

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

- Rough Justice – Preparations for this year's Open
- All Powered Up – Three decades of equipment change
- Driving Ranges – Making the most of the practice ground
- Making Water A Feature – The benefits of water features
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Picture: Carnoustie Golf Course

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Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

July 2007

Regulars

4-9

News

10

GTC

11

Education

Ken Richardson discusses the department's latest projects

12

Membership

13

Greenkeepers' Hobbies

14

In the Shed

Greenkeeper International's puzzle page

15

What's Your Number?

16

Continue to Learn

Golf Course Wetlands – Their Importance and Management

By Mary Purcell

44

New Products

50

News from the Chief Executive

50-58

Around the Green

66

As I See It...

National Chairman Billy McMillan's monthly column



Features

18

Mind the Gap

Scott MacCallum looks at the unsung hero of many golf courses: the bridge

21-23

Rough Justice

Scott MacCallum chats with John Philp, about preparations for this year's Open and looks back at the most controversial Championship of recent times

25-27

Making the Most of the Practice Ground

Colin Jenkins takes a look at some of the issues in relation to adding a commercial golf range to a golf club's facilities

29-32

Making Water A Feature

A look at the appeal of water features on the golf course

By Jackson House

40-42

Three Decades of Equipment Change

By James de Havilland

46-49

From Golf Course to BSc Course

By Paul Cook



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



A Special Week Awaits

Eight years after feeling the heat of the media spotlight and the wrath of a few players, Carnoustie Links Superintendent John Philp and his team are gearing up for another Open Championship this month.

The narrow fairways, severe rough and high scores brought about a renaming of the course in some newspapers to “Carnasty” last time around and took away from the great work John and his team had done on the areas he describes “as the areas the players were supposed to be playing from”.

This time round John has already had to face the media again as they looked back at the last Open and quizzed him on his preparations. He handled himself well when faced with a barrage or questioning and took the wind from the sails of one journalist who, hoping to highlight John’s lack of knowledge of the game, asked if he played golf and, if so, of what handicap? John was able to say that, while he doesn’t play so much now, he did once play off 1.

I was lucky enough to catch up with him a few weeks later to talk about the preparations in a more detailed and measured manner and can honestly say that a couple of hours in John’s company is as refreshing as it is exhausting. I came away with my head buzzing full of the ideas and philosophies of a man whose passion and knowledge for turf management. It’s a genuine privilege to spend time in his company.

This time around the rough won’t be as penal – the weather conditions over the last 12 months or so have seen to that while the fairways are a little wider so hopefully more players will appreciate the work that has gone into giving those who play golf as it should be played – finding the short grass from the tee then the green – every chance to control their golf ball.

Those of us who were at Carnoustie in ‘99, and had the unforgettable experience of cheering home a home grown winner in Paul Lawrie from the side of the 18th green, would have been staggered to learn that between then and our return to the Angus town there would have been no British winner, not to mention European winner of a Major Championship. While the Ryder Cups have proved easy meat over the last few years, 31 Majors have passed with a series of American, South African, Australian, New Zealand, even Fijian winners.

That run will come to an end sometime but, if truth be told, there is no-one exactly holding up their hand and declaring themselves a contender. But the beauty of golf is that you never know and a new hero is likely to burst from the dark shadows at any time.

Let’s hope so, just as we hope John Philp and his team have a wonderful week full of praise for a magnificent links in magnificent condition.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

Why not drop us an email with any news, press releases or new product updates you have –
Send them to Melissa (melissa@bigga.co.uk)

SUPPORT TEAM FOR BRITISH MASTERS

The Belfry have kindly offered BIGGA five places on their Support Team at the 2007 Quinn British Masters, to be staged at the Belfry from September 20 to 23, 2007.

The five BIGGA Support Team members will work alongside the main crew led by Superintendent Kenny Mackay. Kenny is looking for greenkeepers that are competent machine operators, as the work of the support team will consist of mowing of all cut areas of the golf course along with bunker maintenance. Also a valid driving licence would be of benefit. All members of the Support Team will need to arrive on September 16th and stay until the 23rd. Free accommodation, food and soft drinks will be given to all Support Team members during their stay.

All applications to be made to Kenny Mackay, Director of Golf Course & Grounds. Tel: 01675 470301 or email: kenny.mackay@thebelfry.com

TONY JACKLIN DESIGNS MAJOR NEW GOLF DEVELOPMENT



Tony Jacklin, the most successful European Ryder Cup Captain, has been contracted to design a new golf course development in Cyprus.

The man regarded as ‘Europe’s first golf superstar’ is also in discussion with golf course developers in the Middle East, continental Europe and the Caribbean – all of which follow his recent collaboration with Jack Nicklaus on the vaunted new ‘The Concession’ course in Florida, USA.

Tony, aged 62, has made a conscious decision to concentrate on golf course design, and is looking forward to taking a unique, hands-on approach with his projects – which will bear all the hallmarks of The Open and US Open champion.

He said: “I have decided only to take on a limited number of design contracts at any one time, as this gives me the opportunity to get personally and deeply involved in each of the projects.

“I hope that my signature design courses will be my legacy in Europe, where I learned the game, made many friends and enjoyed many of my finest moments in the sport.”

By becoming personally involved in each project – from the very first preliminary design meetings, right through to the official opening – Tony hopes to forge an enduring link with the golfing community. And he is determined that each and every one of his Tony Jacklin Signature designed golf courses will be a very special place for golfers to learn the game, play and most of all enjoy their golf.

GENTLEMAN DON: 1938 - 2007

It's with great sadness that a true friend to greenkeepers all over the West Country passed away suddenly on Monday, May 14, 2007.

I first met Don when I was a young lad starting on my career path at Saunton GC in North Devon. Don at the time had his own Company based at Bovey Tracey in Devon making and selling topdressing across the South West, his Company also sold fertilisers and course sundries.



First and foremost Don was a family man who loved his wife and daughters and later on his grandchildren. West Country greenkeepers and groundsman both young and old were an extension of Don's family, he always had time to have a chat and always asked about the family before turning to the topical sports story of the day.

Don lived life to the full with his positive attitude that rubbed off on everyone he met, he would always see the good points in people and encourage them with his positive manor.

During recent times Don has been working for Roffeys as their representative in the Devon & Cornwall area, he was also the Section's events organiser for Devon and Cornwall where he continued to drive the Section forward.

I'm sure Don would like us to remember him with a smile, many of you will have your own memories of gentleman Don, my most fondest memory has to be Don taking an order for materials on the back of a cigarette packet and losing it before he could place the order back at his desk.

Richard Whyman, BIGGA Past Chairman

BMW SUPPORT TEAM 2007

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



Some of this year's BIGGA Support Team with Chris Kennedy and winner, Anders Hansen.

A small team were on stand-by duty on the Thursday and Friday of the event in case of bad weather. Fortunately the weather was kind on these two days, and glorious sunshine was experienced by all with only our Chairman, Billy McMillan, suffering with a touch of sunburn on his visit to the Course!

A rapid change in conditions meant that the full contingent of 40 volunteers were armed with squeegees as well as bunker rakes for the last two days of the Championship.

With the help of Chris Kennedy and his greenstaff, the West Course stood up well to a day of incessant, and at times, very heavy rain with no delays in play on the final day.

Once again this year competitors had to negotiate a few subtle changes and modifications to the Course instigated by Ernie Els and Chris.

The winner of this year's event was Anders Hansen who beat Justin Rose on the 1st extra hole of a play-off.

Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator

COMMENDATION AWARD

The Altonwood Golf Group based in Godstone, Surrey has been given a Special Commendation at South East Learning Skills Council's (LSC) inaugural Employer of the Year Awards. The company collected the commendation in the medium employer category. Employing about 100 people, five of Altonwood's young employees are on work-based Apprenticeship programmes with Kent-based Hadlow, one of the UK's leading land-based colleges.

The awards ceremony was hosted by former Olympic athlete Colin Jackson CBE who also presented the prizes. Speaking on behalf of Altonwood, Matt Macklin said 'The commendation means a lot to us. As a result of taking on Apprentices, we have invested in the development of young people and now have a quality, enthusiastic confident, qualified staff and increased staff retention. We aim to take on more Apprentices in the future.'

STUDENT RETURNS AS TEACHER



George Pitts at the Cannington Golf Course

George Pitts, a former top golf course management student at Cannington (Somerset), has recently returned to Bridgwater College's Cannington Centre for Land-based Studies to inspire future generations of students, as the new Programme Manager for Sports Turf and Greenkeeping.

George studied at Cannington between 1997-2000 for an HND in Golf Course Management, for which he received a Distinction – and awarded the Top Student prize, the BIGGA South West Cup, for his Dissertation.

He has been involved in the golf industry for 12 years, working at various golf courses including: St Mellion International – Cornwall; Pallazzo Arzaga Club - North Italy; Sherfield Oaks – Hampshire; Bovey Castle – Devon.

George said: "I'm very passionate about the golf industry and the quality of our courses in particular. I've enjoyed training employees and seen the benefits it can achieve not only to the sports surfaces but also to a persons self-esteem and confidence. I've made many contacts and many close friends within the Greenkeeping industry.

"At Bridgwater College's Cannington Centre, where we have a 9 hole, 18 tee links-like golf course, we are concentrating on promoting equal opportunities by offering courses to suit all situations. We are raising awareness in nearby schools by promoting sports turf careers. We invite industry professionals to contribute to our courses to ensure the courses are as industry specific as we can.

"We will also be offering a new NVQ Level 3 in Sports Turf, starting this September, which will be run in conjunction with BIGGA South West and BIGGA South Wales regions."

BUSHEY HALL GOLF CLUB

One of Hertfordshire's golfing gems, Bushey Hall GC, has just appointed Neil Fergie as the new Course Superintendent to take the course to new levels of excellence. Neil (37) who heralds from the home of golf, East Lothian in Scotland, brings to Bushey Hall 17 years of world-class expertise.

Neil's impressive international career includes five years working at Muirfield in Scotland – one of the world's most prestigious courses. Muirfield has hosted the Ryder Cup and 'many Open Championships. Neil was part of an eight-man team responsible for bringing the course to such a high standard that it could hold major tournaments at any time of year.

Neil has also worked as Greenkeeper and Superintendent on courses in Moscow, Russia and as far away as Trinidad and Tobago in the West Indies at Tobago Plantations Beach & Golf Resort. It was here that Neil was responsible for the overall management of 72 staff. During this time Tobago Plantations hosted the European PGA Seniors Classic Tours 2000 – 2005. This event was televised worldwide and the course was widely acknowledged as a first class championship golf course.



When asked about Bushey Hall Golf Club, Neil responded; "I initially visited Bushey Hall as a consultant, I was immediately impressed by its beauty and the extremely friendly atmosphere both on the course and in the clubhouse. I'm very proud and excited to be working at Bushey Hall. I'm very ambitious for the course; my goal is to make the course the best it has ever been and to be one of the best in Hertfordshire. In 1-2 years I would love the course to be ready to host tournaments for adults and juniors at amateur and professional levels.' Neil added, "my message to anyone in Hertfordshire interested in joining a golf club would be, come and join Bushey Hall Golf Club and be part of the English golfing paradise that's about to happen – watch the old become new."

NEW EIGCA PRESIDENT

Scottish course designer Ken Moodie has been elected President of the European Institute of Golf Course Architects (EIGCA), succeeding Mark Adam, who has held the position for the last three years. David Krause has taken over as Vice-President. Moodie said: "During my presidency, I'm especially keen to work on strengthening our relationships with the other professional bodies in the field, such as the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects (SAGCA). We are planning a joint world summit on golf course architecture in 2010, which will be a great opportunity to share our thoughts on the global development of the profession and the game of golf."

Education is a key part of EIGCA's remit, and Moodie is committed to strengthening the Institute's training programmes. "Our diploma course is continuing to grow, but we must keep improving it," he said. "We also plan to expand the areas of research we already support and carry out, including – learning more about the impact of club technology on course design – so that our members are better placed to design golf courses that will be playable long into the future."

Seven EIGCA members form the Council – the President, Ken Moodie, and six members, each of whom have responsibility for chairing a committee, as follows: David Krause, PR & Promotion; Thomas Himmel, Professional Development; Rainer Preissmann, Membership; Howard Swan, Education Board; Peter Fjallman, Finance; and Mike Wood, Environment.

ARCHITECTS EXPERIENCE GOLF THE OLD WAY

The men and women behind some of the newest golf courses in the world recently tried golf the way it was played a century ago. Members of the European Institute of Golf Course Architects (EIGCA) – who were gathered in Portmarnock, Ireland, for their annual general meeting – took the opportunity to play several holes of the Portmarnock Links golf course, built in the 1990s by architect Stan Eby and signature designer Bernhard Langer, using hickory-shafted clubs from the 1920s and earlier and reproduction vintage golf balls.

Gavin Bottrell of Timewarp Golf provided the hickory clubs. “I think the EIGCA members found it an interesting experience,” he said. “Different players react in different ways to vintage clubs – some find them very stiff, to others they are very whippy. I believe this is because all of these clubs were tailor-made for individual golfers. But I do try to match the clubs to the ability of each player.”

Bottrell reckons playing extensively with hickory clubs has helped him realise that, although the best golfers could hit the ball considerable distance with old equipment, the lack of forgiveness the clubs provide is the biggest difference. “Better players play well with hickories – I have seen professionals break par on difficult courses using them,” he said.

EIGCA member Tom Mackenzie echoes Bottrell’s view. For Mackenzie, the day after he won the Institute’s President’s Cup golf tournament, it was his first experience of vintage equipment, although he felt having grown up before the era of big-headed drivers and forgiving irons gave him some inkling as to how the clubs would feel. “I really enjoyed playing with the hickories, but you have to swing the clubs completely differently,” he said. “You can’t be so eager to get at the ball. For some of the young guys who play the modern game of just swinging as hard as possible then it was a much bigger culture shock.”

“I typically carry the ball between 185-190 yards with a hickory driver,” said Gavin Bottrell. “But the ball flies much lower, and when the ground is firm – as it was at Portmarnock – then the extra roll you get means a good shot can travel quite a long way.” Mackenzie agrees, but is quick to point out the other side of the coin. “Poor shots go absolutely nowhere!” he said.

BOARDROOM CHANGES

Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd have appointed two new directors. Derek Cronshaw will become Financial Director, having previously been Company Secretary. Derek has worked at Sisis for 38 years, in Accounts and Purchasing.

David Harrison was Export Sales Manager and becomes Sales Director with overall responsibility for all Sisis sales. David joined Sisis from college, working in Design & Development and as a Demonstrator, so has much experience to bring to his new role.

Roger Hargreaves becomes Chairman with brother William Hargreaves now sole Managing Director.



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AWARD WINNER

Manor House & Ashbury hotels, Duchy College and the greenkeeping sector are celebrating a significant success after winning an award at the South West Skills Awards recently. The Award, presented by Jason Gardener MBE, Olympic gold medal sprinter, celebrates the achievements of apprentices, learners and employers who have excelled in the region.

The Manor House & Ashbury hotels are a privately owned, family business specialising in Sports, Craft and Golf holidays. The company employs 300 members of staff and the company have worked hard to ensure that every one of their team members has access to training.

Manor House Hotel based in Okehampton won the Large Employer of the Year Award; judges were looking for employers that could clearly show the benefits they had gained from a commitment to training their workforce through apprenticeships.

The achievement of this award is a major one both for the Manor House & Ashbury hotel and for the greenkeeping sector within Devon and Cornwall. The greenkeeping sector has, over a number of years, raised the standard of vocational training through national initiatives led by the British and International Golf and Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), and through the Greenkeeping Training Committee (GTC). Clubs and head greenkeepers throughout Devon and Cornwall have committed to such training. There has been a further significant element of support in the region from the Devon and Cornwall Section of BIGGA.

Pete Gross, Deputy Course Manager, said; "Before the training programme began, all staff including juniors would complete the task set for them, but now they are much more engaged in what they are doing, the reasons behind doing certain things and the benefits that the different methods will achieve."

Steve Harris, Course Manager, stated, "We are currently building another 30 golf holes, 19 of which opened in March this year, 7 to open in April 08 and the last 4 to open in April 09. On completion we will have 512 courses to maintain to an equal standard. As a company we believe in doing most things in-house; we find that this improves everyone's interest in all aspects of greenkeeping from constructing a golf green to finally presenting and cutting the finished green. We have trained greenkeepers to drive diggers, dumpers and even new methods of installing our new irrigation system. Training in our department is without doubt the best way to help our greenkeepers improve their understanding, knowledge and enjoyment of their job."

"If we look at our greenkeeping department, we have 40 staff members working in this important area, some have already achieved their NVQs, 16 have just achieved specialist NVQs and we have nine ready to start their qualification. There has been a measurable improvement in the standard of work being undertaken and we have worked closely with Duchy College to achieve this." He went on to say, "We hope to follow these training methods by putting two of our Head Greenkeepers through the A1 Assessors course."

Duchy College and, Manor House and Ashbury hotels worked together in a unique way to

achieve the greenkeeping qualifications for a significant number of employees. The training and instruction were delivered by Pete Gross (Deputy Course Manager). This took place totally in the work place, with no college attendance by the candidates, a very unusual system for when a college and a club work together. The college were represented by Bill Pile (retired Head Greenkeeper and life BIGGA Member) who supported Pete in the delivery and assessment process through weekly visits to the workplace. Bill Pile said, "It was very hard work over a concentrated period of time but I was pleased to be able to use my experience to help the individual candidates, Pete Gross and Manor House and Ashbury hotel to raise their greenkeeping standards".

Steve Evans (Devon and Cornwall BIGGA Section Chairman) said, "This is fantastic news for Manor House and Ashbury hotels and a tremendous example to Golf Clubs in Devon and Cornwall. Duchy College are repaying our support for them in this region as this is the second significant award they have achieved for our industry in the last six months. In January Michael Wannell (Greenkeeper at Bovey Castle) achieved The South West Student of the Year Award from the Institute of Groundsmanship. Well done to all".

TRAINING PROGRAMME

John Deere and Brooksby Melton College have launched the industry's first specialist training programme for aspiring parts apprentices.

The new Parts Tech programme will be run on similar lines to the award winning John Deere Ag Tech and Turf Tech apprentice engineering technician programmes, delivered in partnership with Brooksby Melton College of Brooksby, near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.

The 18-month training programme is based on the existing City & Guilds NVQ course in Vehicle Parts Operations, Levels 2 & 3. It has been tailored to include specific parts training on John Deere business systems, as well as industry training requirements such as forklift truck operation and more generic skills such as merchandising and desktop publishing. Completion of the course will lead to the award of the John Deere Parts Tech certificate and City & Guilds NVQ Level 2.

Further details are available from local John Deere dealers or from Brooksby Melton College, tel: 01664 850850 or 855444.



Achievers and staff at Manor House Hotel and Golf Club: Pete Gross (Deputy Course Manager), Richard Vallance, Paul Adams (Personnel Manager) Andrew Barnett, Stuart Entwistle, Ali Grant, Dave Chamming, David Lawrence, Mike Issac, Stuart Partridge, Jeremy Rumford, Tim Hughman, Ron Skinner (Programme Manager, Duchy College) Steve Harris (Course Manager)

CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2007

The Writtle College exhibit 'How Green is my Garden', which features in the Lifelong Learning in the Garden Section of the Chelsea Flower Show, has been awarded a Silver Lindley Medal.

The exhibit is an environmentally friendly garden centering upon issues such as recycling, water use, sustainable practices and 'garden miles', which determine how far the contents of the garden are physically transported and at what cost. The aim of the exhibit is to educate gardeners about what they can do to improve their environmental credentials. The team used as many recycled products as they could in order to reduce the environmental impact of their own efforts.

Mick Lavelle, Senior Lecturer and team leader for show preparations, said: "I'm really pleased that the exhibit received a Silver Lindley. The students involved were all first year degree students and receiving this accolade is testament to their hard work. This will be the last Chelsea for me, and it's great to bow out with one last medal".



PRESTIGIOUS GARDENS

Rolawn is once again celebrating being the first choice for some of the country's top garden designers at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show.



Leeds City Council: Scent of a Roman

Rolawn's famous Medallion turf and Blended Loam (a premium topsoil) have been incorporated into some of the show's most prestigious gardens and medal winning exhibitors, such as: The Fortnum & Mason Garden, Leeds City Council: Scent of a Roman, Marshalls: The Marshalls Sustainability Garden and The Children's Society: Lust for Life, to name but a few

LAWN SOCIETY AWARDS MEDALS



Mike Seaton, Founder of the Lawn Society

The Lawn Society has awarded its first medals for lawns and grassed areas exhibited at the Chelsea Flower Show.

Brian Alabaster received "Gold," The Fortnum and Mason show garden has been awarded "Silver-Gilt," Illusionesques "Silver" and Notcutts, "Bronze" for the use of grass in the company's display in the Grand Pavilion.

Mike Seaton, a fellow of the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) and founder of the Society, said that the medals were awarded according to the quality of the sward and the suitability of the grass within the overall design. "Brian Alabaster showed not only grass of a very high quality, but the display made full use of the sloping site and the bronze sculptures of children sitting on a grassy bank had been designed to fit perfectly," he said. "The Fortnum and Mason garden showed an effective and imaginative use of small lawn areas – squares of grass broken by stone - within a formal design, and Illusionesqueus with its grass sculptures showed what could be achieved when grass is used as an art form. The Notcutts Group use of good quality grass under a classical arched walkway of yellow climbers created a contrast adding an interesting dimension for the viewer."

The Society, which was formed to offer expert independent lawn care advice and act as a forum for lawn lovers, can be contacted at www.lawnsociety.org.uk



APPROVED TRAINING PROVIDERS

David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, explains the purpose behind the recent meeting of its Approved Training Providers held at GTC headquarters, Aldwark Manor, York.

The GTC has the responsibility to ensure the employers and greenkeepers it represents are served by its network of training providers by way of quality education, which can be delivered in a variety of ways e.g. part or full time at a college, on the job or on-line.

The choice of delivery is very much up to the student and if employed, the employer.

Some employers still consider it best that the student attends college even when they have registered them on a work-based training qualification.

I still feel there is a great deal of misunderstanding of the modern vocational qualifications and without wanting to bore regular readers I will briefly explain the structure and content of a vocational qualification.

Vocational qualifications include skills AND the related knowledge which are assessed using nationally agreed standards NOT individuals standards!

The VQ's are nationally accredited National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) in England, Wales & Northern Ireland and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Scotland – NOTE: the content of the N/SVQ's are exactly the same at all Levels.

Groups of skills are agreed and become Units which in turn are grouped into Levels of qualifications e.g. N/SVQ Level 2,3 or 4.

In Sportsturf there are specific N/SVQ Levels 2 & 3 with a Sports Turf Manager qualification at Level 4.

The GTC has a major input into the content of the qualification ensuring the employers either recruiting using the appropriate level of qualification or reviewing staff training requirements can use the VQ's to identify particular staff's skill and/or knowledge requirements.

The crucial element of any VQ is the quality of assessment and I don't think I need to repeat the fact that this is where much of my time is spent ensuring that Centres are delivering the various programmes at to the national standards laid down by the Awarding Bodies NPTC & SQA.

Back to the main point of this article, our providers meeting. The importance of what our providers are teaching turf students has been raised over many years and while the GTC can ensure the content of the qualifications meets employment and employers needs we also attempt to ensure the theory or knowledge is also to a national standard.

The GTC invited speakers to address the provider delegates on subjects, which are today's major issues in terms of golf course maintenance and management.

Each speaker was asked to provide notes, which the GTC can circulate as additional learning materials to turf students over and above the current set of Level 2 and 3 materials through its Approved Centres.

Subjects included, sustainable sportsturf management, climate change, waste management, pesticide thematic strategy, water regulations and environmental management were all addressed.

The GTC, while promoting vocational training, also promotes the college based Higher education qualifications such as the Higher National Certificate/Diploma, Foundation Degree, B.Sc and M.Sc.

No matter which course or qualification a greenkeeping student is registered on the GTC is looking to ensure they get a balanced education where the ideals are balanced with the reality of employer/customer requirements. We need to ensure our providers do teach and discuss all aspects of turf maintenance but at all times be in touch with the current trends in the sector hence the recent GTC workshop.

The workshop proved to be a very worthwhile event and the GTC will continue to work on raising the maintenance issues facing the sport with all parties.

Clearly the Home Unions and BIGGA are committed to the awareness campaign through conferences and seminars but we accept that each golf club has to take the responsibilities for the standards it requires.

The GTC is committed to ensure its provider network teaches best practice in aspects of course maintenance providing qualified turf professionals for the employers.

The best practice information produced for use by the providers is also available within the hard copies of the Level 2 & 3 and will be sent out with future copies of the CD Rom format.

The learning materials are available from the GTC direct –
Tel: 01347 838640 Email: golf@the-gtc.co.uk or visit the GTC website: www.the-gtc.co.uk

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

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Another busy month has gone by with Sami and Ken finishing off the Safety Management System, starting the Environment Competition, making arrangements for the Student of the Year Competition and updating CPD credits.



After what seems like an age, the BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System is, at last, finally installed on the BIGGA website and on the GCMA website. Members of either association can access the SMS through their respective web site members' area. You should have received a copy of the Getting Started guide in this magazine.



Remember that the SMS will not do all of the work for you but it will help you to introduce a health and safety system for your golf club.



The deadline has passed for entries to the 2007 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition. However, there is still just enough time to submit your entry if you have forgotten to put in the post.

Judging of entries will commence later this month when the judges from STRI will contact clubs to arrange visits.



The judging of this year's Student of the Year Competition begins on Monday, July 2 in Edinburgh. There are 32 entrants in this year's competition and judging will finish on Friday, July 6 when the judges will select eight finalists to progress to the National Final that will take place on September 17 at BIGGA House.

MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Club Managers Association of Europe is running a series of Seminars in Scotland this summer. They have agreed that BIGGA members can attend at the same price as CMAE members.

The next seminar takes place at McDiarmid Park, Perth on Tuesday, August 28 from 11am to 5pm. Details as follows:

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GUEST SPEAKERS

Billy Dixon is a Managing Partner of MIND Associates and is a specialist in public relations, image consultancy and communication. With his passion for sport, Billy's presentation will be especially relevant. Mary Keightley is also a Managing Director of MIND Associates, specialising in human motivation, leadership skills and performance enhancement. Mary coaches senior executives and speaks regularly at industry conferences.

BIGGA Members £75 - Price includes lunch, coffee, tea and all handout material. Register by fax on 01334 460859 or email cmoe@elmwood.ac.uk

FREE TRAINING FOR UNDER 25S

It is not often that we can get anything for free but as from August this year, those under 25 and living in England can get free training up to and including NVQ Level 3. Details just released by the Learning and Skills Council are:

FREE TRAINING FOR UNDER 25S

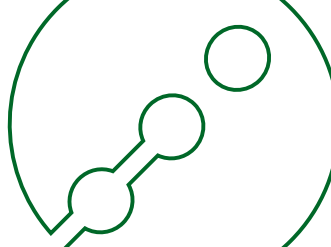
Adults under the age of 25 who have missed out on education and training opportunities will be able to get free tuition to obtain a first, full level 3 qualification, equivalent to 2 A levels, from this August. The new entitlement for the key intermediate technician level skills employers say they need will provide routes back for those who left education early and want to return to improve their qualifications and job prospects.

The new entitlement will be available from August '07 through colleges of further education and other providers of high quality education and training who have satisfied the Learning and Skills Council quality assurance process. The entitlement is expected to benefit some 60,000 learners in 2007/08, enabling more young adults to achieve higher-level technical and professional qualifications.



EDUCATION

Membership



VANESSA DEPRÉ UPDATES US ON MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

COMPETITION:

Win one of three mobile phones, a BIGGA polo shirt, a waterproof pair of socks or a fleece just by answering the following question:

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2. Reduced rates at selected beauticians
3. Personal Accident Insurance

Email your answer to vanessa@bigga.co.uk and quote your name and membership number and you could win one of the prizes.

We have three Nokia 6233 mobile phones up for grabs with Bluetooth, 2 mega pixel camera, large high quality screen with stereo speakers also boasts MP3 player and video ringtones. This phone takes a memory card for additional storage.

There is also a BIGGA polo shirt, a pair of waterproof socks and a fleece to be won.

BENEFITS REMINDER:

Legal Helpline:

Offering legal advice on employment matters, health and safety issues, consumer rights and any other legal matter for Greenkeeping Members and their families. Call on 0800 1777891.

Personal Accident Insurance:

This includes cover for time off work due to an accident at home, work or even on holiday as well as one off payment dependent on the type of injury. Call 01277 251000.

Car Rental:

National's Affinity Leisure Programme offers BIGGA Members exclusive rates on car and van hire in the UK and on international car hire in over 80 countries. Call us on 01347 833800 for more on this.

Discounted Workwear:

ARCO offers BIGGA Greenkeeper Members 20%* discount off a choice of goods. *Discount not available on selected products. Call 01482 611773 for more on this.

BIGGA Library:

The BIGGA Library is available to all members and stocks over 800 titles. You can borrow up to two titles from the library at any one time, for a period of six weeks. Call 01347 833800.

These are only a few of the benefits that BIGGA offers you. For a complete list go to www.bigga.org.uk

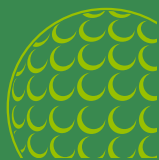
BIGGA WELCOMES

SCOTTISH REGION		
Trevor	Cameron	North
Michael	Forsyth	North
Craig	Sword	Central
NORTHERN REGION		
Neil	Cox	North West
David	Harrison	North West
Mark	Linsley	North East
Mark	Moore	North West
Christopher	Shorten	North West
Dean	Traynor	North West
Derek	Turnbull	North East
MIDLAND REGION		
Malcolm	Barnett	Midland
Alan	Hacking	Midland
Richard	Hughes	Midland
Steven	Lane	East Midland
Michael	Scullion	Mid Anglia
Russell	Sinnett	East of England
Lee	Tustian	Berks/Bucks & Oxon
SOUTH EAST		
Joseph	Dormer	Sussex
Morne	Kaasjager	Surrey
Russell	Kirk	East Anglia
Adam	Millward	Essex
Daniel	Morgan	Kent
Michael	Nelson	Kent
Steven	Pearce	London
Daniel	Saunders	Sussex
Nick	Swanson	Essex
Jeff	Taylor	Essex
Andrew	Toomey	Essex
Scott	Waddell	London
STH WEST & WALES		
Steven	Chivers	South West
James	Freeland	South Coast
David	Hiscock	Devon & Cornwall
Colin	Ruffell	South Coast
INTERNATIONAL		
David	Downing Li Cgcs	USA
Ricky	Heine Cgcs	USA
Sean	Hoolehan Cgcs	USA
Mark	Kuhns Cgcs	USA
ASSOCIATE		
Simon	Squires	Northern



NEW RECRUIT

Brad Anderson's temporary move from Receptionist to Membership Services Assistant at BIGGA HQ, is now permanent. Congratulations Brad!



Hobbies

Here's something you didn't know about me...



Name: Ian Stephens
Club: Carholme GC, Lincoln
Position: Head Greenkeeper
Hobby: National Trust Volunteer

How long have you worked for the National Trust?

"I started off at 19 and am now double that – so in answer to your question probably too long!"

In exactly what capacity do you work for them?

"I am a volunteer and a member of the South Downs National Trust Volunteers (SDNTV) that involves carrying out conservation work at the weekends. At the moment I am a 'sleeping' member as it is a bit far to travel from North Notts down to Sunny Sussex. In my years with the group I have been a work party, social and fundraiser organiser, as well as Chairman."

How and when did you get introduced to this hobby?

"I found out about volunteering in my Dad's Daily Telegraph. There was an article on weeklong conservation projects. My best mate and I decided to go to a property in Northumberland working on Hadrian's Wall, doing a bit of archaeology. I definitely got the bug for the work from that!"

What is it about the work that appeals to you?

"I have always loved the outdoors and having been brought up on wildlife, walking and the countryside it was a perfect way to keep busy over the weekends doing stuff that I enjoy, doing my bit for the environment and meeting friends from many walks of life."

"The biggest reward and appeal by far for me is meeting my wife Jenny when we were both starting out in the SDNTV. We've now been married for 15 years. Our friends in the group even changed our 'work in progress' sign to 'wedding in progress' and posted it outside the church."

"Our biggest honour came in 1995 when I was Chairman and we were invited to attend a Centenary event for the NT. We were introduced to Princess Alexandra as representatives of conservation volunteering."

"It's a great way of making friends. I would recommend this to anyone wanting to get out and about and active in the countryside. The skills I've learnt from this work really help in the work environment - fencing, hedge-laying and coppicing."

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HOBBIES



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.

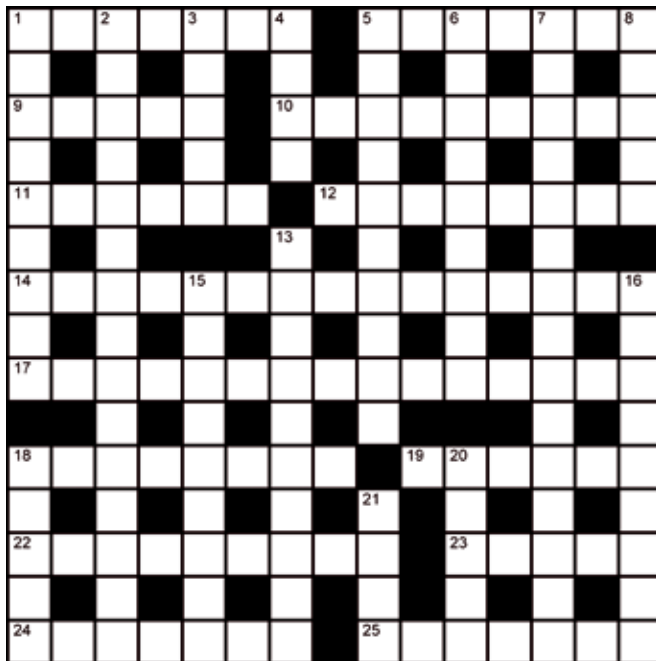
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Of an insurance claim, paid without assigning blame to any party (2-5)
- 5 Title bestowed upon kings of ancient Egypt (7)
- 9 French city famed for its rayon and silk manufacture (5)
- 10 Factory which uses cheap, non-union labour (5-4)
- 11 Completely, as a unit (2,4)
- 12 Insect, the female of which feeds on animal and human blood (8)
- 14 Leader of a group - name taken from a childrens' game (4,2,3,6)
- 17 Original name for a petrol bomb (7,8)
- 18 "On one's —", in a difficult or destitute situation (4-4)
- 19 Apothecary weight measure of an ounce (6)
- 22 Having existed at the earliest stages of existence (9)
- 23 Cricket ground located in St John's Wood in London (5)
- 24 Wander (especially from a topic of conversation) (7)
- 25 The upper jawbone (7)

DOWN

- 1 Russian gymnast who won her first Olympic gold in 1976 (6,3)
- 2 Deductions from mutual fund payments to cover sales commission etc. (5-3,7)
- 3 An unexpected victory (5)
- 4 Specific item of work (4)
- 5 Any remarkable occurrence (10)
- 6 Theoretical particle, opposed to one measured in "flavours" (9)
- 7 Dickens novel featuring Ebenezer Scrooge (1,9,5)
- 8 Shortened name of animal whose name means "river horse" (5)
- 13 Snooker player awarded the OBE in 2001 (5,5)
- 15 Trying to gain profit, usually dishonestly (2,3,4)
- 16 Dangerous toxic condition experienced during or immediately after pregnancy (9)
- 18 Term for any creature having two feet (5)
- 20 Controversial Frankie Goes To Hollywood single first released in 1983 (5)
- 21 Type of fruit; word used informally to mean "exactly" (4)

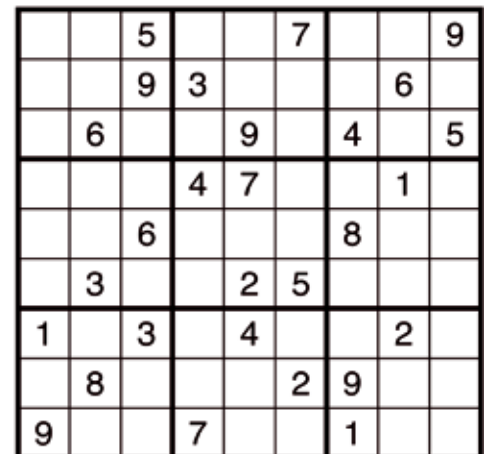


QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

- 1 Slider, sacrifice fly and R.B.I are all terms used in which sport?
- 2 In which sport do players take long and short corners?
- 3 Which Olympic sport needs a planting box?
- 4 Which non-mechanical sport achieves the highest speeds?
- 5 Which sport is played over four periods of 15 minutes where only two of the seven players can score?
- 6 The volume of a golf ball is approximately equal to how many cubic centimetres - 8, 22 or 40?
- 7 What is the only Olympic sport that has a finish line that no competitor will ever cross?
- 8 How many penalty strokes are added for a lost ball in golf?
- 9 What was the name of the 1980 comedy film about golf which spawned a sequel in 1988?

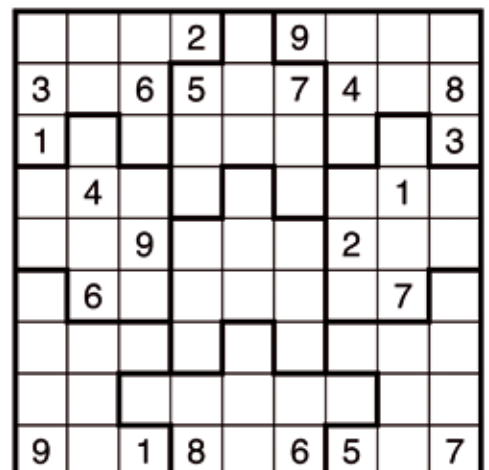
MONSTER SUDOKU

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



SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 12 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



IN THE SHED ANSWERS ON PAGE 59



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**BRITISH
SEED
HOUSES**



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



Name: Rob Donald

Company: Whitehorse Contractors

Position: Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?

"15 years."

How did you get into it?

"As a student I worked for M J Abbott between semesters, Mike Abbott became a mentor to the extent that he sponsored me through my final year at uni - I became a competent machine operative, this has served me well throughout my career as it has helped me understand what is achievable and more to the point, what isn't."

What others jobs have you done?

"I worked for M J Abbott until 1996 until I was recruited by White Horse Contractors. During my time with Abbott's I progressed from a Graduate Trainee to Site Manager and ultimately a Contract Manager."

What do you like about your current job?

"I thrive on the daily challenges of running our company. I enjoy the camaraderie of colleagues and staff. I get a buzz out of closing deals, developing business relationships. I have a real interest in the construction, management and maintenance of sportsturf facilities."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

"Construction, Design and Management and staff competence

certification have influenced the greatest change in both site and contract management attitude over the last 15 years. I look back at practices that were accepted as the norm and consider that, despite the bureaucracy associated with CDM, the increased awareness of health and safety issues has undoubtedly made the industry a much safer environment."

What do you like to do in your spare time?

"I've a house full of sprogs and dogs and am kept busy both vocationally and socially. My true passion is fly fishing for salmon. Standing waist deep in a cold, Scottish river, casting a fly for the most enigmatic of fish species - an antidote to the pressures of business life."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"Waist deep in a cold, fast flowing Scottish river – would be nice!"

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?

"This particular industry is, by its very nature, 'friendly'. Over my 15 years I have made close friendships with architects, specifiers, suppliers, subcontractors and believe it or not, competitors!"

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

"I have 3 happy, healthy children – I consider that to be lucky".

Pick a number

"11."

Rob has picked Clive Nottingham, Lloyds of Letchworth

GOLF COURSE WETLANDS – THEIR IMPORTANCE AND MANAGEMENT

By Mary Purcell

Golf courses are important green spaces to any area, and in many urban sites can be the only green spaces available. They can provide a useful and compatible habitat for humans and nature together. Wetlands are among the most productive and dynamic ecosystems on the earth. They are host to numerous wildlife and plant species. While water ecosystems are of special importance for biological diversity.

Every species has specific habitat preferences and golf course managers and greenkeepers can contribute greatly to conservation by providing habitats for local species. Water quality and indeed overall wetland quality can have an effect on the native diversity.

The age of the golf course can be important in determining its value for wildlife, with conservation value of older sites often seen as being greater. But there exists the potential to enhance local biodiversity significantly if appropriate habitats are created and restored on newer courses, which can be more productive than older unmanaged wetlands. Installing ponds and maintaining wetland areas (no matter how small) can add greatly to the diversity of flora and fauna on the course.

Wetlands are key habitats for the conservation of invertebrate animals. For example, many insects depend on water for their larval stages. Invertebrates have an important role in decomposition and recycling of nutrients in wetlands. Created wetlands in the form of ponds and other water hazards can provide habitat for a diverse array of wetland-dependent species, particularly birds. Wetlands provide large amounts of food that attract high volumes of wildlife with many species using them as an important part of their life cycle. They also act as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain-water, flood water and ground water. Loss or degradation of wetlands can lead to an increase in flooding, extinction of species and the decline in the water quality of the area. So it is very important to maintain and restore wetland areas on the golf course.

ESTABLISHING WETLANDS

Before trying to enhance wildlife to any degree on any area of the course, it is important to understand the basic needs of wildlife so as to incorporate them into the site. The basic components of any habitat include: Space, Food, Cover, Water

Wetlands can provide all of these components and in my eyes provide the 'complete package!'

Space is provided in terms of the area of the wetland body as well as surrounding areas. Wildlife corridors (connecting fragments of habitats) help to increase species number and diversity. The greater the variety of plant species located in or around a waterbody, the greater the increase in the niches available for colonisation by various wildlife species. Wetlands contain detritus, which is dead vegetation that forms particles of organic matter, supporting a multitude of insects, which in turn support many other wildlife species.

Water birds use wetlands for shelter, protection, resting and nesting sites and feeding. Water availability is the most important factor for wildlife in my opinion, and so maintaining or restoring water features such as lakes, ponds, streams and wetlands should be top priority for greenkeepers looking to increase the nature potential of the course. Many wildlife species depend on wetland areas for survival and there

are also many species that visit wetland areas less frequently but just as importantly, for, say, breeding purposes.

Robust golf course construction can involve the loss of habitats such as wetlands. But with careful planning they can be incorporated into the landscape of courses, adding to their diversity and uniqueness. Designing and restoring golf courses in natural ways such as incorporating wetland areas may determine the survival of wildlife populations and the ecosystem on which they depend.

STRUCTURE

In nearly all ponds and wetlands, certain plants grow in more or less clearly defined 'zones' and particular communities of animals are associated with them. Closest to the shore are the emergent water plants, which grow with their roots in water and stems and leaves in the air. For example, reeds, bulrushes and marsh grasses. There are plants whose stems are below the waterline; the simpler plants including desmids and algae. Beyond this zone, the floating leaved plants reside – for example, the near-shore lily pads and duckweeds (Lemnaceae).

In deeper water, pondweeds (Potamogeton) and freshwater eel-grass (Vallisneria spiralis) stem upward from the bottom along with submerged liverworts (Bryophytes) and bladderworts (Utricularia). Emergent plants do not usually colonise water deeper than one metre while the totally submerged plants can be found at depths of many metres. Submerged plant forms include species of pondweed (Potamogeton) and water milfoil (Myriophyllum). Examples of emergent plants include common club-rush (Spirus lacustris), mares-tail (Hippuris vulgaris) and bur-reed (Sparganium species).

Slow moving or still waters encourage copious growth of submerged and emergent plants. Many species of waterbirds use golf course ponds. Shoreline vegetation is important for many foraging and nesting birds. Greenkeepers can add a multitude of plants to a waterbody. It is highly recommended that plants natural to the area, sourced locally, be used in building or restoring waterbodies. Over time the natural plants of the area will colonise the site also.



Author Mary Purcell carrying out laboratory analysis into macro invertebrate diversity in newly-installed ponds

'Macrophytes' refers to the large photosynthetic organisms typically rooted in and permanently submerged in water. Aquatic macrophytes include Charophyceae (stoneworts), Bryophyta (the mosses), Pteridophyta (the ferns) and Spermatophyta (seed plants). Macrophytes have importance, especially in shallow waterbodies. They are important sources of energy and play a significant role in the cycling of nutrients and organic matter. They also provide food for herbivores and contribute to detrital food chains. Additionally they act as substrata for algae and invertebrates. Shoreline and emergent plants add cover, food and aesthetics to the golf course and plants also oxygenate waters to decrease algal blooms.

'Macro invertebrates' refers to the larger and readily visible animals without a backbone. Frogs can be a common sight in wetland areas, which are an important part of their habitat, particularly when young, while adults can also live away from the water (in moist woodlands and grassy areas), returning to the pond to breed.

MANAGEMENT

A golf course can produce low environmental impact if managed well. However, good management practice is essential. Sparse vegetation and lack of buffer zones can increase chemical run-off. Improper fertilisation and poorly maintained irrigation systems add to nutrient losses. Informed management of the golf course is important, not only to the look and finance of the course, but also to the survival of healthy waterbodies.

Raised walkways and cart paths over wetlands allow traffic to move from tee to landing area without disrupting the habitat for wetlands located in areas of in-play. Naturalised areas need to be located where possible out of the regular lines of play. No-spray zones (buffer zones) around a pond are important so as to keep nutrient leaching to a minimum. Aquatic plants in wetlands oxygenate water. If waterbodies become excessively nutrient rich it leads to excessive plant growth and consequently eutrophication, causing the growth of algae, which is not desirable. The system can be balanced by allowing broad floating aquatic plants such as lilies to stop the penetration of sunlight (and therefore temperature) to the bottom so reducing excessive plant growth.



Waterbodies provide contrast to the manicured look of other areas on the course

Emergent vegetation. Juncus provides a beautiful aesthetic enhancement. Cat tail utilises many nutrients, which might otherwise be available for algal growth. This vegetation in streams or along shore-lines boosts supplies of O₂ for aquatic flora and fauna by reducing the BOD. Maintenance problems associated with wet areas along edges of ponds and so on are ideal for modifications to benefit waterbirds, while at the same time reducing management costs.

WATERBODIES

Ponds lack a strong, continual, unidirectional current and are usually small with specialised biota. Shallow ponds are inhabited right down to the bottom, as the main population of green plants and animals require light. Water is transparent and allows sunshine to penetrate. The movement of water in streams leads to different colonisation compared to stagnant waters of other waterbodies. The addition of a mini waterfall or oxygenation system to increase water movement in ponds leads to an increase in the water oxygen content and so increases diversity – for example, mayflies are found only in oxygen-rich waterbodies.

Fens are wetland systems with permanent high water levels at or just below the surface. They are fed by rain-water and so are acidic in nature. Fens are important for biodiversity. Over the years there has been a loss in fen habitats. If fens occur on a golf course, care should be taken to incorporate them into the site.

'Riparian zones' refers to the shorelines of lakes and ponds, stream corridors and wetlands. The maintenance of riparian vegetation along streams and rivers is critically important to prevent soil erosion, maintain high water quality and provide habitat for riparian specialists.

Wetlands are a crucial part of our ecosystem and an asset to any golf course. Architects, course managers, greenkeepers and golfers all have a vital role in the preservation and restoration of these resources. Water should be carefully and sensitively maintained for wildlife, as it is an essential component of habitats. Not only is it a refuge for countless species, but also adds great aesthetic appeal to the course.

THE AUTHOR

Mary Purcell is currently carrying out research for a doctoral degree in Environmental Science at University College Dublin, Ireland. For more information, contact Mary at mary.purcell@ucd.ie

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MIND THE GAP

Scott MacCallum looks at the unsung hero of many golf courses – the bridge

If a course architect, constructor or greenkeeper is faced with a span to traverse on a golf course whether it be a lake, a river or stream, busy road or a gully, what are their options?

Well, you could go round the obstacle. But that could be time consuming for golfers and/or greenkeepers and, let's face it, a little bit boring. A tunnel is sometimes an option, ideal for some situations as they are extremely discrete, but can be expensive to introduce. A ferry, as one used on the 18th hole at Bocket Hall, is another consideration if it is quite wide expanse of water, although this can be expensive and often labour intensive to run.

What else is there? Well let's just think inside the box for a change. What's the most common and most effective method to get from A to B across the sort of terrain we've been talking about? A bridge, of course!

A bridge can make a huge difference to a golf course. Imagine what the 18th on the Old Course would look like, or indeed, function like, without the famous humpbacked stone bridge upon which, in recent times, both Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus have stood and waved goodbye to the adoring galleries. If the bridge hadn't been there we wouldn't have been left with those unforgettable images, while no bridge would involve a somewhat less dramatic walk around the burn.

Likewise the 12th hole at Augusta National. You're leading the Masters on the final day but have had to play three from the wrong side of the creek having misjudged your tee shot and now have the time it takes to walk over the beautifully manicured bridge to collect your thoughts. They are probably the most famous bridges in golf and probably among the smallest.

At many clubs bridges, while often taken for granted, play a significant role in everyone's regular round of golf.

Georgia-based, Creative Bridge Designs, has worked for some of the best known golf course architects in the US, including Robert Trent Jones and the aforementioned Palmer and Nicklaus providing an array of bridges in different styles.

"One of the main considerations before deciding on a bridge is budget," explained General Manager, Richard Eunice.

"Once that is determined we can examine the options. We can supply pre-fabricated bridges, in whole or in sections but for club's with larger budgets we will look at a range of options and different styles," he explained, adding that in the US many bridges are installed to keep golfers out of protected wetland areas.

"The things we like to look at are from artistic perspectives we want to make a bridge look as natural as possible and we don't like a bridge over a river to go from bank to bank we want it above the bank, ideally about 10 feet on each side."

With golf in the USA suffering from a lack of money similar to the situation in the UK Creative Golf Designs has found a way of providing golf clubs with a more cost effective way of what they want.

"To save a dollar here and a dollar there what we have been doing lately is steel beams but decorating them with timber so that they look like a regular wooden bridge."

Length of span has a part to play in materials as well.







“If you want to reach 200 feet in a single span for example you are definitely looking at a steel bridge; from 10 to 20 feet you are looking at timber and for 30 feet a lot of people like to use a glue laminated beam timber,” explained Richard, whose company, launched by Richard’s brother Brian Nuttall, in 2000, is hoping to offer its services to UK customers in the near future.

One of the other main elements to consider is weight as the larger the bridge the more that can be done with it – buggies, greenkeeping machinery etc.

“From our point of view a two ton bridge is a pedestrian bridge, a five ton bridge can take buggies and some lighter maintenance equipment while 10 ton bridges are for large equipment and 20 ton for large vehicles,” explained Richard.

Health and Safety is another important issue and hand or bump rails, should always be considered in most circumstances.

Sometimes bridges can give a new lease of life to a golf club. At Aldwark Manor, home of BIGGA HOUSE a bridge over the River Ure enable the course to be extended from a short nine holer to a full length 18-hole course with the additional holes being laid out on the land on the other side of the river. The 70-yard long single span steel bridge may not be a thing of beauty but it can take buggies and is of vital importance to Aldwark Manor Hotel and its owners Q Hotels.

So next time you are traversing one of the bridges at your club just have a think about how life would differ if it didn’t exist.


Thanks to Richard Eunice, of Creative Bridge Designs, for his assistance with this article. See: www.creativebridgedesigns.com

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ROUGH JUSTICE

Scott MacCallum chats with John Philp, about preparations for this year's Open and looks back at the most controversial Championship of recent times

Let's rewind to the end of April and a function room within the excellent Carnoustie Hotel, which overlooks the 18th green of this year's Open venue. The annual R&A press conference has just finished and one man is surrounded by the nation's golf writers, with a battery of dictaphones and tape recorders stuck inches from his nose.

Carnoustie Links Superintendent, John Philp, is the man at the centre of all the attention. Eight years ago he was identified as being responsible for the famous links being renamed "Carnasty", when many players hit out at the playability of the course. John was infamously described as "an out of control greenkeeper" who, among other devilish acts, had fertilised the rough in a warped attempt to make the players look foolish.

Three months ahead of this year's Championship the press were taking their chance to quiz the man himself.

John coped with all the attention admirably, answering the questions as fully as he could and certainly giving as good as he got in a relaxed, honest, and up-front manner.

What those golf writers missed out on, however, was the opportunity to sit down with John at length and listen to his philosophies on golf course management and on his beloved Carnoustie Links.

For example, had they heard him talk about the work he and his staff have done to reward a player for finding the fairway, or ensuring consistency of bounce when the ball lands, they would have discovered a man as knowledgeable as he is passionate on the subject of fine turf and golf. They would also have learned more about the reasons why so many of the world's best struggled in '99.

Sitting in his office, close to the 10th green on the Championship course and 5th green of the excellent Burnside course, John first of all paid tribute to his team and outlined some of the work they have been doing since the Open's last visit.

"I've got a wonderful team and, although they are split over our three courses, they combined over the winter to re-do over 90 bunkers on the Championship course. We have 26 greenstaff in total, as well as four in the workshop, some of whom were here in '99, but also a lot of lads working on an Open for the first time. My staff produce the highest standards of workmanship and I'm very proud of their achievements.

"I am very fortunate to have very talented people in key positions. Sandy Reid is the skilful and committed head man on the championship course and Eric Watson with his wealth of experience leads the workshop team. I have worked with my Deputy, Paul O'Connor since 1990. He has an impeccable knowledge of links turf management and has been instrumental in the development at Carnoustie Links over the years."

The team has spent a lot of time trying to get a balance on the fairways between low areas, which obviously can be a little lush and higher parts so that they will perform similarly.

"The ball is not going to sit on a crown, it's going to roll into the hollows but we feel that the crowned area is the type of turf, providing a nice tight lie, that enables a player, with the skill to do it, to squeeze the ball out and get spin."

For a good number of years the team has been verticutting and hollow coring to get as much sand into the low areas to give them the same playability quality as those higher areas.

"We'll cut these areas a bit lower, 6-7 mm is not uncommon in good growth, to control the mixed grass sward. We also overseed the higher areas with fescue, adding wetting agent and liquid seaweed where necessary to hold moisture and retain sward density. The Hydroject has been a great tool for us."

John is well aware that this sort of high intensity work is not something many clubs could tackle.

"We're fortunate that we have a big enough staff and the equipment to do this compared with the more limited staff single course clubs would have," said John, who when asked whose turf he envies most, offered up Muirfield, Gullane and, in particular, Luffness.

"I get a lift when I go to these places and look around. Basic greenkeeping principles have been followed over the decades and they haven't had to fight back from misguided agricultural policies."

Back at Carnoustie - where John has had a constant battle with rye grass contamination in many playing areas brought in as a new "super grass" many decades ago - and having catered for the skilled golfer, who has found the fairway from the tee, John and his team were intent on ensuring that the player could then be rewarded when it comes to the shot in to the green.

"When the ball lands on the approach or the green itself you want a reaction on the ball that is consistent and to know that if it lands on the approach to the green it will get the same reaction as if the ball landed on the green itself.

"And you need rooting for that, which you get from fescue and, indeed, brown top bent grass, but which you can't get with meadow grass. I don't care how well it's prepared, you can't get proper ball reaction from meadow grass because it doesn't have the root system to give you that resilience and consistency of reaction when the ball lands.

"With a meadow grass dominated sward the ball will either land soft, make a dent, bounce up and perhaps suck back, or, if it's hard and dry enough, have no resilience at all and bounce on through the green. A

player sometime doesn't know what to expect," explained John, whose passion when he describes such things shines through like a beacon.

"We want to retain more of the residual spin when the ball lands. Greens are not only prepared for smoothness and puttability - but also for how they receive the ball and, from a well struck shot from the perfect lie, we want the ball to bounce twice then, on the third bounce, grip - not spin back, but stop. That's what we are trying to achieve, but a lot will depend on moisture levels at the time."

"The guy who is sitting in the perfect lie in the fairway and with the skill to spin the ball should be rewarded, but he won't be if the green is such that everyone can control the ball all on it from any lie on the course," said John, who in conjunction with the R&A, has been using the Turf Thumper, a USGA designed-tool, comprising a tube with a ball shaped centre, linked to a computer, which drops on the turf to measure the firmness and resilience of greens and, indeed fairways.

So there you have it. Just a snapshot of the thought and skill which has gone into some of the preparation for this year's Open venue.

What then happened eight years ago to cause such controversy and produce such negative headlines?

"In the lead up we were aware of the severity of the rough and that some of the fairways were a bit narrow in places, narrower than they will be this year, but following on from a wet year in '98, the rough was very severe on many courses on the east coast of Scotland in the lead up to '99," recalled John.

What couldn't have been foreseen however was the situation which arose on the 6th hole - Hogan's Alley.

With a strong prevailing headwind the players were frightened of the out of bounds left so were laying up short making it a genuine three shotter. They then couldn't reach the regular second shot landing area about 60-70 yards short of the green. The second shots were landing in a very narrow area bordered by thick rough about 50 yards in length which was never intended to be a landing area," explained John.





John Philp, Course Manager



That area was widened just after The Open and has remained so ever since while the landing area off the tee has been made more inviting, encouraging players to hit driver, with the fairway bunkering amended by Martin Hawtree.

The 3rd hole has also been altered by Martin and the rough on the 17th and 18th holes recontoured. The course is now actually 60 yards longer than in '99, and is the longest on the Open rota at 7421 yards, complete with two par-4 measuring more than 500 yards. It will be no cakewalk.

What disappointed John and his team more than anything in the aftermath of '99 was the fact that the attention was firmly on the penal rough and not on the wonderful condition that the "in play" areas were in.

"The lads were very disappointed because they knew what they'd put into the course and they knew what the playing surfaces were like - the areas the players were meant to be on. This wasn't emphasised, because it wasn't controversial to say that the fairways were firm and the greens were consistently pacey and true," said John, who did say that some players, including Ernie Els, praised them for the course condition, while others, among them Tiger Woods, didn't make any negative comments.

John's opinion on golf course set up and the nature of player power and press coverage, is also equally well argued.

"Rough is a hazard area. If players go into the Barry Burn, as is very common, there is never anything said - players fish out the ball, take a penalty drop and play on. But go into the rough and there is a totally different outlook. 'I'm 150 yards away, 40 yards off line. I should be able to get to the green from here, but this rough is ridiculous.'

"To me the other way is far worse. When a player, 30 yards off line - in the rough, a supposed area of punishment - can hit a 3-iron 220 yards onto the green. No-one says that's nonsense, he shouldn't be able to do that, but the media will say, 'What a fantastic shot. What a player!' But he was 30 yards off line and had the perfect lie!" said John.

"Ok, we obviously accept that we want to progress in golf turf management, presentation and quality, ball reaction, etc but when it comes to hazards on the links, nature prevails."

So what is the definitive answer to that fertilising the rough rumour and how did it get started?

"That came from Greg Norman who had just taken a 7 on the 17th. It was quoted that he was just a couple of feet off the fairway but, in fact, he was through the three metre wide semi rough and in the really thick stuff. What he said in his interview afterwards was that he'd never seen links rough so green.

"Like other courses in this area the rough can colour quite well and it can take quite a bit of dry weather to discolour it. That year it never did turn to semi dormancy and certainly was nothing like Hoylake last year." Having talked about the rough it is perhaps ironic that the lasting memory of the '99 Open is of Jean Van De Velde, shoes and socks off, standing in the Barry Burn as he nightmarishly threw away a certain win.

Jean's thoughts of playing from the Burn seemed ambitious at best but John revealed that Sam Snead successfully extracted himself from a sand bank in the burn during the 1937 Open. This year, though, the wall around the burn is one block higher where Van De Velde dropped in.

It is to be hoped that 2007 brings no more rough justice for Carnoustie but that all the memories it creates revolve around wonderful golf and a fine tuned and well received golf course. They should be.

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MAKING THE MOST OF THE PRACTICE GROUND

Colin Jenkins, takes a look at some of the issues in relation to adding a commercial golf range to a golf club's facilities

In the British Isles there are nearly 1500 golf ranges, with a little over 800 of these ranges located on their own as 'stand alone' facilities. Nearly 700 golf clubs have fully functional practice grounds, that is to say a range type system where balls are sold or provided and then collected centrally, cleaned and distributed to other golfers.

Golf clubs have changed substantially over the last 100 years. First, it would be most unlikely for any more 'members clubs' to be built. Originally these clubs or associations were the normal way that clubs came into being. These days golf clubs are built for commercial reasons and, due to changes in society and the law, it would be most unlikely that a group of individuals could create a new club from scratch, although some existing proprietary clubs are still being bought by groups of members.

The original golf club had little need for those wishing to learn the game, as golfers seemed to just materialise, and the lack of practice facilities definitely led to some interesting swings – in fact the quality of golf swings has changed significantly in the last 20 years. There are many reasons for this: improved coaching techniques, video analysis, television, a massive increase in tournament prize funds for professionals and, of course, much improved practice facilities.

Many clubs are struggling to retain their membership numbers as changing social trends in society have made many unwilling to commit to a single club with a large annual fee. Rising house prices and a more inclusive nature for families have caused a major drop-off in the number of full club members in their 20s and early 30s. Golf clubs have always been a useful and rewarding pastime for the retired, but this ageing customer base is an increasing problem for many clubs. The highly prestigious venues, such as Wentworth, Chart Hills and Sunningdale, will rarely struggle to fill their allocation, but even these clubs have invested heavily in the best practice facilities, which their members have come to expect.

Many traditional clubs with a less prestigious tradition are now facing real dilemmas, with the easy option of increasing the subscription rates to counter falling numbers, proving less viable as members decide that golf is just too expensive to support just one club.

The traditional style of membership holds less appeal to young couples and families than the vast array of leisure pursuits open to us all today. Two for One green fee vouchers are readily accepted by too many facilities, fearing that by not swallowing this poison pill they will lose



the decreasing income to other clubs in the area, willing to take a cut price rate. Clubs must also look at different ways of marketing their core product – membership and green fees.

So for those clubs that are less willing to change their rules, relax their dress codes (and embrace breast feeding in the clubhouse!), the answer may well lie in teaching new golfers that are socially acceptable to the rest of the club's membership. Put simply, if you can't find enough suitable members in the market, then 'grow your own'. Clubs may also find that such a policy is lucrative in its own right.

In order to improve the practice facilities of a club to a point where new golfers can be taught there are several points to consider –

The area must be large enough and not just long enough. A good range area would be 300m long by 200m wide. Such a size may seem excessive, but it is the wayward shots that threaten the boundaries, particularly to the right of the course, which can lead to ball escape issues and health and safety problems.

Planning restrictions will often allow a structure to protect golfers from the elements, but if your club wishes to illuminate the range, then such planning consent is far less likely to be achieved. Golf courses tend to be in rural areas, so floodlights will normally be alien to the local residents and the borough's plan.

Although floodlit golf ranges take far more than those without illumination, careful thought must be given to the decision to operate during the winter evenings. Ranges need to be attended and this may require the full clubhouse to be open to provide toilet facilities and possibly food and beverages. Clubs will also have to invest in additional lighting and be prepared to have several additional staff on hand, even if the returns from the range may prove lower than expected.

Access to the site is vital. Too many clubs have introduced a wonderful practice range 500 yards from the clubhouse, so few use it before or after the round.

Dress rules for the range should be less stringent than for formal play, as many will want to use such a facility on the way home from shopping or other normal domestic chores. To enforce a strict code is damaging to the income of the new range.

Almost all ranges should be run by or in conjunction with the PGA professionals engaged at the club. This is not part of the old pals act (the writer is a PGA professional!) but PGA pros are without question best placed to ensure that the new range is used to maximum effect. Lessons for all types of player can be given and once a new golfer is comfortable coming to the club to practice, then he or she can be gently introduced to the other facilities and may well be attracted enough to wish to join the club.

The normally agreed truth about beginners is that they do not mix well with existing golfers. In fact the reverse is true – new golfers mix well with everyone. They are charming, polite, humble, keen to learn and excellent customers – it is a shame the same cannot be said of all existing golfers! The reality is that beginners have to be carefully integrated with experienced golfers. Once their initial set of lessons is complete, some venture out onto the course with no care for others



around them – this is where the trouble can begin. Careful introductions and beginner oriented days are vital. Many ladies sections have a great record of ‘mentoring’ new golfers. Experienced players give up their time to guide new golfers through the minefields of etiquette, rules, the history of the game and even a little socialising to make the new player comfortable and easy in this new environment.

With regard to the physical issues relating to building a new range, there is much to consider. The first decision is vital – is there enough room to safely create a golf range? If the practice area being considered is even fractionally tight for space, then real problems will ensue. Practising golfers are far less accurate than those playing and the number of times an unusually bad or off-line shots occurs will be alarming to some.

Secondly, is there enough demand to justify the expense of building a range? This is to some extent less important, as a practice ground converted to a quality golf range will attract custom that had previously not been considered. Demographic surveys will give some indication of population and lifestyles, but a rule of thumb that is worth considering is that a range can normally expect to take £1 per annum for each of the people that live within 10 minutes of the range. This is assuming that it is floodlit and also that it is offering a good quality facility and is open to all, with reasonable marketing. Do not assume that range users are the same as golfers – many clubs have been surprised at how few of their members actually use the new range, despite voting for its introduction at AGM's and EGM's.



Once the range site has been established, it is best to work backwards from muddy balls to the customers' first approach to the range. The cleaning, collection and distribution of range balls is so often overlooked by those designing the range. If this is not given sufficient thought, then the range will be blighted by extra labour costs and inefficiency forever. Golfers should never see a muddy ball and preferably never see mud, however, the number of ranges where they actually get muddy trying to practice their favourite game is a testament to the lack of forethought or expertise employed in the original design. Many ranges leave this ball management issue so late that they ‘plonk’ the ball management room at the end of the range and trail wet balls daily across an otherwise elegant carpeted range.

For a range to succeed at a golf club it is vital to have the co-operation of the greenkeeping staff, as it is almost always the case that they will be responsible for ball collection and maintaining the outfield and surrounding area. Targets are vital for any range to succeed, but are



a nuisance to avoid with ball collection and cutting equipment. Often clubs expect the additional work and responsibility to be provided for no extra remuneration – this is ridiculous and few people in business expect more work for the same money. It may well be necessary to collect balls at night, if pilferage becomes a problem on the range. This can easily disrupt the workings of the greenkeeping team and so it is sometimes better to have a separate ball picking contract or team of collectors – much depends on the area and the number of balls involved.

In the UK most ranges will need to be cut once a week in the growing season. To clear the range of 95% of the balls on it can take the same time as the remaining 5% of balls, which must all be collected prior to a cut. Cutting the range should be carefully scheduled so that both course and range are not inconvenienced.

There are many other points to consider in establishing a golf range as a paying contribution to a golf club. The best route is to take advice from other clubs that have gone down a similar path, much can be learnt from mistakes!

Colin Jenkins is the editor of Golf Range News and operates four golf centres in the UK. For further advice on any aspect golf ranges, contact him at: colin@golfrangenews.org or by phone on: 01580 715248, 0776 8887033.

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Growing success



Water feature at The Manor House Golf Course

MAKING WATER A FEATURE

By Jackson House

The obvious success of a golf course is shown by the repeated visits of members and, although we cannot take away the importance of a good round of golf, water features can play an important part as well as providing attractive, environmentally enhancing areas, giving pleasure to all.

As with any large country house, a lake, constructed in full view from the residence is important and, an attractive water feature by the clubhouse can provide a tranquil area in which to enjoy a drink or lunch. A water feature can provide a very good 'first impression' and should be seen from the entrance.

Working closely with golf course architects, The House Brothers designed the three lakes and waterfalls for The Manor House Golf Course at Castle Coombe. It took a model of the proposed water areas to convince the architect and the client that it was worthwhile. The architect has since been heard to say that The Manor House Golf Course has the 'finest 18 hole' in the country.

Winter storage reservoirs for irrigation are, with global warming, even more important. In many situations it is possible to construct a reservoir which will also be an attractive water feature. Waterplants provide an attractive edge to any water feature and these will camouflage the waters edge when the levels drop a foot or so. However, in years like the 1976 drought, the greens must be kept watered and it does give the Environment Agency comfort if a golf course is irrigating from its own winter storage reservoir.

If the average 18 hole golf course is 120 acres with 0.5m (20") of rainfall this gives 240,000m³ (52,800,000 gallons) for evaporation, run off and restoring the water tables. To take advantage of this it may be possible to construct a reservoir at the lowest part of the golf course and, with a small submersible pump, pump up to a larger reservoir on another part of the course. With a more sophisticated submersible pump it could pump directly into the high pressure irrigation system.

Lakes and adjoining canals can be incorporated into the golf course to form attractive hazards and these can be either a 'love or hate' for some golfers, and a great deal of thought needs to be given to the design including the siting of the tees and greens.

An attractive 'canal type' linear lake along the contours may be possible on a golf course with a clay subsoil. This opens up the possibility of a canal which resembles a large river with weirs and bridges which, with imaginative design, can also be a feature of the golf course.

An island green is an outstanding water feature. It has been a long ambition of ours to design a 'floating green' which can be easily moved. It could also remain green in dry weather without irrigation.

The golf course at Pyrford (Near Wisley) has one of the largest areas of water features (25 acres). The design involved lakes constructed down into the water table with a submersible pump to lift the water to a large waterfall into high lakes running around the course in an attractive stream. This attracted the sand martins.

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During construction at Pyrford GC near Wisby

Water proofing water features can be costly if a complete liner is required. However, if there is clay in the subsoil this can be used to help waterproof to above the top water level. Bentonite, which is an inert 'fullers earth' can be used to waterproof the base of the lake, depending on the type of soil.

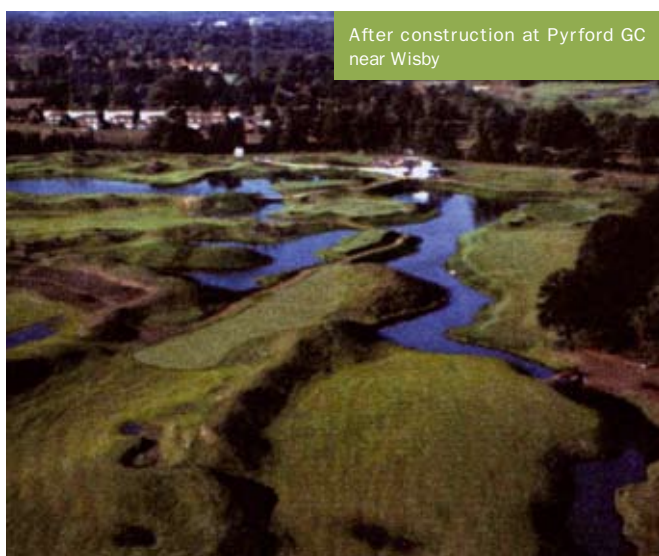
One of our most successful methods of waterproofing lakes is by using a 'bentonite Slurry Cut off Trench' which are installed in existing, leaking dams or around the lower sides of lakes. They rely on an impervious layer of soil under the lake which the bentonite Slurry Cut off trench is

excavated into. This method of waterproofing is relatively low cost and successful. It is interesting that a trench filled with bentonite slurry does not cave in. A bentonite slurry cut off trench can also be used to bring underground streams, or water courses to the surface.

Golf Courses can be a wonderful habitat for birds and wildlife to such an extent that some golf courses have been granted an SSSI status. An environmental lake can attract all kinds of birdlife and to see the swallows diving over the water is an attractive sight.

Although common waterfowl are the most common birds to be attracted to a new lake, occasionally a tufted duck or even swans will take up residence, which is wonderful. Dragonflies, watervoles and moorhens with their fluffy black chicks are also interesting inhabitants.

Although a golfer is concentrating on his game, to be in the natural countryside with views of a magnificent lake, surrounded by wonderful fauna and flora can only add to their pleasure. With the need for a 'greener world' and golf courses becoming more 'family orientated', the enhancement of the environment is even more important. Waterplants can also add beauty to a water feature. The depth of water is important with shallow water for the waterplants and deeper water, at least three meters, if stocking trout. The waterplants, especially phragmites can help a great deal in the balance of a pond by restricting the blanket



After construction at Pyrford GC near Wisby

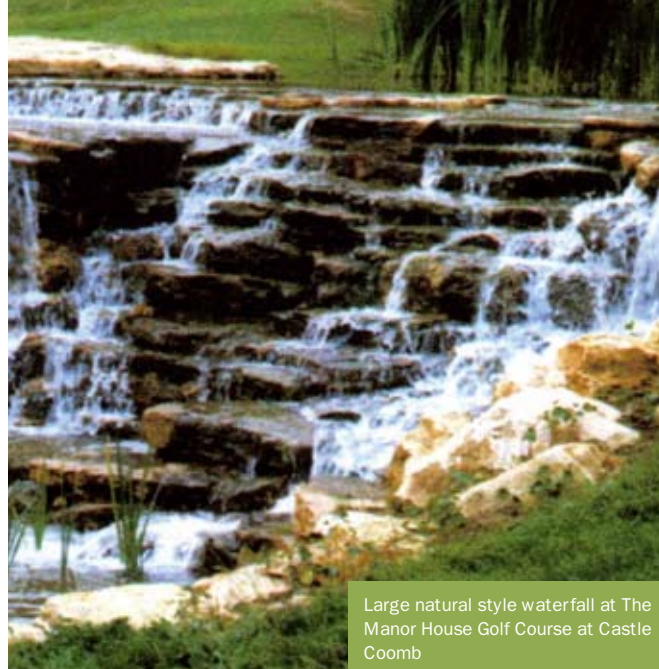
weed caused by high nitrates in the water, and helping to give clear, blue water.

A reed bed of phragmites, with the water seeping through the roots is a very effective way of purifying water. A large village in the west country are using this method to effectively purify human effluent.

If the golf course is experiencing problems with polluted water a version of the reed bed can be used to clean the water which could also be an attractive environmental habitat and may even attract reed warblers. Water has many other attractions, i.e. swimming Lake swimming on a hot summer day with a good expanse of water with no chlorination can be lovely. A jetty with ladder makes a good platform to dive from and climb out.

As consultants, it is interesting to see how the uses of water features can be combined giving, winter storage, irrigation, hazards for golf, environmentally enhancing for the wildlife and also to provide a beautiful view from the clubhouse and other sections of the course.

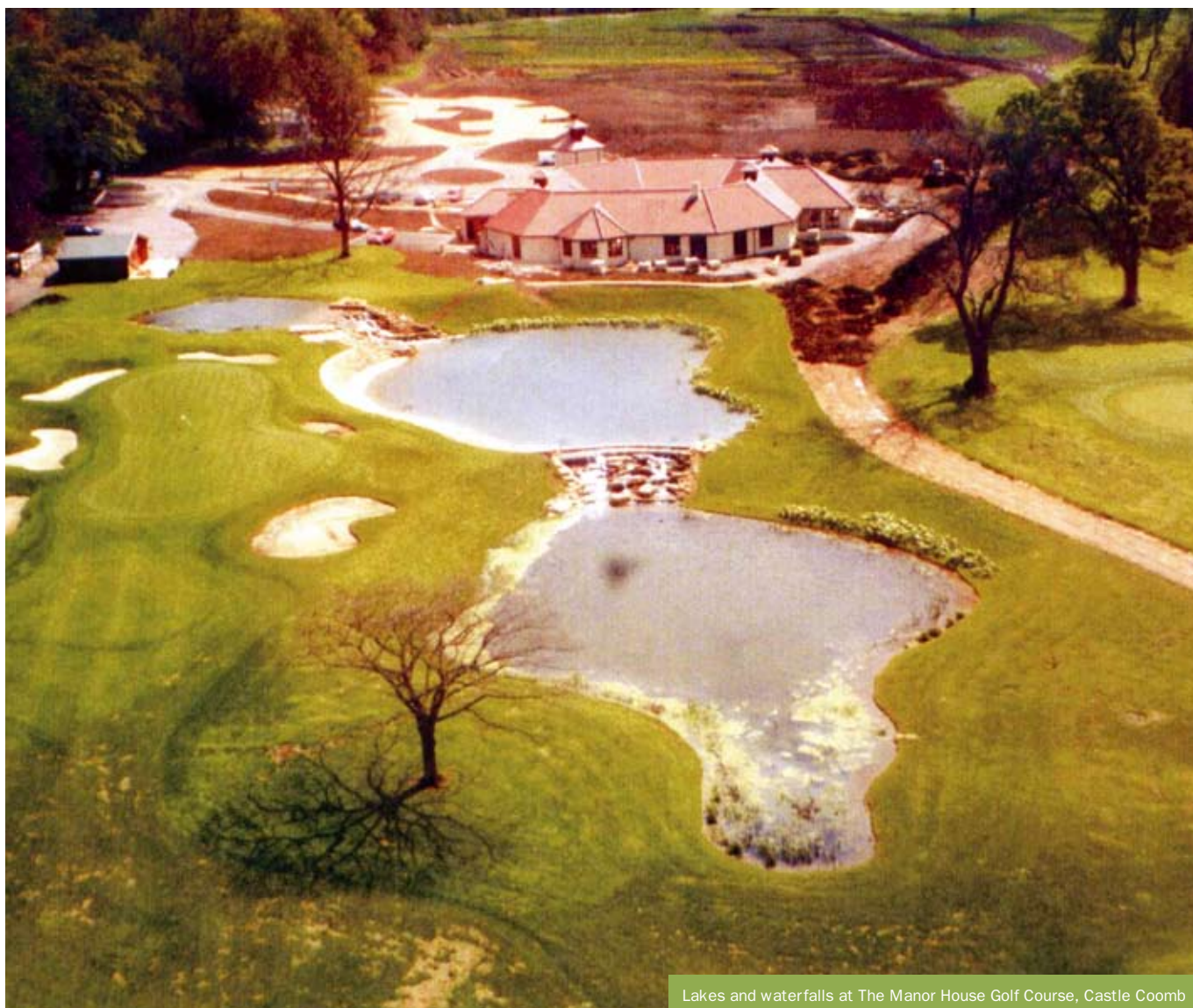
How to advise on how water features can help an existing golf course is a challenge especially when costs are important. When asked to advise we study the ordnance survey map of the area and the geological map showing the subsoils and the latest satellite photograph. These are combined with local knowledge and, most importantly, the requirements of the golf course personnel and greenkeeper, who will be aware of the drainage and irrigation needs is helpful.



Large natural style waterfall at The Manor House Golf Course at Castle Coomb

Our main criteria is to use the existing features as far as possible, which is cost effective and helps the water feature to blend well into the surroundings and look as if it had been there forever!

Jackson House is Managing Director of House Brothers Limited www.lakesandgolfcourses.com - 01935 433358



Lakes and waterfalls at The Manor House Golf Course, Castle Coomb

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SKIN AT WORK: OUTDOOR WORKERS AND SUN EXPOSURE

BIGGA'S Health & Safety series produced by Xact



As we approach the late spring and early summer months, consideration should be given to the effects of sunshine on the skin of people who spend an appreciable period of their working time outdoors during the day, or during leisure time spent outside e.g. gardening, playing or watching sports, holidays etc. As well as tanning the skin, ultra violet radiation in sunshine can also cause skin cancer which is one of the most common cancers in the UK. In recent years UK summers have been getting warmer with greater amounts of sunshine giving a corresponding higher risk from the disease. Diagnosis of the disease is rising each year. However, up to 80% of cases could be avoided with some simple precautions. The highest risk is when skin is exposed to direct sunlight but damage can occur even when it is overcast.

On average, people who work outdoors receive three to four times more UV exposure each year than people who work indoors. This cumulative exposure puts outdoor workers at greater risk of non-melanoma skin cancers, which are the most common forms of skin cancer in the UK. People who get sunburnt e.g. at work, while on holiday, gardening etc, also increase their risk of malignant melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer. Those most at risk of skin cancer are people with fair skin, lots of freckles or moles or a family history of the disease.

Employers and other persons exposed to the sun should, whenever possible:

- Avoid unnecessary sun exposure at times between 11am - 3pm – this is the time of day when UV radiation is at its peak in the UK
- Plan outdoor tasks so that they can be done earlier in the morning

or later in the afternoon, reserving indoor or sheltered jobs for peak UV radiation times in the middle of the day

- Limit each employee's midday UV exposure where possible by rotating tasks with other staff
- Provide shade for workers to use, especially during breaks. If this is not feasible, encourage workers to find shade where it is safe to do so
- Encourage people to cover up
- Provide hats or appropriate headgear for workers to wear. Hats should ideally shade the face, neck, ears and head
- If hardhats are worn, consider providing extension flaps to protect the neck
- If your organisation has a uniform, this could include a hat, as well as shirt and long trousers
- Consider providing/using sunscreen
- If practical, SPF 15+ sunscreen should be available for outdoor workers to use
- Keep it in easily accessible places, such as tearooms, toilets or site offices
- Ensure you give guidance that for maximum benefit, sunscreen needs to be applied generously before being exposed to the sun and reapplied often
- Keep their workers informed
- Include sun protection advice in any routine health & safety training
- Encourage workers to check their skin regularly for unusual spots or moles that change size, shape or colour and to consult their GP promptly if they find anything that gives them concern – Early detection saves lives!

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GREENKEEPER TRAINING

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the Standard of Greenkeeper Training. The Association is a member of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including Section, Regional and National workshops, seminars and conferences.

The range and quality of training now available throughout the UK means that there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry.

Golf Course Managers should ensure that their staff are trained to

the highest standards. This begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC. There is a clear link between education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff.

Ken Richardson

Education and Training Manager
British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association

Tel: 01347 833800

Email: education@bigga.co.uk

Website: www.bigga.org.uk

SCOTLAND

ELMWOOD COLLEGE

Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JB

Contact: Sam Letham

Tel: 01334 658842 **Fax:** 01334 658888

Email: sletham@elmwood.ac.uk

Web: www.elmwood.ac.uk



Information: Information: Full Time National Certificate Greenkeeping: Block Release. SVQ Level II and III Block Release and Workbased options available. SVQ IV ILM Management, HNC & HND Golf Course Management available as Full time and Online Distance Learning. Golf Course Environmental Studies, Construction and Design Management Online Learning Courses. HNC & HND Golf Facility Management. PDA for Football, Cricket Management. SVQ Level II & III Landbased Service Engineers and Golf Course Mechanics Course. BTLIA Irrigation Management Block Course Various times throughout the year. FEPA and COSHH Health & Safety Courses Available. Chainsaw, tree climbing and Rescue Techniques.

LANGSIDE COLLEGE

Rutherglen Campus,
Buchanan Drive,
Rutherglen,
Glasgow, G73 3PF



Contact: William O'Neil

Tel: 0141 272 3823

Email: woneil@langside.ac.uk

Information: SVQ, SGA, HNC, HND. Full time and part-time courses in Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship, Golf Course Management, Horticulture, Land and Environment and Applied Ecology. Short courses for land-based industries including Pesticides.

GOSTA TRAINING LTD

50 Brook Street, Glasgow, G40 2AB

Contact: Chris Bothwell

Tel: 0141 556 3999 **Fax:** 0141 556 4999

Email: learn@gostatraining.co.uk



Information: SVQ II, III and IV also Modern Apprenticeship in Sportsturf including other options and GTC Training Manual. Attendance Day release from November - March. Distance Learning also available. Short courses with certification include Pesticides, Chainsaw, First Aid, Risk Assessment, Abrasive Wheels, Full Range of Machinery Courses, Manual Handling and Fire Extinguisher training. Consultancy service for Health and Safety Policy development, Site Risk Audits, Machinery Permit to Use system, COSHH and Noise Assessment.

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL GREENKEEPING COURSE

Chief Executive's Department,
Training & Development Centre,
15 Links Road, South Ayrshire



Contact: Gordon McGinn

Tel: 01292 678861 **Fax:** 01292 671790

Email: gordon.mcgin@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Information: SVQ Level 2 Amenity Horticulture: Sportsturf, SVQ Level 3 Amenity Horticulture: Sportsturf and the Modern Apprenticeship in Amenity Horticulture

WALES

PENCOED

Pencoed, Bridgend, Cardiff, CF35 5LG

**Contact:** Paul Discombe or John Sullivan**Tel:** 01656 302672**Fax:** 01656 302601**Email:** pdiscombe@bridgend.ac.uk**Web:** www.bridgend.ac.uk

Information: NVQ Sportsturf Level 2-3, HNC/HND Turf Management. National Certificate/Advanced National Certificate - Sportsturf Management. Short courses: PA1, PA2 PA6a and Chainsaws. NCH National Certificate in Horticulture. Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture.

ENGLAND

ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE

Askham Bryan, York, North Yorkshire, YO23 3FR

Contact: Central Admissions**Tel:** 01904 772211**Email:** enquires@askham-bryan.ac.uk**Web:** www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Information: First Diploma and National Diploma in Horticulture. Foundation & Extended Foundation Degrees in Horticulture, Landscape and Garden Management or Arboriculture. All available full or part-time. Block release courses: NVQ Levels 2 & 3 Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Maintenance. Short courses: FEPA spraying, chainsaw and brushcutter courses.

**TRAINING PROVIDERS/
COURSES GUIDE**

A full list of GTC approved training providers can be obtained from the GTC.

The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) are continually reviewing the approved status of training providers offering greenkeeper training courses.

For more information contact the GTC on: 01347 838640 or visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk

BERKSHIRE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Hall Place, Burchetts Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 6QR

Contact: Deborah Smirfitt**Tel:** Freephone 0800 0711 666**Fax:** 01628 824695**Email:** enquiries@bca.ac.uk **Web:** www.bca.ac.uk

Information: Located in the Thames Valley, BCA has excellent resources for horticultural based training including a six-hole golf training facility opened by HRH The Duke of York. Programmes include the First Diploma, National Certificate and National Diploma in Horticulture, with Landscape Design and Greenkeeping options plus Apprenticeships, Higher National Diploma/Certificate programmes. Part-time programmes include NVQ Level 2 and 3 Amenity Horticulture, Sports Turf. Residential accommodation is available and free parking on site.

**BRIDGWATER COLLEGE CANNINGTON
CENTRE FOR LAND-BASED STUDIES**

Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2LS

Contact: Course Enquiries**Tel:** 01278 441234 **Fax:** 01278 444363**Email:** enquiries@bridgwater.ac.uk**Web:** www.bridgwater.ac.uk

Information: National Certificate in Horticulture (Sportsturf), Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture (Sports Turf), Certificate of Higher Education in Golf Course Management, Foundation Degree in Golf Course Management, NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf, NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf, FEPA Training, Chainsaw Certification, Greenkeeper Mechanics. Note: The Certificate of Higher Education and the Foundation Degree are available as part-time options.

HADLOW COLLEGE

Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0AL

Contact: Sally Flanagan**Tel:** 0500 551434 / 01732 853164**Email:** enquiries@hadlow.ac.uk**Website:** www.hadlow.ac.uk

Information: NVQ's, Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning courses available in Amenity Horticulture (Sports Turf), Amenity Horticulture (Landscape) and Production Horticulture. We also offer a range of short courses for example, Health and Safety, COSHH, Chainsaw use, Welding and Pesticide Applications. Additionally, full and part-time courses at different levels in Horticulture and a variety of other land-based subjects are available.



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Contact: Keith Harrison

Tel: 01483 884136 Fax: 01483 884001

Email: kharrison@guildford.ac.uk Website: www.guildford.ac.uk



Information: Part-time courses: NVQ Level 2 Sportsturf college day release and workplace visits/assessments, Level 2 First Diploma college day release, for those without qualified workplace assessors, NVQ Level 3 Sportsturf on-line, Level 3 National Award college day release for those without qualified workplace assessors, HNC Turfgrass Science and Management college day release over 2 years, HND day release 1 extra year plus a Top-up BSc Degree for HND graduates part-time over 2 years, Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Science (subject to validation) plus various short courses including BTUA Irrigation Certificate Course, throughout the year. Please contact us for up-to-date listings, qualifications and advice. Open evenings are held regularly at the Campus.

PLUMPTON COLLEGE

Ditchling Road, Plumpton,

Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3AE

Contact: David Blackmur

Tel: 01273 890454 Fax: 01273 890071

Email: enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk Web: www.plumpton.ac.uk



Information: Foundation Degree in Horticulture (Sportsturf specialism), National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture, National Award (Garden Design), First Diploma in Horticulture. Part time courses: NVQ Level 1; NVQ Level 2 in Landscaping and Sportsturf; NVQ Level 3 Landscaping and Sportsturf; NVQ Level 4. Also available are RHS Certificate and RHS Advanced; IOG National Technical and Intermediate National Diploma. Short courses are also available for FEPA spraying and chainsaw. Bespoke courses to order. Centre of Excellence for Horticultural Technologies (CoVE).

MYERSCOUGH COLLEGE

Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 0RY

Contact: Stewart Brown

Tel: 01995 642222 / 642305 Fax: 01995 642333

Email: mailbox@myerscough.ac.uk

Web: www.myerscough.ac.uk



Information: Full time courses: BSc (Hon's) Turfgrass Science, Foundation Degree Sportsturf Science - (Including an Online option by Distance Learning), National Diploma, National Certificate and First Diplomas in Sportsturf, Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship.

Part-time courses NVQ Level 2, 3 & 4 Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Maintenance (Work-Based Training). All higher education courses can be accessed on a part time basis: FdSc / BSc Turf Science: FEPA Short courses. NPTC Certificates of Competence in the safe use of Mowers and Turf care Equipment. Careers mornings monthly on Saturdays.

REASEHEATH COLLEGE

Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF

Contact: Gareth Phillips or Chard Spicer

Tel: 01270 613236 Fax: 01270 625665

Email: enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk Web: www.reaseheath.ac.uk



Information: Foundation Degree and Higher National Certificate in Golf and Sports Turf Management; National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture with Sports Turf; NVQ levels 2 & 3 in Sports Turf; Apprenticeships; NPTC Qualifications.

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OAKLANDS COLLEGE

St Albans Smallford Campus,

Hatfield Road, St Albans,

Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA

Contact: Andrew Wight

Tel: 01727 737080

Email: andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk

Web: www.oaklands.ac.uk



Information: Full time courses: National Certificate in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management. HNC in Sportsturf. Part-time courses: leading to NVQ Level 2 & 3 Greenkeeping, Apprenticeship Training. Short NPTC Courses: Pesticide, Chainsaw. HNC starting in Sept 07.

WARWICKSHIRE COLLEGE

Moreton Morrell Centre,

Warwick CV35 9BL

Contact: Andrew Turnbull

Tel: 01926 318285 Fax: 01926 318300

Email: aturnbull@warkscol.ac.uk



Information: Greenkeeping Courses: Foundation Degree Sports Turf Management (2 years full-time, 3 years part-time), NVQ Level 2 & 3 Day Release and Work-based Options, NPTC Level 2 National Certificate Sports Turf (1 year full-time, 2 years part-time), City & Guilds Advanced National Certificates (Sports Turf), BTECH First Diploma Sports Turf. Short courses: Spraying Certificates (PA1, PA2), Chainsaw and tree felling, Tractor Driving, Mowing Equipment, Turf Maintenance Equipment.

OATRIDGE COLLEGE

Ecclesmachan, By Broxburn,
West Lothian, EH52 6NH

Contact: Steve Miller

Tel: 01506 864800 Fax: 01506 853373

Email: info@oatridge.ac.uk

Web: www.oatridge.ac.uk



Information: Full-time National Certificate in Greenkeeping: SVQ Level II and GTC Manual (Day and Block Release): SVQ Level 3 Sportsturf & SVQ Level 3 Fast Track (Day and Block Release) SVQ Level III in Service Engineering, full range of Amenity Horticulture, Landscaping and other land based subjects at HND and HNC, National Certificate and SVQ Levels; Short Course - FEPA, Chainsaw, Forklift, First Aid.

WRITTLE COLLEGE

Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3RR

Contact: The Registry

Tel: 01245 424200 Fax: 01245 420456

Email: info@writtle.ac.uk Web: www.writtle.ac.uk



Information: SPORTS TURF PROGRAMMES: Foundation Degree- Sports Turf and Golf Course Management Honours Degree- Sports Turf Science & Management Higher Certificate- Sports Turf Management NVQ Level 2 & 3- Sports Turf OTHER PROGRAMMES: BSc (Hons) & FdSc Horticulture BSc (Hons) & FdSc Landscape & Amenity Management BSc (Hons) Horticulture with Business Management BSc (Hons) International Horticulture BSc (Hons) & FdSc Horticultural Crop Production FdSc Landscape Construction MSc/MA International Horticulture MSc Horticulture (Crop Production) MSc Postharvest Technology MA Landscape Architecture MSc Landscape Management First Diploma, National Certificate, National Diploma- Horticulture NVQ Level 2 & 3 Landscaping NVQ Level 2 & 3 Service Engineering (Agricultural & Groundcare Machinery) C&G Service Engineering Progression Award SHORT COURSES: NPTC Chainsaw, Health & Safety plus many more.

BIGGA MEMBERSHIP



STUDENT BENEFITS

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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.

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.

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

All Members are invited to a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme, which records education and training achievement. Regional training courses are offered alongside regional and national seminars and workshops.

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John Deere entered the UK golf sector in 1992, the company's growth having been strong. Now part of the big three, with Toro and Ransomes-Jacobsen, Deere has a wide mower offering. Options, such as a cab, reflects a demand for virtually year round mowing on some courses



Gang mowers, such as the Lloyds Leda, remained the key fairway mowing tool until comparatively recently. Modern ride-on fairway mowers can now deliver a quality of cut that would have seemed far in excess of what was required back in 1977

THREE DECADES OF EQUIPMENT CHANGE

By James de Havilland

Cast your mind back to the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977. If it were possible to go back and look at how a golf course was managed back then, what would be the key changes?

For those who have been responsible for maintaining golf courses over the past 30 years or more, the expansion of year round play has to be one of the most noticeable developments. The luxury of a closed season has long gone, with year round pressure to keep the course in tip top condition arguably being the biggest challenge in the past 30 years.

That this demand has coincided with rapid equipment development is either a happy coincidence or a key reason why demands have been

able to rise; it depends upon individual viewpoints. Certainly Norman Fenwick, Course Manager at the Ipswich Golf Club suggests modern aeration equipment is among the mechanical developments that have helped to keep courses in play throughout the winter.

"Modern aeration equipment can be tailored to suit the season and weather enabling you to make it do what is required", he says. "We used to have just the choice of a slitter, chisel or solid tine aerators, these only really working effectively when the conditions were right for them. Now we have a range of needle through to hollow core tines that we can employ to do a specific job. The operation speed and variety of aeration equipment now available is a great help to us".



By the 1980s, Ransomes was producing its own greens mowers, the pictured Motor 180 and Tournament Triplex 171 being early examples. By 1984, the Triplex MarkII had a choice of brush or cutter attachments, quality of cut taking a useful step forwards



The Ransomes-Hahn Tournament Triplex was produced in the US, Ransomes importing it as a response to the Toro Greensmaster III. This first came to the UK in 1970 and was imported by Flymo International. In the USA, Jacobsen was the first to develop a ride-on greens mower in 1968. Powered by a 12hp petrol engine, the Ransomes-Hahn offered a 1.70m cut and could be supplied with verticutting, spiking and utility mowing reels. The first machine was sold in 1972, with 300 units having been sold by summer 1974



Evolution in greens mower design gathered momentum quickly, the Ransomes GT models first seen in 1987 featuring Kubota diesel power as an option, full hydrostatic drive and cylinder backlapping

Mr Fenwick is not alone in this view, of course, good aeration now being accepted as one of the key management disciplines that a good greenkeeper can exploit to keep greens and fairways playable, and looking good, year round. That is not to suggest there are hard and fast rules on how and when any type of aeration should be carried out. Individual experience continues to outweigh 'text book' practice, but there cannot be many in the industry who would want to see their equipment list pruned of their aeration kit.

"Mowing equipment has seen dramatic change as well. As recently as the mid-90s the trailed gang fairway mower was still dominant. The development and almost universal acceptance of ride-on fairway mowers has definitely seen an improvement in the quality of fairways", adds Mr Fenwick. "I would not say modern kit is necessarily more productive, but it certainly does a better job. For a start the latest machines will produce more cuts per metre and can be fitted with groomers and brushes".

He also adds that being able to mow in different directions is a key advantage over trailed gangs, a point those who have operated a set of venerable Lloyds Leda or Ransomes Sportscutter units will appreciate. Look at photographs and existing footage of past championships and the way in which the fairways are mown that will help to date them.

Ride-on fairway mowers have also evolved, the early models having cylinder dimensions that are now more likely to be associated with a commercial mower. That is not to say all fairway machines were like this. The Jacobsen LF100 of the early 90's demonstrated the way this type of equipment would evolve into much lighter machines. The ultra light designs now available would no doubt have been seen more suitable for greens mowing back in 1977.

"I think ride-on greens mowers were another key development, these machines starting to make an increasing impact from the 1980's",

adds Mr Fenwick. "Hand mowing will retain its place, no doubt, but the quality of cut offered by current ride-on greens mowers is such that I can see little advantage using a pedestrian machine, even for tournaments. The narrow stripe from hand mowing remains an advantage, but not much else".

The way in which golfing has evolved and course management developed in the past 30 years has been extraordinary. The demands for quality play have been driven by keen golfers. No longer content with playing a handful of local courses, modern golfers have not just greater national course experience but international exposure as well. For course managers this has helped to drive improvements in course quality, and not just for a few months of the year.

"Not so long ago green speeds were not necessarily known, with few golfers even knowing what a Stimp Meter was. Now green speeds are better understood," adds Mr Fenwick. "We now aim to get our green speeds as similar as possible and use Stimp readings as a tool. A few years back, this would have been seen as excessive even when preparing for a tournament. Now we try to maintain consistent readings year round. Yes, demands have certainly changed".

So would Mr Fenwick like to roll back the clock, and find himself in charge at the Ipswich back in 1977? In a word, no. The pressures in 1977 were still there, make no mistake, but they were a different set of pressures. Reverting to what are now obsolete practices is not something he would relish. It would, however, be a revelation to see how modern practice would have been received back in 1977.

"We have higher levels of staff training and standards are certainly a lot higher," he concludes. "So now we have the equipment and staff to help ensure the course can be maintained to an extremely high standard. The key pressure is to maintain a consistently high quality throughout the year."



The tine armoury that can be fitted to a modern aeration tool, such as the Wiedenmann Terra Spike models, is considerable. For many, the impact this type of equipment has had on the modern game is considerable, enabling many courses to remain in play year round



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 www.johndeere.co.uk



GPS-BASED GOLFERS AID

Using the latest satellite positioning technology to measure distance around the golf course, Caddy Lite, a new pocket-sized British electronic development from GolfPlus, is set to help golfers of any ability to improve their game and to reduce their scores by knowing their live yardages.

 01494 795110
or visit www.golf-plus.co.uk



80 SERIES BREAKER

Bobcat has launched the new Bobcat HB280 hydraulic breaker, the smallest model in the company's 80 Series. Like the other breaker models in the 80 series, the HB280 is designed to meet customer requirements for improved performance, efficiency and reliability.

 www.bobcat.com



WHERE THERE'S MUCK THERE'S A MUCK TRUCK

Steve Eaton first used a Muck Truck back in 2003 and was so impressed that he didn't buy the Company, but he did start up a new venture called Severnside Plant, dedicated to selling the product and one of Muck Truck's biggest dealers.

The Muck Truck has a carrying capacity of 6 cu ft. (220 litres) and can climb up to 38 degrees carrying a quarter of a tonne.

 0845 838 5480
or visit: www.mucktruck.co.uk



LET US SPRAY

Rochford Garden Machinery has been appointed distributor of the Inter range of compression and knapsack sprayers.

This comprehensive line-up of sprayers include a starter model in the 1litre capacity Intereko 1.5 unit featuring wide opening mouth, Viton closing valve and adjustable conical nozzle.

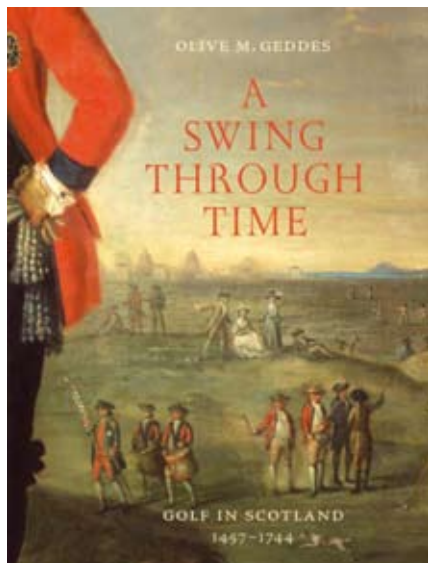
 01963 828000
or visit www.intersprayers.co.uk



A SWING THROUGH TIME

NMS Enterprises Ltd, has launched a revised edition of A Swing Through Time: Golf in Scotland 1457-1744. Enlightening its readers about the 'Dark Ages' of golf, the book travels through time on a journey from the games early illegitimacy to the establishment of the first golfing societies and clubs in the mid 1700s.

 Email publishing@nms.ac.uk



BOOSTING EFFICIENCY


Toro has launched two new turf maintenance products designed to improve efficiency for greenkeepers and groundsmen – an eco-friendly e2065 Workman electric utility vehicle and a time saving roller attachment for the ProCore 648 aerator.

 www.toro.com



HEAVY DUTY ROTARY

Hayter has introduced a new 21" Heavy Duty-Walk Behind Rotary Mower aimed specifically at the commercial market. Designed and manufactured by Hayter's parent company Toro, the machine will cope with the toughest conditions but is still competitively priced. Particular attention has been paid to operator safety and comfort, especially vibration levels.

 01279 723444
or visit: www.hayter.co.uk



DOMESTIC CHAINSAW

ECHO has launched a new chainsaw, the CS-270WES.

The CS-270WES provides the operator with a 30cm bar operating on a 26.9cm³ engine. At 3.1kg, this is one of the lightest ECHO chainsaws available, making it very attractive to the domestic user, being easy to operate, and very well balanced.

 www.countax.com



UTILITY BUGGY

DQL (Diesel Quads Ltd) has launched The Utility Buggy 400cc Diesel. Ideal for many purposes, with diesel economy and good ground clearance, the 'UtilityBug' is surefooted and stable over rough terrain, while giving a comfortable ride.

 01407 839393
or visit: www.dieselquads.com



FROM GOLF COURSE TO BSC COURSE

By Paul Cook

In GI last August I asked “Who’d be a Greenkeeper ... and wrote of my intention to go get myself a degree ... well here I am, writing again, this time from my en-suite room in halls of residence at Myerscough College, Preston. I’ve just sat my first year exams...

Adjusting to college life was tough to say the least – the sudden switch from the long hours demanded by a televised tournament, straight off the plane and into the lecture room, a different lifestyle and a different culture.

Until now free time was precious and had to be maximised, life had consisted pretty much of work/sleep; work/sleep; with only the odd beer here and there ... great huh? But that’s what it took to get me here. Now I found myself having time on my hands - a totally new concept to me and one that was not the joy and wonderful situation I might once have imagined.

Gone are the days of the 5am start, now I could stay in bed all day if I wanted ... and I don’t! My body was used to physical work, lots of exercise, movement, fresh air; I was used to programmes and timetables, schedules and shifts; personal chores and errands and a pay cheque - and now suddenly here I was with nothing/no-one making any demand on my time other than two and a half days worth of lectures, with the rest of my time made up with reading and assignment work – three meals a day, a cleaner making my bed and cleaning the shower. All that was left for me to do was the mental stuff. My body hurt – muscles were missing their previous regime – my head hurt – struggling with the sudden and dramatic increase in exercise!

It all began around four years ago – having saved my hard earned cash I got onto a three-week Turf Management Course at Rutgers University, New Jersey. At the time my career as a greenkeeper in Austria was going well and this course seemed like a good thing to be doing to move me along a bit further.

Mid-Atlantic, 30,000 feet and with plenty of time to think it no longer seems such a good idea after all – I mean “What if I can’t take in what they’re saying...? What if I can’t remember...? What if they ask me a question...? What if I can’t answer...? What if I can’t learn...? What if ... What if...”

A great idea – Rutgers was a great experience! Superb course at an impressively professional establishment - got a distinction too! With all the ‘What ifs’ disappearing faster than dew in the morning sun I left knowing more and wanting more. On the flight home I decided I would do a degree course.

So, decision made – now how to make it happen. Hmmm – a quick check on the ‘credentials bank account’ reveals not a lot. One GCSE (in PE), NVQ II, a spraying certificate and a three-week course didn’t look like enough to get into University. Obviously there was only one approach to take...

Graft, graft and more graft – returning to work in Austria I set about becoming the best greenkeeper I could be – eventually becoming Deputy Course Manager on a course hosting the European Ladies’ Open. A lot of extraordinary experience there in preparing a course for a televised event. What else would add weight to my case? How about a world-class course, southern hemisphere, warm-season grasses? A three-month stint at the superb New South Wales links course, Sydney, confirmed to me that my skills and knowledge were up to working on a high end course.

Those four years, working horrendous hours and learning, learning, learning, were underpinned by my good fortune to work with some great Head Greenkeepers - each one of them pushing me on and believing in me. So, Brian Piggott, at Buckingham GC; Wayne Beasley, at Fohrenwald GC; Alex Hofingerm, at Eichenheim GC, and Gary Dempsey, at New South Wales GC Sydney – thanks guys.

Getting accepted – graft is one thing, ‘selling myself’ is something else altogether! Trying to convince others that I have what it takes to undertake the demands of a degree course - that I could make the transition from mowing grass to writing essays. To convince them I first had to convince myself! And although writing is something I enjoy writing personal descriptions for UCAS applications, grants and a bursary was, for me, an agonising time.

Gimme the money – please? This was the tricky bit. While there are many options in terms of finance available to sports turf students, my own case was somewhat unusual. Born and bred in England, I am



STRIKE A POSE!

Just a reminder that there's still time to submit your entry for BIGGA's Golf Photography Competition.

Are you proud of the hard work you have put into making the most of your course? Do you catch yourself admiring it at its spring finest, or wintry best?

The BIGGA Golf Photography Competition allows greenkeepers to display their artistic talents and creative flair, while also earning some publicity for their club.

Photographs will be accepted in three forms -

Prints (nine inch by seven inch), transparencies, or digitally (pictures MUST be at least 300dpi and capable of being blown up to nine inches by seven inches in size).

Anyone wishing to enter should send their pictures to: Scott MacCallum or Melissa Toombs, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF (digital photographs should be sent on CD) by July 31, 2007. Alternatively you can email them to scott@bigga.co.uk or melissa@bigga.co.uk

So come on, don't just post your pictures on the bulletin board!

BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Sponsored by **Kubota**

Fellow greenkeepers and trade members will once again get the chance to play golf and socialise with old and new friends when the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, returns to Scotland this October.

The two-day event will take place in the Ayrshire Section, at Dundonald and Kilmarnock (Barassie) Golf Clubs on Monday, October 8 and Tuesday, October 9 respectively.

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion.

The registration fee of £85 includes entry into the Championship, lunch each day and dinner on Monday, October 8. Applications are also invited from Associate members who will play for their own trophy. All competitors must make their own accommodation arrangements.

An information leaflet and entry form will be included in next month's edition of GI meanwhile to reserve a place or find out more contact: BIGGA HQ on: 01347 833800. Details are also available on: www.bigga.org.uk

actually classed as an overseas student when it comes to grants/loans because I've worked abroad for several years. It's only thanks to a recent EU directive that I was granted a student loan.

I reckon I'll finish my course with £15,000 to pay off. Adding that to the money I haven't earned during the years I'm studying – well, that's just not useful thinking! I don't think in terms of "is it worth it in financial terms" ... the only 'worth it' question I ask myself is "will this experience help get me where I want to be?" and the answer always comes up – "YES".

Learning to study and handing in that first piece of work - at first the whole learning experience was an inner demon – unsettling me far more than I had anticipated. Never much of a book-worm and many years out of school I just didn't know how to organise my thinking, how to read a reference book, review literature and form my own opinions. But I stuck with it. At times painfully slowly, I put together my first piece of course work. And the time came to hand it in - I knew that I had worked very hard to produce a good and solid piece of work and it was one of the best feelings ... awesome. Life on campus – 26 and only the tutor's older than me – and the girls are too young!

Life on campus is very entertaining. I felt quite old when I first arrived – I'd been told by my friends "oh you'll meet loads of women at college". Of course, that was the case for them – they went to Uni straight from school, they were 18 and so were the girls! For me it was just an expectation shot to pieces.

Life without a pay-cheque – this is proving one of the hardest things for me – life without a monthly pay-cheque and my bank account only going in one direction and after ten years of a regular pay-cheque and a well exercised overdraft it is for me a very strange feeling to not have that. Very quickly I had to learn to live without the luxuries and adapt to my new circumstances.

Getting a bursary- shortly after starting college we were told about the bursary awarded by the R&A - £1,500 for each year of study. Several of us submitted an application, 500 words on why we should get it and a further 500 words on how it would benefit us. Three of us from Myerscough were successful. This bursary enabled me to fund a laptop and a digital camera, it also paid for me to attend BTME at Harrogate and the BIGGA North-West Section Spring seminar. First Semester over! Crikey – I've done all that?

Looking back, reflecting on what we had covered in just those few months - "crikey, we've all come a long way in such a short space of time..." And now we're into the last semester of this first year - yes, I've had some doubts – the experience was, to begin with, a bit of an emotional roller-coaster but the delight of learning and discovering new things has been such a great experience

Placement year – being a misfit - part of the BSc course involves a year out on a placement – this provides an opportunity to gain practical experience for those who haven't yet worked in the field as it were. For those like me who already have a wide and extensive experience this is



not compulsory we can continue straight on to year two of the course. I was something of a misfit - my level of experience got in the way a bit ...places are usually for new or novice greenkeepers.

Some of the guys on my course have chosen to do the Ohio State programme, going to courses such as Valhalla for the Ryder Cup, Double Eagle Golf Club, and others chose to stay in Europe, working at prestigious venues such as The K Club, Wimbledon and Loch Lomond Golf Club. These opportunities tempted me, but with having eight years experience already I felt the need to expose my self to something I had not done before.

I've chosen instead to take this opportunity and get experience in those things of which I have no knowledge/skill. I've accepted an offer from FEGGA of a scholarship with Polaris World to get experience in construction and growing-in at one of their new courses, designed by Jack Nicklaus, and it's in Spain so it will be all warm season grasses too – another plus for me.

I wonder what it will be like giving up work a second time to return to University when the placement year is up.

Myerscough - a great course – any doubts I may have experienced in my early days were about myself - there have been no doubts at all about my choice of where and what to study. The BSc Turfgrass Science course here at Myerscough is great - with my tutor Dr Andy Owen and the other lecturers all being not only extremely knowledgeable but also

having worked in their respective industries. They bring to the course their personal experiences, demonstrating the practical application of the theory they are teaching. What's next? After the placement year we return to college for a further two years.

And then it's crunch time - back to the world of work! It would be naïve to think that a degree in and of itself will get someone a top job however, I do think that the more young people who do get themselves some higher qualification, raising the bar in terms of understanding what golf greenkeeping is all about, can only be a good thing...

I see a balance that needs to be found combining practical ability with understanding of the science and the art of application. As a Golf Course Manager of the future I expect to be forever learning... things are changing in unprecedented ways - there has never been a more important time to be aware and able to understand the implications of what is happening around us with the environment...

While I don't know what I will be doing once I've finished my degree I do know that I will have a better, broader understanding of our craft ... and passionately believe that higher education is the way forward – for the betterment of the individual and the advancement of our profession. As we enter summer and with it my placement, to be honest, I can't wait to get back onto the course – to experience that special feeling I get when I step out onto the course, pick up my cart ... smell the grass, hear the birdsong, feel the breeze against my skin and feast my eyes on the beautiful scenery ... a feeling that is beyond words...





News from the Chief Executive

In early July the telephone system at BIGGA House will be updated to include an automated answering service together with a host of other features that are now possible, thanks to the wonders of modern science. Love them or hate them such systems have become a part of every day life and for the Association it presents an opportunity to make some substantial savings. Callers will be offered a short menu of options, one of which will be to speak to an operator for help. The financial gain comes as a result of the changes in jobs for Rachael and Brad who were originally employed in reception. Their original posts become redundant and their non-telephone duties will be absorbed elsewhere in the office. Brad has accepted the position of Membership Services Assistant and Rachael will become Sami's assistant in the Education Department, both of these are replacement jobs and not new ones.

There seems to be a great deal of interest, debate and speculation regarding BIGGA's talks with the IOG. I can only repeat my earlier comments, stressing that it is not a 'done deal' and that any firm proposals will have to be approved by the members of both organisations. How this will take place, if we get that far, has yet to be determined. One solution, and arguably the fairest, may be by an independently controlled postal ballot. We are a long way off that stage and I cannot help but feel that some of the Chinese whispers are being blown up out of all proportion. If any member wishes more information or clarification on a matter then I suggest that they contact me direct by telephone, letter, email or in person. Please do not expect me to enter into a loaded debate on a public bulletin board somewhere.

I often see it stated that BIGGA is at a crossroads. Quite frankly I do not know a time when it has not been at a crossroads. The journey since it's formation in 1987 has been far from easy however I would like to think that the greenkeeping industry, and those employed in it, has benefited as a result of the Association's activities and will continue to do so.

I finish with two thought provoking extracts:

'Most of us find change uncomfortable, if not traumatic; yet change can be both exhilarating and desirable. Change tests our convictions and calls into question our intentions and aspirations, clearing a path for growth. It always requires that we make choices - to choose between a reactive and anticipatory course, between being good and doing good, and between suffering change and causing change. The resulting decisions shape our life and how we look at it.' Clement Mok, Communication Arts.

'Are you a professional? How you look, talk, write, act and work determines whether you are a professional or an amateur.' I came across this on www.tipsforsuccess.org which is a website worth a visit. If you have five minutes to spare take a look and see if you can relate to any of the other remarks listed there!

John Pemberton



SCOTLAND – CENTRAL

On the education front we hosted two successful seminars last month. Frank Newberry delivered an excellent two-day Course on "Leadership and Management Skills", in his usual entertaining, and inspiring manner. Everyone left with some positive ideas on how to improve their personal effectiveness within their teams, and also how to develop their careers. Kevin Barker, R&A Rules Official, gave a very informative and enjoyable evening presentation, with excellent video examples to demonstrate the importance of course set up by the greenkeepers, and how it influences decisions on the rules of golf. This sparked much debate, which continued into the bar afterwards.

As Chairman of the Central Section I have to say the first golf tournament of 2007 was a great success, having 60 members of the Section playing Panmure Golf Course on a perfect sunny day says it all. On driving up to the course you are presented with a fantastic view of the course and clubhouse. My first impressions then were that we were in for a great day. I was not disappointed!

The hospitality we received from the Golf Club was first class, and many thanks go to Secretary/Manager, Charles Phillip, for taking such good care of us and for presenting the prizes at the end of the day. His warm words of appreciation to the greenkeeping profession were very encouraging. The food and the service from the staff were all first class, and the clubhouse had a fantastic atmosphere. Congratulations to Gary Nicol, the Course Manager, and his staff for presenting a great challenge for us on a fantastic course with some tricky pin positions. It was clear to all why it deserved to be chosen for the upcoming Open Qualifier. Many thanks Gary and best of luck when it comes.

Thanks also go to the BIGGA National Chairman, Billy McMillan, and the Scottish Chairman, Stuart Greenwood, for taking the time to attend our Section outing, and to Billy for his kind words of support at the prize presentation. Having the opportunity to play with them both, and Gary, on the day was very enjoyable. With Gary onside I was looking forward to some local knowledge to help us get round. I think my score tells you how well Gary knows his course. I enjoyed your company and thanks for a great day. Well played all the winners on the day with some really good scores, on such a challenging test of control. To see the winners and scores for the day and photos visit our website (see end of notes).

Billy caddied for Andy Mellon for the last two holes as a reward for finding his passport, which he had dropped on the 4th hole. Unfortunately Andy couldn't play as well as Billy could caddie. Billy's patience with Andy's wayward game was admirable. Last I heard Andy was rethinking his gorse/broom planting policy at Elmwood, and asking his team to hand in any lost balls they find.

Note to Billy: You don't need a passport to get into Scotland, (Not yet anyway), but rest assured you will always be very welcome anytime.

The Patrons play a big part in supporting us locally, and I assure you that your commitment to the Section is very much appreciated and commented on among the members. A huge thank you to all our members who made it on the day. It's you who make this Section the success it is, and it was great to see so many new faces along with



Around the Green

the old ones. I'll let you decide which you think you are. The Section is growing all the time and more events will be organised to suit the needs of the members.

Last, but not least, I'd like to thank the rest of the committee. I know they don't do it for the thanks; they do it because they enjoy being part of BIGGA, and the benefits of associating with their fellow greenkeepers. That's what it's all about after all.

Oh I have to tell you that, if any member is going to mainland Europe this year, contact Paul at Downfield he has some Euros that he has been trying to get rid of. I think he forgot he was dealing with a Fifer when he tried to slip a 5 Euro note into the raffle instead of a £5. Paul, you need a long spoon to sup with a Fifer.

I'm looking forward to the Scottish Tournament which is being played over the border on the superb links course at Goswick on June 21. Hope as many of you as possible can make it. I look forward to the same support this autumn when we make the trip to The Dukes - another fantastic venue.

Any news, queries or info contact us and we'll pass it on.
www.biggacentralsection.org.uk 01334 658914

*Chairman: Derek Scott
Secretary: Andy Mellon*



SCOTLAND – EAST

As I write this report in early June, the dry weather of April and early May has given way to the more typical Scottish climate at this time of year - sunshine and showers!

I commence this month's news with an update on Graeme Wood who, as most of you know, is in the Stroke Recovery Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Edinburgh. I have been advised by Stuart Greenwood that Graeme is making slow but steady progress and is starting to put back on some of the weight he lost - initially, aided by some chocolate bars brought in by the aforementioned Mr Greenwood!

I have a few dates for your diaries which have been passed on to me by your Secretary, Stevie Dixon. The Willie Woods Tournament will be held this year at the spectacular moorland setting of West Linton GC on August 23. The Autumn Outing will be held at Ratho Park this year on September 18, which will give everybody an opportunity to see the environmental improvement works carried out by Tom Murray and his team. I have been assured that entry forms for both events will be winging their way to you shortly.

This year's annual Dinner Dance will once again be held at the Kilspindie House Hotel in Aberlady on Saturday, December 8. To reserve accommodation and book your tickets, please contact Stevie Dixon in the first instance on: 0131 443 0235.

On the educational front, the committee have asked me to advise you that

they are looking to run CPD Courses (Continuous Personal Development) at Oatridge College on Management topics. These are credited units which would count towards gaining a Level 4 Certificate. The courses are due to start on September 7, 2007. For further information and/or, to book your place, please contact Stevie Dixon or any committee member as soon as possible. NB - A minimum number of 10 are required to make these courses possible.

On a sad note, I have to advise you that George Thompson's father passed away at the end of May, he was 95. Like his son today, John Robert Thompson, to give him his full title, was a dedicated greenkeeper working as Head Man at Goswick from 1948 until his retirement in 1977. On his retirement he passed the reins over to his son who remains there to this day. Our deepest sympathies are extended to George and his family at this time.

On Sunday, May 6, close friends and BIGGA Members, Andy Forrest and Chris Yeaman, took part in the BUPA 10km Great Run in Edinburgh to raise money for the Chris Yeaman Jnr Charity Day which is held annually at West Linton GC. They were joined on the day by Andy's wife, Kirsty, and the trio completed the run in a commendable time of 1hr 8min.

Not to be outdone, yours truly took part in the MacMillan Corbett Challenge on Saturday, May 26 with Roz and a group of friends. (A Corbett is a peak more than 2000' above sea level but less than 3000'.) We started the walk at Grey Mare's Tail car park with our destination being the White Comb which is high above Loch Skene in Dumfries and Galloway. In all, we raised over £1000 for MacMillan Cancer Research.

Finally, I am sure John Philp and his team will have Carnoustie in excellent condition for the Open Championship this July.

Mike Dooner



SCOTLAND – NORTH

I am a bit late with this piece of information but Colin Russell, who was Head Greenkeeper at Turriff GC, left in June 2006 to go to Muckhart GC, near Gleneagles. Jim Smart, who was Deputy at the time, was given the job on a temporary basis until September 1, 2006 when he became Head Greenkeeper. He has done some sterling work since then on the golf course, which has been noticed by the members and they appreciate his hard work and application to the job overall. Good luck with your new position Jim and sorry for the delay in letting people know.

The Spring Outing took place at Oldmeldrum GC on May 17. Most importantly well done to Robert O'Donnell and his staff for the excellent condition of the golf course on the day. It's never easy when a bunch of greenkeepers turn up for the day, but you had nothing to worry about Robert the course was great.

The one noticeable issue from the outing was the lack of numbers that came along. More than half the field was made up of committee or trade members, which is very disappointing for the host club and also the committee. We recently discussed at a meeting the lack of numbers and are concerned that the drop in interest in the golf outings is now



Around the Green

critical. If the numbers continue to drop as they are then the golf outings may stop because we are starting to run them at a loss because of the low numbers attending. As usual it is the same faces each year that turn up for the outings regardless of where they are held. We have over 250 members in the Section but only 38 turned up at Oldmeldrum. It is a shame because they missed a good day out and some healthy banter with those who did turn up. We know as a committee that it is not easy to get away sometimes for these outings so we are considering having the Spring Outing earlier next year, in Mid April, to see if that will increase the numbers. Have all you non-attendees over the last few years lost interest in the Section or is it just too much hassle to try and get away? Let's hope the golf outings don't suffer, as they are an enjoyable day out and a chance to catch up with old friends. Results from spring outing: 200 Club: £30 - Steven Mitchell, £30 - Cecil George, £30 - Stevie Mackintosh and £100 winner - Ian Buchan. Longest Drives- Class 3 - Hugh Mclatchie Class 2 - Stewart Brown, Class 1 - Bob Hardie. Nearest the Pin- Mike Keay. Sweep Winners - 1.David Duggan, 2.Jim McCormack, 3.Euan Rankin, 4.Craig Mackay. Guest Winner - Peter Boyd. Trade Winner - Raymond Warrender. Alpha Plus Committee Winner- Steve Sullivan. Veterans Trophy- 1.Brian Hunter, 2.Donald Patience. Apprentice Trophy- Euan Rankin 98-27=71 nett.

1.3 David Duggan 91-22=69; 2.3 Euan Rankin 98-27=71; 3.3 Brian Hunter 98-21=77. 1.2 Billy Craig 83-10=73; 2.2 Kevin Fowler 81-7=74;

2.3 Stewart Brown 84-10=74. 1.1 Jim McCormack 74-5=69; 1.2 Steve Sullivan 78-6=72; 1.3 Bob Hardie 81-6=75.

Scratch Prize 1. Kevin Thompson 74, 2. Craig Mackay 78.

The Open is at Carnoustie again this year and I'm sure John Philp and his staff will have the course set up to test the best. I walked part of the course in late May and it was in great shape. Give them a good test John as always and hopefully we will have another exciting finish again and a Scottish winner.

The Scottish Stroke play Championship was played at Royal Dornoch in early June. The winner Kevin McAlpine had some very good scores with a notable 64 in the 3rd round. The weather on the Sunday was hellish with heavy rain all day but the course sucked it up like an old pro, which is testament to the condition of the golf course. Well done to Eoin and his team in preparing the course to its usual high standards.

Not much else from me this month. Can't wait for the football season to get going again so we can add too the haul from last year. Mind you I hope the boys in blue get their act together and give us some decent competition.

This month we welcome to new members: Mr Kyle Cruickshank, Assistant Greenkeeper at Inchmarlo GC and Mr Trevor Cameron Greenkeeper at Muir of Ord GC.

Robert Patterson



CLEVELAND

Firstly I would like to report on the Spring Tournament, held at Houghton-le-Spring GC on Wednesday, April 18. Congratulations to Head Greenkeeper, Richie Hood and his staff for the excellent condition of the course. Many thanks to the catering staff for the top quality food and the hospitality too! The results were as follows: Category 1, 0 – 9 handicap: 1.Daniel Simpson (Bishop Auckland GC); 2.Phil Hargrave (Crook GC); 3.Chris Spence (Crook GC). Category 2, 10 – 18 handicap: 1.Barry Walker (City of Newcastle GC); 2.Robert Hancock (Dinsdale Spa GC); 3.Alan Reed (Saltburn GC). Category 3, 19 – 28 handicap: 1 Dave Jobey (Consett GC); 2.Ian Dunnabie (Dinsdale Spa GC); 3.Ian Pemberton (Cleveland GC). The winner of the trade prize was Alastair Whitby of Lloyds Ltd. What a bandit! Longest Drive was won by Daniel Simpson and Phil Hargrave was 'Nearest the Pin'. Dave Bell of City of Newcastle won the 'Booby Prize' Aptly this was a Putting Practice Game – I told him that 'Black and White g*s's' never hit the target.

On behalf of the Section I would like to sincerely thank Jamie Applegarth of Rigby Taylor for sponsoring the day. It was nice to see Tony Bell, Head Groundsman at Middlesbrough Football Club attending as a guest of Jamie. Congratulations to Tony as he finished third in the Premier League for pitch quality – well done AB! The following companies also provided prizes on the day – Aitkens, Alpha Amenity, Lloyds Ltd., Northern Lubricants, Tacit and Turfcare Specialists.





There has been some movement on the jobs front recently. Glen Baxter has left South Shields GC to take up a position as an area manager for Rigby Taylor. We all wish him well in his new venture. Phil Hargrave moves from Crook to 'Shields' to take on the Head Greenkeepers job. Good luck Phil! Alan Miller, formerly of Chester-le-Street GC, has been 'made up' to Head Greenkeeper at Crook. All the best All!

Initially we have had plenty of interest in our night at Sedgefield Races for the Ladies Meeting. However, yet again, when it came down to the nitty-gritty there was only two greenkeepers and their wives paid up and attended. Barry and Allie Walker plus Phil and Suzanne Hargrave had a great night, especially as Baz was well up on the night after backing the big priced winner of the first race – git. Money goes to money as the old saying goes. Yours truly didn't have one turn in the winners queue at the bookies – now there's a surprise!

Finally well done to the Boro for finishing 'Top Dogs' and the Mackems for gaining promotion to the 'Big League'. Big Sam has certainly got his work cut out but if his first two signings are anything to go by then the Mags may well be looking at a challenging season.

Any news to Terry "El Prez" Charlton on: 07831 214879



SHEFFIELD

Firstly I would like to apologise for the lack of news in the last few months but there really hasn't been any to my knowledge!

On May 14 we held our Spring Tournament, at Rotherham GC, who I would like to once again thank for their continued support of our Section and for giving us courtesy of their course again! It is very much appreciated.

Thanks also goes to Dave Chappell and his staff for the excellent condition of Rotherham after all the rain we had over the previous weekend - Well done Dave!

Our main sponsor of the tournament was Pro-Turf. We would like to thank Graham Fish once again for his continued support of our Section, it is really appreciated. Graham and Pro-Turf provided an excellent prize table with prizes for all the greenkeepers who played, once again it shows it is worth coming to join us on our golf days. Thanks also to all the other trade members who provided prizes for the raffle.

After all the golf had been played, Mike Stubby, Captain of Rotherham, presented the prizes: the winner was a very well known face to him - Dave Chappell, well played Dave!

1.D Chappell, 38pts; 2.D Womack, 37pts; 3.A Unwin, 35pts bb9; 4.S Redman, 35pts; 5.G Briton, 34pts and the trade prize winner was Mike Brear 34pts.

Finally, just a few small things, could all trophy winners please try and keep our trophies in good clean order as in the past we have had a few returned in not such good condition!

If anyone changes address could you please inform us so that we can forward golf entry forms etc to your correct address, in future there will be no telephone entries accepted under any circumstances and no late entries accepted at all. We have a deadline for a reason and we give everyone enough time to get their entries in with ease!

Hopefully we should have some information about the Wembley trip in next month's magazine. As usual any news please feel free to contact me on: 07793111845 or: jv.lax@tesco.net

John Lax



EAST MIDLAND

I start this report with the results from the Spring Tournament that took place at Horsley Lodge GC on Thursday, May 24. Handicap Section 0-14: 1.C.Brown 37 pts (qualifies for National Championship); 2. J.Beardsley 35pts; 3. N.Miller 33pts; 4. P.Gotheridge 32pts.

Handicap Section 15-28: 1. M. Billings, 30pts (qualifies for National Championship); 2. G. Robson 30pts; 3. T. Bloodworth 28pts; 4. A.De. Wet 27pts. Reps' prize: K. Kinzer 33pts. Nearest the Pin was won by C.Brown (Greenkeeper), G.Thurman (Rep). The Longest Drive was won by N.Miller (Greenkeeper), K.Haslam (Rep).

Thanks for the day go to Russell Allen and his staff for preparing the course in excellent condition and to David Smith of Mansfield Sand for sponsoring the event.

The Summer Tournament takes place at Chevin GC on Wednesday, July 18 and if you have not received your entry form please contact me on: 07745227224.

Dan Rodgers



MIDLAND

Well isn't it a kick in the stones when you have bust a gut to prepare your course, and then it tips it down on the day. Such happened at our spring event at Ludlow GC, however, despite such the course was in excellent condition and stood-up well to the inclement weather. Congratulations to Chris Roberts and his fine team for a lovely track. The combination between Race Course and Golf Course is somewhat unusual, yet works. But the 'sport of kings' was over shadowed by the 'gods of Graminae' presentation. The results of the day were: 1.D. Fellows; 2.S. Scott; 3.M. Walker; 4.R. Beacham; 5.A. Jones; 6.R. Thomas; 7.L. Swann. The main table sponsor was our old friend J. Mullings/Vitax. Trade winner: P. McCrainor. Our thanks to R. Page & K. Pugh/Turners for sustenance around the course. Our thanks to Ludlow GC. and Mr J. Smallman for their/his hospitality.

Still on golf matches, we also were invited for the 56th year to play

Around the Green

the Annual President's Match at Handsworth GC. My partner and I played well in our match, however we were thrashed. They were giving us shots and with a combined age of 150yrs, against our 70yrs, it just shows how versatile our sport is. Our thanks to Handsworth GC and to the President Mr Degge. The match was won by Handsworth 6:5-5:5. Well played gentlemen.

It is my unfortunate duty to report that Mr Matthew Folka, from Hawkstone GC, has sadly passed away. From the whole of the Section our condolences to his family and friends at this most difficult time.

With great pleasure I would like to welcome two new members to the Section: James Hampson and Gary Wood. Talking about new members, congratulations to Dave Gibbons on the arrival of his first son, Callum (Dove) David. It makes ones eyes water, 10lb 1/2oz, he'll need some feeding. I'm sure Cheryl is more than up to the job. A personal note now, Steve ex Hobson's, I've lost your contact number and recent happenings. Please give me a call mate.

What's this I see, Mike Whitehouse driving a fancy Merc? Must be why he's joined Whitemoss. Good luck in your new position mate.

Now come on Gashey, how can you get away with putting raking bunkers at the U.S. Open before taking your wife out on her birthday? Enjoy yourself mate; she will make you pay 10 fold chap.

Just time to thank our machinery friends at Burrows for their kind sponsorship of this month's calendar. Don't forget to consider them for your machinery requirements. Our thanks to them for their continued support. Also don't forget to get your entries in for our autumn event at Walsall GC on 12/9/07. Samba Barry?

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Firstly I will explain the fixture card scenario. We haven't got one, we were promised one, we thought we had one, we nearly got one, suffice to say the age old lesson was once again learned, speak to the organ grinder not the monkey. You should have all the dates by now but if anybody is not sure of any give me a call.

Now onto important matters. The second golf day was held at Rutland County. It was a good turnout considering the short week and the weather. Our thanks go to Chris and Rutland for allowing us the day. The results were as follows: 1.C Wilkinson; 2.S Bossett; 3.B Robinson; Trade Prize - D Smith; Nearest the Pin - D Smith; Longest Drive - R Welford.

A big thank you to Dave Smith and Mansfield Sands for sponsoring the day, although as you can see from the results he took a couple of prizes back home with him. Don't worry Dave – they will keep for the Christmas raffle. I was fortunate enough (I think that's the right phrase) to play with Dave, an experience I will never forget. I would also like to mention our other playing partner who, despite numerous distractions, finished runner up. A tremendous effort considering the circumstances Simon.

A little bird tells me that Mrs Howkins is expecting a new arrival later in the year. Congratulations Les I know you had at least a small part in the proceedings. Well done and good luck to you all.

Finally I am astounded. I never would have thought that we would have such a legend in our midst! Personally I don't know how he does it – working on a golf course, playing golf and being a global rock star! Step forward Russ Moody or should I say Axel Rose. Yes, your eyes don't deceive you, Russ Moody, that gentle giant is a colossus of the rock world. Anybody looking for a band or even just an autograph can contact Russ at Lincoln Golf Club or give me a call (for a small bung I'll be agent). Good luck to you mate.

Allan Walker 07974816927



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

Greenkeepers in the UK and, I am sure, across the world are looking at the evidence of climate change and dare I say it, global warming? Or, is it just a load of hot air and the sun is simply getting a bit hotter? It's a hard job predicting rainfall when our own top weathermen can still get it wrong. So, what's the future for 2007 likely to be? In April we had some crazy weather patterns - one minute we are in short sleeves and t-shirts, the next a frost to dampen our hopes with a woolly jumper - and as I sit here writing this, the heavens have opened again with much needed rain for all of us after a very dry and windy spell. Let's hope the summer of 2007 is not too vicious. However, I think tough times are ahead and a certainty when it comes to the weather. Anyway, will July be a hot one or possibly a real record breaker? We will wait and see.

The BB&O National Qualifier Tournament was set in a picturesque valley with unrivalled views high up across stunning scenery and countryside just outside the town of Loudwater - this was Wycombe Heights GC which provided the perfect challenge and venue for our first event in 2007. A good turnout on a spectacular spring day enjoyed a fabulous golf course presented in first class condition to find the winners who will make the long trip to the Leven links championship course near St Andrews.

Local knowledge proved the key to winning as our host Rob Surgey managed the best gross score of the day with 75. Net results were as follows: 1.1. Hardaker, Wycombe Heights; 1.2 D. Marshall, Lambourne; 1.3 A. Higgs, Blue Mountain; 1.4 S. Gardener, Flackwell Heath; 1.5 C. Small, Ellesborough, and the longest walk after a gruelling 100 shots plus went to Dale Hand, Aylesbury. Longest drive went to R. Davis, Berkshire. Nearest the Pin to Calum Taylor, Blue Mountain, and Jack Robinson, Chairman of Wycombe Heights, winning the trade and guest prize.

The two making the journey to Scotland for the qualifier this year are Steve Gardener gross 76, Flackwell Heath, and Alistair Higgs net 71, Blue Mountain. A big thanks to The Burhill Group for allowing us the courtesy of the course and to Rob Surgey and Colin Wilson and his team for the conditions they presented for us and also to the superb catering and bar staff who ensured we all had a great day out.

Thanks to Tacit, who were the main sponsors of the day, and all the



other trade who supported us on the day and in the raffle.

The second event this year is The Summer Tournament, sponsored by Gem Professional, at Sonning GC, in Berkshire, on July 4. Results will be in next month's magazine.

Information on Section events can be gleaned from the new www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk website where you will be able to download your entry form and tee times when they are published. With all this in mind our Section Secretary, Dean Jones, looks forward to your entries which, if on time, makes for a more organised and enjoyable day. So please try and get your entry forms in by the closing date.

On the education front, Alec MacIndoe (recently converted back to Rangers) is well underway in planning a seminar for us all, sometime in late autumn, date to be confirmed, but as soon as more information becomes available this will be on the website.

If there is any news or views you would like to share with the Section please get in touch. Wishing you all the very best in our new Spanish climate.

Mark Day: mark.day@tacitgolf.com



SOUTH EAST – SURREY

Tuesday, June 6. Hello readers and welcome once again to my monthly jottings on the comings and goings in Surrey. The big splash news follows later. More importantly congratulations to Milly Grace Gill who entered our world weighing 8lbs 7ozs on May 28. To Milly's mum, Lisa, her three brothers and dad Jason, Hampton Court Palace GC, we send our best wishes for a very happy future.

I was returning home from deepest Kent last week and driving along an unusually quiet M20 in my normal highly attentive state when directly in front of me, waddling across the inside lane, was Mrs Duck being followed by her eight ducklings, completely unaware of the danger. I used the hard shoulder to avoid mass murder and another driver did the same in the outer lane. I hope they made it to safety but it just goes to show that any animal outside its normal habitat can make some serious errors of judgement.

I now know that even humans can make errors when confronted by an unusual situation and are also capable of ending up in a habitat similar to that preferred by Mrs Duck and her brood but more of that later.

Golf at Gatton Manor GC on Thursday, May 17 was excellent. Paul Hobden and his team had produced a course that was a delight to play and the caterers a meal that was a delight to eat. Thank you to Gatton Manor for the warm welcome and courtesy of the course. The weather was very kind with sunny spells and no rain although one of our golfers did not need the rain to cool his brow. The format was a full handicap stableford competition sponsored by Avoncrop and represented by Gary Olgvie. It was unfortunate that not all golfers were informed of the two extra novelty prizes on offer or the competition for them may

have been more keen.

The winners were: Ashley Allpress 39pts; Tony Bremer 38 pts; Barry Cannon 36pts; Barry West 34pts. Tony Bremer was Longest/Straightest drive and Ashley Allpress, Nearest the pin.

A football match is being arranged between Surrey and Essex Sections for later in the year so please all you energetic chaps with magic left and right feet contact Mr John Ross for details: 0798584304.

I have had a complaint from Mr Ron Christie that I did not mention last month that he won the Ray Day Memorial Trophy at Walton Heath in March. As this was not a Surrey Section event and I that I new his face was to be splashed all over page 4, I thought it better not to pamper his ego by putting him in Surrey Section as well. I now realise that I was wrong and I personally congratulate him on a fine photograph and only if you look carefully can you see the join.

I almost forgot about Gary Ogilvie at Gatton Manor and I know that he would never forgive me if I left out the details of his little adventure and successes out of this month's edition. Remember those two extra novelty prizes, well who do you think won them? That's right it was Gary. The Longest Dive and Nearest the Fin were won in fine style according to his playing partners. Gareth Roberts said although his entry into the pond on the 6th hole had rather too much splash he still marked him 7.5 and had Gary found his ball it would have been higher. Tony Bremer missed seeing the entry but did applaud with much enthusiasm Gary's gallant attempt at gaining dry land using only his sand wedge. George Barr who also witnessed the whole entry was lucky to avoid serious injury when rushing to congratulate Gary he collapsed into a heap and was so convulsed by happiness at Gary's achievement he was unable to move for many minutes. George later said that it was the best forward dive, with pike, or should that read, with sand wedge, that he had seen this side of the Olympics and as he eat his meal he could not hide the odd smile of pleasure. For Gary, he is now assured, due to any run off of chemicals from greens and fairways into the ditches that fill the pond he will never again have to visit his doctor for treatment against fusarium, leather jackets or worms.

I do need news to splash across our Around the Green Spot every month so please like Ronnie let me know on: 07879474038.

Brian Willmott



KENT

Hi sports fans, By the time you read this report our summer golf event at Westgate and Birchington would have been and gone and I hope all of you who attended had a great time. Results and report will follow next month. Our next event is to be held at The Wildernes Club on September 27. This event will be played in a three ball format with team and individual prizes on offer. Entry forms and more details will appear on our website soon along with all other up-to-date info and goings on in our Section.

Around the Green

The next big event after that will be the south east Regional Seminar which Kent are hosting this year. This will be held at the excellent facilities at Hadlow College in Tonbridge on October 30. We have some great speakers lined up for the day. Again, see the website for more details.

Your committee have been very busy of late organising the seminar, our usual industry days and a full golf events calendar for 2008! All members will receive a fixture list hopefully by Christmas (sorry to mention the 'C' word!). If anybody wishes their course to be considered for hosting a 2009 event please let us know as soon as possible please.

If you haven't visited our website yet please do so and if you have any funny pictures you don't mind sharing with us then please download them on our gallery!

Rob Holland

kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



SUSSEX

Hello again, can you believe we are half way through the year already - time flies when your having fun!

We had a good turn out at our Spring Golf Day at Ham Manor with over 35 players attending. This was our qualifier for the National Tournament which will be held in Scotland at Barrassie and Dundonald golf club's. A big thank you must go to everyone at Ham Manor for the warm welcome and for giving us such a great day. A big thank you to budd the chudd, and good luck for his move to Effingham GC. Also, a big thank you to our sponsors of the day, John Shaw's - These events do not happen without your support.

The results of the day are as follows: Nearest the Pin - Richard may. sponsored by Tower Chemicals; Trade Prize - Gary (the man from Atlantis Ogilvy); Best Nett - 1.Chris Ahier 75; 2.Merrick Treveski 76; 3.Eric Green 76; Best Gross - 1.George Barr 76; 2.David Hinks 86; 3 John Hills 87. Best Nett and Gross go through to the finals in Scotland, so congratulations to George and Chris. If these players cannot make it they must let me know and the next in line will be entitled to go.

Moving on to the football, there is a possibility that we have got a sponsor for the kit but there are a few things to sort out before we can make it official. Also, we do have a home ground which is three bridges football club. This is sponsored by John Wart from Albourne Irrigation - So a big thank you to him.

You didn't think you were going to get a way with it did you Gary? Just in case you hadn't heard, Gary attended a Surrey Golf Day, he was trying to retrieve his golf ball from a lake and slipped and ended up falling in. Now I can hear a lot of cheering from here. No, to be honest it couldn't have happened to a nicer bloke!

If there is any news you want me to include in ATG please contact me on: 07776223234 or email me: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Cheers for now

Rob Hudson



ESSEX

Well the weather changed with a vengeance from temperatures out of the norm for the time of year, to rain more reminiscent to March and April. Still we needed it and now we have grass to cut.

Once again members from our Section have helped out on the greenkeeping support squad at the PGA Championship, Wentworth. The following members from our Section were on the team: Andy Cracknell, Robert Bramwell, Nick Gates, Mark Gemmill and Nick Swanson - well done guys.

The pairs competition is off and running and a reminder to everyone involved, to make sure that they have played there games within the time frame stipulated.

Paul O'Kane has reported that he has been overwhelmed with interest in the chainsaw courses he is running, and has now filled places up until October. Those interested in this course or any other courses, please contact Paul on: 07921292057. His email details are on the website. The date for the Autumn Stableford tournament at Colchester GC is August 15 - So be sure to make a note and get your entries in sooner rather than later.

Entry forms can be downloaded from our website, www.essexbigga.co.uk (if you don't get one through the post) and starting times will be posted on the web, two or three days prior to the event.

Sorry this month's news is a bit light on the ground, anyone who has any news for inclusion in the "Around the Green" section can email me at: highwoods.photographic@virgin.net or call me on: 01206852353.

Arnold Phipps-Jones



SOUTH WEST AND WALES

I'll start this month with a groveling apology - the match against the Secretaries at Henbury had to be changed due to a clash of dates, and the new date came "as a little bit of a surprise" to Wayne Vincent, Team Captain. In the event, thanks to some superb crisis management Wayne managed to come up with a finely-honed team at very short notice, but unfortunately it was a team capable of losing by almost the heaviest possible margin. Not quite the result that Wayne was looking for in his opening game, with only Richard Louisson and Alan Quartermain salvaging a half point. Henbury was presented in immaculate condition so we couldn't use that excuse. The weather was either bright sunshine, or torrential storms, which should've favoured the greenkeepers, but no, it was a good old-fashioned thrashing. Thanks very much to Henbury, and particularly Gary Hauley and the greenkeeping team for the wonderful



conditions, and back to the drawing board for “McClaren” Vincent. In fairness of course Steve doesn’t have to pick his team at only a couple of days notice, although after some of the recent England results - maybe he does! (Although I wasn’t a particular member of the Bring Back Becks campaign, even Crouchy must have wondered where all the half-decent crosses in the Estonia game were coming from all of a sudden.)

Enmore Park was in similarly good order for the Greenkeeper\Amateur in mid May, despite not having the best of Spring growth – again! Gary Cook presented the course in beautiful condition, and this very popular event was thoroughly enjoyed by all the competitors. Thanks very much to all at Enmore for the day and congratulations to the winners. 1. J Bachelor and M Chapman, 45 pts; 2. G Cook and M Bovingdon, 43 pts; 3. C Shutt and P McGreevey, 42 pts.

Thanks also to Steve Hazell for attending to fly the flag for Cannington College. Steve asked me to mention that the new Level 3 distance learning course is filling up fast, so to book your place do get in touch with Steve, or Jonathan McDonald, at Cannington as soon as possible.

I was very pleased to hear from Mark Ford of Kingsdown who is well on the way to recovery following his recent heart scare. He particularly asked me to pass on his thanks to all those who sent their best wishes, and also thanked the committee for their card. Mark mentioned that he had been at Kingsdown for 30 years this year and the conversation rapidly turned into a couple of old f*rts reminiscing about over-long careers. Marks first task when he returns to work this month is to appoint an extra member of staff to carry out his physical work while he continues to recover. Is that a twinge I feel all of a sudden?

Looking forward to Cumberwell Park on July 25 followed by the Marc Haring Quiz Night – which is not to be missed. Marc tells me there’s a fighting chance of us being let loose on the new nine which should be very worthwhile.

If I could just return to the fixture list for a moment – there are two further corrections to be made. The AGM is at Minchinhampton on Thursday, October 11, and the National Tournament is NOT at Ogbourne St George. All other dates and venues are correct. My apologies again for the printing errors, and any inconvenience caused.

Finally back at Minch we’re just stepping up to our final Open Championship Regional Qualifying round, before the tournament moves to Ferndown for the next six years. I’ll be quite sorry to see it go as it really gives a focus to the whole season, but with the English Mid-Amateur Championship to look forward to in August (there goes my bank-holiday!) maybe we’ve got enough focus. Watering is now in full swing with an awful lot to learn about computers, waterbudgets, ET values, pump control software, and system programming. We’ve just had a text alert system fitted to the pump station, which seemed like a good idea at the time. Any time there’s a power failure, or low pressure situation, it sends a text alert to my mobile, and to our Will Harris, our Machinery Managers, mobile. This only ever seems to happen in the middle of the night and it’s like having another alarm clock in the room. So the next time you see me, it’ll be with red-rimmed eyes, and carrying two bunches of divorce papers from our long-suffering wives.

Paul Worster. paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

Hello everyone, and welcome to the latest news from the South Coast Section. I’m sure you will all agree the year is flying by and before we know it we’ll be signing up for the Turkey Trot at Barton-on-Sea! But before that, if you receive this issue in time, we have the Summer Tournament at Andover GC to look forward to on Tuesday, July 3. Chris Sturgess and his Assistant, Dave, will be working very hard to present their golf course in what is the golf club’s centenary year. If you want to attend this or any of our Golf Days please contact Chris Sturgess on: 0777 313 8409 or send a cheque to Chris direct at his home address: 31 Bay Rd, Sholing, Southampton SO19 8EZ.

A fantastic day was had by all who attended the Scotts/BIGGA Golf Management Trophy, which was held at Stoneham GC on May 31. For those Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers who have not attended this annual event previously, I thoroughly recommend you raise a team for next year! The teams consist of four players, with one Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and the remaining three representing the other management roles within the Golf Club e.g. Secretary, Chairman, President etc. The result is tremendous networking across the industry, which of course is very beneficial for the Greenkeepers. Stoneham was no exception with 21 teams competing on what was meant to be a thundery, horrible, wet day but in the end with one 3 minute cloud burst turned out to be ideal playing conditions.

The winning team, with 89 points, was from Southwood GC led by Head Greenkeeper John Mathis with Ian Attoe, Ashley Sharpe and Stirling Robertson – congratulations. Scraping into second place on count back with 81 points was Petersfield GC led by Brian Gillespie, with Peter Badger, Dave Arnold and Alan Cornick. Third were Basingstoke GC led by Head Greenkeeper Colin Hutt, with Simon Lawrence, Brian Knight and Paul Knight. Nearest The Pin – Ali Briggs from Test Valley GC. Longest Drive – Simon Lawrence.

Vince Ley and his team did a tremendous job in the preparation and the presentation of this beautiful golf course. Many compliments were paid to Vince in the Clubhouse. Very well done Vince and the team. The food was superb. Much gratitude to Duncan and his catering staff and to all the team and members at Stoneham GC for making us welcome. In particular to Alan Douglas, Stoneham’s Captain, who made a very good speech welcoming us to the Club, their Chairman Clive Cole, and much appreciation goes to Richard Penley-Martin, their Secretary.

Thank you to John Noyce, from Scotts, and their sponsorship for the day. John also made an excellent starter on the first tee (the other starter on the 10th tee was a little bit ropey, but thanks to him anyway!) Finally, well done Jane Jones, our Regional Administrator from BIGGA, who did a fabulous job with the organisation and running of the day.

Joe Crawley - 07721 389200

Around the Green

DEVON AND CORNWALL



I start my column this month with some desperately sad news. Our great friend and colleague Don Hunt passed away suddenly on Monday, May 14. Don supported greenkeepers up and down the country all his working life and he was also the events organiser for the Devon and Cornwall Section of BIGGA. Don will leave a massive void in the world of greenkeeping and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

During a recent committee meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Section, Abi Crosswood, of Newquay GC, was appointed Secretary of the Section. Abi will be supported by all the "old boys" and Billy Mitchell was given the honour of becoming Abi's Assistant. Graham Gallimore, the Head Greenkeeper at Launceston GC, is the Education Chairman and John Palfrey is the new Fixtures Secretary with Tim Wakeham taking on the role of Treasurer.

Ashbury Golf Club in Okehampton have won The Large Employer of the Year Award at the South West Skills Awards. The Course Manager, Steve Harris, along with his Deputy, Pete Gross, have carried out all training "in-house" and with the help of Bill Pyle and Ron Skinner from the Duchy College, no fewer than 12 greenkeepers from Ashbury achieved their NVQ Level 2. More training is planned for this year for Level 2/3 NVQs and A1 Assessor awards. The partnership between the college and the workplace has been expertly managed and congratulations go to everyone involved.

The Section, along with the Duchy College, sponsored four students to attend the BTME show in January. One of the students sponsored, Mike Wannell, Assistant Greenkeeper at Bovey Castle GC, went on to win The Institute of Groundsmanship Student of the Year Award. This is a fantastic achievement for Mike, Bovey Castle and Duchy College Well Done All!

Any information for this column? Please contact me at stevenevans184@btinternet.com or: 01822 617671.

Steve Evans



SOUTH WALES

The Tower Sport Europe Spring Shield was recently played for at the Coedy-Mwstwr GC near Bridgend.

The weather was glorious, hot, no wind - ideal for golf and low scoring. The course was a picture, presented superbly by Head Greenkeeper Andrew Hatcher and his team. The greens were true, slick and firm and it was evident to all that participated that a lot of work and effort had been put in (and not only for our benefit) for our tournament, the first of the year.

The hospitality afforded us by all at the golf club was excellent, warm and friendly, they went out of their way to make us feel welcome and

it was appreciated by all.

Tower Sports took on the sponsorship of this event and it was their inaugural competition. Managing Director, David Goldstone got us off to a flying start and then proceeded to take care of everyone throughout the entire day. Again the hospitality afforded us by tower, David and our local representative Gareth Knight was superlative. A sincere thank you to them for their support, the excellent prize table, their hospitality and to David for his attendance and kind words in summing up after presenting the prizes.

Following the golf we were treated to an excellent three course dinner in the marquee, prior to the football (which we won't mention again) the fine food was plentiful (even for Emyr) and great value, a sincere thanks to the catering staff for looking after us so well! The winner of the "Tower Sports Europe - Spring Shield" was Rhys McDonagh from Llanwrn with 38 points, winning the trophy and a colour TV. Second place went to local knowledge, Andrew Hatcher, Head Greenkeeper of Coedy-Mwstwr with 37 points beating Herbie Probert from Pontardawe into third. The longest drive went to Old new boy, Huw Morgan from the Ashburnham golf club and nearest the pin went to Stuart Jones from Maesteg. Best Trade card went to Peter Holmstrom with a very creditable 35 points.

A great day had by all, made by the good weather, an excellent golf course, great company, super hospitality and fine food, what more could one ask for (perhaps a better back swing for the Secretary). A sincere thanks to the directors of the club for giving us courtesy for our visit and to Gareth Summerton especially for allowing us our visit.

By the time you read this someone will have won the Wales Open at the Celtic Manor Resort, we hope that he's Welsh and that the sun also shines on Jim McKenzie and his staff for the event.

Peter Lacey - Section Secretary

PS: Our best wishes to our normal (if we can call him that) around the green scribe, Henry Stead, whose unfortunate trip has resulted in him breaking a wrist (mind you, it makes a change from a Toro!). No but seriously, Henry we wish you a speedy recovery, you never know long term it may improve your grip and you may finally better a handicap of 24!

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Section Notes -

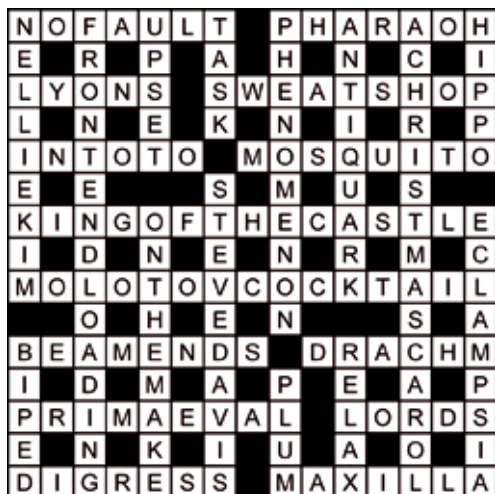
Can all notes be emailed to: melissa@bigga.co.uk
by the 5th of the month prior to publication please.
Suggested word guide: 500



In the Shed

ANSWERS

CROSSWORD



QUICK NINE HOLE QUIZ

- 1 Baseball
- 2 Hockey
- 3 Pole Vault
- 4 Sky-diving
- 5 Netball
- 6 40
- 7 Swimming
- 8 One
- 9 Caddyshack

MONSTER SUDOKU

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

8	7	4	2	3	9	6	5	1
3	9	6	5	1	7	4	2	8
1	8	5	6	2	4	7	9	3
2	4	7	9	6	8	3	1	5
5	1	9	7	8	3	2	4	6
4	6	3	1	9	5	8	7	2
7	3	8	4	5	2	1	6	9
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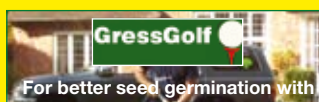
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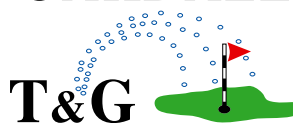
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The "Good Old Days"

Do you remember the "good old days?" One of the pleasures of being Chairman is meeting and listening to my peers. Those sometimes retired or coming to the twilight of their time in greenkeeping and soon moving onto pastures new. Or will they? Will they drift off into the sunset and hang up their work boots never to be seen again? Well I can assure you, if my trips during the past months are anything to go by then nothing could be further from the truth.

It seems everywhere I go there is always at least one of those greenkeepers who we have all heard of and to whom we have looked up to for inspiration and guidance. They turn up to golf days and seminars and still enjoy the buzz of mixing it up with us comparatively young whipper snappers.

What I love best is their stories. With a quiet assurance and a passion, they openly share their life spent on courses up and down the country. I asked one what he missed from the good old days. "Young man," he said, "the good old days my arse. You don't know you are born today. Now when I was a lad..." He then drifted back through the drudgery of greenkeeping over the ages and it's only then you realise just how far we have come. They didn't even have the basics that we take for granted today in terms of welfare and working conditions and if we were to compare maintenance complexes, there would be no comparison to the well-heated, ventilated and secure buildings where we all, mostly, enjoy working from today.

One old greenkeeper told me about how he used to sit having his lunch on tubs of mercury fungicides as they always kept those in the driest part of the sheds while, as for ventilation, he said that was never a problem as they had that in abundance.

All materials were moved by hand and in most cases wheelbarrows featured highly in their daily existence - something I can remember from when I was an apprentice greenkeeper.

As I remember, we had been digging some drains - now you have to picture the scene, me and my twin brother down the dirtiest hole in the world, hand digging what seemed to be miles



of lateral drainage. We were in those drains for what seemed to be years. The funny thing was that Bobby seemed to have a knack of bringing more clay out on his clothes than he ever managed on his spade. My mum used to comment on how clean he used to be when he got home. God he did look a picture after a day in the drains.

As always I have gone off the topic of wheelbarrows, I'm turning into one of those Ronnie Corbett sketches where he sat in a big chair and start off telling a story, drift off the point and with complete aplomb return nicely to the subject in hand. Wheelbarrows it was, anyway there we were Bobby and I down this drain on the 6th hole in the middle field at Bushill Park and we noticed my dad stomping over the fairway. So with great presence of mind, we both started digging and looking busy, covered in what could only be described as the dirtiest muck London had to offer.

"A load of rejects (drainage stone) is on its way, so meet the lorry and try and get him as close as you can then you can get backfilled today," he said. We both looked at each other, then at about five miles of open drains up and down this fairway, shrugged our shoulders and said, "Yes. No problem dad."

The lorry duly turned up and we went over to meet the driver, hoping that the persistent rain over the last two months hadn't made the

ground too wet and we could get the required stone near to the job in hand. As I remember the driver wasn't too eager to venture his nice clean lorry onto what could only be described as a wobbly jelly of a golf course. Now we had a vested interest in getting this stone as close to the offending drains as possible. We convinced the driver that he would be fine and there was no chance that he would get stuck. Well, he reversed his lorry, none of your beeping horns in those days, got about 30 feet off the roadway and duly got stuck up to his ankles in the soggy ground. There was nothing left but to tip him where he was and head off for the tractor and chain to pull him out.

Our required stone was now so far from the open drains it to be wheel barrowed halfway across the course. It took us an eternity so long, in fact, that we must have worn out at least two pairs of work boots. What the experience gave us was a dogged determination not to be beaten by anything and in the face of adversity rise to any challenge asked of us.

So to all those that share our passion for greenkeeping from a yonder year, I would say this - You are valued still and we enjoy as much, as I know you do, the exchange of stories. We thank you for the wonderful gift of sharing your life with us and long may it continue. And just reading what I have remembered from a part of my past made me smile. As you know, I'm still very young indeed and not nearly as accomplished as my peers.

As for the "good old days" - As I'm often told by those who have been there and done that, these are "our" good old days and when you have the chance to meet those coming to the twilight of their time in greenkeeping, enjoy their wonderful stories. Knowing where we have come from will make us all the richer and I'm sure we can share our lives with the next generation of whipper snappers.

The thing is, stories always get bigger in the telling and all the more pleasurable for that, so forgive the odd fib about linier lengths on this occasion.

Billy McMillan

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GREENKEEPING STAFF



**ST THOMAS'S PRIORY GOLF CLUB
RUGELEY, STAFFORDSHIRE**

Ready for a fresh challenge?

Want to join a team and make a real difference?

The new owners of St Thomas's Priory Golf Club are looking to strengthen the golf course maintenance team with the appointment of a **First Assistant and a Greenkeeper**.

This proprietary members club is set within the Hawkesyard Hall Estate and features a 5,969 yd. undulating golf course and practice ground. The new owners are investing heavily in improvements and are looking for individuals with commitment and passion to join the existing team.

A competitive salary will be offered to applicants with the appropriate NVQ qualifications and experience.

In the first instance, applicants should send their CV to; Robert Pointon, Operations Manager, St Thomas's Priory Golf Club, Armitage Lane, Armitage Park, Rugeley, Staffs. WS15 1ED



SHOOTERS HILL GOLF CLUB

is a private members Club situated 6 miles from the centre of London with commanding views of the Kentish Hills.

Due to the retirement of our Deputy Head Greenkeeper in October, we are looking to appoint a successor.

- The appointee would be expected to have the following skills and qualifications:
- NVQ level 3 sports turf management plus spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6 Chainsaw qualifications,
- A sound working knowledge of machinery
- Effective Management skills
- Experience in golf course construction including irrigation systems and Knowledge of Health & Safety regulations.

A competitive salary is available- but no accommodation.

Applications in writing, with a CV, should be submitted by the 31st July 2007 and sent to: The Head Greenkeeper, Shooters Hill Golf Club 'Lowood' Eaglesfield Road Shooters Hill LONDON SE18 3DA

DE VERE OULTON HALL

De Vere Oulton Hall is a 5* De Vere Deluxe Property located within 2 miles of the M62 on the outskirts of Leeds. The property boasts a Dave Thomas designed Championship 27-hole golf complex which surrounds the Oulton Hall Estate and is regarded as one of the finest courses in the North of England. We are currently investing a massive £7.5m at the property which includes the construction of a luxurious Clubhouse facility for our members and visitors.

Assistant Greenkeeper required

We are now seeking an ambitious, professional Assistant Greenkeeper to join our permanent team on the golf courses. You will need to hold a minimum of NVQ Level 2 and preferably all current spraying certificates. The ideal candidate will also be required to have a minimum of 2 years' relevant work experience.

If you would like to apply for this vacancy please send your CV to:
Jim Brown, Course Manager,
De Vere Oulton Hall, Oulton,
Leeds LS26 8HN – or email it to:
jim.brown@devere-hotels.com

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BRANCH SALES MANAGER

Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd. is a family run company selling agricultural, construction and groundcare equipment from 19 branches throughout the South East and has a vacancy for a Branch Manager at it's Esher Branch.

Esher Branch is Ernest Doe's specialist groundcare branch situated in a prime area in Surrey adjoining Sandown Park Race Course. Main franchises include Ransomes Jacobsen, EZGO, Iseki, Wiedenmann, Ferris, Stihl and Husqvarna, together with many leading domestic brands.

We are looking for a candidate that can capitalise on this great opportunity to lead our well established experienced team of people with the premier Ransomes Jacobsen main franchise in an excellent sales area.

Sales and or management experience within our trade is required. We offer an attractive package with all the benefits of working for a secure and progressive company.

Please apply in writing with full CV to:

Colin E. Doe
Managing Director
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd
Ulting, Maldon
Essex CM9 6QH


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or call him on 01245 380311 to discuss.



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