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- Toro Student of the Year
- Irrigation Replacement
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NOVEMBER | 2007



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Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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By Giles Wardle



Cover photograph by Steve Anstey of Lamplight
Photography Lamplight@Wakefield.net



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



Not a Bad Life Really

I've said it before but it bears saying again. There are times when I'd have just loved to have been a greenkeeper.

Just last month the programme for Harrogate Week was circulated and the buzz that is created by that one week in January is almost palpable. It would be great to have something similar in my walk of life – a week in the year when you can just immerse yourself in your job, meet friends and colleagues, attend workshops and seminars and do some business for the up-coming season. Sure there are journalistic equivalents but they are far more expensive and the chances of my meeting people I knew would be remote. The fine turf industry is just the right size and because so much of Harrogate Week's education is subsidised, costs are kept down and affordable and more people can justify attending every year – that, and the time of year, means a few days in North Yorkshire can be built into a timetable without the worry of too many traumas back home.

So you have Harrogate Week to enjoy but there is also so much more. I'm just back from the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, when around 85 of our members had the opportunity to play two of the finest courses to be found anywhere, in Dundonald Links and Kilmarnock Barassie, and enjoy yet another sociable few days. The great thing for the guys was that if they weren't playing with someone they already knew, they would have some new friends by the end of the round.

And that's just at National level. At Section and Region level there is so much going on as well, with some of the Sections, with the support of Headquarters, putting on their own high quality training courses. Next month, turkey trots will be in full swing up and down the country and wives and partners will be charged with picking up merry BIGGA members, some carrying ready plucked prizes, from clubhouses late into the evening. Yes it's a great life you guys lead.

Of course, I'm not ignoring the pressures you are under. I'm all too well aware of what is going on at golf clubs throughout the country and some of what you hear is truly shocking, but BIGGA's legal support services does a great job in assisting members with employment problems and gives you the best chance of a positive outcome.

However, much of what BIGGA stands for comes into its own in those times of adversity. There are the formal services in place to assist but the informal network of support is often the best form of comfort. A sympathetic ear over a quiet pint can often soothe some of the concerns and I can't think of another profession which offers up such support quite so readily.

As I said at the beginning, greenkeeping's not a bad life and there are times when I wouldn't mind swapping a laptop for a handmower.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

NEW FOR THE UK

Aquatrols and Farmura Environmental have formed, new for the UK distribution, Aquatrols water management products including market leading brands such as Revolution®, Primer®, Dispatch®, Aqueduct® and Fifty/90™.

"These two product ranges ideally complement each other and suit the growing environmental approach to greenkeeping," said Jonathan Harmer, Managing Director of Farmura,

Aquatrols products are well researched and their benefits are proven by greenkeepers in many countries with differing climates. With increasing concerns over the availability and cost of water Aquatrols Water Management products can make a major contribution to turf quality both on the greens, approaches and fairways. With the Aquatrols range of products, water management programmes can be preventative, curative or problem specific with application via sprayer, hand applicators or injected into irrigation systems.

"We are very pleased about the partnership with Farmura Environmental. After more than 25 years of working in the UK, our goal continues to be provision of excellent service and support for our distributor and end user customers. We are confident that this partnership is a positive development in that direction," said Tracy Jarman, President and CEO of Aquatrols

Aquatrols, based in Paulsboro, NJ, USA has been engaged for more than 50 years in the discovery, development and commercialisation of uniquely effective products and technologies that improve the rootzone environment and increase water and input efficiencies for better growing conditions. Aquatrols products are backed by research and technical support, and are available worldwide.

HARROGATE WEEK 2008

The Scottish Region once again offers their members a subsidised package deal for Harrogate Week 2008.



The Package includes: Entry to Continue to Learn Seminars (six in total), three nights Bed & Breakfast in en-suite twin rooms on 22nd, 23rd and 24th January, 2008 in the Holiday Inn (formerly Moat House Hotel).

Package cost: £236.00, accommodation package only: £164.00.

To obtain booking forms contact the Regional Administrator, Peter J.Boyd on 0141 616 3440 and 07776 242120 or email at pj.boyd@btinternet.com

ROYAL APPROVAL

HRH The Earl of Wessex visited JCB's World Headquarters recently to present a Queen's Award for International Trade to the company's Loadall Business Unit.

The JCB Loadall is the world's top-selling brand of telescopic handler. Last year, JCB became the first construction equipment manufacturer in the world to build 100,000 telehandlers.

The Prince was welcomed at the World HQ, in Rokester, Staffordshire, by schoolchildren from Dove First School and Rycroft Middle School, Rokester, and went on to meet employees during a tour of the factory. He then made the presentation to Matthew Taylor, JCB's Group Chief Operating Officer. He also made a special presentation to JCB employee Fred Egerton, one of nine people who have been with the business unit, formally known as JCB Materials Handling, since its formation in 1977.

The other eight men who have been with the Loadall Business Unit since its formation were also given mementoes afterwards. They were Kenny Kirkland (42 years service to JCB), of Tean, Frank Rowe (31 years), of Tean, Chris Chell (31 years), of Uttoxeter, Stuart Summers (30 years), of Uttoxeter, John Muirhead (30 years), of Ipstones, Eddie Press (34 years), of Uttoxeter, Dave Jones (33 years), of Cheadle, and Terry Brain (33 years), of Tean.

The Loadall Business Unit was among three within the JCB Group to be honoured with Queen's Awards for International Trade in 2007. The others were JCB Compact Products, of Cheadle, Staffordshire, and Wrexham-based International Transmissions Ltd, the third party sales arm of JCB Transmissions. In total, the JCB Group has won an impressive 21 Queen's Awards since its first in 1969.



JOHN DEERE IRRIGATION

John Deere has announced the expansion of John Deere Golf Irrigation to include selected John Deere dealers across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East next year, following the launch of the company in north America early last year. With the launch of a full range of golf heads, valves, control, sensing and communications systems John Deere believes that it will be offering a genuine alternative to Toro and Rainbird in the irrigation sector.

"We are pleased to offer this new product line to our golf customers," said David Thorne, Director of Sales and Marketing at the press launch in Mannheim, Germany.

"Up to now our customers in this region of the world have been offered limited irrigation products and solutions and we believed that coupled with John Deere's industry leading equipment we will have the ability to provide comprehensive solutions for golf and turf industry professionals.



As part of the Feedback event being run in Germany during September Course Managers were given a demonstration of the new John Deere irrigation equipment, which provides remote, web-based monitoring, the Aurora Intelligent Controls, troubleshooting, performance monitoring and service scheduling.

Graham Williams is co-ordinating the European launch of John Deere Irrigation and has been in discussions with irrigation consultants and contractors. Product and service will be provided through John Deere's 44 dealers, who are currently receiving extensive training he believes will give the customer excellent service.

Around 700 greenkeepers and groundsmen from 37 different countries and five continents attended John Deere's Customer Feedback event in Germany in September with the opportunity to view and comment on the latest and potential developments to the John Deere product range. The main purpose of the event is to give customers the chance to experience personally new products and technology on the golf course.

The majestic St Leon-Rot Golf Club, host to the Deutsche Bank/SAP Open previously won by Tiger Woods, was the venue with six Stations each displaying a different array of new or developmental machinery to view. Once they'd been shown what it could do customers provided feedback to the on-site engineering team by filling out survey questionnaires and discussing any issues which arose.

"The size and diversity of this programme accurately reflects John Deere's growing global commitment to the golf and turf industry," said David Thorne, Director, Sales and Marketing for Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

"We are honoured to be hosting this event in Europe and we are taking every opportunity to demonstrate John Deere's global capabilities to our attendees," he added.

As well as the on course feedback every guest was treated to an extensive guided trip around the Mannheim plant to witness the production of John Deere machinery and enjoyed a superb dinner in the new training facility at the plant.

CUBS CAUSE GOLF MAYHEM

A family of foxes is putting on a show for golfers at a Surrey golf course – and their amusing antics are proving to be a hole lot of fun for members and staff.

Two foxes and five cubs have set up home close to the clubhouse at Addington Court Golf Centre and they've taken to using the course and its facilities as a playground.

Hogging the bonnets of the golf buggies for a spot of sunbathing and sneaking out of the bushes to steal players' balls is all par for the course at the Featherbed Lane, Croydon, complex.

Glen Halsey, Addington Court Golf Centre General Manager, said: "The foxes are extremely cheeky, but very cute and people-friendly. They don't mind at all that there are golfers walking and playing within yards of them. In fine weather the cubs can be spotted sunbathing on the buggies or larking about on the greens. They're just like a bunch of rowdy teenagers."

Like many other players at the club, Glen has fallen foul of the foxes' penchant for pinching balls.

"I was enjoying a round with our Food and Beverage Manager, Michael Matthews, and I had just landed a ball on the 9th green when one of the fox cubs legged over and ran off with it into the bushes," Glen said.

Michael went in hot pursuit of his boss' ball and couldn't believe his eyes when he scrambled into the undergrowth.

Said Michael: "I went to fetch the ball and instead of just one I found 30 in the bushes.

"The youngsters are just like dogs playing fetch – but unfortunately they don't bring the ball back again. They hide them instead!" Glen admits he has received some complaints from club members about the foxes' ball-stealing.

"Fortunately, they've been light-hearted and players don't really mind. In fact they often stop during a round of golf to watch the cubs playing. The foxes have caused a bit of damage by digging up the greens, but nothing we can't easily put right and there's no inconvenience for players.

"We reckon the youngsters are about four to five months old and will be moving on soon - so everything should get back to normal," he added.

Addington Court Golf Centre is one of the top golfing venues in Southern England, boasting an 18-hole championship course, a further 18-hole course, a nine-hole course, and an 18-hole pitch and putt, all located in picturesque parkland. It is also an Official Venue for PowerPlay Golf. The centre also features two golf shops and excellent teaching facilities for players of all abilities in addition to an attractive function room.

NEW RECRUIT

Scotts has demonstrated its commitment to making further investment in Ireland with the appointment of Colman Warde to the new position of Area Sales Manager for the Republic of Ireland.



A well-known face in the industry, Colman brings a great deal of experience to the role. For the past nine years he has been with Scotts' distributor partner in Ireland, National Agrochemical Distributors Limited, where he was both Technical Manager and Technical Area Sales Manager. He also has a Diploma in Commercial Horticulture and has developed a strong technical reputation with key professional end-users in Ireland, which will help to further develop and grow the company's business in the area.

ROAD SHOW

DLF Trifolium, are running a series of seminars titled "Practical Sustainability" to help turf managers achieve a quality, sustainable turf surface. The seminars, the next one being held at Wilmslow Golf Course on October 23rd, will demonstrate the benefits and use of more frequent overseeding within any prudent turf management programme.

The events will cover all aspects including: Why oversow and which grass? - Derek Smith, DLF Trifolium; Creating a receptive rootzone - Martin Ward, Symbio; Effective overseeding (practical) - Keith Kensett, R & K Kensett; Primo Maxx – Simon Barnaby, Syngenta; Managing for a quality sward - Andy Cole, Henry Bechelet, S.T.R.I.

The events will be free of charge but numbers will be limited, therefore tickets will be on a first come, first served basis. The course is recognised by BIGGA and greenkeepers will qualify for points towards Master Greenkeeper/3 CPD professional credits. The event will start at 9am and finish at 2.30pm.

Please contact us on the details below if you are interested in attending. Tel: 01386 791102, Email: amenity@dlf.co.uk or visit www.dlf.co.uk/amenity

NEW RECRUIT

Kawasaki Motors UK has appointed a new District Manager. Recent recruit, David Edwards, will be exclusively catering for the company's commercial products dealer network within the North of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.





NEW APPOINTMENTS

Toro distributor Lely UK has made a number of appointments aimed at further improving its customer sales and technical expertise and helping address calls for the creation of more apprenticeships in the turf machinery industry.

Simon Gale has joined in the newly-created role of Key Accounts Support. He works in tandem with the service department, and is responsible for liaising with Key Accounts Manager, Trevor Chard, providing him with technical support for Toro's large machinery fleet customers.

Meanwhile, in a move to help address the turf machinery industry's need for more apprentices, Lely has started its own Apprenticeship Training Scheme with the recruitment of five trainees from Cambridgeshire. Dean Rook, 18, is from Papworth; while Andrew Ireland, 16, Sam Drew, 19, Laurence Moody, 17, and Adam Hubbard, 17, all hail from St Neots.

The five work across Lely's many departments, learning about all aspects of the distributor's business. The apprenticeship mixes academic, workshop and field experience into a superb work package lasting four years. Students can attain a Grade 3 NVQ in Engineering. Writtle College, in Essex, is Lely's partner in the initiative.

Three of the new Lely apprentices, from left, Dean Rook, Andrew Ireland and Laurence Moody



Call to discuss your requirements: 01883 344244

Email: info@eagle.uk.com Website: www.eagle.uk.com



INNOVATION IN IRRIGATION

A new company, Enviropro h2o, has been formed – it claims to be environmentally aware of the importance of managing water effectively within the fine turf industry and is committed to the needs of its customers and clients as well as the continued professional development of its staff.

Heading the company are two familiar faces who got together to serve a perceived need: Simon Leathley is Operations Director with 15 years irrigation engineering experience at both Wright Rain and Par 4; Duncan McGilvray is Managing Director with more than 37 years experience in golf greenkeeping/course management, as well as experience in commercial, health & safety and advisory management.

A key policy of the new company will be to give free helpful advice with no obligation on all aspects of irrigation needs with the company's website giving visitors the opportunity to sign up for a free regular e-newsletter.

OUTING

The BIGGA East Section held their Autumn Outing at Ratho Park GC recently, with 24 golfers in attendance. Weather conditions were ideal and as a result the golf scores were good. Our thanks go to Ratho Park for granting us courtesy of the course, the catering staff for keeping everybody well fed and watered and last but certainly not least to Tom, Billy and the team for presenting the course in excellent condition.



The golf results are as follows: Best Scratch – S. Cunningham 75; 1.1 T Murray, 75-7-68; 1.2 C. McArthur, 76-6-70; 2.1 R. Murdoch, 85-12-73; 2.2 C. Yeaman, 86-12-74; 3.1 S. Dixon, 92-19-73; 3.2 B. Hudson, 101-24-77; Best Nett - T. Murray 75-7-68; Veteran - A. Holmes, 77-3-74; Trade Prize - H Fraser (Huxleys), 69-3-66; Longest Drive - C. McArthur; Nearest the Pin at 15th - G. White.

Mike Dooner

ELLON PRO-AM

The Ellon Pro-Am, situated east of Scotland between Aberdeen and Peterhead, was held recently.



Team Daval: L to R: James Peace, Paul Lawrie, Brian Hunter and John Geddes

The Ellon Pro-Am is one of the oldest in Britain and was in its 20th year this year. Paul Lawrie played and drew a large crowd with him. A good day was had by all and few drams passed over the lips for good measure.

The team pictured would like to thank Alec Cruickshank, from Daval, for his sponsorship on the day.

NEW DEPOT MANAGER

Rolawn have appointed Steve Pilcher as Manager at their Sevenoaks Depot.

Philip Cuthbert, Commercial Director commented "Steve has a strong background in customer service and logistics and is keen to use his skills to build on our success. Our customers have increasingly high expectations, and achieving customer satisfaction is a key objective in our drive to build on our market leading position."



NEW HEAD GREENKEEPER

Norwood Park Golf Course Ltd recently welcomed Grant Lee as their new Head Greenkeeper.

Although Grant will only be 28 this month, he has already had considerable experience in the greenkeeping sphere. Starting his career at the prestigious Huddersfield (Fixby) Golf Club in 1997, he has been Deputy Course Manager at Leeds Golf Club, and Head Greenkeeper at Midgley Lodge Hostel and Golf Course, Yorkshire. He has also spent an 18 month internship at East Lake Golf Club, USA, where he gained valuable experience in the day-to-day management of a very exclusive golf club ranked 60th in the USA by Golf Digest.

SOUTH EAST REGION TEAM CHALLENGE

The South East Region has held its inaugural team challenge, sponsored by Ernest Doe and Sons, recently.

Teams from Essex, Surrey and Sussex took part in this the first of many we hope, aimed a joining fellow greenkeepers in a game of golf and a chance to meet and discuss the merits of our profession.

On a windy day at the end of September, the teams congregated in North Essex at Colne Valley Golf Club. The course was in excellent condition and the golf was well organised, with teams of eight players going out in three's.

With the lead switching from Section to Section towards the end of the day, Colne Valley's fine scoring system with a screen in the club house kept those around the bar up to date with the scores as the players arrive from the course. A last ditch move by Essex pushed their noses in front to producing a fine win for the home side, the team captained by Nick Gates were honoured to take the trophy and look forward to the next year's matches.

Results: 1st Essex, 224pts; 2nd Sussex, 215pts; 3rd Surrey, 199pts; Nearest the Pin in two (7th Hole) Andy Cracknell, Essex; Nearest the Pin (17th Hole) Dan Beard, Sussex.

BUTTERFLIES, MOTHS AND GOLF COURSES

This book has been devised as a practical guide to golf course management. The needs of butterflies and moths are described together with the different habitats likely to be found on the golf course. Management techniques are explained in order to encourage the growth of a variety of food plants to attract as many species of butterfly and moth as possible. By increasing the variety of food plants and establishing shelter and over-wintering sites, the number of butterflies and moths can dramatically increase. Potential habitats include grassland, woodland, wetland and hedgerows. Also included is an identification guide for 20 of our regularly seen butterflies and a few day flying moths. The life cycles of the species covered is included together with a habitat 'threats and actions' list.



The book is available from the Cheshire and Peak District Branch of Butterfly Conservation at a cost of £5.95 plus 75p post and packing.

For more information please contact: Brian Cornelius on Tel: 01270 842363 or email: brian.cornelius44@tiscali.co.uk

PARKS AND GROUNDS OPEN DAY

At their recent Open Day at Dorridge Cricket Club in Warwickshire, Parks and Grounds Machinery Ltd of Bidford-on-Avon, invited in the region of 200 people not only to come and see their wide product range but also have specially arranged guest speakers, in conjunction with excellent hospitality. A lot of time, trouble and energy by the PGM directors and staff had gone into the preparations for this day and the attendance was encouraging.

One of the guest speakers for the day – Steve Rouse, from Edgbaston CCG – had, because of his long association with PGM, been happy to come along and support them, but was unable to attend after all due to a sudden vital commitment at the ground. But John Deere were there, as ever, to help out, in this case with Maurice Tomkinson presenting the astonishing array of statistics as to their parts supply capability via their UK, Germany and American bases.

The other speaker for the day was equally as interesting and fact-based. Paul Woodham is an extremely dedicated Course Manager at Gay Hill Golf Club, Birmingham, and certainly showed the complexity and science that lies behind the golf turf maintenance calendar. But an equally interesting aspect was his explanation as to how his profession does not lose sight of global awareness. Their gradual introduction of a policy of reduced chemical involvement and with the movement towards longer cut grass blade length was extremely interesting and encouraging.



NEW KUBOTA WEBSITE GOES LIVE

Renowned Japanese Global Tractor and Groundcare machinery manufacturer, Kubota, is delighted to announce the recent launch of its new website: www.kubota.co.uk

Designed and developed as the ultimate resource for customers, dealers and industry professionals, the new website boasts in depth product and specification information, simple and intuitive navigation, and a slick design.

“The new website is very easy to use, ensuring information can be accessed quickly and easily. In addition to the obvious facelift, the new site offers far more content regarding the Kubota machines, providing an information rich resource for those who want to know more” commented Kubota UK Tractor & Groundcare Marketing Co-ordinator Rhian Kendall.

Substantially more powerful than the previous site, Kubota’s new website incorporates a host of new features including a Quick Address Look Up Dealer Locator and with additional search facilities, finding the information you require couldn’t be easier.

Dynamic contact forms have been incorporated to further enhance communication, ensuring enquiries are channelled to the relevant departments immediately.

TERRAIN AERATION DISCOUNT

Terrain Aeration is offering a 15% discount to all BIGGA Members, with immediate effect.

The discount is applicable to all members of the Association on production of a current Membership card, and covers Terrain Aeration’s specialist, 1-metre deep compressed air aeration/ de-compaction treatment of fine and amenity turf, and around tree roots.

For further details contact Terrain Aeration on Tel: 01449 673783, Email: terrainaeration@aol.com or visit the Membership section of the BIGGA website: www.bigga.org.uk



HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE

In this article David Golding, GTC's Education Director, explains why the GTC invested in reviewing the Health & Safety Guidance booklet and how you can access the revised information

I don't know of many people in life who at some time or another have made a negative comment about Health & Safety legislation!

We have all had a spit at the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) at some time or another however, a short time ago I visited its Headquarters and enjoyed the experience!

Yes, the staff are friendly, real people who are regularly at the brunt of media jibes or blames for much of the disruption in the country.

Whether it's the wrong types of leaves on the train tracks or school closures due to snow and children have dared to start a slide on the ice, it seems it is always blamed on the HSE.

Well I have to say I came out of the meeting with a fresh approach and certainly a better understanding of the role of the HSE.

We all know that whether it is in the above examples, Network Rail or the school, somebody somewhere has made a decision based on safety grounds or more likely the fear of litigation.

So let us have a look at our "own house" the golf course. So many H&S issues to consider from greenkeepers maintenance facilities to the safe use of machinery, to dangerous holes to course closures, the list is endless.

What the GTC did in 1993 was to raise the awareness of H&S on the golf course by producing a booklet specific for our sector in association with HSE staff.

It quickly became a best seller and certainly helped employers, employees and local authority environmental officers understand the key areas within golf course maintenance and management, however, in hindsight there was still plenty of work to be done by the employers and the employees at every golf club to put in place good working practices including developing a Health & Safety Policy.

I remember Jon Allbutt, the GTC's H&S advisor stating several years after we had produced the guidance booklet that when asking for a show of hands at EGU seminars the majority of delegates had all bought, or at least seen, a copy of the guidance but to date had not put in place their own systems and policy. He said that many employers had welcomed the booklet but saw it as a lifebelt that if hung up on the wall then that ensures everything is in place should an accident occur!

Well despite that observation many golf clubs now have an up to date H&S Policy in place and thankfully we (sports turf) do not figure highly on the radar of the enforcement officers within local authorities.

We do receive reports on purges occasionally in an area but due to the

very low numbers of reported accidents and incidents other industries seem to attract more attention.

I do not want to portray an "everything in the garden is rosy" picture! Many near misses go unreported and only serious accidents receive immediate attention and there have been a few prosecutions. The GTC wants to assist the employers and employees it represents by way of giving everybody the correct information and guidance to ensure a safe working environment and a safe golf course for golfers to enjoy.

The revised Guidance notes have been developed by the GTC H&S advisors and they have the HSE's endorsement.

The HSE, while encouraging industries to develop their own guidance notes, go to great lengths to emphasise that they are developed by industry, for industry.

With these guidance notes, the GTC hopes that there is far more assistance to readers through links and information to allow them to minimise risks for staff, golfers and the public.

The guidance notes are available on-line through the GTC website and when viewed alongside the BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System (available through their respective websites) we sincerely hope we are again giving golf club employers and greenkeepers the tools to use appropriately at their golf club.

Let us keep working together to improve greenkeepers workplace welfare and also ensure employers meet their legislative responsibilities.

H&S does not need to be an unnecessary evil, accidents will happen but let's hope we in golf can continue to act in a responsible manner.

Visit

www.the-gtc.co.uk

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David Golding may be contacted on Email: david@the-gtc.co.uk or Tel: 01347 838640

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Sami Collins updates us on Learning and Development matters



Time is marching on towards January and Harrogate Week. Rachael and I are now in full swing processing bookings for the Continue to Learn Education Programme that are arriving via post, telephone and the web.



Supported by the John Deere Team Championship and the GTC, we are featuring five new workshops on the 2008 programme:

Managing Relationships at Work

I am sure we all have relationships with work colleagues that could be described as 'challenging'. This two-day workshop will examine those relationships in an engaging, interactive and enjoyable way. Focusing on what makes us tick, personal effectiveness, building rapport, teamwork and conflict resolution this workshop aims to help resolve issues and create a more harmonious working environment.

Managing the Golf Course Better

Do you want to understand how the business of managing a golf course is achieved? Look no further, this one-day workshop, presented by Laurence Pithie MG, Group Golf Courses Manager with Crown Golf, will reveal a route you can follow. Looking at the Golf Club, the Course Managers Role, Basic Planning, Implementation and Setting Up Systems, this workshop will provide you with a strategy to take back to your workplace.

Stress Awareness

Would you like to enhance your wellbeing and your personal effectiveness at work and at home? The purpose of this one-day workshop, presented by a qualified Stress Management Consultant, is to provide participants with the knowledge and awareness to identify and manage their own stress levels and to help them recognise the causes and effects of stress in others.

The Minefield of Appraisals!

Is it appraisal time again? Why do we have appraisals? What use are they? Are these questions you hear every time the 'A' word is mentioned? This informative one-day workshop aims to improve the understanding and the importance of appraisals, how to conduct them and how to use the outcomes to make a difference.

The Disturbance Theory

The Disturbance what? Henry Bechelet, Turfgrass Agronomist with the STRI, will reveal all, in what promises to be an entertaining and enlightening one-day workshop. Guest speakers will discuss practical greenkeeping for the modern age, managing growth, surface preparations without compromise, disturbance theory around the world and the 2007 Open at Carnoustie.

Remember, places are limited on all of the workshops so book now to avoid disappointment.

Full details of the Continue to Learn Education Programme can be found in 'The Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week' brochure or by visiting the Harrogate Week website www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

Toro Student of the Year Award 2007

Congratulations must go to the eight student greenkeepers who attended the National Final of the Student of the Year at BIGGA HQ on 16 & 17 September. All eight candidates represented the greenkeeping profession to the highest standard.



The 2007 Toro Student of the Year Award was won by Avon Bridges, Head Greenkeeper at Luton Hoo Golf Club who was representing Oaklands College. The runners-up were Lewis Birch from Abbeydale Golf Club, representing Askham Bryan College and Simon Lambert from Seaford Head Golf Club, representing Plumpton College.

Full details of the final can be found in this magazine.

Membership



VANESSA DEPRE UPDATES US ON MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Focus on the BIGGA Website:

On the BIGGA website you will find a host of information including events, job vacancies, discussion boards and useful tools for your career.

As a member you will be able to network with others in your profession by exchanging ideas, opinions and giving each other advice on the greenkeepers' bulletin boards, reserved for BIGGA Members only.

There is always an up to date list of greenkeeping jobs on the website. You can also place an advert on our jobs section if you are looking for a job. There is a reduced rate for BIGGA Members to place an advert.

The BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System is a proactive tool used to identify and control hazards and to reduce risks to prevent injury to golf club members, visitors and employees. It is only available to BIGGA Members through the website.

Also only available to our Members on the BIGGA website is the Training Manual. It explains how to introduce a Training and Development Plan, offers guidance on the types of education and training available and provides information on training providers, national standards and qualifications.

Take the strain out of those tricky calculations with our easy to use Website Calculator and access four-day weather reports so you know if you'll be prepared come rain or shine.

The BIGGA shop can be accessed on the website, and don't forget that our Members get a 10% discount on all clothing.

The Events Section will keep you up to date with what is up and coming in your Section, including golf days and seminars.

For more information on any of the above call us on: 01347 833800 and select Option 1.

Thank You

Big thanks to Mr John Rogers from South Wales for making an extra donation on top of his usual Gold Key donation, to the BIGGA Training and Development Fund.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF GREENS AERATION

By Bruce Jamieson

After one of the wettest summers on record, combined with the golfer's desire for improved putting surfaces, the need for aeration has increased substantially. Clearly something must give: if aeration is postponed until late autumn, the players may be appeased. However, limited or no recovery will occur during periods of low temperatures, causing frustration for golfers as the greens will take longer to recover.

You can almost hear the cry: "Why can't the head greenkeeper leave the greens alone?" The answer is that, though the need for aeration is extremely difficult to justify when the greens are looking great, if neglected the resulting problems will slowly increase and the greens will start to deteriorate.

But before aerating the greens course managers must decide what needs to be achieved through this disruptive process, as all too often the wrong operation is implemented just because it was done in previous years.



Assessment of the greens will indicate the course of action required. If the problem is compaction, and the rootzones are of a high quality with limited thatch, Verti-draining with a small amount of lift or heave would be the correct approach. This is in preference to hollow coring, which removes a core of material to allow soil improvement. But if the thatch layer has increased during the summer months, as it has on many courses this year, then hollow tining may be the best course of action as it will remove some of the organic build-up and allow new rootzone material to be inserted into the thatch layer. This increases microbial action and helps to break thatch down.

It is important to recognize that aeration replaces cultivation of the soil in its true sense. Farmers will always turn the soil between crops to relieve compaction and redistribute nutrients evenly throughout the profile. Unfortunately, this type of exercise would be too costly and disruptive to the golfing calendar.

However, during the late 50s and early 60s it was commonplace in Scotland for head greenkeepers to remove the turf from two or three greens during the winter and dig the rootzone material over to a depth of 250-300mm. This material was then made firm, by using the heel and tread method, prior to raking and was done at least three times to ensure the material was evenly consolidated.

Surface levels may have also been adjusted or amended at this point. The turf was placed upside down in a box and the thatch and soil was

cut away to ensure that all of the turves were of a uniform thickness, following which the greens were then re-laid and top-dressed.

Some head greenkeepers apparently were able to boast that three greens could be done each winter without the members realising! However the volume of play was probably not as great then as it is now and certainly members today would not accept this type of disruption. This kind of operation was implemented before the advent of hollow tine and aeration machines. Things have moved on, thank heavens!

With the various tines available for aeration, it can be difficult to decide upon the correct course of action. It is important that, following each operation, the decision makers assess the effectiveness of tine selection and adjust future operations accordingly. Many resort to using 8mm hollow tines during the summer to remove thatch build-up and increase nutrient and water penetration. These small holes are extremely difficult to fill uniformly and sometimes result in uneven surfaces that require additional applications of top-dressing. Although more disruptive, 12-15mm tines create holes that can be filled uniformly and, if timed correctly, recovery can be achieved within seven days.

Cross, slit and chisel tines, which create small incisions in the surface with minimum disturbance, would be the best choice for summer aeration. These tines increase gas exchange within the profile, improve nutrient penetration into the soil and aid the removal of surface and subsurface water. It is doubtful whether these operations in themselves will relieve compaction substantially, but the act of moving the soil will encourage new roots to develop and help reduce Black Layer if present.

Over the years I have seen many aeration ideas come in and go out of fashion. For example, in the early 70s, Sisis developed a pedestrian aeration machine called the Autocrat, which would hollow tine a green to a depth of four inches (100mm) with half-inch (12mm) hollow tines. It



would take one man approximately one to one-and-a-half hours to aerate a green and another hour for two men to collect the cores. Aerating greens with this machine was a slow process compared to the speed at which it can be achieved today.

Then in the mid-80s development moved towards tractor-mounted aeration machines with the Core Master being the forerunner to today's machines. Recently Toro has launched the pedestrian ProCore 648 greens aerator (see picture), which can aerate 18 greens in less than a day, providing you can collect the cores quickly enough.

Scarifying in the early 70s was implemented with a machine called a Bluebird. This could be set to penetrate to a depth of 20mm into the green with blades spaced at approximately 20mm apart. This operation became unfashionable through the 90s but has been resurrected with today's Graden machines and a phrase called 'linear aeration'.

A machine that was very popular for several years was the Subair, a pedestrian vibrating mole plough that could be fitted with three blades up to 225mm deep. I remember once visiting St Andrews during the early 80s when Walter Woods had used this machine, in two directions, on the Old Course greens and the greens had been cut into neat cubes. Fortunately this was during the autumn and the turf recovered quickly. Newer versions of this machine have come and gone over the years and will, I am sure, reappear in the future.

Aeration is the most important operation that can be implemented on a golf course and there are few procedures that produce as many benefits for the grass. (See Table.)

THE BENEFITS OF AERATION

- restructures deflocculated soils
- reduces compaction
- improves surface and subsurface drainage
- breaks down thatch by increasing microbial action
- reduces Black Layer
- increases aerobic microbes, which increases root development and improves drought-resistance
- reduces dry patch
- allows top-dressing to be incorporated into thatch and soil without layering
- increases overall health of the turf

Aeration must be implemented regularly throughout the year at varying depths to deliver all of the benefits shown in the Table. It is evident that many courses in Britain use three main types of aeration:

- **Verti-draining, with a small amount of heave set on the machine, once during winter with 19mm tines to a depth of 300mm**
- **Hollow tining once or twice a year with 12-15mm diameter tines to a depth of 100-125mm**
- **Slit, chisel or cross tining at various depths throughout the year**

The debate on 'sustainable golf' hinges heavily on aeration, sensible use of water, fertilisers, fungicides, pesticides and so on. Aeration helps the grass develop deep roots that, in turn, will ensure that the



grass is in a healthy condition when adverse weather conditions occur. The constant wet weather of this summer will have resulted in more compaction on most greens, because water acts like a lubricant in assisting the movement of small clay particles within the soil to block up the pore spaces.

A combination of Verti-draining and hollow tining will be required to reduce deep compaction and remove thatch build up. I would recommend that these operations are implemented one after the other – ie, Verti-drain with 19mm tines to a depth of 225mm and then hollow tine with 12mm tines to a depth of 100mm. Hollow tining will close up most of the Verti-drain holes and recovery will occur within the normal timeframe despite two disruptive operations being implemented together.

Once the cores have been removed, top-dressing should be applied to fill in the holes. It is important that these operations are implemented when the soils are moist, but not waterlogged, as there is no benefit if the holes remain full of water for several weeks.

Ideal conditions in which to aerate are when the soil is dry and friable.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce Jamieson is an agronomist who runs his own consultancy, and is well known in the greenkeeping industry.



The importance of raking bunkers is demonstrated here at the Open Championship 2007

SAND SAVERS

By Scott MacCallum

Golfers today now expect a perfect surface from which to play their bunker shots so a good quality rake is now a necessity.

Bunkers have been a golfing hazard for as long as the game has been played and they have struck fear into the hearts of many who would rather execute their Vardon grip on a hot poker than a sand wedge.

But most professionals will tell you that bunker play is not that difficult and they would miss the green in the sand than in the rough as they would normally back themselves to get up and down.

For that reason bunkers have become a very emotive golfing issue as the top players have tended to forget that bunkers are indeed a hazard and that automatic recovery should be a given. Think back to press coverage you've read and invariably the sand has been too deep, the bunker not firm enough, the sand the wrong type, the base too flat, bunker not raked well enough etc etc etc.

Of course in the old days bunkers were indeed hazards and going into one really did mean a shot dropped. Oakmont GC, scene of Angel Cabrera's US Open win this year, used to be known for its rutted bunkers – deep grooves carved into the bunker sand by specially devised rakes

guaranteeing a tough old time for anyone misfortunate, or unskilled, enough to find them.

But times have changed and greenkeepers give priority to ensuring bunkers are kept in as perfect a condition as they can be and anyone who doesn't rake a bunker once they've played out is considered the golfing equivalent of a pariah.

So rakes are now an important element of a golf course's furniture and the need for effective rakes capable of doing the job has never been greater.

"In the early days, golf bunker sand was smoothed after use by the player upon leaving the hazard by means of using the back of his sand wedge and/or his foot in most cases," said Andrew Cornes, Managing Director of Acorn Golf

"Over the past 20 to 25 years there has been an insurgence of rakes for sand that have appeared in bunkers all over the world. Which one and for which type of sand has always been a point of debate, with golf committees, club management, players and members alike."

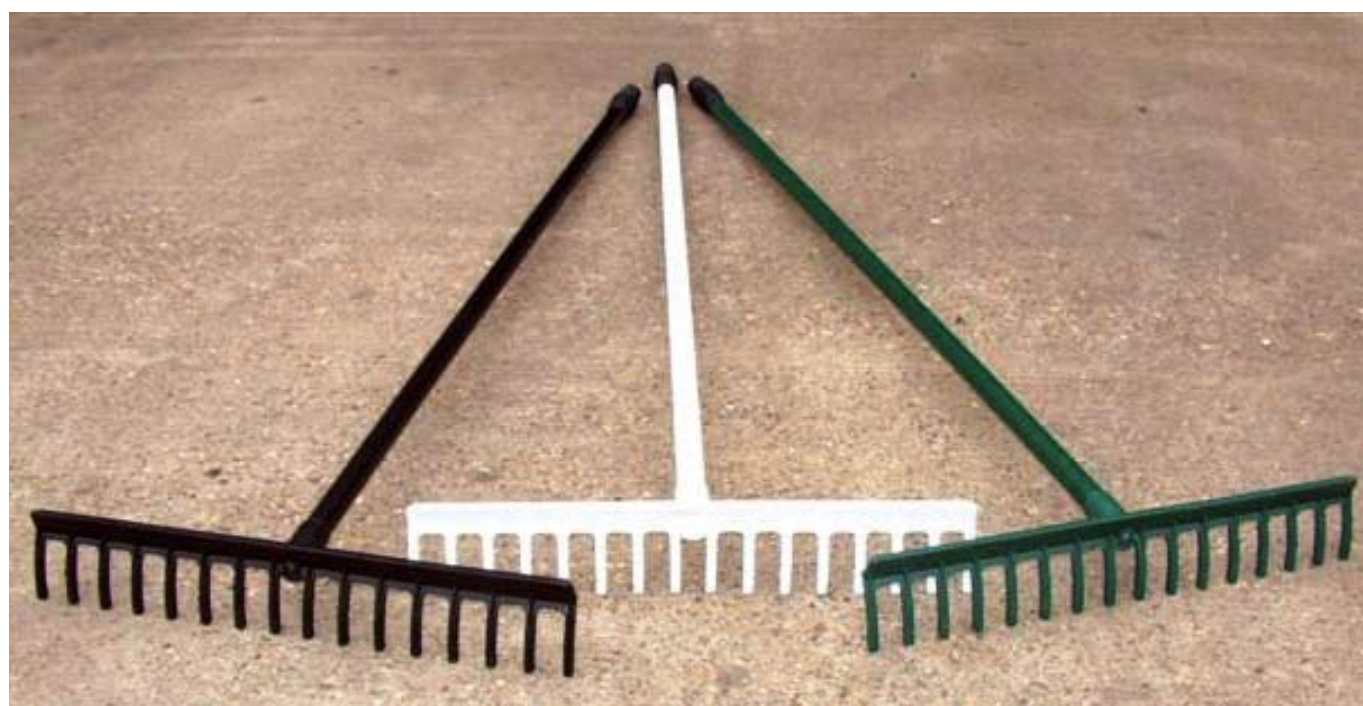
Andrew has spent more time than most attempting to solve the conundrum.

“A few years back, in 2003 to be exact, from a debate at the GCSAA show in Atlanta, I wrote an article about preferences on design and manufacture of bunker rake’ it covered short teeth; long teeth; no teeth; flat; curved; flexible; rigid rakes that would tiller sand as well as smoothing sand. Then we looked at which handle is best for players to use - short; bent; flexible shaft design etc.

“On compiling all this data, and along with BMS in manufacture we came up ‘one rake head’ that had covered most of the things everyone involved wanted from a members/greenkeepers or club bunker rake,” he explained.

“To simplify the supply and to cover all needs we decided to produce this head in a ABS polyethelene which is virtually unbreakable, but supply three different colour options for different environments and a choice of three shaft/ handle options to cover all budgets, wood for the lower end to lightweight aluminium for the higher end,” said Andrew adding that these had become the company’s best selling rake.

Thanks to Acorn Golf sales@acorn-golf.com and BMS info@bms-europe.co.uk for their assistance in putting this article together



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A modern zero tail-swing excavator is designed to enable it to work in a confined space. It will not do a better job than a used example, but represents what you might get from a hire company

MINI-EXCAVATORS: A TOOL FOR ALL SEASONS

By James de Havilland

Tracked mini-excavators can be really useful on a golf course. Suitable for digging out and clearing ditches through to helping in bunker repairs or even levelling gravel in a car park, a mini-excavator often finds itself out working far more than would initially have imagined. This is all well and good, but how much do these machines cost and is it better to hire or buy one?

Although the size of the excavator will ultimately determine how much it will cost to hire, a small 1.0 tonne machine that can dig down to a depth of 1800mm will cost about £65 a day or £200 a week plus delivery at perhaps £125. A nominal 5.0 tonne model will cost nearer £100 a day or £350 per week with transport starting at much the same £125. The larger machine will have much greater capacity and dig a lot deeper, but for most jobs around a golf course, the smaller machine should be fine; there are, of course, models in between, all of which will typically do much the same type of general-purpose work around the course.

Most hire companies will supply the machine with three buckets, two for digging and a wider ditch bucket. Other attachments can be supplied, to include soil augers and hydraulic hammers. As a guide, these items will cost upwards of £100 a day or £300 a week to hire. Soil augers can be supplied with a choice of flight diameters, including larger diameters that can be ideal for preparing holes for tree and shrub planting. So when hiring an auger to put in fence posts, try and extend its use by also using it for some planting work.

These aforementioned hire rates, which are intended as an outline guide as opposed to representing hard and fast prices, are pretty reasonable if the machine in question is worked hard during the hire period. Hire companies, however, make most of their money on machines that are hired out but actually spend much of their time parked up. So it pays to plan the excavator's usage to maximise upon its hire value.

It is this planning issue that can be a problem. All it takes is for someone to be off sick, the weather to change or some other demand to raise its head and everything can get upset. It is not unusual to find a hire machine is not used as much as intended and then for it to be in demand just as the hire lorry turns up to take it back. If a project needs completing but there is no fixed time in which it can be done, it can make sense to consider a different approach; buying a used machine.

This may seem a bit of overkill, but used mini-excavator prices, sourced from a dealer, will start at £5 to 6,500 for a tidy 1.5 tonne capacity machine. An equivalent 3.0 and 5.0 tonne model will be priced from £8,200 and £12,400 respectively. These are entry level dealer prices, but will secure a machine with a set of buckets and a full dealer pre-sale service and check. Although this is a fair chunk of money for a non-essential item of kit, selling the machine on once it has done its job should be easy enough. If the machine is cared for, its residual value after six months on a golf course could well be pretty close to what was paid for it. This makes buying a good alternative to hire.

When considering a used buy, it can pay to look for a model from a better known supplier such as JCB, Kubota or Volvo to name just three. These will make a sound choice because they tend to have good parts support and it is always easier to sell a machine with a recognised name. That said, there are some excellent machines available from companies even plant enthusiasts would not recognise. If in doubt, ask a few dealers what they think and see if they would buy the machine from you in a few months time.

Rubber tracks have gained popularity simply because of convenience. A steel track can damage hard surfaces such as pavements, roads and drives, whereas rubber can cross them without any problem. Rubber track has become increasingly popular because of its versatility. With regard to marking turf, the best low ground pressure and stability option will be a machine running on 550mm steel plates. These are not a common find unfortunately.

It is the 1.5 tonne mini-excavators that will be among the most common size available as it is a size that can be towed on a trailer behind a suitable pick-up or 4x4. Because of this they are popular with smaller builders. Pro-rata, this can make these small units more expensive than a larger nominal 2.5 or 3.0 tonne machine. If transport is not going to be an issue and there is access to something that can move the excavator around the course, then a bigger machine can make the most sense.

As an aside, it is all too easy to forget how long it can take an excavator to propel itself over longer distances. Travel speeds that barely make it above 5 km/h are the norm on excavators. This can mean it takes a long time to get from one job to the next. A trailer that comes as part of a used excavator deal is therefore well worth considering.

One final point. A machine without buckets is not much use, so expect it to come with at least a digging and ditching bucket. Typically, a 3.0 tonne model will have been supplied when new with a 12, 18 and a 30 inch plus ditching bucket. Also consider the hydraulic specification offered. An auxiliary hydraulic circuit will be needed to power a soil auger and a free-flow return is necessary to drive a hydraulic breaker.



Before buying or hiring a mini-excavator, it is important to do a full risk assessment. If in doubt, seek advice and check if any extra insurance will be required to cover the machine, its operator and third parties



Once you start to get to excavators exceeding 5 tonnes capacity, it is more economic to call in a contractor using their own kit. A skilled operator will do more work than someone with less experience and do a better job too



Hobbies

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

Name: Paul Black **Age:** 39

Hobby: Cyclist

Occupation: Student, studying HNC Sports Coaching at Moray College

Previous Occupation: Head Greenkeeper at Gogarburn GC (1990-2006)

How and when did you get into cycling?

"I've been competing since 1991. I got into it by accident through a fellow greenkeeper. I used to bike to work each day on my mountain bike until my colleague gave me his old racing bike - I decided to look up what was involved. When I was out cycling I saw a race taking place, I found out the details and began racing for Edinburgh Road Club."



What is it about cycle racing that appeals to you?

"Cycling used to be just a way of commuting to work but the more

I did it the more I enjoyed it. I find it peaceful, I love going fast, although I was never a boy racer, but when you're balancing on 23mm of rubber hitting speeds of 53mph it's thrilling.

"Through completing my studies I'm hoping to help other people improve upon their abilities and encourage children that it's a great way to get fit."

"I cycle about 1000 miles a month while training and racing."

Which races have you competed in?

"The Club Time Trials riding for East of Scotland. I've competed at Scottish and National Level - 10, 25, 50 and 100 mile races. I've done Mass Road Races with 50-60 other riders travelling 95 miles with an average speed of 25-30 mph. I've got five Scottish Championship Medals and eight East of Scotland Gold Medals for various distances. I'm the Edinburgh Road Club Time Trial Champion, and have been undefeated for 10 years."

How many bikes have you got?

"Seven in total. There are two main bikes that I use, one cost £2,500 and other cost nearer £4000. I have to prepare two bikes if I go away for weekend races."

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Askernish Adventurers

A HEBRIDEAN TASK

Scott MacCallum visits South Uist to see the work being carried out on Askernish and talks with Gordon Irvine about progress

Gordon Irvine MG is many things. He's a Master Greenkeeper; he's a Course Manager; an ex General Manager, and currently he's a Consultant to some of the finest courses in the country. But he is also something else. He's the Tony Robinson of Greenkeeping. Gordon might not be starring in Time Team but the work he and his team of volunteers are undertaking on the island of South Uist is just as exciting as any project Baldrick and his archeological colleagues have been up to.

Gordon is currently fitting in regular visits to the Outer Hebrides where he is carrying out greenkeeping's answer to archeology – uncovering Askernish Golf course which was one of the last courses ever designed by Old Tom Morris back in 1892 and which fell into obscurity in the early part of the last century.

Askernish is not your conventional golf club. There is no sumptuous clubhouse complete with spike bar and locker rooms. In fact outside of a few tin sheds there is nothing to signify a golf club at all, but for a few flagsticks. It is very much golf as it used to be played – golf in the raw.

But once you tee off you are met by a host of excellent golfing challenges, albeit some of which in a stiff wind are a little too tough for all but the better quality players and some of the holes run alongside the beach and are as beautiful as any you would find anywhere in Scotland.

Gordon became caught up in the project a couple of years ago when on a fishing trip to the island and since then it has become something of an obsession seeing him using up much of his free time jumping on planes and heading to the little island off the north west coast of Scotland surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean.

"I'm pleased with the progress we've made so far. It has been slow but this project deserves to have time spent on it because it's so unique and special we wouldn't want to make any mistakes on it," explained Gordon.

Some of the delay has revolved around local politics with crofters suspicious about the consequences and implications of a rediscovered golf course in their back yard.

"We had a seven month delay because of the need to make sure all the paper work was in order. We want to make sure that we are working with the local community so we have been spending a lot of time talking with different local bodies and making sure they were happy with the golf course being here and see the benefits it can bring."

In the early stages Gordon spent a lot of time with architect Martin Ebert walking the site, studying it and attempting to uncover the 18 original holes.

"We'll never be totally sure but we are as confident as we can be that we have picked up the bulk of the old course."

One area with which Gordon and Martin had to work around was the RAF airfield which was cut out of the course in the 1930s, flattening part of the existing course.

"We actually decided to stick to the policy of working only on the land Old Tom had used so we have actually incorporated the runway into the 6th fairway – we've made a feature of it. We thought that would be the fairest way to combine everything," explained Gordon.

Bunkering was another issue which had to be resolved.

"We've identified five areas which we considered to be bunkers, but they may have been places which sheep scraped out for shelter and which subsequently became bunkers. They might not be in the ideal area for the modern game but it fits into the ethos and we will maintain them as bunkers."

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Euan Grant and Chris Haspell, Gordon spent three weeks on construction work – repairing rabbit damage on greens, building tees and attempting to reinstate a lot of the playing surfaces.

“Chris helped me in the early stages to stake out holes and Euan dropped in for a couple of days and built us two tees. But we’ve also had great help from many others including Alistair Beggs, of the STRI, on agronomic issues; Steve Isaac, of the R&A and Keith Duff, formerly the Chief Scientist of English Nature.

“Keith’s advice on the paper work side and making sure we had a sustainable policy was invaluable. He also advising that having an animal grazing on the course was to be encouraged and this also helped with the concerns of the crofters.”

The man charged with raising both funds and profile for Askernish is well known Temple Golf Club man, Malcolm Peake, whom Gordon knew well from their joint involvement with Royal Cinque Ports, in Deal.

Malcolm’s passion for traditional golf and general enthusiasm and drive made him the ideal man to take on the mammoth challenge of making Askernish a must visit golfing destination.

Thanks to Malcolm Ransomes Jacobsen got to hear of the project and so well did he sell the project that Managing Director, David Withers, offered some kit to assist with the maintenance of the course.

“We were absolutely overwhelmed by the help we got from Ransomes Jacobsen. We never expected them to do as much as they did for us,” said Gordon.

“They sent us a lightweight fairway mower so we now have fairways. If we’d stuck with the old trailed gangs it would taken us a long time to get to where we are now, and there would have been a lot more tractor damage. They also sent us a top dresser which has allowed us to get our top dressing down which otherwise would have been down by a barrow and shovel and they sent us a top of the range hand mower which has allowed us to tackle the delicate contours of the greens.”

Malcolm led a party of newly signed up Askernish Life Members, interested journalists, Keith Duff and David Withers to South Uist in September to play the course and experience island life.

Hosted by larger than life Club President, Ralph Thompson, the visitors were treated to some wonderful hospitality and an early chance to play the golf course – it won’t open officially until next August. They also met some of the volunteers who have taken the project to their hearts and worked with Gordon to improve the golf course.

“Two of them, Alan and Colin, are now working as full time greenkeepers which is fantastic because it shows that the golf course is contributing to the island.

“I visit the island every month and do a bit of on-site training before leaving the guys with a small programme to follow,” said Gordon, who delivered a passionate and informative presentation on the work at the course to the guests at the end of one of the dinners during their stay.

Leaving novice greenkeepers for a month is something which many Course Managers would have nightmares about but Gordon is delighted with the progress that has gone on during his times away from the project.

“They are all very mechanically minded, many of them having come from an agricultural background so they can turn their hands to what you ask them very quickly but the only thing I’ve really found is the need to explain to them how fragile a lot of the contours are and that those contours are what we are trying to keep.”



Keith Duff (right) with his wife and local volunteer, Colin McGregor



With that in mind Gordon is adamant that wherever possible he wants them working with hand tools even if it means the project working at a slower rate. It must be done this way to retain the character.”

Asked what has shocked or surprised him at Askernish Gordon comes up with two very interesting observations.

“It’s the strength of the Atlantic Ocean. It is absolutely unbelievable. I had two fairways coming along nicely and arrived back to discover them both under eight inches of sand, which had come in over the space of three days. It is staggering to consider the power needed to do that.” It also demonstrated just how hardy were the fescues which were swamped by the sand.

“Six weeks later without us moving the sand the fairways were playable again as the grass had absorbed the sand and worked its way through without any artificial aid. It was amazing to see.”

The other area that has surprised him was in the quality of some of the turf that he found.

“Some of the best quality grass was under some compaction from vehicles and tractors going up and down to the beach. It certainly opened my eyes and showed that by using moderate levels of compaction you can perhaps help prevent weed invasion. That’s been very interesting.”

Speaking with Gordon you sense that he has been well and truly won over by South Uist and Askernish and he admits that if he were to win the lottery he’d love to move over permanently and treat the course as a labour of love.

One of the biggest hurdles is the course’s inaccessibility given that there are only two flights from Glasgow each day and if the plane is full there is a possibility your clubs might have to join you on a later flight.



Two of the island volunteers



Gordon Irvine MG



The Ransomes Jacobsen Triple which has made such a difference

“At the end of the day if a course is worth playing people will make the effort. We’ve seen that at places like Machrihanish, Royal Dornoch and Skibo Castle. People will make an extra effort to experience something special and undoubtedly Askernish is special enough to attract people to come and play it. The big challenge is whether they have ever played anything as exposed, as it is as much a battle against the elements as it is against the course itself. It’s quite unique in that way,” said Gordon, whose dream for the island is ultimately to make it a dedicated links resort with perhaps a total of three or four links courses for people to experience.

The next stages are two fold. He is taking one of the full time greenkeepers under his wing who now sees greenkeeping as a career – having him shadow Gordon at some of his other courses in Ireland and at Cinque Ports to get a feel for greenkeeping as a whole while he has also signed up for Elmwood College – while his is putting together another team of volunteers for this winter’s work.

“We have more work to do on reinstating the greens and taking care of rabbit warrens and putting in some more forward tees – not the modern type but teeing platforms just to give golfers a level stance. We also have three of the holes at the end of the course which are further behind, because of the discussions with the crofters, which need to catch up. “The project will take time and deserves to. It has staggering potential but could be easily damaged and we are determined that we won’t make mistakes with it.”

If anyone wishes to volunteer to help at Askernish they should email Gordon at ormegagi@hotmail.com Gordon has also promised keep anyone interested in the project up to date by sending out pictures.

HARROGATE: AN ANNUAL HAVEN FOR THE GROUNDS CARE INDUSTRY

Exhibition: 22-24 January 2008 Education: 20-24 January 2008

Harrogate Week has been established for 20 years and during that time has grown to become a must-see grounds care event for many satisfied visitors.

Harrogate Week 2008 with its regular elements of BTME, incorporating ClubHouse; the world renowned Continue to Learn programme; a Careers Clinic, Job Shop, Internet Café, banquets, lunches and fringe events ensures that a well planned visit sets you up for the year ahead. And it's not just of benefit to turf professionals and BIGGA members. Many other golfing and sporting bodies are involved in the week with seminars by the R&A, EGU and GCMA and many other workshops that are particularly pertinent for turf professionals from other sporting arenas.



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The BIGGA staff will be on hand throughout the exhibition to give advice and information on all Association matters. Visit the BIGGA Stand to renew your membership, purchase some BIGGA merchandise and the chance to meet the people you only ever talk to on the telephone.

From a training and development standpoint there isn't a workshop or seminar that doesn't include a nugget of information which might help some aspect of your professional life. Continue to Learn 2008, supported by the GTC and the John Deere Team Championship, boasts five new workshops including subjects such as Stress Awareness

and the Disturbance Theory. Also taking place at Harrogate are the following courses designed to provide you with the perfect opportunity to get your questions answered and to share your problems, as the seasons alter, our climate changes and you face an uphill struggle, dealing with drought one minute and flooding the next: Environmental Management; Current Environmental Legislation; Drought, Drainage & Conservation; Moving Toward Greater Sustainability; The Practical Guide to Growth Regulators; Golf & Turfgrass Management in the Future; Water Management - An American Perspective and Golf Green Fertilisation in our Changing Climate.

The programme also sees the return of several old favourites including An Introduction to Golf Course Design and Moving into Management.

BIGGA's discount scheme offers savings of up to 52% and is available to all delegates who pre-book Continue to Learn seminars.

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New to Harrogate Week 2008 is "Have We Got Views for You!" an unmissable event taking place in the Majestic Hotel on Monday 21 January. A panel, comprising Walter Woods BEM, former Links Supervisor at St Andrews; Jack McMillan MBE, former Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale GC and now Course Consultant to the PGA European Tour; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Ken Siems MG, CGCS, Director of Agronomy for Loch Lomond and Stan Zontek, from the USGA, a certified Professional Agronomist; will be ably compèred by Television Producer and Presenter, Roger Greenwood. The panel will answer your questions and regale you with stories from the world of greenkeeping and beyond.



To register, book education or find accommodation, visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk





Back row (L to R): Neil Plenderleith, Stuart Ross, Greg Knight, Jamie Duncan and Richard Oakley. Front row (L to R): Simon Lambert, Avon Bridges and Lewis Birch



SCHOOL'S OUT!

Once again the level of entrants for this year's Toro Student of the Year have surpassed all expectations. Melissa Toombs witnessed a fierce final at BIGGA HOUSE

The combination of studying and socialising doesn't always work well together! However, when living life as a studious type, you discover your strengths and weaknesses, not only as a student, but also as an individual.

No-one, ideally, wants to still be working on their imminently due assignment at 4am, realising the course work they've been working on hasn't turned out quite as they'd expected, resigning themselves to the fact that this isn't their best work and realising that perhaps they should have managed their time a little better.

Every student needs a kick up the bum now and again, to be given encouragement and pointed in the right direction but, if you really want the qualification, it's up to you to find the time and put the effort in. Having to juggle both work and study, hard work and dedication was required by this year's Toro Student of the Year Finalists and they are a prime example of what time and effort can achieve.

Eight anxious finalists visited BIGGA HOUSE on September 17 to be quizzed and probed within an inch of their lives and given the task of completing a survey of Aldwark Manor GC (evaluating nine of the holes). On the judging panel this year were: John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA; Jeff Mills, from the BIGGA Board of Management; Peter Mansfield from Lely; and Bruce Jamieson and Andy Brown, from Toro.

After an exhausting, nail-biting wait, finalists: Neil Plenderleith, Jamie Duncan, Lewis Birch, Stuart Ross, Richard Oakley, Avon Bridges, Simon Lambert and Greg Knight, were put out of their misery as, now retired, BIGGA Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, announced

this year's winners for the last time in his role.

Runners-up were: Lewis Birch (23), from Abbeydale Golf Club, in Sheffield, and Simon Lambert (25), from Seaford Head Golf Club, East Sussex.

Lewis achieved PA1, PA2, NVQ Sports Turf Level 2 and the Technical Certificate in Sports Turf at Askham Bryan College in York. He is currently working towards his NVQ Sports Turf Level 3. "I enjoy working outdoors and with the great variety that a greenkeeping role brings, I felt no other position would keep me as happy," said Lewis.

Simon has worked at Seaford Head for seven year and since working as a greenkeeper, has learnt, achieved and given a great deal. "All of my training will working at the course and attending Plumpton College, has enabled me to work more confidently and efficiently in the everyday running of the golf course," said Simon.

Lewis and Simon both win a trip to Harrogate Week 2007, where they will be invited to attend the Continue to Learn seminars and workshops as well as the evening banquet.

Overall winner and Toro Student of the Year 2007 was Avon Bridges (27) from Luton Hoo Park Golf Club, Bedfordshire.

Avon's amazing prize involves an eight-week trip to the USA, where, for six weeks, the University of Massachusetts will be home, as he completes a residential turf management study course. The trip also includes visits to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis, the Toro Irrigation Division and to the GCSAA Golf Industry Show in Anaheim next February.



Simon Lambert, Avon Bridges and Lewis Birch

AND THE WINNER IS...

2007 Toro Student of the Year winner, Avon Bridges, is over the moon about his achievement, as Melissa Toombs found out

As the competition reached its 18th year, the standard of Toro Student of the Year applicants seemed to have risen once again. It was up to the judges to make some tough decisions at this year's final and all competitors were commended for their hard work.

When I asked this year's winner what it was about greenkeeping that he loved, he replied, "I couldn't put my finger on exactly what it is about greenkeeping that appeals to me, I just know I love it and I'm good at it. It's one of the very few things that I'm very good at it. I just enjoy everyday. I like the variety of work that we do. Greenkeeping is a career that changes with the seasons, you never get bored of it."

I think that response is one with which every greenkeeper can identify - variety is the key!

Avon fell into greenkeeping. "I was rubbish at school, he said, "I left when I was 17 and when looking for a job I came across greenkeeping. My father was a greenkeeper so I knew roughly what the job entailed from spending time with him as a kid."

Avon started his career in greenkeeping at Finchley Golf Club in 1997.

"Within two to three years the club had sent me to college and I discovered that I actually really enjoyed learning more about greenkeeping and it was something I was good at it."

Having completed his studies at Oaklands College, Avon speaks very highly of his Tutor, Andy Wight, "He was one of those rare tutors that doesn't just stand there telling you what you need to know, he always managed to teach you without you realising you were learning. It's been a privilege working with Andy; he's been immensely supportive,

particularly during my NVQ 2 and 3. I've never had a tutor or teacher that's more like a friend than a tutor. He is one of the best tutors in the country as far as I'm concerned," continued Avon.

You could say golf is in Avon's blood, as every family member involved in the sport seems to have fallen in to it. "My grandfather was a professional golfer and my father a greenkeeper but neither of them by intention," continued Avon.

Starting off as a Trainee at Finchley, Avon worked his way up through the ranks, and within nine years, went from knowing next to nothing to taking the position of Head Greenkeeper at Luton Hoo Golf Club, an 18 hole golf course with breathtaking parkland views in Bedfordshire, just over a year ago.

"Finchley have always been eager to get people into college, the team have always been very supportive and the now Head Greenkeeper (Craig Newton), has always encouraged me to learn." Avon recalls when he was offered his post at Luton Hoo, a luxury five-star hotel with an 18 hole golf course, and more than 1,000 acres of parkland and gardens, and how he worried that Craig would be upset that he was leaving,

"I had quite an important part to play in our team, I did most of the spraying and key jobs. I thought Craig would say he really didn't want to lose me but actually he was really pleased to have one of his team, he had trained from the age of 17, to be moving on to become a Head Greenkeeper. He was extremely supportive and I still speak to him regularly. He gives me a lot of advice, although we have actually reached the point where we now give each other advice," laughed Avon.

Clearly holding Finchley GC in high regard, Avon mentioned how the club had built up friendships with other golf clubs in their locality, visiting

each other's courses and sharing equipment.

"Within the next year or so I'd like to achieve that where I am now," said an enthusiastic Avon, who admits he, "doesn't play golf very well."

Barbara, Avon's wife, is expecting their first child this December.

"Having a baby reinforces to me why I'm doing what I'm doing. By becoming a Head Greenkeeper I am getting rewards for my 10 years of hard work in the trade. Barbara says I'm more alive now than I have been for years, because my mind is active all the time."

The past year has been hard work for Avon but he seems to thrive on the challenges that being a Head Greenkeeper presents.

"It took me a good six months to get used to the pressure of being a Head Greenkeeper and it's taken me 11 months to get used to the position."

The role of HG is not an easy one, Avon has had the added pressure of getting a team together and a new course construction.

"Stress and pressure are sometimes a good thing as they stop you from just getting on and doing the same old thing each day," said Avon.

Aged just 27, Avon is quite a young Head Greenkeeper.

"Most people walk up to my Deputy, who is in his thirties, and shake his hand as Head Greenkeeper which I quite enjoy - I like surprising people!"

Over the moon at being crowned Toro Student of the Year 2007, Avon can't wait to go to America,

"Having only worked at two golf clubs, I haven't experienced much variety in greenkeeping. I'm looking forward to being shown different ideas, how to look at things differently, and studying within a different college culture. I'm grateful to Finchley for all they have shown me but I do need to expand on my knowledge. I think this country is moving over to the American way of thinking about greenkeeping so it will be good to get a head start!"

Looking to the future, Avon has his hands full at Luton Hoo for the next few years, building up its reputation and working with local golf clubs to ensure they compliment each other rather than compete.

"Our Course Designer, Mike Smith, has gone beyond his call of duty and acted a mentor to me during my steep learning curve at Luton Hoo," said Avon, with a positive outlook for the years ahead.





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WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



Name: Tim Earley

Company: Waste2Water Europe Ltd

Position: Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?

"Although approaching 11 years in the golf business in many ways I still feel like an apprentice. Incredibly friendly and welcoming, once you join you don't want to leave and most people you meet seem to have been connected with golf for a lifetime, which says everything about the industry."

How did you get into the industry?

"I was looking for a new challenge and was offered the opportunity to launch the range of microbial biostimulant products known as "Green Releaf" in the UK to golf courses in 1997. It seemed the perfect job with the opportunity to play golf at the same time! In 2000 I launched Waste2Water Europe, supplying Recycling Wash-Off Systems and the rest, as they say, is history."

What other jobs have you done?

"Before I joined the golf industry I was the European General Manager of an American electronics company."

What do I like about my job?

"It was initially the challenge of introducing a new concept to the industry and is now being part of an industry where it is a real

pleasure to mix with genuine people who make it happen on the golf course."

What Changes have you seen?

"When I initially introduced the concept of Recycling Wash-Off Systems in the UK around seven years ago, there had been no record drought or record flood and global warming and environmental concern was something for the future. In the intervening period everyone has come to realise urgent action is needed to safeguard the environment. The golf industry has 'grabbed the mantle' and is now leading the way in addressing environmental concerns."

What do you do in your spare time?

"Playing golf and socialising."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"Playing golf in southern Spain!"

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

"Too many to mention, this has to be the friendliest industry you could ever wish to work in."

What is your lucky number?

"7."

Pick a number

"38."

Tim has picked David Green from Terrain Aeration.



NATURAL AREA ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT ON THE GOLF COURSE

Tim Butler provides some useful information on managing natural areas on your course

Nature on the golf course is gaining continued publicity. Golf course landscapes typically contain a diverse range of habitats, which provide opportunities for wildlife. Planting naturalistic areas on golf courses may be a very useful way of increasing the appeal of the course to golfers, while consequently accentuating the natural diversity and image of the golf course. Natural plantings are suitable for diverse areas including roughs, hillsides, along ponds and streams. Integration of naturalized areas is commonly practiced on new golf course developments, however little has been written concerning the implementation of natural areas on existing courses. From experience, meeting with turfgrass managers, much confusion exists about how to go about integrating natural areas on the golf course. With much media attention regarding the environment, people are beginning to realise that native areas can be very attractive when maintained properly. In the past, golfers had expectations about how the greens and fairways should look. In more recent times these expectations have also shifted to bunker and rough management and in some instances, the maintenance of native areas.

IN OR OUT OF PLAY

Probably one of the most commonly used methods of establishing natural areas is through the introduction of native grasses. This system as well as benefiting the environment may lead to a reduction in maintenance. Natural areas can be established in areas that are both in-play and out-of-play. Out-of-play areas can be planted to wild flower meadow mixes with species such as cowslip and foxglove included. It is very important to realise that these plants will grow tall over time and will greatly reduce playability if sown in the wrong location. Grasses such as the fescues are often sown and used for in-play areas. Such grasses will maintain a low growing habit and are often used as a base material for other plants to colonize the area. One of the main benefits with fescues is that they

will not develop the density of many other grasses, which makes them ideal for areas that receive a little play. It is vital that careful planning is put into deciding in and out of play zones or areas on the course or playability may be dramatically reduced.

Golf course superintendents spend a lot of time and money each year maintaining areas along stream banks and around ponds and wetlands. Grass strimming of these areas is a slow and tedious practise which staff rarely enjoy. Careful planting of wildflowers and native grasses in such locations if properly managed can dramatically reduce the amount of maintenance around these course features. Coupled with this, golfers on the course will be delighted to see masses of colour around lakes and other areas as it adds to the character of the course.

Wildflowers should be kept out of locations which receive a lot of traffic. Besides the issue with lost balls, wildflowers unlike grasses do not often rebound well from trafficking. In the past some people felt that wildflowers should be planted in small spaces, often nearby the clubhouse. It is vital to remember that when planting natural areas, "natural" needs to be kept in focus and these natural areas need space, sunlight and room to prosper. Natural areas will also serve to enhance wildlife on the course, although many do not realise that even in such surroundings that wildlife still need protection from predators and tree and shrub planting in these natural areas often serves to protect the wildlife.

ESTABLISHMENT

Establishment of natural areas on golf courses can be complicated and numerous methods have been suggested. In my opinion, excellent preparation is the key to the success of wildflower plantings. I have come across so many situations, where poor consideration was given

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into weed management prior to sowing the natural grasses or wild flower areas, which in time lead to failure of the natural grasses and flowers due to excessive weed growth. Weed management is essential on new and existing sites, since weed seed banks are usually high in most soils. For in-play areas some suggest that you can stop mowing the areas in the rough that you have decided to naturalize and letting the existing grasses grow taller. From experience this method often raises problems, since the grasses will grow tall relatively quickly leading to in-play areas that are almost unplayable. In my opinion, one of the best options is to kill off the grass in the areas that you have decided to naturalize. It is important to ensure that you check the roughs prior to herbicide application in order to maintain any native flowers that may be growing.

The grass or wildflower seeds can be sown onto the bare soil and rolled in after sowing. When choosing wildflower seed, it is important that the seeds are native wildflower seeds. A good seed mixture often contains a variety of perennials as well as some annuals. Wildflower seeds are different to grass seeds in that some species within the mixture may take several weeks or even months to germinate, so patience is essential. Fertiliser application at establishment is usually not required except on very poor fertility areas. Wildflower areas may need light seeding every couple of years in order to prevent specific plant species from dominating the stand.

MANAGING NATURALIZED AREAS

Wildflower meadows like all turfgrass systems require some management. During the grow-in year 4-6 cuts may be required in order to get the meadow established and allow non-germinated seedlings to grow. The cut material needs to be removed after each cutting to prevent problems with poor air circulation and grass death. Basically, the rough needs to be treated like a hay field and we have come across situations where animal fodder has been cut from golf course roughs and sold. Having said this, some wild flower species can be poisonous to animals and humans and careful thought should be put into species selection. In many cases, golf course superintendents choose wild flower mixes that can be consumed by animals and this gives more freedom in future management strategies. After establishment meadow mowing is often reduced to 2-3 times yearly.

WEED CONTROL

Probably one of the biggest problems with establishing natural areas is weed invasion both during and after sowing. Perennial weeds usually pose most problems in the long term in native areas, with annual weed problems usually subsiding after a couple of years. Weed control strategies include:

- Mowing
- Manual weed removal
- Herbicide spot applications

Mowing twice yearly is usually an effective means of controlling many weeds, although some weeds may persist. Spot treating with herbicides does work, but emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that many so called weeds may actually be important plants in the native system and correct identification and inspection by a turfgrass agronomist is essential in order to build a management programme and maximise the golf courses potential.

Advice that we give to many turfgrass managers is to start small, evaluate how the native areas establish and grow, and if happy with the results then larger areas on the course can be converted to natural areas. It is vital that areas which are planted with natural grasses and wildflowers do not overly affect the playability of the course. In the past, some courses have rushed into planting native areas and have ended up with over penalizing golf courses. Native areas that encompass wildflowers may attract a myriad of birds and butterflies and provide a sea of colour and

fragrance throughout much of the year. We have all at one time or other seen pictures on postcards or on television of meadows full of vibrant yellows, oranges, blues etc. Unfortunately such images are not common place in many areas of Ireland or the U.K. in recent years. Planting native areas on the golf course could be an excellent way of differentiating your golfing facility from the rest. Golf is a cut throat business and standing out from the crowd is a way of attracting more golfers, which is where native planting may turn into an important marketing tool.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Tim Butler is a Sportsturf Science Agronomist and consults on all aspects of Golf Courses including Environmental Management, Construction/Renovation, Agronomy and Drainage. For more information contact Tim at tim.butler@ucd.ie

Mary Purcell is carrying out research for a doctorate degree in Environmental Science at University College Dublin. Mary has Undergraduate and Masters Degrees in Environmental Science and Engineering respectively and is a specialist in all aspects of Environmental Management and Enhancement on Golf Courses. For more information contact Mary at mary.purcell@ucd.ie

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Knautia species



Cornflower and Corn Chamomille



Tim Butler



David Simpson, BIGGA National Champion



Elliott Small, winner of the BIGGA Challenge Cup



A CHAMPIONSHIP OF WHICH TO BE PROUD

Dundonald and Kilmarnock Barassie hosted the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and produced one of the finest events ever

October on the west coast of Scotland and what would you expect for your golfing weather? Exactly! Well you will appreciate just how delighted the 80 plus competitors were to be playing the majority of the 36 holes in shirt sleeves.

The 2007 BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, basked in sunshine... at least for some of the time and the two venues Dundonald Links and Kilmarnock Barassie witnessed golf to match the conditions with the home nation taking a clean sweep of the major prizes.

David Simpson, a plus 1 handicapper from Crieff Golf Club, emerged as BIGGA's new Champion Golfer with two rounds of 75 to pip another plus 1 handicapper Steve McIntosh, of Torvean Golf Club, by two shots. Steve had fought back after an opening round 78 to post a second round 74. Three handicapper Paul Dolton, of Southfield Golf Club, finished third a further shot back.

The Challenge Trophy for Best Nett was a triumph for the older brigade when BIGGA Past Chairman, Elliott Small, after many years of trying got his hands on the silverware with a two round total of 144 off his still very useful handicap of 12. Elliott shot a gross 82 around Dundonald and followed it up with an 86 around Barassie.

To top off a fine couple of days for the host nation Scotland clinched the Regional Trophy for the first time in many, many years with their eight

best counting scores giving them a healthy advantage over the Midland Region on the 18 hole opening day competition which runs concurrently with the main individual event.

Both golf clubs made BIGGA exceptionally welcome with Ken Seims MG Director of Agronomy for Loch Lomond Golf Club, which owns Dundonald, greeting every player on the opening hole and the catering staff doing a sterling job in keeping the competitors fed and watered.

In the evening at the Championship Dinner held at Barassie, Course Managers, Frank Clarkson, from Dundonald and Brian Finlayson, of Barassie, received the acclaim of their fellow greenkeepers for the condition of both courses and were presented with tankards to commemorate the occasion. Captain Bob Pollock also warmly welcomed BIGGA to his golf club and said how proud they were to show off their course to so many greenkeepers.

Kubota proved wonderful sponsors of the Championship. National Sales Manager David Roberts and Tom Dunlop, who looks after the Scottish area, provided everyone with superb goodie bags containing balls, tees, a pen, towel and hat and the halfway house on the 10th tee of both courses was a welcome sight for all the competitors.

Despite being a winner of both the Blairgowrie and Crieff 36 hole events and being the Perth and Kinross Order of Merit winner and last



year's Team Player of the Year David believes that the BIGGA National Championship is the top event he has won.

"It is a British event and there were a lot of very good golfers playing in it. I was there after Monday's round and started well on Tuesday but I dropped quite a few shots over the last six holes and while I was relieved to have won I was disappointed in the way that I finished," explained 29 year-old David.

"It was the first time that I'd played either course and I thought they were superb. In fact the Scottish Mid-Amateur is being played at Dundonald next year and I'll look forward to going back," he said, adding that he was hoping to defend his title next year. Discussions are currently underway with East Sussex National to play the Championship there.

Elliott, National Chairman in 2000, has played in at least 17 National Championships but this is the first time his name will be engraved on a trophy.

"At last! I think I might just retire now," explained Elliott, while admitting that if it is played again in Scotland or the north of England he might make an exception.

Elliott entered the back nine of the second round feeling he had a chance but an 8, a 7 and a missed two footer at the last left him feeling that he might just miss out. However his scored was enough to win, on a better second round, from overnight leader Francis Kempster, who followed his first round nett 67 with a nett 77.

The best two round score of the week was actually achieved by 1 handicapper, Alex Webster, of Tower Chemicals, who shot rounds of 73 and 75 to win the Associate prize.



BIGGA National Chairman, Billy McMillan, with Frank Clarkson, Course Manager at Dundonald



The winning Scottish region



BIGGA National Chairman, Billy McMillan with Brian Finlayson, Course Manager at Barassie

ROLL OF HONOUR

BIGGA National Champion for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy	David Simpson, Crieff GC, 150
BIGGA Challenge Cup – Best Nett Score	Elliott Small, Life Member, 144 (Better Second Round)
Gross Over 36 Holes	2. Steve McIntosh, Torvean GC, 152 3. Phil Dolton, Southfield GC, 153
Nett over 36 Holes	2. Francis Kempster, Glen Gorse GC, 144 3. Kerr Rowan, Carrick GC, 146

DUNDONALD LINKS

Scratch to 6	Gary Burgess, Grange Park GC, 73
7 to 13	William Craig, Kirriemuir GC, 75
14-24	Frank Stewart, Cookridge Hall GC, 79

BARASSIE

Scratch – 6	Graeme MacDonald, Newark GC, 73
7 to 13	Derek Wilson, Irvine GC, 75 (BIH)
14-24	David Fellows, Cocks Moor Wood GC, 74
Nearest the Pin	Andy Peel, Bull Bay
Longest Drive	Kerr Rowan, Carrick
Associate Prize	Alex Webster, 146

TEAM TROPHY

Winner Scotland Total 601

Elliott Small, Life Member; Kerr Rowan, Carrick GC; Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews Links; William Craig, Kirriemuir GC; David Simpson, Crieff GC; Derek Wilson, Irvine GC; Christy McKenzie, Dunblane GC and Jim MacCormack, Kirriemuir.

Runner Up Midland Total 622

Francis Kempster, Glen Corse GC; Paul Dolton, Southfield GC; Steve Scott, North Warwickshire GC; John Ganley, North Warwickshire GC; Carl Small, Ellesborough GC; Steve Mason, Stocks GC; David Fellows, Cocks Moor Wood GC and Brian Robinson, Belton Woods GC.



BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, with Dave Roberts, from Kubota



A REVOLUTION IN

Golf Course Drainage

QUICK TO INSTALL | LIGHTWEIGHT/CLEAN TO HANDLE | FOR ALL AREAS OF THE COURSE



“ Although the course is constructed on a heavy clay soil, Aquadyne has been very successful in the areas where it has been used... around greens, on fairways and in bunkers. ” (installed 2005)

**Maurice Gaumley
(Middlesborough Municipal Golf Club)**

- In or around greens, Aquadyne's high capacity and performance drains quickly without drying out the soil or turf.
Easy to address problem areas quickly.



“ We have been replacing our conventional bunker drainage over the last 3 years with Aquadyne. Installation is very quick and simple and the drainage performance remains very high. ” (installed 2005)

**Duncan Kelso
(Kings Hill Golf Club)**

- Eradicates stone migration into the bunker and onto the fairway. Aquadyne is easily located and can be removed and reused during remodeling or refurbishment.



“ We installed the 3000 metres of fairway drainage ourselves ... the Aquadyne system has worked without any problems whatsoever.

We use a shallow slitter on this fairway to keep the surface open and aerated, this works exceptionally well with the Aquadyne system. ” (installed 2003)

**Neil Hullah
(Leeds Golf Club)**

- Aquadyne drainage is unaffected by regular maintenance operations.

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- UK South / Wales – Avoncrop Amenity 01934 820868

- Econoplas Ltd,
Unit 5a, Plaxton Park Industrial Estate,
Cayton Low Road, Eastfield,
Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 3BY
Telephone: 01723 586611

Aquadyne is a product of Econoplas Ltd www.econoplas.com

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AND CHECK OUT THE LATEST CHAT FROM THE GREENKEEPING INDUSTRY



In the Shed

Greenkeeper International brings you 'In the Shed', a puzzle page to keep you entertained when the weather forces you in or for when times are slow.

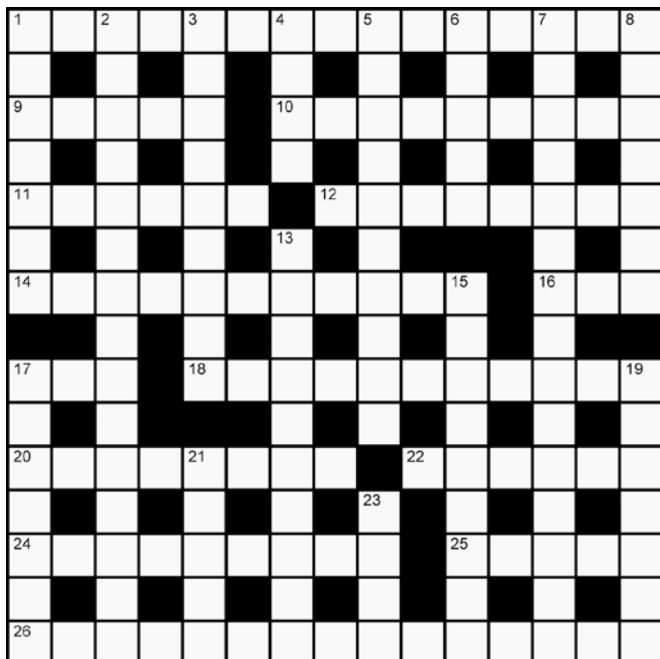
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 One who cannot venture beyond established behaviour (8,2,5)
- 9 Belgium's largest French-speaking city (5)
- 10 Ready, on hand (9)
- 11 Foul-smelling, usually because of decomposition (6)
- 12 Sandwich filling featured in the 1966 spy spoof "What's Up, Tiger Lily?" (3,5)
- 14 Supernatural messaging devices (5-6)
- 16 Unspecified quantity; in the US, also means "whatsoever" (3)
- 17 Colloquial name for tea (3)
- 18 Pertaining to the branch of surgery dealing with the spine and joints (11)
- 20 Engrave (8)
- 22 Written order directing a bank to pay money (6)
- 24 Administer a virus to create immunity (9)
- 25 Thick woollen fabric originating in Scotland (5)
- 26 Symbol of communism - in Russian, Serp i Molot (6,3,6)

DOWN

- 1 Percussive dance music of Trinidad (7)
- 2 ALL TIMES CORRECT (anagram) (10,5)
- 3 G&S opera which included the first use of the phrase "short, sharp shock" (3,6)
- 4 Wander aimlessly (4)
- 5 Herbal medicine plant also called goldenseal (10)
- 6 Accommodates (5)
- 7 British dish of leftover cabbage, potato and meat fried together (6-3-6)
- 8 Day of the week closely associated with Mars (7)
- 13 Its largest resort is Lloret de Mar (5,5)
- 15 Pasta in the form of long strings (9)
- 17 Informal gathering for folk music, typically in Ireland (7)
- 19 Staffordshire market town close to Alton Towers (7)
- 21 Make-up of red or pink powder (5)
- 23 Patch up, restore (4)

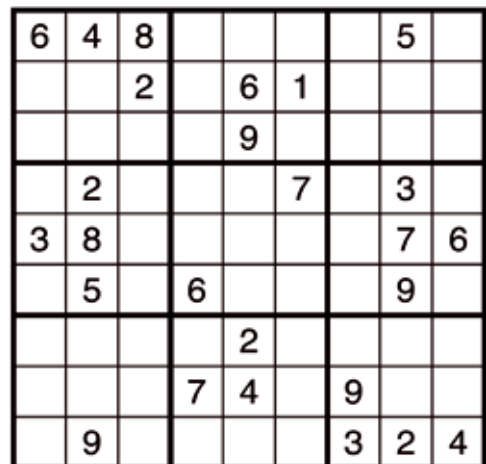


QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

- 1 Why was professional footballer Maribel Dominguez forbidden by FIFA to play for Mexican side Celaya, after having signed?
- 2 Which golfer completed the Grand Slam of the amateur and professional Opens of both the USA and Britain in 1930?
- 3 Which Scottish rugby player married a TV sports presenter in 2001?
- 4 By what name did the Empire Stadium become known?
- 5 Which sports goods company, founded by Joseph Foster in 1892, is named after a species of South African antelope?
- 6 Which Football team play their home matches at the 'Estadio Nou Camp'?
- 7 On which piece of apparatus would a male gymnast do a Crucifix?
- 8 In rugby union the Australian team is called The Wallabies; what is their name in rugby league?
- 9 How many players are there in a basketball team?

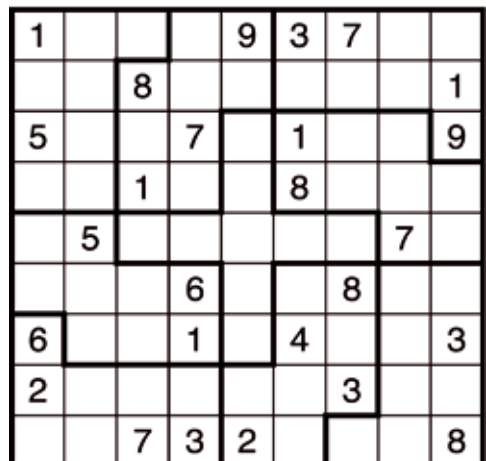
MONSTER SUDOKU

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



SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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



IN THE SHED ANSWERS ON PAGE 55



IN THE SHED

WHEN SHOULD I UPGRADE OR REPLACE MY IRRIGATION SYSTEM?

By Giles Wardle BSc MSc MIAgrE, Irriplan Ltd.

Whenever I buy a piece of consumer electronics, from MP3 player to DVD player, a better and cheaper model is on the market next year. The pace of technological development in irrigation over the last decade has been such that one might be tempted to conclude that it is worth waiting a little while before upgrading or replacing your system, since something cheaper and better will be on the market soon. So, is there any merit in this argument?

Unlike consumer electronics, the cost of irrigation systems has never dropped. So the argument that a technological innovation might make irrigation systems much cheaper for similar or better performance would certainly be highly optimistic, at least on historic grounds. You can be pretty sure that the cost of an irrigation system is not going to drop in the future, either.

This is because a major element of the cost of a new irrigation system is the sprinklers, valves, pipe and fittings, which are all made from plastic, the cost of which is predominantly dependent on the price of oil; which is unlikely to drop significantly any time soon.

Approximately 30-40% of the cost of a new irrigation system is the installation element which is dependent on the cost of labour, machinery and fuel - our friend oil again! While the direct cost of unskilled labour has dropped a little (due to the recent expansion of the EU to Eastern Europe), this has been more than offset by the rising cost of skilled labour and associated employment costs and legislation.

In real terms, the cost of the electronic components (decoders, controllers etc) has probably dropped in recent times, but these components account for less than 15% of the entire cost of a new irrigation system.

So if you need a new irrigation system there's no benefit in waiting on the grounds that costs might drop. One might arguably justify waiting on the grounds that one could benefit from some future technological advance, but on this rationale we would never upgrade or replace anything as there is always the potential for future technological advances.

The dilemma most commonly faced by golf clubs is whether to upgrade their current irrigation system or to replace it completely. This will be dependent on the individual circumstances and history of the course's particular irrigation system and ideally should be evaluated and assessed by an independent engineer/consultant, who has no vested interest in

selling or installing irrigation equipment.

The cost of purchasing a new irrigation system is a high capital cost for all golf clubs and is often a bitter pill to swallow. With machinery, you buy an item every year and replenish your fleet over time; however irrigation is normally a one-off capital purchase.

The temptation is to keep spending modest amounts and merely upgrade certain specific elements within the system. The problem with this approach is that one tends to end up with an incoherent patch-work quilt of an irrigation system. While financially palatable in the short term, in the long-term this approach costs a great deal more and more often than not performs inefficiently, unreliably and imprecisely.

So under what circumstances is it justifiable to upgrade a system rather than completely replace it? The answer really lies in the pipe and cable network. If both these elements are robust and have sufficient capacity to accommodate any modifications or extensions, then you have a good basis to upgrade the system rather than replace it. If you have an ageing PVC pipe network, then wholesale system replacement should be given serious consideration and money spent on short-term measures, will almost certainly be a palliative and not a cure.

The good news is that while PVC pipe networks have a life expectancy typically no longer than 25 years, polyethylene (PE) pipes have a design-life of 50 years (so long as they are rigorously jointed and installed). In this context, capital expenditure on an irrigation system is potentially a 50 year investment – not one to be undertaken lightly. During the 50 years, there is no doubt that some components will be replaced (sprinklers for example), in the same way that one might replace the tyres on a car. The upgrade v. replacement argument will thus be vastly different in the future for golf clubs with PE pipe networks compared to that faced today for clubs with PVC pipe networks.

By way of illustration let's consider a case study of a current Irriplan project; Saunton Golf Club. This is a 36 hole links on the North Devon coast with an irrigation system that can be summarised as follows:

- Recently installed PC controller, new decoders and new cable network
- Old PVC pipe network of varying age up to 30 years old, with capacity to irrigate greens, tees and approaches only; not fairways
- Sprinkler coverage to greens, tees and approaches and some fairways

(single-row)

- Gear-driven sprinklers of varying ages up to 20 years old
- Old pumping plant, recently upgraded with retro-fitted variable speed drive units

Irriplan's technical brief from the club was to:

- Stop leakages from the ageing PVC pipe network
- Reduce the run time of the system. Over the years, the extent of the sprinkler system has outgrown the original mains pipe network
- Improve sprinkler coverage and water use efficiency
- Eliminate overthrow of the single-row fairway system into the rough
- Increase system capacity to be able to extend irrigation to all fairways in the future

Given the age, condition and capacity of the existing PVC pipe network, replacing this element of the irrigation system was indisputable. The existing sprinkler system was ageing, susceptible to wind and not very efficient - especially the single-row fairway system. The solution to this was to replace the system with modern sprinklers with low-angle, wind-tolerant nozzles.

On the fairways Irriplan proposed the replacement of the single-row system for a double-row of part-circle sprinklers on the edge of the fairway, thus avoiding overthrow into the rough and optimising the consumption of water.

A new pipe network and sprinkler system was what the club wanted and needed, but having recently purchased a new PC controller, new cable network and new decoders, the possibility of re-utilising these elements was given consideration. The disadvantages to keeping the control system were summarised:

- The manufacturer had just announced that the model and type of control system was discontinued and its replacement was not compatible with the existing decoders or solenoids
- The capacity of the system (interfaces and cables) was insufficient to support the extension of the system to all the fairways in the future
- Any contractor would view trying to preserve the existing cable network, whilst installing a new pipe network and then trying to marry them up, as complicated and fraught with risks and would price the contract commensurately
- No contractor would accept responsibility for the existing control system components, which were out of warranty
- The savings in cost were minimal compared to the cost of the entire project

Given that capital expenditure in irrigation is a long-term investment, it was decided to replace the control system and start afresh. However there are some elements that have been retained and these are facets that are easily replaced in the future and do not compromise future selection of equipment. Some of the existing fairway sprinklers are being connected to the new pipe network and new control system, with a view that they can be replaced in the future. The pumping plant also remains, pending the outcome of a feasibility study into the construction of a winter storage reservoir.

So when considering upgrading or replacing your irrigation system, it's as well to remember two aphorisms, clichéd though they are; an irrigation system should be "greater than the sum of its parts" and a "chain is only as strong as the weakest link".

Giles Wardle is a Director of Irriplan, one of Europe's leading consulting engineers in golf irrigation and water resources.

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WORKING AT HEIGHT

BIGGA'S Health & Safety series produced by Xact



Falls from height cause over 40 deaths and 3,000 major injuries per year in the workplace. This incident is recognised as the major cause of death and one of the main causes of major injury at work.

A place is defined as being at height if a person could be injured falling from it. It is commonly thought working over a specific height (2m) requires precautions in place to prevent injury. However, as the above definition from the Work at Height Legislation illustrates, falls from any height are covered even if this is at or below ground level. Examples of typical activities which could come under the legislation would be: Working from a vehicle or trailer; Tree pruning off the ground; Maintenance work involving ladders or steps; Work in pits and silos.

Employers who control the work of others have a duty to ensure:

- Persons expected to work at height are trained to safely do so - don't suffer any condition that may affect their ability to work safely when at height
- Equipment used for is maintained and inspected by a competent person
- Work is planned, organised and risk assessed prior to work starting
- The location is safe e.g. protected from moving traffic
- The work takes into account ongoing weather conditions that may endanger workers safety
- Fragile roof surfaces/roof lights are suitably protected to prevent falls
- The risks of others being injured by falling objects is recognised and controlled

Most people working at height use a ladder/steps. While nobody is suggesting under the Work at Height Legislation that ladders/steps are banned, their use now needs to be justified to ensure they are the most suitable means of access compared to other equipment options by means of a risk assessment. Ladders/steps should only be used for working at height where:

- Work is of short duration (max 30mins)
- Work is of a light nature, they are not suitable for heavy work involving lifting of heavy loads
- A suitable handhold is available along with maintaining three points of contact when on the ladder
- Operators are not required to overreach i.e. the person's centre of gravity (belt buckle) should always be kept within the stiles (uprights) of the ladder
- Side-loading is not involved – it should be avoided as the ladder may over-tip. Where possible always face the job in hand. Where this is not possible additional stability devices will be required
- Correct angle of 75o can be maintained i.e. 1 unit out for every 4 up
- Regular inspections are carried out to ensure they are safe to use
- Correct class of steps/ladder is employed. Domestic type ladders are not suitable for use in commercial workplaces.

More information can be had from INDG 401 and INDG402 on the HSE website www.hse.gov

The Toro GDC System. Designed with imagination in mind.

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Introducing the Toro GDC System, the most powerful decoder system available for golf course irrigation.

The GDC system uses proven technology from the aerospace and aviation industries to provide reliable, affordable irrigation with the ability to support the complex designs of today's golf courses.

- **Design without complicated calculations.** One cable can have up to 800 stations and be up to 4.5 km long.
- **Lower installation costs.** The Toro GDC System minimises wire usage and reduces overall system costs.
- **Reduce maintenance and downtime.** Reduce troubleshooting time; activate 50 stations simultaneously.
- **Count on the Toro NSN Support Network.** The first dedicated support network in the irrigation industry.

For full details please call 01480 226858



TORO STUDENT OF THE YEAR

I recently participated in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Competition 2007. This was a fantastic experience and opportunity that also allowed me to meet seven great finalists from throughout the UK.

I would like to thank the BIGGA staff and the judges for their warm welcome. The accommodation and facilities were excellent. This is an amazing competition and would not be available for students without support from Toro, Ken Richardson and Sami Collins. This was the 19th Student of the Year Competition and Ken's last, so now he can finally enjoy his retirement (welcome on board Rachael).

It was fun to go out in Harrogate after the presentation, this then allowed everyone to enjoy the experience and relax after the two days hard work. The meal and drinks were a delight. The bowling was interesting as well, but I think the BIGGA staff and Billy McMillan had been practicing!

BIGGA is a fantastic organisation and this is shown by the achievements from its staff and members. With the support from my family, work colleagues, members from Abbeydale, Steve Prinn (Askham Bryan College), Gordon Brannah (Sheffield Section) and my Head Greenkeeper, Warwick Manning, it made this all worth while...Thank you and congratulations to Avon Bridges.

*Lewis Birch
Abbeydale GC*

STUDENT OF THE YEAR

I am writing to express my many thanks to the Learning and Development Department and all BIGGA staff involved with the recent 2007 Toro Student of the Year competition.

I felt privileged to be chosen as one of the eight finalists and to be selected as one of the runners up was fantastic. Everyone I met was very helpful and made the entire weekend very enjoyable.

I found it exciting and feel I have gained valuable experience throughout all the stages of the Award. I have also met some very interesting people and made some very useful contacts.

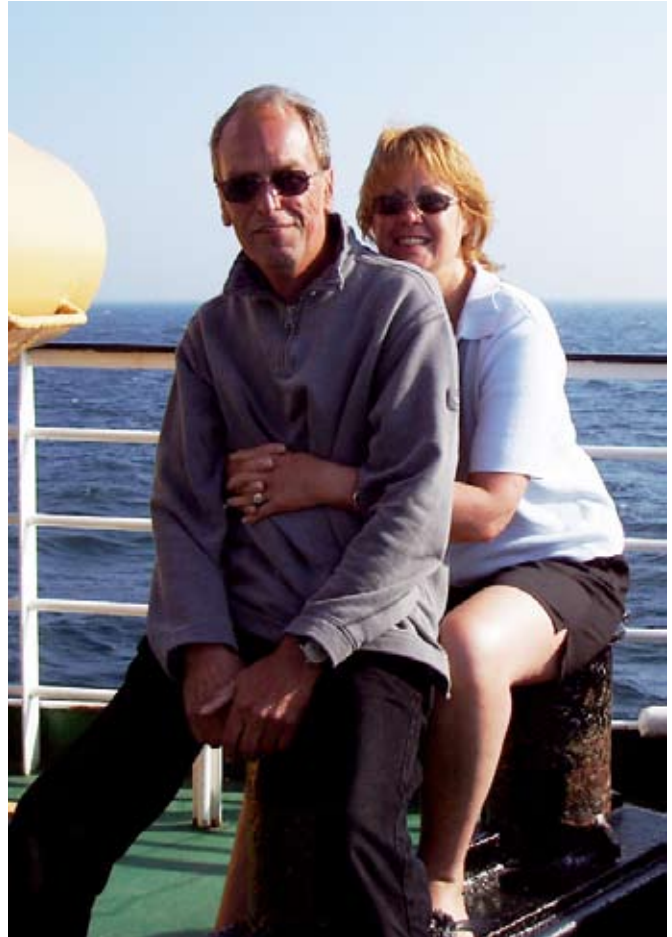
I look forward to seeing some of you again during Harrogate Week. Thank you once again.

*Simon Lambert
1st Assistant Greenkeeper
Seaford Head Golf Course*

DIL BARNARD

It is with regret, that we report of passing of Dilwyn Barnard, Salesman at Grasshopper Ltd, Toro Dealer in Essex.

Dil passed away on Saturday, September 22, after a brave, two-year battle with Cancer.



Dil was 59 and had worked at Grasshopper from 1989, having previously worked for Hensmans Agricultural dealers in Ingatestone, Essex, as a fitter. After which he joined Chelmsford Plant Hire as a Fitter, and Trainee Salesman.

He enjoyed Sailing from Bradwell Marina when he was younger, and in the latter years enjoyed travelling with his wife, Maureen, and the Scilly Isles were a favourite.

Dil leaves his Wife, Maureen, son Neill, Daughter Sally, and four Grandchildren.

He will be sorely missed by family, friends and colleague's alike, for his legendary humour and ability to make everyone he met feel instantly at ease.

*Arnold Phipps-Jones
Essex Section*

New Products



NEW PRODUCTS

FAST REMOVAL OF WATER

Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd recently announced that it is now exclusive distributor for the UK and Ireland for the BunkerBlaster. The BunkerBlaster is designed to quickly and efficiently remove water from flooded bunkers and water saturated playing areas on golf courses. The discharge nozzle allows the operator to direct the unwanted water to the nearest drainage area.

i www.sisis.com



LETHAL WEAPON

Headland has launched Surpass, their new, broad spectrum, contact fungicide based on iprodione.

Surpass gives both curative and preventative control of common turf diseases including Fusarium Patch, Dollar Spot and Red Thread.

i 01223 597834
or visit: www.headlandamenity.com



ICE AND SNOW CONTROL

Broadwood International has launched the SnowEx SP-1575, a tailgate mounted de-icing spreader unit for use with a range of vehicles including 4x4 and tractors. Lightweight for easy installation and removal, the SnowEx SP-1575 can accommodate up to 160 litres of road sand, grit or salt.

i 01794 388881
or visit: www.snowexeurope.com



AUTOMATED BALL COLLECTOR

A fully-automated ball collector, suitable for use on golf ranges and practice grounds all year round, has been launched by Turfmech Machinery Ltd.

Known as the RangeRunner, the unmanned, self-propelled machine combines global positioning satellite (GPS) technology with a programmable routing system to enable golf ranges to automate what is accepted as the most hazardous and time-consuming job on the range, namely, the collection and retrieval of golf balls.

i 01889 271503
or visit: www.turfmech.co.uk



PETROL STORAGE

The new Maxi 2000 Petrol Station from Ideals UK Ltd joins the Midi 1000 unit, launched just over a year ago.

The Midi 1000 was designed to meet the demand from Golf Clubs for a safe, purpose designed, above ground Petrol Storage Station, to receive tanker delivered fuel. The 1000 unit has been so successful in its first year that Ideals UK developed the Maxi 2000 to meet the needs of larger users of Petrol.

i 01530834384
or visit: www.idealsuk.com



LONGER-LASTING GRINDSTONES

Bernhard and Company recently launched SuperBlue genuine grindstones, designed and developed to last up to three times longer than conventional grindstones.

Highly durable, these stones come into their own when grinding the more demanding new generation of harder steel blades.

SuperBlue is now available for the Bernhard range of grinders Anglemaster, Chippermaster and Rotamaster.

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News from the Chief Executive

The BIGGA/IOG group set up to investigate the potential benefit of a merger held its latest review meeting at BIGGA House. Both BIGGA and the IOG confirmed their desire to continue with talks however, BIGGA representatives firmly stated their concern at not having made more progress. After an open and frank discussion a very progressive task list was agreed with some extremely tight deadlines. The intention is to have a report out to members by January 31, 2008, for consideration. I stress nothing can be agreed regarding a merger without the approval of membership.

Another meeting has been arranged for November when the two Chief Executive's must present to the Group the following reports: The benefit of a merger to their respective members: The benefit of a merger to the respective businesses: A proposed membership structure with associated subscription rates: A study on exhibitions and publications. These will be key documents that will give a clear indication of the value of further negotiations.

The Amenity Forum's recent meeting was attended by our representative, Ken Siems. The meeting was very constructive, detailing the extensive work undertaken by the Amenity Forum in lobbying the European Parliament regarding the proposed pesticide ban.

The National Championship was a great success, our thanks go to Dundonald and Kilmarnock (Barrassie) Golf Clubs for hosting the competition. Both clubs made the Association very welcome. I would like to thank Kubota for their sponsorship and the members who supported the event by entering. Congratulations to David Simpson and Elliott Small, the respective winners of the Challenge Trophy and the Challenge Cup.

I recently attended a meeting of the Children in Golf Strategy Group – A partnership of the governing bodies and organisation's in golf throughout Great Britain and Ireland. They have committed to work together to ensure golf is an environment within which children/young people can participate in safely. A possible change in the law could see the golf club being registered as a business within which all employees will need to have a Criminal Records Bureau check. There is an increasing concern in society over the welfare of children and more and more those persons likely to have contact with them are being vetted. Whether we shall be invited to become a permanent partner will be decided at their next meeting. I hope this is the case. For more information go to: www.childrengolf.org

One of our greatest challenges is getting information to the golfer so we can create a better understanding of the role of the greenkeeper and the level of education, training and professionalism required to do the job. Scott MacCallum and I recently met with Mike Harris, Editor of Golf Monthly. We are in the process of putting together some suggestions for features in their publication, both on greenkeeping and the environment, linking in our own Environment Competition.

Please take time to study the education programme for Harrogate Week that members should have received. Details are also available through the BIGGA website. Book early to avoid disappointment!

John Pemberton



SCOTTISH - EAST

After the long wet summer, what a welcome relief to have a good September, with conditions ideal for renovation works.

The Autumn Outing was held this year at Ratho Park GC on Tuesday, September 19, with 24 in attendance. Weather conditions were ideal and as a result the golf scores were good. Our thanks go to Ratho Park for granting us courtesy of the course, the catering staff for keeping everybody well fed and watered and last but certainly not least to Tom, Billy and the team for presenting the course in excellent condition.

The golf results are as follows: Best Scratch – S. Cunningham 75; 1.1 T Murray, 75-7-68; 1.2 C. McArthur, 76-6-70; 2.1 R. Murdoch, 85-12-73; 2.2 C. Yeaman, 86-12-74; 3.1 S. Dixon, 92-19-73; 3.2 B. Hudson, 101-24-77; Best Nett - T. Murray 75-7-68; Veteran - A. Holmes, 77-3-74; Trade Prize - H Fraser (Huxleys), 69-3-66; Longest Drive - C. McArthur; Nearest the Pin at 15th - G. White. Finally the committee have asked me to personally thank all the Trade members for their continued support, it is very much appreciated.

I had a meeting this week with a real blast from the past, Donald Menzies, the former Head Greenkeeper at both Mortonhall and Peebles. He has spent the past summer working as manager on a farm near Malaga, which is one of the largest growers of Bermuda Grass in Europe. Now returned to the UK he is based in Edinburgh and is running his own landscape business.

The hot news this month is that Bill Lyon, the brother of Jim at Lanark is the new Course Manager at Murrayfield. He commences his duties in January. Continuing on the job scene, our congratulations go to Kevin Shiels on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Torphin Hills. He started his career at Lothianburn before joining the greens staff at Baberton in 1990. He has worked at Torphin Hills for the past two years as Deputy Head.

Mike Dooner



NORTH

The Autumn Outing was held at Fortrose in late September. The weather was windy but quite normal for this part of the world. A good day was had by all and thanks must go to Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC for their kind hospitality on the day. The course was in excellent condition throughout with firm fast greens that were hard to hit but a joy to putt on. Well done to Kevin Fowler and his staff for all their efforts on the day. There was a good turnout of 51 members on the day, which made it very enjoyable. Hopefully we can maintain at least this level of numbers for the outings next year and beyond.

Results - Longest Drive: Class 2 - James Hutchison, Castle Stuart GC; Class 1 - Neil Sadler, Portlethen GC; Nearest the Pin: Muir Ross, Ballindalloch GC. Sweep: 4th- Kevin Fowler, Fortrose GC; 3rd - Ben Brookes, Murcar GC; 2nd - Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC; 1st - Mike Keay Tarbat GC. Guest Winner: Neil Cameron, Castle Stuart GC.

Around the Green

Trade Winner: Raymond Warrender, Alpha Plus. Committee Winner: Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC. Veterans Trophy: 2nd Brian Cocker- Alyth GC; 1st George Simpson, Oldmeldrum GC. Class 3 Nett: 3rd - Hugh McClatchie, Peterhead GC; 2nd - Dale Robertson, Newmachar GC; 1st - David Duggan, Fortrose GC. Class 2 Nett: 3rd - Sharp, Peterculter GC; 2nd - Ben Brookes, Murcar GC; 1st - Mike Keay, Tarbat GC. Class 1 Nett: 3rd - Jocky Urquhart, Rothes GC; 2nd - Steve Sullivan, Craigie Hill GC; 1st - Kevin Fowler, Fortrose GC. Scratch: 2nd - Barry Cruickshank, Garmouth GC; 1st - Robert Patterson, Royal Aberdeen GC.

John Littlejohn has left Fraserburgh GC to take up a position at the new complex for Northern Marts at Maverston Urquhart near Elgin. This is a 27 hole complex that has been built so good luck to you John in your new venture. Nothing more from me this month.

Robert Patterson



WEST

A warm welcome to this month's report it's nice to see some decent weather after our disappointing summer, and just looking forward to picking up leaves.

This year's autumn outing was held at the Vale of Leven GC. It's a very important year as the club is now 100 years old. On the day I played with Davie McBride, the Course Manager and the Vice Captain, Drew, we had a fantastic day until the water was running into my shoes on the 12th hole and we decided to abandon ship back to the clubhouse for a few beers and some much needed food.

The course was in first class condition and I would like to congratulate Davie and his team for their hard work in presenting the course, also to the catering which was first class and not forgetting the bar staff for keeping us going in refreshments throughout the day.

I would like to thank the club for courtesy of their fine course and wish them all the best for the remainder of their centenary year. The scores on the day were: Scratch - Gerry Bruen, Williamwood. 1.1 Brian Hillan, Drumpellier; 1.2 John Brown, Bearsden; 1.3 Charlie Goodall, Balmore. 2.1 Alan Dykes, Balmore, 2.2 Barry McCulloch Whitecraigs, 2.3 Gary Burns Lenzie. 3.1 Jamie Keith, Cowglen, 3.2 Brian Logue, Vale of Leven, 3.3 Richard Cuthbert, Cowglen. And this year's Daval Trophy went to Brain Hillan, Drumpellier with a two round score of 71 points, well done to all the prize winners, many thanks to our patrons for their continued support of our outing.

This years annual night out will be held at Jongleurs Comedy Club the site of the old Apollo on Friday, November 23, tickets are on sale from anyone on the committee priced at £22 please be quick in buying tickets as it's a very popular venue.

As we head into the autumn/winter one of our colleagues will be heading to the surf and sun for six months. Derek McCallum, Deputy Head at Helensburgh GC, has secured a position at a prestigious golf club in Sydney, Terreyhills Golf and Country Club, have a look on the

website for some fantastic views of the course the West Section would like to wish you all the best, watch out for the red backs and always take a golf club when looking for your ball in the semi rough to bash any passing snakes

Our Education Convenor, Stuart Taylor, will be organising training days at Killermont GC November 6, Manual Handling half day course, November 13, Fire Extinguisher Course. Cost of courses £45-50.

Fraser Ross. karen.ross @teco.net, 07970366355



NORTHERN - NORTH EAST

On Thursday, September 20, Greenlay Co Ltd of Choppington held their Open Day for their new premises. They were very pleased with the amount of interest shown in the day by all the local greenkeepers and would like to thank them for making the effort to attend at this busy time of year. To get an attendance in excess of 100 people was tremendous. As well as all the John Deere equipment on display they had five representatives from John Deere including David Hart (Head of the C and CE division.) Food was a hog roast van and the sandwiches went down well, some who went back for seconds will remain nameless.

Recently two greenkeepers from our Section have had accidents one at work been Steven Richardson, of Tyneside GC, and Russ Black, of Westerhope GC, his been at home we hope they make quick recoveries.

New members to join the Section are all from the same club being Gosforth GC, they are J.Lee, J.Saunders and C.Walker. Some greenstaff from Slaley Hall are also showing interest in joining the Section - Come on lads get signed up - there are lots of benefits for you all.

On October 4 we had our Autumn Comp at Ravensworth GC. It's been a long time since we played there and by all accounts the greenkeepers who played were very praiseworthy of the excellent condition of the course, thanks would go to Stuart Morrison and his staff - Well done lads, thought we might have seen you playing but I believe you had a meeting with the local police regarding the continuous vandalism you have to put up with, maybe next time. The leading scores were as following: Best Gross - J.Gibson, Northumberland GC, 70 gross + Salver; Best Nett - M.Harvey, Wearside GC, 94-24= 70 Ransome Cup; Best Nett - A.Harrison, Garesfield GC, 89-10= 79 Greenlay Cup Handicap from scratch - 12; Best Nett - K.Dinsdale, Northumberland GC, 92-20=72 Fewsters Shield Handicap from 13- 28.

Well done lads keep them trophies nice and clean, good to see Alan Harrison returning to Section events and thanks to all the other members for turning up hope you had a good day, perhaps I will see some of you at Harrogate next January.

I would like to thank the following sponsors for their prizes which I must say were excellent they are: Turf Services Ltd, Rigby Taylor, Tacit, Greenlay, Shorts of Whitbur and, Aitkens.

Jimmy Richardson

Around the Green

NORTH WEST



The Autumn Tournament took place on Tuesday, October 2. A sunny day greeted us all and I can honestly say that the journey up was well worth the effort although Phil Dewhurst did most of the driving, thanks Phil.

Silloth was magnificent, a pleasure to play. Brian Storey and his lads had the course in great condition and the hospitality was fantastic, many thanks to the Captain and his Committee at Silloth and to everyone involved in making it such a success. On to the winners, Best Gross - Brian Storey. Best Nett - Grant Dougherty. Aggregate Cup - Peter Hogan. Vets Prize - Peter Hogan. Guest Prize - Peter Boyd. The Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive was once again sponsored by Bathgates and was won respectively by Grant Dougherty and Brian Storey well done to you all.

The next fixture is the President's Cup and AGM at Wilmslow GC on Thursday, December 6. Please get your names down early as this is a very popular event. If you wish to play send a cheque payable to BIGGA North West Section for £20 to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Tel: 07985175825. And don't forget to bring a bottle of alcohol or prize to the value of £5 so everyone on the day goes home with something nice. Just to finish harrogate is just around the corner so make sure if you are staying to

book early as the hotels get full very quickly. If you have any news please contact Bert Cross on: 0151 7245412 or myself on: 0151 2894625 my email is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



NORTH WALES

The Section would like to apologise for the lack of notes over the past few months, this has been down to a technical hitch, namely human resources or a lack of human resources.

We have had a few of changes on the committee over this year, Wendy O'Brien took a career move earlier this year and went over to work in Spain at one of the Polaris World resorts where the grass cutting motto is...maybe tomorrow better today. Also congratulations to Darren Anderson on his Master Greenkeeper award, he will also come off the committee due to work commitments, both Darren and Wendy were an active part of the Section team and we would like to thank them both individually for their efforts over the past years.

Our Autumn Golf Tournament was held at Lymm GC and we had another impressive turnout of just under 60 members, guests and trade playing – The course was presented in a fine condition for this part of the year and our thanks go to Lymm GC, Stuart Yarwood, Course Manager, along with his greenkeeping staff and also to the caterers for the excellent food afterwards.

The AGM that was due to take place at Lymm GC was postponed until the Christmas competition being held at Harlech – (Royal St David's GC) on December 5, We would like to see as many members attend this meeting as we possibly can and will be looking for two or three new committee members along with asking for courses to be put forward to host our 4 tournaments in the 2008 season and we are still looking for a venue for our spring seminar, does any one have any suggestions for such a place? It would be nice to see some new faces on the committee with new idea's to keep us progressing forward in an ever-changing environment.

Any questions with regard to your committee/your BIGGA Section + events/courses etc, should be directed to Jeremy Hughes at The Vale of Llangollen GC, Tel: 07876 776265 or Email: jezpro62@aol.com

Mesen Cymru

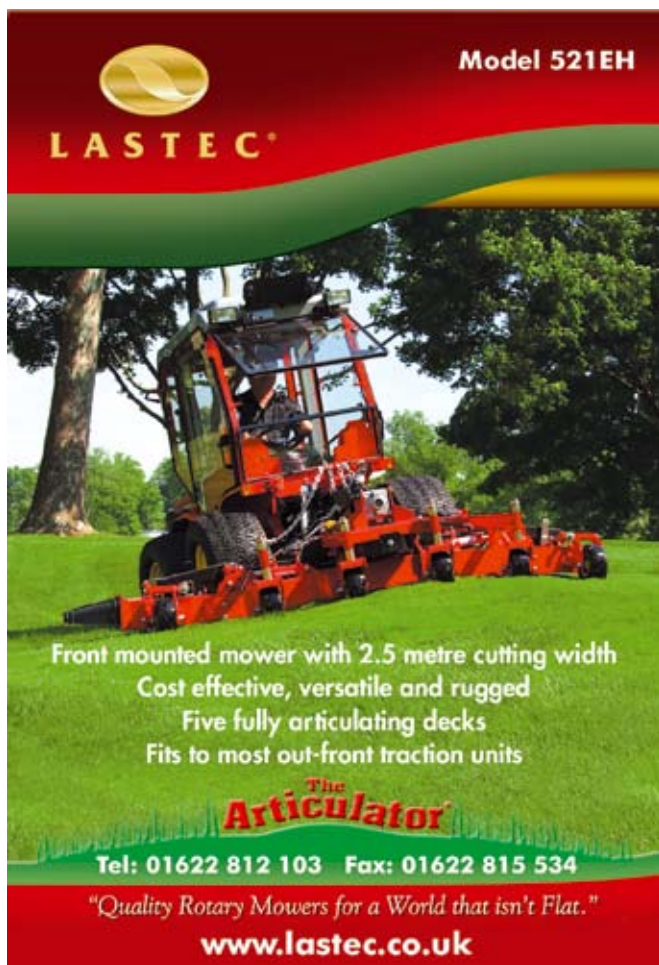
Andrew Acorn Andrew@acorngolf.com



NORTHERN

I must begin this month by apologising to you all for the lack of notes in the last couple of issues, I promise to keep on top of them in the future.

In the last couple of months the Section has held numerous events,



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including an excellent seminar at Moortown GC. A huge thank you to Mike Brear and Rigby Taylor for their sponsorship and assistance in organising the day, and also thanks to Henry Bechelet, Megan Hood and Richard Windows, all from the STRI, for their superb speeches and discussions. During the day at Moortown a presentation was made to Head Greenkeeper, Bill Fox, for his upcoming retirement and his services to greenkeeping. We wish Bill all the best in his retirement and hope to see him again at future Section events.

On the golf side of things, both Invitation Day and the Autumn Tournament have taken place. Firstly, Invitation Day was held at Howley Hall on a somewhat wet and overcast day, and with Head Man, Mike Bussey having a bad sense of humour with his hole positioning, scoring on the day was very tough going.

The Autumn Tournament was this year held at Fulford GC, and again with a combination of a very tough course and difficult weather conditions, the scoring was kept low.

Congratulations to all the winners in both competitions, we hope the same amount of players can be seen next year. Further thanks to our sponsors Rigby Taylor, for Invitation Day, and Scotts for the Autumn Tournament. Also thanks to the staff of both clubs for producing two fantastic courses.

At last I can bring you the date for 2007's Christmas Golf and AGM. It is being held at Crossland Heath GC, Huddersfield, on Thursday, December 6. Can anybody who is interested in playing please get in touch as soon as possible, and I must ask that all people attending pay by cheque before the day. If you have difficulties with paying by cheque then please get in touch and we can sort alternative arrangements out.

Before I leave you for another month, a huge congratulations goes to Tony "Bones" Gerrard, who I believe has just got engaged. Best wishes to Tony and partner from all at Northern Section.

Adam Speight 07739 319060



SHEFFIELD

Finally we have some Section news!

On September 6, we held a seminar at Rotherham GC, who I would like to thank for their continuous support of the Sheffield Section by providing their facilities for us to use at no expense to the Section! The seminar was sponsored by Mike Brear and Rigby Taylor who I would also like to thank for their continuous support of the Section! The seminar was on The Disturbance Theory and was given by Henry Bechelet, Richard Windows and Megan Hood, from the STRI; it was a very informative seminar which I think was enjoyed by all of the 50 plus people who attended which once again made it a very well supported event. I would like to thank Henry, Richard and Megan for giving us this interesting lecture.

On September 17, we held our Autumn competition at Brough GC who I would like to thank for giving us the courtesy of their course. The course

was in great condition and our thanks go to Derek Neve and his staff well done Derek! Thanks also go to our sponsor of the day who was Glen Sawyer from Golf and Turf Machinery, thanks for your continued support of the Section. Thank you also to the catering staff for providing an excellent meal. There were 15 greenkeepers who played and the eventual winner was Les Varndel with 32pts, well played Les! The results were as follows: 1st L Varndel, 32pts; 2nd R Jones, 30pts bb9; 3rd P Neve, 30pts; 4th S Redmond, 28pts bb9; 5th R Needham 28pts. The guest prize was won by C Martin with 29pts.

On September 24, the SUGC held their annual greenkeepers competition at Sandhills GC and the results were as follows: 1st Hickleton GC (R Needham); 2nd Chesterfield GC (A Bunting); 3rd Wheatley GC (P Docherty); 4th Grange Park GC (S Pickering); 5th Wortley GC (S Davies).

Our next golf will be at Worksop GC for our Christmas competition and AGM on December 3, so hopefully as many of you can turn up if it is possible for you.

Finally just about the Wembley trip, it has been postponed for the time being due to logistical reasons but hopefully this will happen at some point next year!

John Lax



MIDLANDS - MIDLAND

As some of you may be aware I recently left Sandwell Park to peruse a career in angling. However, after two months I began to miss greenkeeping and have been fortunate to be offered employ at The Wrekin. What a beautiful place to earn one's corn. As the old doctrine professes, "a change is as good as a rest!"

Well I must have been fished-out by the time of our annual angling match, I came last. The winner on the day was Allen Shore, Harborne, and second being Steve Yates, Little Aston - Steve any chance of holding next year's at Little Aston's pool? Our thanks to Mr.Perks for his kind and welcoming use of such great fishing. Also gratitude to N.Tyler/Alpha Amenity for sponsorship of the day.

Our Autumn event was held at Walsall GC and we were blessed with great weather. The course was as always beautiful. Our thanks to D.Coutts (C.M.) and his fine team for there great efforts. Also our thanks to Mr.R.Smith (Captain) for his informative sermon and welcoming manner. The results of the day: Best Gross - A.Jones. Nett: 1. K.Swan. 2. G.Turner. 3. A.Jones. 4. E.Stant. 5. J.Ganley. 6. R.Beacham. 7. M.Hughes. Our thanks to Campeys Turf Care for sponsorship of the fine main prize table. N.T.P.& L.D. was won by K.Swan(on Count-back) and P.Woodham respectively as sponsored by N.Tyler/Alpa Amenity. Thanks also to R.Page/Turners for refreshment around the course. Best Trade: T.Cheese.

The final of the Scotts Doubles was held at Wentworth and won by E. Stant and P. Woodham. The runners-up being R. Thomas and A. Jones. Our thanks to Scotts for sponsoring this long running event. What a great competition, £2.50 per head. playing great courses around the

Around the Green

Midlands then the joy of Wentworth, free! Get your partner ready/sorted for next year. I know mine has such a sentiment.

The Christmas event is to be played at Whittington Heath on 6/12/07 with full breakfast on arrival. Partner draw 9am Tee off 10am. Traditionally we have run a bring a prize and receive a prize format, this is to continue this year. Please bring prizes wrapped and to the value of over £7.00. There of course shall be a main prize table as sponsored by Tacit. Get your entries to Gary A.S.A.P.

We have again joined forces with New Grange Training to run the IOSH Managing Safely course. This comprehensive four day course provides managers from any type of organisation/industry with a basic introductory grounding in health and safety at work. It concentrates on training delegates to apply sound management principles to health and safety, and is divided into eight different modules. Bigga members are offered a specially reduced fee. Booking and enquiries should be made direct with New Grange on 01562 632143. Course Duration: 4 Full Days 9.30am-4.30pm. Venue: Gay Hill Golf Club. Cost: £420 + IOSH Delegate Registration of £35 per person (exc VAT) Includes IOSH Managing Safely Course Manual, IOSH Training Certificate on successful completion & examination, folder, pen, lunch and daily refreshments.

Well I hope you have inundated our Chairman with photos for next year's calendar, I'll put a fiver on it that you haven't. Our thanks to Whitemoss: www.whitemossec.co.uk for sponsoring this month's calendar page. Looking forward to next year's. Our thanks to all of our prior and future sponsors of this very unique benefit of being a member of our Section. Please take advantage of the others! www.midlandsection.co.uk

It is with great pleasure (via M.Gash) that Mike Green and his wife Faye have just had a little boy. From the whole section congratulations to you both. Gashey, you had better get some coffee at work for Mike, or a bed.

Sean McDade



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

October! What a month in our calendar. The so-called summer is becoming a distant memory, the nights are pulling in and the mornings are darker than a coal miner's armpit.

The weather is unpredictable and I suppose we will have a Russian winter to look forward to, with scenery changes before our eyes with leaves turning from green to every shade from brown to red and gold, and the squirrels are hurriedly burying their nuts, hoping that the greenkeeper will help remember where they put them. Finally, an old saying to remember, the holly tree heavy with fruit in early Autumn means a hard winter to come, so remember those woolly hats, warmer clothes and a half pint of pink gin and a few whelks should keep away the winter blues.

A warm welcome awaited the 50 or so Section members for the BBO Autumn Invitational which took place at Newbury & Crookham GC, a club with golfing history dating back to 1873 to which competitors still

play for possibly the oldest trophies in English golf and each I am sure all with a fascinating tale to tell. The course was an excellent test of golf, full of surprises with even the odd deer or muntjac seen roaming the heathland.

The results: 1st Ben Kebby and Richard Davis, Berkshire; 2nd Dan Lightfoot and Leigh Powell, Bearwood Lakes; 3rd Dave, Pussycat Lyons and John Bowness, Deanwood Park.

Nearest Pin - Erik Kinlon and Longest Drive - Pat Carroll with Jon Ryan from Browns winning the John Deere Putting Competition. Thanks to Newbury & Crookham GC for the courtesy of the course and all the catering and bar staff who provided hospitality ensuring our every need was met, Alec MacIndoe and all his green staff for the huge effort throughout the whole year in preparing first class playing conditions that made for a great day out. Thanks to Ian Richardson from Headland for sponsoring this event and Jon Beck for laying on the burgers at the halfway hut.

News around the Section, Nick Paris has left Chobham GC in Surrey and has started at Datchet GC. We wish Nick the best of luck in his first role as Head Greenkeeper.

The Xmas Turkey Trot will be at Beaconsfield GC this year on November 21 and will be a team event, so please get your entry forms in on time.

The Section website is alive and kicking, so if you have any news or views, give it a hit! www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk

Mark Day mark.day@tacitgolf.com



MID-ANGLIA

Is this the start of our long awaited growth decline, "about time" I hear you say, a few signs of disease and a wind that feels like its from the arctic. It seems funny that it is time for things to change but we are still very lush and green and cutting like mad. It won't be long until we are paying for the Christmas presents and looking forward to the New Year.

Here is a quick reminder to you all, the Texas Scramble is at South Beds on December 6, please get those entries in early to avoid disappointment as it will be on a first come first served basis. All entries to Richard Saunders at the usual address. We are trying to arrange a couple of educational seminars in Feb/Mar time - Details will be in the next issue.

As I write this article, I am preparing for the trip to Scotland to play in the National Championship, and am looking forward to representing the Section and when we return we have the Autumn comp at Berkhamsted GC, the results will be in next month's article.

Finally, this will be my last write up for the Section, as Craig Spooner, from Advanta Seeds, will be taking over the challenge. I would like to wish you well in whatever you do, all the best.

Steve Mason



SOUTH EAST - KENT

What a great day we had recently at The Wildernesse Club for our Autumn meeting.

A fun, team Texas Scramble format, great company, quality food and an unrivalled golf course. Many thanks to Mark Todd and his team for providing a stunning setting for us all to enjoy. Brian Willmott must have particularly enjoyed it as Duncan Kelso noticed that he appeared to be "Stiffening up" as he collected his nearest the pin prize!

It was nice to see many new faces at Wildernesse. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves and that you will become regular attendees at future events. Full results of the day as follows: 1st on 5 under par Gary Branchett, Paul Rudkin, Mark Wise; 2nd on 4 under par Duncan Kelso, John Millen, Dave Vidler; 3rd on 2 under par Paul Boozer, Matt Gray, Rob Holland. Nearest the pin was won by Brian Willmott and Longest Drive by Michael Wigstone.

On November, 29 the Kent Section annual tour draws to a close when the Turkey Trot shall be contested at Birchwood Park. Lets hope our Indian Summer continues until then at least! We shall be teeing off from 8.45am, having a three course Christmas dinner, lots of prizes and holding our AGM. Having an early start will hopefully enable many of you to be present for the whole day. If you wish to raise any issues for discussion or if you wish to join or change the current committee could we please have proposals in writing prior to the event. A fixture card for all 2008 events will also be distributed to all attendees on the day so you can plan your work programmes around our activities wherever possible.

I hope all of you who attended benefited from and enjoyed the Regional Seminar we hosted for the South East Region at the end of October. A lot of planning went into producing what looked to be a pretty comprehensive coverage on our overall working topic of "Climate of Change". Our usual industry days shall continue over the Winter months. Please consult our website or continue reading this column for more details.

Rob Holland kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



SUSSEX

Hello again, can anyone believe we are this close to Christmas already, the year seems to have flown by.

We have had a few events recently, the first was our Autumn meeting on September 13 which was held at Cooden Beach. I would like to thank everyone at Cooden for their hospitality, and big thanks to John Hill, Carl Wyborne and the team for providing such a great course and a cracking day - The greens were the best I have played on this year.

A big thanks to Blade Amenity for sponsoring the day, so well done Mark Wilton. The results were as follows: Nearest Pin on 3rd - Francois

Russell, Nearest Pin on 6th - Chris Ahier; Longest Drive on 18th - Phil Squelsch. Greenkeepers prizes: 1st - Glen Pollard, 39 pts; 2nd - Peter Ray, 37 pts; 3rd - Dave Allen, 36 pts. Guests prizes: 1st - Gerome Finley, 34pts; 2nd - Gary "Ian Beale" Ogily, 32 pts; 3rd - Darren Mitchel, 32 pts. Thank you to everyone who attended the day, there were some great prizes to be won from dvd and TV's to digital radios, so congratulations to those of you who won.

The next event is the three way game between us, Surrey and Essex. this was held at Colne Valley. Thanks must go to Tom Smith who hosted the game and also organised it together with John Ross. The course was in very good condition, but very tough.

The team we took up and a big thank you to them was: Dan Beard, Chris Ahier, Dave Allen, Rob Hudson, Matt Cossley, Dave Ansell, Rob Short, Tony Wooley, Dave Hinks, Ian Beale and Pete Crossley. Results: 1st Essex, 233; 2nd Sussex, 215; last Surrey, 198.

The way it worked, we took the best eight Stableford scores from eleven and added them all up. I can't quite remember the finishing scores but we didn't come last!

The next event will be the Turkey Trot held at Worthing GC on November 30 which is not to be missed. for me it is the best event of the year, no one goes home empty handed and everyone has a great time.

We have got a game of football against Surrey on October 25 with our brand new, sponsored by Rigby Taylor, kit. Thanks to Mike Ring for organising the kit, may we have many wins in it.

If you want to get in touch Tel: 07776223234 or Email: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Rob Hudson



LONDON

Well time certainly does fly by with summer being a distant memory.

October proved to be a busy month for London Section and as a result we are pleased to announce that this coming December will see the official launch of our very own website www.biggalondonsection.co.uk.

On top of that, for 2008 there will be a new trophy to play for in the form of a matchplay competition, which is to be played throughout the year with knockout stages, more to come on this next month so stay tuned.

Also not to forget that Christmas is almost upon us and that means only one thing, the Scotts Trophy at Porters Park - Will it be another Northwood victory for the third year running?

P.S. look out for the website.

Aaron Percival
Secretary



Around the Green

EAST ANGLIA



Our band of brothers (and Clare), ascended on Eaton Golf Club on 12 September 2007. All nearly went smoothly until Ian found out it was a two tee start and had to re-arrange the start times at the last minute. All my fault I'm afraid (a senior moment). I forgot to tell him! I hope all those who came enjoyed their day as much as we enjoyed "preparing" the course.

The event was sponsored by Bartram Mowers. Incidentally Barry Bartram started in a small workshop at Norwich Airport in 1972 - The same time I arrived at Eaton on an old BSA motorbike. One of us has clearly moved on somewhat. I've still got by Bike!

I digress, now for the important bit. 0 - 9 Handicap: 1. Mark Henderson, 35 pts on countback; 2. Chris O'Dowd; 3. Graham Hurren, 34 pts. 10 - 18 Handicap: 1. David Farmer, 35 pts; 2. Glen Rayfield, 34 pts; 3. Ian Willett, 30 pts. 19 - 24 Handicap: 1. Andy Baker, 33 pts; 2. Neville Rowlandson, 26 pts; 3. Richard Mitchell, 25 pts. G & T's: 1. Eddie Jack, 42 pts (who wrote the script); 2. Ian Benn, 39 pts; 3. Mark Keysall, 36 pts. Longest Drive - James Gill; Nearest Pin - Neville Rowlandson. The prizes were presented by Terry Upton of Bartram Mowers.

(Another senior moment) Step up Bob Chesham, of Sisis, who sent everyone diving for cover when he was approaching the 18th. From 20 yards he thinned one and struck the clubhouse wall. He is now the proud winner of our coveted "loo seat." As always our trade friends did us proud and they are as follows: Bartram Mowers, Textron, Tacit, Rigby Taylor, CMW, Sisis, A & K Supplies, Midlube, Collier Turf Care, Aitkens, Scotts, Earnest Doe, Ben Burgess, Sherriff (of Nottingham), Toro, Tomlinson Ground Care, Consultant Clarkson, Headland, Atterton & Ellis and Lely UK. I hope you all had a good day and thank you Eaton GC for your support in stepping when a neighbouring club double booked!

Danny, from Bartrams, was recently married. I thought he said he had his honeymoon in Maldon. Seemed a bit strange to me but it turned out to be the Maldives. It's that language barrier I guess. And don't mention suppositories to Mark Day - he'll tell you where to put them!

It has also been brought to my attention that some clubs are not giving us courtesy of the course. I know we are a big group but most of us have given nearly all our working lives to golf. Indeed in our Section I'll bet that working years are almost 2,000 between us. We visit five courses a year and spread them out as much as we can. I know there is no such thing as a "free lunch" but if you ain't got a greenkeeper, you ain't got a course. Is a bit of courtesy really too much to ask?

Mick Lathrope



ESSEX

North Weald GC played host to the Winter Trophy on a dry but cold and windy day at the end of September. Club owner, Andrew Lloyd-Skinner,

welcomed us to his club and offered a few words of, keep it straight and stay out of trouble, which was easier said than done on a windy day. He is backed by a fine course staff under the leadership of Bryan Girling who had put a lot of effort into producing such a fine course for all of us to enjoy. Despite some heavy reconstruction works going on around the perimeters of the course, and with the trundle of lorries every few minutes. Play was not disrupted and that is down to some well thought out planning by the clubs owner. We all enjoyed the day and food that followed the game. The Essex Section wish thanks Andrew and Bryan for the day and look forward to returning in the future, to see the fruits of the construction work. That I'm sure will make the course even more interesting to play.

Winners were as follows: Overall. Don Clark, Orsett GC, 38 pts; 1.1 Tony Barker, North Weald GC, 35 pts; 1.2 Ben Sharpe, Orsett GC, 34 pts; 1.3 Roland Hughes, Forrester Park G&TC, 34 pts on count back. 2.1 Andy Cracknell, Orsett GC, 37 pts; 2.2 Nick Swanson, Orsett GC, 36 pts; 2.3 Keith Chinnery, Colchester GC, 35 pts. Nearest the Pin, Lewis Tweed. Longest Drive, Daniel Hughes. Guest Prize, Roy Sprong 40 pts. Trade Prize, Mark Keysell 32 pts. Chris Wild was happy to hand out the prizes on behalf of Rigby Taylor, which had representation from Steve Denton and Mark Keysell and ex member of staff Dennis Smith. A fine raffle table was helped out by trade members who always support us so well.

Move news this month is that David Beale, Orsett Golf Club, who over the years has supported the Section with a long stint on the committee as competition secretary. Has decided to leave the profession and take up the art of house building. We wish him well over the coming months and years.

Also David Tindell has left the profession having joined Stock Brook the Country Club a year ago on his return from the USA having just completed a year with the Ohio State University project, Stock Brook staff wish him every success.

The next event is the Winter Stableford Tournament, at North Weald Golf Club.

November 27. Christmas Texas Scramble and AGM at Orsett GC. Teams of Four. Each team must comprise of at least two Greenkeeper members and then can be made up of anyone else, Trade, Guest or Greenkeeper. You choose and make up your own team. Antony will not be making the selections; it's up to you. Entries to Antony Kirwan, on the official entry forms please, with your entry fees.

Any queries contact Antony on 0707887-780.065 or by E-mail: antz16@btinternet.com

Anyone wishing to raise anything or be considered for the committee at the forthcoming AGM should contact, Martin Forrester as soon as possible, cut of date 10 days prior to the meeting. E-mail: mdwforrester@hotmail.com Anyone who has any news can contact me at highwoods.photographic@talktalk.net or call me on: 01206 852353

Arnold Phipps-Jones www.essexbigga.co.uk



SOUTH WEST & WALES - SOUTH WEST

I was down at Cannington College last week for the first in a series of one-day training courses. This particular day was devoted to Health & Safety plus Accident Reporting, and was led by Frank Newberry and Jon Allbutt, with support from Paul Woodham and Hugh Murray. The content was spot-on when considering Risk Assessments of the golf course, machinery areas, and general Safety. There are a number of other similar training days in the offing, which are actually attached to the current NVQ 3 course on-going this winter, but remember, you don't have to be enrolled on any formal course with the College to attend, simply ring or return the application form to book your place on the day in question: 31.10.2007 – Machinery Maintenance; 28.11.2007 – Drainage; 07.01.2008 – Course Presentation; 27.02.2008 – Manage Oneself; 26.3.2008 – Create Grassed & Planted areas. Contact George Pitts at Bridgwater College on: 01278 655144 or 07929 754401 or email pittsg@brdgwatercollege.co.uk to discuss content and times etc. From what I've seen, these days are well worth consideration.

In the Section, congratulations are finally due to the Section Team. After what can best be described as a "difficult season", McClaren Vincent and the lads finally came good at Farrington Gurney against the South Coast Section. McClaren's new five million pound strikers, Nigel Pring and Robin Greaves, led an improbable comeback from five down with six holes to play to snatch the point and turn the match 31\2 to 2 1\2 in our favour. I wasn't able to play myself, but I'm told that the course was in fantastic condition, so many thanks to Nigel Pring and his team, and to Farrington Gurney Golf Club for allowing us to play and courtesy of the course – the first time that the Section had visited.

Back at Minch we've just hosted South West Seniors Golf Week, and it was really nice to bump into Lauchlan "Jock" Millar yet again. Jock retired from greenkeeping some eight years ago, having had spells at Brunham & Berrow, Moor Park, St. Pierre, and again at Burnham & Berrow, but still plays a mean game off 5 and still represents his county at senior level. We had a good chat about greenkeeping in general (and Burnham in particular!) about which he was extremely complimentary. It was great to hear that his sons, Lauchlan junior, and Kelvin, are enjoying successful careers as Course Managers at Hayling Island and Churston Ferrers respectively.

Fixtures are largely in place for next season, early dates for your diaries are:

- Winter Tournament, Kingsdown, February 21
- Spring Meeting, Clevedon, April 24
- Greenkeeper\Amateur, Minchinhampton Old Course, May 13
- Summer Tournament, The Bristol, July 24
- Autumn Tournament, Marlborough, October TBC + AGM
- Christmas, Weston Super Mare, December 18

Many thanks to all those golf clubs, and grateful thanks to the greenkeepers who helped with the organisation. If you would like to host an event for 2009, please let me know (it's never too early to start booking!).

I might just take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge our Patronage Partners for their sponsorship of the Section this year. The money is

put to very good use – sponsoring a place at Harrogate, ten places at the Cannington Seminar, a representative at the National Tournament, and helping to administer the section. Thank you gentlemen and in no particular order – Avoncrop Amenity, Vitax, Irritech, Tower Sport Europe, B.S. Mowers, Rigby Taylor, Symbio, Countrywide, M.J. Abbott your help is very much appreciated. Please consider these companies when making purchasing decisions.

Our best wishes to Rich Carter, Lansdown, who was attacked in the street a month ago and hasn't played golf since – a swift and complete recovery to one of Gloucestershire's finest players.

In the meantime, look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Burnham & Berrow for this year's Christmas event in December, so keep a sharp look-out in the post for the entry form. Any news from your courses would be welcome.

Paul Worster paulw@mgcnew.co.uk 01453 837355



SOUTH COAST

I'm always saying how quickly the year passes, it only seems like yesterday I reported last year's annual match between the South Coast & the South West Sections. Once again this event was upon us taking place at Farrington Golf and Country Club near Bristol on September 13. I'm sorry to say history repeated itself and the South Coast lost. The score was 1.5 points to 3.5 points. Many congratulations to the South West team and many thanks to our players for taking part in what was a very sociable and enjoyable day. Much praise goes to Nigel Pring the Course Manager and his team for providing the course in tip-top condition. The catering and the club staff were very friendly, providing a welcoming atmosphere and excellent food. Thanks to all at Farrington Golf and Country Club.

You'll notice my report this month is a bit short in length. This is for two reasons. I'm moving house or hope to be! What do you call a room full of conveyancers?! The answer...well it's too rude to print in such a quality publication as Greenkeeper International. On my rounds ask me and I'll give you a quick reply and you never know we might be in our new house by the time we play Barton-On-Sea on December 5! If you want to attend this or any of our Golf Days please contact Chris Sturgess on: 0777 313 8409 or send a cheque, made out to BIGGA South Coast, to Chris direct at his home address: 31 Bay Rd, Sholing, Southampton SO19 8EZ. The other reason is I need some more news from you guys. Thanks to those who have informed me about happy events like exam successes and winning golf tournaments but, please, I need more stories. I always say it, but I'll say it again, it's your Section, make the most of it. Please contact me on my mobile number which is below.

Well that's it for this month. Last month, when I finished the article, I started packing for Saltex. This month, I'm now off to pack lots and lots of boxes for my new abode – what joy!

Joe Crawley 07721 389200

Around the Green

DEVON AND CORNWALL



By the time you all read this column, we would have had our first meeting at Elfordleigh including the Section AGM. I look forward to this time of year where we can all meet up, have a good old natter and try to put the world to rights.

We have made some changes this year into the way we run your Section. Some of us 'oldies' are hanging up our boots paving the way for the 'young guns' to take us forward. I think we now have a good balance of young and old, Abi representing the young, Colin representing the old and Billy representing the very old (sorry Bill but it seems like you've been here forever). Joking aside, I do think we have a good balanced committee with lots of enthusiasm and I wish you all the very best of luck.

Our next meeting will be at Killiow Golf Club in Cornwall, on November 7 and the South West Seminar at Cannington College in Bridgewater on November 15 - Don't forget the Christmas meeting at Okehampton on December 11 and book your place early to avoid disappointment.

Last but not least the BTME Education Week in Harrogate. Your Section has once again laid on free transport with pick up points in Devon and Cornwall. If you haven't done so already, you need to book your place through our Secretary, Abi Crosswood. Abi can be contacted at: 28 Porthbean, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 3JE or: 01637 871166. Please book early as places are very limited. The bus will be leaving the last pick up point at Cullompton approx. 9.30am on Monday, January 21, 2008 and returning at 12.30pm on Thursday, January 24. (times to be confirmed). The cost for the trip is £133.50 for a twin room or £222 for a single room which includes 3 nights B&B at the Cairn hotel in Harrogate plus your entry into the conference centre. Although some seminars are free there are ones which will need to be booked through BIGGA HQ at Aldwark. Details of all the education courses and seminars, if not already with you, will be sent out in the near future.

Here's hoping you all have a disease free autumn especially you lowie mowie boys (pink flying pig just gone over) and I look forward to meeting up with you all soon.

Steve Evans



SOUTH WALES

Hi everyone, I hope you are not too stressed out after the wettest summer we have had in years and that your autumn work is well in hand, at The Grove we are just about finished.

My first report is on our annual match v the Golf Club Secretaries which took place at the Inco GC on Thursday, September 27 before I reveal the results I must give thanks to the following, Inco Golf Club for the courtesy off their fine course, the Club Captain, Mr Phil Symons, for presenting the prizes, Mr Emy Nickels and his crew for the superb condition of his

course - Congratulations Emyr you can stop taking the Valliam now! The catering and bar staff for their friendly welcome and fine meal.

Our sponsors for the day were Complete Weed Control, Mr Allen Able - If you did not know it Allen broke his foot a few weeks ago and although in pain turned up and went around the course in a J.D Gaiter to support both teams that's what I call dedication! Many thanks Allen your continued support is much appreciated (hope the foot mends soon).

On to the results and although we were two men short the result went our way, 4 to 3, well done lads especially you boys that played on your own, of which I must include our Chairman, Kerry Jones, because he played with me, sorry Kerry and John and Mansel. Prizes for Nearest the Pin 6th - Ian Church (Ashburnham Secretary), Nearest Pin 13th - Andy Roach and Longest Drive - Andy Roach, Nearest the Pin 13th another familiar name, Daryl Jones Nearest the Pin 8th Daryl Jones, these boys all won a bottle of fine whiskey and when a Scots man donates the prize you know it must be a good one, ones again thank you Allen. Last but not least thank you all for taking part.

One last piece of news, although you all know it by now, Mr Peter Lacey is the new Tower Chemicals rep so by the time this report comes out you will properly had a visit (give the old boy a cup of tea). All the very best from us all, Peter.

That's it for now lads so just remember keep smiling, news and views to: henry@henrystead.wanadoo.co.uk.

Henry Stead

BIGGA's Regional Administrators



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Section Notes -

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

CROSSWORD

C	R	E	A	T	U	R	E	O	F	H	A	B	I	T
A	L	H	O	R	O	U								
L	I	E	G	E	A	V	A	I	L	A	B	L	E	
Y	C	M	M	N	D	B	S							
P	U	T	R	I	D	E	G	G	S	A	L	A	D	
S	R	K	C	E										
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D	R	G	V	N	T	A	L							
H	A	M	M	E	R	A	N	D	S	I	C	K	L	E

QUICK NINE HOLE QUIZ

- 1 She was a woman!
- 2 Bobby Jones
- 3 Kenny Logan
- 4 Wembley
- 5 Reebok
- 6 Barcelona
- 7 The rings
- 8 The Kangaroos
- 9 5

MONSTER SUDOKU

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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

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NOVEMBER HOT JOB



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Invites applications for the position of

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Braintree Golf Club currently has a vacancy for a suitably qualified mechanic, who also has skills relating to greenkeeping, to join our skilled and enthusiastic course management team.

The successful applicant will report to the Course manager and be responsible for all aspects of the machinery maintenance, the day to day servicing, the grinding of cylinders and the general health and safety of the workshop, as well as contributing to the maintenance and upkeep of the golf course.

Ideally the candidate will have a proven career record and the experience of working in the golf club environment. An NVQ2, spraying qualifications and any machinery certification would be an advantage.

Salary is negotiable dependant on qualification and experience. 20 days paid annual leave plus bank holidays.

Please apply in writing with full CV and two references by Friday the 23rd of November to:
Kevan Sharpe, Course Manager, Braintree Golf Club,
 Kings Lane, Stisted, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8DD

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GOLF CLUB

The Buckinghamshire Golf Club has vacancies for 2 fully qualified experienced greenkeepers to work and play on our 18 Championship Golf Course.

The successful applicants should have a minimum of 2-3 years experience and should be qualified to NVQ level 2. Spraying qualifications and driving licence would be an advantage.

An excellent salary is being offered which is negotiable depending on qualifications and experience.

Please apply with full CV to
Erik Kinlon, Course Manager,
 The Buckinghamshire Golf Club,
 Denham Court Drive, Denham, Bucks, UB9 5PG.



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ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applicants are invited to apply for the above position at this archetypal parkland club. Ideally the successful candidate will be enthusiastic, reliable and will be qualified to NVQ level 2, have relevant spraying certificates and have experience of greenkeeping at a golf club.

Salary will be between £15,000 - £19,000 dependant on experience.

Applications should be sent accompanied with a CV to:
The Course Manager, Chipping, Norton Golf Club,
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Head Greenkeeper Venue: Thamesview Golf Centre

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Applications in writing plus curriculum vitae to:

The General Manager
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For an informal discussion please contact either Sean Thomas or Neil Drew on (01325) 388406.

Application packs are available on-line at:
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Only candidates who are fully qualified - minimum NVQ level 3 or equivalent - and preferably (but not essential) have experience in managing a links course, should apply and, in addition, they should have the following attributes:-

- Ability to lead and motivate staff.
- Excellent communication skills, together with knowledge of IT.
- Expert knowledge of irrigation systems and machinery.
- Ability to manage resources effectively within budgetary controls.
- Knowledge of all relevant health & safety and other statutory legislation.

Please apply in writing for an application form and outline job description to:

The Secretary/Manager, Formby Golf Club, Golf Road,
 Formby, Liverpool L37 1LQ,
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Please reply in writing by 30th December 2007 with C.V to:

Scott Ballentine, Secretary
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Course Manager

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Candidates with the following attributes are invited to apply:

- A minimum of three years experience as a Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper, including Tournament experience
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- The ability to deliver effective performance management
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Run during Harrogate Week, Continue to Learn provides members with a week of seminars, workshops and debates ensuring there is something for everyone.

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BIGGA WEBSITE - WWW.BIGGA.ORG.UK

Exclusive access to the Members area of the website. Interact with other Greenkeepers on the bulletin board or check out the latest recruitment vacancies in the industry.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

When you join you are automatically given membership of one of the 27 sections around the country. As an active member you can attend golf days and other social events on a regular basis enabling you to network amongst others in the industry. Look at the 'Around the Green' section for contact details.

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The BIGGA Library boasts over 650 books available to borrow for up to six weeks. The only cost is that of returning the book to HQ.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

Our course here at Tyrrells Wood has recovered very well from all the hollow tining heavy dressings and renovation works that took place and kept us so busy during the past month or so. I would've thought we would be enjoying a slow down in growth that would release us from the intensity of cutting - Not a bit of it. As the trees start to change to their autumn splendour and blaze of colour, we are as busy cutting grass as we were a few months ago. But it's not all bad, the course looks great and we still enjoy some very good playing surfaces.

Something happened a few weeks ago that surprised me! We were stopped from abstracting water from our borehole as the flow rate in the local river had fallen below the required flow rate. Not unheard of you might think, however, bearing in mind we have had a record-breaking year in terms of rainfall the last thing I expected to receive was a stop notice from the Environment Agency.

I might add that even with the driest year on record last year we were able to abstract fully all year, so it just goes to show things can and do change even when you least expect them to. Of course we were not abstracting any water at the time because of the heavy amounts of rainfall we experienced, so thank God they did it this year when we didn't need the water rather than last.

Anyway enough of this dribble. I have had a packed month of doing nice things as your Chairman. My first venture was to BIGGA HQ and a chance to meet with the future. By that I of course mean 'our' future, yes, it was that time of year when we have the pleasure of meeting all the finalists in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year. You can't help but feel inspired by meeting with students within your chosen profession. They are unspoiled, fresh, dynamic in their thinking, willingly open and share their dreams for not only their future but also that of Greenkeeping. I was very impressed with each and every contestant involved in this year's competition so they all have my heartfelt congratulations on getting to the finals. Regardless of the fact there can only be one winner, they are all winners in getting to the finals and, based on what I saw, they all have an assured future within Greenkeeping. So it's my pleasure to congratulate, firstly, both runners up - Lewis Birch and Simon Lambert.



Well done to you both on your achievement and to the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner for 2007, Avon Bridges. Well done young man. Congratulations on winning this important competition during my year as Chairman. I hope you enjoy your time in the USA and that you return home to your family and work the richer for the experience. None of this would be possible without the continued support of the sponsor, Toro, so they also have my thanks for their input in the development of these young students and with the next year being the 20th anniversary, well done to everyone involved and long may it continue.

October, and it was the turn of the west coast to host our National Championship so, packing everything an experienced traveller needs, namely everything except sun cream it would seem, off I set.

I arrived in Glasgow late afternoon and driving to the hotel we passed places I remembered from being a child, it was a real treat for me to be on the west coast again. Being born in Kilmarnock it was like going home for me quite a treat really. Anyway I digress as usual. We were here for 36 holes of golf on two splendid venues namely Dundonald Links and Kilmarnock Barassie. So with the venues chosen the competitors started to arrive we had a full field with no spaces untaken. With some exceptional hospitality we had a great first day with a wee bit of rain to begin with, then the sun split the trees as usual and yours truly got a burnt head on the Dundonald course. That night we had an

exceptional dinner at Kilmarnock Barassie and were duly entertained by the Club Captain Mr Bob Pollock quiet a golfer and no mean speaker too boot. The next day's play was looming and the heavens opened during the night - It could have been touch and go whether we would play at Barassie. But in true Greenkeeping fashion the boys were out early and mopped up the course for play on time and again the sun split the trees.

So after two days of play we came to the winners - Elliott Small (retirement must have its compensations) 36 hole gross 168 net 152 well-done young man and David Simpson, Crieff Golf Club, (with his dad George as caddie) 36 hole gross 150 net 152 being the overall winner. The region prize went to Scotland so congratulations to all the winners.

Thanks that should be mentioned - To both golf clubs we thank you for two superb golf courses and for your exceptional hospitality, to Ken Siems for his warm welcome at Dundonald and Donald Wilson, Secretary at Barassie, to all the club staff that made us all feel so welcome. To Frank Clarkson and Brian Finlayson, respective Course Managers, and their dedicated Greenkeeping teams, well done you rose to the challenge and gave us two well-presented first class golf courses. To our wonderful sponsor, Kubota, who in the shape of Dave Roberts and Tom Dunlop, did a marvellous job. To Stuart Greenwood, an exceptional Scottish Chairman, and wonderful host. Without doubt our RA, Peter Boyd, did a fantastic job arranging everything and controlled us all in due process along the way and was for me the perfect host. So how did you play you might ask? Well, I can only boast that I played with some nice people and had the pleasure of seeing first hand what kind of golf it takes to win our national Championship. And one of my playing partners, Brian. He begged a mention. So there it is, young man.

Until next month, enjoy yourselves and remember when going home that's another time to sparkle. Your family need that from you don't you think?

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