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Greenkeeper

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



Strange but True

I used to think those people who lived above the San Andreas Fault, in San Francisco, must have worried themselves to death every time they went to bed about the prospect of being caught up in an earthquake.

Now, having survived an earthquake myself I don't think these Californians have anything to worry about at all. Well, I say survived, I was woken up by my better half, and caught the last five seconds of the windows and wardrobes shaking before nodding off again. Only later, having tuned into the radio, did she nudge me to say that she'd been right and that it was an earthquake, did I appreciate just what an ordeal I'd been through.

The point is, we don't normally get earthquakes here, not 5.2 on the Richter Scale at any rate, and it does hammer home the fact that the regular scheme of things in the UK doesn't seem to exist any more.

Take this week as an example. We've experienced the worst weather of the winter - weather that made the main television news, with wretched reporters sent out in inhospitably conditions in newly-purchased anoraks, hoping that their fame will be boosted on TV bloopers. We've seen this type of coverage much more recently to the extent that it will soon no longer be treated as "news".

We've also just been told that last year's summer flooding was part of the natural scheme of things and nothing to do with global warming. That might be the case but surely we can't discount them as anything other than part of a bigger, more extreme, weather picture. Let's face it how often have we heard that it's the "wettest July since records began" or the "hottest November day for 40 years", or that "recorded wind was the highest since 1953"?

Met Office researchers point to the arrival of Bluetongue disease as evidence of changing climate while recent press releases note that they are also warning against the effects of climate change on plant health.

On that final point, many of you have already seen evidence of it, with diseases emerging at strange times of year or others which have not generally been seen within these shores until now. It all means not closing minds to any possibility and being prepared to scrap some of the tried and tested routines in favour of a more fluid approach to course management.

In the longer term, and it's a theme I return to on this page time and time again, golf has to embrace whatever conditions it faces. If it means warmer weather at the tail end of the year having more club competitions then and if we do continue to get more summer rain it might just be the time to do some of that work that was previously left to the bleak, cold winter months.

I know it takes time to get your head around it, but then so does an earthquake in the middle of Yorkshire.

SPARKING AN INTEREST IN IRRIGATION



The Midland Section enjoyed yet another fine day's weather during the latest of their training events at Gay Hill GC, Worcestershire. The one-day regional training workshop subsidised by BIGGA's Continue to Learn Education Programme focused on irrigation electrics.

The course programme included the general principles of the laws of electricity and how to trace and diagnose some of the common faults associated with golf course irrigation systems. The beauty of setting aside a complete day on the subject of electrics was that the delegates were given every opportunity to trace some pre-set faults on Gay Hill's system. A range of fault-finding equipment was on hand and the delegates soon got to grips with some of the techniques used.

The event was organised following the positive feedback from the irrigation workshop staged at The Belfry last year. Tony Ware, of Tonick Watering, and chairman elect of the BTLIA was joined by Mike Woolcock, from Kiem Water, to present and guide the delegates through an intensive days programme.

The event was not designed to eliminate the role of the skilled technician but to educate the owner and operator of any irrigation system to employ some sound maintenance procedures and to give them a basic understanding of fault-finding skills. In the heat of the summer when things go pear shaped these skills will allow for a quick diagnosis of the fault and reduce costly downtime.

The Midland Section are hoping to run the event again later in the year. The next event scheduled will be a Pesticides and Spraying Techniques Update which will again be a practical refresher workshop aimed at keeping the operator up to date with the latest legislation, equipment and techniques. Anyone interested in booking a place on either event should contact Paul Woodham by emailing him at paul@ghgc.org.uk

WALTER WOODS TROPHY

The Walter Woods Trophy, organised by students from Elmwood College and now in its second year, was contested by teams from Elmwood College, St. Andrews University, Dundee University and Abertay University at Scotsraig Golf Club recently.

The sharp and breezy conditions did not deter the students from producing some good scores and a competitive match. The day was rounded off with Walter Woods presenting his own trophy to the eventual winners, Dundee University.

WEE WONDERS LAUNCH EVENT



Monty and the greenstaff at Dukes Meadow GC

Colin Montgomerie, six-time Ryder Cup player, recently hosted a golf day at Dukes Meadows Golf Club in West London to celebrate the launch of the 2008 HSBC Wee Wonders Championships.

Dukes Meadows Golf Club was chosen to host the event as it is a great example of a successful local community facility helping to develop the game at grassroots. Scott Margetts, General Manager of Dukes Meadows said "HSBC Wee Wonders is a fantastic event which exemplifies exactly what we are doing here at Dukes Meadows, by supporting junior golf development in this way".

Colin was able to play the course with winners of last year's HSBC Wee Wonders and hosted a skills clinic on the Golf Range and Short Game Academy. "There are not enough of this kind of facility and the owners should be proud of what they have on offer here" said Monty.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

The London Club Course Manager, Peter Todd is looking for volunteers to assist with tournament preparation during The European Open - the week of 30 June – 6 July

The tournament is the first main tour event to be hosted by the club and successful applicants can expect the following package: Accommodation for non-local volunteers, food and drink while at work, two shirts and a rain suit, and a round of golf at The London Golf Club.

Full details can be found at: www.londongolf.co.uk/recruitment.shtml

Applicants should contact Peter Todd on peter@londongolf.co.uk or Tel: 01474 875701.



IOG SOUTH WEST YOUNG STUDENT OF THE YEAR 2008

Congratulations to James Rendell, Trainee Greenkeeper at Cape Cornwall Golf Club, who finished runner up at this years IOG Student of the Year award. He was interviewed at Duchy College, Stoke Climsland, by Les Gibbs and Len Smith from the IOG in January. To enter, James also had to complete a 500 word essay.

James spent the previous week at the BTME Harrogate Show alongside fellow apprentices from Duchy College; Jack Davis (Lanhydrock Hotel and Golf Club) and Mark Downing (Launceston Golf Club). Attendance at the show was jointly sponsored by the Devon and Cornwall BIGGA Section and the Training Agency (Duchy College).

James is currently studying towards the Level 2 Apprenticeship in Amenity Horticulture (Sports Turf) and attends Duchy College on day release.

A SUCCESSFUL REUNION

The Frank Newberry European tour continues and after great success in Belgium with FEGGA and a trip to the Canary Islands with the Norwegian Greenkeepers Association Frank returned to Denmark. Invited back for the third year in a row by the Danish Greenkeepers Association the topic for the seminar this year was Negotiating Skills and proved to be a great success with the delegates who arrived on the day to the sight of a snowy landscape, something of a rarity during another mild and wet winter.

The seminar was organised by Søren Nicholson, held at Ledborg Palace Golf where Alex McCombie is Course Manager, and sponsored by Svenningsens who are main dealers in Denmark for Ransomes Jacobsen and other leading brands.

At the end of the day the 25 delegates left with some new skills and ideas to help them in their future negotiating. In summing up Søren thanked Frank for his commitment to Danish greenkeepers and his endless energy and enthusiasm. He also thanked hosts Ledborg Palace Golf and Ole Knuth from Svenningsens for their generous sponsorship. Final thanks went to the delegates for attending and wanting to develop some essential skills.



STUDENT WINS SCHOLARSHIP



Robert Farthing, third year BSc (Hons) Horticulture student at Writtle College, Chelmsford, has been awarded the Floranova Ornamental Horticulture Research Scholarship – a scholarship awarded to a student with a particular interest in the research and development of ornamental plants.

Funded by Floranova, the UK-based flower seed breeder, and awarded by the David Colegrave Foundation, the scholarship provides an award annually of £1,500 to a student with a particular interest in ornamental horticulture research and development.

Robert has a personal interest in commercial production of ornamental pot plants and cut flowers. In his application he stated: "I have always had a strong interest in horticulture. In my time at Writtle College I have been able to specialise in horticultural production and technology, with a strong leaning towards the commercial sector."

OPENS DOORS TO OATRIDGE

Barenbrug's Scottish facility recently opened its doors to a delegation of lecturers and student greenkeepers and groundsmen from Oatridge College. The specialist grass seed breeder's Scottish manager, Billy Nimmo, gave the 30 visitors an insight into the training, sales and production activities of the Falkirk-based site.

"I was delighted to open our facilities to the college," said Billy. "We at Barenbrug have a vast amount of knowledge, technical expertise and experience to share with the industry. From a primary grass breeder's perspective, our Falkirk-facility is unique to Scotland and enables us to support existing and future groundsmen and greenkeepers on a local basis."

The student delegates are now working on essays relating to the visit, with Billy set to present the writer of the best essay with a commemorative Barenbrug clock on completion of their projects.

TRAINING COURSE DATES ANNOUNCED

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) has confirmed the dates and venues for their training courses on the maintenance of synthetic surfaces, run in conjunction with maintenance and renovation specialists Technical Surfaces.

The IOG has developed the one day courses entitled 'The maintenance and management of synthetic sports surfaces' to ensure that those responsible for synthetic surfaces understand the care and maintenance requirements of the surface and to aid in the provision of a better and safer surface for all non-turf games.

The aim of this course is to explain how the surfaces are constructed and demonstrate the various methods of maintenance for synthetic surfaces.

The main surfaces covered during the course will be sand-based, water-based and rubber filled carpets. However, all other types of surfaces will be included.

The courses will be held at: Leicester, Loughborough University, 21st May; Bristol, Bristol University, 30th September; Yorkshire Weetwood Sportsground, Leeds, 16th October.

Attendance is £100 for IOG members and £200 for non-members which includes lunch, refreshments, comprehensive handout and certificate.

For further information contact the IOG on: 01908 312 511.

WINNERS

Ed Combest, retired professor from Lake City Community College in Lake City, Florida, is the inaugural winner of the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) Edwin Budding Award, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen.

The Edwin Budding Award was created to recognise those in the turf equipment sector whose actions have gone above and beyond the norm to help shape the golf industry into what it is today. Edwin Budding was one of those individuals who helped define golf, not as a player, but as an engineer. He designed the first cylinder mower, which has shaped golf as we know it today.

Ed Combest was selected by a committee of industry professionals chosen by the IGCEMA and David Withers, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, presented the award at Grande Pines Golf Club in Orlando, Florida. The 2008 award will be presented at Harrogate Week 2009.

EXCAVATOR SAFETY TRAINING DAY IN THE SOUTH WEST



Joe Lewis, Assessor\Trainer of RGL Plant Ltd takes a group of South West Section greenkeepers through the safe operation of mini-excavators.

These greenkeepers now possess an HSE recognised operators licence - valid for the next five years - for machines of up to 10 tonnes. BIGGA CPD points are also available for this course.

Future courses will be arranged on demand - please contact Paul Worster paulw@mgcnew.co.uk for further details.



SAFETY TOOLS

Orwell Mencap Genesis has produced a selection of wooden safety tools for Ransomes Jacobsen. Genesis Garden Furniture, part of the Orwell Mencap Genesis organisation, is already well known in the Ipswich area as a producer of hardwood garden.

Damien Ribbans, Business Development Manager for Genesis said, "Work such as this is vital for us, as it provides the varied workload that we need to develop our workforce. Our people are always more than happy to demonstrate what they can achieve, as well as learning new skills along the way."

Ian Mitchell, Sales and Product Trainer with the Cutting Edge Training team at Ransomes Jacobsen commented, "Health and safety is a major consideration right across our company, so these paddles play a vitally important role when we are turning heavy cylinders with extremely sharp blades in training situations."

GREENKEEPER RECEIVES TOP AWARD

Top learners from Scotland's land-based industries were recognised by Maureen Watt MSP, Minister for Schools and Skills, in a glittering Awards Ceremony recently.

Daniel McGarrell, of Biggar was named "Horticulture Learner of the Year" at the fifth annual Lantra Land-based Learner of the Year Awards.

This is the first time that the Horticulture industry have had their own prize category at the awards. The prize was sponsored by The Horticultural Trades Association and Lorna Davies Florist.

Some 150 guests, including employers, farmers, crofters, land managers, training providers and members of Scottish Parliament, attended the awards. Calum MacLeod, a 21-year-old agricultural engineer from Fife, scooped the top prize.

Daniel had a double win on the night taking home a total cash prize of £450.00. In addition to the 'Horticulture Learner of the Year prize, the Oatridge College student took home the 'Scottish Enterprise Regional Winner' prize, sponsored by Scottish Enterprise.



Daniel (left) receives his award from Maureen Watt MSP and previous winner Barrie Lewis



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COURSE MANAGER WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

A man, whose vision and dedication has helped to earn an international reputation for championship golf at The Grove in Hertfordshire, has been honoured and recognised for his skill and effort by the world's largest golf management company.

Phillip Chiverton, who oversaw the development of the course in 2001 with American designer Kyle Phillips and has led a 25-strong team of specialists responsible for its superb quality and condition ever since, has been named as Troon Golf's Course Manager of the Year for 2007.

Phillip is the first Course Manager to receive the award outside the Americas, a phenomenal achievement.



A key factor in the presentation of the award was Phillip's dedication and outstanding work preparing the course for the 2006 World Golf Championship.

The event not only attracted more than 100,000 visitors and global TV coverage but considerable praise from the world's elite players including World No. 1 Tiger Woods.

Phillip's illustrious career started at the age of 15 with an apprenticeship at Bridport and West Dorset Golf Club before he moved to Wentworth Golf Club working on the Championship West Course preparing it for two World Matchplay events and two Volvo PGA Championships.

BIGGA'S FIRST MECHANIC MEMBER

BIGGA has just launched a new membership category for mechanics. For just £60 per year mechanics can now also benefit from BIGGA Membership.

The first person to take advantage of this was Colin Thomas from Grove Golf Club, Bridgend, South Wales (pictured below). His membership benefits will include:

Free legal helpline – Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for you and your family (living at the same address).

Personal accident insurance – Cover for time off work due to an accident at home, work or even on holiday as well as one-off payments dependent on the type of injury.

BIGGA website – You will find a host of information on the website and you will also be able to access the BIGGA bulletin board.



For more information and a full list of membership benefits, please contact the BIGGA Membership Department on 01347 833800 and select option 1.

A WELCOME RETURN

The English Open, a tournament steeped in rich history and tradition, will return to The European Tour International Schedule from 2009 for a minimum of five years at the St Mellion International Resort in Cornwall.

Severiano Ballesteros won the inaugural English Open in 1979 and the event quickly developed a strong sense of national identity.

Clarke won the last English Open to be played in 2002, capturing a record third win in four years. In 2009, the 21st edition will unfold after a seven year break on the spectacular Jack Nicklaus Signature Course at the St Mellion International Resort, which is currently being extensively remodelled.

St Mellion is not new to The European Tour International Schedule – the Benson and Hedges International Open (seven times) and The Players' Championship of Europe (twice) have been played at the venue – but in 2009 the players will face a revised challenge in considerably revamped surroundings.

PARTNERING TO SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMMES IN GOLF

European Golf Design, the golf design arm of the PGA European Tour and IMG, has become a Technical Supporter of Golf Environment Europe.

The partnership recognises the values that EGD and GEE share in designing, constructing and managing environmentally and socially responsible golf courses.

The practice, comprising of six full time golf course architects, and with an international track record of responsible design and construction over the past 16 years, recognises the growing importance of environmental sustainability to the future of golf.

"Golf Environment Europe is extremely excited to be partnering with European Golf Design," said Jonathon Smith of GEE. "EGD has clearly recognised the need for the golf industry to take effective action on environmental issues, and the GEE is well placed to provide the industry with valuable technical guidance, and strategic and political support."



AWARDING BODIES

Nick Bisset, the Chairman of the GTC's technical committee, explains how basic knowledge of soils is included in the vocational qualifications and where it can be identified within the N/SVQ Levels 2 and 3

“Greenkeeping qualifications are not what they used to be” – a statement often heard from course managers who completed college courses some 20 -25 years ago. The fact is they are not the same. The emphasis is now on work-based learning with registration with a provider necessary to obtain the qualification - no exams to fail at the end of two years!

However, there are some elements of the old syllabus which may have appeared to slip under the net, namely the soil science (for want of a better phrase) part of the programme.

If the Level 2 and Level 3 standards are looked at carefully, the subject does appear and it's written into the GTC learning materials at these levels.

Why should this be an issue then? Previously with the examination system, this science part was included as part of the exam and it was assumed those who passed the exam knew all about soil science. Under the work-based system and the emphasis on producing a comprehensive portfolio of work, evidence of knowledge of soils is harder to identify. The previous exam based system had elements the candidate needed to know with added elements that were nice to know. The NVQ system trimmed the knowledge to what candidates need to know. However at Level 3, an understanding of practical soil science is needed as decisions have to be made.

Aside from the learning materials produced by the GTC at levels 2 and 3 there is also a reference in the actual standards at level 2 and 3 to knowledge of soils. The standards are available on the GTC website at both levels and learning materials available to purchase.

As with many issues raised about the work-based N/SVQ system, 'soil science' can often be put down to a lack of familiarity. Perhaps this could be down to insufficient information being available at this level or a failure of candidates, assessors and verifiers to interpret the standards correctly.

In order to rectify these points attention is drawn to Level 2 unit L2 'Establish Plants Outdoors' and to knowledge items e, f and g in L2.1 which state that:

Candidates need to know and understand

- “How to achieve correct tilth, consolidation, pH and nutrient levels”
- “How to ensure preparation is suitable to the plants, soil type, ground conditions and the type of site”
- “The effect of soil type and condition, climate, weather and ground conditions, previous treatments and existing services and structures on clearance and preparation methods”

So at Level 2 there is a need to prove tilth, consolidation, pH and nutrients are understood and how they may vary according to soil type, weather and ground conditions and the site.

Attention is also drawn to Level 3 Unit L19.2 'Evaluate Ground and Environmental Conditions' which states that it covers:

(i) Substrate structure (ii) Substrate texture and conditions (iii) Drainage characteristics (iv) Ph (v) Pest, disease and weed problems (vi) Nutrient deficiencies (vii) Ground and air pollutant (viii) Microclimate...

And that the following must be known and understood

- The principles and methods of measurement of ground & environmental conditions
- The range of methods available to evaluate the implications of measurements taken & to which situations they may be appropriate
- Effects of varying ground & environmental conditions on plant establishment & growth
- The importance of keeping accurate records
- What environmental pollution may occur & how to avoid it
- The maintenance of equipment typically used in this work
- What contingencies may occur & how to handle these effectively
- The sources of information & analysis relating to ground & environmental assessment
- The principles and application of risk assessment
- The statutory health and safety requirements & codes of practice
- The methods of monitoring health & safety requirements

These being 'need to know' they have to be evidenced in some form or another. So how can evidence be provided?

At L2, an understanding of why certain tasks are undertaken or certain materials are used is likely to come out in a well-produced task (job) sheet. At this level the knowledge is directly related to performing the appropriate task at the appropriate time and appropriate conditions. All of which may be influenced by soil type.

At L3 knowledge of soils is important in order that correct decisions can be made when planning tee or green reconstruction or even when planning maintenance. At this level, it is important to be able to justify decisions and this is where the science comes in. The answer to the question 'why is this being done' needs to be more than 'because I say so'.

This information is unlikely to come out in a task sheet as these are inappropriate at this level- it is more likely to come out in a well-documented work-based project.

There is no need to worry about the term 'Soil Science' as it does not mean you have to become a geologist, soil scientist, meteorologist or botanist all you need to be is a knowledgeable greenkeeper.

GTC is supported by:





Industry Update

IN DISGUISE TO REDUCE CO2



Econoplas Limited has launched an innovative drainage system that allows buildings to become part of a stunning skyline and reduce carbon emissions globally.

Situated within the existing range of Aquadyne drainage systems for sports pitches, green spaces, green roof and roof garden products, the new Aquadyne Green Facades transforms almost any surface or structure into a living garden, allowing city workers to breathe more easily.

After undergoing further development, the Aquadyne product can now be erected upon external building walls. This provides a unique vertical drainage system, as well as an opportunity for businesses to show off their creative talents, as various species of plants can be grown on the product, providing a more colourful appeal.

Benefits include: Creates a beautiful, living, cooling, cleansing, green skin to a building; Aquadyne is created using recycled plastic; Lowers the carbon footprint; Reduces thermal loading on buildings; It supports the development of photosynthesis; Increases urban wildlife.

DEALERSHIP NETWORK ENHANCED

Based in Semley near Shaftsbury, E.G. Coles is the new Kubota dealership servicing Wiltshire and the surrounding areas.

With a background of over 30 years trading in the tractor and spares market, the business has gone from strength to strength and E.G. Coles was delighted to expand its offering further with the introduction of the Kubota brand.

The new dealership offers the complete Kubota range from premium domestic ride on mowers to the largest Kubota agricultural tractors, including the all new, class leading GL40 Series of mid range tractors.

E.G. Coles plan to further expand its offering to include Kubota engines and construction equipment.

GA ANNOUNCE SUPPORT FOR NEW GOLF PRO SHOW

The PGA has announced its support of the new Golf Pro Show to be held on October 30 to November 1 at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire.

The three-day event will offer exclusive benefits to PGA members including a designated hospitality area and CPD points available for attending workshops and conference sessions.

The Golf Pro Show will combine a showcase of the entire golf business including equipment, products, training aids and destinations from all over the world. In addition there will be a range of conference sessions and workshops, informal evening networking events, a golf tournament and a range of practice zones for testing new products.

Free for professionals, course owners/ staff and retailers this event is exclusive for trade; however, the final day will be a preview day for the wider golfing community – by invitation only.

For more information visit www.golfproshow.com

BEST NEW PRODUCT AWARD WINNER

The Ransomes HR 3300T out-front rotary mower has won the Turf Professional Best New Turfcare Product Award for 2007.

Specifically designed by Ransomes Jacobsen for the UK and European municipal and contractor markets, the HR 3300T was launched last September.

Voting for the award was via the Turf Professional website and the HR 3300T was the clear winner. The engraved crystal award was presented to Managing Director David Withers recently by Chris Biddle, Managing Editor of Nelson Publishing, the media owner of Turf Professional.

“Better mowing efficiency, more evenly dispersed grass clippings, the ability to cut a wide variety of grass, low maintenance, operator storage, reduced noise and vibration and better operator ergonomics were all areas identified by the VOC research. The design and product development team here at Ransomes Jacobsen have produced a first class mower which has exceeded expectations in all of these areas.

“This award is voted for by people from within the industry, who know what makes a good mower and that makes this award even more special,” said David Withers.



FIRST-EVER BARKOEL COURSE

Barkoel, a new crested hairgrass bred by Barenbrug, has allowed Yorkshire farmer Graham Chapman fulfill his dream of providing top class golfing facilities that everyone can afford. His nine-hole pay-and-play Academy golf course at Towthorpe just outside York opened last year, and is the first ever course to be constructed using Barkoel across most of the playing area.

The course was constructed two years ago by Mr Chapman and his two sons, on mainly light land that had previously grown cereals and grass for livestock. They created features including a large wildlife pond and two raised greens before seeding the entire area with Barenbrug's BAR 40 mixture. As well as Barkoel, this mixture also contains Barcrown, a slender creeping red fescue, and a new drought tolerant hard fescue called Barnova.

The sward was left to establish on its own, with very little inputs and no irrigation.

The resulting fine-leaved sward is dense and very slow growing – reducing the need to mow significantly. During the summer the greens were cut just twice a week down to 5mm. The fairways and roughs were left to grow longer and required even less mowing.

Thatch production has been low so no aeration has been required, and the cultivars have all shown good disease resistance and all-year round colour.

NEW APPOINTMENT

Sherriff Amenity has appointed Lewis Blois as an Amenity Specialist, responsible for sales in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

After leaving school Lewis joined Norwich City Football Club on a three-year apprenticeship and following that on a one-year professional contract.

Lewis said, "I am delighted to be joining Sherriff Amenity and am looking forward to meeting new and existing customers and working to further develop the company's business in East Anglia."

ETESIA EXPANDS UK DEALER NETWORK

Since first launching its ride-on and pedestrian rotary mowers in the UK almost 20 years ago, Etesia has established a path of continual growth. As part of an on-going plan for expansion in this country, the company has recently increased its dealer network.

Sales and service for professional and domestic users in the East Riding and Humberside is strengthened with the appointment of K & M Mowers based near Hull; while new dealer for the Isle of Man, Mowers & Motors, has already moved into top gear selling machines from their winter stock order.

Dorset, West Hampshire and West Wiltshire are now covered by Blandford Forum dealership, C & O Tractors who have not wasted any time in breaking into their local authority and commercial end user markets.

In the Essex area, P Tuckwell Ltd of Ardleigh near Colchester, has taken over an existing territory, selling Etesia's professional and domestic rotary mowers and brushcutters. The company is enjoying great success with their promotion to local authorities and sales representative, Alan Ford has already received an award from Etesia for his outstanding achievements.

FREE SEMINAR

Landscape businesses from across the South West attended a free seminar to learn how training and development can grow their staff and enhance their profitability.

The Get Growing event, held recently at Dillington House, Ilminster, is part of an information campaign developed by Train to Gain, which aims to encourage the environmental and land-based sector to grow by developing their staff.

The event, organised by Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the landscape industry, and Train to Gain, was attended by over 60 businesses from a range of rural industries and highlighted the key business benefits of training.

'SIR' LES FERDINAND SIGNS FOR NEW CLUB

Former England, Tottenham Hotspur and Newcastle United football legend Les Ferdinand has been appointed as an ambassador for Playgolf Northwick Park.

A keen golfer, Les plays regularly at the popular Harrow complex, which features replicas of some of the most famous golf holes in the world and will become London's premier 9-hole golf course this month.

In his new role as ambassador he will make personal appearances at Playgolf Northwick Park and also help to promote Playgolf's other major sports projects in the UK, including its Manchester venue and the Playsport Scotland venture - a £16m golf and multisports complex in East Kilbride, Glasgow.

TOP DEALER REP AWARD

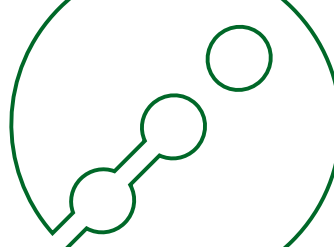
Adrian Gardner's sales expertise has earned him special recognition from Campey Turf Care Systems, having won the company's Top Dealer Rep Award for 2007. Adrian, who is Sales Professional with The Double A Trading Company Ltd of Fife, was presented with his trophy during Harrogate Week in January.

Competition among Campey dealers was intense, and so Adrian's success is a significant achievement, especially as he has only been with Double A for 18 months. During that time he has sold over 25 versatile Dakota Turf Tender machines to golf courses throughout Scotland, among other sales successes.

This is the first time that Campey have presented the Top Dealer Rep Award, which will become an annual event to recognise sales excellence.



Membership



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES OFFICER, JUSTINE DE TAURE PROVIDES AN UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



Hello! My name is Justine de Taure. I would like to introduce myself to you as your new Membership Services Officer.

I live in Harrogate with my two children. In the past I have worked in Product Development, Sales and Customer Care in the Beauty Industry.

I am very excited about my new role, as I have joined BIGGA just as it is embracing new and exciting times. Over the next couple of months we will be implementing new software enabling us to send more information out by email and leaving the department more available to communicate with our members. If you have an email address and have not already given it to us please contact Brad or myself.

The core part of my job is to be available and accessible for you our members. Your opinions are paramount and will help me understand what is happening out in the field. If you would like a chat please feel free to either email me on justine@bigga.co.uk or call me direct on: 01347 833818 (option 1). I look forward to speaking with you!

IMPORTANT UPDATE!

Are You Receiving The Full Benefits Of BIGGA Personal Insurance?

We need to inform our members that there has been a change of telephone number for Greenkeepers Accident Insurance. The number to call is now: 0207 560 3013. Those of you who received their membership cards in March 2008, will have the correct details on the back of your membership card. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused.

We thought this would also be the perfect opportunity to remind you of the benefits and peace of mind BIGGA Personal Accident Insurance provides:

- Personal Accident 24hrs a day anywhere in the world: Death cover to a sum of £7,500
- Loss of Limb up to £7,500
- Loss of Sight or Speech up to £7,500
- Loss of Hearing up to £3,750
- Permanent Total Disability up to a sum of £7,500

There is a weekly compensation as part of the policy. This covers injury, which temporarily prevents an insured person from carrying out the whole of their Occupational Duties:

- Funeral Expenses incurred as a result of death following accidental

bodily injury up to £5,000

- Hospitalisation and Coma £25- £1,000 (maximum)
- Relatives Expenses up to a maximum £2,500 payable in addition to any person who has to travel more than 10 miles after the insured has been hospitalised for 14 days or more.

Finally, there is Healthline Plus provided for all members, their partners and children. This allows you to get a second opinion on any condition from renowned consultants and remote nursing services.

To get further information the entire policy can be viewed as a download on the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk or please feel free to contact the membership department on: 01347 833800 option 1.

BIGGA WELCOMES

MIDLAND REGION	
Craig Nolan	Berks/Bucks & Oxon
John Rowe	Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Alan Raymond	Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Mark Walker	Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Joel Siddall	East Midland
Kevin George	East Midland
David Taylor	East Midland
Christopher Bates	East Midland
Gary Davies	East Midland
Henry Bredin	East Midland
Christopher Brown	East of England
Gareth Gilmore	East of England
Ian Soper	Mid Anglia
Gordon Butcher	Midland
Timothy Haycock	Midland
George Griffiths	Midland
Trevor Simpson	Midland
Daniel Myatt	Midland
NORTHERN IRELAND	
Alan Shankland	Northern Ireland
Michael Garrity	Northern Ireland
Aaron Small	Northern Ireland
NORTHERN REGION	
Stephen Russell	Cleveland
Richard Pybus	Cleveland
Graham Crowther	North East
Simon Harding	North East
Damian Mitchell	North East
Terrence Maguire	North East
John Maree	North West
Paul Jones	North West
Michael Ewins	North West
Daniel Foster	North West
Aaron Watkinson	North West
Joseph Horrocks	Northern
Thomas Wall	Northern
Ben Rutter	Northern

This month's new members will be continued in the May issue

Learning & Development

Key Sponsorship:

UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF GREENKEEPERS

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING KEY SPONSORS



GOLDEN KEY



Golden Key Individual Members

JH Fry; JH Greasley; WJ Rogers; Chris Yeaman; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Bruce Cruickshank; Frank Newberry; Andrew Cornes; Christopher Lomas MG.



SILVER KEY



Silver Key Individual Members

Clive A Archer; Douglas G Duguid; Robert Maibusch MG; Steven Tierney; Roger Barker; Ian Semple; Paul Jenkins; Robert Hogarth; Nichollas Gray; Trevor Smith; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Alex McCombie; Paul Murphy; Reaseheath College; Steve Dixon; Ian Benison.

SAMI COLLINS, HEAD OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES AN UPDATE



Easter has been and gone, we're all fat from eating too many eggs and hot cross buns! Rachael and I will work off all those goodies by keeping ourselves busy with the many new and ongoing projects undertaken by the Learning & Development Department.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2008



The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2008 supported by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Golf Monthly is launched this month. The application form will be arriving at your golf club soon. This is your club's opportunity to win between £500 and £2000, and a Scotts Weather Station for the ecological work that takes place. As well as national and regional prizes, there are categories for Best Newcomer and for Special Initiatives.

The competition has been raising the awareness of environmental and ecological issues for many years and acknowledges the positive work being carried out at golf clubs highlighting ways in which golf clubs can be more sustainable. It has been run, by BIGGA, since 1997 and past winners include Wilmslow Golf Club, Brighthouse Bay Golf Club, Thorpeness Golf Club, Minchinhampton Golf Club and The Dyke Golf Club.

All that is required is the desire to push your golf club forward in terms of its ecological and or environmental merits and have some evidence to show the judges that your club is heading in a positive direction.

Application forms can be requested from the BIGGA Learning & Development Department or can be downloaded from the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk/education/downloads.

The closing date for entries is Friday, June 20, 2008 - we look forward to receiving yours.

The BIGGA Library

The BIGGA library is an invaluable membership benefit for those studying towards qualifications and for those who have a general interest in all things related to greenkeeping.

The library boasts nearly 900 items including books, videos, DVD's and transcripts, 170 of which are reference items.

All members may borrow up to two items, except those marked 'reference', for a period of up to six weeks. The only cost to members is return postage to BIGGA HQ.

The BIGGA library continues to expand, with the following titles being added recently:

- Golf Course Management for the benefit of Butterflies and Moths – Brian Cornelius and Emma Gardner
- STRI Disturbance Theory – Henry Bechelet and Richard Windows
- Golf Facility Planning – Roger Bennett & STRI
- Handbook of Turfgrass Management and Physiology – Mohammad Pessarakli

An up to date library list may be obtained from the Learning & Development Department.

BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

Supported by:



Higher Education Scholarships have been awarded to:

- Stephen Clark – Foundation Degree Sports Turf and Groundsmanship
- Chris Sherrington – HNC Sports Turf

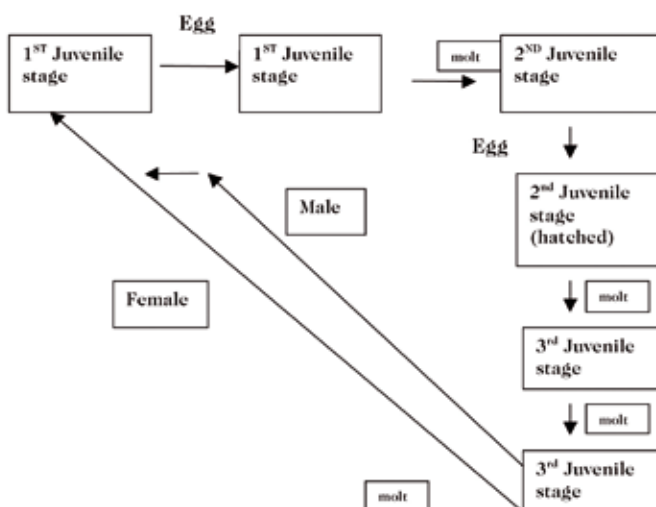
NEMATODES IN TURFGRASS

By Dr Tim Butler

Nematodes belong to the phylum nematode and are invertebrate, non-segmented, soil-dwelling, microscopic round worms that range in size from 1/25th of an inch up to 100 inches (Warner, 2006. Pers. Comm.). There are about 10,000 different species of nematodes, a large proportion of which are beneficial and are being used as biological control agents for insect pests in many crops ranging from mushrooms to turfgrass.

Control of insect pests such as cutworms and armyworms with specific nematode species is being used in the United States. Several types of nematodes exist including algal feeders, fungal feeders and carnivores. However, plant parasitic nematodes are a big problem on turfgrass. About 15 per cent of nematodes are believed to be plant parasites (Wick, 2007, Pers. Comm.). Most plant pathogenic nematodes are less than 4mm in length (Wick, 2007, Pers. Comm.).

NEMATODE LIFE CYCLE – Nematode lifecycles are made up of several stages. Most turfgrass nematodes have about four molts after the egg stage, followed by the adult stage. Sexual reproduction is usually the means of reproducing. It is important to realise that many nematode populations are only female and that females can produce fertile eggs with the male nematode. The lifecycle can last for up to a few months and many hundred eggs can be produced by one female. The common turfgrass nematode lifecycle is given in Figure 1 below.



DISTRIBUTION – From experience, many golf course managers and greenkeepers often say they have no obvious problem on their fairways or roughs from nematodes, but that it is their tees and greens that are affected. This is because many golf greens contain around >85 per cent sand depending on the specification, which is an ideal environment for nematodes. Nematodes are usually found with the top 6in layer of the rootzone and move through the layer of moisture around soil particles. Nematodes can be spread through soil, machinery, water, and wind.

CLASSIFICATION – Plant parasitic nematodes have a styla (mouthpart), which allows them to feed on plant roots by puncturing the plant cell and subsequently feeding on the contents within. Plant parasitic nematodes are often broken down into:

- Root Ectoparasites
- Root endoparasites
- Foliar feeding parasites (Warner, 2006. Pers. Comm.)

A very low proportion of nematodes are foliar-feeding, with endo and ecto parasites making up the vast majority. Ectoparasites feed outside plant tissues and not within, whereas endoparasites feed within the plant tissue (Warner, 2006. Pers. Comm.). Endoparasites can be divided into mobile (migratory) and immobile (sedentary) nematode feeders.

ENDOPARASITES – Root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne* sp.) are well known to golf course greenkeepers and can cause a lot of damage to turfgrass. Juveniles enter into turfgrass roots and begin feeding. When feeding, cells form on the grass root as a response from enzymes produced by the nematode and injected into the root of the grass.

It is also believed that the nematode may communicate with the plant in order to build nurse cells by genes controlled by the nematode. Female root-knot nematodes often lay hundreds of eggs in or on turfgrass roots. The eggs are extruded to the surface of the root in a sticky mass (Wick, 2007, Pers. Comm.).

Damage is very common on bentgrass swards, with many greenkeepers feeling the root-knot nematode is one of the main nematode problems. Damage includes irregular yellowing of the turfgrass and in some cases root galls. It is estimated by some that an action threshold for root-knot nematodes is about 100 nematodes per soil and root sample (Warner, 2006. Pers. Comm.).

Cyst nematodes (*Heterodera* sp.) are a big problem on bentgrass and can cause a lot of damage which can be somewhat similar to root-knot damage. These nematodes can persist in the soil for many years and the estimated

action threshold is about the same as for root-knot nematodes.

Lance nematodes (*Hoplolaimus* sp.) are mobile within the turfgrass root, and lay eggs and feed with the root system itself. Damage includes brown, rotten roots and turfgrass thinning.

ECTOPARASITES – Stubby root nematodes (*Paratrichodorus* sp.) cause root tip death through root piercing and subsequent sap-sucking. It is thought these nematodes have a synergistic effect with fusarium.

Sting nematodes (*Belonolaimus* sp.) have a style which penetrates deep into the root of the plant, causing considerable damage. Symptoms include root blackening, die back and cell death.

Ring nematodes (*Criconemella* sp. and others) are relatively small nematodes, which are commonly found in turfgrass in many countries. These nematodes appear not to be very pathogenic to turfgrass and at levels of over 100 per sample, turfgrass may still be healthy (Wick, 2007, Pers. Comm.). Other examples include dagger nematode, stunt nematode and spiral nematode.

DAMAGE SYMPTOMS – Symptoms of nematode damage on turfgrass above ground include chlorosis of the turf in irregular patches which – even after fertilisation – persists, followed in some situations by turfgrass wilting and general poor health of the sward.

Above ground damage is usually more apparent during high stress conditions on the turfgrass, such as found under high temperature and limited water supply. Damage below the surface of swards appears as a short unhealthy root system, with limited density. With root-knot nematodes, the plant may form cells on its roots as a means of feeding the nematode. These cells allow the nematode to feed from a large pool of nutrients within the plant. In time the turfgrass roots become altered due to the feeding nematode and the large cells on the plant roots, and the term knot or gall is then used to describe the condition.

Turfgrass plants suffering from nematode invasion have a reduced ability to uptake water and nutrients and thus excessive applications of both may be required to get some response from the plant. It is important to understand that nematode feeding concentrates on the xylem parenchyma, which transports water and nutrients. Many turfgrass managers do not realise that they have a nematode problem, and associate the poor turf with management practices and in many cases disease problems, when neither are the truth.

Nematode species have specific optimal temperatures from growth and reproduction, although it is well known that moderate to warm soil conditions are generally most favourable to nematode populations. It is generally believed that conditions that favour grass growth, favour nematodes also. During cold weather, nematode activity decreases and many nematode eggs will over winter in plant material or in the dead female body. Nematode damage is usually more prevalent on sand based rootzones, particularly during summer and autumn.

SOIL TESTING – If problems with nematodes are suspected, then field evaluation is critical in order to establish if they are present, species type and numbers in the soil. A commonly used method is to take numerous separate random subsamples from suspected areas and healthy areas,

usually to a depth of about four on golf greens or tees. The subsamples should be subsequently bulked together. Samples should be kept cool but not frozen during storage. In my opinion, soil samples should be taken when the turfgrass is actively growing, and not during cold periods.

MANAGEMENT – Using nematode-free planting material and rootzones is the ideal method of avoiding nematode problems. However in reality it is very difficult to have on a continuous basis plant parasitic nematode-free material. Even when such material is sourced, nematodes over time may still invade rootzones on greens and tees.

Many feel that the best solution is to keep the turfgrass sward as healthy as possible, by ensuring that the grass has adequate access to nutrients and water and is subjected to limited amounts of stress. Proper irrigation is essential, particularly during periods of warm weather, if nematode populations are high, since the turfgrass rooting system may be limited and water uptake severely reduced. Reducing plant stress levels is also vital in order to maintain a relatively healthy sward. In recent years, the application of biostimulant products on turfgrass has gained much momentum. These products include seaweed extracts, humic acids, sugars and microbial inoculants and research has shown that they may reduce stress levels within turfgrass swards. Raising mowing heights is also an excellent way to reduce stress levels on turfgrass plants. In recent years, pressure has increased on golf course greenkeepers to lower mowing heights, which reduces photosynthetic capacity and stresses the plant.

Several plant-derived materials are currently being used on golf courses throughout Europe, with varying degrees of success. Such products include mustard bran, thyme and oils from various trees and shrubs. Mustard bran is gaining much attention at present. It works by releasing allyl-isothiocyanate in the soil, which kills the nematodes through a biofumigation action. This product has been trialled in the USA and shown some promise.

Many microbial inoculant products, containing live blends of bacteria and fungi are on the market, although research looking at specific microbial antagonists for nematodes is also underway. Some inoculants currently available may have some negative impact on nematode populations, although limited if any research is available. The use of resistant germplasm, which could be developed into commercial varieties, may be of use in the future and such varieties may be seeded into existing turfgrass stands. But as yet this is not readily available.

Nematode problems will continue to grow in magnitude on golf courses in years to come. Research is underway and it is hoped that more reliable control will be available in the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Tim Butler is a sportsturf science agronomist and part-time lecturer in sportsturf science and agronomy at University College Dublin. He is an independent expert in all aspects of golf courses including construction, renovation, drainage and environmental management. Contact Tim at 062 55285 or www.irishgolfcourseexperts.ie



Count on it.



A HEATHLAND CRUSADE

Scott MacCallum visits BIGGA's Environment Competition winner and finds a club that has been transformed over the last 10 years

A meeting 10 years ago between Notts (Hollinwell) Golf Club Course Manager and a member of the Sherwood Forest Trust may not have been up there with Stanley catching up with Dr Livingstone or Harry meeting Sally, but the consequences of that encounter have had a hugely beneficial impact on the golf course. So much so that Notts (Hollinwell) are the current holders of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts and Syngenta.



Phil Stain had been Course Manager for a couple of years and very keen to ensure that the jewel in Nottinghamshire's golfing crown was maintained to the highest possible standard when he met Adam Goodall, of the Sherwood Forest Trust,

"I was approached by Adam, who asked me if I realised what we had at Notts - before adding that we were going to lose it. I was shocked, as I was proud to be working on a heathland golf course and, with a strong environmental and wildlife interest, keen to maintain the course as sympathetically as possible," recalled Phil.

Adam was referring to the fact that the course was being taken over by birch woodland and the distinctive heather and gorse was disappearing. In short, Notts Golf Club was on its way to losing its identity and becoming a woodland golf course.

Phil was genuinely disturbed. He and his team had been doing all they could to maintain the heathland characteristics but resources meant that this work was restricted to the playing areas, while the extensive

land the club owned bordering the playing areas had to be left and was becoming overgrown.

"These areas were closing in and the two main grazing areas – one 27 acres and the other four – were on the verge of becoming birch woodland and closing in on the course itself."

Originally these areas had been grazed by sheep and cattle, which keep the growth down, but when this practice stopped the land, left to its own devices, got out of control.

"Adam offered us a solution and the resources to restore and manage more of the heathland. I was very much in favour and spoke to my Chairman of Green at the time, Ian McLachlan, and encouraged him to come along to a seminar outlining how important it was to retain the remaining heathland in Nottinghamshire," said Phil, adding that Sherwood Forest Trust research highlighted that 95% of heathland had disappeared in the previous 10-15 years.

"Ian was taken aback, just as I had been, and together we felt we had to do all we could to restore and retain heathland at Notts. What has subsequently been achieved couldn't have happened without Ian. I've got huge respect for him because I was getting paid to do a job but he was doing it in his own time because of his love of the golf course," said Phil, who revealed that Ian still provides practical support by personally potting heather seed to produce small plants for replanting on the course.

Signing up to a 10 year contract with Sherwood Forest Trust provided the funding to enable Phil to put added resources to heathland management but it also meant that certain targets had to be met.

To that the club land was split into compartments and a prescription

given for each area. For example, the first 20 yards into woodland could be cleared for golfing purpose but beyond that nature had been allowed to take its course and fallen or wind blown wood left to become potential habitat for the insects. Anything cleared from the outer area also had to be taken into the inner part so it wasn't wasted.

"It might be that Compartment A has a target of 40% of gorse removed by a certain time and a heather bed developed, while in Compartment B they might want to see 20% more heather. It's not so strict that we have to comply down to the exact percentage point, and through time we developed a very close relationship with Sherwood Forest Trust and they know and we've often exceed the targets. So it's a system which works well.

"A lot of it is matched funding but our input comes in the shape of man hours and machinery."

The benefit of the agreement, and they are set to sign up for a second 10 year period with increased funding, is that what the Sherwood Forest Trust and the golf club desire naturally tie in very nicely.

They have taken thousands of trees out during the last 10 years – one small area just in front of the 13th tee involved removing 650 – but the timber is all put to good use in a Biomass boiler and two log burning stoves in the clubhouse which has helped reduce heating bills.

The tree removal has helped the airflow to greens so Phil has found that his putting surfaces are much healthier.

However, with birch clearing, one problem is solved but another three created as the issue of gorse and bracken invasion and self set trees doesn't go away and places constant demands on the team.

"If we hadn't got involved with Sherwood Forest Trust and the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust when we did we would have been predominately a woodland golf course by now. Had we left it much longer to do the work it would have been too expensive and we would have lost the little pockets of flora and fauna which were clinging on including the common lizards and the grass snakes. Fortunately we caught it in time and where bird species were here in small numbers we have much more and brought in new and different species as well."

The Club has featured highly in the BIGGA Environment Competition over the years, winning the Regional prize and the New Initiative prize on a couple of times. These prizes came for the introduction of specialist black Hebridean sheep, owned by the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. The sheep, at one stage there were 70 of them, complete with shepherdess, in a throwback to the old days kept the vegetation down on the grazing areas.

"They had to be very hardy as the scrub is very poor quality and the discampsia grass doesn't provide much nutrient. We repeated the project last year with three short legged Dexter cattle, and we're investigating the use of ponies for future use."

The second new initiative prize came for a reed bed filtration project but it was another project, combined with the continuity of environmental endeavour which clinched the top prize this time around.

As Phil has discovered the chain reaction of benefits to wildlife which come about interlinking one project to another are amazing and gratifying.

"Because we had the sheep we have now got little owls, because little owls eat beetles which eat the dung left by sheep," said Phil, who is staggered by the amount of interest there has been in the club since it won the award with many calls from other golf clubs and coverage in local, environmental press, as well as national publications, including



Phil Stain, Course Manager



new media sponsor Golf Monthly, television and radio.

To enable the club to provide a nine hole loop two additional holes were added – 8a and 9a – which return golfers, who would otherwise be heading away from the clubhouse back to sanctuary. The attention to environmental detail on those two new holes is remarkable.

"Year and years ago we used to mow the margins of ponds and streams so balls would fall in but now, and with the new holes, we've ensured that we leave at least a metre around all ponds and water hazards to create little corridors for wildlife to move around.

"In fact, all the new ponds on the new holes are linked by corridors. With streams having two metre corridors, a metre each side, so wildlife can move from one pond to another without the risk of being seen by golfers or predators. We have gone from one pond inhabited by water voles to four – in ponds that didn't exist three years ago."

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Growing success

They also took the unusual step of leaving trees in the newly created ponds as the dead Alder trees provide nesting for the green woodpecker, the great spotted woodpecker, the tree creeper and the nuthatch.

“We’ve lost about 40% of timber through rotting and falling over but there are new trees growing up to replace them,” explained Phil, who also pointed out the sand bank at the edge of one pond in which they had created holes and which is now home to some kingfishers.

That wasn’t a first for the club. A few years ago they created something similar for sandmartins on a small quarry area in one of the non-play area grazing areas on the course.

“We excavated a small wall out of the sand in the quarry and made some holes and sandmartins used it for nesting. We actually featured on Springwatch with Bill Oddie and Simon King. Bill Oddie said it was great and that golf courses could do a lot more, but he’s probably oblivious to a lot of the other great work that does go on,” said Phil.

Despite all the excellent environmental work that has gone on at Notts, Phil is adamant that the priority is always the golf course.

“We’re something special. A heathland course verging on inland links and there are very few like that. People come here because they want to plan traditional golf – fast greens in summer; hard, fast fairways, a bit sparse and a bit wiry going back to the time before people came along with 100s of tonnes of fertiliser and 100s of gallons of water.

“Americans and Japanese come over and want to play this type of golf and the club does recognised that this is its selling point and from a golf course point of view it is a lot more valuable if it retain its heathland status rather than just becoming another parkland course.”

But with Phil and his team of eight working on it there is now no danger of that happening.

“If people come here from a parkland course they probably think we neglect it. Heathland management verges on neglect because we want those wiry tough grasses and we certainly don’t want high fertility fairways, or to be throwing nitrogen or water on it. That wouldn’t be natural and we try and keep everything to a minimum.



“I do get criticism for keeping the greens a bit stressed and hungry but I feel that is sustainable through winter and summer - there are no peaks and troughs. Everything I do is for the long term. I want to be sitting here when I’m due to retire thinking I’ve done my best and that the club has been happy with what I have done,” adding that he is delighted to have such a supportive golf club and hard working and talented staff.

“I can’t imagine a job that would be better than what I’m doing now. I’ve got a bit of office work, quite a bit of health and safety, but I’ve got the golf course and I’ve got the environment. What else is there from my point of view?”

All Course Managers/Head Greenkeeper members of BIGGA should find a copy of the BIGGA Golf Environment competition 2008 application form with this magazine. It can also be downloaded from www.bigga.org.uk/education



UTILITY VEHICLES: TAKE A LATERAL LOOK AT UTILITIES

By James de Havilland

Think of a golf utility vehicle, and it is pretty easy to come up with three typical choices; Cushman Turf-Truckster, John Deere Gator and Toro Workman. No surprises here, although other suppliers to include Club Car, Kawasaki, Polaris and Yamaha should not be overlooked either. But what about something that can go on the road as well?

There will always be pressure to try and come up with a new equipment choice that does the primary target job but, if possible brings something extra with it. In some cases this can lead to buying a compromise that does not do its primary task that well; the phrase Jack-of-all-trades, master of none springs to mind.

So how can you get a utility vehicle to do as bit more without compromising its main duties? The starting issue has to be determining exactly what the main duties are. For a start there is a clear differentiation between a unit that will be used with a top dresser and sprayer and one that will be used solely to ferry materials and people around.

As a simple rule, a manual transmission is favoured for jobs that require a fixed speed. Select a given gear and run the engine at a fixed rpm and you pretty much get an easily repeatable forward speed. When it comes to a simple transport unit, a CVT belt drive automatic has its plusses. With no gears or clutch to worry about, it is just a case pressing the throttle and away you go.

Now what if you want to have a vehicle that can legally travel on the road? Road homologation is a complicated subject and one that most utility vehicle manufactures do not get tangled up with. This can mean finding a road legal utility is not quite as simple as it may at first seem.

For a Course Manager there are other important considerations. As soon as you move to a traditional 'pick-up' type of unit, there are issues of VED tax discs and MOTs to consider, not to mention the need to run on white as opposed to red diesel. A pick-up is also relatively heavy and, if it is running on road-orientated tyres, it will be pretty limited in its on course usefulness.



A well-proven utility vehicle will have little that will beat it for all-round versatility...



Kubota offers its well-proven RTV900 in road-homologated form. Fitted with a screen and ROPS frame, the unit has individual front seats with suspension for the driver, full road lighting and a front 'crash bar'. Full hypostatic drive means there will be little need to trouble the brake pedal.

So is there some middle ground? Well perhaps, take a Kubota RTV900 as an example, this hydrostatic drive utility can be specified with all the right kit to allow it to be run on the road. Realistically, the option is not designed to make it suitable for long trips on tarmac, but more to allow it to run between sites where there may be more than just a simple road to cross.

For some courses, a road worthy Kubota RTV could well be worth looking at. It is a tough utility with a half tonne load capacity for starters and, with its all-wheel drive and locking differential it can get across pretty tough terrain too. It is well worth looking at.



Kubota controls are well thought out and easy to understand, the quality of the fit and finish certainly having more in common with a road vehicle than most utilities. On-road pep not great but on off-road tyres this is no bad thing. Power steering is standard.

With this unique sprayer added, a Workman becomes a liquid asset.



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Cushman Turf-Truckster... but a cab can make all the difference to its popularity on a cold morning!



A Piaggio Porter may be spartan by modern pick-up standards, but cosy compared to a utility in the same price bracket. This is a proper 'road going' vehicle, with only 2WD and a five-speed transmission. But with a 1400cc diesel engine it is priced in similar territory to a top end utility.

A more radical approach is to consider a really light pick up such as a Piaggio Porter. These diminutive little Italian vehicles are offered with a choice of not just petrol or diesel power but LPG and electric too. Depending upon the specification, you can expect the payload to be between 560 to 685kg but do not look for much choice in the transmission department; 2WD and a five-speed manual is your lot.

Conventional utility vehicle makers will continue to dominate sales, but it can pay to take a sideways glance at an alternative. A little pick-up may well be a very useful addition to the course equipment fleet.



Piaggio has been producing light utility pick-ups and vans for years. Distributor The Pro-Truck Group also offer the three-wheeler Ape range, these little units offering handlebar steering and even lower

DRIP DRIP DROP LITTLE APRIL SHOWER...

Spring is here! Time to discard your winter warmers in favour of some stylish new lightweight workwear. Melissa Jones looks at some of the latest clothing options...

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 requires that personal protective equipment is supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled by other means.

However, that doesn't mean you can't look good while you work! Safety Sunglasses protect your eyes while keeping you looking fashionable, polo shirts, available in a variety of colours and with club logos, give informal workwear a stylish edge and there are a number of improved fabrics on the market right now with many trendy lightweight jackets offering breathability as well as being waterproof.

Jerzee Colours Poly/Cotton Twill Cargo Workwear Trousers

Price: £4.55 + VAT



This contemporary design boasts an expandable waistband, cargo pocket, back pockets and mobile phone pocket. Available in five colours, the trousers come in a 32 and 34 inch leg.

BIGGA MERCHANDISE IN CONJUNCTION WITH CORPORATE WORKWEAR DIRECT (CWD)



Last year BIGGA announced a new deal with Corporate Workwear Direct (CWD), to supply a new comprehensive range of workwear garments and Personal Protective Equipment.

The range includes polo shirts, fleeces, safety footwear, gloves and high-visibility garments as well as an improved range of top quality waterproof suits.

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Check out the BIGGA website for a full list of available products: www.bigga.org.uk An embroidery service is also available.

Receive a free pair of gloves with every 10 BIGGA/CWD items purchased during the month of April.

Jerzee Colours Ripple Collar & Cuff Polo Shirt

Price: £4.55 + VAT



Made of durable fabric and suitable for hard-wearing environments, this ring spun cotton top is suitable for a 60 degree wash. With side vents for ease of fit and reinforced shoulder seams, this lightweight polo shirt is available in 10 colours and ranges in size from XS to 6XL.

Jerzee Colours Full Zip Outdoor Fleece

Price: £11.50 + VAT



Made of high density, heavy weight fabric, this fleece boasts a full length zip, cadet style collar, zip pockets and a waistband with elastic bungee cord and release toggle. Available in eight colours, sizes range from XS to 4XL.



Green King Long Coat: £48.50

Jerzee Colours The Outlander Water Repellent Jacket

Price: £23.50 + VAT



Caption: Available in three colours, this 100% nylon Oxford shell, 100% polyester quilted fleece lining jacket has a water repellent coating and boasts a cadet collar, Velcro closing flaps at the cuffs and a concealed hood. Sizes range from S to 4XL.



Green King Overtrousers: £20.40



Green King Leggings: £9.95



Green King Gaiters: £8.95

Also available from the BIGGA website (www.bigga.org.uk) are the -

RGPC27 Regatta Safety Glasses

Price: £31.00



As spring creeps up on us and the weather begins to flitters between sunshine and showers, these lightweight, polycarbonate safety sunglasses are ideal for this time of year. They are soft to touch, have non-slip frames/arms, completely protect your eyes against speed particles and provide full UV Protection. Tested to BSEN 166 (1995) and conforming to BS 1836 (1997) CE marked.

Unique and highly specified technical waterproofs, the Green King™ waterproof range is designed for greenkeepers who need to stay dry even in the toughest weather conditions. All Green King waterproof garments are made using state-of-the-art hardwearing Ripstop™ outer shell fabric with fully taped seams for 100% waterproof protection. The range consists of a long coat with built-in hood, overtrousers, leggings and gaiters.

Mercury V2-ST

Price: £25

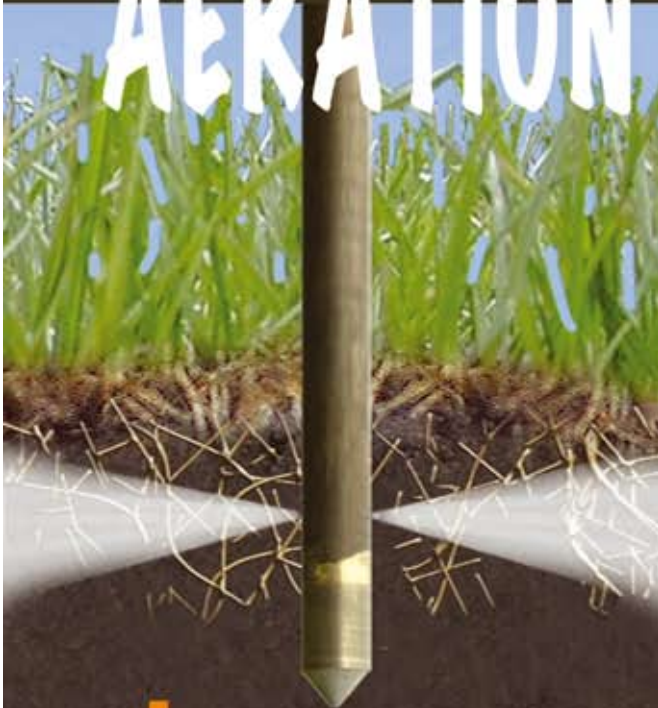


Hoggs of Fife can offer 21 different safety boot styles and more than a dozen non-safety styles with 17 of their work boot styles being fully waterproof and breathable. For summer wear, the Mercury V2-ST safety trainer is proving very popular among greenkeepers.

From April Showers to Summer Sun...

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For more information contact Hoggs of Fife Ltd, tel: 01334 653733 or visit: www.gkwear.com

Unpredictable Weather...

The thrill for many greenkeepers is the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and all that comes with it, but with the seasons constantly changing the elements can also provide their own tribulations.

Simon Jersey has woven suggestions and requests into a range of workwear specially designed for greenkeepers.

The company's unisex sweatshirts use a 60% cotton and 40% polyester blend to combine both ease of laundering and comfort into one.

Their gilets and fleeces have been designed specifically for outdoor wear. Keeping out the chill is their number one function, although they have been well designed to offer full manoeuvrability to the wearer. Made of polyester, they also boast anti-pill properties meaning that they're hard-wearing and therefore longer-lasting.

Fleece Jacket

Price: £16.99



Outerwear jackets are available in styles from lightweight waterproofs which can be carried in a bag 'just in case', through to heavyweight affairs with attachable fleece innards. There is also a high-visibility option with reflective stripes for those that need their presence to be known.

Casual, Quilted Jacket

Price: £39.95



New for spring 2008 is a quilted jacket of which Simon Jersey is particularly proud. Not only does the jacket provide warmth on colder days, but it is also waterproof and Teflon-coated meaning that it stays cleaner for longer.

This thinking has also been applied to their combat trousers that feature zips in the trousers allowing them to be cropped at different lengths, meaning warm legs in the winter and fresh legs in the summer.

Trousers

Price: £14.95



Also available are a wide range of items perfect for spring and summer, particularly various styles of polo shirts which are available in both short and long sleeve options, and a fantastic new range of Cotton Traders clothing which can be customised by employers.

Unisex Anti-Pill Fleece Gilet

Price: £11.95



Polo Shirt

Price: £6.95

All are available in a plethora of sizes, contemporary colours and trim options and, using Simon Jersey's embroidery service, garments can be personalised with club names and logos.

For more details visit: www.simonjersey.com or call: 0870 111 8800.



THE WALLER'S TALE

By Paul Worster, Course Manager, Minchinhampton GC

The two courses at Minchinhampton New incorporate some five miles of Cotswold Stone Walls. The courses have both boundary walls, and also internal walls. Both types are part of an old field system through which the courses were originally laid out - but a glance at an Ordnance Survey map of 1895 shows that there were then significantly more walls, and many lengths have been lost. This brings home the importance of protecting those that remain. Paul and Matt Worster take a look at how the walls fit into the golf courses, and the on-going maintenance of these historic features.



Planning restrictions imposed on the golf course design limited the number of fairway bunkers permissible on the Cherington course, which opened in 1995. Therefore the walls “double-up” as golfing hazards, and landscape features. They do in fact form pretty extreme golfing hazards, and Martin Hawtree (golf course architect) was able to make the best use of them in his layout. The Cherington Course has no less than seven holes, which require very accurate tees shots to be threaded through gaps in the walls in order to find the perfect position on the fairway.



Over the years before the farmland was purchased for golf, the farm walls, in common unfortunately with many other drystone walls in the Cotswolds, had been allowed to deteriorate quite significantly. The reason for this deterioration was the significant ongoing cost of upkeep and maintenance. As with other rural issues, the reduction in expense afforded by replacing crumbling stone walls with post and wire, has been compelling.

A condition of securing Planning Consent for the construction of Minchinhampton's Cherington Course in 1992, was that all the field walls were to be retained in the course design, regardless of their condition. A minimum height of 0.66 metres was to be attained throughout the property. This meant frantic mass-rebuilding over the winter of 1993 by greenstaff who frankly didn't have a huge amount of experience. It was nonetheless a tremendous effort over one winter to repair some two miles of course walls in order for the course to open. That was 15 years ago.

Now, time and resources exist to tidy, repair, and rebuild to higher standards, and over the past five years, bit by bit, the walls are being replaced with new stone as time allows.

Charlie Beetge, Assistant Greenkeeper who acts as Drystone Walling Tutor, is managing the project and comments – “If the course were regarded as a picture painting, then the walls would be the picture frame”. Sound words indeed.

Drystone walling is a very traditional art, and is very difficult to speed up even with the use of modern equipment, but as Charlie reminds us – “at least we can have the stone delivered - spare a thought for the original builders who first had to dig and salvage stone from the fields”.



The first step in the rebuilding process is to remove the old wall. Even this should not be done by machine for the danger of damaging any reusable stone.



Large stones are put into the foundation and base courses, followed by progressively thinner stones for the uppermost courses.

Therefore, this is done mainly by hand, as there will be some stone which is reusable in the new wall, stone which will be suitable for foundations, and stone for infill during rebuilding. All these various materials are sorted and put to one side.

The rest of the material is removed, and a firm foundation trench dug. A specially shaped frame and lines are used to make sure that all walls are of standard dimensions and follow straight lines. Charlie makes it look easy, but this is an illusion – there is a lot more involved than placing one stone on top of two more. All stones must be level and firm with no rocking. Charlie actually walks on the foundation stones to make sure they are firm.

The site is rather windy and exposed – the builders are much happier with their own tea-room (a converted car-port, staff only - no members allowed!) Progress is slow but steady with some ten metres per week achieved from start to finish. On average, Charlie and his team spend one third greenkeeping, and two thirds of their day building during the winter.



The local wildlife is already showing a strong interest in the walls which provide a habitat for small mammals which in turn benefits the local bird of prey population. The walls are therefore a critical part of the various ongoing ecology initiatives here at Minchinhampton.



New stone – (as dug from the ground during a recent lake excavation), is sorted from a stock-pile, faced, and delivered on pallets to the wall site. All staff are involved in this sorting & facing process, while Charlie and the two other skilled “wallers” do the rebuilding. Most of the stone needs to be “worked” with hammers & chisels to get rid of any protrusions, allowing it to lie firmly within the new wall. The internal walls are known as feature walls and their construction differs quite significantly from boundary walls. Charlie pays great attention to detail whilst building these feature walls and uses large stones which virtually meet in the centre of the wall to produce a solid structure that uses the weight of the stones to hold the wall together. A boundary wall would be built much quicker than a feature wall and less work would be done to face and prepare the stone.

This stile-stone on one of the public footpaths dates back to the 1700’s. It was found in an overgrown corner, and has been restored to its former glory. This helps demonstrate to the general public the clubs commitment to the environment and to being a responsible custodian of the land that it occupies.



This is clearly a long-term project, but both club and staff are totally committed to seeing it through.

P.S. No rodents were harmed during the making of this article.



Adam Matthews & Matt Workman make the best of a muddy little corner!



Hobbies

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

Name: Brad Anderson

Hobby: Building PC's

Job: Membership Services Assistant at BIGGA HQ

How and when did you start building computers?

"It was either 1994 or 1995 when my dad's computer started playing up and not working properly. I decided to take it apart to try and mend it for him – not knowing anything much about computers at the time – and I managed to fix it.

"I've always been interested in computers but ever since fixing my dad's, my interest in how they work has grown and I built my first PC from scratch in 2001. (I can only build PC's as it is not possible to build Macs from scratch)."

What is it about building PC's that appeals to you?

"Being a bit of a nerd, I just like taking things to pieces and looking at how they work. You get quite a sense of achievement from building something from nothing - computers are a part of everyone's life whether they like it or not so it's beneficial to know them inside and out."

What's the best computer you've ever built?

"The one I currently own at home which I built at the beginning of this year (see picture). It's made of transparent perspex and is basically an all singing all dancing PC. It has dual core which is better for performing many tasks and it is good to use for video and MP3 manipulation.

"I bought the pieces I needed to build the computer over time and it ended up costing considerably less than buying a new computer."



FEATURE



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



Name: David Withers

Company: Ransomes Jacobsen

Position: Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?

"20 years."

How did you get into it?

"I was working as a mechanic in partnership with David Watson, now at Does of Esher, and we started servicing the cars for Charterhouse Turf Machinery. From there, we started doing demos, building some of the machines and so on, and in the end went to work for CTM full time, which was a great learning experience for me."

What other jobs have you done?

"I did two years working in Kenya as a volunteer followed by working at Barker's Garage, then CTM followed by a variety of different jobs since joining Jacobsen in 1992."

What do you like about your current job?

"The opportunity to meet interesting people and to travel to some of the best golf courses in the world. I also enjoy the challenges and being able to make a difference."

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

"Increased focus on environmental and ergonomics on machinery design, Consolidation of golf courses and increased commercial pressures on Golf Course Managers. It's also more professional in virtually every way than it used to be."

What do you like to do in your spare time?

"I enjoy playing golf and watching rugby."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"I would like to think I will still be in the industry and doing a worthwhile job if I haven't turned golf pro by then."

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

"Too many to mention."

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

"Don't really have one."

Pick a number

"5."

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3. Enter your login details and select the BIGGA Training & Development Manual from the left hand menu.
4. The Training Manual will load and the user can click on Enter the Site to view a welcome video or can select 1-9 or 10-18 on the top menu bar.
5. You can progress through the manual hole by hole or go straight to the hole you wish to view. You can also skip to holes 10-18.
6. When you select a hole you will be presented with a window that explains what that hole is about. You can then select from the bottom tabs, video or sub-text (downloadable documents and links).
7. When clicking on a downloadable document it will automatically open in your default word processor. This can then be amended, updated and saved to your computer's hard disk or printed and filed in your personnel files.





MAPPED OUT

Archie Stewart highlights just what a GPS system can add to a Course Manager's arsenal

GPS is a technology that is mature and proving to be an invaluable part of our infrastructure. It is used for navigation; guiding planes in to airports via flight paths and ships along sea lanes to ports around the world. For scientific research it has made accurate measuring of the polar ice caps and melting glaciers possible. It can track anything from trucks carrying valuable cargoes to elephants in Africa. It is used in agricultural to drive giant tractors and machines through dust and darkness. With experienced labour very scarce growers of high value crops can achieve a constant level of accuracy for the application of fertiliser and pesticides ensuring maximum output and reducing operator error. It is a vital tool for business improvement in many sectors and can increase efficiency and save costs.

So how is GPS being utilised in golf course management?

The most common application of the Global Positioning System (GPS) in golf management is in course surveys. The initial GPS survey and mapping may be best carried out by contractors who can provide high accuracy and are well versed in the use of GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping software. It is worth the extra investment to provide a useful geographic appraisal of the prime asset of the golf club, the course itself. The survey provides a snapshot in time of the course which is easily updated and kept relevant. This is a valuable record of historic and current management practices, landscape and other features and forms a base for course management and development planning.

Accurate area measurement for all features of the course, like tees, fairways, bunkers and greens are the minimum requirement of a survey. This information is invaluable for precise calibration of spreaders and sprayers. The certainty that you are working with current measurements

for each feature should allow for accurate ordering of inputs and robust record keeping. The survey will be produced as a digital map that can be linked to a database to allow records to be kept regarding each feature on the map. The survey should also show buildings, areas of different habitats, feature trees, ponds and wetlands.

Golf courses don't sit in isolation, so combining aerial photos and Ordnance Survey maps add value by showing the immediate surrounding environment that may influence many factors on the course. This context also produces an attractive and accurate map for scorecards and websites, and even for the wall of the clubhouse.

Maps are an excellent media that can be used as living documents and updated over time. Maps can be printed for daily tasks and planning to help communication with staff, committees, golfers and the public. They can show development plans, plans for new planting or new bunkers. They can also be used on signboards to inform the public about paths, location of dog bins and the plants and animals that live on the golf course.

GPS comes into its own when installing irrigation, or any underground services. Anyone who has tried to dig a burst drain or find broken control box from a set of old drawings of the irrigation or drainage system will know that what the plan shows and the location of the pipe or control box may not be one and the same. The use of GPS to record the position of the pipes or drains as they are laid ensures that they can be found again in the future. The location can be shown on the course map or if there is no course map they can still be recorded and added later.

Once the survey is done and installed on computer, what next?

After obtaining your professional basemap, you can begin to update this



yourself. Buying and learning to use a compact handheld GPS receiver to take onto the course to record information and locate features is the next step. There are a range of receivers available from small units used by walkers with an accuracy of four or five metres to units that can download the course map and have accuracy of about one metre. As with most things it is a case of getting what you pay for, more expensive units will be more accurate and prove better value for money in the long term. The units should be rugged enough to withstand daily use in all weathers, recording and transferring data should be simple otherwise they will not be used to their full potential.

With the map installed in a handheld GPS unit it is possible to go on course to record areas of weeds or disease, wet patches and soil sample points or any other feature that is needed. All the information gathered can be transferred to the office computer and laid over the course map to record treatments and results. Areas of weeds or diseases can be shown as maps and these maps can be used to reduce the amount of pesticide used by treating only the area required instead of a blanket application. This has obvious savings in terms of cash as well as the environmental benefits.

The location of soil sample points can be shown and the analysis can be displayed in a nutrient map allowing investigation into any problem patches with the ability to record the results in map form and on a database. Any applications can be tailored to try and resolve the problem and the results monitored. GPS brings the ability to manage areas large or small record and display the results in a form that is easily understandable.

If drainage is a problem and, as is often the case, plans for the existing

drainage system are old and possibly inaccurate areas that flood or lie wet can be recorded and plans made to remedy the problem. At the other extreme during times of drought the lines of drains sometimes can be clearly seen and that is a good chance to record their position.



Maps can be created that show how habitat management is working, gorse areas responding to rotational cutting, location of bird life on the course in fact almost any feature on the course can be recorded as required.

Many buggies are sporting GPS screens and scorecards to help the golfers with their round. These can also bring revenue to the club in the form of advertising of local services and with a relay back to the clubhouse be used to monitor the location of each buggy and the pace of play.

The decision by the PGA to allow the use of GPS rangefinders in professional events this year will inevitably provide a sales boost for the products and an opportunity for clubs to benefit from having an accurate course map. The range finders can only be as accurate as the information (course map) they contain.

By looking to agriculture we may take a guess at what may be available for golf and amenity work in the near future. GPS guided tractors are becoming common for the application of fertiliser, sprays and ensuring that high horsepower tractors with wide equipment is working at optimum rates with no overlapping or missed bits. Mowers could be equipped with GPS steering control that would ensure that each bout was made at the full width of the mower ensuring an even cutting pattern allowing the operator to concentrate on the machine and saving

time and fuel. Details of the shape, width and height of cut can all be stored in a database building up a record over the years.

Application of sprays and fertiliser could be targeted to the areas predefined by soil, weed or disease maps. With increasing regulation these maps would show justification and control for treatment of pesticides.

GPS is a relatively new tool in the course manager's armoury that is yet to be fully integrated and realise the potential it offers. Investment in a course map perhaps to be followed by handheld GPS data receiver can be gradual process to suit the budget and ensure that the club is making the most of developing technology to take it into the future.

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THE EVOLUTION OF SOIL WETTING

By Demie Moore, S. Kostka, L. Lennert, M. Franklin, P. Bially, R. Moore

Wetting agents, also known as, soil surfactants or wetters, are getting increased exposure. With efficient water use and conservation being goals for both environmental stewardship and sustainability, the effect of wetting agents on water delivery to soils and overall water needs is being considered beyond Dry Patch management. A look at the evolution of these turf management tools may lend some perspective and the opportunity to understand some good, “bad”, and practical news about these widely used, yet still vaguely understood, materials.



In A Nut Shell

Invented in the mid-1950's soil wetting agents/soil surfactants have gone from a single, purpose formulated product and some detergents to well over 50 products developed specifically for turf management.

There are significant differences in the chemical structures and performance of many of today's soil surfactants; and there are a variety of effective products to choose from which will be more or less effective in different situations.

The good news is that there are more legitimate soil wetting agents/soil surfactants on the market than ever before. The “bad” news is that no single test can tell you which product is “the best” for you. Turf managers are best served by reviewing their particular needs and the objective information on available products, followed by evaluation and choice of what best suits their situation.

The Originals

To better understand the variety of products available – a review of their “evolution” may be useful. AquaGro (Aquatrols), the original patented soil wetting agent, was a blend of nonionic surfactants including an alkylphenol ethoxylate (APE) and a fatty acid polyglycol. Between the mid-1950's and early-1970's few other effective and safe products were available.

In the 1960's Dr John Letey, at UCLA-Riverside, tested two products on very hydrophobic soils. These materials were Aqua-Gro (a mid molecular weight surfactant blend) and Soil Penetrant (a low molecular weight surfactant). The two products performed very differently. Aqua-Gro wet more slowly and was highly adsorbed on the soil particles. Soil Penetrant wet faster and deeper and was not readily adsorbed on the soil particles. Differences in plant safety were also recorded with Soil Penetrant being more phytotoxic than Aqua-Gro on the plant material tested.

Other research in the 1960's was conducted by Drs J. Boodley and R. Sheldrake, at Cornell University, looking at surfactants for better

wetting of peat-based horticultural substrates. They found that, even within the non-ionic group of surfactants which were by then considered to be safest for use with plants, there were differences in wetting efficacy and plant safety.

The first controlled research specifically for use in turf management was conducted in the early 1970s by Drs J. Beard and P. Rieke, at Michigan State University. They evaluated the effect of several products on water repellency and dry patch on golf courses. Of the 10 or so products tested, only AquaGro and HydroWet were effective in combating dry patch. Both products contained an APE as an ingredient.

While APEs were not the only surfactant ingredient used in soil wetting agents, they and a particular one - nonylphenol ethoxylate (NPE) - were the most widely used ingredients in the effective products available through the end of the 1980s.

At sufficiently high rates, NPEs are effective for wetting water repellent materials. Because these compounds adsorb tightly onto soils, they also provide some residual effectiveness. NPE effectiveness, and how long they last, depends greatly on the rate of active ingredient applied per area and the soil environmental conditions. Unfortunately, rates giving acceptable results were also quite phytotoxic if not sufficiently diluted or aggressively water in immediately following application. At today's conventional water spray volumes – NPE based materials are likely to burn most turf. To address this, some products have been packaged in diluted formulations, recommended at very low rates, or require application of large quantities of water with or directly after application. While this is effective for lowering toxicity – it also reduces efficacy.

Early Innovations

In addition to APE based materials available to turf managers, other surfactant ingredients were also packaged for use on turf in the late 1970's and 1980's. One example is the anionic surfactant sodium lauryl sulfate found in shampoos. Other mixtures of APEs, anionics and nonionics also appeared. The amounts of active ingredient and water in different products varied dramatically. Many of these wetting agents, at fairly low rates, will increase water penetration into soils to some extent. However, by their chemical nature, most do not adsorb onto soil and therefore have little to no residual effect.

Other innovations in the early formulations included – injectable (granular formulations), “Pellets” for hose end application, and “Natural Products” such as the Yucca and seaweed extract materials. While the “natural products” are indeed less phytotoxic to turf, they show limited efficacy at improving wetting. An NPE is often added to the formulation to enhance performance. Most of these innovations continue today in certain product formulations.

A Step Beyond in the 90s

In addition to phytotoxicity concerns, in the early 1990s APEs also became suspect from an environmental safety standpoint. The concerns were potential for long-term accumulation in waterways and endocrine disrupting behaviour from some breakdown products. While adsorption and degradation in soils would likely mitigate these problems, some companies chose to look for more environmentally benign alternatives that were safer to turf and still effective as soil wetting agents. This combination of performance parameters was found in “block copolymer” surfactants.

The first block copolymer based product brought to market was HydroFlo followed soon by a differently structured block copolymer, Primer 604. Many other block copolymer based products followed. This ushered in an age of products that were effective against water repellency and could be applied in lower amounts of water with no need for immediate watering in to avoid turf injury. Most of the products introduced in the 1990s were block copolymers of one sort or another – whether injectable products, treatment or monthly program products, or “season long” products. The particular block copolymer chemistries vary, as do the suggested application rates, both contributing to differences in performance between products. This is similar to products in the pesticide field – where, although the broad class is the same, the performance of particular formulations varies.

Also making an appearance in the 1990’s were the organosilicone, “super spreading” surfactants. This chemistry is excellent at very low rates for extremely fast spreading and penetration of solutions – however applied at higher rates it can be extremely phytotoxic if not abundantly watered in. In addition the organosilicone chemistries are hydrolytically unstable and rapidly degrade as pH drops below 7. For these reasons – this chemistry has not been widely used to manage soil water repellency. However, it remains an excellent spray adjuvant material.

Many factors contributed to the increase in products during this period. Increased use of wetting agents by turf managers resulted in companies recognizing a business opportunity for effective products. More research substantiating efficacy of some soil surfactants increased use as well. Distributor organisations with their own brands wanted their own wetting agent too. And with the original patent on AquaGro expired, and no new patents applied for in turf, it was a wide open market. In this sense the wetting agent market was like a generic/post patent market.

As mentioned, there are many block copolymer surfactant products on the market today – however their performance varies because all block copolymers are not the same. There are straight blocks and reverse blocks with varying molecular weights and chain lengths. Depending on the formulation, they have different effects on how water disperses or is held. In addition, the “blocks” are also rate dependent, i.e. different rates will give different levels of effect. As has been seen by Dr Letey and colleagues in the 1960’s, Drs Beard & Rieke in the 1970’s, Dr Karnok in the 1980’s, and Dr J. Cisar, at the University of Florida, and others since the 1990’s, even within the same general class of surfactants there are variations in performance based upon formulation, use rate and environmental conditions.

Recent Innovations

Since 2000, there have been additional developments in soil wetting agent/surfactant technology, resulting in yet new performance options for turf managers. These developments have come from continued research by a few companies looking for improvements to existing block copolymer formulations and/or new and novel formulations with performance advantages to separate them from the pack.

Some developments have been simple but useful application changes, or program modifications. Others have involved formulation modification or the inclusion of additional. Still others have been novel enough to be eligible for patents – so there really is something new about them.

In the case of Dispatch, the patented technology involves combining certain block copolymer materials with another surfactant class – alkyl polyglucosides (APGs) – to create a synergistic effect which dramatically increases infiltration efficiency at very low application rates. In the case of OARS, a patented combination of an organic solvent and a surfactant complex is designed to remove accumulations of water repellent humic substances from soil surfaces. And in the case of Revolution, the new invention is constructing the block copolymer molecule with methyl caps which affects how the material orients itself on soil particles and influences water movement through the soil.

These newest formulations and the associated products take soil surfactants to a new level. While they have some familiar soil wetting agent performance characteristics, their novel formulations promise results that go beyond what has been achieved with previous products. From removing or overcoming the causes of problems in the case of OARS and Dispatch to allowing the rootzone to function hydrologically as intended in the case of Revolution, the new patented products offer a new level of control in managing the turf system. Time and use will show how real and important these new performance promises are. At this point, the information suggests that they are at least worth a try.

The Bottom Line – What to make of it all

There has been a tremendous amount of research and development on soil surfactants for turf management since their introduction in the 1950s. This article has attempted to shed some light on their evolution through the decades. All soil wetting agents/surfactants have some things in common – some impact on how water moves across or through soil. However that’s where the similarity stops. Different ingredients, different levels of active ingredients, and different application rates and frequencies make real differences in how these products perform in the real world.

So, the good news is that there are numerous soil surfactant products that are effective to some degree or another. The “bad” news is that there is no single clearly superior product for everyone. The practical news is that turf managers and advisors can evaluate needs and options on a case by case basis to determine which chemistries are likely to work best for them in accomplishing their goals.

To this end, turf managers can take a pragmatic approach.

First, assess the soil wettability and solute distribution needs at the particular location;

- **Then, consider which companies and products have a history and performance profiles with supporting data, user experience and technical backing that suggest they can address the needs.**
- **Finally, try those products on site to determine which one or several are the best fit – agronomically, economically and customer support wise.**

As with other product segments, the choices and capabilities of soil surfactants have evolved over time. What’s best for you depends on the needs you have, the results you want and the resources you choose to employ.

For a full list of references and credits for this article please visit the BIGGA website - bigga.org.uk

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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.

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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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ABOVE: Greenkeeper International magazine
LEFT: The BIGGA website



Starting to cut the 15th Fairway

LIFE AS A QUAIL HOLLOW INTERN

By Tom Granite



Having completed my degree in 2006 from Writtle College, I decided I needed to gain as much practical experience as possible.

I had heard about the Ohio Program through college and trade magazines and wanted to find out more. I got in contact with Mike O’Keeffe (www.top.osu.edu) and went to meet with him in person at Harrogate Week. The programme brings young, 19-28 year old single turf applicants from around the world to the States for 12-18 months. You have to be drug free, have no criminal record and be willing to work hard while over there, if you want to be placed at a top club.

After speaking with Mike I decided to submit the forms as soon as I could. They were received by the end of January and I was starting at Quail Hollow by mid-March, so the whole process happened very quickly.

Once I arrived in Charlotte I was given a tour of the course and it was off to work. Luckily for me there were two Ohio State interns from Australia working at Quail; Simon Beilby had been there for a year and Patrick Casey had been there for two weeks. This was good for me as I had people who understood what I was going through and could show me the ropes and help me settle in.

Since 2003, Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte, North Carolina, has been home to the Wachovia Championship. The tournament has always attracted the best golfers in the world, with 30 of the top 35 taking part in the 2007 championship.

The course was originally designed by golf course architect George Cobb in 1961. In the intervening years, the course underwent a series of improvements, including modifications of several holes by Arnold Palmer in 1986 and a redesign by Tom Fazio in 1997 and 2003. The course is renowned for having the toughest three finishing holes on the PGA TOUR schedule for the past few years.

The championship traditionally starts around the first week of May and the preparation starts months in advance. As I arrived in mid-March preparations were well underway and I now have an understanding for the term “out of the frying pan and into the fire”. From the moment I arrived we were working from dawn until dusk, at least six days a week in a high pressure environment, so I had to adapt to this very quickly especially as interns were given extra responsibilities and duties.

- **Tournament Heights of cut**
- **Greens - .110 inches (2.8 mm)**

- Tees, Approaches and Collars - .240 inches (6.1 mm)
- Fairways - .350 inches (8.9mm)
- Intermediate rough - .750 inches (19mm)
- Primary rough – 3 inches (76.2mm)

The greens are double cut in the mornings and once again in the evening. Everything else is cut once in the morning and once in the evening with the exception of the primary rough which is left. Approaches are rolled twice a day but the greens are not.

The largest area to be cut is the fairways which are approximately 30 acres. This is done in 45 minutes using up to 15 fairway mowers cutting in a “flying V” hole by hole in one pass.

To make it possible for all the cutting to be carried out in a short space of time (under three hours) a huge amount of machinery and staff is

needed. During the tournament there were over 30 full time staff and up to 100 volunteers from all over the USA and even Australia.

The machinery is supplied by Charlotte-based Jacobsen, who kept a steady supply of machinery coming in the weeks leading up to and during the tournament.

Machinery supplied by Jacobsen for the tournament:

- 8 greens mowers
- 9 fairway mowers plus 2 clean up mowers
- 12 tee/approach mowers
- 2 collar mowers
- 20 golf cars
- 14 mower trailers

This is only a small sample of equipment supplied; other machines include sand pros, rough mowers, flail mowers, utility vehicles and shuttles.

This is in addition to the equipment already owned by the golf course.

The Transition

Charlotte is within the transition zone of the United States. This means that Quail Hollow has a mix of cool and warm season grasses including Creeping Bentgrass, Tall Fescue, Fine Fescue, Perennial Ryegrass, Bermuda grass and Zoysiagrass.

The day after the tournament has finished, work began on transitioning the course from cool to warm season grasses. This process includes scalping down the rough practically to the soil, in order to expose the Bermuda rhizomes.

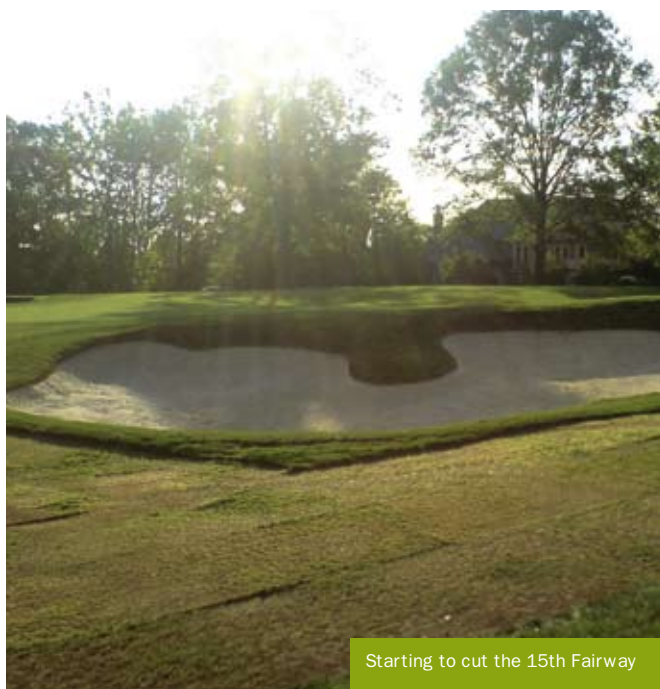
The rough was predominantly Ryegrass and after the tournament was up to 12 inches high in places. This grass has to be scalped down and removed, using a combination of rough and flail mowers for the transition to be successful. It is important to remove the organic material to allow the sunlight to get through to the Bermuda and allowing the transition to happen as quickly as possible. The scalping of the rough was a very long and slow process, taking approximately one month to complete, with the mowers working non-stop through out this period.

Bentgrass Maintenance

Throughout the summer, the maintenance of bentgrass greens in a warm season environment is an ongoing challenge. The greens were G2 bentgrass inter-seeded with A1 bentgrass. Heights of cut on the greens were maintained at .120 of an inch (3.05mm) during periods of heat over 38 degrees Fahrenheit. To prevent wilting of the turf we would syringe the greens when needed by putting out a light mist of water using a half inch hose. The purpose of syringing is to replace moisture lost by the plant through transpiration, but with out moistening the soil. In addition to the syringing, static and portable fans were used to cool the soil surface. The greens were only irrigated once a week, but this was done using a heavy application known as flushing. This would flush the greens of salts in order to keep the EC levels down. After the greens were flushed, the Sub-air system would be activated to move excess water out of the rootzone and into the drainage pipes. This keeps the playing surface firm and encourages deeper rooting.

Due to the difficult environment which we faced, an intense program of chemical and fertiliser was undertaken. This includes the use of many different fungicides to control a long list of diseases such as brown patch, dollar spot and pythium. Foliar fertilisers based on soil and tissue test results were also used on a regular basis along with the use of different plant growth regulators.

The greens are hollow tined three times a year, once in early spring,



Starting to cut the 15th Fairway



Drainage project on the 4th fairway

once in early summer and once in early autumn. In addition to the hollow tining, dryject machines were also used. The greens were also vent tined and hydrojected through out the summer to help improve gaseous exchange.

Summer Projects

Throughout the summer along with the regular course maintenance, a number of projects were taking place.

This included a substantial drainage project of fairways and approaches and the re-build of the 8th bunker.

The drainage project lasted for eight weeks, with the interns starting at 5.30 in the morning to lift the sod, number it and then move it away before the contractors started to install the drainage. Once the contractors had finished for that day, we then had to put all the sod back in the right place, water and then roll it. With only one hole being closed per day, it often meant that we were working until dark to get the hole ready for opening the next day.

The re-build of the 8th bunker involved working with one of Tom Fazio's designers to re-shape the face and shorten the total length making parts of the green more visible from the fairway allowing for more pin positions. Also the alterations were designed to improve the playability and make maintenance easier.

The total re-shape, including the replacement of the drainage system, liner, sand trapper and sand took just five days to complete.

Overseed

The overseed involves re-seeding the entire course with various different cool season grasses, with the exception of the greens which remain creeping bentgrass all-year round.

The process begins with raising the heights of cut to encourage vertical growth and discourage lateral growth. This is done to help provide a thinner sward to allow the seed to fall through the canopy and make contact with the soil.

During the last week of September the overseeding begins with all the areas being scalped down, and the fairways, tees and approaches being verticut. This process is done to create as many gaps in the canopy as possible and to reduce competition from the Bermuda.

The Species and rates are as follows:

- Tees – Fine Fescue@ 800lbs per acre (896kg per hectare)
- Approaches and collars – Fine Fescue@ 600lbs per acre (672kg per hectare)
- Fairways – Ryegrass@ 350lbs per acre (393kg per hectare)
- Rough – Fine Fescue@ 400lbs per acre (448kg per hectare)
- Shaded areas – Tall Fescue – as needed

Irrigation of the Overseed

The irrigation operating system at Quail Hollow is Toro VP Sitepro and the pump station is Flowtronex PSI with an operating pressure of 130 PSI. The total gallons per minute are 2250 (8516.25 litres).

During the overseed period it is important to keep the seed wet at all times, and as rainfall in Charlotte was very rare in 2007 the irrigation system was working overtime to keep the whole course wet.

Trying to water the entire course at least three times throughout the day, while avoiding play was challenging to say the least. To avoid putting too much pressure on the pump and to keep the correct operating pressure at each head, only 16 heads per 9 holes could be run at a time making the task even harder.

Winter Work

During the winter time, the work really slows down because of the weather. Typically we would have frosts in the morning but that would lift by mid morning. There is very little rainfall so the average winter day is cold and sunny with blue skies, much better than a cold wet winter in England!

During this winter, a lot of tree work was taking place due to the effect that the drought had on the pine trees. This included de-limbing any dead branches and removing dead or dying trees to help improve the health of the remaining trees and to reduce the risk of limbs falling on staff and golfers. This was done using a mechanical lift allowing us to get to the top of the trees, often over 60 ft high.

I would like to thank David Withers and his team at Ransomes Jacobsen in Ipswich for their scholarship and for all the kind support and help in getting me over to the States. Also I would like to thank Mike O'Keeffe at the Ohio State University, Jeff Kent and all the staff at Quail Hollow Club for making this such a beneficial and memorable experience for me.

About the Author

Tom Granite is Assistant Greenkeeper at Slinfold Park Golf & Country Club. He has a Foundation Degree in Sports Turf & Golf Course Management, and a BSc (Hons) Degree in Sports Turf Science & Management.



Tom Granite (left) and fellow Ohio State intern, Patrick Casey, de-limbing trees



Construction of the 8th bunker





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Primo MAXX programmes work to cut turf stress

Syngenta Technical Manager, Simon Barnaby, reports

Greater demands for consistent high quality playing surfaces throughout the summer put extra stress on both turf and turf managers. New techniques in Primo MAXX pre-stress conditioning have been shown to minimise the effects of heat and drought stress and keep turf in top condition.

UK cool season grass species struggle to cope when temperatures rise and soil water reserves fall. With a warming climate becoming a reality, turf managers are going to have to cope with increasingly stressful conditions. Staying cool and green when all around are burning up will make a real difference.

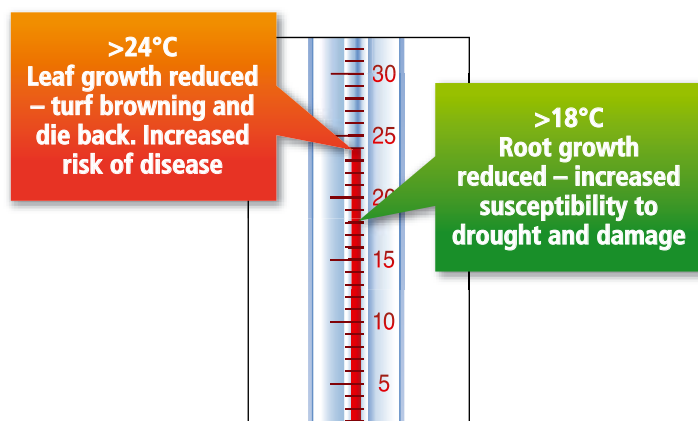
Staying green

Research trials and turf managers' experience on UK golf courses and sport pitches has consistently demonstrated the ability of a Primo MAXX programme to help turf withstand the effects of stress more effectively, and to recover faster.

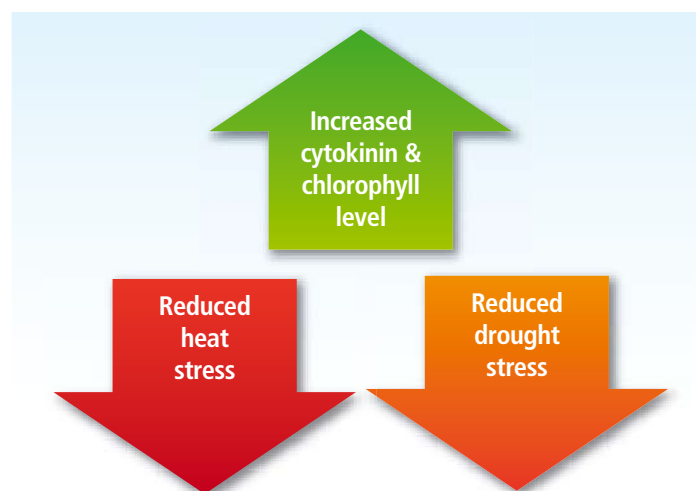
On a sunny day, the temperature within the turf grass canopy is often 7–10°C warmer than ambient air temperature, adding to turf stress. Studies have shown that temperatures above 18°C inhibit root growth and above 24°C reduce photosynthetic rates and decrease the chlorophyll content of cool season turf grasses, such as bents, fescues, ryegrasses and *Poa annua*. The net result is loss of colour, turf density and turf quality.

Under drought conditions Primo MAXX has been shown to increase leaf chlorophyll content by 60%.

*Source – Rutgers University



The presence of cytokinins in the plant has been shown to improve turf quality by delaying the degradation of chlorophyll caused by high temperatures and to alleviate leaf browning. Research has shown that Primo MAXX applications increase the level of bioactive cytokinins within the plant – improving tolerance to heat and drought induced stress.



Make better use of moisture

Research at Rutgers University has shown that only 3% of water taken up by turf grass is used in photosynthesis, with over 90% transpired by the plant. Primo MAXX has been shown to improve the turf plant's water management efficiency by reducing respiration rates and stomatal evapo-transpiration.

In trials under drought conditions Primo MAXX enhanced the photochemical efficiency of turf by over 75%, compared to untreated turf. The relative water content of the grass leaves remained a healthy 20% higher than untreated 28 days after treatment.

Healthier plants, with deeper rooting, are also better able to seek out available soil moisture and nutrients, and stay green and healthy for longer, as well as recovering faster from drought effects or traffic and wear stress from heavy play.

Turf managers' experience reports that a Primo MAXX programme can reduce irrigation requirements by 30%, whilst keeping turf greener and healthier for longer.

Pre-stress conditioning programme

- Start Primo MAXX programmes early in the season when grass growth has commenced.
- Tailor application timing to gain maximum benefit before key stress periods.
- Maintain use when stress periods end, to aid turf recovery
- For more information and examples of suitable Primo MAXX programmes visit www.greencast.co.uk



- Up to the minute weather forecasting
- Advance warning of turf diseases
- Integrated turf management plans
- Independent advice from STRI

New Products



NEW WEBSITE

Kawasaki's recently created European Engines & Power Products Division has powered up a new website dedicated to its products and key distributors across the continent.

The first stage of the three-phase development went live recently to provide a definitive information resource for the Japanese manufacturer's stationary engine business targeting OEMs and power products ranges for the professional grounds-care markets.

It's part of the global engine manufacturer's strategy to step up its profile and business activities in both engine and power product markets across Europe.

i www.kawasaki-engines.eu

CLEANSTRIKE SHOWS IMPECCABLE GREEN CREDENTIALS

Not content with bringing to market what is claimed to be the 'first new golf consumable since the golf ball and golf tee', CleanStrike of Ireland have gone to great lengths to make it environmentally friendly as well.

CleanStrike believe the twin products of the golf club-cleaning wipe and sports shoe cleaning wipe offer the very best of disposable, value-for-money solutions to what is a drudgery but also a necessary task. The problem with the throw-away benefits of the demand society, however, is that disposable products are so often an environmental nightmare.

i +353 1 602 4710
info@cleanstrike.ie



MINI EXCAVATOR RANGE EXPANDS

Three new mini excavators designed to further enhance JCB's range of compact models for small contractors, plant hirers, landscapers and utility companies are set to be launched. The three machines include two versions of the new 8055 and the 8020.

Based on JCB's 8045 platform, the 8055 will be available as either reduced tailswing or zero tailswing and will compete in the 5-6 tonne sector. The machines will replace the existing 8052 in the JCB range and will go into full production during 2008.

A third new machine is the 8020, which will compete in the 1.9-2.3 tonne operating weight class. Based on JCB's 801 series of easier to service, easier to operate and more comfortable machines, the 8020 is positioned between the existing 8018 and 8025 models and is now in full production.

i 01889 590312
www.jcb.com



NEW PUTTER

Yes! has launched the Donna hybrid putter.

This hybrid putter is composed of two different materials. The face is made of aviation grade aluminum and the body is made of 304 stainless steel. The combination of a light face and heavy

back generates a high MOI. The design of the putter is a combination of a mallet and cavity-back blade design. The heel-toe balance makes it a very forgiving putter. The full offset shaft features a double bend and the cavity of the putter head has a single alignment line.

i 0113 255 4114
www.yesgolf.co.uk



PLENTY OF FEATURES IN A COMPACT PACKAGE

SkyCaddie has launched a new entry-level model to replace its hugely popular SG2.

With recent news that the PGA has sanctioned the use of GPS rangefinders in all its professional events this year, the new SG2.5 has been specifically designed to meet the inevitable surge in demand for SkyCaddies.

The 4.5in x 2.2in device is packed with features, including the patented IntelliGreen technology, which enables golfers to measure the full depth and exact shape of the green from any angle of approach - even from adjacent fairways!

Golfers get three precise measurements to the green - to the front, to the back or directly to the flag, which can be positioned anywhere on the green using the SG2.5's four-way thumbpad.

i 0870 112 0513
www.skycaddiegps.co.uk



GREEN AND WHITE FOR GREENER MOWING

With recycling a top priority for today's environmentally conscious gardener, Etesia has launched a new mulching facility as standard for their Bahia ride-on mower.

Now, Bahia can recycle as it cuts, chopping the clippings into extremely fine particles before returning them to the turf to decompose naturally. This mulch acts as a conditioner, feeding nutrients to the growing plants, plus its high water content provides essential moisture for the lawn during hot, dry spells. It's quick, clean, environmentally friendly and with no clippings to dispose of, mowing time is reduced - leaving users more leisure-time to do other things. Quicker mowing means less fuel and reduced emissions.

i 01926 403319
www.etesia.com



Salsco's Slicer/Seeder and Greens Roller

SLICER/SEEDER MAKES UK DEBUT

Salsco's Slicer/Seeder and Greens Roller will be imported to the UK by Equipment Supply Services, the Glamorgan-based machinery sourcing company that works in grounds care, landscaping, forestry, re-cycling and agriculture/horticulture.

Salsco's Slicer/Seeder is a truly 'all terrain' seeder, being able to work on slopes of up to 40 degrees and able to seed on the turn, which - combined with a 25 inch turning circle and great manoeuvrability - means it can work around trees, sprinkler heads, bunkers, flower beds and other obstructions.

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Beds and Borders Topsoil is a fertile, organic rich, light and friable topsoil, analysed to BS3882:2007, that contains a controlled release fertiliser and a water retentive polymer.

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For the 2008 season, Massey Ferguson's ride-on mower and garden tractor range encompasses:

- Seven tractor-mowers equipped with direct-collect mid decks in cutting widths ranging from 0.76m to 1.22m (30in - 48in), all with rear-mounted grass catchers as standard.
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- A 25hp garden tractor with 1.37m (54in) side-discharge cutting deck and optional mulch kit.
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Sporting a fresh and modern design, The Golf Book is a celebration of all that is great about golf, from the ancient origins of the game to the most prestigious championships held today. The book profiles all of the greatest players, from the Grand Bear Jack Nicklaus to the Shark Greg Norman, as well as capturing the landmark moments in golf history.

i 020 70103000.





Last year's winning picture of The Duke's Course, Woburn taken by Michael Cunningham

SNAP HAPPY!

BIGGA's Golf Photography Competition is back

CALLING ALL BUDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS!

Are you proud of your course? Do you catch yourself admiring it in a certain light?

The BIGGA Golf Photography Competition, back for its third year, creates an opportunity for greenkeepers to display their artistic flair, while also earning some publicity for their club.

The winner will receive a full course profile in Greenkeeper International, a trophy and a special prize, while the 12 best pictures will be selected for the 2009 BIGGA Calendar.

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

Anyone wishing to enter should send their pictures to: [Scott MacCallum](#) or [Melissa Jones](#), BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark Manor, Alne, York, YO61 1UF by July 31, 2008.

Alternatively you can email them to scott@bigga.co.uk or melissa@bigga.co.uk

Entries will be judged by Alan Birch, whose inspiration the competition has been; Professional Golf Course Photographer, Eric Hepworth, Golf Photographer, Matthew Harris and Scott MacCallum, Editor of Greenkeeper International.

Only BIGGA members are eligible to enter.

So come on...strike a pose!



Second prize went to Marek Zubert last year for this picture of Mount Juliet, County Kilkenny



Chris Sherrington took third place last year with his shot of Sunningdale Old

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Letters

THE DISTURBANCE THEORY

On February 20, The East Section was host venue for a seminar organised by Rigby Taylor Ltd and The STRI. The venue was Ratho Park Golf Club and the topics covered were: The Thrill of Real Golf, The Disturbance Theory, Use of Growth Regulators and, preparations leading up to the 2007 Open Championship at Carnoustie.

The Guest Speakers were: Richard Windows, Henry Bechelet and Megan Hood, who all did a marvellous job in sharing their views and experience of effective Course Management with all in attendance. There was some cutting edge technical jargon used by the team such as "Chemification" and "Squiffing" so thanks for that I'm sure these terms will eventually become very popular when they reach north of the border.

There were 42 delegates in attendance, inclusive of our own Regional Administrator, and the feedback from most people has been very positive.

So firstly, thank you, most importantly to Rigby Taylor Ltd for sponsoring the event, special thanks to David Carson and his team for organising the event and ensuring its smooth running on the day. And secondly, thank you to everyone involved at Ratho Park Golf Club for agreeing to host this event and making sure we were made to feel welcome. Special thanks to Tom Murray for the time and support given to the event.

And finally thanks to everyone for attending the seminar - It was encouraging to see many East Section members on the day, hopefully we will meet again at the Spring Outing!

Stuart Ferguson
Scottish East Chairman

THANK YOU

I would like to thank everybody who took the time and effort to complete the questionnaire on Sustainable Golf Course Management. After a first look the results look very interesting. They are currently being analysed and will be disseminated back to the industry as soon as possible. If someone still has a questionnaire they'd like to send back then please do so.

The winner of the £50 M&S vouchers is Mike Garrett from Canterbury Golf Club.

Katie Walls
Lecturer in Sportsturf and NC Course Tutor
Myerscough College

HAMISH STEPHEN

It is with a heavy heart I write this letter about the tragic death of our good friend Hamish Stephen. Hamish was at Cruden Bay Golf Club where he worked for 18 years.

He worked his way up from assistant to deputy then to Headgreenkeeper/ Course Manager. Hamish passed away at the tender age of 44 years and he will be sadly missed by all his greenkeeping friends and also all the many friends he had in the trade. Hamish was a very well respected

greenkeeper and this was evident by all the people who attended his funeral at Aberdeen Crematorium.

His death has left all his friends in the North Section devastated by the speed of his illness and our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife Elaine and the family.

Dale Robertson (North Section Secretary)

When I first heard of the death of Hamish Stephen I was stunned. I have known Hamish for almost 20 years during college training and through the green keeping fraternity. When I moved into the area to work at Royal Aberdeen Hamish was one of the first people to phone and welcome me to the north east and so our friendship continued.

I will always remember the football banter with Hamish as he was an ardent Rangers Fan and me being Celtic daft meant there was healthy debate about who was the best in Glasgow. The texts and phone calls from Hamish always came when the gheres were winning and he loved rubbing it in when they beat Celtic.

Hamish will be a sad loss to greenkeeping as he had a vast knowledge of the job and was very enthusiastic about what he was doing at Cruden Bay.

I will certainly miss the big fella as I'm sure will a lot of other people and my sympathy goes out to his wife Elaine and his young family.

Robert N Patterson
Course Manager
Royal Aberdeen GC

DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW GREENKEEPERS,

You will know by now that the proposal to purchase land to construct a golf course and clubhouse, which will serve as BIGGA Headquarters, was passed by a majority at the Harrogate AGM in January.

I hate begging letters but this is exactly what this is. For the project to materialise cash is required. Any small amount will be more than welcome, although a large donation would bring the purchase of land and our Dream Golf Course within our comprehension.

If the Section Secretaries could see their way to put the hat around at their meetings and golf competitions and send the cash to our HQ the fund will grow from hundreds to thousands "and then the sky is the limit". I have directed this letter to Greenkeepers and Friends. We know out there in the wider field of our Profession we have many friends who are interlinked with us. In the past you have supported and backed us to the hilt on many occasions. We would again ask for your help that we go forward together to the benefit of all.

Cecil George
Life Member
Lenzie

**PLEASE EMAIL YOUR LETTERS TO SCOTT MACCALLUM,
SCOTT@BIGGA.CO.UK OR MELISSA JONES, MELISSA@BIGGA.CO.UK OR
POST TO: BIGGA HOUSE, ALDWARK MANOR, ALNE, YORK, YO61 1UF**



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.

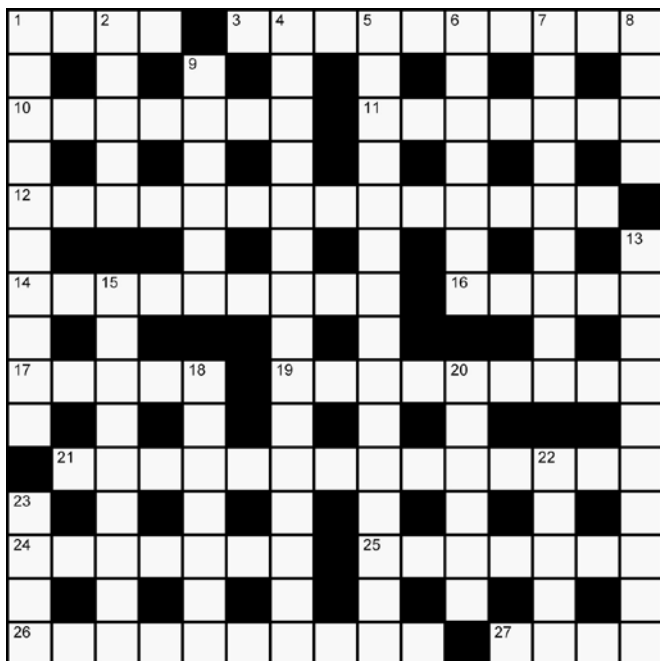
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Make way for pedestrians? (4)
- 3 Time's starting point? (3,4,3)
- 10 Belgian city on the river Scheldt (7)
- 11 Not equipped with weapons (7)
- 12 Futile pursuit of something unattainable (4-5,5)
- 14 In the early days of rail transport, a term for a locomotive (4,5)
- 16 Reject something with contempt (5)
- 17 Blows hard and noisily (5)
- 19 Person or situation which is potentially explosive (6-3)
- 21 Gambling game of Spanish origin (5-4,5)
- 24 Document which confers e.g. university degree (7)
- 25 Slender tower with balconies (7)
- 26 Mostly poisonous plant of the Solanum genus (10)
- 27 Dull noise of impact (4)

DOWN

- 2 Essential (5)
- 4 Ethical affirmation of the medical profession (11,4)
- 5 ITV's home camcorder compilation programme (5,4,6)
- 6 Indigenous Americans resettled in Oklahoma (7)
- 7 Something that disappoints after high expectations (4,5)
- 8 Put things in order (4)
- 9 Distance from start to finish (6)
- 13 Out of the blue (10)
- 15 Of clothing, made in standard size (3-3-3)
- 18 Make certain, ensure (3,2,2)
- 20 Expensive white fur obtained from type of weasel (6)
- 19 Country to which the word "Hellenic" is applied (6)
- 21 In architecture, a vertical supporting structure (4)
- 22 Foot division (4)
- 23 Supreme god of Norse mythology (4)

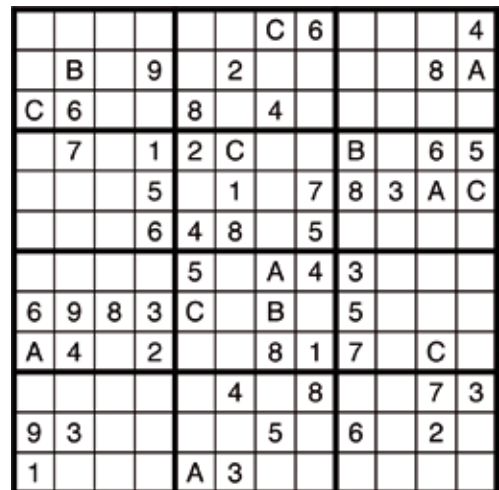


QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Barwick Green is the name of the title music to which show?
2. Why is the Golden Gate bridge painted plum colour?
3. Which island near Hong Kong is famous for gambling and motor racing?
4. What is the more common name for the type of bear called the Ursus Maritimus?
5. In what year did Pinky and Perky first appear on television?
6. In what year was the film Chitty Chitty Bang Bang released?
7. Who directed the 1976 film Taxi Driver?
8. What is the name of the character played by Robert de Niro in the 1976 film Taxi Driver?
9. What does MRSA stand for?

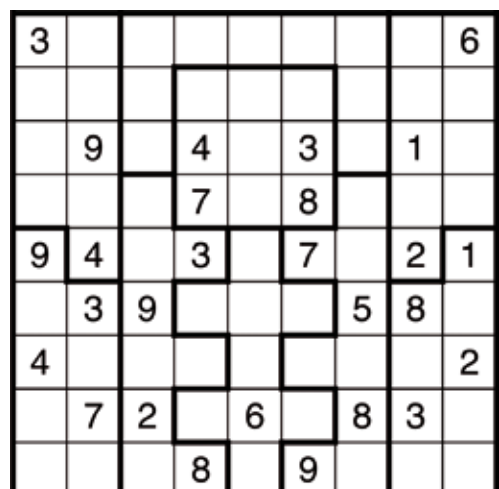
MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A,B and C.



SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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



IN THE SHED ANSWERS ON PAGE 59



IN THE SHED



News from the Chief Executive

It's all change this month at BIGGA House with the arrival of the builders whose task it is to convert the array of downstairs offices into one large open office. We are all dreading the nuisance factor but the overwhelming feeling is one of support for the project and the main disruption should only last for three to four days. The work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April following which the GTC can move into part of the upper floor, bringing the two organisations much closer together but also bringing BIGGA some rental income to help offset overheads.

I seem to have done an excessive amount of travelling of late but it just happens to be that time of year when the industry takes advantage of a quieter time to host conferences. My latest visit, and last for some while, was to the Canadian Conference and Exhibition in Calgary. Coupled with this was an International Summit that attracted delegates from a variety of countries.

It was especially pleasing to meet Allan Devlin, from the Australian Association, who, as an ex-patriot of many years, found himself immediately at home in the company of the delegates from the UK and Canada. Ken Siems, Steve Isaac and our Chairman had all been invited over to give presentations that were very well received and that fitted well into the busy and informative schedule of education seminars that my counterpart, Ken Cousineau, and his staff had arranged. Our hosts could not have been more welcoming.

My personal thanks go to Ken Cousineau, Terry McNeilly, the CGSA Board and the great number of Canadian friends, too numerous to list, who made the trip a success not only for me but for the Association. The golf industry in the UK is going through testing times but these conditions are not confined to our shores. The same pressures are in evidence in Canada, Sweden and America and I wish Past President of the CGSA, Ian Martinusen and Dana, his wife, every success for the future. Ian was recently a victim of change at his golf club, in the same way that many have suffered in the UK, he has thankfully found employment as a technical representative.

While it is important that we develop strong relationships within the UK to try to protect and develop the better interests of our members it is also vital that we do not neglect the international aspect of the greenkeeping fraternity. There is much to learn from others as well as share our own experiences and there is no doubt about the fact that BIGGA is held in very high regard around the world. The international travel sounds wonderful and I do find it rewarding, both personally and for the Association, but it is also tiring, very demanding on home life, and the work back the office never disappears! I do what is necessary to promote the Association but the cynics among us will say that I would say that.

Finally I would like to wish Steve Mona every success in his new position as CEO of the World Golf Foundation based in Florida. Steve took over as CEO of the GCSAA 14 years ago and has been a great ally for BIGGA. I look forward to building on this relationship with Steve in his new role.

John Pemberton



SCOTTISH REGION – AYRSHIRE

Hello everyone, just a few items on the agenda for your perusal as we actually held a committee meeting at the end of February (crazy I know!).

Although not present at the Scottish National Conference myself last month, I have it on good authority that it once again was a resounding success and a well worthwhile event to have been in attendance at.

The Golf Club Secretaries versus Greenkeepers match will be contested at West Linton GC on Monday, April 14, so here's hoping they get a good day for it and the greenkeeper's prevail.

Troon Portland plays host to our Spring Outing on April 15. Tee times will be from 9:30am - be sure to get your form back to Derek quickly as I'm sure such a fine venue will attract an excellent turn out.

Derek Wilson's Irvine Bogside course will be the venue for this year's Scottish National Tournament on Monday, June 23. I'm sure the Ayrshire lads will be out in force to lay waste to the field and plunder the big prizes that day. I for one will be looking forward to playing one of the most challenging courses in the area.

The National Championship is to be played at East Sussex GC on October 13 and 14.

After a brief conversation with some of the West Section lads at Harrogate it was tentatively agreed to hold a rematch of the dramatic and thrilling football match we enjoyed a few year's ago in Glasgow.

Director of Football, Marshall Sloss, has taken on the responsibility of organising a fearless squad to give the West a torrid time of it. Anyone interested in playing should contact either Marshall or myself. It was only lack of fitness, subs and talent that let us down last time!

Our annual match against the County Down Greenkeeper's has been scheduled for Friday, September 19 at Duncan Gray's The Pines GC in Dumfries. Having lost the first two year's to the Irish lads I feel we jolly well need to roll our sleeves up next time and keep the Shield on Ayrshire soil. Give us a ring if you're up for it.

Ability to hold one's drink would be an asset to this event!

That's it for now. I'm off to watch the Boro destroy Cardiff as we march on to cup glory, just a pity we couldn't of got Man U or Chelsea in final?

Denis Tweddell

07939 104701 denis.t@hotmail.co.uk



CENTRAL

Congratulations go to Albert Arnott, currently the Head Greenkeeper at

Around the Green

Lochore GC, he will now take on the responsibility at the 18 hole Dora Golf Course. We would also like to wish Graham Taylor all the best on his move to sunny Spain from the equally tropical Leven, as he heads off to begin work on a new golf course project in Murcia. Graham, the guys from Leven said remember your friends.

The Walter Woods Trophy, now in its second year and organised by Elmwood College, was held recently at Scotsraig GC. The trophy was contested between teams from St Andrews University, Dundee University, Abertay University and Elmwood. The sharp and breezy conditions did not deter some good scoring and the day was rounded off by Walter Woods meeting with the players for dinner, and presenting the trophy to Dundee Uni who ran out the winners.

Gordon McKie, from the Old Course, recently spent a week at Guelph University near Toronto where he had been invited to give a series of presentations to various groups of students, as well as local business leaders, on how the Links at St Andrews are maintained along with some background on the history of golf on the Links. The visit has elevated him to a new status as the headlines in the regional newspaper the following week referred to "The Turf God Speaks".

On a personal note, by the time you have read this I shall (hopefully) have completed the Sports Relief mile, or three as I committed myself to. I would just like to say a massive thank you to all those in the industry who sponsored me. My aim was to raise a £100 but with a week still to go I was already well over £400 - no pressure then.

The website continues to get even busier, it's almost turning into a full time job for Graeme Taylor. Sign up and give us your views on what you would like your committee to organise for you and for the latest news: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Gordon Moir



EAST

The old saying that March comes in like a lamb and departs like a lion, is not true to form this year, with blizzard conditions experienced in early March and more on the way. Hopefully things can only get better!

The big golfing event this year is the Graham Wood Testimonial, which is being held at Dunbar GC on Friday, September 19 with all proceeds going to Graham and his family. The golf competition is, I understand, oversubscribed with 22 four-man teams entered, and a waiting list already formed. The day kicks off with a 10.30am shotgun start followed by a grand auction in the evening when an array of sporting memorabilia will be up for grabs. The main sponsors are local John Deere dealers, Thomas Sheriff & Co Ltd of Haddington, to whom the organising committee are extremely grateful.

The East Section are sending a team to play in Graham's testimonial. To help the committee raise the funds for this event it has been proposed

that a Fun Quiz Night be staged at the Railway Hotel in Haddington in late April/early May. Any member wishing to support this event can do so by entering a four-person team at a cost of £10 per team. Teams can comprise of family members, friends or trade. For further information or to enter a team, please contact our Social Convenor Stewart Crawford on: 01620 893103 or email: s.crawford@live.co.uk

Our congratulations this month go to Ross Prowse on his move from Dalmahoy, where he has worked for the last 10 years, to the Deputy's position at Muckhart GC near Dollar. I am sure my old friend Colin Russell will keep him on the straight and narrow and help further his knowledge of greenkeeping.

Until next month

Mike Dooner



NORTH

Just a quick introduction, my name is Ben Brookes and I have taken over from Robert Patterson as 'Magazine Man' for the North Section so please bear with me as this is my first newsletter. I can hear the moans now, what's a 'guffy' writing the notes for? It wasn't my plan, just address all complaints through one Hugh Mclatchie at Peterhead GC.

As I've taken on the Section news I would appreciate it if anyone within the Section could either email or phone me with the slightest bit of news whether it's anyone moving on to another club or what kind of week you've had just contact me, as one great big superstore said "Every Little Helps". My email address is: benbrookes@yahoo.co.uk and mobile: 07813889374.

One lad on the move is David Nicholson, he is taking on an Assistant Greenkeepers role at Murcar Links. I'm sure Brian and the lads there will make him feel at home. He is moving to us from Meldrum House.

The Section has at long last been able to purchase a laptop, I think Hughie has been doing a little bit of wheeling dealing and has come up with something suitable for the Section. You can just imagine him walking into shop with his flat cap and leather jacket and standing on a box to speak to the salesman. The laptop has been purchased, as discussed at the AGM, for the Secretary to have all the information available to him at Section Outings and to answer any queries that members have.

Speaking of Section outings, the Spring outing at Craibstone has been pushed back a week from the original date of Thursday, April 24 to Thursday, May 1. The forms for both of the Section annual outings will be posted out by Dale in the near future. The Autumn outing is on Thursday, September 18 at Kirriemuir. Keep the September form safe as there won't be anymore issued. For these outings we need as much support as possible. I know it's difficult for a lot of people to get time off but even if you just came to one to see how the day is run

Around the Green

and to meet the committee and other greenkeepers it would be much appreciated, as without you the Section cannot survive. I sound like a stuck needle but we really do need your support.

The 200 Club cards should have been sent out by Robert Hardie by now, if you haven't received yours then let me know or you can let Robert know. If you need any more cards for any long lost relatives then just let us know and I'm sure it can be sorted out. Again this is an already well supported venture so long may this continue. I did go back to my former club, Newmachar and tried to sell a ticket to Patrick Wood but the deep pockets still remain!

As I'm writing this article the Scottish Conference in Dunfermline has just taken place and I understand that it went very well and was strongly supported. The North Section was well represented with lads from Newmachar, McDonald GC, Huntly and Fortrose and Rosemarkie – thank you for supporting the Section lads.

John Geddes, from McDonald GC, has asked me to pass on the news of the passing away of former member Gibby Wright who I'm sure a lot of the older members in the section will remember.

Thank you very much for your time lads and remember, if you have any information just let me know and I can pass it on to the rest of the Section.

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links GC



WEST

Welcome to this month's report. I would like to welcome new member Andrew Orr, from East Kilbride GC. We hope to see you taking part in the golf outings and seminars planned for the year ahead.

We have a new member on the West Committee, Terry Smith from Helensburgh GC, I hope you will enjoy your time on the committee, it's good to see some younger members coming forward with new ideas.

I attended this year's show at Harrogate and I would like to congratulate head office, as the feedback from members was first class. It was good to see so many attending the show and the presence of the larger companies seemed to help. Many thanks to Peter Boyd for arranging the Scottish package which was first class value. I would like to pass on Barry McCulloch and Michael Maxton thanks - the patron award winners for 2007.

Loch Lomond was the venue for our recent seminar, the thrill of golf and the disturbance theory. Many thanks to the STRI for a first class presentation, also thanks to Ken Seims, from Loch Lomond GC, for

the use of their facilities and to David Carson, from Rigby Taylor, for sponsoring the days event. There were 35 greenkeepers in attendance, a good turn out for the time of year.

The Spring Outing is being held at East Renfrewshire GC on Thursday, April 24 - letters will be sent out early April. Please come along for a good days golf and meet up with some old friends.

The Scottish National Tournament is being held at Irvine Bogside GC on Monday, June 23, the course is a fine test of golf and will be in great condition as always.

Last year's annual night out was held at the Comedy Club in Glasgow, the numbers were low but the general conscientious was it was very enjoyable. This year we intend to go back with a greater amount of numbers. If you are interested please contact myself, Gavin Jarvis or any other committee member. Names are being taken at present so here's hoping for a good night out.

This year's fixture diary is now ready and should be with you very soon. For all information on outings and seminars check the Greenkeeper International website under the Education Forum.

I attended the recent superintendents show in Orlando, America, along with four other greenkeepers from the West Section, the trip was organised through the Fairways group Jacobsen, dealers throughout Scotland. We all had a fantastic time and memories of the trip will stay with us all for a long time.

I would like to thank David Rae for giving us the opportunity to attend the trip and to Richard Green for looking after us so well, also a big thank you to Ian Bridges from Ransomes Jacobsen for the hard work and effort from within the company to make it such a great success.

That's all for now, more news next month.

Fraser Ross
07970366355 karen.ross@tecco.net



NORTHERN REGION – NORTH EAST

Our first piece of news is that we now have sponsors lined up for the Spring and Autumn Competitions. The Spring will be through Turfcare Specialists Ltd, alias Terry Charlton, and Jacobsen, through Rickerbys of Hexham, are doing the Autumn Competition. As from this year the Fewsters Shield name will be changed to Ransomes Jacobsen, since Fewsters are no longer around these days. As one of the Spring majors needs replacing, perhaps we could use Turfcare as they have been good to us over the years with their many excellent prizes.

Next we have a bit of movement in the Section. The Section welcomes Roy White, formerly of Stocksfield GC, who's back in greenkeeping



and started work on March 1 at Slaley Hall - I believe a few of his comrades are wishing to join BIGGA, forms have been sent out via Graham Lauder, so come on lads get joining.

I recently heard that Stocksfield GC are having a new purpose built shed for all their machinery with work having started in the first week of March - another forward thinking club doing the necessary, it's a pity a few more golf clubs are not doing the same.

At the last count we have almost 100 members in the Section and could do with a lot more - I know of some golf clubs who only have one member and yet clubs like Whickham, Hexham etc have all their staff signed up as members of BIGGA. Well, that's all to report, any news is welcome.

Jimmy Richardson



NORTH WEST

At last I have something to write about. You should by now have received your fixture list for 2008. These have been sponsored by Sisis Turf Maintenance Machinery and we are all very grateful for their continued support.

If you have not received one, here are the dates: Spring Tournament, Heaton Moor GC, April 10; North West v North Wales, Ilangollen GC, June 10; Summer Tournament, Chorlton GC, June 19; Autumn Tournament, Davenport GC, September 4 - the stewards match is to be arranged; Presidents Cup and AGM, Wilmslow GC, December 4.

Here is the contact information for anyone who requires it. The Secretary, Bert Cross tel: 0151 7245412 or myself, Chris Sheehan: 0151 2894625 or: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk - for golf tournament details contact Billy Merritt at The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Mobile: 07985175825.

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

Just a very short and sweet report this month. I hope by now you have all received your fixture list for this year's events. If not, then do not worry here is the list in full. For those who have received a list there is one amendment. This year's Invitation Day, to be held at Shipley Beckfoot GC, will be held on Thursday, August 21 not Thursday 14 as advertised.

The fixture list in full is: Spring Tournament, April 30, Filey GC, 12.12 tee; Presidents Day, June 12, Cookridge GC, 12.30 tee; Northern V Sheffield, July 23, Otley GC; Invitation Day, August 21, Shipley Beckfoot GC, 1.30 tee; Autumn Tournament, October 1, The Alwoodley GC, 9.40 tee; Winter Golf, December 11, Halifax GC.

Please remember that your names need to be down and payment received at least one week before each event.

Adam Speight

07739 319060 adam@speight1156.fslife.co.uk



NORTH WALES

April, I hope, finds us rested and ready to face the ever so close season after a relaxing Easter break, do we really get a break on these so-called public holidays? Answers on a postcard please! I suppose that's what you get for working in the sport service industry.

I hope you enjoyed the seminar at Abergele GC and that if you're taking up the Safety Management System you'll get full benefit from it. A big thank you to all the speakers for giving their time and making an interesting day of it for us all - also an equally big thank you has to go to Abergele GC for making us all feel so welcome and allowing us to use their facilities.

It's all go now towards the Spring Tournament at Llanymynech GC sy10 8lb (yes helping these people with sat nav again!) on May 14. There is an amendment to be made on your entry form, it is classed as a medal but it will be scored on a stableford basis. Please get your entry forms back to Jeremy by May 5.

In local news, Carl Crocher, and his team at Caldycote GC, have been busy constructing three new greens and two new tees using green waste of compost and sand, then putting the original turf back on to provide the putting surface. Input was used from Tom Owen, who apparently did a lot of Formby's recent upgrade work as shaper and Alistair Begg as Agronomist/Architect. The greens are due to open in March/April; they have also completed the renovation of nine bunkers.

Our best wishes go to John Kerry of Royal St. David's who recently had pneumonia - get well soon.

Just remember though April showers may come your way it brings the trench foot that cripples in May.

All the best until next month

Pete Maybury

07756001187 petemayb66@aol.com

Johnny Evans

07917584728 Johnny.evans@tesco.net



Around the Green



MIDLAND REGION – MIDLAND

Why oh why do folks get married after cohabiting quite nicely for a number of decades? I recall my father spending an inordinate amount of money (so rare for him!) on a holiday at Port Merion so as he could pop the question on the hotel lawn. After being together for 20 years one would think such would be a simple formality. However, my stepmother said no, citing the costs of such. I am pleased that the above was not the fate of Ray Taylor of Gay Hill who has been graced with the hand of Claire after some 20 years of living in sin. Our happiest of congratulations to you both, and wishing you all the happiness in the world for the future. In answer to the afore question, "Because they want to".

What's this, more good news? Mike Hughes has become the new Course Manager at Ludlow GC. How does H&S work there when mowing fairways with race horses thundering across them? Also our Chairman, Ed Stant, has taken over at Trentham GC - I am sure Ed will not mind me thanking Penn GC on his behalf for eight years of rewarding and enjoyable employment there. Good luck to you both in your new posts.

Just another reminder, the Spring Tournament is to be held at Kidderminster GC on April 24, also the Scotts Doubles draw will be held there. If you haven't got your entries in to either/or both, then there is just enough time to enter if you ring Rhys on: 07775 581615. Please support our events, they are difficult to organise and are such great value for money, especially considering the reduced entry fee of a mere £20 for seasonal events, and £2.50 per person for the Scotts Doubles.

The Section would like to thank Osprey Irrigation Ltd. for sponsoring this month's calendar page. Did you spot the error in last month's notes? Summer 2007 was unbelievably wet, I did of course mean summer 2006. Osprey's informative website address is www.ospreyirrigation.com

Looking forward to seeing you at the spring event at Kidderminster.

Sean McDade

Training and Education

We enjoyed yet another successful days training workshop held at Gay Hill GC for the Irrigation Electrics Workshop. Tony Ware, Tonick Watering really blew our minds while trying to explain Faradays theory of electrics. Fortunately there were plenty of practical exercises for the delegates to do which brought us back down to earth, fortunately not with a bang. Mike Woolcock, Kiem Water was on hand to keep us all on track and show us how the repairs should be done. Tony even treated us to a few bomb making methods. I wasn't sure how best to use this advice but as the classroom also doubles as Gay Hill's committee room, a few ideas suddenly sprung to mind. Can't wait for the next meeting! I have already sent my apologies. We hope to run the event again so please get in touch if you would like to book your place.

Plans are underway for a Pesticides and Spraying Techniques Update, which will again be a practical refresher workshop aimed at keeping the operator up to date with the latest legislation, equipment and techniques. Anyone interested in booking a place on either event should contact me by email at paul@ghgc.org.uk

Paul Woodham
Education and Training Coordinator



EAST MIDLAND

Not much to report this month besides you should all have received entries for the Spring Tournament on Thursday, April 24 at Notts GC (Hollinwell), sponsored by Mansfield Sand. The tee is booked from 2pm until 3.30pm and is limited to 30 greenkeepers on a first come first served basis. The closing date for entries is Friday, April 18.

Congratulations go to Andy De Wet on his appointment as Course Manager at Birstall GC. We wish him all the best for the future.

Dan Rodgers
Secretary
07745227224



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all. Firstly I would like to begin by saying congratulations to Les Howkins on his appointment as Course Manager at Richmond GC. Les has been part of our Section for about eight years and during that time has served on the committee as secretary and vice-chairman. His input and dedication will be missed, however some of us may now stand a chance of winning a golf day! On behalf of the current committee I would like to wish him and his family all the best for the future.

Over 50 people attended our final seminar of the winter on Wednesday, February 27. It was held at Elsham GC and the topic of the day was 'The Disturbance Theory'. This was quite ironic after the earthquake the night before! The day was presented by the STRI with presentations from Henry Bechelet, Richard Windows and Megan Hood on various topics including, the fundamentals of the disturbance theory, how to prepare your course using minimal disturbance, the use of growth regulators and how Carnoustie was set up for the 2007 Open. If anyone has the chance to attend one of these seminars I would definitely recommend it. The day is informative to both course managers and



assistant greenkeepers and the enthusiasm shown by Henry is guaranteed to entertain.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank Henry, Richard and Megan for their excellent presentations, Elsham GC for their excellent hospitality and buffet and Ian Collett and Rigby Taylor for organising and sponsoring the day.

Our golf season fixtures have been finalised as below - April 16, Pottergate; May 20, Burghley Park; June 12, Cleethorpes; July 8, Gainsborough; August 19, Immingham VS Trade; September 24, Radcliffe-on-Trent VS Secretaries; October 2, Belton Park; December 10, Holme Hall.

Hopefully all golf days will continue to be as fun and relaxed, while highly competitive, as they have been for the last few years. All members are invited to attend, no matter what standard of golfer you are, a warm welcome will be extended to all.

Letters will be going out shortly about our first event, however if anyone should need any more information then contact Rob Welford.

A final reminder to everyone to visit and register on our website www.eastofenglandbigga.com

Many thanks

Steve Beverly
Immingham Golf Club



SOUTH EAST REGION – SURREY

Terrible news, the Gentleman's dinner at Walton Heath GC has been postponed due to some application forms not being sent back quickly enough. Now that I am no longer a member of a golf club I need to play in as many greenkeeper events as possible, so please, when you get the new date, don't let me down, return the application form immediately and let me have another days golf.

The following are our Section events for 2008: Texas Scramble, Laleham GC, April 10; Spring Tournament and National Qualifier, West Surrey GC, May 13; Surrey Greenkeepers v Wimbledon Common GC, July 18; McMillan Tankard at Sunningdale GC, September 11; Cresta Cup at Richmond GC, September 18; National Tournament at East Sussex National GC, October 13 and 14; England v Scotland at Hankley Common GC, November 5; Turkey Trot, Betchworth Park GC, December 11.

Fixtures to be confirmed are Match v Secretaries and Surrey v Essex v Sussex, October 21. Health and Safety Day at Foxhills (to be confirmed).

Now that Ron Christie is Secretary he has appealed to all of you to let me know of interesting news to put in ATG so that I don't fill it up with

details of my holidays every month. Well the bad news is that nobody has contacted me and the good news...my next holiday is booked in April and Studland Bay in Dorset is my destination. The nudist beach is a must for its fine views although the temperature is still a little cool for hanging around for long.

Brian Willmott



SOUTH WEST AND WALES REGION – SOUTH WEST

We had a fine welcome at Kingsdown GC for the first meeting of the 2008 season. Mark Ford and his staff had the course in brilliant early condition with dry fairways, and smooth fast greens. Mark fed his greens in late January with 4 0 10 winter fertiliser – in his own words “I don't overfeed, but this year the greens looked like they needed a little support after the frost and rain”. A very sensible approach, which has clearly paid dividends. The height of cut was 5mm, and Mark was looking forward to mini-coring and dressing in April. A good deal of work has been done on rebuilding bunkers since we were last here, and the course, which opened in 1890, has hardly looked better.

The competition was won, again, by Roger Neale aka “Ravishing Roger Rude” - for some reason (which escapes me) Roger has been compared with the American wrestler Rick Rude. So big respect next time you meet him. The full result: 1. Ravishing Roge, Taunton GC, 38 pts; 2. Jamie Acton, Worlebury GC, 37 pts; 3. Paul Healy, Worlebury GC, 36 pts.

Thanks very much to all at Kingsdown, especially Mark and the team, for a warm welcome and a great day.

The first of several Excavator Safety Training courses was run recently at Cirencester GC. Six of us, under the watchful eye of Joe Lewis - RGL Plant Ltd Trainer and Assessor - were put through our paces with mini-excavators digging and backfilling trenches, loading trailers, bulk handling, and tracking up and down steep slopes. I got stuck on a particularly severe downslope, and at one point was almost standing on the windscreen. As Joe said, “no need to panic - your bottom'll give way before the machine does”. After clambering gratefully out of the cab back on level ground - I knew exactly what he meant. A safety briefing followed in which we learnt all about how to balance the digger properly, the correct methodology of loading, site safety, trenching, safety of colleagues, and avoiding overhead and underground services (and what may happen if you don't!). Passing the course gives a licence, valid for five years, which qualifies the greenkeeper to operate up to a ten tonne machine. All this for the cost of only a couple of extra days digger-hire, and BIGGA CPD points as well!

Our grateful thanks to Cirencester GC for the use of their digger,

Around the Green

and the facilities; and to BIGGA for helping with sponsorship from the Education Fund. Two additional one-day courses are scheduled at Woodlands GC and these will be sponsored jointly by Holt-JCB and BIGGA. It is hoped, if there is sufficient demand, to run further courses in the autumn. Do please register an interest by sending me an email.

The first Frank Newberry Management Masterclass will also have been held on March 12. Frank has come to the Section for the first time, and brings his own inimitable style combined with a deep understanding of the management situation within the golf course industry. This will hopefully be the first of several such days, and thanks to all those who have been forward thinking enough to enroll. Again, BIGGA CPD points apply, and thanks again to the BIGGA Education Fund and our Patronage Partners for sponsorship, enabling us to keep the course to a reasonable cost.

Another date for your diaries will be announced shortly – this will relate to an STRI information afternoon. The event is still on the drawing board, but will hopefully be held at Chippenham GC in mid-June, and will feature the local STRI advisors talking through dry patch, fertiliser regimes, disturbance theory, aeration and scarification etc, and how all these are relevant to our courses. It is intended that the day should start at 1pm, and run through until early evening. Watch this space for confirmation of dates, location, and itinerary etc.

The fixture list and invite for Clevedon will be tumbling through your letterbox soon. Please support your section by playing or attending as many events as possible. As I've recently discovered, just the arrangement of a couple of straightforward education events is in itself a pretty substantial amount of work. That pales to insignificance however compared to the efforts being put in to the Section by Nobby and your Committee – do please thank them by participating if at all possible. Have a good season.

Finally, could I welcome the following companies into the Patronage Scheme for this year. They are – Ecosol, Headand, and Ken White Signs. They join - Avoncrop Amenity, Vitax, Irritech, B.S. Mowers, Rigby Taylor, Countrywide, Symbio. Thank you one and all, your support is very much appreciated.

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk 07768 394593



SOUTH COAST

First of all an apology, it would seem that ATG for February is lost! An explanation: at the turn of the New Year when the report was due, I was ill with the dreaded flu and it missed the deadline.

Our first outing for golf this year will be held at Alresford GC on May

1st. There will be a total of 27 holes played with 9 in the morning and the remaining 18 after lunch. The cost for the day is £22, which I'm sure you will agree is excellent value for 27 holes, and which includes a ploughman's lunch and an evening meal. Also a reminder that this event is the qualifier for the National Tournament, which this year will be held at the East Sussex National GC. It is also a very special event as we remember Colin White, who the tournament is played in memory of. Chalky White is greatly missed and when we remember him in conversation a smile always appears.

To book your place please send a cheque for £22 made payable to BIGGA South Coast to Kevan Glass at the following address: Apartment 1, Forge Side Court, Lepe Road, Langley, Southampton SO45 1SS. If you have any queries or need further information please contact Kevan on mobile 07859 053054 or email: glassy2003@hotmail.com.

The BIGGA South Coast Section educational seminar was held at Canford Magna GC on February 21. Once again it proved to be a successful and informative event. The attendance numbers were 80 plus which for a Section seminar is very encouraging. Such a day would not be possible without the input of sponsors and our presenters. A big thank you to our sponsors, Blade Amenity, Banks Amenity and Vitax Ltd. We are truly indebted for your input and support.

Our first presentation was from Ed McCabe, of Brockenhurst GC, on the subject of managing golf courses. Ed highlighted the importance of working with all parties within the golf club with good communication and strong policies for the long-term future of the golf course. Ady Archer followed with a talk entitled "Tomorrow's Course Manager" which emphasised sound advice and practical means for tomorrow's aspiring course managers. I have not got enough space in this report to fully praise Ed and Ady's papers for this seminar. Everybody agreed that they absolutely delivered an inspiring talk which stimulated an open discussion from the floor.

To follow was Simon Barnaby, from Syngenta, talking on the subject of "Plant Growth Regulators – latest research and development". What was so impressive with this presentation was Simon's excellent technical knowledge combined with superb practical and sensible advice for Sports Turf Managers. After a delicious lunch, we were very pleased to have our BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, speak to us on the new BIGGA/GCMS Safety Management System, which by the way is available for members on the BIGGA website. Thank you John for informing the delegates about a very important subject.

To finish off the day Peter Hickling, the General Manager of High Post GC gave a speech on his role as General Manager which included the Clubs proud achievement of being awarded the Environment Agency's Water Efficiency Award 2007. Thank you Peter for your input, we hope you enjoyed sharing the day with us.

The Committee would like to praise the staff at Canford Magna GC for once again looking after us so well and making us feel very welcome. Thanks go to particularly to Alain Sainval and his catering staff. The last big thank you goes to Chris Bitten who organised the



event and the speakers. If an event goes smoothly as this one did I can guarantee you that means a lot of hard work has gone into the organisation of the day...Bravo Chris!

Chris and myself have already had a debrief meeting and are already working on next years seminar. Remember it's your Section so please let us know of any speakers, topics etc that you would like to be included in future seminars and also remember to let me know of any news in the Section. Please contact me on the number below.

Joe Crawley
01530 510060



DEVON AND CORNWALL

Our February meeting was held at Tavistock on a very pleasant day. Our sponsors for the day were Avoncrop and WBB, thank you to them for their continued support.

Thank you also to Head Greenkeeper, Gary Foster and his team for the use of the course and for putting up with us for the day! It was a pleasure to be out playing on such a well looked after course with fantastic far-reaching views.

We played a full handicap stableford competition with – 1. Tony Gooch, Torrington GC, 38pts; 2. Simon Clarke, St Mellion GC, 37pts; 3. Andy Parker, Downes Crediton GC, 35pts. We also had a Longest Drive competition won by our guest celebrity for the day, Tony Blackburn! Also Nearest the Pin on the par 3 15th, won by another famous person namely Richard Shapland. Congrats to all.

After the course walk was completed and the golfers had all safely returned, we all sat down to a wonderful lunch provided by the catering staff, a big thank you to them.

Afterwards our guest speaker for the day on the subject of Stress Management was Kate Porkess who gave us some excellent pointers and ideas to combat this problem which does unfortunately occur from time to time.

Just a word on the weather lovely and dry at the moment with some cold to help check things, hope we don't have a repeat of last year!

Well that's it for this month if anyone has any news or would like me to mention some forthcoming events you can email: greenwaysjrc@aol.com or phone 07764 224582.

Jerry Cole



SOUTH WALES

Hi everybody, it's time to shake off the cobwebs of winter and get those spreaders and sprayers out of storage, let's hope it will be a kind spring for us this year so we get a good start to the season. At the Grove we are just finishing the last of the winter programme and prepping everything in anticipation of some warmer weather.

The 2008 winter lectures, sponsored by Countrywide Turf and Amenity, continued on Wednesday, February 20 with Headlands Technical Director, Mark Hunt, giving a very interesting talk on "Health & Nutrition Strategies for Sports turf " we would like to thank Mark and Headland for their continued support.

That's it from me for this month, short and sweet because none of you guys have anything to say...wait, hot off the press some information from our Past Secretary Peter Lacey, he informs me Eric from Brecon GC has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Llandrindod Wells GC. Well done Eric all the best in your new post.

News and views to henry@henrystead.wanadoo.co.uk

Keep Smiling

Henry Stead

BIGGA's Regional Administrators



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NORTHERN & MIDLAND
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SOUTH EAST
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Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST & WALES
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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

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Plant protection products include pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, growth regulators and wood preservatives. They are, by nature, a necessary evil for use on the golf course to control problems that cannot otherwise be managed by good husbandry and management. Many are toxic chemicals and are subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations and will require assessments to be carried out to ensure their safe use. Only pesticides which are currently MAFF approved can be used and it is important to check that any old stock is still on the approved list of materials before using it.

The product label and the manufacturer's safety data sheet (MSDS) are essential instructions for the use of any chemical. These will inform: How the substance can be used; Where it can be used; How it is to be stored; Safety precautions to be taken when used regarding protection from the chemical for the operatives and others who may come in contact with it; Effects on other species other than the target organism; Emergency action in case of spillages and fire.



Both the MSDS and the product label should be available to those who use these substances.

Storage - Plant protection products should be stored in a suitable secure bin, chest or vault dependent on the quantity being retained. The container must: Be secure from theft; Have at least a 30min fire protection; Be resistant to impact damage; Have a sump which will retain at least 110% of the contents in the event

of the contents leaking; Be signed to indicate the nature of the contents. It should not be sited near to staff eating areas and if situated outside it needs to be frost proof.

Usage

Those using plant protection products must be aware of the hazards and risks from the substances. They should have received training on the safe use of such materials and should be aware of what personal protective clothing is required, how it is worn and disposed of.

The substances should only be used for the purpose the manufacturer has designed them for and particular care should be taken in the vicinity of rivers, burns and ponds to avoid contamination.

Waste Disposal

Empty containers should be rinsed out with clean water and the rinsings added to spray solutions or sprayed onto soil or grass away from watercourses and drains. The foil sealing caps should also be rinsed with water and retained for later disposal. All waste containers, foil caps, contaminated clothing and excess pesticides must be disposed of via a waste contractor approved to handle these types of products. Waste disposal notes for hazardous wastes must be held for three years.

Emergency Plan

An emergency action plan needs to be in place to deal with any accidental spillage, personnel exposure or fire.

Personal Exposure - The manufacturer's safety data sheet will outline the actions required to treat contamination of personnel. Where medical help is required the safety data sheet and the label from the substance should accompany the person requiring treatment to give to the attending doctor

- **Spillages** - Ensure spillages do not enter watercourses or drains by using covers, sandbags etc. Inform the Environment Agency, SEPA in Scotland, if the pesticide contaminates watercourse and the local water company if the spilled material enters the sewers
- **Fire** - Where the fire cannot be quickly put out, call the fire brigade and evacuate personnel away from the area. An inventory of the pesticide store should be given to the fire brigade to enable them to decide the safest way of tackling the fire

Further information on the actions required when dealing with plant protection products can be had from the BIGGA safety management system or from the government website

www.defra.gov.uk

For more information on health and safety issues visit:
www.xact.uk.com



In the Shed

ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

P	A	V	E		T	H	E	Y	E	A	R	D	O	T
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QUICK NINE HOLE QUIZ

1. The Archers
2. It is the most visible colour in fog
3. Macau
4. Polar Bear
5. 1957
6. 1968
7. Martin Scorsese
8. Travis Bickle
9. Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

MONSTER SUDOKU

3	1	7	8	9	A	C	6	2	5	B	4
5	B	4	9	1	2	7	3	C	6	8	A
C	6	2	A	8	5	4	B	1	7	3	9
8	7	3	1	2	C	9	A	B	4	6	5
4	2	9	5	B	1	6	7	8	3	A	C
B	A	C	6	4	8	3	5	9	2	1	7
7	C	1	B	5	6	A	4	3	8	9	2
6	9	8	3	C	7	B	2	5	A	4	1
A	4	5	2	3	9	8	1	7	B	C	6
2	5	B	C	6	4	1	8	A	9	7	3
9	3	A	4	7	B	5	C	6	1	2	8
1	8	6	7	A	3	2	9	4	C	5	B

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

3	1	8	2	4	5	9	7	6
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Cruden Bay Golf Club

Requires a

Head Greenkeeper

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- Management/Master Greenkeeper PA 1,2&6 spraying certificates
- Understand Health & Safety, Environmental Issues and other appropriate legislation
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- Be able to develop and implement a course management plan
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Please apply in writing, including a full CV by 25th April 2008.

To: The Secretary, Cruden Bay Golf Club, Aulton Road. Cruden Bay, Peterhead. Aberdeenshire AB42 0NN.
e-mail: secretary@crudenbaygolfclub.co.uk
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RECRUITMENT

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- Working knowledge of Health & Safety and Human Resources legislation
- Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications

Please apply with full C.V., covering letter & current salary to:

The General Manager, Swinton Park Golf Club (1996) Ltd.
East Lancashire Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 5LX

Email: barbarawood@spgolf.co.uk
Tel: 0161 794 0861
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Closing Date for applications Friday 25th April 2008



PORTLETHEN GOLF CLUB

Require an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applicants will be qualified to NVQ level 2 and preferably hold current spraying certificates.

A competitive salary is offered dependent on qualifications and experience.

Please forward your CV to:
Neil Sadler Course Manager, Portlethen Golf Club, Badentoy Road, Portlethen, ABERDEEN AB12 4YA

or email to: info@portlethengc.fsnet.co.uk

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

Required by
Tidworth Garrison Golf Club

Tidworth Garrison Golf Club founded in 1908 seeks a Deputy Course Manager to assist the newly appointed Course Manager with the managing of the golf course and the green staff. The ideal applicant will currently be a 1st assistant who is looking for his/her first step into golf course management.

- Minimum of 3 years golf experience.
- Qualified to NVQ2 standard or equivalent.
- Working knowledge of Health & Safety regulations.
- Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications.

Tidworth Garrison Golf Club is a chalk down land golf course with excellent drainage throughout the year and is celebrating its "Centenary Year" in 2008.

Please reply in writing by 21st April with a CV to:

Richard Moan, Secretary/Manager,
Tidworth Garrison GC, Bulford Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire,
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Tel: 01980 842301

Email: tidworthgolfclub@btconnect.com



THORPE HALL GOLF CLUB requires an ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applications are invited from experienced individuals for the post of Assistant Greenkeeper at this traditional, friendly members club. We are looking for someone who is highly motivated and able to work as part of a team. Applicants must be qualified to a minimum of NVQ Level 2 or equivalent, plus PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates. A very competitive salary will be offered.

Please reply in writing with full CV to:

Barry Williams
Course Manager
Thorpe Hall Golf Club
Thorpe Hall Avenue
Thorpe Bay
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PINNER HILL GOLF CLUB POSITION: ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Situated on Pinner Hill surrounded by rolling parkland and mature woods in North West London.

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With this position we offer a competitive salary.

Please apply in writing, including a full CV, via post or email to:
Darrin Urquhart, Course Manager, Pinner Hill Golf Club, South View Road, Pinner Hill, Middlesex, HA5 3YA

Email: darurquhart@aol.com

Mobile: 0777 552 3623



ROYSTON GOLF CLUB

Require

HEAD GREENKEEPER



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- Relevant experience to a minimum of NVQ3 or higher, plus appropriate spraying certificates
- Full understanding of Health & Safety and COSHH regulations
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- Implement work programmes within an approved budget
- Maintenance of equipment
- Report directly to the Golf Club Manager

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Successful applicant will have knowledge of greenkeeping

- Qualified to NVQ2 or equivalent preferred
- Spraying certificates advantageous
- Self motivated and be able to work on their own or as part of a team

Please apply in writing or by email, enclosing a full CV with salary expectations to:
Sean Clark, Golf Club Manager, Royston Golf Club, Baldock Road, Royston, HERTS SG8 5BG.
Email: roystongolf@btconnect.com



SALTFORD GOLF CLUB

is seeking a

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER



Salford Golf Club is an 18 hole private members club. It is a parkland course on Duchy of Cornwall land situated between the cities of Bath and Bristol.

We are looking for a hard working, self motivated and conscientious team member. You will be able to deputise in the Course Managers absence and make a strong contribution to the day to day running of the golf course.

Minimum 5 years golf course experience
Qualified/working towards NVQ3
Hold PA1, PA2 and PA6 certificates
Experience of modern irrigation systems
Knowledge of machinery maintenance
Good supervisory and communication skills

Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications.

Please send applications in writing with a full CV to:
Mike Penn, Club Secretary,
Salford Golf Club,
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RECRUITMENT

THE GLAMORGANSHIRE GOLF CLUB

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ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for an enthusiastic hard working greenkeeper prepared to work flexible hours to include weekend work on a rota basis.

NVQ level 2 qualifications and spraying certificates PA2 and PA6 would be an advantage.

Apply In Writing To:

The Secretary/Manager, The Glamorganshire Golf Club, Lavernock Road, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan CF64 5UP

NORTHAMPTON GOLF CLUB



Head Greenkeeper

Northampton Golf Club is a private members club that celebrated its centenary in 1993. The Club moved to a new course and clubhouse in the village of Harlestone in 1990.

Reporting to the General Manager and Course Committee, the successful candidate will need to have the following:-

- Proven experience of providing a quality Golf Course.
- A sound understanding of the needs and interests of Club Members and golfing visitors.
- Familiar with working to and managing an operating budget.
- Working experience of Health & Safety.
- Possess all relevant qualifications and knowledge of Turf Management, Drainage and Irrigation.
- Ability to lead and motivate the staff.

In return for this the Club will offer a competitive salary, a stakeholder pension scheme and 4.8 weeks annual leave.

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**The General Manager
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Closing date:- 04 April 2008

CANADIAN GOLF CONFERENCE 2008

My week started by meeting with John Pemberton at Heathrow airport before boarding a flight to Calgary to attend the Canadian Golf Superintendents Conference and arrived at the hotel, extremely tired and feeling the very cold temperatures, -10.

I met up with Tommy Witt, Jay Leach and Jim Paton on Thursday and discussed some of the issues the week had in store for us.

On Friday there were some pre-Conference seminars. 'Enhancing Your Values As Golf Course Superintendent', Additional choices included, 'Preparing Your Golf Course For Winter'; 'Golf Course Techniques and Management'; 'Bentgrass Management and Rootzone Maintenance', and 'Solving Your Drainage Problems'. A wealth of choice for attendees and some great material.

The second day started with Dr Joe Vargas, 'Physiology and Culture From Annual Bluegrass'; 'Managing People'; 'Managing Today's Generation'; 'Wetting Agent and Localised Wet Spots'; 'Managing Root Systems' and 'What Do Operators Expect From Their Superintendents?'

On Saturday we attended the 18th International Summit for all Greenkeeping Associations, hosted by the Canadian Association where we joined our American, Canadian, Australian, European counterparts, along with the R&A. It was a great forum with everyone putting their heads together for a collective opinion, with education and environmental issues the hot topics. We all agreed there was much room for improvement in the way that we communicate with each other. We felt that we needed to take the issues to a wider audience including Governments, Club Owners, R&A, USGA, and other major golfing influences in a bid to increase exposure and achieve our objectives. In the evening we attended the Summit Dinner held at Calgary Golf Club, which had had a covering of snow for many months and was just beginning to melt.

Sunday 8am, and we were already up and attending the keynote address, given by Steve Donahue. His talk, 'Follow a compass not a map' was a fantastic, inspiring workshop on Steve's trek across the Sahara Desert and



all that he encountered. A truly great start to the day.

We then attended the Canadian awards, CGSA Awards Luncheon, where the Certified Superintendents were honoured - Trainee Superintendent, Trevor Anderson, and, Blake McMaster, as Superintendent of the Year.

Sunday evening we attended the President's Welcome Banquet, where we dined and networked with colleagues.

On Monday there was a British feel to the conference with the R&A's Steve Isaacs and his presentation 'Sustainability In Action' was well received. As controversial as this subject may be, there is much merit in the issues being discussed, in terms of European Greenkeeping, and water resources and its management, grass species and overall sustainability of golf.

Monday night we had a reception at the Calgary Flames Ice Hockey Supporters' Club. It was an interesting venue and a good night where the passion for ice hockey from the locals shone through.

On Tuesday, the environmental theme continued with Ken Siems, from Loch Lomond, giving a presentation on Environmental Movement in Europe and its impact on golf courses. Ken gave a great insight into the work being carried out at Loch Lomond. The golf club is also situated in a National Park, which was quite interesting as Canadian Club, Banff, is also being a National Park, so it tied in with Steve's sustainability in golf nicely.

My turn had come around and I had decided my presentation would also focus on sustainability

in golf - 'Is it possible at a commercial venue?' - The feasibility of implementing Steve and Ken's goals, as a Course Manager at a commercial venue. I suggested that trying to go down this route is a long term project and not to be taken lightly. You need your club support and I suggested that as long as we greenkeepers employ good practices we should be ok. I call it good greenkeeping practice, sensible management and achieving the very best at our venues with the resources available.

The Canadian audience received the talks very well. The issue and the impact a golf course's presence has on it is also filtering into their subject matter.

Closing keynote address speech on rankings, 'The top 100 golf clubs in Canada' and issues relating to that within the industry. It was another interesting presentation with background on how the course rankings are put together over there. Very similar to the UK and some of the pressures and issues clubs have with how they are rated.

As the week drew to its close, with its impressive dinner, I felt the environment, coupled with maintaining a high standard at our golf clubs, is an issue set to continue through 2008 and is a challenge that faces us all.

To conclude, the Conference was a great experience and an event to which I would not hesitate in returning. I could sense from my visit the high regard in which BIGGA is held and the Canadians were fantastic hosts. On a professional level I took a lot away from the week.

Back home, we have had a good end to February weather-wise and a dry, cold start to March, although as I write we are experiencing some of worst winds and storms of the winter. The rest of March forecast is unsettled but hopefully we will be able to finish our work programmes. Although with a very early Easter weekend, and two Bank Holidays, we will feel the impact of this in terms of staff holidays. If we get some good, dry weather, golfer expectations will be high and maybe a good month in front of our expectations for turf conditions.

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