

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.

