent for their hospitality. Details of future events, including a proposed football match against

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Essex Section and an autumn golfing day, shall follow in next month's report. Please feel free to get more up to date news however, at kentgreenkeepers.co.uk where you can also contact any of the committee with news and views.

Until next month
Rob Holland

Essex

Well then, the world of English sport has come crashing down to earth with a big bang! As I type this article the English football team have been knocked out of the World cup on penalties again - Deja vu I feel. The English cricket team have lost their 15th game out of 18 to the Sri Lankans and the Rugby team have been walked all over by the Australians. On the British front, Monty the magnificent managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in the US Open and Andy Murray has been knocked out of Wimbledon, after humiliating Andy Roddick in the third round. All doom and gloom on the sporting front I hear you cry. Not so...

The top golfing event in the Essex Section's annual calendar, the summer tournament and National qualifier, took place at Langdon Hills GC on June 29. It's a superb venue, where some considerable investment has truly paid dividends. Well done Tony for presenting the course in such an impeccable fashion. A thank you is in order to Rigby Taylor and Steve Denton for sponsoring the day and thanks also to all those stalwart sponsors of the raffle prizes from the trade.

On the golf front, some sharp shooting saw Dominic Rodgers pick up Nearest the Pin for category I and Mark Stopps pick up the prize for category II.

The two people to represent the Section in the National Championship will be Tony Barker, who shot the Best Gross and Nick Gates who shot the Best Nett. Well done guys and good luck at the nationals.

Second and third in the Best Gross section went to Pat Laws and David Beale, while Sam Cook, Robert George and Anthony Kirwan finished behind Nick Gates in the Best Nett category.

As mentioned in last month's article, it's Colne Valley GC next, for the autumn trophy on August 24. Be there or be square!

Until next time - be Good!
Richard Williams
07737 985735



South West

Back in June, the Section played the annual match against the Secretaries on Cherington Course, at Minchinhampton. The weather was very hot and dry - which clearly suited the greenkeepers, as the secretaries were obviously missing air-conditioning and all of life's other little luxuries found in comfy offices and bars.

Actually, it was a great day with warm camaraderie, which was much appreciated by all competitors, especially us humble greenkeepers. Adrian Bennett, your Team Captain, was delighted to have got off to a winning start, by masterminding a 5-1 thrashing - although five of those games went to the 18th green. My own match, playing with Adam Matthews, was a one-hole victory against Ian Crowther, ex-Assistant Secretary at Minch, partnered by Geoff Beetham, retired Secretary from Stinchcombe.

Geoff Beetham never missed a fairway off the tee all afternoon. (Don't you just love the elderly opponent who wafts his tired ball much further down the fairway than you can smote yours?) 180 yards every time, straight down the middle. Completely the opposite to Adam Matthews, whose red meat diet is clearly doing the business - nearer 380 yards, but not always in quite the right direction.

Thanks to all the greenkeepers who played and sorry about the rough, (just the small matter of South West Counties Week, the week after). Thanks to Minchinhampton for hosting the event and to my staff for providing us with such a challenging course to play on.

Talking about challenging golf courses, I recently had the privilege, along with several other South West Greenkeepers, of playing at Bearwood Lakes GC near Wokingham. This very challenging, Hawtree designed "top 100" course, was in fantastic condition and our Section delegation was made welcome by Course Manager, Dan Lightfoot. We were particularly delighted when Dan told us he'd got the Black Tees ready especially for us "cause it's a better course off the black" all 6800 yards of it. Oh yes, triplex-cut double criss-cross hatched fairways, a couple of AR250 type widths of semi, and then hay length rough, (more often than not with Wayne Vincent looking for a ball right in the middle of it.) The "Lakes" bit of the name is also particularly relevant with a huge lake, complete with Canada geese, posing more problems on the back nine. As Wayne remarked while sitting at the side of the fairway, picking the seeds out of his socks: "It's so pretty, you'd really look forward to work every day".

The South West Section are staging an L12 Coaching Day at Cumberwell Park GC on September 26, from 9.30am until 4pm. Please contact Marc Haring, Education Officer, for further details on: 01225 863322 or: 07816 106146.

Cost will be in the region of £20, thanks to sponsorship from the GTC. The day is open to members from other Sections as well as the South West. Take this opportunity to keep your coaching qualification up to date.

Many congratulations to John Keenaghan on his promotion to Head Greenkeeper following a re-shuffle at Chipping Sodbury GC. John is one of those sincere guys who you instinctively know will make a go of it.

Finally, I was sitting behind the 8th tee of our Avening Course the other day, waiting to drive my machine down to the Maintenance Facility, situated over the hedge to the right, about halfway down this hoie. On the tee were four golfers, and one was about to drive. You can usually sum up how well a guy is going to hit the ball just from watching the practice swing. Well, this one looked like a one-armed bloke trying to kill an octopus with a stick. The ball predictably shot off at right angles and soared over the hedge heading directly for the maintenance area. Things took on a kind of dreamy slow motion. As the ball disappeared over the hedge, I remember thinking "wonder if the lads are back yet?" With that, all four guys on the tee winced, and most of my greenstaff appeared like little ants swarming out from behind the hedgerow waving and shaking fists. When I got down there, yes, the ball had gone clean through my car windscreen, which looked like a bomb had gone off. Never mind - he was well insured.

South West Counties Week and the South West Regional Open Championship Qualifying Round - both went really well, despite the weather. The course attracted a lot of nice comments and now I'm off on holiday. Let me know how your summer's going and I'll print it.

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk
07768 394593.

Devon and Cornwall

Many congratulations to Andrew Dunstan and Terri, who recently did the honest thing and got married. Andrew is First Assistant at Newquay GC, in Cornwall, under the wing of Chris Pearson, Head Greenkeeper. Chris tells me instead of going on honeymoon, they decided to buy a house, not easy in today's climate - we wish them well and many happy years together. Incidentally, Chris told me on the quiet that Andrew is on one long honeymoon working under him at Newquay, is that correct Andrew?

June 22 - the Section held their mid-summer meeting at China Fleet GC in Saltash, it was a fun day with superb weather. The course was in excellent condition thanks to Richard Shapland, Head Greenkeeper and his staff, who did us proud.

A big thank you to Martin Ward of Symbio - sponsor for the day - who delighted the winners with some fantastic prizes. The golf competition was followed by a barbeque.

The winners were as follows: 1. Colin Wheatcroft, Plymouth Argyle AFC, 33pts; 2. David Moulding, Bigbury GC, 33 pts; 3. Jane Jones, South West and South Wales Regional Administrator, 29 pts.

Colin won Nearest the Pin on the 5th hole and Dave Moulding, Longest Drive.

It was great to see Jane at our meeting with husband Clive. They both enjoyed the day and Jane, I will watch your handicap with interest from now on.

Last but not least, a big thank you to all at China Fleet and especially General Manager, David O'Sullivan, and Head Greenkeeper Richard, for their hospitality.

Donovan O Hunt

Events Co-ordinator and Administrator.

South Wales

Hi all, It's 31 degrees, July 4, I don't want to give any readers an image, however, I am sitting in front of the computer in just my trunks - it is so blooming hot.

I have been in shorts all week, but as I am a highlander, the colour of my legs has changed in shade not to a lovely golden bronze but from a pale blue to white. I am just killing time as the semi final of the World Cup is on in half an hour.

Big Russell Anderson has just touched down in Denmark to start a new project.

Peter Lacey and I represented BIGGA at Pencoed College Open Day, on June 24, a scorching hot day, big thanks to Ted Hopkins for delivering a Toro 5400 D Fairway mower, which was displayed outside our marquee. Many thanks to Pencoed College, in particular, Paul Discome for allowing us to exhibit.

Pretty poor turnout for the summer competition - 20 including trade. Come on guys please try and attend, I know we are all very busy watering but the tee is booked from 1pm until 2pm. Hassle your bosses for a half day, there is a lot of organising for these events - for your benefit. It is a great networking day with great prizes, great courses and a cracking meal all for £13.50. The competition can't be that tough as one of my assistants bagged a prize.

The event was staged over on the Dewstow GC and we played on the Park course. Many thanks to everyone at the club for making us feel welcome. The course was in great condition and we had a super meal. Many thanks to Course Manager, Mark Harris, and his team for the hard work in preparing the course, all who played thoroughly enjoyed the course.

Many thanks to the sponsors of the summer competition, Birds of Cowbridge and many thanks to Jeff Bird for attending and helping present the prizes. They are our longest standing sponsors. Thank you from all in the Section for your continued support.

Results: 1. Birdie Cup, Gary Humphries, 34 pts; 2. Jacobsen Cup, Reece McDonagh, 33 pts; 3. Mark Wilshire, 31 pts; Nearest the Pin, Peter Lacey; Longest Drive, Nick Rawlings; Trade prize, Jim Openshaw, Mid Lube.

Congratulations to Paul Handy who has been appointed Deputy Course Manager at Newport GC.

The competitors chosen to represent the South Wales match versus the South West, will be contacted by the Section Secretary in due course.

Angus Macleod

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

In order to improve the sending and receiving of Section Notes, where possible can all future notes be emailed to melissa@bigga.co.uk by no later than the 5th of the month prior to publication please.

Word limit for Section notes: 500-600.

You will receive an email back to confirm receipt of your notes.

If you do not receive this confirmation please get in touch with BIGGA HQ.

In the Shed ANSWERS

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I	D	Y	L	L	B	R	A	N	C	H	O	U	T	
D	E	R			H	R	O							
A	Y	C	K	B	O	U	R	N	O	R	I	O	N	
	O	E	C	O	F	N								
M	A	N	O	R	K	E	T	T	E	R	I	N	G	
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E	A	R	N	I	N	G	C	A	P	A	C	I	T	Y
S	O	N	U	M	N	E	U							
S	I	R	E	N	S	P	E	E	D	B	U	M	P	

SUDOKU

5	9	7	1	6	3	4	2	8
6	4	8	2	7	9	3	1	5
1	3	2	5	4	8	6	9	7
9	1	3	4	5	7	2	8	6
7	5	6	8	3	2	1	4	9
2	8	4	6	9	1	5	7	3
4	7	5	9	1	6	8	3	2
3	2	1	7	8	5	9	6	4
8	6	9	3	2	4	7	5	1

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With a minimum of two years' sales experience, you will be following leads, securing sales and assisting with technical queries from your customers. A sound knowledge of pesticides would be an advantage. Your main contacts being our distributors and their sales/technical teams, Contractors, Greenkeepers of top golf courses, Local Authorities and Forestry Departments. A BASIS qualification would be advantageous, but not essential as training will be provided.

You should also be able to demonstrate a real understanding and technical knowledge of the UK and Ireland turf and industrial herbicide business. You will require drive and commitment and be highly organised as well as being self-motivated and having strong influencing and interpersonal skills.

In return for your talents, you can look forward to all the rewards and benefits you would expect from this major international company. Salary is dependent on experience.

To apply, e-mail your CV, stating your current salary and salary expectation to ukhuman.resources@bayercropscience.com or call 01223 226559 for an application form. Closing date for applications: 17th August 2006.



Bayer CropScience



Sales Personnel - Amenity Sector

Gem Professional, a trading division of Joseph Metcalf Ltd, are manufacturers and suppliers of fertilizers, chemicals, grass seed, turf dressings and other ancillary products to the amenity turfcare market.

This division has aggressive growth plans and is currently looking for experienced technical sales people for the following territories.

The North West
West Midlands
East Midlands

We are looking for self-motivated and ambitious people who can demonstrate a successful history selling similar products to golf and other sports clubs and independent clients such as hotels and schools. If you are seeking a new and interesting challenge please apply in writing with a full CV to:

Mark Smith, Gem Professional, Joseph Metcalf Ltd,
Brookside Lane, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 3NY
Tel: 01254 356600

E-Mail: msmith.gem@tiscali.co.uk

A competitive salary and benefits package awaits the successful applicants.

Recruitment

THE ROYAL BURGESS GOLFING SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH

INSTITUTED 1735

MECHANIC

The Royal Burgess Golfing Society, situated in north Edinburgh, is renowned as one of the world's oldest golf clubs.

The Society has a vacancy for a skilled mechanic with knowledge of grass cutting machinery and tractors

The ability to work flexibly, including weekend working and assisting the greenkeeping team with specific tasks, is essential.

A competitive salary and an excellent benefits package will be offered to the successful applicant.

Applications in writing with full CV marked 'Private and Confidential' to:
The Course Manager, Royal Burgess Golfing Society,
181 Whitehouse Road, Edinburgh EH4 6BU



HEAD GROUNDSMAN Aintree Racecourse

Aintree Racecourse home to the John Smith's Grand National, is one of the leading leisure venues within the UK and a market leader in world horseracing and are seeking to appoint the high profile position of Head Groundsman. As well as the racetrack there are 270 acres of grass to manage including a golf course, gardens and stables.

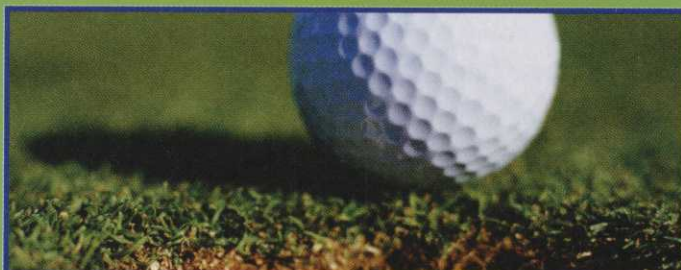
We require an individual in this hands on role with excellent qualifications in turf husbandry and health and safety, able to enhance the quality of the racing surface and build on the current high standards. The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate financial and budget management skills plus the ability to manage and motivate a team. A good eye for detail is essential, along with the ability to think and plan strategically, communicate at all levels, organisational skills, drive, initiative and enthusiasm are also essential.

Please send your CV and covering letter along with salary expectations to: Mrs Lynne Bulmer, Group HR Manager, Epsom Downs Racecourse, Epsom Downs, Surrey, KT18 5LQ



Closing Date for applications: 25th August 2006.

RHT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER



COURSE MANAGER'S POSITION

CROWN GOLF require a GOLF COURSE MANAGER at BATCHWORTH PARK GOLF CLUB

Batchworth Park is a modern Dave Thomas designed 18 hole course complete with numerous water features and full fairway irrigation. It is one of the 31 properties within Crown Golf's portfolio. The position offered is an exciting opportunity at a time when another 9 holes are currently under construction.

Applicants must have a proven track record to lead and work with a committed greens staff team and to help further develop and improve this parkland course. The successful applicant should have all the necessary experience and ability to maintain a private members club to a high standard.

Applicants for the position should have the following:

- HNC or similar plus spraying qualifications
- A sound knowledge of full fairway irrigation systems & machinery
- Health & Safety Awareness
- Excellent man management & leadership skills
- Ability to work within and understand budgets

Salary by negotiation.

Apply in writing by Friday 18th August with full CV to:

Laurence W. Pithie
Group Golf Courses Manager
Crown Golf
Blue Mountain Golf Centre
Wood Lane
Binfield Berks RG42 4EX
or E-mail l.pithie@crowngolf.co.uk



BATCHWORTH PARK

Middlesbrough Golf Club

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

- A minimum of 5 years greenkeeping experience
- Must be hard working, enthusiastic & self motivated
- Qualified to NVQ level 3 sports turf, PA1, PA2 & PA6 spraying certificates

An excellent salary package is on offer for the right candidate.

Apply, in writing, to:

The Course Manager, Middlesbrough Golf Club,
Brass Castle Lane, Marton, Middlesbrough TS8 9EE.

Closing date for applications: 28th August 2006.

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

FOR ALL YOUR RECRUITMENT NEEDS!

Call the Sales Team NOW on:

01347 833800 or email: sales@bigga.co.uk

WE CAN HELP YOU FILL THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES:

Course Manager • Head Greenkeeper • Deputy Head Greenkeeper
Assistant Greenkeeper • Sales Representatives and Sales Managers
Engineers, Technicians and Mechanics

MECHANIC REQUIRED

Leeds Golf Car Company has a vacancy for a fully qualified/ experienced mechanic to work on their range of petrol/electric golf cars and utility vehicles.

The candidate must be enthusiastic, committed, self-motivated and have a clean driving licence.

Salary negotiable dependant on qualifications and experience.

Please apply in writing, including full C.V. to:
Ken Hidle, Leeds Golf Car Company, The Old Bungalow,
Castle Gate, Patrick Green, LEEDS LS26 8HH.

Alternatively, call 0113 393 4100 for an application form.

Feature listing from August 2004

August 2004; Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day; Open review; Royal Cinque Ports; Irrigation; Mowers (2); Saltex Preview; Best Practice; Top Dressing

September 2004; Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Preview; Ravensworth Golf Club; Turf Disease; Royal Holloway College; Tractors; The Greener Approach to Greenkeeping

October 2004; STRI 75th Anniversary; Kenwick Park GC; Ecology; John Deere National Team Championship; Best Practice; Top Dressing; Saltex Review; Aeration

November 2004; Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Final; The BIGGA National Championship; Comrie GC; CV Advice; Drainage; Construction; Fences

December 2004; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; Henley GC; Grass Identification; Trees; Environmental Winner; BIGGA Delegation; Interview Advice; College Listings

January 2005; Sir Michael Bonallack; Parkstone GC; Machinery Servicing; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship; Recycled Products; John Deere Team Championship; Tees; Negotiation Advice

February 2005; Harrogate 2005 Review; Meet the Chairman; Environmental Competition; Tyres; Coombe Hill GC

March 2005; Alwoodley GC; Difficult Areas; Drainage; Irrigation; Greens

April 2005; Augusta Syndrome; Thornhill GC; Difficult Areas Part 2; Turf Tonics; BIGGA Delegation; Fescue Grass

May 2005; Hellidon Lakes; Power Mowers; Pest Control; Cutting Heights Survey; Nozzles

June 2005; Minchinhampton GC; Aeration; Rigby Taylor Profile; Chemical Usage; Top Dressing; Jim Arthur Tribute

July 2005; Loch Lomond GC; St. Andrews; Mini Excavators; Disease; Finance; Scholarship

August 2005; Ramsey GC; Open Review; Quad Bikes; Top Dressing; BIGGA Golf Day; Anthracnose; National Championship Preview

September 2005; John O'Gaunt GC; Drainage Special; Security; Student of the Year; Massey Ferguson Profile

October 2005; Laleham GC; Dollar Spot; Utility Vehicles; Bio Oil; Pneumatic Fracturing; Best Practice

November 2005; Chipping Norton GC; National Championship; Course Construction; Fertilisers; Servicing

December 2005; Harrogate Week Preview; BIGGA Delegation; Environmental Competition; Fescue Debate; Irrigation

January 2006; Bearwood Lakes GC; Course Furniture; Nicklaus Design; Seed; Alternative Fuel; Disease Survey

February 2006; Cold Ashby GC; Netting; Chemical Fertilisers; Turf Construction

March 2006; Seed; Ride-on Mowers; Pesticides; Irrigation; Bio Stimulants

April 2006; R&A Conference Report; Scornie GC Profile; GCSAA Delegation Report; Wastewater

May 2006; Stock Brook GC Profile; Spraying; Aeration; Line Marking; Growth Retardants

June 2006; Disturbance Theory; Hand Tools; Surveying; Thatch/Scarification; Drought

July 2006; Hoylake Profile; Difficult Areas; Japanese Course Management; Top Dressing; Askernish Project

Time to consider

As we sit out in our gardens, enjoying the August sunshine with family and friends, serving those burnt offerings from the barbeque, I would like you to give some thought to your Sections AGM, which will take place in the next few months (check your Sections notes for the date in your area). This is your opportunity to voice your views on your association. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every Section committee member for their devotion to our association, sometimes without recognition by others.



In an interview earlier in the year, with Scott our Editor and Communications Manager, I expressed my desire for each Section to have at least one young person (21 and under) elected to the Section committee, so these young members both female and male can be nurtured over time to become senior figures within our association.

To the youth of today, what has being involved at Section level got to offer? It will give you the opportunity to express your views on the way forward for our association, the opportunity to network with many of our professions top names - which can only raise your profile. In return you offer fresh ideas and the opportunity for the Section to reach out to your generation.

I believe the lifeblood of our association is its Sections, as this is the educational entry point for most greenkeepers who have a desire to progress within our industry. What do I mean by progress? Well, this is for each member to be encouraged through continued personal development to reach his or her goals.

Member's goals are quite diverse but one thing all members have in common is to perform at his or her chosen goal to the highest standard. Sections need to be active and encourage members to take part in their events, one way we can achieve this is by making Section events enjoyable and educational, so members have a desire to return. Each and every one of you can help by getting involved in some way and drive our association forward.

Our International membership is an area where I feel the association can develop by working with senior International members, to provide educational opportunities for their staff by using our expertise at BIGGA house and the associations close links with the GTC. With this in mind your Board of Management decided at the June meeting to re-apply for membership of FEGGA as it was felt that our association could assist with the educational developments within the European greenkeeping

industry. If any International members out there have any good ideas on how the association can assist please, drop John or Ken a line.

Probably, in this technological world we live in, one of your associations most important communication tools is the BIGGA website, which has been around for more years than I can remember and is still looking very professional. But we do have a major problem with administrating the site, due to its old style format, that doesn't allow for any in-house updating of the site. Presently, any updating of the site has to go through our present web designer, which, as you can imagine, is a slow process, as well as expensive. Your board has taken the decision to develop a new site, which can be easily upgraded in house and will contain many of the membership items that you, the members, have requested over the last 12 months. The board hopes this new site will be up and running before the end of the year.

Champion of BIGGA

This month my champion of BIGGA is a young man who represents the theme of this article, Jonathon Scoones Course Manager at Caversham Heath GC, has followed his father into the greenkeeping industry and through the education opportunities offered to him,

Jonathon has become a manager in his own right. Jonathon has never lost his desire to be an active member of our association, which has seen him undertake the duties of Section Secretary, a task I know well! Jonathon has recently become vice chairman of the midland region.

Richard Whyman
Chairman



BIGGA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

FREE LEGAL HELPLINE

Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for you and your family (living at the same address). Advice on employment matters, health and safety issues, consumer rights and any other legal matter. Medical costs and expenses should personal injury be sustained in an accident and Legal expenses up to £50,000 per annum. Call 0800 019 2569 For Greenkeeper Members Only.

FREE PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Cover for time off work due to an accident at home, work or even on holiday as well as one off payments dependent on the type of injury. Call 01277 251000 and ask for Ira Mullish For Greenkeeper Members Only.

FREE MEMBERS HANDBOOK

A free yearly copy of this indispensable tool, enabling members to track down professional help and keep contact with contemporaries.

FREE FIELD GUIDES

A set of field guides is available to every member on request. This handy guide is produced in an easy to use format and is an aid to course identification. Call 01347 833800.

FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

A monthly copy of the Association's award winning magazine delivered free to your door, keeping you up to date with all that's new in the industry.

BIGGA LIBRARY

The BIGGA Library boasts over 650 books available to borrow for up to six weeks. The only cost is that of returning the book to HQ.

BIGGA REFUND OF FEES SCHEME

Members may apply for an 80% refund of education and training fees up to a maximum of £350. Conditions apply. Call 01347 833800 for an application form.

BIGGA REGIONAL TRAINING

BIGGA provide quality education and training courses at a minimum cost thanks to the support of Golden and Silver Key Members who contribute to the Education and Development Fund. Call 01347 833800.

DISCOUNTED WORKWEAR

BIGGA have teamed up with ARCO, the leading supplier of workwear, safety clothing and maintenance products to offer members 20%*discount off a choice of goods. Call 01482 611773.

*Discount not available on selected products.

CAR LEASING

Driving a brand new car couldn't be easier. Bigga has teamed up with Lex FreeChoice to offer an exclusive scheme which allows you and your family members to drive the car you've always wanted at a price you can afford. Call 0800 419 930 and quote BIGGA.

CAR RENTAL

BIGGA have enrolled in National's Affinity Leisure Programme that offers members exclusive rates on car and van hire in the UK and on international car hire in over 80 countries. Ring 0870 191 6950 and quote A099084 for UK Car hire, A099085 for UK Van Hire and 8573290 for International Car Hire.

INSURANCE QUOTATION SERVICE

A quotation service is available to members on a wide range of insurance products. Call 01603 828255 and quote UniBG0306.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

When you join you are automatically given membership of one of the 27 sections around the country. As an active member you can attend golf days and other social events on a regular basis enabling you to network amongst others in the industry. Look at the 'Around the Green' section for contact details.

BIGGA WEBSITE - www.bigga.org.uk

Exclusive access to the Members area of the website. Interact with other greenkeepers on the bulletin board or check out the latest recruitment vacancies in the industry. For Greenkeepers and Student Members only.



The Intelligent Use of Water™



Water. It's what keeps the world alive. As the world's largest manufacturer of irrigation products, we believe it is our responsibility to develop technologies that use water efficiently. Over the past seven decades, our pioneering efforts have resulted in more than 130 patents. From central control systems and automatic shut-off devices to pressure regulating components and low volume drip irrigation, Rain Bird designs products that use water wisely. And our commitment extends beyond products to education, training and services for our industry and our communities.

The need to conserve water has never been greater. We want to do even more, and with your help, we can. Visit www.rainbird.com for more information about The Intelligent Use of Water.™

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