



Welcome

A GOLFER'S VIEW

Fancied a game at the weekend just past. I could sneak off because, well, the garden is looking after itself at the moment. No need to cut the grass - it hasn't grown in ages. It's going a little brown but, hey, can't do anything about that when the bans are in place can I? Pressure off!

No, a game of golf was called for, so off I went. Couldn't believe it! What a disgrace, the course was as bad as I've seen it for, well, since ever. Now I know what a good golf course should look like. We all do. We see them on the telly every week. Green! A golf course should be green. They even call the things we aim at but rarely find "greens". Well not at my place. Not any more at any rate.

Now our 1st is a short par-4. A nice starting hole, because if you don't get it off the tee very well - and who does when you've just fallen out of the car, grabbed your clubs from the boot, pulled on your shoes and built up a sweat running to catch up the rest of your fourball - you know a well struck 5-wood off a good lie will still get you on the dance floor in regulation.

Sure enough the tee shot scuttled off its usual 150 yards but, not so usually, it was straight and I thought "Whew hey, I'm on for a good 'un today." But when I got to the ball the first thing I noticed was the lie. Where was the juicy grass sitting under the ball, which creates the launch pad for my secret weapon - the trusty 5-wood?

It was like playing off the M25, but I don't mind telling you, I pride myself on my ball striking and this was one of my best. I nipped the ball off the surface so well, if it had been off the tummy of a sunbathing supermodel she wouldn't have known I'd been there. The ball didn't rise more than 20 feet and it was going like a rocket. I regained my balance and waited for the applause from my three partners who were further up the fairway. I was thinking birdie. I was thinking handicap reduction. I was thinking - why has it bounced straight through the green and gone up against the fence at the back?

Unplayable, it was. Unplayable! Took a drop, knocked it on and sure as night follows day, three putted. A seven!

Well, it didn't get any better, and it was roasting hot so I packed in at the 9th. I was frustrated and I was furious. Why is the course in such a state? I pay subs for all year golf and while I can accept a drop in standards when it snows or we've got thick frost, I can't for the life, of me understand why it's so rotten now, in the height of summer.

So what do I do with myself now? I can't even wash the car because of these blessed drought restrictions.

Anonymous Contribution as told to Scott MacCallum

Scott MacCallum, Editor

COACHING DAY

The South West Section, are staging an L12 Coaching Day at Cumberwell Park Golf Club, on September 26, 2006. The day will take place 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 only £20 thanks to sponsorship from the GTC. The day is open to members from other Sections, as well as the South West.



Will Harris, Machinery Manager at Minchinhampton, supervises trainee Chris Dodd, while preparing a machine for use

VETERAN GOLFERS PROVE AGE IS NO HANDICAP

Veteran golfer Frank Rogers, proved that age is no handicap, by notching his first hole-in-one at the age of 76!

Frank, a retired Stonemason from Burland, near Nantwich, hit an ace during the Reaseheath Vintage Open - a tournament for golfers over 70.

The competition, organised by Golf Course Management and Sportsturf students at Reaseheath College, Nantwich, attracted almost 50 competitors from all over Cheshire including a contingent from Hazel Grove Golf Club.

The Stableford competition was held on the college's commercial 9-hole golf course. The competitors were also able to take part in chipping

and putting contests.

Winning lady was Joan Yarwood of Scaife Road, Nantwich, also a member of Reaseheath Golf Club, with 37 pts, while Monica Norman of Lochleven Road, Wistaston, a member of Brookfield Golf Club, was not far behind with 34 pts. Overall winner was Bill Harris of Merebank Road, Dane Bank, Crewe, who scored 42 pts, while Brian Gough, current Captain of the Reaseheath Golf Club, was runner up.

Proceeds from the day will be donated to the County Air Ambulance, which operates in an area including Staffordshire, Shropshire and Derbyshire.

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL WINS

Greenkeeper International has the finest front covers in the world.

That has to be the conclusion after the magazine won the 2006 International Photography Section of the American-based TOCA (Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association) Awards, with our 4x4 inspired cover of the August 2005 issue.



The cover was submitted by Greenkeeper International's Designer, Marie Whyld, and it competed with entries from all over the world.

"I'm delighted that the quality of Greenkeeper International has been recognised by TOCA and commend Marie for the winning front cover and her continued good work in the magazine," said Editor, Scott MacCallum.

RETIREMENT AFTER 40 YEARS

Dennis Ellicott, Parts Manager at PJ Flegg, the South West dealer for Ransomes Jacobsen, has retired after 40 years of service in the grounds care industry.

Dennis completed 23 years at Flegg's and a further 17 years at Stanley West in Exeter. Having grown up on a farm, he was always interested in mechanical equipment and after leaving school he began his working life in the motorcycle trade. After just a couple of years Dennis was moved into their Parts department and has been in the parts business ever since.

Ransomes Jacobsen's Phil Naunton, International Parts Manager and Stephen Mitchell,

Customer Care Director, visited Fleggs to present Dennis with a special copy of the Ransomes 200-year history book, signed by the Directors at Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd as a thank you for his commitment to our industry.



Left to right - Phil Naunton, Dennis Ellicott And Stephen Mitchell.

CHARITY GOLF DAY

Rachel Thorpe, from Weston Park Hospital Cancer Appeal, would like to thank Neil and the Sheffield Section for all their hard work and support.

The Sheffield Section collected donations for the hospitals charity golf day, to be held at Hallamshire Golf Club.

"The success of our annual golf day really does depend on generosity of this kind. This is a showpiece event for our charity and makes a significant contribution to our work with cancer patients," said Rachel.

Weston Park Hospital Cancer Appeal raises funds to support research, improve treatments and

the care of people with cancer. The hospital is one of only three purpose built, dedicated NHS cancer hospitals in the UK. We serve the 2 million people in the South Yorkshire and North Midlands region, but act as a nationwide specialist hospital for some cancers. Our researchers work at local, national and international levels and the charity has built and core funds a specialist Cancer Research Centre. We have also recently opened a Cancer Information and Support Centre which is open to anyone who has cancer, their families or supporters/colleagues who need reassurance or advice. For more information call: 0114 2265370 or visit www.cancerappeal.org.uk

BMW SUPPORT TEAM, WENTWORTH

Once again a team of volunteer Greenkeepers were on hand at The Wentworth Club for the BMW Championship, held at the end of May.

On this occasion a small team were on stand-by duty on the Thursday and Friday of the event, in case of bad weather, with a full complement of forty volunteers available for bunker raking on the last two days.

Fortunately the heavy rain that was forecast (during the period of severe drought!) did not transpire, so the team were only required for squeegee duties for a short time on Friday and late on Saturday.

The sun did shine for the visit of our Chairman, Richard Whyman, enjoying his first visit to the course.

Over the past few months many alterations, instigated by Ernie Els and Chris Kennedy, have taken place on

the West Course at Wentworth, including the addition of thirty new bunkers that have already blended in well, and eight new teeing grounds, all without changing the nature of the course.

David Howell was a worthy winner on a course superbly presented, in sometimes very trying conditions, as always, by Chris and his Greenstaff.



DE VERE CARDEN PARK WELCOMES NEW BLOOD

Peter Pattenden is to take on the role of Estate Manger, of De Vere Carden Park, Chester succeeding Andy Campbell MG CGCS, who moved to the Dukes in St Andrews recently. Peter joins Carden Park from The



Gleneagles Hotel, Perthshire, Scotland, where he was responsible for the maintenance and management of the PGA Centenary Course and greenkeeping team. Peter has worked in the greenkeeping industry for fifteen years, starting his career at The Gleneagles Hotel, as a Greenkeeper. After gaining experience as a Deputy Head Greenkeeper, at Bonnyton Golf Club, East Kilbride, Peter returned to The Gleneagles Hotel, but this time as Head Greenkeeper. In his previous role, Peter managed a team of 21 greenkeepers, which rose to a team of 32 during busy tournament periods. During his time in this role, he managed the team in preparation of the PGA Centenary Course for five European Tour Events, five Scottish PGA Events and one Ladies International Match Play. His dedication and high standard's, whilst overseeing the PGA Centenary Course, were a contributing factor in the course's selection for the 2014 Ryder Cup.

RACE FOR LIFE

A team of ladies from BLEC Specialist Landscaping and Turf care Equipment, took part in the largest women-only fundraising event in the UK - Race for Life.

Held at Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire, on May 14, approximately 4,500 participants turned up on the day, all willing and able to walk or run 5km to raise funds for Cancer Research UK.

"Most of the members of our team have family or friends who have suffered from cancer at some time in their lives, but thankfully have survived." said Sue Mumby, Director of BLEC: "We all wanted to take part and give a little of our time and effort to support this incredibly worthy cause. Between us we hope to raise over £1500."

This years target is £46m and anyone wishing to take part or make a donation should look on the website www.raceforlife.org for further information.

RETIREMENT



The British Association of Golf Course Constructors, has announced the retirement of David White, its long-serving Secretary come Public Relations Officer. Coming from a career in sports journalism and

bringing with him a passion for the game of golf, its history and architectural development, David was perfectly suited to see the BAGCC through several different phases of its 27 years history. He insists now, that it is time for him to pursue his other great obsession; restoring and driving classic Porsche sports racing cars.

"I regret not being active in the BAGCC during the balmy period of golf course construction in the 70s," David said, "the so-called 'golden age' of land development and a time when every golf course constructor and architect boasted full order books and, quite often, waiting lists. Things are different now, with much more construction work being undertaken in mainland Europe, though there remains a demand for older courses to be refurbished and hazards repositioned to keep pace with ever-increasing length from the tee."

With David's retirement, the task remaining appears to be to find his successor, with a brief that may include some writing, though more likely calling for a flair at encouraging members and persuading prospective members of the benefits to be gained in working together for the betterment of this vibrant industry.

HUNT FOR OLDEST VERTI-DRAIN

Charterhouse Turf Machinery, is searching the nation for the oldest working Verti-Drain turf aerator.

Turf managers simply have to provide the serial number on their Verti-Drain, together with a photograph and a brief history of the machine. Once the oldest working model is established, its owner will receive a modern version.



One hopeful entrant is Theydon Bois Golf Club. The Essex course bought its machine back in 1990.

NEW WEBSITE PROMOTES ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN GOLF



Golf Environment Europe

Golf Environment Europe has launched a new online resource - www.golfenvironmenteurope.org

Among other things, this new website aims to provide information to golf course managers, greenkeepers, owners, developers and architects; promote examples of environmental sustainability within golf course management and promote the greening of golf events.

Referring to the website, Maria Strandberg, Chair of the European Forum for Golf and Environment said: "This website is a valuable addition to the golf sector's efforts to tackle environmental issues. It is fundamental to the better exchange of information with government and environmental bodies. It will improve communication and raise awareness within the golf

sector itself. Over time it will develop into a centre for technical information on ways to better address issues such as water, landscape and biodiversity conservation; on how to adapt to and mitigate against climate change, and about how to minimise waste and energy consumption."

She added: "We will also use the site to provide open access to the work of the Forum for Golf and Environment, to ensure its total transparency. We want the outside world to be able to see the discussions that golfing and environmental organisations are engaged in, and the types of practical projects golf is working on to address these major societal issues."

The development of the website has been facilitated with funding from Deutsche Bank.

ETT'S DAY OUT AT THE REEBOK

At a recent Premier League match Sam Allardyce, Manager of Bolton Wanderers presented Richard Lawrence, Managing Director of ETT, with an Investors in People award.

The presentation on the pitch was the highlight of an exciting day out for the entire ETT team which included a tour of the stadium, where the ETT staff met a number of current and former players. Also at the presentation was Richard Norton, Head Groundsman at the Reebok, who has worked with ETT for a number of years and despite often difficult



conditions, has produced consistently excellent facilities. Roy Winter of Business Link who had advised ETT on the procedure of attaining the Investors in People award was also present as the guest of ETT.

KENNEMER GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB PREPARE FOR THE KLM DUTCH OPEN

Kennemer Golf and Country Club, will be hosting the KLM Dutch Open this August, one of the European Tour's major events.

Originally designed by Harry Colt in 1920, the course at Kennemer Golf & Country Club, situated on the coast at Zandvoort, is one of the oldest in the Netherlands.

The original 18-hole Colt design is a classic links course requiring great accuracy, especially when the wind blows off the sea.

To ensure the best possible playing surfaces are achieved for the KLM Dutch Open, Kennemer will be using Jacobsen LF-4675 light fairway mowers, complete with turf groomers and rear roller brushes, on their fairways.



VINTAGE LAWN MOWERS

Andrew and Michael are the founders of The Hall and Duck Trust - collectors of Vintage Lawn Mowers. The trust, which aims to save and preserve artifacts of turf care to educate groundsman on machinery history, boasts almost 1000 lawn mowers dating from the 1850's to the 1940's. Find out more by visiting: www.hdtrust.co.uk



At the annual meeting of The OLMC at Milton Keynes Rural Life Museum. Andrew Hall (right) and Michael Duck (left) are pushing a Lloyds Leda gang mower, rigged with an oversize handle.

GETTING THE LEGAL MEASURE ON GPS DEVICES

Since the launch of the new GPS devices, concern has risen that club revenue generated through the sale of stroke saver booklets, may be significantly reduced and eventually, lost altogether. Michael Shaw, National Secretary at the NCGAA, comments: "The satellite measuring technology is relatively new and still has a period of trial and error to go through. During this time, manufacturers will be keen to ensure that their technology evolves to offer the greatest accuracy possible. Taking this approach could provide clubs with an alternative source of income, to compensate that lost through reduced stroke saver booklet sales."

Growing in popularity, the new GPS measuring devices have provoked mixed response across UK courses. In particular, clubs where the course has been mapped and made available to users of the GPS devices, are questioning whether their rights

have been violated. Argument has been made, that similar to unauthorised photography, measurements of a course cannot be taken without the owner/club's permission. There is now no law to prohibit the taking of aerial photographs of property and therefore, taking the measurements of a course from an aerial photograph falls into the same category."

There are approximately 1,266 UK GPS course maps now available, which claim to help improve a golfers' game and speed up play. "Clubs do have the right to impose local rule banning or restricting the use of GPS devices. However, before taking any such action, we recommend that clubs consider member opinion and balance their views with how a ban or restriction may impact on revenues," added Michael.

RYDER CUP

Wales is a hive of activity as the Celtic Manor Resort in the City of Newport hosts the prestigious Wales Open and prepares the new golf course, ready for the Ryder Cup in 2010.

New workshop facilities are planned to service this championship course - to be equipped with Bernhard and Company grinders.

"We plan to have their latest Express Dual 5000 spin grinder, which has an enclosed cabinet to minimize noise and dust levels," said Cal Callaby, Workshop Manager. "With this highly automated machine we can complete other tasks while the mower blades are being ground."

A series of existing barns will be converted to create the new workshop.

"As the new clubhouse overlooks the four barns part of the planning condition is they have to be built to resemble a farm layout," said Jim McKenzie, Director of Estates Management and Ryder Cup Courses Development. "Our current maintenance facility services the Roman Road and Coldra Woods courses, but is more than a mile away from the new Ryder Cup course. Logistically an additional facility is vital. Through a costing exercise, it was found otherwise that lost man-hours in travelling to and from the new course would be significant."

Non-interference during tournaments was also essential. "You cannot have machines crossing the Roman Road course to get to the Ryder Cup course," said Jim. "We are in the process of planning the workshop and Cal Callaby is carrying

out a machinery appraisal taking into account the new holes."

A key concern to Jim, Director of Estates Management and Ryder Cup Courses Development, is keeping the Wales Open Course and new Ryder Cup Course in A1 condition. Based in hills and valleys with a generous rainfall is proving a decided advantage and the resort has been designed to be self-sufficient in its water supply.

"Luckily, we are in an area renowned for its rain levels and this is a tremendous asset, as we harvest water in the wetter months, store it, and use it on our courses during drier periods," says Jim.

"Permanently re-cycling our water in this way works well and we are also careful to select grass species which are more drought tolerant."

Irrigation and drainage specialist MJ Abbott has been involved in fitting more than 2,400 sprinklers at the resort, to cover the Coldra Woods course, Roman Road course, driving range, turf nursery and the new Ryder Cup course.

"It is vital to ensure shaping incorporates the provision of water collection on the modern golf course," says Nigel Wyatt, Contracts Director for MJ Abbott. "Storm water collection is the key to successful recycling of water, particularly within the summer months," says Nigel.

For more information about MJ Abbott, specialist in golf course construction, irrigation and drainage - Tel: 01722 716361; or visit www.mjabbott.co.uk.



18-HOLE GOLF COURSE FOR QUEEN'S FAVOURITE TRACK

Ascot's £200m facelift includes: a new 400 metre long, curved grandstand; eight restaurants; 265 hospitality boxes; a sunken reservoir on the heath to give the course its own water supply and an 18-hole golf course.

Re-opened on June 20 by Her Royal Highness, this amazing facelift was completed in less than two years and can now accommodate 57,000 racegoers.

GOLF RESORT INVESTMENT

Kevin McColm, De Vere Dunston Hall's Golf Course Manager, has developed colourful new course furniture and launched a machinery investment programme to improve playing conditions and attract top amateur competitions.

Kevin explained the changes on the golf course: "De Vere Hotels and Resorts have new corporate colours, so I thought I would 'do different' in the Norfolk tradition and use the De Vere logo with its purple and cream colours on all our golf course furniture. As well as brightening up the course, it is part of my overall drive to improve presentation."

Flags, flag pins, hole cups, divot boxes, bins, ball washers, signs and even the putting green flags and cups have been given the purple and cream makeover at the Norwich course. "Our members and visitors have all commented very favourably. I would like to thank our supplier Andrew Corns of Acorn Golf and the production company BMS, who valiantly entered new territory to complete the golf course furniture project."

More than £130,000 has been spent buying additional equipment to redeveloping areas of the golf course to increase standards. "Dunston Hall is a busy course with a flourishing membership. It is also a very popular golf destination. But we are keen to attract top amateur and local pro-am competitions," added Kevin, "so have embarked on a five year investment programme to enhance the presentation and improve the playing surfaces."



The Dunston Hall golf course team with some of their new equipment

HOSE BAN? IT'S NOT ALL BAD NEWS...

The threat of a hosepipe ban may drive the fear of dread into every grounds Maintenance Manager across the country. However, for those lucky enough to have a synthetic surface it is not all bad news. The dry weather offers the ideal opportunity to carry out specialist maintenance work to your synthetic pitch which could not otherwise be done in wetter months.

Contamination levels can build up on a synthetic surface, this will cause it to harden and problems with drainage and silt-like deposits will begin to form after heavy rain.

Due to the very specialist nature of the operation a Revite® can only be carried out in the dry. The

process involves removing the top part of the infill using rotary brushes and whilst the infill (sand/rubber) is air-borne a powerful vacuum extracts the fines and dust which cause the contamination. The cleaned infill is then sieved to remove larger particles before being returned back to the surface. Dependent on the severity of the contamination the process can take anywhere between 1 and 6 machine days to complete on a full sized surface.

For more information contact Technical Surfaces National Office on Tel: 08 702 400 700 or visit: www.technicalsurfaces.co.uk

NORTH STAFFS PROVIDES IRRIGATION FOR THE OPEN

Staff at North Staffs Irrigation, will have more than a sporting interest in this summer's coverage of the Open Golf Championship.

The irrigation and drainage specialists have been carrying out alterations to the irrigation system at Royal Liverpool Golf Club, for more than five years in preparation for the Open.

In a project requested by the R&A, North Staffs have installed a new stand-alone system on the practice ground, which has been designed to allow single head control, as the area will house a tented village during the Championship. Its Logic 2100 controller can shut off any one of the 360° Hunter G90 sprinklers if an obstruction is in its path, while continuing to irrigate the remainder of the area.

Just prior to the main event at Hoylake, many of the World's finest young golfers will take part in the Junior Open Championship at nearby Heswall Golf

Club. While the biennial tournament will take place on the original 18-holes at the parkland course, it's currently being remodelled to include five additional holes designed by Tom Mackenzie, which are being built by constructor John Greasley on newly acquired land. Under the guidance of irrigation consultant's Zic, North Staffs will then install an independent system, providing irrigation to the greens, tees and approaches on the five new holes and one hole of the existing course.



TRAINING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL GREENKEEPING

Training doesn't have to be expensive, or mean employers must send staff off to college. "Most greenkeeping skills training should be carried out at the golf course, by the Course Manager, with only specialist skills covered by statutory regulation such as, Health & Safety or pesticide spraying, needing external input," said Education Director at the Greenkeeper's Training Committee (GTC), David Golding.

"All too often I hear from Course Managers that the club won't support staff training or staff aren't currently going to college due to budget cuts," continues David. "I have to say that in answer to both of these comments, it is often down to ignorance about the modern formal training system."

He explained that all staff must have some skills to do what they are employed for. "Where they have been taught their current skills is irrelevant," said David. "However, employers should be looking to develop their staff to their maximum potential."

The GTC has trained many Course Managers and several deputies to be aware of their formal role in training and assessment. "But so often I hear that trainees feel they are not receiving the level of support from their boss, especially when they have been registered on a vocational qualification or apprenticeship," said David.

He reminded employers that Course Managers - or in some cases, the deputy - must be formally involved with the centre where the learner is registered for vocational qualifications.

"Any competent Course Manager will be involved in their staff skills development, at the same time keeping the employer informed of their own continual professional development.

"The GTC makes no apologies for raising this problem as it has invested heavily in Course Manager training to ensure skills development can be the norm at the golf course," David said.

He explained that the land-based colleges who have traditionally "taught" greenkeepers have, in the main, now accepted that the skills should be coached by the Course Manager and have designed various methods of offering the knowledge and qualifications through different delivery methods.

"Our friends in the colleges do still have a major role to play with academic courses and qualifications such as the Higher National Certificate or Foundation Degree and these awards can be studied in a variety of ways including on-line and distance learning."