



Greenkeeper

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INTERNATIONAL

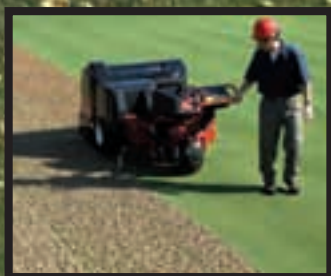
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IN EXTREMIS PARALLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

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Cover Picture: Castleknock Golf Club, near Dublin, taken by Victor Lucas

Welcome

We're all Human Beings After All



Do we like to see top golfers struggling or shooting the lights out?

That's the question being posed following this year's Masters as the Augusta National Club achieved the rare feat of protecting Old Mother Par over the four days of competitive golf.

Since then I've read people say it was a terrible Masters and that it got the Champion it deserved in the shape of Zack Johnson, in much the same way as they spoke of Paul Lawrie at Carnoustie eight years ago.

Funnily enough I found both the '99 Open and this year's Masters extremely exciting and good television. The dramatic conclusion at Carnoustie will be remembered for many a long year, and not only by native Scots and flamboyant Frenchmen, while the eventual winner of this year's Masters was not known until very late on the final afternoon.

Many players appeared on the verge of donning the green jacket only to find and give up the opportunity to some other soul who'd just holed a chip or sunk a putt involving 45 feet of break – It was riveting stuff.

But, getting back to the original point, it may be a case of schadenfreude, but isn't it refreshing to see the top guys making the sorts of errors we all manage at home – knocking short chips into the water, failing to pitch far enough up the green and seeing the ball trundle back down the slope to our feet and four putting from six feet. The degree of difficulty involved may be vastly different but the outcomes are very much the same.

We can all admire golf where the fairway is hit, the green is hit and, every third time, the putt is holed. It would add up to a 66 but it's hardly edge of your seat stuff. I once watched Bernhard Langer shoot 65 round Wentworth from inside the ropes. It's a backhanded compliment to Bernhard to say I was bored by the end. Far more exciting to see the old Seve style of golf miraculous recoveries are manufactured from cosses and car parks.

So let's revel in the Masters of 2007 and be thankful that once in a while the best golfers in the world are seen as not machines but human beings.

Look out for a new look Greenkeeper International dropping through your letter box next month. Over the last few months, together with designers, Stone Soup, we've looked at re-designing your magazine to bring it into the 21st century and we have come up with a new and contemporary design. I hope that when you see the June edition you will feel that it has been time well spent.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

NEW HEAD GREENKEEPER FOR OLD COURSE

It is a case of out with the new and in with the old for Gordon McKie, who has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at the world famous Old Course.

Gordon, who has been Head Greenkeeper at the New Course for two years, will take up one of the most prestigious roles in golf



next month. His immediate task will be to continue the preparations on the venerable links for the staging of the Women's British Open in August and further ahead the Curtis Cup next year and The Open Championship in 2010.

Gordon takes over from Euan Grant who is moving on to a similar role at a new development in the Mull of Kintyre after three years at the Old Course.

Having worked for St Andrews Links Trust for 12 years, Gordon said he was very proud to be taking over at the Old Course.

"It is a privilege to work on the most famous course in the world. The history and tradition surrounding the Old Course makes it unique and it is continually under the glare of the international media spotlight. I am very much looking forward to maintaining the exceptionally high standard of the course and ensuring it continues to set the benchmark for links courses around the world."

NEW CONSULTANT

Kelly Watson, Ecological & Environmental Consultant, is the most recent addition to STRI's expanding Ecology & Environment Team working from head office in Bingley.

Kelly has an Honours Degree in Environmental Science from the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland and has completed a period of doctoral study at the University of Nottingham. Her PhD studies had a practical focus and aimed to quantify the effects of aquatic vegetation on river flooding, water velocity and sediment storage. On the golf course, this work has particular significance to sustainable urban drainage systems, reed bed filtration systems and the recycling of waste water.



NEW TERRITORY

Golf & Turf Equipment Ltd, the Wokingham-based Charterhouse Turf Machinery dealership for Berkshire, has now added the county of Surrey to its territory. The business is part of the Burdens Group of agricultural and groundcare companies serving professional

and domestic markets. "The timing is ideal for us as we recently expanded our team with the appointment of new Sales Representative Steve Coone," says Golf & Turf Managing Director Tom Scanlon.

COMPACT TRACTOR PROVES IDEAL FOR TRAINING COURSES

Growing demand for grounds care and amenity equipment training courses has resulted in a rapid expansion of the machinery fleet used by Littlefield Manor Training Services Limited.

Owned and managed by former Agricultural Training Board instructor, John Tangye, Littlefield Manor Training Services was established in the 1990s as a provider of general agricultural and horticultural short training courses.

Although farm tractors, implements and hand-held equipment remain very much in evidence at the company's headquarters, they have been joined in the past year by a 32hp Massey Ferguson compact tractor and a number of matching attachments including a 400-litre mounted sprayer.

The result has enabled Littlefield Manor to extend its range of National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) sprayer courses to include staff employed by golf courses, local authorities, landscape contractors, plant nurseries and public and private gardens, among others. "We are training close to 400 people a year and virtually all of our courses lead to trainees being assessed for an NPTC certificate of competence," explained John who, as the



Surrey agent for the NPTC, is responsible for also organising independent assessments throughout the county. "Having a range of relevant, up-to-date equipment is a key factor in the success and popularity of our courses and we own the majority of the kit that is used for training purposes."

John Tangye (wearing red overalls) of Littlefield Manor Training Services, guides horticultural students through basic tractor operation and maintenance procedures with the help of his MF1531 compact tractor.

SURVEY REVEALS HIGH LEATHERJACKET NUMBERS

An autumn 2006 survey has revealed that leatherjacket numbers are again high and that greenkeepers and groundsmen, particularly in the south of the country, should assess the risk of turf damage by leatherjacket activity and take action.

Although mean leatherjacket numbers are down on 2005 levels at 97.1 per m², they are still significantly higher than the long term mean of 69.7 per m² for all survey sites in the period 1992 – 2006. Regionally, mean numbers of leatherjackets have fallen in the Midlands and north but in the southern region they are 28% higher than in 2005 and the highest since 2001.

Adequate soil moisture in the autumn is critical for the survival of crane fly eggs and newly hatched leatherjacket larvae. All counties experienced heavier than average rainfall in late August, and apart from a warm dry week ending 12 September 2006, the weather in autumn 2006 has been conducive to egg and young leatherjacket larvae survival.

"We have been routinely monitoring leatherjacket numbers, via an independent organisation, since 1992," explains Andy Cawley, Sales and Marketing Manager, Specialty Products of Dow AgroSciences.

"Monitoring helps greenkeepers and groundsmen plan control measures against leatherjacket damage. It certainly helped alert them in 2006 when 2005 survey figures revealed exceptionally high numbers of leatherjackets in the soil. In the south numbers are well up on last year and therefore we would recommend greenkeepers take action now and perform a risk assessment of the damage potential by leatherjackets to their turf roots."



TGA TURF SHOW SET TO BE BIGGER THAN EVER

The TGA Turf Show is to be hosted by Andy Fraser at County Turf on Wednesday, June 27 at Cleatham Hall Farm, near Kirton Lindsey in North Lincolnshire, and will include a wide range of activities, events and demonstrations for everyone involved in the growing, buying, selling, laying and after-care of turf for amenity, sports and landscaping.

Entry to the show is free and registering is easy. Simply log on to: www.pitchcare.com and click on the 'TGA Turf Show' banner to the side of the homepage. By registering online, entry to the show is quicker and the TGA can also keep you up to date with all the latest news and information.

For more information about the turf show and the TGA, visit: www.turfshow2007.co.uk To enquire about exhibiting or to book tickets for the dinner at Forest Pines, please contact the TGA office on: 01507 607722.



Andy Fraser of County Turf will host the 2007 TGA Turf Show.

WWW.GOLFBLOGGER.CO.UK

A new blogg: www.golfblogger.co.uk has been created to provide golfers of all standards with an up to date global golf result service and the latest golfing news.

This site also provides Reviews of golf courses, equipment, clothing, accommodation and other golf-related material.

In addition, there is a list of upcoming events, golf tips, interesting golf facts, and the latest golf betting.

Blogg navigators do not have to register and are invited to post comments on golf-related subjects of their choice.

For further details, please click on: www.golfblogger.co.uk to view this blogg.

NEW GROUND CARE SALES MANAGER



New Holland has appointed Henry Bredin as Groundcare Sales Manager for the UK and Ireland. His role includes the development and management of the groundcare dealer network throughout this region, and he will also contribute to the development of New Holland's groundcare business throughout Europe.

Henry, 28, brings a wealth of experience to the position. He previously spent four years working for John Deere, joining straight from university as a graduate trainee. He made rapid progress to become a Sales Instructor and then an Aftersales Area Manager.

Most recently, for two years before joining New Holland, he worked for himself, founding and managing his own landscaping business, which employed two other people. Henry felt the opportunity to join New Holland was too good to miss and sold his company to a fellow landscape firm.

AWARDED WATERWISE MARQUE

Barenbrug has received a significant accolade for its unique Rhizomatous Tall Fescue (RTF). The grass seed variety is the first to gain the prestigious Waterwise Marque.

It was one of 15 products to be awarded the Waterwise Marque at a special awards ceremony at Oxford University. The Waterwise Marque is the first scheme in the UK to highlight water efficient products.

The Marque is awarded annually to products which reduce water wastage or raise the awareness of water efficiency. RTF was included in the list of winning products, which included dishwashers, an aerated showerhead, water storing gels for the garden, a waterless urinal, a new dual flush toilet and a waterless carwash. Joanna Yarrow, Director of Beyond Green, presented the awards.

INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Turf-Seed Europe Limited is pleased to announce their collaboration with Andreas Herrmann, a well known certified Golf Course Superintendent.

Andreas will provide technical assistance to Turf-Seed's national distributors in central Europe and Scandinavia regions.

Andreas can be reached at: herrmann@golfgrasses.com



CLIMATE CHANGE SEMINAR

Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers, Contractors and Grounds Managers are invited to hear a panel of eminent speakers discuss the impact of climate change on the turfgrass industry.

The one-day seminar entitled Climate of Change in Turf Culture, will be held at the Celtic Manor resort on Wednesday, July 11.

Hosted by British Seed Houses it features a diverse programme of presentations from guest speakers Arwyn Harris from the Met Office, Professor Al Turgeon from Penn State University, Ed Clarke of Absorbent Technology Inc, European Agronomist Dr Michael Schlosser and Jim McKenzie, Director of Golf & Estates at the Celtic Manor Resort.

The cost is £50+VAT, with all proceeds going towards funding a climate change-related research project by a UK-based PhD student, selected by British Seed Houses. Refreshments and lunch are included. To book contact Julie Brankston on: 01522 868714 or email: julie.brankston@bshlincoln.co.uk

PERFECT PITCH

Sportsturf specialist, White Horse Contractors, has purchased three JCB Groundhog utility vehicles for work on its high profile projects including the development of the Welsh Football Association's training facility at Hensol.

The three new JCB models will be put straight to work on the development of Premiership quality training pitches on behalf of the Welsh FA. The pitches incorporate intensive irrigation and drainage systems and the Groundhogs' primary role at the Hensol facility will be to cross the site during the construction phase - quickly and efficiently - without disturbing the gravel layers which are installed to fine tolerances.

On completion of the Welsh FA project, the Groundhog models will be used for a range of tasks including the transportation of surveying teams and equipment, providing site mobility for drainage and irrigation crews, the movement of light or low volume materials over delicate surfaces and to give access to restricted sites.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The 2007 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Berwick upon Tweed (Goswick) Golf Club on Thursday, June 21 by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. The cost of the event will be £20, which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, evening meal and prizes. (Apprentice fee will be £12.) Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring Outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance to: Regional Administrator, Peter J Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA by June 12. Please make cheques payable to: BIGGA Scottish Region. The draw will be placed on the BIGGA website.

RETIREMENT

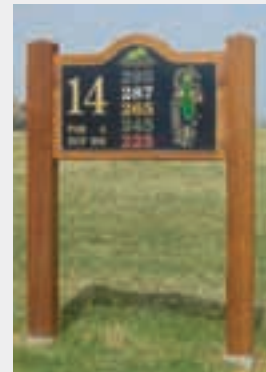
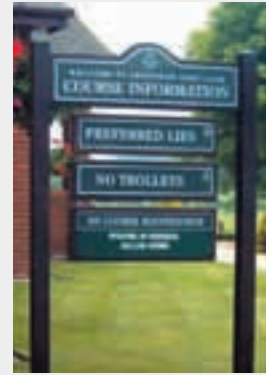
The end of March saw the first ever retirement at BIGGA HQ. Staff said a fond farewell to Tony Cocker, who has been an Accountant at our headquarters in York, for the past 10 years.

"Tony is the first headquarters-based member of staff to retire and we all wish him a long and fulfilling time. He has been an extremely valuable member of staff for the last 10 years and I will miss him both as a colleague and a friend," said John Pemberton, BIGGA Chief Executive.

Happy Retirement Tony!



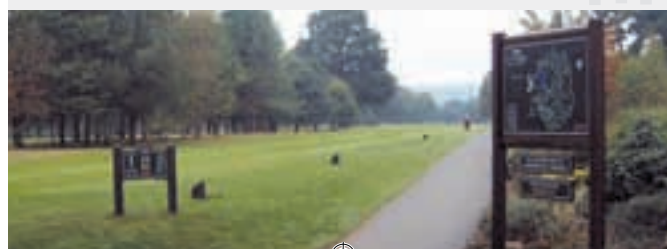
BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, thanks Tony Cocker, (left) for his hard work over the past 10 years.



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WARWICKSHIRE FIRM WINS DEALER OF THE YEAR

Warwickshire company, Parks and Grounds Machinery, has been named Turfmech's dealer of the year for 2006.

The award, which is now in its ninth year, was presented in recognition of the outstanding sales results achieved by the firm during 2006 and the consistently high level of service provided to owners and users of Turfmech equipment. An engraved plaque marking these achievements was presented to Parks and Grounds Machinery's management and sales staff at a special ceremony arranged by Turfmech at the company's premises in Waterloo Industrial Estate, Bidford on Avon.

Presenting the award, Turfmech's Area Sales Manager, Jon Proffitt, said that Parks and Grounds Machinery had achieved consistently good results since being appointed a Turfmech dealer in 2001. However, 2006 had proved an exceptional year for the business, culminating in the firm securing Turfmech's coveted Dealer of the Year award.



Turfmech's Area Sales Manager, Jon Proffitt (centre), presents the Turfmech Dealer of the Year award for 2006 to David Tullett, Co-Director of Parks and Grounds Machinery. Also pictured are Jon Lewis, Will Davies and Andy Perkins of Parks and Grounds Machinery and Dave Rogers and Ian Pogson of Turfmech.

NEW APPOINTMENT

James Gilbert has been appointed Commercial Manager at Ransomes Jacobsen.

In this new role, he will be responsible for all the commercial aspects of the Ransomes Jacobsen business including the dealer development programme, market and segmentation analysis, pricing and contracts. He will also assist the field sales teams with commercial issues applicable to the dealer and distributor network. He will report directly to Alan Prickett, Sales Director.



James is new to the turf care industry having spent the majority of his career working in the financial services industry in the field of management information and business/performance analysis.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

BIGGA's Scottish Region's Conference was once again held at the Business Learning Centre, Dunfermline on Tuesday, March 6 where we welcomed over 160 delegates. In charge of proceedings was the Scottish Chairman, Stuart Greenwood, Course Manager at North Berwick West Links, who introduced the speakers. Our first speaker was Ian Butcher, International Golf Development Manager at Elmwood College in Cupar. Following Ian we had Graeme Francis, from Lakes and Greens Ltd, and to round off our morning session Gordon Irvine, Master Greenkeeper Consultant.

After lunch and prior to the afternoon's session, the Chairman had the very pleasant task of presenting the Harry Diamond Quach to the Student of the Year. This year it went to Kenneth Gilroy, Shiskine Golf Club on the Island of Arran.

Starting off the afternoon session was Dr Jim Hunter, Agronomist from Florida, USA followed by Brian Robinson, Senior Agronomist from Rigby Taylor. To round off the afternoon Kerran Daly, Past Chairman of BIGGA and Course Manager at The Gog Magog Golf Club, finished the day in his own inimitable style with his interpretation of a Dylan classic but with a Fife theme.

The Board of the Scottish Region would like to thank the delegates who attended the

Conference once again in such numbers and look forward to seeing you all at the same venue on Tuesday, March 4, 2008.

Our thanks to the Patrons of the Region for their continued support to the Association in Scotland, and to the Education Department at Headquarters. Thanks must also go to the members of the Central Section who assisted me on the day.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

THE 2007 NEIL THOMAS MEMORIAL GOLF DAY

Companies who have entered teams and sponsored a hole in the 2007 Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day include: Rigby Taylor; Heath Lambert; Kubota; Ransomes Jacobsen; Hayter; Colourstream; Warners; Yorkshire Aggregates; Hunter Grinders; New Holland; the Tower Group; John Deere and Destination Harrogate, while Q Hotels, owners of Aldwark Manor have offered four x two balls at any of Q Hotels' golf clubs as a main prize and two nights B&B at Forest Pines GC, near Scunthorpe, which will be offered as a raffle prize.

The money raised will be going to this year's designated charity the Rainbow Trust, for children with life threatening or terminal illness rainbowtrust.org.uk

GEAR CHANGE INTO GREENKEEPING

After two decades in the high pressure world of motor sports, welder and fabricator David Jones has changed gear to a career in greenkeeping.

And 42-year-old David is continuing to use his engineering skills while learning new ones in his dream job at Tadmarton Heath Golf Club near Oxford. "I had wanted to be a greenkeeper for quite some time but had to wait until the time was right in my life," said David, who spent 20 years working with touring car and formula one teams.



"It was a very volatile industry which revolved around sponsorship and other people's money and I had been made redundant several times. I also had a seven year old daughter and I wanted to spend more time with her and not work weekends and all the hours God sends." However, David is fully aware that greenkeeping is far from a 9-5 job!

Having made the decision to change careers – and with the support of his wife Jayne, an NHS ward manager – David's next steps were to try and get a job. "This was quite difficult as my CV was very motor orientated but then someone suggested that I go to college and get some qualifications," he said.

David went to Moreton Morrell College where he gained the pesticide application PA1 and PA6 certificates. "Eventually I was offered a job at Brailes golf course in June last year," he said.

"The club registered me with the Warwickshire College on the NVQ Level 2 sports turf qualification and I was then contacted by Tadmarton Golf Club asking me if I was still interested in working there."

As that had been somewhere David wanted to work initially, he jumped at the chance. "It is a private golf club and is very supportive of staff training and health and safety," said David. "It is over 80 years old so has some history and is also closer to home for me."

Tadmarton encouraged David to carry on working towards his NVQ and the college recognised his commitment and awarded him the Derek Sharman trophy in the process. "To get this trophy at 42 years of age was quite an achievement," he said.

Now happily working at Tadmarton, David said: "I love the job – it's absolutely fantastic. I like working outside, the hours are good and I enjoy a much better quality of life."

A normal working day is from 7am until 3pm and David is able to pick up his daughter Emma from school every day. "A lot of fathers aren't able to do that so I feel very lucky," he said. "And I don't mind getting up early so the hours suit me really well."

"Being a greenkeeper means I can work outside and also use my engineering skills. Really, I am "engineering" the right grasses to grow and I am involved in all aspects of the maintenance including of course, the machinery!

"I also use my welding and fabrication experience in repairing machinery – I am using all my old skills while continuing to learn new ones. " Hoping to register with the college on the NVQ Level 3 sports turf, David found support from the college combined with work experience an interesting and a very flexible way to learn.

"Andy Turnbull, the turf tutor at the Warwickshire College, was very helpful – the avenues are all there if you want to learn," he said. "Doing a job while learning at the same time is great and I am very lucky to have the support to do this."

Working alongside and learning from colleagues is a key way of gaining new skills, according to David's course manager Brian Owen. "David is very good and his enthusiasm is excellent," said Brian, who has been in the industry for 32 years.

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IMPORTING OR EXPORTING SKILLS?

In his latest article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, looks at the opportunities to import and export greenkeeping skills.

Having just returned from a cross-landscaping Industry group meeting, it is clear that several land base sectors in Britain, have already recruited many workers from Europe, with an increasing number coming from Eastern Europe.

I know that several golf clubs have also recruited non-British workers and we can see this trend continuing as the European Union grows and travel between countries becomes more accessible. Skilled labour is of course any employers' priority and now we have established formal work-based training as the best way to develop and assess skills, there should be no barriers to recruitment, apart from maybe language.

Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers, especially those qualified assessors, will be able to train up all operators using the national standards as the guidance to competence. Awarding Bodies such as the National Proficiency Test Council (NPTC) and Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), are looking to develop assessment strategies for migrant workers in areas such as health and safety and the safe use of pesticides.

The GTC, as previously reported, has been involved in meetings to discuss the merits of establishing a European Greenkeeping Education Unit and this initiative transpired following a greenkeeping questionnaire which had been circulated to all the Federation Members of the European Golf Association (EGA).

One of the R&A's priorities is to help develop the sport in countries where golf is only just starting to grow and as many of the returned questionnaires sought help in greenkeeper education and training, a working group was established.

BIGGA and FEGGA, together with the GTC and college representatives from European countries, have met and proposed three sets of skills, which, following consultation, will become the foundation for the Education Unit to develop a Pan-European Certification Scheme. The development of Pan-European standards will undoubtedly be useful for the greenkeeping sector and should encourage the movement of skilled workers in our specialist sector.

In many golf developing countries owners and developers are still designing courses, building them and then as the handover day looms somebody then thinks who shall we employ to maintain the course!

If only more Architects encouraged the obvious and that is to ensure developers recruit a Course Manager before the earthmovers enter the site, future problems would be reduced greatly. The grow-in and aftercare programmes are so important to the long-term success

of the golf course, and therefore the recruitment of a qualified Course Manager is very important.

Britain has exported some great talent over the years and the experiences of these pioneers is often shared through their attendance at the BIGGA Harrogate Week, articles in this magazine or more recently on the Bulletin Board on the BIGGA website.

I am sure there will be more and more opportunities for qualified greenkeepers to ply their trade abroad as the game continues to grow across the world but we must also encourage local skills to develop in these countries.

Several British colleges are playing a major role to help establish greenkeeper education programmes in other countries and we can all learn from each other as I found out at the first meeting of the Pan - European working group meeting!

The language can be a massive obstacle and that is why it is so important, if you are looking to work abroad, you try to learn at least some of the language before heading off. Consideration for how the family might settle in should also be high on the agenda with the education of the family a priority.

I am sure many of the British qualified greenkeepers working abroad would endorse this statement and would be willing to discuss their experiences with anybody considering a move abroad.

Just thinking that the grass will be greener in another country needs careful consideration and without sounding flippant, grass comes in a variety of species and so do people!

I know of many British greenkeepers who have nothing but good to say about their life on foreign soil but there are also some horror stories.

Be prepared as the days of importing and exporting skills are clearly with us.

It is increasingly important that employers in Britain continue to invest in their staff development and the most successful golf clubs in terms of business coincidentally have a competent Course Manager at the helm.

Equally if greenkeepers do not keep themselves updated on all issues relating to MANAGING the golf course – someone else will!

David may be contacted by email at: david@the-gtc.co.uk or tel: 01347 838640







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The AGCS/BIGGA Safety Management System TORO Student of the Year Competition

Anyone contacting the Education and Training Department during April would have realised that both Sami and I were not in the office for a good part of the month. Sami was recovering from surgery on her knee and I was researching the effect of seawater on fine sand in the Maldives writes Ken Richardson.



As I mentioned in the April edition of Greenkeeper International, the internet based Safety Management System is nearing completion and it should be available to all members during this month. You will find an information leaflet in this magazine and we will be distributing a 'getting started guide' in next month's magazine.

Many golf clubs already have very good safety management systems whereas some do not have any form of health and safety management. This SMS will enable golf clubs to implement a safety management system that will make their clubs better and safer places to work and they might even save money on insurance premiums.

The SMS is not a 'turn key' solution. Clubs will need to put in some effort to ensure that the System works for their club. Some clubs may not have anyone competent to implement the SMS and they will have to employ the services of a health and safety advisor or have a person or persons trained.

All employees of the club should be involved in implementing the SMS and should receive training in risk assessment and basic health and safety management.

The AGCS/BIGGA SMS contains a wide range of health and safety information, including example risk profiles for the Clubhouse, for the kitchens, for the Pro Shop, for the Golf Course, for greenkeeping activities and for the Maintenance Facility. Each Risk Profile is linked to example Risk Assessments that should help you assess risks at your golf club. Risk Profiles are also linked to detailed information on a wide range of hazards from Airborne Dust and Debris to Young People at Work.

The Risk Profiles and Risk Assessments have been developed by a team of Golf Course Managers, Golf Club Secretaries and Health and Safety Advisers to meet the needs of most golf clubs. However, clubs must ensure that all risks and hazards at their clubs are included in their Risk Profiles and in their Risk Assessments.



The deadline for entries to the TORO Student of the Year Competition is May 4. However, there is still time for training providers to nominate their

candidates. The Regional Finals will take place during the week commencing July 2, when a team of judges will select the eight national finalists. The National Final will take place on September 17 at BIGGA House.

For more details or for an application form please contact BIGGA House.



Mike Emptage, last year's Toro Student of the Year

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition



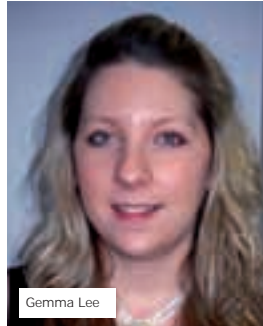
You should be receiving an application form for the 2007 Golf Environment Competition during May. We are able to continue this competition only with the generous support of our sponsors. Unfortunately, one of our 2006 sponsors, Course Care, have decided that they no longer wish to continue their sponsorship and we are, therefore, struggling to make the competition viable.

This competition has gained a reputation for encouraging golf clubs to use sound environmental management principles and to show the general public that golf helps the environment.

If there is anyone out there who would like to help make this competition a continuing success by helping with the sponsorship for 2007, please contact Sami or me as soon as possible.

A SAD GOODBYE

Unfortunately Membership Services Assistant, Gemma Lee, has decided to leave BIGGA for Portakabin in York, where she will be working in Human Resources. She will be missed in the Membership Department and I am sure you will all miss her too as she has proved to be an irreplaceable part of the BIGGA team.



Gemma Lee

I would like to thank Gemma for all the help she has given me over the past few months and wish her all the best in her new job.

Brad Anderson, who normally works on reception, will be filling in for Gemma for the time being.

Vanessa Depré



Brad Anderson

RINGING RENEWALS

If you would like a quick renewal you can give us a ring and renew over the phone with your credit/debit card.



COMPETITION UPDATE

You may remember that last month I mentioned a competition we won concerning membership. This is what the Membership Development Awards said about BIGGA:

Retention Award – Runner Up

British and International Golf Greenkeepers' Association (BIGGA)

// The entry shows BIGGA as an association that is genuinely concerned for its members and understands what they want from their organisation.

They took a series of measures to improve renewals to increase retention.

The key highlights of the BIGGA campaign:

- The campaign was research driven.
- Various hurdles were identified and removed to make it easier to respond, including removing the need for Greenkeepers to stamp the name of their golf course on the renewal form, instant renewal of all those members on the direct debit scheme and the introduction of a new one instalment payment option.
- It was a people oriented campaign; renewal reminders were written in a friendly tone
- They identified unemployed members as vulnerable, and made special provision to help them. This gives the Association a caring image of an organisation whose members matter.
- They made good use of a striking creative theme and image on the outer envelope and letterhead.
- To promote membership benefits, the renewals pack was revised and included benefit sheets and a brochure, and the website was updated with more information on member benefits.

//

NEW MEMBERS

BIGGA welcomes the following new members this month:

SCOTTISH REGION

Thomas Adams, Central
Russell Aird, West
Kenneth Ambrose, West
Fraser Anderson, East
David Baird, Ayrshire
Kieran Coll, Central
Graham Copland, Central
Jamie Duncan, Ayrshire
Sue Glen, East
Jack Glen, West
Alan Jack, West
Gary Kilday, Central
Brian Logue, West
Andrew Marshall, West
Clark Mccarron, West
Raymond Perrins, Central
George Taggart, Ayrshire

Paul Hewitt, East Anglia
Ashleigh Latter, East Anglia
Daniel Norsworthy, Surrey
Jonathan Novis, Sussex
Clive Smith, Surrey

SOUTH WEST & WALES

Thomas Baker, South Coast
Alan Benson, Devon & Cornwall
Steven Bishop, South West
Jason Chidley, Devon & Cornwall
Vincent Harris, South Wales
Adam Mitchell, Devon & Cornwall
Lauchlan Morrison, South Coast
William Paull, Devon & Cornwall
Darren Pearce, South Coast
David Perkins, South Coast
Luke Pound, South West
Peter Williams, South West

INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS

Brian Barnes, N Ireland
Steen Nic Olsen, Denmark
Manfred Sakowski, Germany
Matthias Stumm, Germany
Doug Meyer, Canada

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Peter Easton, Central Scotland
Paul Rolfe, Midland
Ian Hugglestone, South West

CORPORATE MEMBERS

David Howells, North West
Mark Hunt, East Midlands
Iain Richardson, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
James Watson, Surrey

E & D FUND

Simon Barnaby, South East
Andrew Janman, Devon & Cornwall

NORTHERN REGION

Stephen Gardner, Northern
Matthew Hollgh, North West
Charles Land, North Wales
Kerry Shotton, North East
James Talbot, North West
Daniel Tench, North West
Christopher Westwood, North West

MIDLAND REGION

Roger Jennings, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
John Meade, Midland
Christopher Nunn, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Matthew Turner, Midland
Sebastian Welsh, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Luke Wilson, East Midland
Craig Wyatt, East Midland

SOUTH EAST

Decebal Ahdrohic, Surrey
Neil Baker, Surrey
Stuart Bedford, Surrey
Tim Buckley, Surrey
Richard Buick, Sussex
Jimmy Butler, Surrey
Simon Campbell, Surrey



Lee Dunn, Director of MYPEC, visited BIGGA HQ to present Sales Manager, Rosie Hancher and Membership Services Assistant, Gemma Lee, with the departments Runner-Up award.



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DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

On February 21, I was invited to Saint James Palace by the Duke of Edinburgh to be presented with my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. I dressed in my smartest clothes and my BIGGA tie and headed off for the railway station.

When I arrived at St James' I could see lots of people, all very smartly dressed and many of the ladies wearing hats waiting outside. Police horses on guard were also present.

Everything was very well organised, people were directed to different entrances according to their ticket colour. Security was very strict and you were required to produce two forms of identification, one of which had to be photo ID. Inside, everywhere was very plush and grand, deep pile carpets, oil paintings and lots of gold trimmings.

There was a band playing and we found our way to the State Room. Award winners sat on chairs to the left of the long high-ceiling room, and the one guest allowed per person sat opposite them to the right. There were a number of important dignitaries and celebrities present, speeches and then Bill Turnbull, the BBC breakfast presenter, presented us with our awards.

The Duke of Edinburgh walked through the room talking to people. He was taller than I'd expected and I thought he looked very fit and well for a man of his age. He seemed interested in people and liked to laugh. He did say, "I expect you are all going on to University" I thought certainly NOT me! The Duke asked me "Where did you go for your expedition?" I answered "The Pyrenees Mountains." Then he asked what the weather had been like. I said, "The weather in the mountains can change very quickly and we experienced the most violent storm I had ever seen while we were camping high in the mountains and I thought the tent might blow away." He then moved on.

I really enjoyed the experience and shall always remember the day as it is so different from what I usually do every day.

Stephen Burroughs
Stock Brook Manor Golf Club



A SAD GOODBYE

Hi, my name is James McCormack and I am the Head Greenkeeper at Kirriemuir Golf Club.

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the death of Mr William Ritchie, who, for over 30 years was Head Greenkeeper at Kirriemuir GC.

Willie was a past winner of the Scottish Greenkeeper of the Year Award in 1969 which was then sponsored by Fisons.

Willie looked after Kirriemuir GC from the end of Second World War until his retirement.

He was a good golfer with a handicap of three and was a past club champion of Kirriemuir on several occasions, as well as a former Club Captain and Match and Competition Secretary.

He attended greenkeeper outings and one or two greenkeepers will have a few stories to tell about Willie as he was not prone to a dram or two.

When I got the job at Kirriemuir he was still golfing at that time and was always willing to give any advice or encouragement, his favourite saying was remember you have 500 greenkeepers and one golfer and the golfer, that is you.

Thank You
James McCormack

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!


Send to:

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



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IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN...

By Roger Davey

It's time to ensure that the irrigation system is ready for the next six months, and to take into account all associated aspects of its operation!

Water Source/Supply

The source/supply of water can be from either mains water supply, winter storage reservoir, summer borehole supply or emergency top-up (borehole), grey water, or treated sewage effluent.

Whatever the source, the end user must ensure that the supply is adequate and provides enough water for the areas in question. Is it also licensed and legal? Is it regularly tested for pH, N, P, K and trace elements? Is it tested for associated disease risks – ie, Weils disease/Legionella? (The risk, although slight, is obvious; warming water in pipelines or tanks breeding germs ready for atomisation and drift in front of the paying public.)

The storage areas must be adequately signed, be capable of holding the required volume of water, and be safe in its operation within the irrigation system. This all may sound obvious. But the writer has witnessed – prior to alerting the gentleman in question – undiluted hydrochloric acid being poured into a reservoir by someone standing on a plank of wood across two milk crates!

Pumping Stations

The pump station is the heart of the system and incorrectly configured or maintained it's a death trap. Too low a flow and the sprinklers are ineffective, too low a pressure and the sprinklers are ineffective, too high a pressure (without pressure regulation in place) and the sprinklers are ineffective.

What else does the Greenkeeper come near to that operates usually at 8.0 bar pressure (80 metres), and relies on high-voltage power to work correctly? - Water, electricity and pressure – a lethal combination.

The pump station must be adequately signed, the pressure vessel safe to use/certified, a risk assessment be in place, and adequate segregation provided (8.0 bar pressure will blow a valve stem 240 feet into the air before coming down!). Therefore leaking or weeping pumps, slippery floors, poorly earthed pumps, and inadequately signed pumphouses all need to be addressed before we even look into the pump duty!

Underground Mainline

Usually manufactured from UPVC and jointed every six metres, or possibly a more modern system which should



Poor pressure and droplet distribution

have Medium Density or High Performance polyethylene as the mainline piping materials.

UPVC is prone to age deterioration, typically a system over approximately 20 to 25 years old (some less than this) will suffer from leakage, which reduces pressure and reduces sprinkler performance, as well as wasting water and reducing efficiency of usage.

Underground pipelines must be sized to take into account required water flows and pressures at the sprinkler: too small a pipeline size creates a higher velocity, more friction loss, more water hammer, more joint damage and less water/pressure at the sprinkler.

To operate sprinklers effectively, friction loss and static differences have to be calculated to understand the ability of the pump to deliver the required flow and pressure at the point required.



A wet pumphouse floor needs addressing



Count on it.

Solenoid Valve Assemblies and Solenoid Valves

Solenoid valves should be installed within assemblies and chambers that allow easy access, are clean/free of debris, and enable manual operation of the system if required.

Many valve assemblies within ageing irrigation systems are incorrectly installed, within poorly installed chambers, with products that are prone to failure as they age-harden and corrode.

Solenoid valves should be pressure-regulating in operation, allowing the correct downstream pressure into the sprinklers preventing over-pressurisation of the droplet and subsequent wind drift. Poorly installed chambers, cracked lids, leaking or weeping or corroded valve assemblies all create a health and safety risk to both the operator and golfer, and should be repaired or replaced as soon as possible.



Poorly configured assembly with poor cable joints.

Sprinklers

All sprinklers (greens, tees, approaches, fairways) should be regularly inspected for correct operation – ie, pop-up action, nozzle performance/pressure, action in operation, radius of throw and correct retraction.

For sprinklers to achieve uniform application they must be evenly spaced, throw at least head-to-head, and be set correctly within the turf. Once this is achieved, accurate precipitation rates, and run times, can be calculated which will improve water use and efficiency and provide a more consistent turf area.

Sprinkler models and mode of operation will also play a huge part in uniformity and reliability. For example, modern

sprinklers have nozzles and gear-drive units designed to higher tolerances, thus providing much higher uniformity across the area of coverage. Whereas other older sprinklers lose efficiency, have non-uniform rotation speeds, and worn nozzles. Liken the sprinkler to an engine, the older it is, the more likely it is to be inefficient, underpowered and to lose reliability.

Upgrading just the sprinkler is never the full answer as the spacing and flow to the units is as crucial as the sprinkler itself. However a faulty sprinkler that does not rotate is no good to man nor beast! While on the subject of servicing sprinklers, do you have a clearly defined staff risk assessment?!

Control System

How much water do you apply to your green/tee/fairway – eight minutes, 10 when it's really hot! Rubbish! It's millimetres we need to calculate in, millimetres per sq m per day. And it can be done (remember 1cu m of water is 220 gallons).

So, how much water do you want to apply to your green/tee/fairway today – 3mm per sq m? I have calculated the daily evapotranspiration rate, measured the sprinkler head and row spacing and checked the nozzle data, and I therefore need to run the station/sprinkler for six minutes...now that's better, we can put on exactly the amount required, can prove our efficiency and conserve water. Suddenly our abstraction licence re-application looks favourable!

An up-to-date, fully-functioning PC-based control system will allow us to do this if properly configured and used correctly – you only get out that which you put in!

Other elements associated with the control system operation, apart from programming, are usually cable-jointing and reliability. Cables will only provide reliable, trouble-free operation if jointed/installed correctly (cable as approved by the manufacturer and set into the ground correctly – ie, if in rock, sand/selected backfill used), with approved cable joints and proper jointing techniques.

And then...

Well, if all that works you are onto a winner. If not, it's time to plan the upgrade and concentrate on becoming an efficient and conscientious user of water. A planned, phased upgrade need not cost a fortune and can be undertaken over a period of years, using a design blueprint from which to work.

Designing an irrigation system is much like designing a house: get the final objective in mind – ie, greens, tee, approach irrigation – and ensure that phase one (the foundations) is installed correctly. That is, size the mainline and control system/pump station so that each subsequent phase can be added as required.

Roger Davey is Managing Director of Irritech Limited – independent irrigation consultants.

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Course Feature

Rejuvenated Felixstowe

Scott MacCallum travelled to East Anglia to visit an old club with some new and fresh thinking.



An area of gorse which has taken well in from of the SSSI site

Felixstowe Ferry is the fifth oldest golf club in England and boasts a history befitting a club of that longevity. However, if you were to ask members today they would probably be more proud of their achievements over the last three and a half years than much of what has gone on before.

In that short period in the club's history the improvement in the presentation and grass quality has been marked, while three new holes, designed by Martin Hawtree, have added something more to the course.

"I was employed in the April and we started work on the new holes in the November so it was a case of being straight in at the deep end," said Course Manager, John Houston.

"At the interview it was mentioned that there was a possibility of it happening and I said it would be great to be involved."

With the hole construction work on the horizon – coastal erosion and health and safety issues were the reasons the new holes were

required – John and his team got to grips with the condition and presentation of the course.

"When I arrived the greens left a lot to be desired – they were soft, compacted and had the wrong species of grass in them, including rye, and the ball just didn't run very well – while the fairways were just straight up and down," said John, who by coincidence also has England's oldest club, Royal Blackheath, on his CV.

A programme of intense aeration, slit tining, micro tining, hollow tining and vertidrainage was introduced in a bid to reduce the compaction and thatch, while wetting agents were applied.

"I see aeration as the key to success. We micro tined every three weeks and vertidrainage up to five to six times a year and this went on for two and a half years at this level of intensity. We applied 200 tonnes of Fen Dressing 80-20 mix to the greens before spring and autumn on the greens. Members put up with it because they could see the greens improving month on month," said John, who took over from a

“ ...he dug up what looked suspiciously like a landmine...

It was a genuine “Don’t panic!” moment ”

The boulders brought in from Norway to act as coastal defences



fine old greenkeeper, George Newson, who along with greenkeeper Paul Bolton, who retired recently, each had over 40 years service at the club.

The smooth hand over from George to John was complete when John had a hole-in-one at George’s retiral golf day.

“With salt tolerance a real requirement in the East Anglian area, I felt we needed something other than the fescue with which they had been overseeding before I arrived. I thought this was just throwing money away as the soil structure was poor and there was no root development in the greens,” explained John, who replaced the Fescue overseeding programme with that of bent and brought in Headland to provide soil analysis and produce a programme to help improve matters.

“I am now using Rigby Taylor R1 and R1 01 with all seed treated for salt tolerance,” said John, who will be 50 this month.

At the same time John has added his own touches to the fairways and rough, using the golfing knowledge which has carried him to playing success at several of his previous courses – Junior Champion at Ratho Park twice, the village where he was born; Club Champion at Dorking twice, once breaking the course record twice in the same day with rounds of 66 and 65; Club Champion at Dale Hill twice and winner of the Artisan’s Scratch Medal at Royal Blackheath two years running.

“I put some shape into the fairways and in doing so brought in the rough with one and a half inch and three inch cuts. The members loved having shaped fairways instead of straight ones. It started to look like a golf course,” said John, who works closely with Tim Lodge, who advises on agronomic issues.

John used his previous experience of working with Martin Hawtree at Royal Blackheath to persuade him to take on the re-design work. The plans were drawn up but with consultation required with, among others, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the Major of Felixstowe, it was a drawn out process. However with everyone’s concern satisfied work began on the holes – moving and directing holes away from the sea wall – with the construction work being carried out jointly by John Greasley, and the Felixstowe green staff to keep costs down.

“The Greasley’s team did the mounding on the right of the 15th hole and we did the ones between 14 and 15. We all did the turfing while we built the 16th tee ourselves. All the staff enjoyed the experience.”

The importance of moving the holes away from the sea wall and the still ever present danger that coastal erosion presents showed itself late last year when the wall almost breached – the new holes only being saved when the night tide turned with only a few inches to spare.

“I was getting worried about the new holes and thinking about the potential salt damage but the very next day the authorities pushed the shingle up the beach and then, over a period of around five months some huge boulders imported



Some of the Felixstowe team with Captain Mick Dabbs second from the right and John Houston extreme right

from Norway, were put in place,” said John, who added that in 1953 over 100 people drowned in Felixstowe when the area was flooded.

With the new holes proving a great success, John felt there was one small area which still needed a little refinement and Martin was brought back in to take a look.

“Looking down the course I thought a new mound might just help define the 14th hole a little better but I would never have gone ahead without consulting with the professional architect first. Martin came in, agreed, and the mound was added a few weeks ago.”

Another more recent refinement was to deepen the three fairway bunkers on the 15th so that they could be seen from the tee. The work on these brought a little excitement to the club earlier last month for John and Deputy Course Manager, Glenn Rayfield.

“Glenn was using the digger on the second bunker up on the right when he dug up what looked suspiciously like a landmine. It came up in the bucket and placed in the trailer having come from about three metres down.”

It was a genuine “Don’t panic!” moment but Glenn was more impressed than worried as his ambition always had been to find one, while John, having convinced himself that it was indeed a mine, phoned Club Manager, Richard Tibbs, who called in the police.

“They arrived within five minutes and one of them, who

knew about such things, told us not to go too close to it. A bomb disposal team then arrived and after we had cleared the course of golfers the team moved the mine onto the beach and there they blew it up. It made one hell of a bang,” recalled John.

An interesting recent innovation is a monthly 7.30am informal greens committee meeting, in addition to the regular meetings, which enables a much more hands-on approach to the role and, being a morning, allows the committee to meet on the course itself if necessary.

The whole course is a nature lover’s idea of heaven and bird watchers can often be seen spying on the rare species which drop in on the course on their migratory paths.

“It has been recorded that we have 11 different species of butterfly and 147 species of bird, including the skylark which are generally declining in numbers, while we also have otters, water voles, slow worms and lizards. We have a SSSI site at the bottom of the course, wild orchids at the back of the 9th hole the Kingsfeet course as well as Giant Hogweed and we work extremely closely with Peter Ling, of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust to ensure this is maintained and protected.

Among the projects, the Trust and the Club - which won best Newcomer in the 2004 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition - have worked on cutting back some of the long lank grass which bordered the road which cuts through the course, back to three inches to reduced its fertility.

"We collected the clippings and scarify and once we'd done that two or three times it came back looking nice and wispy just as the Trust would want it and exactly what we would want for a links course. It shows that golf is compatible with wildlife and wildlife is compatible with golf," said John, who added that it was an expensive process but that they received funding from the Trust.

John was a member of the 2006 BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard's, which attended the GCSAA Show, in Atlanta, and the trip left a lasting impression on him having visited some of the finest courses America has to offer.

"I'd like to thank BIGGA and Bernhards for the trip. We visited East Lakes and the Atlanta Athletic Club and since I've become friendly with Ken Magnum, the Atlanta Athletic Club Superintendent. Ken played Felixstowe Ferry in a Ransomes tournament many years ago and is keen to play next time he visits the UK. He was also kind enough recently to send me a flag signed by David Toms, from when he won the USPGA Championship at Atlanta Athletic Club a few years ago."

If East Lakes and Atlanta Athletic Club both have impeccable golfing pedigrees, through their connection with Bobby Jones, Felixstowe Ferry has its own claim to fame. Willie Fernie was the Club Professional when he won the 1883 Open Championship, while another Club Professional, Bob Martin was also an Open Champion. The Rt Honourable A.J. Balfour was Captain of the Club in 1889 before taking on the job of Prime Minister in 1902, while that doyen of Golf Writers, Bernard Darwin, was made an Honorary Member in 1957.

Over 10 years ago the greenkeeping staff built a new nine holes which now operates as a successful and lucrative pay-and-play course.

"It was funded for by the VAT money and was the club's way of giving something to the community," said Glenn, who'd joined the club just before the work began.

"It took us two and a half years to build but was great experience for the team and we all learned a lot."

It is all the more commendable for a club with such a history that in the 21st century it is so go-ahead.

Mick Dabbs became Club Captain at the end of March and he is keen to ensure the club moves forward and takes advantage of the quality course John and his team have produced.

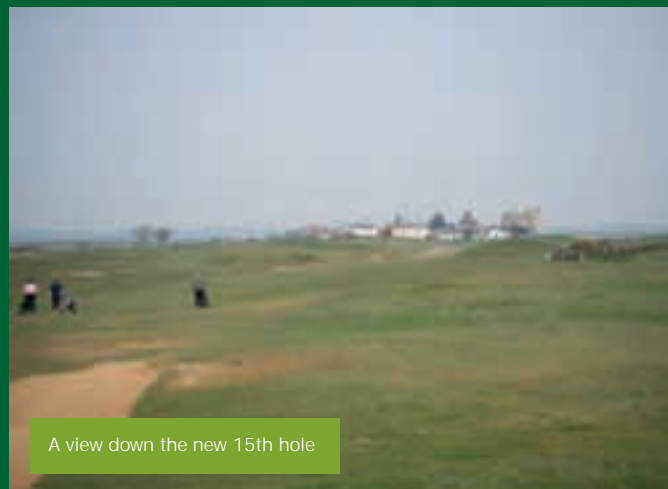
"We employed John four years ago and he asked for five years to get it right but within three and a half we have got one of the best courses in East Anglia. It is in fantastic condition," said Mick, who got some excellent publicity for the club by turning up at his "Driving in" ceremony with a 10 foot long driver, securing publicity in all the local papers.

"We have accommodation at the Club and it is important that we use the quality of the course to bring more people to Felixstowe Ferry and maximise our revenue. We're also working to attract people living further than 45 miles away to join us as a second club."

Mick explained that he was the third businessman in a row to become Club Captain and that the knowledge of health and safety, personnel, marketing and finance had been a huge benefit to the club.

"It's like running a £1 million company for a year. Courses need money to survive and there is a lot of competition."

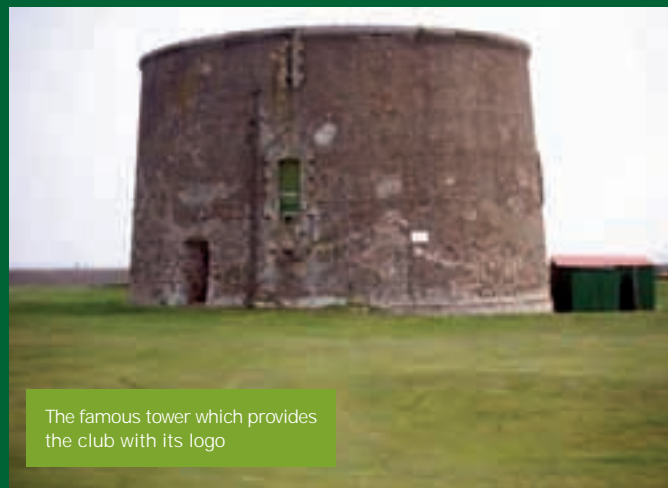
There is a desire at Felixstowe to keep on improving and developing, and you can be sure that despite its age the best years are still ahead of it.



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One man went to mow!

By Peter Todd

How you mow your tees and surrounds depends on many factors: the terrain, the desired finish, obstructions, tournaments – the list is endless. And can the same mowers be used for both tasks? In this article Peter Todd, Golf Courses Manager at The London Golf Club, near Brands Hatch, Kent, talks about how he is using a range of mowers to cut both tees and surrounds on his two 18-hole courses and the factors involved.

Tees mowing is carried out here using both Toro Greensmaster 1000 pedestrian mowers and Greensmaster 3250-D, 8-blade ride-on triples. Use of triples in the growing season frees up valuable time that can be used on other essential tasks at a time of year when the advantages of using a triple tend to outweigh the disadvantages. Tees mowing of 18 holes takes approximately seven man-hours with a triple, or twice that with a pedestrian machine. The saving can be in the region of 600 hours a season on the 36 holes.

The use of walk-behind tees mowers is reserved for tournaments and out of season, when cutting conditions are more difficult. This minimises the stress and damage that can occur when using triples, particularly out of season, when thinner and slower growing swards are unlikely to recover quickly from tyre marking, for instance.

Steeper slopes where tees are shelved into hillsides and built up on mounds can also make triple cutting in adverse conditions difficult. The ease with which tight turns in restricted spaces using walk behind mowers can be achieved, makes this method more suitable and allows the operator to avoid the slope that triples would need as space to turn on.

Triples equipped with three-wheel drive are necessary on our steeply undulating site, improving traction particularly on slippery morning dew. The use of treaded turf tyres can also be used to improve traction as an alternative to slicks but operators need to

carry out turns with added care to avoid marking. Triples fitted with ROPS is also a must in our situation and is an important consideration before selecting equipment as not all manufacturers, like Toro, offer these as a CE certified option.

The tees triple also doubles up as an approach mower with a cutting frequency of twice a week on both surfaces, maximising the use of the machine. Heights of cut range from 10 to 13mm, summer to winter. Tee sizes vary from small tournament tees of 45sq m to combined tees of 280sq m. Striping with the narrower width of a pedestrian mower scales much better with the small tees than a triple. In addition, there are more options on cutting directions due to their ease of turning. Overall presentation and definition is enhanced when using pedestrian mowers.

Course furniture is kept low profile and to a minimum to make maintenance operations more efficient and to avoid the cluttered look. The use of granite distance markers, set level in the grass with the tee surface, allows the mowers to cut straight over the top and requires little maintenance. Ball washers are generally placed on the edge of the long native grass areas adjacent to the mown tee surrounds. Golfers can easily access them and few need moving for mowing. For tournaments, the addition of advertising boards, and so on, placed very close to tees for TV, makes walk-behind mowing the only option, as well as for presentation reasons.

For us, surround cutting starts with one width of a Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder triple, cut as a ring around each tee at 30mm. This is mown in the opposite direction to the clean-up cut on the tee itself, giving greater definition to shapes. Apart from this ring, the rest of the tee surrounds on the two courses are mown and presented differently.

The Nicklaus Signature course has long, large carries that blend seamlessly into the tee surrounds. These areas are cut using a Toro Groundsmaster 4000-D bat wing rotary at 60 to 80mm. In contrast, Ron Kirby's International course which has tall native grass roughs, carries with grass pathways cut through from the tees. These, together with the tee surrounds, are cut using the Toro Sidewinder triple.

Striped cutting in alternating directions produces chequered-patterned tees with surrounds mown in one direction as a contrast. Triple-cut striped tees do not present as well as those mown with a pedestrian due to the limitations of cutting directions and the cut width only allowing a few number of stripes on small and narrow tees.

Cutting directions of clean-up cuts – ie clockwise or anti-clockwise – are displayed on work boards for the staff to follow and alternated on a regular basis to avoid washboarding. The nature of the tee design is predominantly flowing curved outlines with rounded and kidney shapes. Preserving the perimeter shape of tees is easier to achieve using pedestrian machines with much greater accuracy staying on line, achieved by operators than with the use of triples. In time this can easily lead to loss of tee shapes and their size. Periodically it's worth reviewing these to ensure tees are not allowed to creep in or out in this way and temporarily re-mark outlines to re-establish the perimeters.

We like to offer players two distinctly different golfing experiences on both our courses. The flexibility of our mowers allows us to do just that on all areas of the course, not just on tees and surrounds, to use the machinery which is most appropriate for the prevailing conditions and also the level of presentation required, such as for tournaments or club events.



Above: Golf Courses Manager at The London Golf Club, Peter Todd

Opposite page: The Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder is used to cut a single ring around each tee.

Below: A Greensmaster 3250-D is used to cut tees at the start of the season.





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Count on it.

Making Tracks

Scott MacCallum meets Architect, Jonathan Gaunt, to find out more about building buggy tracks.

Thirty years ago the golfing dream was to head off to Portugal, Spain, or if you were feeling flush, the Carolinas, for a week of golf with a difference. The main difference being the weather and the fact that you'd invariably be wearing shorts – matched, possibly, with long socks, you'd be playing from between palm trees and, of course, you'd be playing out of a buggy.

Invariably buggy golf was perceived to be the preserve of holiday making players, but since then more and more clubs in the UK have identified buggies as a potential lucrative money earner and installed fleets. The need for buggy tracks, therefore, has become much more pressing, not just for new golf developments, but also for existing clubs hoping to benefit from increased revenue.

But there is more to designing a buggy track than you might at first believe. For example you don't want to ruin your signature hole with a two metre wide strip of concrete slicing right through the middle of it, while you can't presume the buggy will be the motorised equivalent of a mountain goat and climb to the top of the club's infamous Cardiac Hill.

One man who has spent more time than most considering the issue of buggy tracks for golf clubs old and new, is renowned Golf Course Architect, Jonathan Gaunt, a man who is keen to ensure that a track doesn't dominate the golf course.

"The buggy track should be secondary to the design of the course but it is an opportunity to make money for a golf club and in that regard they are now a necessary evil," he explained, adding that it was important to do the job correctly to avoid spoiling the visual and playing experience for the golfer.

"A mistake which is so often made the world over is to have the buggy track so close to the fairway that it actually influences play. People will play a shot and find the ball bouncing off a concrete or a tarmac road and into real trouble," explained Jonathan, who now operates as Gaunt Golf Design Ltd from a superb studio in Bakewell, Derbyshire.

"As it is you've got to think carefully about the playability of the hole, the relationship with the buggy track and how it allows you to get people around the golf course without creating enormous



walks from the buggy track to where your ball lands." Jonathan explained that he didn't think buggies worked as a concept without buggy paths.

"Many clubs have perhaps realised that there was money to be made from buggies and just got them without thinking of the need for a track, and that is wrong.

"The projects we are working on now are on courses that are expected to be in play 365 days a year and the only way you can achieve that is to put in a good drainage system, That is not conducive to buggies on the fairway causing compaction," he said, adding that it jarred with him to see tyre marks running down the middle of a fairway.

"The way we design a buggy track is to hide them in among fairway mounding, hollows or planting.

"It's a matter of standing on the tee and looking down the fairway and if you've designed the buggy track correctly you shouldn't be able to see it too obviously," said Jonathan, adding that while that was the ideal there were occasions where it was impossible to achieve that.

"Sometimes you've got no option. For example, if you've got a terraced fairway on the side of a mountain you have to put the track where you can."

As for occasions where there is no option but to cross the hole with the track there is a right way and a wrong way to do it.

"You don't want to have a crossing point too close to the front of the green. It is much better 100 yards back, but better still for it to be in the carry area closer to the tee."

The general rule of thumb for a golf course architect is that you attempt to design a course to play clockwise so the out of bounds



is generally to the left as more often than not a right handed golfer will slice. With that in mind, generally the buggy track should be on the right side of the fairway so golfers don't have too far to walk to their balls.

While the ideal way of providing buggy track facilities is to build them at the same time as building the golf course existing courses can add them at a later date as well. But again mistakes are made.

"I know of some clubs which have just employed a contractor with a digger and said, 'There's the 1st tee. Off you go.' That's never going to be a good idea. If you sent someone out with a digger you're probably adding 10%-20% more pathway than you would need if you'd designed it beforehand because you wouldn't be finding the most efficient route around the course. For example, you might discover later that the best route is 20 metres further away than you thought as by doing that you would be avoiding some high ground or you could make the path solve a drainage problem at the same time."



The answer, as with most things, is preparation and planning.

"Before you start you want to have a good survey of the course. You want to know what land is available. You want to know where the boundaries are. You need to know where the greens, tees, fairways, bunkers, rough, and, in particular, woodland are, so you can route your track through them and away from the playing area. How do you achieve that?"

"Basically we design something on a computer which creates a 3D model of the golf course. It's like a video which allows you to look at every single hole and see how the buggy track is going to fit into the landscape. If it's a little too high in places you can find a way to drop it behind a mound or through a hollow." Another issue which a well planned survey will reveal is that of gradient.

"I was involved with a new course at Zagaleta, in Spain, an exclusive members club, which in places rose from 170 metres above sea level to 340 metres and we had to get from one end of the course to another in a buggy," said Jonathan, who designed the course with his former partner, Steve Marnoch.

"In order to make the buggy path work, the buggy track was over 10,000 metres long to cover the 6,000 metre course," said Jonathan

"It was like one of those Italian or French Riviera roads with long sweeping curves, but that was the only safe way to do it. It was a massive engineering job."

Jonathan and his team operate to a prescribed safety margin for gradient of no steeper than one metre rise or fall in eight. Buggies can be extremely dangerous if they are allowed to pick up too much speed an accidents on golf courses which have gradients steeper than one in eight are all too common place.

Drainage and the collection of water is an ever more important issue at golf clubs and buggy tracks can actually help in this regard.

"We design drainage systems where we collect every single drop of water that falls on the site and flow it back into a reservoir to supply the irrigation system. The buggy track can work to our benefit because if we direct our drainage trenches or our pipe work along the buggy track they become collection opportunities in the same way as a roof or a car park," he explained, adding that they were doing just that on a four hole extension they are carrying out at Westerwood Golf Club, near Cumbernauld, in Scotland.

Despite being an expert in the provision of buggy tracks, Jonathan is not a huge advocate of buggy golf.

"If I'm honest I'm a traditionalist and much prefer to carry my bag than use a buggy. You don't really get warmed up, or into a rhythm when sitting in the cab of a buggy and you don't get to experience a course as the designer intended if you play from a buggy and that's quite sad really," explained Jonathan, who also sees the financial benefits which an investment in a quality track



could bring.

"A buggy track will pay for itself extremely quickly. Some clubs build the hire of a buggy into their green fee and with clubs charging £15 to £25 for buggy hire it will pay for itself quickly even if a complete track can cost anything from £50,000 to £350,000, dependant on site conditions."

However there is inevitably a conflict whenever buggy golf and the need for paths is involved – you don't want golfers to finish up too far away from their ball while at the same time you don't want a path to be too close to playing areas.

There are other benefits to a track not least allowing the greenkeeping staff quick and easy access without disturbing the playing areas.

"That's particularly important on a new course at grow-in stage. A track can come within 10 metres of a green and the greenkeeper can drive to it on a soil covered site without causing any damage.

"Also a track on a new course means that the developer can drive potential members round the course and show them the stand out holes, without causing damage to the course or visitors' clothing!"

Cutting corners is also to be avoided.

"Tracks should be complete wherever possible, as non tarmac or concrete areas create extremely heavy wear at the funnel points where the buggies join or leave the track and this usual tends to be near the green."

The advice is therefore, on a new build, to think about the track as part of the overall design of the golf course, while on existing courses always commission a survey to ensure that the most efficient, least obtrusive route is adopted.



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HOBBIES

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



Name: Tony Lashmar
Club: Highgate Golf Club
Age: 32
Hobbies: Marathon running

Tony came to work at Highgate GC as an Assistant Greenkeeper from a local scheme in Highgate Village called the Harington Scheme, in January 1995. The scheme was set up to provide

training to students with severe learning or physical disabilities. Tony is now employed four days a week at the club - part funded by Remploy.

Tony has run 20 marathons in total including Paris, Berlin, New York and London.

In the year 2000 he ran the Paris marathon as a late entrant and one week later ran the London marathon (52 miles in total.)

Last November he ran in the New York marathon and ran his quickest ever time of 2hrs 38mins placing him in 109th position out of over 30,000 entrants. He was running on behalf of the British Airways Team and received a medal from them at a presentation held in New York as the fastest team member.

His slowest time ever was 3hrs 51mins. When training for marathons he will run approximately one hundred miles a week and it is not unusual for him to run into work from his home in the Isle of Dogs which is 13 miles away, and still be on time.

He entered this year's London marathon which took place on Sunday, April 22 and finished in the top 90, with a time of 2hrs 36mins and 53secs to be exact!

He has run many times for charities to raise money for local churches, the Harington Scheme and for a school for disabled children in London.

He is a member of, and represents Victoria Park Harriers which is based in Hackney, London.

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DISRUPTION VERSUS REVENUE: That Old Chestnut

By Alistair Beggs

In today's commercial world, golf clubs increasingly have to compete with one another and are very conscious of the need to impress. The demands of members and green fee payers are significant and the instant gratification society in which we live demands excellence in every quarter. The requirements of the user cover every aspect of club life but nowhere are they more important than on the course itself. Members rarely have any interest in the day-to-day workings of course management yet they expect the course to be perfect, regardless of extraneous circumstances.

At the heart of most clubs' objectives is the desire to keep the course open and playable on a year-round basis. If this can be achieved, it not only means that the members and their guests can enjoy the facility more regularly, but it also means that other revenue generating income streams are optimised as well. The appropriate management of the course is therefore the single most important factor to longer-term success. Unfortunately, with no two sites the same and no two years the same on a course, there is no successful universal blueprint for every club. However, there are fundamental principles, which if followed, provide clubs with a better opportunity of achieving success.

The single most controversial aspect of greens maintenance every year is the timing of sometimes disruptive work such as verti-draining, hollow coring, top dressing, etc. The perception of most golfers is that these treatments are always carried out when the greens are at their best, destroying the surfaces and the enjoyment of the user. There is little appreciation or understanding for the need to do the work at a given time if the treatments are to be successful. For example, top dressing can't be applied and spread in wet weather and can only be applied to growing turf. Verti-draining requirements vary enormously from site to site and depend upon levels of compaction and soil type. However, verti-drains are best employed when soils are no more than moist and certainly not when they are very wet. Too many clubs perceive this unit as a panacea and often use it inappropriately with disastrous consequences. For compaction relief, there are now other alternative techniques to consider alongside or instead of verti-draining. Tools such as the Earthquaker, ShatterMaster or equivalent are worth considering - in some circumstances they may prove to be most appropriate. Hollow coring should only be carried out in response to a specific problem and great care is needed with the timing of this operation in all its forms.

The reality is that most of these treatments, and others periodically undertaken by greenkeepers, are not too disruptive provided the user accepts the work is best done at the correct time. Some clubs have seen the light and the most successful ones do the work at the correct time, always deciding which treatments are necessary and when to undertake them well in advance. Appropriate communication between green and competitions personnel means that the needs of all are met without any aspect being compromised. How this compromise is achieved is up to individual clubs – sometimes aeration coincides with members' holidays or lulls in competition activity, others set aside specific weeks in advance so that members are forewarned. A



Verti-Drain



flexible approach is essential because the weather does not always play ball.

Sadly, at many clubs the pivotal maintenance practices so essential to the long-term health of the course, are not carried out for fear of prejudicing play and therefore income. Instead, they are delayed and often carried out at inappropriate times with poor results, poor recovery times and prolonged misery. The treatments themselves are then blamed for causing chaos when, in truth, this is rarely the case. At one club of my acquaintance verti-draining and top dressing works originally timed for late August were delayed until November – This, despite contrary advice and the better judgement of the greenkeeper! The work proceeded and was followed by heavy rain and cool temperatures. Fusarium caused chaos under top dressing that lay on the putting surfaces and destroyed 50% of the turf on some of the greens. They did not recover until late June the following year! This debacle, which should have been avoided, resulted in direct costs to the club in terms of fungicides, etc. but far more harm was done to the reputation of the club and its greens. Members departed for smoother pastures and society income went elsewhere. Greenkeeping mistakes can be very expensive and can linger for a long time! Personal agendas must not be allowed to cloud judgements and a good man who knows his site is ignored at your peril.

With modern equipment, many maintenance treatments are less disruptive than they were and can often be carried out with minimal disturbance to the course.

Golf courses will always have to be aerated and top-dressed whether Mr or Mrs User likes it or not. There is clear scientific evidence that shows that heavily played soil needs aeration to support a healthy wear and drought tolerant plant community, and pretending this is not necessary is the road to ruin! Too many have taken this route and regretted it. Far better to openly discuss what is required, plan and timetable its implementation and enjoy the benefits. There will be some minor disturbance in the short term but this does not compare with the misery you will suffer if it is poorly planned or worse ignored altogether.

Maximising revenue is about good greenkeeping, knowing the site and the prevailing weather patterns, being aware of the available remedies to overcome the problems you have, planning and discussing maintenance procedures well in advance and executing the work in a professional manner at the right time with the right equipment. There is nothing to fear because your neighbours (at least those you should be worried about) will be doing it too.

This is an updated and revised version of an article that originally appeared in Golf Club Secretary Newsletter.

Alistair Beggs is STRI's Northern Area Manager.

“Appropriate communication between green and competitions personnel means that the needs of all are met without any aspect being compromised.”



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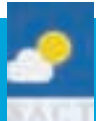
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Noise at Work

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Noise can be described as unwanted sound which may be distracting, annoying or in some cases may cause either temporary or permanent physical damage to the hearing. Hearing loss due to prolonged exposure to noise usually occurs gradually and hence might not be immediately noticed.

Noise induced hearing loss can be selective and affects the frequencies associated with speech. Speech becomes muffled and sounds like T, D and S become difficult to differentiate. It cannot be reversed or remedied by the use of hearing aides.

Hearing loss can have an impact at work with people not hearing instructions, warning calls or alarms. Tinnitus sometimes may also occur when the hearing mechanism is damaged.

Employers have a duty to assess the risk of hearing damage from noise generated in their workplace. Where risks are low the action required may be simple and inexpensive but with high risk they should be managed to reduce them to as low as reasonably practicable.

Typical actions that can be taken are:

- Eliminate the source
- Reduce the amount of noise, eg. by using quieter equipment
- Isolate the source, eg. by the use of enclosures
- Control the degree of exposure, eg. by changing work patterns

- Personal protective equipment, eg. hearing defenders

The limits of exposure to noise at work are dictated by the 'Control of Noise at Work 2005 Regulations'.

The Regulations require employers to:

- Assess the risk to employees from noise at work
- Take action to reduce the noise source that produces the risk
- Provide employees with hearing protection if noise exposure cannot be reduced by other methods
- Make sure the legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded
- Provide employees with information and training regarding noise risks
- Carry out health surveillance where there is a risk to health

Typical sound levels to give an indication if a full noise assessment is required are given above right.

For information on action required at various noise levels, go to the following site:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg362.pdf

The results of noise risk assessments should be recorded even where no actions are required. Where noise levels are above the action levels, measures should be taken to protect employees. Risk assessments should be reviewed when equipment or work practices change. Otherwise the assessment should be reviewed at least every

Activity	dB(A)
Quiet Library	20 - 30
Quiet Office	40 - 50
Normal Conversation	50 - 60
Loud Radio	65 - 70
Tractor Cab	75 - 85
Raised voice to be heard at 2metres	75 - 85
Shout to be heard at 1metre	85 - 90
Power drill	90 - 100
Road drill	100 - 110
Chain saw	115 - 120

two years to ensure that all practicable measures are being taken.

Where the possibility exists that employees hearing can be damaged, health surveillance will be required. This is best carried out when employees start their employment to ensure that their hearing is not being damaged over time.

Where hearing protection is required and has been supplied, the employer has a duty to ensure that it is, appropriate for the level of noise, is worn when required, that employees know how to wear it, inspect it for damage and provide replacement equipment when it is required.

Further advice on controlling noise at work can be had from the HSE's leaflet INDG 362

www.xactconsulting.co.uk

Turfgrass Stress Management

By Andrew Turnbull

Satisfying golfers is difficult at the best of times, but a change in the climate could make life that much more complicated for turf managers in the near future. Higher temperatures may become the norm over the next decades and turf managers will need to have a deeper understanding of how turf grasses grow so that good environmental stress management techniques can be practiced.

Weather data and growing conditions

Before we investigate the plant science, let us examine turfgrass growing conditions during the summer of 2006.

Here in the UK we have the most turf friendly growing climate in the world, enabling turf managers to grow good playing surfaces without having to think too much beyond basic and sensible turf management practices such as reasonable mowing heights, regular topdressing, aeration, correct feeding etc. However, this luxury position may change in the near future. According to the UK Meteorological Office "Preliminary temperature figures for 2006 ... show the mean surface air temperature has continued to demonstrate a warming climate, both around the globe and especially here in the UK." Air temperatures reached up to 36°C in the UK, common to many parts of the world such as mid and southern Europe and the USA but not experienced by many UK based turf managers.

Percentage Growth Potential

Grasses belong to the plant family Poaceae, and the grasses we use in this country belong to the sub-family Festucoideae. This sub-family are also termed cool-season grasses as their optimum growth occurs at air temperatures of 20°C (68°F) and soil temperatures of 18°C (66°F). At temperatures above or below this optimum, grass growth will be below its best due to the slow speed of the plant's internal functions, mainly photosynthesis. Actual growth of grasses through the year can be measured against the optimum growth rate and calculated as a percentage of the potential maximum growth rate at 20°C. The formula used was developed by the PACE Turfgrass Institute and is called the Turfgrass Growth Model. The variance in the equation below is set to 10 for cool season turfgrasses and 12 for warm season turfgrasses.

$$100 \times e^{\left(\frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{\text{average temperature} - \text{optimum growth temperature}}{\text{variance}} \right)^2 \right)}$$

Source: PACE Turfgrass Research Institute
www.paceturf.org

To illustrate this, examine the following table which shows the average temperature over a 30 year period, 1971 to 2001, for a weather station situated to the north of Birmingham.

Month	Ave temp °C	Ave temp °F	30 year % Growth Potential
Jan	6.90	44.42	6.20
Feb	7.20	44.96	7.04
Mar	9.80	49.64	18.54
Apr	12.10	53.78	36.38
May	15.80	60.44	75.14
Jun	18.60	65.48	96.87
Jul	21.30	70.34	97.30
Aug	21.10	69.98	98.06
Sep	17.90	64.22	93.11
Oct	13.90	57.02	54.73
Nov	9.70	49.46	17.93
Dec	7.60	45.68	8.28
Average	13.49	56.29	50.35

Source: www.metoffice.co.uk

Chart 1: 30 year average monthly temperatures at Sutton Bonnington 1971 – 2001

The percentage growth potential of cool season grasses, on average, only reach their full growth during June to September. This can also be illustrated in the graph below:

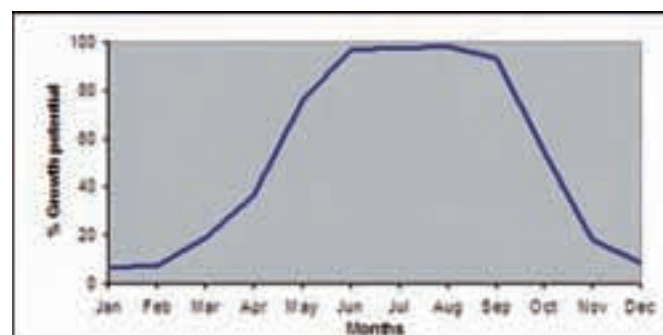


Figure 1: 30 year average % Growth Potential for cool season grasses in the north Midlands region of England

Compare this data (above right) with the average temperatures and the percentage potential growth for this past summer:

Month	Ave temp °C	Ave temp °F	% Growth Potential during 2006	% Growth Potential 30 yr ave
Jan	6.3	43.34	4.78	6.20
Feb	6.2	43.16	4.57	7.04
Mar	7.9	46.22	9.33	18.54
Apr	12.2	53.96	37.32	36.38
May	16.3	61.34	80.11	75.14
Jun	21.1	69.98	98.06	96.87
Jul	25.6	78.08	60.17	97.30
Aug	20	68.00	100.00	98.06
Sep	20.7	69.26	99.21	93.11
Oct	15.7	60.26	74.12	54.73
Nov	11.1	51.98	27.71	17.93

Source: www.metoffice.co.uk

Chart 2: 30 year average monthly temperatures at Sutton Bonnington Jan – Nov 2006

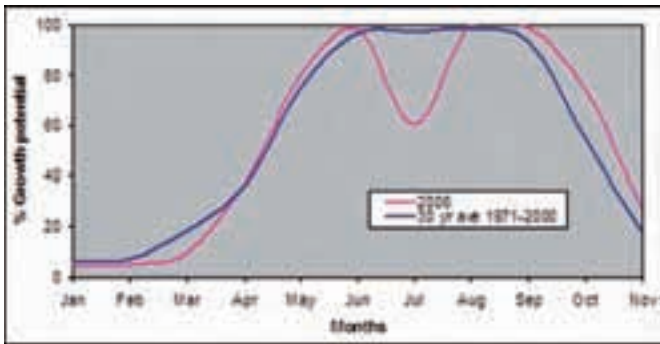


Figure 2: Comparison of the 30 year average and 2006 % Growth Potential for cool season grasses in the north Midlands region of England

OTHER AREAS OF THE UK

Below we can see how other parts of the UK fared.

Comparisons of 30 year average and 2006 % Growth Potential for various areas of the UK.

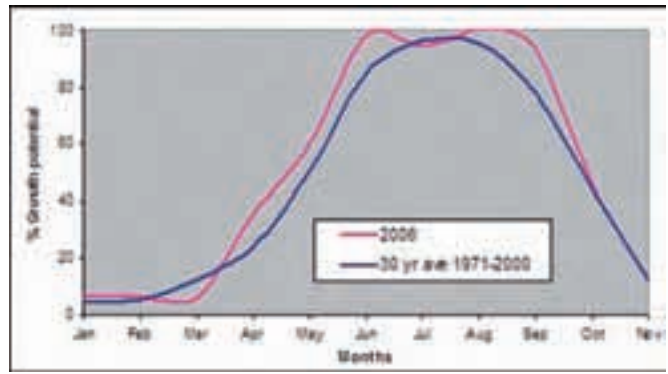


Figure 3: Leuchars – East coast of Scotland

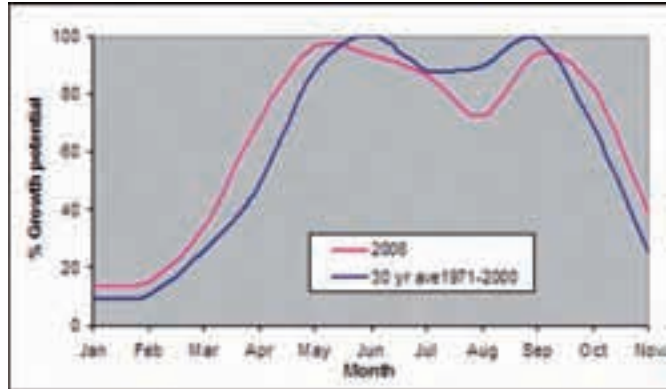


Figure 4: Greenwich – South east London

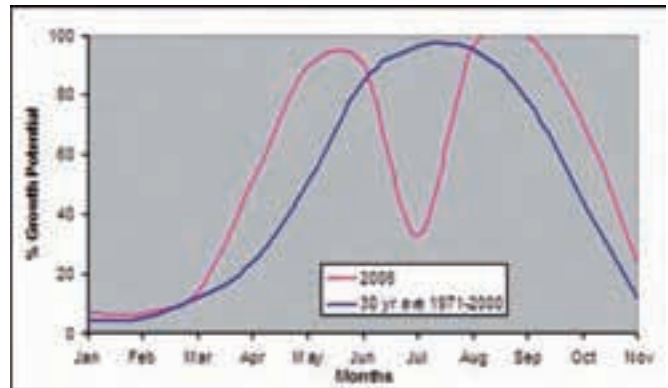


Figure 5: Cambridge – East England



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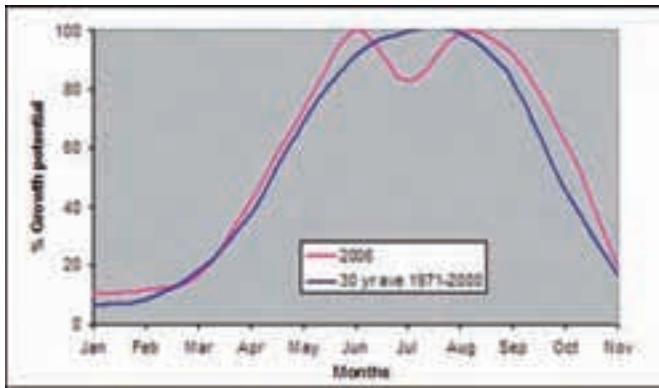


Figure 6: Armagh – Northern Ireland

Most areas suffered a dip in growth potential during the period when the quality of presentation would normally be at its best, i.e. June through to mid-August. Although some areas of the UK experience a dip in turf quality due to heat stress during most summers, as we can see from the above charts, most areas suffered restricted growth during July and August.

Some areas experienced an earlier than usual peak growth, then a dip, then another rise in growth during a period when normally grass growth would be slowing, i.e. a longer growing season.

So, what has caused this reduction in grass growth and playing surface quality?

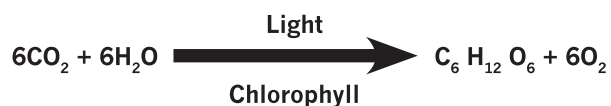
Carbohydrate Metabolism

To manage healthy areas of turf that are able to withstand the effects of increasing use, the turf manager needs to understand plant energy relationships and carbohydrate partitioning. Carbohydrates, or sugars, control turfgrass growth, quality, resistance to environmental stresses and pests and are manufactured by plants in the leaves through a process called photosynthesis. In cool-season grasses the carbohydrates produced are mainly fructose and glucose and are important in cold hardiness. The carbohydrates are moved from the leaves to other areas of the plant when required and are used to make proteins and plant tissue. Unused carbohydrates are stored in roots and shoot stems until required during periods when the plant is under severe environmental stress.

Summary of Photosynthesis

Photosynthesis is the process in which carbon dioxide (CO₂) & water (H₂O) are converted into carbohydrates (food) in the presence of light energy and chlorophyll.

Reaction:



Photosynthesis takes place in the chloroplasts of plant cells and consists of *Light-Dependent* and *Light-Independent* reactions. The Light-Dependent reaction converts light energy into ATP and NADPH₂, molecules used by the plant to energise reactions that convert carbon dioxide and water into sugars (carbohydrates). During light-dependant reactions water is split and oxygen is given off.

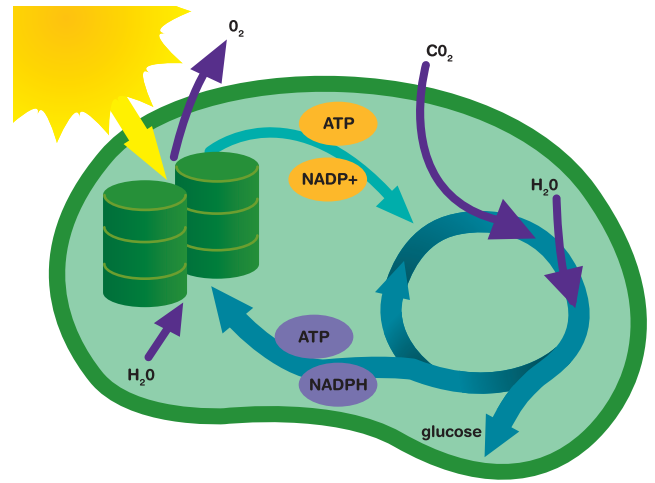


Illustration 10: Photosynthesis in the plant cells.

Source: www.biologycorner.com

Light-Independent reactions (the Calvin Cycle) incorporate CO₂ into sugar, the basic food source for all organisms, using the energy molecules ATP and NADPH₂ developed in the light-dependant reaction to drive the reactions.

Importance of Stomata

The CO₂ needed for photosynthesis enters a leaf via microscopic pores called stomata. During the day, when stomata are open, CO₂ enters the leaf through stomata and an enzyme, called Ribulose 1,5 bisphosphate carboxylase (Rubisco), fixes the carbon and combines it with Ribulose-1, 5-bisphosphate (RuBP), a five carbon molecule produced in the Calvin cycle.

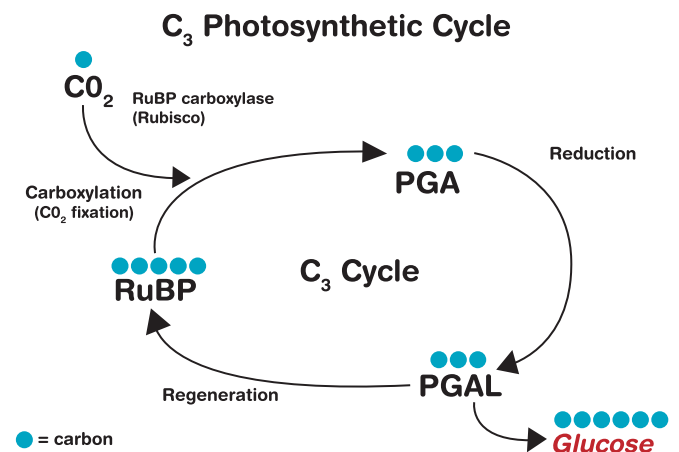


Illustration 11: The C3 photosynthetic cycle *Summer Stress*, Joe Vargas. Used by kind permission

In this pathway, the first product formed is a six carbon compound that breaks into two three carbon molecules called 3-phosphoglyceric acids, hence the term C-3 plants to describe cool season grasses and plants.



Stomata are also the main avenues of transpiration, the evaporation of water from leaves, and are the means by which grass plants keep cool during high temperatures. In hot and dry conditions, grass plants reduce water loss by

closing the stomata. This action also reduces the amount of CO₂ entering the plant and O₂ is retained in the leaf thereby reducing photosynthetic yield. Under these conditions, CO₂ concentrations in the air spaces within the leaf begin to decrease and the concentration of oxygen released from photosynthesis begins to increase.

Photorespiration

Rubisco has a site that CO₂ binds onto, but Rubisco cannot distinguish between CO₂ and O₂. In the high concentration levels of oxygen produced within a plant when the stomata close, oxygen competes with carbon dioxide for the site of reaction in RuBP, which leads to a process called *photorespiration* and the efficiency of photosynthesis is reduced.

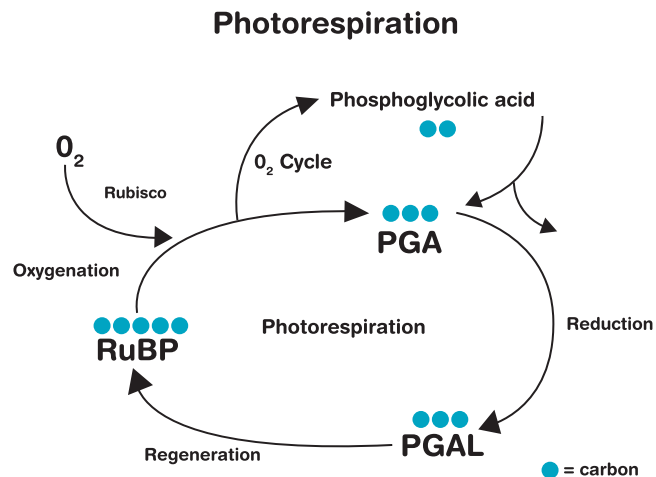
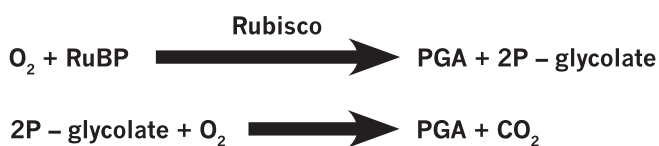


Illustration 12: Photorespiration: Summer Stress, Joe Vargus Used by kind permission

The oxidation process breaks down RuBP to CO₂, which is released as free CO₂. It is a wasteful process resulting in loss of CO₂ from cells that are simultaneously fixing CO₂ in the photosynthesis process.



Unlike normal cellular respiration, photorespiration generates no ATP and no carbohydrate. It is considered to be wasteful, since photorespiration drains away as much as 50% of the carbon fixed by the Calvin cycle. Photorespiration can be likened to a car stuck in the mud; the engine is working and the wheels are spinning, but the car is not moving.

So, in the summer the grass plants keep on growing in the warm environment but once temperatures reach about 30°C the plant cannot produce enough carbohydrates to keep up with the amount being used, and plant growth and vigour is disrupted. The leaves making the limited carbohydrates keep the carbohydrates for themselves and other parts of the plant suffer, especially the roots.

TURF MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

1. During non-stress periods

Carbohydrate reserves, built up during periods when the plant manufactures more carbohydrates than it can use

in respiration, are essential to get through periods of high temperature stress. Peak production of carbohydrates are during the spring and autumn. If the plants reserves are depleted, the roots will begin to recede, picking up less nutrients and water. The plant will also not be able to grow rapidly and recover from wear or pest stresses. The best defense against this process is to have an ample carbohydrate reserve in your plants. This can be done by using cultural practices that promote a healthy plant without excessive growth, *before environmental conditions induce stress in turfgrass physiological functions.*

Nutrition:

Nitrogen fertilisation increases net photosynthesis and growth of leaf foliage in grasses but reduces root growth and stored carbohydrates. Turf could be weakened if excessive nitrogen fertiliser is applied in an attempt to fill in thin areas. Depletion of carbohydrate reserves can be hastened by nitrogen fertilisation. Therefore, high levels of nitrogen fertilisation should be avoided in the middle of summer. Instead, fertilise adequately in spring to build up reserves before temperature and moisture stress affect the plant, and in late summer and autumn to build up reserves before the winter, with very small amounts in the middle of summer. This may be against the "never apply nitrogen after August" mind set, but turf managers need to adapt management practices to take into account our changing climate.

Organic matter control

A small amount of surface thatch is beneficial in protecting the surface from damage from golf balls and foot traffic. However, it can also prevent aeration, i.e. the exchange of atmospheric air and soil carbon dioxide produced by roots and soil organisms. To avoid stress to the turf plant thatch control should be carried out in the spring and late summer.

Growth regulators

Research has shown mixed results on the effects of plant growth regulators (PGR) on carbohydrate partitioning. There are possibilities that they can have a positive effect of helping the plant redirect energy into root production, and some may also damage plant tissue and reduce rooting. They also may make the turf more susceptible to drought stress by reducing root growth. There is not enough published research to support a definitive conclusion on the effects of heat stress on PGR treated turf. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that some forward looking turf managers seem to have obtained some good drought resistance when using trinexapac-ethyl for *Poa annua* control.

2. Cultural practices during hot periods

Irrigation

Heat and water stress are the causes of photorespiration. Syringing during high temperature periods cools the leaf surface and is the most productive activity that can be carried out, but should not be overdone. Too much applied water will flood the surface layers of the turf leading to the loss of aeration pore space. This surface water will heat up and increase the oxygen demand of soil organisms and roots, leading to low oxygen levels in the rootzone and a decrease in turf growth and quality.

Mowing height

Reduced mowing heights, an increasingly common practice on many golf courses, also reduces the root mass of the grass plant. The plant puts energy into producing leaf tissue at the expense of root tissue. Raising mowing heights during heat stress periods enables the plant keep more root mass and draw in more moisture, leading to cooler internal plant temperatures.

Aeration

Aeration is commonly used to describe operations such as slitting, spiking and verti-draining. Aeration is actually the exchange of soil gases with atmospheric gasses, and takes place between the soil/atmosphere interface *and* through the grass leaves. To enable aeration to take place, surface pricking during the summer punches through the organic matter at the sward surface and enables atmospheric and soil air exchange. The use of equipment such as a sorrell roller, and air or water injection equipment leaves very little surface disruption and can have a significant effect on turf health in the summer.

Conclusions

With the prevailing message of managing turfgrass species with minimal inputs of water and nutrients, turf managers need to understand how to help the plant manufacture and store carbohydrates before stress conditions arrive during the summer period. Without this understanding it is debatable whether the message of "sustainable greenkeeping" has itself a more than short shelf life.

Written by Andrew Turnbull BSc (Hons), Dip RSA, Cert Ed, Course Manager for Sports Turf Programmes, Warwickshire College.

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- Website: www.metoffice.co.uk



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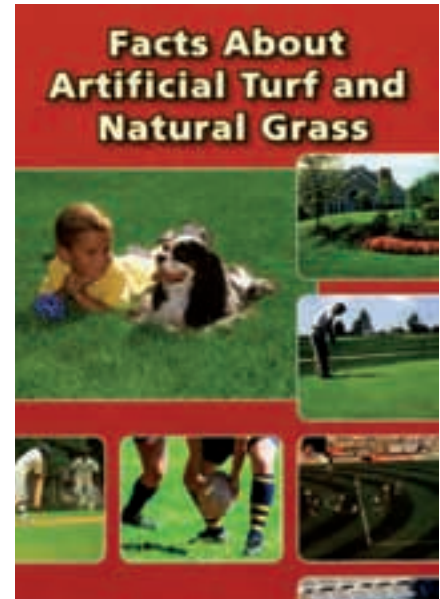
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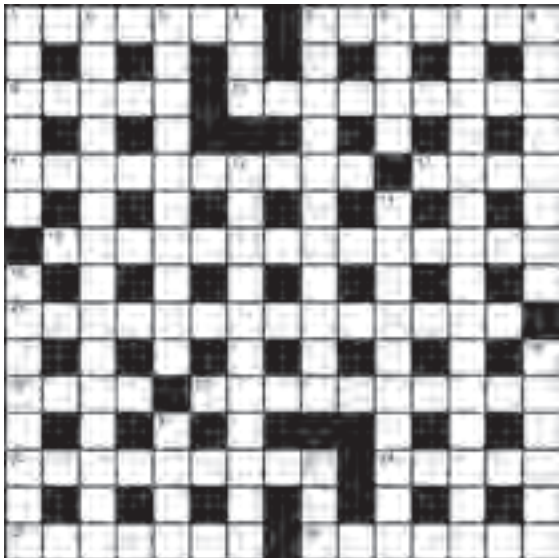
CROSSWORD Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 How acetylsalicylic acid (in tablet form) is better known (7)
- 5 Arrangement of flowers for presentation (7)
- 9 Remote, unconcerned (5)
- 10 Have a contradicting opinion (4,5)
- 11 Laughing jackass, an Australian kingfisher (10)
- 13 Share a boundary with another object (4)
- 15 Eye inflammation also called pinkeye (14)
- 17 Household activity traditionally marking the end of winter (6-8)
- 19 Influence by gentle urging or flattery (4)
- 20 Relating to parrots (anagram of ANTISEPTIC) (10)
- 22 Two conflicts between Britain and China, centred on substance often used as a drug (5,4)
- 24 Mark used to indicate a word above should be repeated (5)
- 25 Type of grass grown for hay (7)
- 26 March 25th festival celebrating the Annunciation (4,3)

DOWN

- 1 N American state referred to as the Last Frontier (6)
- 2 Media coverage which represents stories primarily through pictures (15)
- 3 Iranian president from 1989 to 1997 (10)
- 4 Hexagonal metal block with internal thread (3)
- 5 Gerry Rafferty hit of 1978 (5,6)
- 6 Computer operating system developed by Bell Telephone Laboratories (4)
- 7 Not supported by evidence (15)
- 8 Exposition, formal piece of writing (8)
- 12 Superfluous, a word sometimes used to mean tearful (11)
- 14 Fair, impartial (4-6)
- 16 Mentally intimidate the opposition (5-3)
- 18 Any serious crime (6)
- 21 Leave out, overlook (4)
- 23 Roman god who personified the sun (3)



QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Who had a hit with the song 19th Nervous Breakdown?
2. With which sport do you associated Andre Agassi?
3. Who missed their penalty in Euro 96 to stop England's dream of football coming home?
4. Who is married to Louise Nurdling?
5. Who had a hit with the song Two Hearts?
6. Who captained Europe's victorious Ryder Cup Team in 2004?
7. With which sport do you associate Michael Jordan?
8. Which runner managed to avoid a fine for having an outside toilet event in 2005?
9. Which cricket star was recently sacked as England's Vice-Captain?

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

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ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 54

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TORO

Count on it.

Essex-based Madonna lookalike, Louise.

Delivering Safe use of Pesticides for Effective Weed, Pest and Disease Control

Richard Minton offers some useful advice on eradicating the unwanted from your golf course – within the law.

The recent EU Strategy Document into the Safe use of Pesticides highlights the possibility of pesticide use being totally withdrawn or at least severely restricted in public areas which includes golf courses. No weed, pest or disease control on golf courses or sports fields would eventually lead to deterioration of the surface and would be a seriously retrograde step when there is so much pressure to maintain standards.



The only way we can try to avoid a total withdrawal does not ensue is to abide by the rules and stick to the legislation, ensuring best practice is adopted at all times. The Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products (available from DEFRA) gives advice on how to use pesticides safely.

Website: www.defra.gov.uk

By law everyone who uses pesticides professionally must have received adequate training in using pesticides safely and be skilled in the job they are carrying out. This applies to:

- Users, operators and technicians (including contractors)
- Managers
- Employers
- Self-employed people
- People giving instruction to others on how to use pesticides

Subjects they need to know about:

- The relevant laws
- The risks associated with pesticides
- The risks that may result from using the pesticides
- Safe working practices
- Emergency action
- Health monitoring
- Record keeping
- Using equipment for applying pesticide

Considerations and Contacts

Before considering use of pesticides you should always look at alternative methods of control, consider the risks to people, wildlife and the environment and if using pesticide the policy should be to keep its use to the lowest possible level.

Advice on chemical use should only be taken from qualified personnel - everyone who sells pesticides must have a certificate of competence or be working under the direct supervision of someone who has. BASIS (Registration) Ltd will give advice in this area.



Website: www.basis-reg.com

For a pesticide to be as effective as possible it is essential that you use the correct product at the right time and in the right way. Always use a product in line with its approved conditions of use – Read the Label.



Website: www.pesticides.gov.uk

Application must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, certificated to apply pesticide in the proposed way. NPTC should be contacted for details.



Website: www.nptc.org.uk

The equipment chosen should be suitable for the intended method of applying the pesticide. It should be regularly calibrated and tested. NSTS offer a service to test all spraying equipment.



Website: www.nsts.org.uk

Disposal of any waste should be in a safe and legal way to keep any unwanted effect on the environment or humans as low as possible, if you cause any pollution of air, water or soil you can be prosecuted. The Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 must be adhered to.

Website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Keeping records is critical to the whole operation, with far more documentation than expected, some needing to be kept for up to 40 years.

A summary of the records to be kept:

- Pesticide storage records
- Pesticide application records
- COSHH assessment and environmental risk assessment
- Maintenance inspection and testing of measures to control exposure
- Monitoring exposure in the workplace
- Monitoring exposure of individuals
- Health surveillance
- Disposal records

Choosing a Contractor

A solution to ensure all legislation is adhered to is to appoint a contractor; this does not absolve the manager of responsibility, as they must ensure the contractor fulfils all the criteria laid down in the Code of Practice. A new accreditation scheme "Amenity Assured" has recently been launched by BASIS, NAAC and NPTC and is fully supported by the Amenity Forum who represents the whole industry, giving the assurance to customers that the contractors who sign up to the scheme are regularly audited and fulfil all the requirements laid down in the Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products.

Website: www.naac.co.uk

Conclusion

Pesticide application is a specialist business, governed by strict legislation: the Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products is essential reading, giving clear and concise detail about choosing a pesticide, the storage, the application, waste disposal and record keeping, all essential in delivering effective weed, disease and pest control. The EU Directive are currently reviewing pesticide use, in the UK the necessary legislation is in place and if adhered to there should be no reason to reduce or withdraw pesticide use from public areas.

As stated, application of any pesticide to hard surfaces, grass, shrub beds or water is a specialist service, governed by strict regulations; it remains the least favourite job of almost everyone and is much maligned by the environmentalists, but remains an essential service if high standards are to be maintained.

Richard Minton is Managing Director, JPCS Weed Control Ltd
www.jpcs.co.uk

Chairman of the NAAC (National Association of Agricultural and Amenity Contractors) and a Member of the BASIS Professional Register.



News from the Chief Executive

BIGGA BULLETIN BOARD

There has been much debate of late on the BIGGA Bulletin Board regarding the facility to edit postings, or more correctly the lack of edit facility. I personally am not in favour of giving contributors the chance to go back at a later date and change what they write. This, I hasten to add, is not the reason why this facility is missing. The main reason is unnecessary expense. Unlike some businesses we have to contract out all web programming since we cannot afford the luxury of employing someone with this skill.

Anyway, why would you wish to go back on what you have written? Bad spelling? Poor grammar? Something said in haste and later regretted? A mis-informed statement? The better answer is to be sure of what you write and if you are not sure then don't write it! As regards to grammar and spelling, then the solution is simple. Create your postings in MSWord and then use the grammar and spell check before copying the text and pasting it onto the bulletin board. It is surprising how your spelling will improve over time, some people have a natural ability for words or numbers, others have to work at it. I often find it useful to print out and proof read any lengthy text to make sure that it flows and that everything is kept in context. Using this method also ensures that you do not 'time out' from the website and removes the need for speed when writing. Carefully consider what you are going to write, perhaps make a few notes on paper of things that you wish to include, and above all else do not make 'knee jerk' responses to existing postings. The age old maxim of 'less haste more speed' is always a good one to bear in mind.

Harrogate Week 2007 has been a much better financial success than budgeted for due to a combination of increased revenue and savings on expenditure. The Association's Profit and Loss Account will still return a deficit for the current financial year although this will now not be as bad as anticipated. Next year should see a return to profit, but what of future years? This is one of the major issues facing the Board and one that does not have an easy answer. There was a further meeting with the IOG towards the end of April but there is no doubt that, with or without the IOG, the Association needs to strengthen its membership base and this is something that I intend to address over the coming months. BIGGA will continue to work for the benefit of both its members and the turf management profession, in particular greenkeeping and it will commit all reasonable resources in order to achieve this.

My colleagues and I at HQ are always open to constructive suggestions for improvement.

John Pemberton

Central

Hi all, sorry there wasn't any news in last month's mag, but as you can appreciate getting our courses ready for the start of the season takes up all of our spare time. Welcome to all our new members. An updated list will follow next month.

The Section was well represented at the annual Secretaries' Match held at Glenbervie on April 5. The greenkeepers managed to regain the trophy in a 7-3 victory. Many thanks go to the staff at Glenbervie for having the course looking great, and the clubhouse for a superb meal. Anyone who would like to be considered for the next Secretaries' match next year should get in touch with the committee and will be added to the draw for places.

Congratulations go to Mike Lindsay, from Scoonie, on another addition to his family. A wee boy, Campbell. Well done Mike - the snip awaits!

Congratulations to Euan Grant on his appointment to the new project at Machrihanish. Euan has been an enthusiastic and active supporter of the Section and has helped enormously in developing all the activities we have been arranging for our members. He will continue as Vice Chairman until the AGM, after which he will be sorely missed. Perhaps a Section visit to Machrihanish could be arranged? Congratulations to Gordon Mckie, on his appointment to replace Euan as Head Greenkeeper at the Old Course, and to Davie Wilson on his move to the New Course. Good luck guys.

The Spring Outing at Panmure approaches, with an excellent field entered. It looks like being a great day. A full report will be included next month.

We have been very busy on the educational front, with four separate events.

First up was the Disturbance Theory presentation by Henry Bechelet and Richard Windows, from STRI, held at St Andrews. This was very informative and thought provoking. Next on the agenda was Kevin Cavanaugh, from Floratine, and Kevin Brunton, from Greentech Sportsturf, who discussed the importance of soil analysis for effective turf nutrition management. Adrian Mortram carried out a one day workshop on "Using Water Wisely", and this will definitely be a significant factor in the current climate. Finally, we had an excellent turnout to listen to three esteemed American speakers, who took a pleasant April evening off from their Scottish Golf Tour to provide three excellent presentations which sparked much discussion thereafter. Stanley J. Zontek, Director of USGA Green Section, gave an excellent presentation on the alterations at Oakmont GC to prepare for the US Open, Peter J. Landschoot Ph.D. discussed the advantages/disadvantages of the grass species used in the Northern U.S., and Peter H. Dernoeden Ph.D explained the "yellow" turfgrass diseases common to our climatic conditions, some of which will probably become more frequent as expected climatic changes develop. It was good to see so many new faces. If anyone has any requests for any other training, get in touch and if possible we will arrange it for you.

Please also let us know of any news. For up to the minute updates on Section events, check out the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk, or call Andrew Mellon, Secretary on: 01334 658914
Derek Scott

East

Firstly I must apologise for the omission of our report last month. It was submitted but unfortunately doesn't appear to have arrived! We started on a sad note with the news that our Chairman, Graeme Wood, who was in the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh having suffered a major stroke. He was travelling to Stirling for a BIGGA meeting in the company of Stuart Greenwood when he became unwell. The latest news is that Graeme has been moved from the Western to the Stroke Recovery Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, on Craigleith Road in Edinburgh. Although at present he is only allowed visits

from family and close friends, I am sure everyone will join me in wishing Graeme a speedy recovery.

On Tuesday, March 6, the Scottish Conference was held at Lauder College in Dunfermline. The event was superbly organised by Peter Boyd who had enlisted some excellent speakers for the large turnout of Greenkeepers, who had arrived in Dunfermline from all corners of Scotland and the North East of England. It is often said in life that you save the best for last and true to form Kerran Daly, a former BIGGA Chairman, brought the house down with a witty talk on course presentation, and then finished with a sing song aided by a borrowed guitar.

A gentleman on the move is Jimmy Coombe, Head Greenkeeper at Gifford GC, who is retiring after 15 years loyal service. Originally employed in the building trade, Jimmy worked part time at Gifford, before seeing the light and joining the staff at Muirfield in 1982. He moved to Gifford immediately after the 1992 Open Championship at Muirfield, where he has been employed ever since. I understand Jimmy hopes to play lots of bowls and golf on his retirement. However, I have it on good authority that his wife, Helen, has other ideas and painting and decorating rather than golf could be the order of the day. I am sure all his friends in the trade will join me in wishing Jimmy all the best for the future. His successor at Gifford is Jamie Martin who commenced his career at Gifford and in fact was Jimmy's first YTS Trainee. In 1996 he moved to Royal Musselburgh where he has worked under the expert tutelage of John Reid. I am sure he will prove to be a worthy successor to Jimmy.

On Friday, March 2, Ratho Park held their environmental forum for golf club members and greenkeepers. Despite the weather there was a good turnout from members. However, apart from Tom Murray and his deputy Billy Hudson, only one other greenkeeper (Andy Hastie) put in an appearance. The speakers on the night were very informative and included Richard Windows, of the STRI, who gave a talk on managing clay push up greens.

The saying one man's loss is another's gain, became a reality when Douglas Mackenzie, of Prestonfield, turned down a trip to the American Greenkeepers show in Anaheim, LA due to personal commitments. His replacement, Hamish Brough, had a whale of a time, and would like to thank John Deere dealer, Double AA, for their hospitality. On Wednesday, March 28, a meeting was held at Oatridge College to discuss "Education – the way forward" The meeting was chaired by Steve Miller when a wide range of topics were discussed including Level 4 and HND Courses. One of the key decisions made on the day was the removal of horticulture from all greenkeeping courses. On a negative note only seven greenkeepers attended, which is disappointing for the organisers.

It is now April and most members are reporting a good start to the season, helped a great deal by the very mild winter. The first golf outing of the new season was held at Glenbervie GC on Thursday, April 5, when the greenkeepers, captained by Stuart Greenwood played a team from the Scottish Secretaries' Association. The match ended with a resounding 7-3 win for the greenkeeping team, which included East Section members Kenny Mail, Chris Yeoman, Kevin Hodges and last, but certainly not least, Stuart Greenwood. Joe Wallace and his team presented the course in pristine condition, and the clubhouse staff ensured everyone was well fed and watered.

Mike Dooner

North

How's it going folks? Hope the weather is suiting you and there is plenty of growth to keep you busy. The Spring Outing is at Oldmeldrum GC this year, so we're hoping for a good turnout to support Robert O Donnell and his staff on the day. Robert and his able Deputy, Graeme Gordon, have been very busy this past winter upgrading the course. Several new bunkers have been added and more have been rebuilt and modernised. Four new tees have been built, a new pond and several other areas of the course have been re-landscaped to improve the course overall. The additional tees have stretched the course to over 6000yds and increased the SSS from 69 to 70. Graeme Gordon has been promoted to Deputy Head as a reward for several years' service and hard work to the club. Well done lads for all your hard work and we look forward to playing the course in the Spring Outing.

The weather during March and early April has been very dry which will probably help most of the inland courses but it is making the Links courses crusty already and the summer hasn't even started yet. Maybe this is the trend to come with global warming starting to have an effect on the weather.

Ross Macrae has left Newmacher GC to become Head Greenkeeper at Huntly GC. This happened a while ago so my apologies Ross for not mentioning it earlier. Good luck to you at Huntly. Ben Brookes and Euan Rankin have moved to Murcar GC from Newmacher, so good luck guys in your new posts.

Gavin Cameron, who has worked at Royal Aberdeen GC for 12 years, has left to try his luck in the oil business. I have worked with Gavin for over nine years and he proved to be a very competent greenkeeper in all areas of the job. It is a pity that people like him are leaving the profession to do other work, this trend is happening all over the UK now because there are very few opportunities in the Deputy category that guys like Gavin can actually move into. I wish Gavin all the best and thank him for his efforts over the past 12 years at Royal Aberdeen. Another greenkeeper who is moving into the oil business is Chris Murdoch, from Murcar GC. I posted a link on the BIGGA website about this trend of people leaving their jobs, and hoped to get a better response than I did, I think in five to 10 years time there might be a shortage of quality greenkeepers around to become head men. I'm interested in any comments that you have on this topic, email: grassman351@aol.com

I recently attended a demonstration at Newmacher GC, by Kevin Strachan Construction services, that demonstrated his Viper screening machine. This machine can screen any material like rubble, general golf course organic material, into re-useable material for construction projects. I recently had Kevin screen about 500 tonne of organic material we had dumped over the years into very good root zone for tee and bunker work. I would imagine every course has material dumped somewhere that can be re-cycled into a re-useable product for divots or construction work.

Robert N Patterson



North East

Not a lot to write again this month. As most of you will probably be aware,

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

Greenlay have moved from Choppington, after being based there for 36 years, to new, purpose built premises at Baker Rd, Cramlington. The premises have been designed to include a showroom, offices, stores and workshop. This relocation project is part of Greenlays planned future growth. A new Head Greenkeeper and an Assistant have been appointed at Stocksfield GC - taking over from Roy White and Andrew Morrison. Also to welcome to the Section is Jamie Smith, from Slaley Hall, who is moving to Hexham GC, replacing John Moutrie who is retiring.

I have been asked by Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, to remind you that a golf team event is hopefully being played at Matfen Hall GC sometime this summer (this was played at Teeside GC last year) and will be sponsored by Scotts, we are just waiting for confirmation.

Another suggestion from Peter Larter was if any member needs to use the Legal Helpline with any dispute regarding work, get in touch with him and he will put you in touch with the necessary persons to handle the situation.

As soon as I hear anything about the Scotts competition I will be in touch either by Section news or by phone, in the meantime if anyone is interested in this event get in touch with me and I will forward entries to Peter Larter. Jimmy Richardson

North West

We had a great day at Withington GC recently, to raise money for Stuart Bridge. The course and the turnout was fantastic with all the tee times booked, I think many more greenkeepers and trade members would like to have taken part but could not get in. I know a lot of money was raised but unfortunately do not have all the details, needless to say it was a lovely day. Stuart actually turned up on the day which was a great surprise. I would just like to thank everyone who organised the day, you all know who you are. It was very heartwarming to know that people in our business can pull together and help out a fellow greenkeeper in times of need. We have a misprint in our yearly fixture list, the summer tournament at Denton GC will be played on June 28 and not 14 as stated. Sorry about that.

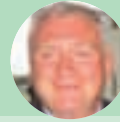
If you wish to play in any of the tournaments please send a cheque for £20 to: Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park GC, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. If you wish to play in any of the team events please contact Bill too. I read something the other week which I think might be of some help to us greenkeepers and it was something like this, you have 10% of the members who like you. You have 10% of the members who hate you. You have to try and please the other 80% because the other 20% won't change their minds. Chris Sheehan

Cleveland

Well, April has started fine and dry with many courses completing their winter work on time and without too much mess. Do we get the wetting agents in now in case the dry spell continues? WARNING - their arrival always prompts a prolonged period of rain!

I would like to start by thanking Henry Bechelet of the STRI who presented a very interesting lecture on the 'Disturbance Theory' to our members last month. This was up to Henry's usual high standard and his wit and repartee added to the night. He's not a bad lad for a Saints fan. Thanks to Teesside GC for hosting the event and making us very welcome.

I was speaking to Mark Davison, Head Groundsman at Sedgefield Racecourse recently. They have a six-race 'Ladies Night' meeting on Thursday, May 31. In conjunction with the local greenkeepers sections we are planning a night out and a betting extravaganza. Why not treat the lady in your life to a night out (make sure the wife doesn't find out mind!) Course tickets are available at a very reasonable £6 (gets only basic facilities in the centre of



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

the track) and only £11.20 for a Grandstand paddock ticket. However, I am working on getting a 'bit of a deal' so please ring me to book your tickets as soon as possible. I'm afraid it's payment up front folks.

Ian Pemberton has taken over the reigns at Cleveland GC, Redcar. Ian has already received loads of help from Les and the other lads at the club and he has asked me to thank them publicly. Ian's place is to be taken by Kevin Scarce, who returns to Bedale after a spell at Easingwold. Good luck to you both.

Alan Reed (Saltburn GC) and Barry Walker (City of Newcastle GC) recently figured in the final of the TSL darts competition, held at Castle Eden Cricket Club. Alan lost to Glen Baxter (South Shields GC) in the semi final. Barry won his semi final beating Andrew Cook of Medomsley Cricket Club. In a fantastic best of five leg final the standard of play was top class. Glen, a Super League player, and Barry, a former Durham County player, served up some great games. However, Barry's lack of competitive tournament play resulted in a deserved 3-0 win to Glen. Glen received the inaugural 'Champions Shield' and a cheque for £100. Barry received the 'Runners Up' medal and a cheque for £50. Finally Alan received his 'Finalists Medal' and a cheque for £20. Thanks are due to Castle Eden Cricket Club for their hospitality on the night. They provided Pie and Peas for everyone and then Kevin Carr of TSL organised a Domino Handicap for us visitors and the regulars. With over £30 at stake the competition was fierce. Karen Hopper of TSL beat one of the locals in the final. All the best. Any news: 07831 214879 Terry El Prez Charlton

Midland

Firstly, my apologies for the lack of notes last month - Such was down to my lateness of submission and a problem with my broadband provider. It happens! Last month's calendar page was sponsored by our old friends and long-suffering supporters of the Section, Bathgate Leisure. Our greatest of thanks to them.

I have just realised that my phone number as printed within our blue programme for 2007 is incorrect, please use the one as printed within our calendar: 07908421015. Sorry for any inconvenience. Ed, you had better check the voicemails on my old phone, you may be some time (if only!). This month's calendar page is sponsored by our young friends and short-suffering supporters of our Section, Rigby Taylor/Tony Cheese. Our greatest of thanks to them. Rigby's have in fact been supporters of the Section for more years than I can remember.

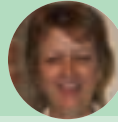
Another supporter over many a year has been Mr R. Minton. Richard has taken a position outside of the greenkeeping remit. Our best of wishes to you, and many thanks for your support over the years.

The closing date for the Scotts Doubles is May 8, the draw is to be held at Ludlow GC on May 9. I understand that a few of you have not received an entry form. My advice is to firstly question your local postal sorting office. Secondly, if you have read these notes in time and wish to enter contact Rhys Thomas (Comp Sec) on: 0775581615. Please remember that late entries are at his discretion and may well be out of his hands, but you might as well try. Also those who have not received entry forms for any other events please contact me and I shall be pleased to send you one in the post.

I'd better rap it up - I'm in danger of sending these notes in late. Just time to welcome six new members: Ian Cureton, John Meade, Andrew Wilkinson, Ian Turley, Craig Souter and Daniel Rowe. Also don't forget our summer event at Coventry GC on July 4 at 2pm. Entry closing date: June 8. See you there. Sean McDade



Clive Osgood
SOUTH EAST
Tel: 01737 819343



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
Tel: 01454 270850



SOUTH EAST

Berks/Bucks and Oxon

Easter and Augusta! The King Pins walked off Augusta National much the same way they came on it, two by two, wrapped up against the cold. Their misery finally over, they trudged into the scorer's hut where the carnage could be tallied. If this is the new, improved Augusta National, welcome to the world of fewer birdies and more bogeys as Tiger and the best golfers in the world, reminding us at times of the human side to battling the beautifully manicured fairways with billions of trees and oceans of water, to threaten wayward balls. It seems that, with greens as fast as lightning and course changes implemented several years ago, gone are the days of 20 under par and Oh look - I nearly managed level par! This year I really enjoyed watching a tournament that became unpredictable with the beauty of the course and the beast playing together as one to provide a challenging climax to this major event. To combat the cold this year, I wonder whether Augusta have ordered any of those new solar plants from Venezuela?

Anyway welcome to May! Our first event this year is on May 17, at Wycombe Heights GC, which by the time you are reading this is nearly upon us, so be quick and check out the new web page at: www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk for all the last minute information. If you haven't already done so, get on the blower and welcome our newest member of the first time dad club, Phil Plater, from Magnolia Park GC, who is the proud dad of newly arrived daughter, Mia Annabelle, who weighed in at 5lb 12oz. Congratulations to Phil and his wife, Jan, who apparently played an important role in the birth.

Alec MacIndoe has recently lost his football shirt while playing his beloved game, if anyone comes across a green and white garment with hoops on it, can they please forward the Celtic shirt to Newbury and Cookham GC where Alec has promised a reward for the kind hearted soul.

Section Secretary, Dean Jones, can always be contacted on: d.jones51@tiscali.co.uk for any news or views, or just to log your new email address if it has changed. Dean can also be contacted through the BB&O web page. Wishing you all a good start to the summer season.

Mark Day

BB&O, Chairman's Message:

As we fast approach a new greenkeeping season, I thought it appropriate to send you my best wishes for the oncoming year. I am sure that for many of you the winter has been quite problematic due to the high levels of rainfall. However, now that the weather seems to be settling down somewhat I expect that you will all be feeling more in control, so good luck to you all.

Good news from your committee that the new BB&O website is well into the final stages of design and will be available shortly. The site will be full of up-to-date information regarding the Section, making communication much easier, so we hope you all enjoy it and welcome any ideas for future improvements.

Finally we extend a warm welcome from the Section to Chris Lomas MG and 10 of his colleagues from The Berkshire GC. We look forward to seeing you soon. Please try to support your Section throughout the season as often as you can, as we have some wonderful days organised for your benefit and enjoyment. Best Wishes

Sid Arrowsmith MG

Surrey

Friday, April 6. Hello readers and welcome to another quota of the Surrey Section's belated news gossip and intrigue. We start with news. Dave Langheim has now officially gone into shorts from April 2, while my eight year-old grandson is now old enough to wear long trousers. Gareth Roberts has had another very successful charity day at Hankley Common GC, in aid of Autistic Children and has raised over £12,000. A fantastic achievement on a day that was really warm and sunny. I was fortunate to be able to play in this event along with my usual partners Phil, Winchester Machinery; Greg, West Surrey GC, and Mark, Cranleigh GC, and for the fourth year running managed to enter the frame coming 4th. However, should any one of them want to bet money against you in a putting competition at a maximum distance of 18 inches, jump at the chance you'll make a fortune! Barry Robertson has had an operation on something but he is keeping the something secret until it heals or falls off.

Surrey Section's first golf event was a great success at Dukes Meadows GC on March 23. Although a few of the early starters had some showers most of the teams enjoyed dry conditions, apart from those, like me, who could not resist the overpowering necessity to pop the odd ball into one of the well stocked lakes, much to the amusement of my playing partners. The winning teams were 1. Darren Lee, Dean Churchill, Daren Pearl and Andy Reason; 2. David Gerson, Rodney Friend, Hany Abbas and Des Folliard; 3. Bobby Rogers, Andy Dennis, Adam Watts and Gregory Sutton.

The Nearest the Pin winners, who must have played really well to have got so near to pins in exceptionally difficult positions, were Brian Willmott on the 1st and my fellow team member Roger Tydeman on the 9th. As there was no gossip or intrigue I finish with a tale of exceptional coincidence that happened when I played in a two ball at Epsom GC a week after Dukes Meadows. On the 3rd par three tee, we were held up and a single player, who we did not know, caught us up. I invited him to join us and he did. Having introduced ourselves we talked about golf and where we had played recently. I mentioned to him what a delightful and well-kept par three course Dukes Meadows was and that it was ideal for improving one's short game. He said that his son had played there last week in a BIGGA tournament and I asked him where his son worked. Croham Hurst GC he replied. So I was able to say that his son's name was Tom. That then surprised him for the coincidence was that his son Tom was the fourth member of my team at Dukes Meadow and was only bought in as a substitute at the last minute. It was the first time I had played with Tom and the first time I had played with his dad, Steve, a two handicapper and a member at Epsom GC.

If you have any odd experiences that you think the readers will be interested in, please, don't tell me, keep them to yourself, and bore the wife.
Brian Willmott

Kent

Hi Guys, hope you're well and the dreaded "Augusta Syndrome" has settled down at your respective courses. It was great to see such a fantastic

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tournament despite the controversy surrounding how the hallowed course has been altered to nullify the effect of the advances in technology on the equipment and the athleticism of the players. The debate about the rights and wrongs of it all will, no doubt, surface year on year as the powers that be in the US do their best to belittle the best golfers in the world.

Kent Section recently played our Spring Tournament at the Kings Hill GC. Many thanks to Duncan Kelso and his team for providing such a great course and to all who attended on the day. The warm day threatened to have us all boiling over but the ubiquitous Vic Maynard and his faithful refreshment buggy came to the aid of many a weary golfer. Many thanks to Vic, and Ernest Doe's, for supplying this essential service again.

Despite the pressure of this event being our National Qualifier and the enforced three-quarters handicap, some good scores were returned at the end of this very challenging course. I'm just glad we got to play it before the rough got to its full height!

Full results were as follows: 1. Wayne Syers, Lullingstone GC, 37 pts; 2. Dan McGrath, North Foreland GC, 36 pts. Both of these players have qualified for the National finals so good luck to them there! 3. Rob Holland, Birchwood Park, 34 pts; Longest Drive, Dan McGrath; Nearest Pin 8th, Dan McGrath; Nearest Pin 11th, Neil Pullen; Trade prize went to Stewart Clayton, of Midlube. Many thanks again to everyone at Kings Hill for a great day and also to all our trade supporters who were kind enough to donate raffle prizes.

Our next event will be held on June 12 at the Westgate and Birchington GC at Westgate on Sea. Please check our website for entry forms and up to date news on all forthcoming events. Please contact me with any news from the Section or to leave a message on our forum board when you visit us at: kentgreenkeepers.co.uk

Rob Holland

Sussex

Sorry for not writing last month but there was not a great deal going on. Since then we have had the Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath, which was a great day. The weather was in our favour and the course was exceptional. It's the first time I have played at Walton Heath and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It's certainly a challenge. A big thanks to Ian McMillan and his staff for providing the course in such great order. Also a big thank you must go to Clive Osgood, who organised the day for us all to enjoy.

I did receive a phone call from Dave Hinks (Nick Faldo to his friends) about some machinery he had stolen from Peacehaven golf club. It actually happened during work hours while Dave was busy in another area of the course. When he returned to the sheds someone had broken the padlock off and stolen two trimmers from his sheds, one was a Stihl and the other an Allen. This all happened between 14.05 and 14.30. I know he is a bit annoyed about it and if anyone did have any information he would be grateful.

I have given you the dates of golf days but here they are again: May 24 - Ham Manor; early July - Cophorne; August - Surrey v Sussex; September 13 - Cooden Beach and also Sussex v Kent - TBA. I hope to see you at some of the golf days this year. If you need to contact me please call: 07776223234 or email: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Rob Hudson

London

Hello to you all in the London Section. I hope you are all ready for the busy season ahead!

Not a great deal of news to report from the area. I would like to welcome back to greenkeeping Craig Handyside, who has joined our Old Fold Manor team. I will report on the Brookman's Park Spring meeting in next month's ATG, as we have not played the event at the time of writing this report. Please remember these dates of the forthcoming events: Summer Meeting, Gerrard's Cross GC, Thursday, August 16 tees from 1.45pm; Turkey Trot Meeting (Scotts Trophy), Porters Park GC, Wednesday, December 12 tees from 10am; Paintballing, Saturday, June 9 at Brickwood. Anyone wishing to partake, the fee is £10 including lunch. This does not include cost of paintballs. Contact London Section Secretary, Aaron Percival on: 07966 247913 - there are limited spaces left.

Finally, if you have any information e.g. achievements, good or bad news, or anything interesting, please let me know on: 07818410333, thank you. Matt Plested

Essex

Well if you didn't already know. We now have our own Section website: www.essexbigga.co.uk set up by Tom Smith, from Colne Valley (Thanks Tom). We will be posting the latest information on the site to keep you all up to date with what we are doing in the Section, plus what is going on around the county, mainly information from head office - Other news as it arrives. Information on the golf days will be posted along with your tee off times and other relative information of the day, how to get there etc. If you see anything you would like added, the committee can take a look at it and maybe add in your requirements. If you have anything constructive that you want aired on the website or if you have any equipment for sale, let Martin Forrester know and we will see what we can do for you.

Just a note, if anyone has moved or has not been getting correspondence from the Section, please notify Martin Forrester on: 07984-867.939 or: mdwforrester@hotmail.com. Don't forget the forthcoming Essex BIGGA v Trade cricket match, on Thursday, May 17 at Brookweald Cricket Club, Weald Road, South Weald Park, Brentwood, Start time is 2.30pm. Information

from Ian Wood on: 01708 746157 or: 07952470861 or email ian.wood@romfordgolfclub.co.uk, come along and enjoy the fun, There is a bar open all afternoon and evening.

Robert Bell has moved from Five Lakes after four and a half years, to take over the running of San Roque Club, Spain, a 36-hole complex as Course Superintendent, it's not that far from Gibraltar, so the warmer climate should suit him and his family. I wish them all well, I'm sure he will not miss the cold north sea weather he's got used to of late. His First Assistant, James Ramey, has moved five or so miles west, after 23 years at Five Lakes (Quietwaters), to Braxted Park as Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, we hope he will be happy there and hopefully join us at a few of our golf days and seminars.

Our Southern STRI Region Agronomist, Stella Rixon, has just given birth to a little girl whom she has named Niamh (an Irish name pronounced 'Neve') she was born on March 8 "in a hurry - only four hours of labour - lucky me!" Said Stella. Weighing in at 6lbs 7oz.. Well done Stella.

Anyone who has any news for inclusion in ATG can email me at: highwoods.photographic@virgin.net or call me on: 01206 852353
Arnold Phipps-Jones

South West

Some good news to start. Tim Needham, Deputy Course Manager at Chipping Sodbury (and an ex-assistant of mine), has just become a father. Daughter, Isabella, arrived safely at 7lb 4oz and Tim, having done all the hard work, is now taking time out to recover at home. Richard Louisson, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Cirencester got married recently. His Best-Man, Graeme Percival, himself an ex-greenkeeper, secretly distributed door keys to various male guests arriving at the reception. While making his speech, he touched on the fact that the new Mrs Louisson was now a married woman, and anyone still with a front door key to her flat had better give it back immediately. To Richard's amazement and horror, several dozen people promptly stood up. What are friends for after all? Rob, our youngest, and I were down at Cannington College the other day. We had the great pleasure of meeting with Steve Hasell and Jon MacDonald who run the golf studies. We had a very good look at the facilities, as Rob is interested in the Foundation Degree. The golf side of things has come a very long way recently. The golf course is very well equipped, enthusiastically managed by Hugh Murray, and looked in extremely good condition for the time of year. Steve Hasell wrote the following especially for inclusion in the magazine.

Bridgwater College, from October 2007, is running, at our Cannington Centre in conjunction with BIGGA South West, the NVQ level 3 in Sport Turf and Greenkeeping. This new format allows flexibility for trainees to attend college only one day per month with additional support from our work-based assessors to get the trainees through their portfolios. The course is run over two years starting this October and will run until March 2008 when you can then get back to concentrating on your golf course work. The second year will start in October 2008 and you should complete by March 2009 with your

Level 3. Contact the college for more information on: 01278 655083 or: macdonaldjo@bridgwater.ac.uk. This course is free to those under 25 who do not possess their Level 3 and is only £350 per year for those over 25.

The college has received unprecedented investment into new greenkeeping machinery in the last two years, and also the appointment of a New Section Leader for the Horticulture and Sports Turf Department, Jonathan MacDonald, who worked at Reaseheath as well as Moulton College. A new Programme Manager for Sports Turf provision and a new Manager of Golf have been appointed to strengthen delivery of the courses which range from NVQ to Foundation degrees and to help provide a first class driving range, academy and 9 hole 18 tee golf course. Apprenticeships in Level 2 Sports Turf and Greenkeeping remain popular and are free to 16-18 year olds and our Foundation Degree in Golf Course management, which is run two days a week for two years full time (part time routes available.)

Marc Haring has a number of training courses and information days in the offing – please ring or mail Marc at march@cumberwellpark.co.uk for more details. Nobby Knight sends a final appeal to respond if you want to be on the mailing list, and to receive details of the Section Events. We are not in a position to be able to send out 290 entry forms for every event, so by not responding, you run the risk of not being informed. You can email Nobby on: nobbyknight384@hotmail.com Anyone wishing to play the team events contact Wayne Vincent: 07958630590.

Back at Minch, Abbots have finished the irrigation installation to everyone's great relief. Despite the weather a fantastic job has been done (providing it works okay) and you can hardly see where they've been. I do not intend to repeat this experience again – ever.

My recent PowerPoint talk to Box Gardening Club went down a storm. Things got off to a slightly rocky start when I arrived at Box Village Hall about half an hour early. When I pulled up outside, all the lights were ablaze, and the car park jammed to overflowing. Blimey I thought, I'm late - all these people have turned out on a freezing cold night to listen, and I'm late. So I grab all my kit, computer, projector, and screen, and go puffing off inside. When I open the front door, the main hall is totally deserted. It looks a bit like the Marie Celeste – not a stick of furniture, not a single person in sight, almost a ball of tumbleweed blowing gently about in the corner. So I tiptoe towards the second, smaller room. As I approach the door, a woman in an overall type uniform pokes her head out. "Thank God for that - the cleaners", so as she looks a bit slow, I talk loudly and clearly. "I'm with Box Gardening Club", I bellowed across the hall – and with that I notice shadowy shapes of people lying on mats on the floor behind her. She's running the local Pilates class and they're all meditating in some sort of trance, or at least they were until I went blundering in.

Paul Worster

South Coast

The South Coast Section Seminar 2007, was held at Canford Magna GC on Wednesday, March 14. Over 100 people attended what was a very successful day. It was also good to welcome some IOG members to the day. Chris Bitten, our Secretary, put together an excellent programme.

The AM session focused on the very important topic of water and irrigation.

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Marcus White kicked off the day with a very in depth talk regarding winter water storage. This included much detail of reservoir planning and construction. His knowledge of the subject really shone through. Much of the planning process with such a project must go via the Environment Agency (EA), so it was apt to have Jim Whatley from the EA talk to us regarding this subject. Jim found it very useful to get out of the office and gain feedback from people within our industry. Before lunch Andy Cole, of Professional Sportsturf Design (PSD), communicated a superb talk regarding soil water. Andy used to be a lecturer in turf culture at Warwickshire College and it showed. His talk was thoroughly informative.

After a super lunch, it was a pleasure to welcome two well respected Head Groundsmen, Peter Craig and Eddie Seaward. Peter is from the Hurlingham Club which features croquet, lawn tennis, cricket and bowls plus gardens. Peter took us through the maintenance year at the Hurlingham Club – never a dull moment – a very busy man. Eddie, from the All England Lawn Tennis Club, gave us a fascinating insight into the year at the famous tennis club. We were blessed to have such a respected personality at our seminar – he is a true professional.

The committee and Section would like to offer our thanks to all the presenters helping to make the day a major success. We also thank Canford Magna GC once again making us welcome and looking after us, in particular Alain Sainval (Clubhouse Manager) and his staff. Also much gratitude to our sponsors for the day, Tower Chemicals, Banks Amenity and Vitax. Well done Chris Bitten with the organising of your first seminar.

To keep the seminar a success we need to know what you want, for example, topics, certain speakers etc. Chris Bitten will contact you with a questionnaire requesting such information. Please respond so that we know what to aim for in the future.

The final of the Jim Fry pairs was between Tony Gadd and Fred Deamen vs Steve Privett and Simon Justice, at Remedy Oak GC, on Wednesday, April 4. And, the winners...team Alresford. Congratulations to Steve & Simon (Steve have you worked out how to get your name into next month's magazine?) Thank you to Robert Hogarth and team for the great condition of the course. The Scotts/BIGGA Management Trophy will take place at Stoneham GC on May 31. Each golf club that enters a team must make up a four ball which must include a member of their greenkeeping staff, the other three must be members of the Clubs Management e.g. Secretary, Chairman, Chairman of Green, President etc. This is reasonably flexible as long as a greenkeeper is part of the team. The cost per team is £90. The prizes include individual rewards plus £200 of Scotts products for the winning Golf Club. To book please contact Jane Jones on: 07841 948001.

That's it for this month – speak to you again soon.

Joe Crawley Tel: 07721 389200

Devon and Cornwall

On March 7, the Section held its first workshop of the season at Trenthorne GC in Cornwall and consisted of three topics on the following subjects: Drainage and Construction – Land Drainage Contractors Association (LDCA); Health and Safety; Environmental Issues.

The Section had an excellent turn out and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the speakers that participated i.e. Nigel Wyatt, Director of M J Abbot; Bruce Brockway, from LDCA, and Jon Allbut.

A huge thank you also goes to Trenthorne GC and in particular, Jon Granger, the proprietor, for making us so welcome, and Justin Austin, Course Manager, for all his hard work in making the day so successful. On March 14, we had the last of our season's meetings, and what a day it turned out

to be, brilliant weather, just like the middle of summer, the Church course was in superb condition and the lunch was outstanding.

Two competitions were run on the day, The Vitax Trophy for Head Greenkeepers and the Bayer Cup for the First Assistants. The winners were as follows: Vitax Competition – 1. Steve Evans, Yelverton Golf Course, 43pts; 2. Andrew Dunston, Newquay GC, 34pts; 3. Paul Newcombe, East Devon GC, 32pts. Bayer Cup – 1. S Green, Torquay GC, 41pts; 2. G Deakins, St Enodoc GC, 35pts; 3. G Moore, Launceston GC, 34pts. The prizes were presented by John Mullons, from Vitax, and Paul Clifton, from Bayer. In the afternoon Sarah Taylor, the Penhale Ranger from The Natural Environmental Services, presented the Educational talk and very entertaining it was too. As it was St Enodoc, a Championship Course, we had a full house. A huge thank you to Stuart Dymond, Course Manager, and all his staff for presenting both course in excellent condition.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Graeme Gallimore to our Section committee, Graeme is the Head Greenkeeper at Launceston GC, and he will run the education side, so I am sure he will be contacting you some time in the near future.

Last, but not least, please will you make a note in your diary that the mid-summer meeting will be held at Trethorne GC on June 14, a nine-hole golf competition will be followed by a barbecue and then ten-pin bowling. As I write this report I am looking out of the window at bright blue skies, and the temperature is just hitting 18 Celsius, and if this is only April, we will have a hot summer. The media seems to think so, so good luck with the automatic watering systems.

Donovan O Hunt

South Wales

Hi lads, me and my big mouth! I wanted dry weather, well I got it big time, trouble was it had our old friend, Mr North East wind with it, last month we had loads of grass and could not cut it, this month we could cut it if we had it! Who would be a greenkeeper.

By now you should have had your fixtures and forms so fill them in and get them back. May 23 is the start of our fixtures so lets see if we can have a few more of you attending, we need your support, it's getting that there's more trade than greenkeepers, even if you don't play golf you can have a walk around the course and meet friends old and new, and have a few beers and listen to other peoples troubles - then sometimes yours don't seem so bad. Don't forget to let Peter know in advance if you are coming or it will cost you more on the day. I would like to say thank you to Dave Cary, I now it was last year but he turned up for a charity walk that about 20 of us did for my wife's cancer charity around Porthcawl in fancy dress, he turned up as Steve Irwin (crocodile hunter), thanks again mate from Norma and myself. One last thank you from Ceri Richards to all the people who turned up at their seminar to make it a great success.

That's it from me for another month, hope you have all got your water systems up and running without too many problems, if anyone fancies getting their name in print get in touch either by email: henry@henrystead.wannadoo.co.uk or ring me on: 07962162044 and remember, keep smiling.

Henry Stead

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

What's *your* Number?



Name: Roger Hargreaves
Company: SISIS
Position: Joint Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?

"Since 1960. My first job was assembling SISIS Motorols and the first Rotorakes at the Company's Cheadle Works."

How did you get into it?

"SISIS is a family business – so I have been a part of it since birth."

What other jobs have you done?

"Pump Sales Engineer (power stations) for Mather & Platt Manchester."

What do you like about your current job?

"As Joint Managing Director it is a constant challenge to maintain profitability, while protecting the company's reputation for quality and service. It is a challenge I relish, and I am grateful for the efforts of the hard-working team here at Macclesfield, and of course my co-Managing Director, and brother, William. A bonus is the number of "characters" in our industry. It is always a delight to meet them at our frequent field day events and trade exhibitions."

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

"Having been in the industry for a considerable time, I suppose the most obvious change is the increase in mechanised maintenance, and SISIS has been at the forefront of this trend. It has also been gratifying to watch the improvement in knowledge and skills developed by greenkeepers, due to the many more educational opportunities now available. Golfers world-wide have high expectations from their courses and greenkeepers have risen to the challenge admirably. We hope that SISIS products have made a contribution to their easing their load!"

What do you like to do in your spare time?

"Amateur Radio and the usual spare-time pursuits, down the pub."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"On the Bacardi Beach in the Seychelles."

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

"Far too many to name individually – I am a very gregarious person!"

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

"Number 1."

Pick a number.

"Well I suppose it had better be my lucky number – 1."

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4. Jamie Redknapp
5. Phil Collins
6. Bernhard Langer
7. Basketball
8. Paula Radcliffe
9. Freddie Flintoff

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

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7	8	6	5	2	9	4	1	3
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3	6	1	9	4	5	2	7	8
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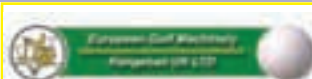
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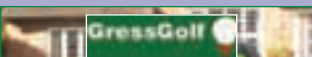
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Reigate Hill Golf Club, Gatton Bottom, Reigate, Surrey. RH2 0TU.
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Assistant Greenkeepers

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Must be able to deputise for the Course Manager in all aspects of the job and help take Thorpeness to the next level.
Closing date for applications is 25th May

Please apply in writing with full CV to:
Ian Willett, Course Manager, Thorpeness Hotel & Golf Club
Lakeside Avenue, Thorpeness, Suffolk IP16 4NH
Or e-mail Charlie@thorpeness.co.uk

The Hesketh Golf Club

Southport, venue of the R&A Junior Open Championship 2008, and the oldest golf club in Southport with a history of hosting National & International Championships have the opportunity to appoint a Head Greenkeeper.

The successful candidate will have:-

- Several years experience as a Head Greenkeeper looking to advance their career by moving to a high profile role.
- Qualified as a minimum to NVQ level 4 or equivalent in sports turf management and PA1 PA2 and PA* qualification.
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- Ability to manage resources, budgets with a thorough knowledge of all relevant legislation and can demonstrate effective implementation.
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- Able to communicate effectively with staff, members and committees through a variety of means.

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MOORTOWN GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

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There is a programme of architectural restoration in progress under the supervision of our golf course architect and the Club retains an eminent Consultant Agronomist.

This is a traditional private members' club which intends to appoint a new Head Greenkeeper due to the retirement of the present incumbent after 34 years in the position.

The successful candidate will work with the Club's Agronomist and the General Committee through the Chairman of Green and will ideally already have experience as a Head Greenkeeper, or be a Deputy Head Greenkeeper at a prominent golf course.

The necessary qualities are:

**Several years of golf course management experience • The relevant qualifications
Good people-management skills • Full Health & Safety, Environment Protection & COSHH skills
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Good communication skills**

This is a demanding role requiring someone of the highest ability who can maintain and develop a golf course of considerable reputation.

Salary and benefits will be subject to negotiation according to experience and qualifications.

**Applications with full CV by 31st May to the Secretary, Moortown Golf Club, Harrogate Road, Leeds, LS17 7DB
or email to rlimbert@moortown-gc.co.uk.**



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Founded in 1974, a well-established private members club with 400+ members. This 6283 yard, par 71 parkland course has an excellent reputation and is one of Renfrewshire's premier courses.

Applicants should be technically qualified in all aspects of greenkeeping and possess the necessary management skills to train, motivate and direct staff.

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Applications in writing and enclose full CV by 11th May 2007 to:
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Head Greenkeeper

Venue: Eden Course, St Andrews



A vacancy has arisen within our greenkeeping team for a Head Greenkeeper on the Eden Course at St Andrews Links.

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The position of Head Greenkeeper requires an enthusiastic, conscientious and self motivated professional with at least seven years' practical experience and good people management skills. Knowledge of the special demands a links environment places on greenkeepers would be advantageous.

Reporting to the Links Superintendent, the successful applicant will also be responsible for maintaining the 9 hole Balgove Course, a course specially designed with beginners, children and families in mind, which lies adjacent to the Eden, and will be expected to assist in preparations for events on other Links courses, including the Old Course.

We would expect the candidate to have NVQ/SVQ level 3 or HNC qualifications and any relevant safety certificates as well as being technically qualified in all aspects of greenkeeping including fully automated irrigation systems.

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Please apply in writing to: Ann Stuart, HR Manager, St Andrews Links Trust, Pilmour House, St Andrews. KY16 9SF.
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Please apply by sending a written application including full CV to:
Tracy Rees, Personnel Manager, Mere Golf & Country Club,
Chester Road, Mere, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6LJ
or email tracy@meregolf.co.uk

EAST BERKSHIRE GOLF CLUB

Deputy Course Manager

East Berkshire Golf Club, established a little over a century ago is located in the village of Crowthorne, a few miles from the Hampshire and Surrey borders. Originally a heathland course it has matured into a tree-lined course of great beauty. Golfers of all abilities leave the course with a desire to return and attempt to better their rounds, if only by a shot or two.

The Role

We are looking for a highly motivated, hard working, conscientious turf professional who can work within a dedicated team. You will be expected to deputise in the absence of the Course Manager, and be able to make contributions to the short, medium and long term maintenance to ensure the course keeps to the highest standard of presentation. You will be conversant with both modern and traditional turf culture practices, and be mechanically minded and competent in dealing with problems with machinery and irrigation systems, servicing and fault diagnosis.

Requirements

Qualified / working towards NVQ3; Have a minimum of 5 years greenkeeping experience; Hold PA1, PA2 & PA6 certificates; Have a sound knowledge of Health & Safety issues. The ability to play golf would be an advantage.

Salary negotiable according to experience/qualifications. (No accommodation available).

Please apply by sending a C.V. with a covering letter for the attention of:
The Secretary, East Berkshire Golf Club, Ravenswood Avenue, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6BD

Closing date for applications –8th June 2007

Deeside Golf Club

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Club Manager, Deeside Golf Club, Golf Road, Bielside, ABERDEEN AB15 9DL
or email to admin@deesidegolfclub.com

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GREENKEEPER REQUIRED

Applicants should have or be working towards NVQ Level 2 in Greenkeeping. Chemical Spraying and Chainsaw certificates would be desirable.

Applications will also be considered from persons with no formal qualifications, although a minimum of 3 years experience is required. **Salary is negotiable depending on qualifications and experience.**

Closing date for applications is 31st May 2007.

Please send letter of application and C.V to:

e Secretary, New North Manchester Golf Club Ltd, Manchester, Old Road, Rhodes, Middleton, Manchester M24 4PE
Or email C.V to tee@nmgc.co.uk

THE DUNNERHOLME GOLF CLUB

Applications for the position of

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Founded in 1905, this is a members club with over 450 members. It is a Par 72 links course, which has 10 greens and 18 tees. Dunnerholme Golf Course is part of the European Marine Conservation area and Site of Specific Scientific Interest.

Applicants should be technically qualified in all aspects of greenkeeping and have the necessary management skills to direct existing green staff.

The ability to manage resources and budgetary controls are required and also has a sound knowledge of Health & Safety Regulations.

Salary by negotiation according to qualifications, knowledge and experience.

Applications closing date Monday 18th June 2007
Applications in writing including full CV sent to:

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Applicants should be used to working within budgets and have a sound knowledge of Health & Safety regulations.

Salary is negotiable

Please apply in writing enclosing a CV to :
The Secretary,
Cavendish Golf Club,
Gadley Lane,
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Greenkeeping in the Spring



Who would be a Greenkeeper in the spring! Well we all are and have to contend the elements. As I sit here in early April in the sun, with the temperature in the low 70's I'm sure we will break yet another record, either it will be too dry or cold and, if not that, then too wet for our course to be at its best. They're all just weather, you know, and I'm sure our courses will survive what the weather has to throw at them, Surely greenkeeping is all about maximising your course's potential in any season or space in time. So why do we suffer an onslaught of criticism, especially at this time of the year when we should in fact be buoyed with winter going and spring springing? It is, in my opinion, impatience on the part of our friends, the golfers. They have just gone through the winter months of low daylight hours and mixed with, yes, some weather not best suited to the playing of golf. They can be a frustrated lot and, yes, it has to be said, hard to please.

Then The Masters was on the telly and we started to be the focus of their frustrations. Why is our course not like that? I was looking through web pages and reading of tales of woe about spring greens the other day. I had an email from one of my officials just after the Easter break – The course was good and the members were happy... "But the greens could do with some water. Of course, Billy, you should decide when to water subject to the nightly frost we have been having."

We can all, I'm sure, quote some special comments by our customer, the golfer, that would bring weight to the argument that the spring is a rocky, hellish bridge we would all like to cross as soon as possible, and get on with our business in the main playing part of the golfing season.

So what are we to do to make it an easier transition from the depths of winter to something better? Well I take strength from those cleverer than I in the art of greenkeeping. The first tip for success that springs to mind is good communications. They will always stand you in good stead and I'm sure help you through what could best be described as the crustaceous period we all suffer from in the spring, before active growth starts on our courses. A great place to start is, of course, with your course officials. Explain to them what, in fact, you have done to minimise the effects of a slow, cold start up to the growing season. Ask them for their support to ward off those ill-informed comments from your members or paying customers, but, most importantly, get their full support for any on course renovations that you have planned for the spring because once on board you are halfway there, with them as a fantastic communication link between yourself and your members.

Next on the communication list would be a form of newsletter to the members. Now I'm sure you're familiar with the old doctrine of if you want to keep a secret at your golf club then publish it on a notice board, because no bugger ever reads those. So you could explore the realms of online communications they have been, for the better part, a much more effective means of getting information across and have been, I would think, the best way forward in this modern age. Something we have used at Tyrrells Wood is a phone line message system that members can call on everyday and get an update on course conditions, weather reports and on course works for the day. It has been well received and been a valued communication channel both for my members, my staff and I to keeping everyone informed.

Our course information line has been so successful I'm often told that even if they are not in fact coming to the course to play, they still give it a call most mornings – with some lady members it's the first thing they do, even before getting out of bed.

I think the biggest problem I see when others are in conflict over spring golf, is one of poor communications at the club, it's not the course condition per say, as in most cases the courses are in fairly good nick, really it's just not what they think we can aspire to at this time of the year. So be brave, explain your plans and most of all share your passion with members and I'm sure the transition from spring to summer will pass in a much more pleasant fashion.

Another area that will help is, of course, a tidy golf course. So I work hard to make everything as tidy as possible and it's a fact that it has made my transition a better one, I read an article last week written by a clever man. He said be pro active, trim those bunkers to a high standard and tidy everything up before The Masters starts, then they don't have a leg to stand on - good advice I thought.

Next on the list is ill-timed operations on the course that are seen in the eyes of the golfer to be offensive and do in fact only compound our problems in the spring, so working with any prevailing weather conditions and with modern equipment and systems these days, we can still do any required works in keeping with the golfing calendar even in the spring. All that has to be agreed is when these works will, in fact, take place, keeping everyone's interests in mind for them to be more palatable, therefore achievable, with the net result of it being a win win situation. A master in my opinion is Chris Kennedy, at Wentworth, which has not only a major tournament in the spring but also in the autumn, and he and his team seem almost without exception to beat the weather and season's variables, maximising their potential and providing a first class golfing experience every time.

A timely lesson I think in the art of good greenkeeping and if you think it's good luck, well I'm minded to remember that old comment when a famous golfer was told he was lucky having won a tournament. "Yes" he said, the more I "practice" the luckier I seem to get. I'm sure we all wish Chris and his team lots of luck in the run up to the BMW and I can assure you all, they will be planning on securing lots of luck for themselves.

So, if we can master the art of communication I'm sure we will all have time to celebrate, rather than dread, this special time of year that makes up only part of the wonderful golfing experience we have to offer in the world of golf, here in the British Isles and around the world. You all do a great job. Have a great spring and summer, should be a piece of cake shouldn't it.

Billy McMillan
Chairman

Feature listing from May 2005

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

August 2006; Open Championship Review; Drainage; Burton GC Profile; Sustainability; Japan; ATVs; Trailers

September 2006; Building an Irrigation Lake; Toro Student of the Year Preview; Artificial Surfaces; Algae

October 2006; Trevoze GC Profile; Aeration; Utility Vehicles; Open Aftermath; Grinding Equipment

November 2006; National Championship; BIGGA Photographic Exhibition; Drainage Explained; Greens Brushing

December 2006; BIGGA Environment Competition Results; Harrogate Week Preview; Work Wear; Paths; Tyres

January 2007; Turfgrass training; Harrogate Week Preview; Grass selection; Think Ergonomically; Petrol complying; Marvellous Mowers; BIGGA in the USA

February 2007; Happy Harrogate; A Hand on the Controls; Pedestrian Mowers; Sustainable Solutions; Sunningdale Ladies GC Profile; No Introduction Necessary; Keeping it Green.

March 2007; Brighthouse Bay GC Profile; Landscaping Supplement; Organic Fertilisers; Greens Triples; Waste & Recycling; Bunker Building; Turf; A Growing Concern; Every Drop Counts.

April 2007; Best Peak Practice; Honey I shrunk the grass; Fairway mowers; Trip of a lifetime; Preventing disease; Its a lifestyle choice; Strike a pose; Algae.

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Tel: 01949 863239

Email: WakefieldYvette@JohnDeere.com

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