

# Welcome

Woke up this morning to the news that Sir Steven Redgrave was looking for tall athletes to develop for the 2012 Olympics. You had to be over six foot three for a guy and five foot 11 for a girl and they were aimed at sports like rowing, handball and volleyball.



If I was 25 years younger right now I'd be distraught. I could have all the drive, determination and talent at my finger tips but just because I'm just under six foot - well, two and a quarter inches under, actually - I'd be passed over for some other beanpole in shorts. Doesn't seem right.

Surely everyone should be given tests, strength and agility and the like, and the best man or woman should be selected - otherwise it would be a bit sizeist. From memory one of the best Harlem Globetrotters, can't remember his name, was a short guy among all the giants. Under today's criteria he probably wouldn't be given the opportunity to represent the UK in the Olympics! But sport is going that way. Rugby Union used to be a game for all shapes and sizes with positions on the field to suit whatever physique but now scrum halves can be over six feet tall and a centre or wing three-quarter is now a similar size to a lock forward of 20 years ago.

Golf still seems to be immune from the sizeist agenda although it is changing. Ian Woosnam became Masters Champion and world number one despite failing to grow much more than five foot four. He was a big hitter in his prime but now struggles in the company of the golfing gym junkies who spend more time pumping iron and visiting the Tour's Physio Bus than yesterday's Tour pros spent selling Mars bars and giving lessons. But getting back to the must be over six foot three and five 11 business. In any other walk of life you wouldn't be able to do that - rule people out because of a physical impairment.

If I'd been told you needed to have under a 32 inch waist to become a journalist - I would have slipped in as a student but from the age of 23 it may/would have been a bit of a struggle and I'd have been lost to the writing game. Indeed there wouldn't be many left to fill the columns of the nation's newspapers.

Thinking back to the halls of Harrogate and you'll recall the variety of shapes and sizes that is welcomed into the greenkeeping game - we have tall ones, short ones, fat ones, somewhat fewer thin ones, ones with hair and those without - and that's exactly what life should be all about. It's not the packaging - it's what's inside.

As we all know life caters for all shapes and sizes and everyone has something to contribute and let's just hope that it's another five foot nine and three-quarterer who becomes a national hero in 2012.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

## ENGINES DEVELOPED TO USE B20 BIODIESEL

As part of its commitment to environmental responsibility, JCB announced that from the start of 2007 all JCB Dieselmix engines have been approved for the use of B20 Biodiesel (20% Biofuel).

Dr. Tim Leverton, JCB Group Engineering Director, said "We are aware that there will be increasing pressure in the future from governments and from the public to use Biofuels in all on and off-road vehicles. Biofuels are a carbon neutral energy source which create lower emissions and are produced from renewable resources. At JCB this is one of a series of Group-wide initiatives aimed at reducing our environmental impact. We are evaluating the use of other Biofuels for future use."

## 175 YEARS OF MOWER MANUFACTURING

2007 sees a major milestone in the grounds care industry with Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd, celebrating the 175th anniversary of mower production at Ipswich.

Edwin Budding's historic lawnmower design was patented in 1830 and JR & A Ransome were the first company to obtain a licence to manufacture this remarkable invention. The first Ransomes-manufactured machine for domestic use was produced in 1832 and this signalled the beginning of commercial mower production in the UK.



Budding 1834

Although the company no longer produces domestic lawnmowers they are one of the leading commercial mower manufacturers supplying equipment to golf courses, local authorities, landscape contractors, sports clubs and major sports stadia around the globe. David Withers, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd commented,

"This is a hugely significant milestone in the history of our company; from this small beginning we are now one of the leading grounds care machinery manufacturers in the world. Ransomes mowers have been supplied to monarchies and nobilities across Europe and Asia and the Ransomes name has become a by-word for quality British engineering. Over the years the company has had its ups and downs, but today it is a vibrant market leader, with a modern manufacturing plant providing employment and career opportunities to the people of Ipswich."

## AEA NEW CEO

The Agricultural Engineers Association is pleased to announce that Roger Lane-Nott will be the new CEO of the AEA from April 17, 2007. He will succeed Jake Vowles, the current Director General, who is retiring.

Roger spent 32 years in the Royal Navy, mainly in nuclear submarines, and retired in 1996 as a Rear Admiral. Since then he has been the FIA Formula One Race Director running all F1 activity worldwide and the CEO of the Centre for Marine and Petroleum Technology, a brokerage for innovative technology and collaborative research for the offshore oil and gas industry. More recently he has been the Secretary of the British Racing Drivers' Club at Silverstone.



Left: Jake Vowles, the present CEO and right: Roger Lane-Nott the new CEO.