



Welcome

TIME TO CHANGE PRACTICES

I suppose in magazine terms we're now approaching autumn although, as I write this it's very early August and I'm just about to head off on my summer hols.

But unlike most years, the thought of the onset of autumn this time around isn't accompanied by a sigh. Such has been the brutal nature of the summer months - the hottest July since records began - a little bit of respite for individuals, as well as golf courses, is a very pleasurable thought.

Having said that, just because the calendar will say autumn it doesn't mean to say that the expected weather conditions will follow. Such has been the unpredictability of weather patterns recently, there is nothing to say that we'll be in for cooler damper spells just because we've left what we traditionally consider to be summer behind.

It may be, of course, that you will have to scrap your traditional working practices to fall into line with the new weather patterns. We all know that you cut fairways and greens far more often in December than you did even 10 years ago. It may be that those changes will continue and even accelerate to the extent that you will be doing your winter programme much later than in the past and traditional on-going "golf season" work, might well extend to cover more of the year than it has done.

That obviously has knock-ons when it comes to integrating course maintenance work with the competition schedules, and enlightened clubs might well take the opportunity to re-schedule some of their events to times in the year which had not previously been utilised for club competitions.

Talking of competitions it has been interesting to read the comments about Hoylake following the Open Championship. There has been more debate about the golf course this year in the aftermath of the event than any Open I can remember since Carnoustie. The vast majority of opinion, in an industry which does polarise views, has been positive. Showing the golfing public that a course doesn't need to be green has, by general agreement, done British greenkeeping a great service and Craig Gilholm and his team must be commended for their work.

That said, Hoylake's "look" was mainly down to the fact that prior to the Championship, it hadn't rained in at least three weeks and if Craig should be credited with anything, it should be with holding his nerve and doing nothing when others might have been tempted to tamper.

Links courses, given the weather, should look like Hoylake because controlling run and gauging distance is what links golf is all about - indeed some would say that it's what golf is all about full stop. Gripping it and ripping it and firing straight at the pins is fine but it takes a real craftsman to hit a 3-iron under the wind and run it up the approach to finish pin high 10 feet from the hole.

It just so happens that Tiger can play both games!

Scott MacCallum, Editor

PGA AND RANSOMES JACOBSEN SIGN AGREEMENT

A three year contract was recently signed, making Ransomes Jacobsen the official supplier of turfcare equipment to the Professional Golfers' Association.

In addition to official supplier status, the Ipswich based turf equipment manufacturer, will also supply support equipment for golf courses preparing for PGA tournaments. The agreement also gives PGA managed golf courses, throughout the world, access to Ransomes Jacobsen equipment.



Sandy Jones with David Withers

HOLE IN ONE...AGAIN!...

Bury GC, situated five miles North of Manchester, located between Whitefield and Bury, made front page news recently.

During a board competition one Saturday, three different men managed holes in one at the same hole (14th) and all within one hour of each other. Named 'The Conifers', this par 3 hole is played from an elevated tee - the shot is almost total carry to the green.

When asked if there was anything unusual about the pin position of the 14th, Head Greenkeeper Spencer Lloyd-Pye said "The pin was bog standard, it's just weird that three hole-in-one's happened within an hour of each other."

The story appeared on the front page of the Manchester Evening News and also featured in the Bolton and Bury Evening News, as well as being discussed on Talksport.

LADIES' GOLFING COMMUNITY EXPANDS IT TEAM

Building on its success since launching in November 2005, online ladies' golf community AmateurLadyGolfer.co.uk (ALG) is looking to appoint up to 25 regional representatives throughout the UK and Ireland, to help fulfil its vision of improving the golfing and social experience for lady golfers whatever their ability or skill level.

ALG is offering its community members first refusal on the potentially lucrative independent regional representative positions.



Founder of ALG, Casie McDonald Wood

Women remain a minority in the golf world with, on average, only 103 lady members per club in the 2,500 golf clubs in the UK and Ireland.

Many women take up golf and then give up after a couple of years for reasons including lack of encouragement, the wrong equipment, insufficient coaching and feeling like second-class club members. "We are providing them with a solid reason to continue with the sport", said Casie McDonald Wood, ALG's founder.

DROUGHT SEMINAR

For clubs coping with drought restrictions, Stella Rixon with STRI's southern advisory team have organised a seminar at Chipstead GC in Surrey, on Wednesday September 13, entitled "Drought Issues and Planning for the Future."

This one day seminar will cover all drought related issues including protection and efficient use of water resources, storage, recycling and harvesting, alternative water supplies, rules and regulations, turf maintenance and managing under restrictions.

Adrian Mortram from STRI's Irrigation Services will lead a "walk about" and talk about the club's on site irrigation system. Other speakers include: Dr Jerry Knox from the UK Irrigation Association, Chris Haspell from Water Direct and representatives from the Environment Agency and the EGU.

Further details and booking forms are available on-line at: www.stri.co.uk or contact Amy Crooks on Tel: 01274 565131.

HELPING RAIN TO DRAIN

Heat waves or prolonged periods of drought followed by intense rainfall can cause localised flash flooding. In the event of extreme rainfall, the capacities of sewers, covered watercourses and other drainage systems can be tested to their limits. If drainage capacity is exceeded surface flooding may occur.

Experience has shown that much of the recorded flooding in urban areas is attributable to the passage of above ground surface flow. Recognising the importance of flood pathways

along highways and other routes, and the storage of water in low spots, is the first step to better management. Through good design, a second important step is to direct flood flows along routes where the risk to health and safety is minimal.

CIRIA's new guidance Designing for exceedance in urban drainage - good practice (C635) provides advice for the design and management of urban sewerage and drainage systems and is available to buy or download from CIRIA. Visit: www.ciria.org or Tel: 020 7549 3300.

COMPETITION WINNER

BIGGA Environment Competition sponsor, Scotts, presented one of its high-tech iTurf electronic weather stations to 2005 winner, Thorpeness GC.

Thorpeness Course Manager Ian Willett, was delighted with his prize: "The Scotts iTurf weather station is a very exciting piece of equipment to have on the course. It will enable us to accurately monitor disease, weather conditions, soil moisture and also help us with more effective water management. We can't wait to put it through its paces."

The BIGGA competition, which had been running for ten years, provides a platform for golf clubs to demonstrate their environmental credentials and prove that golf can be a positive and sustainable use of land. Thorpeness GC was selected as 2005 winner after attempting to win the top prize for eight years. "It's been a long road, but we are absolutely delighted to have finally made it," said Ian.

Over the past eight years, Ian and his small team have put in an enormous amount of work to ensure the course is as environmentally friendly as possible. This has included composting, controlling water waste, installing bird and bat boxes, closely monitoring flora and fauna on course to ensure minimum impact from course maintenance, and using locally grown turf for repair work.



Scotts Mick Fance (left) presents Thorpeness GC Course Manager Ian Willett, with an iTurf weather station.

HI-TEC REACHES ALL STAR STATUS

Hi-Tec was announced as the 'Official Footwear Supplier' for this year's star-studded, celebrity-swamped Northern Rock All Star Cup, held at The Celtic Manor Resort from August 26 to 28.

The celebrity golf tournament was hosted by prime time TV favourites, Ant and Dec. The three day event featured an amazing line-up of A-list stars, including HI-TEC's latest 'model designer' Jodie Kidd.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2006 - TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

Don't forget the deadline for entries into this year's Championship is September 8.

The National Championship will take place at Burton-on-Trent GC on Monday, October 2 and Tuesday, October 3.

BEAT THE DROUGHT

Scotts has published a Turf Stress Management Technical Update to help golf, sports and amenity turf managers, develop a drought management strategy and maintain their grass to the highest standards even during testing conditions.

The document contains a broad range of advice on factors which can affect turf quality in dry conditions, such as irrigation, use of drought tolerant grass species, mowing regimes and correct nutritional inputs to minimise stress. It also includes guidance on the use of a range of products, which can help as part of a drought management strategy.

For your free copy of Scotts' Turf Stress Management Technical Update, call: 0871 220 5353.



The Turf Stress Management Technical Update gives golf, sports and amenity turf managers practical advice on how to develop a drought management strategy.

SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH LEADS TO SECOND INTAKE

Writtle College are now enrolling for the second intake on their 15 week Sports Turf Mechanics course for September 2006, after its successful launch in March 2006 following consultation with the industry.

The course is suitable for individuals or employers in the sports turf industry that are looking for training opportunities for employees.

Discussions at BTME with the GTC and IOG were very positive with each institution showing interest in the course. These discussions lead to the potential of the course being awarded joint certification, as well as allowing other colleges around the country to adopt this course in a collaborative approach to training.

Intake dates for the Sports Turf Mechanics Course are: September 14 - December 21 2006; January 11 - April 26, 2007 (excluding February 15, 2007).

For details of how to apply, please contact The Training Group on Tel: 01245 424102 or Email: shortcourses@writtle.ac.uk

TOUGH COMPETITION

This year's Golf Management Competitions recently took place in the South West and South Wales Region. These events are organised by BIGGA and sponsored by The Scotts Company (UK) Limited. Winning teams received £200 worth of Scott's products for their clubs, together with individual prizes for team members. The host clubs this year were Neath GC, Minchinhampton GC and Moors Valley GC, all of which were excellent venues, thoroughly enjoyed by the teams participating.



Winners of the South West Section were Long Ashton GC



Winners of the South Wales Section were Trefloyne GC



Winners of the South Coast Section were Southsea GC

INDUSTRY CALL FOR HELP

Horticultural employers have had the opportunity to make NVQs and SVQs more relevant to the business world, through amending the industry's National Occupational Standards.

Lantra, Sector Skills Council for environmental and land-based industries, has been looking for input to make sure that vocational qualifications, designed by employers, are delivering work-ready employees.

Sharon Mahay, Standards and Qualifications Co-ordinator, said: "We want the qualifications to be as relevant as possible, which can only happen with employer input."

The changes will affect the content of the Production Horticulture and Horticulture Occupational Standards and NVQ/SVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3.

SNAPPY DRESSER KEEPS COURSE IN CONDITION



A versatile Dakota top-dressing machine from Campey Turf Care Systems, is helping a Lancashire golf course maintain high-quality greens

Colin Worthington, Head Greenkeeper at Werneth GC, says that the Dakota 410 has become an essential part of his machinery fleet. Colin, who has worked at the club for 26 years, exemplifies many greenkeepers who advocate a 'little and often' approach, applying top-dressings frequently but sparingly. This requires equipment that can be set precisely and which lends itself to quick, efficient operation. He uses the Dakota 410 at least once a month from April through to October, applying top-dressing and fertiliser on the greens.

DEMONSTRATIONS DELIVER

Campey Turf Care successfully staged two summer Open Days at their Macclesfield headquarters.

Groundsmen and greenkeepers were able to witness first hand, the quality and performance of the purpose built turf maintenance equipment available from the company.

What made the Open Days particularly effective were the working demonstrations that ran throughout the afternoons. These enabled turf professionals to see the benefits that could quickly be achieved.



REGIONAL QUALIFIER

The road to America got off to a very positive start for Tydd St Giles GC, when they clinched the Woodhall Spa Regional Qualifier for the John Deere International with a superb score of 61.

The team consisting of: Managing Director, Adrian Hurst; Course Manager, Derek Beba, and Head Greenkeeper, Kevin Goude started superbly with Adrian holing four long putts in the first five holes - in the Texas Scramble format. That was good enough to withstand the challenge of RAF Cottesmore who succumbed in a card play-off having also finished 10 under par over the magnificent Hotchkin course.

Sleaford GC finished third with a 63.

The shotgun start was organised superbly by the Lincolnshire-based John Deere dealership Burden's, marshalled by Woodhall Spa member, Norman Burden. A total of 17 teams were invited plus a guest team, comprising David Hart and Howard Storey, from John Deere and Scott MacCallum, from BIGGA. BIGGA benefits to the tune of £25 for each team that plays, with the money raised going towards education and development initiatives within the Association.

The guest team didn't disgrace itself with a score of 67, mainly through the fine play of David, while Howard produced the shot of the day on the team's final hole when he launched a 7-iron over a tree not four feet in front of him, having first located his ball in the deep undergrowth.

Tydd now head on to the National Final at East Sussex National where the team will be strengthened by the inclusion of Norman himself. Another fine performance there and they'll be off to America later in the year to take part in the International Final.



Left to right - Norman Burden, Adrian Hurst, Derek Beba, Kevin Goude and David Hart.

LOCAL IS BEST FOR SCOTTISH MARKET



Scottish Operations Manager, Billy Nimmo, stands proudly outside his new facility.

Barenbrug UK has celebrated its commitment to a local presence in Scotland, with the official opening of its Sales and Production complex in Falkirk.

The facility, which is the most advanced blending and bagging plant in Scotland, includes a 12,000 sq ft warehouse that can

hold 520 tons of grass seed and a three ton capacity blender, capable of processing six bags of grass seed a minute.

Guests from throughout Scotland had the chance to see the facilities first hand and hear from guest speakers: Allan Patterson of St Andrews Links Trust and David Johnston, plant breeder at the Agri Food Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

Allan Patterson is the Head Greenkeeper for the new prestigious Course No 7 at St Andrews. He provided the audience with a fascinating insight into the work involved in building the new 18-hole course and why he had chosen Barenbrug varieties and mixtures for this challenging task.

STUDENT SOWS TOP SEEDS

A City and Guilds student from Swansea, beat stiff competition to design the winning garden of the year at the Royal Welsh Show 2006 - one of the most prestigious events of its type in Europe.

Saunurée Evans, 30, who designed the 'Tequila Sunrise' garden, was helped by nine other students and staff in the creation of the sunny landscape. They spent five days working on the Mexican-inspired garden, creating a central patio composed of a sun, surrounded by botanical rays of orange, blue and red.

Evans joined horticulture about two years ago and has since successfully completed the City and Guilds Certificate in Gardening and the City and Guilds Garden Design courses. In 2006, she was hailed Neath Port Talbot College Student of the Year.



DROUGHT TOLERANT MIXTURES GO ON TRIAL

Significant improvements in tall fescue cultivars, together with the interest in more drought tolerant species, has resulted in DLF Trifolium putting a range of new formulations into trial. The new mixtures, to be sown this autumn, will assess the best formulations for the future and will be available for all customers and interested parties to visit, alongside other landscape, wildflower and sports turf demonstration trials.

In addition, DLF will sow mixtures under different nutrient programmes to assess requirements in line with customers looking to adopt more sustainable maintenance programmes.

Pro26 Ecosward, a mixture with tiny clovers known as microclovers bred by DLF Trifolium, is looking particularly green at the moment, under the drought conditions.

A new mixture, Pro29 Drought Master has been formulated to take advantage of the exceptional colour,

density, wear tolerance and disease resistance of new tall fescue cultivars Masterpiece and Debussy. By including Limousine, the UK's leading smooth stalked meadow grass, and a dark leaved perennial rye grass, the mixture is aimed at customers interested in long term drought tolerance who require a mixture with very good visual merit as well.

For more information call: 01386 791102 or visit: www.dlf.co.uk/amenity.



THE MODERN DAY TRIUMVIRATE



Serious golfers should understand the need for maintenance of a club's biggest single asset, according to the "modern day triumvirate" at Temple GC.

Former Chairman of Green Malcolm Peake, Secretary Keith Adderley and Course Manager Martin Gunn, say it makes sound business sense for management to allocate the highest proportion of its resources to the golf course - but not all golfers understand the need for maintenance, be it routine or non routine, disruptive or non disruptive.

"We have all been faced with the perennial question, "why have the greens been tined just when they have reached their peak," said Malcolm. "Of course trying to explain that one of the major reasons the putting surfaces are so good is because they have been regularly aerated, is one of those areas that the triumvirate of Chairmen of Green, Course Managers and Secretaries is frequently faced with.

"And this is where presenting a united front, singing from the same hymn sheet, backed up by an understanding and supportive board or general committee is vitally important," said Malcolm.

This united front is becoming more important by the day as the impact of restrictive legislation, health and safety, increasingly likely water shortages and other factors beyond management's control, will have serious and ongoing ramifications to courses and clubs.

This modern day triumvirate - as important to the future of golf as the great triumvirate of James Braid, JH Taylor and Harry Vardon was to its development - must work in close harmony and be able to communicate constantly changing and evolving course management policies to members.

"Hopefully all clubs have the hugely important course management policy document, with the underlying theme that the golf course in question is managed and maintained in keeping with its location and natural environment aiming to present it in as good condition and for as long as possible - subject to local climate and weather conditions," Malcolm said. Communication is the key. "And with the ability to reach most members quickly by email, this objective should be easier to achieve," he added. At Temple, members are kept informed in various ways including informal liaison meetings, a monthly course bulletin and weekly competition results emails.

"Modern day life is such that we all have increasingly limited time and demanding expectations," said Malcolm. "This is no difference at golf clubs where the average golfer expects millionaires' golf at rock bottom process.

"With the supply of golf clubs and courses now outstripping demand and financial resources at golf clubs under huge pressure, the role of the modern day triumvirate and the requirement for good communication of policy is critical if this great game, and the camaraderie and friendships associated with it, is to survive."

TV BOOST FOR SUSTAINABLE GOLF

The campaign by The R&A to promote sustainable golf courses worldwide, received a major boost from the Open Championship at Royal Liverpool GC, Hoylake - with television's multi-million audiences a key factor.

For several years, the televising of major tournaments such as The Masters has led many club golfers to ask for "greener greens and fairways", requiring the application of huge quantities of water and chemicals. At this year's Open, however, spectators watched one of the most successful championships ever, played out on dry, brown fairways, which had not been watered at all during the long weeks of drought and record temperatures running up to The Open.

The excellence of Hoylake's sustainable course led to many tributes:

"I think it's a fantastic test. With the golf course being this fast, it lent itself to just amazing creativity. This is the way - how it all started and how I think that it should be played." Tiger Woods.

"I wish our fairways in the States were like this. It's nice, it's golf, instead of trying to grip it and rip it." Chris DiMarco.

Agronomists and greenkeepers confirmed that Hoylake was a shining example of The R&A's definition of the sustainable course: "Optimising the playing

quality of the golf course in harmony with the conservation of its natural environment under economically sound and socially responsible management".

Robert Webb, Chairman of The R&A Golf Course Committee, which spearheads the drive for sustainable courses, said: "We have had to work hard to get the message of best practice course management across to many amateur golfers and their club administrators, so The Open has helped our cause significantly. People watching television coverage around the world - or on the course itself - must have heeded the message that best practice course management, with conservation of water, minimum use of pesticides and enhancement of the natural environment - makes for more pleasurable golf and, at the same time, demonstrates greater social responsibility.

"We're thrilled with this boost to our work and like to think it will lead even more golfers to turn to our website: www.bestcourseforgolf.org which has already attracted registration from nearly 2,000 clubs worldwide".

PAST CHAIRMAN STAYS LOYAL TO MASSEY FERGUSON

Long-established Cambridgeshire golf club, Gog Magog, has selected a 46hp Massey Ferguson 1547 compact tractor to handle a variety of turf maintenance and transport tasks across the club's two 18-hole chalk downland courses.

Chairman of the British and International Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) in 2005, Kerran Daly has been Course Manager at Gog Magog GC since July 1999. He leads a team of two Head Greenkeepers and 10 greenkeeping staff.

GOLF COURSE LIGHTNING SAFETY

Every day thousands of golfers roam the links of Europe's golf courses, many heedless of impending weather changes. They may wait until the sky darkens, the clouds open and rain descends in torrents before seeking shelter from lightning. Yet a Lightning Protection Institute study in the US, shows the frequency of lightning deaths and injuries to golfers ranks only second to fishing as a leisure time activity during which lightning deaths occur and this is only due to the number of fishermen outnumbering the golfers.



Lightning strikes are unpredictable, especially since the warning thunder is heard only after the lightning strikes. Though lightning strikes are invisible, they produce a flash as a result of ionised air. According to the United States Inland Marine Underwriters Association the following facts may help understand the gravity of exposure to lightning.

- Lightning kills nearly 100 people in the United States alone each year and injures hundreds more.
 - Lightning strikes create temperatures that can reach between 8,500 and 33,500 °C, hotter than the surface of the sun!
 - Lightning strikes can travel up to 10 miles before striking the ground.
 - A typical flash carries a current of 12 million volts and 242,000 amperes (equivalent of 2.9 billion kilowatts of power).
 - Most lightning injury and damage are the result of a lightning strike occurring several hundred metres from the affected person or object.
- Technology is available in the form of devices and systems that enable the detection of an

SCOTTS® DONATE TO WEE ONE FOUNDATION

Scotts/Landmark Seed are to donate \$5.00 to the Wee One Foundation, for every 25-pound bucket sold of its new Memorial Creeping Bentgrass. The Wee One Foundation was established in memory of Wayne Otto, CGCS and his dedication to the betterment of the golf maintenance profession.

The Wee One Foundation provides financial assistance to golf course management professionals who incur extensive medical expenses within their families. For more information, visit www.weeone.org

Quick establishing Memorial Creeping Bentgrass is the result of eight years of selection and is most notable for its outstanding resistance to Dollar Spot and Brown Patch, medium to fine leaf texture and medium green colour.

For more information visit: www.scottspseed.com

BAGS OF WORK



Rolawn Limited has appointed Graham Gilbertson as Bulk Product Production Manager.

Graham (36) brings to his new role a wealth of experience in the packing and agricultural industry, having previously worked for

Excel, a leading contract logistics company and also run his own farm.

WRAP LAUNCHES CAPITAL FUNDING COMPETITION

A new capital support competition, recently launched by WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme) is aimed at accelerating investment in higher value wood recycling infrastructure in the UK.

For more information visit: www.mediacentre.info/wrap

approaching thunderstorm. These systems detect electrical disturbances through radio frequency signals and can determine the distance and relative electrical activity of the storm.

A Strike Guard predictor system, from Hydroscape Ltd was used by the R&A, to monitor potential storm activity during The Open. The system monitors cloud and cloud to ground lightning and provides warning alarms at user-set lightning activity distances.

Although it should be recognised that no system of warnings, shelters or evacuation procedures can ever completely manage the lightning hazard, reasonable safety precautions are appropriate and potentially life saving. For instance, the posting of lightning warnings is within the capability of all course management and the provision of shelters need not be costly.