



Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

- Harrogate Week 2008
- Rotary Mowers
- Meet the Chairman
- Course Feature – Remedy Oak GC

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FEBRUARY | 2008



HARROGATE WEEK 2008
REVIEW INSIDE

Excellence is par for the course!



"We have been very pleased by the establishment of the Johnsons Sports Seed mixtures throughout the course, and the fact that we are continuing to see an increase in the fine fescue component of the sward."

Mr Craig Gilholm
Head Greenkeeper

Royal Liverpool Golf Club
Mixture used J Fescue



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Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £47 per year, Europe and Eire £60. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

ISSN: 0961-6977

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Scott MacCallum butchers Shakespeare just to get a heading for his Harrogate Week review



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



Lucky Number 13

On Sunday, January 20, I drove into the car park of the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate, around 6 o'clock in the evening for the 13th year in succession. I witnessed the ribbon cutting which heralds the opening of the Show for the 13th time in a row and attended the BIGGA AGM, again for the 13th time. I let my hair down at the banquet again for the 13th time.

Now I'm not superstitious, but if I were I'd certainly rid my mind of any thought that 13 is an unlucky number.

Harrogate Week 2008 was what we hoped it would be. A celebration of all things fine turf, with sparkling new machinery on show; the latest developments in agronomic advances showcased and valuable educational opportunities being offered, and more importantly taken up, by turf professionals from all over the world.

The weather may have been a little unkind, particularly at the beginning of the week when everyone was setting up, and the GCSAA Show followed immediately on from our week for the first time in a number of years, but the Harrogate Week attendance figures reflected the fact that people genuinely feel they must be there. To not have been would leave them open to missing out on something. The final attendance figure for the three days was 8,641, almost 2,000 up on 2007 and 900 up on 2006.

At a time when the world economy is uncertain, and golf couldn't claim to be booming, it is a credit to the positive nature of greenkeepers, and their desire to keep on top of the job in any way they see fit, that they supported their show in such numbers.

We know that it's expensive to attend – hotel prices only head in one direction and I broke a personal record this year by paying over £10 for one drink! – but there is no avoiding that unfortunately. Harrogate is not out of step with other such venues while wherever there is a conference centre there are hotels which set their prices accordingly.

However, I do know that the price BIGGA charges for its education, whether it be workshops or seminars, is extremely inexpensive (I'd never use the word cheap) when compared with that on offer in other industries. And not just a little bit less expensive, considerably less so. BIGGA runs its education at a heavily subsidised level thanks to the continuing support of the BIGGA Golden and Silver Key programme, supported by the industry, and you'll not find the quality and broad range of BIGGA education matched anywhere.

For that reason I hope that golf clubs continue to find a way to send their staff, even if it is a day trip, so that they can take part, learn and develop.

Now, I'm going to make sure that the number 13 features large in whatever I'm going to be doing – lottery, roulette, bingo, the gee ges... But, as I said, I'm not superstitious!

RAISING THE PROFILE OF GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The R&A has promoted Steve Isaac to the position of Director - Golf Course Management to reflect the importance placed by The R&A on environmental issues and sustainable course development and maintenance. The promotion also highlights the increasing reach and scale of The R&A Golf Course Committee's work.

Steve has been instrumental in delivering The R&A's golf course management policy, which reflects the organisation's belief that golf courses throughout the world should present themselves in the best possible condition and work to the highest ecological and environmental standards.

Since his appointment in 2003, his work has centred around developing management strategy guidance for sustainable golf courses, with particular focus on the use of water, fertilisers and chemicals, climate change, appropriate turfgrass selection and the planning of new courses.



Steve Isaac, 46, gained a BSc (Hons) in applied biology from Liverpool Polytechnic in 1983. Before joining The R&A, he worked as an agronomist for 17 years at the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI).

SCOTTISH REGION CONFERENCE

The 2008 BIGGA Scottish Region Conference will take place at the Business Learning Centre, Carnegie College, (formerly Lauder College), Dunfermline on Tuesday 4 March, 2008.

This year's speakers include Gerry Byrne, Resort Superintendent, The K Club, Ireland, Jonathan Smith, Chief Executive, Golf Environment Europe and Archie Stewart, Landmaps Ltd. Other speakers include, from America Ron Alexander, Ron Alexander Associates, Allan Patterson, Head Greenkeeper, The Castle Course, St. Andrews Links Trust and, finally, Gordon Holms, CSC Amenity.

Tickets cost £34, which includes Tea/Coffee on arrival, coffee/pastry at the mid morning break and buffet lunch.

Full details and booking forms will be posted to all members in Scotland and further forms can be obtained by contacting Peter J.Boyd, Regional Administrator on Tel 0141 616 3440 or pj.boyd@btinternet.com

OBITUARY

Glenn Bray - 1944 to 2008

Glenn Bray, Chairman and Customer Services Director for Lloyds & Company Letchworth Ltd, died suddenly on Sunday 20th January 2008 from a heart attack while at home.

Glenn had worked for Lloyds for over 45 years. He started work with the company aged just 16. His first job in the company was that of office junior in the sales department which was followed by various roles within the company including warehouse manager before moving to the board and taking up the role of customer services director, a role he held for some 20 years until his untimely death.

In his youth outside of work Glenn was a keen amateur footballer from which he later went into refereeing, but his first passion was music. Having collected records since a teenager Glenn's heroes included Roy Orbison and Willie Nelson. His other passion was his dogs with which he enjoyed walking and holidaying in the West Country. Clive Nottingham, Managing Director of Lloyds, said "Glenn had worked at Lloyds for so many years that he was known by many not just as a colleague but as a friend as well, he will be sadly missed."

Clive Nottingham

NEW HEAD PRO

Simon Fowler has joined Merrist Wood Golf Club near Guildford as the new Head Golf Professional. The 36-year-old from Fleet, in Hampshire, spent eight years as Assistant Director of Golf at Merrist Wood's sister club, Pine Ridge Golf Club in Camberley, before joining the team. Having first taken up golf at the age of 10, Simon turned pro at 20 and his impressive CV includes four years at Pachesham Park Golf Course and four years at Camberley Heath Golf Club.

He said: "My move to Merrist Wood is an opportunity to continue to develop golfing talent, and as I get to know the members at the club I will be encouraging everyone to tell me all about their golfing goals.

"Merrist Wood is a thriving club and I'm thrilled to be playing an active part in both the sporting and the social opportunities it provides."

WIMBLEDON'S EDDIE SEAWARD AWARDED MBE

Eddie Seaward, Head Groundsman at the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, Wimbledon, has been awarded an MBE for services to sport in the New Year Honours List.

After 48 years as a ground professional – the last 17 years as Head Groundsman at Wimbledon – Eddie oversees the preparation and maintenance of 41 grass and nine hard courts at the world renowned stadium, and in recent years has played a key role in the much-publicised multi-million pound redevelopment of its Centre Court.

"I am of course deeply honoured to be receiving an MBE – it's a very proud occasion for me and my family. But the award also effectively acknowledges the professionalism of the team that I have around me at Wimbledon and, in many ways, it is also public recognition of the role of groundsmanship in the widest sense," said Eddie.



BIGGA SCOTTISH REGION PATRON'S AWARD

Once again we hosted our Annual Patrons Award and Lunch at the Terraces Hotel, Stirling on Thursday 6 December, 2007.

Our Vice Chairman John Geddes was the Master of Ceremonies and ensured that everything ran smoothly. He introduced our speaker Leslie G. Peters, a regular on the after dinner/lunch circuit who was a most entertaining and lively speaker.



With the support of the Patrons of the Scottish Region, we are able to send 10 members of the Association to Harrogate for three days to enjoy the Show and to attend the Seminars that are on offer during the week. They also receive a book as part of their award.

The following members were the Patron Award winners; John Wilson, Irvine GC, George Morrison, Largs GC, George Pendrich, Student (Formerly Gleneagles Hotel), Alan Sharp, Scotsraig GC, Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhall GC, Gary White, Baberton GC, Niall Bruce, Montrose GC, William Craig, Kirriemuir GC, Michael Maxton, East Kilbride GC and finally Barry McCulloch, Whitecraigs GC.

The lunch also gives us a chance to thank our Patrons for their generous support of the Association in Scotland, not only for the Patrons Award trip, but for the many other events they support in Scotland. Their sponsorship is greatly appreciated.

Next year's lunch will be on Thursday, 4 December, 2008.

*Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator*

ARE YOU IN CONTROL OF STAFF TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT?

Vocational qualifications for employers and greenkeepers are now recognised internationally since the GTC introduced the programmes 13 years ago.

David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, is now advising Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers that their role as work based trainers and assessors is a 12-month position and not just seasonal.

David explains: "A system supposedly driven by industry for industry has not been without its difficulties and critics, however there is no doubt that the opportunities for employers to develop staff and for greenkeepers to take up formal qualifications for the job they carry out day by day has never been better."

National Standards developed by the industry are at three levels; craft, supervisory and management are now better known as National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications at Levels 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

David continues: "As these qualifications have national accreditation they are offered through Centres, often Further Education colleges in the land-based sector, and attract funding support through various schemes including a Sports Turf route apprenticeship framework.

"So if "we" as a specialist sector have a major input to the National Standards and we have approved centres offering qualifications, how can we improve a system that still seems to leave work-based training open to criticism?

"A major part of my job is to work with the awarding bodies like the Scottish Qualifications Authority and City & Guilds/NPTC and then the centres who offer N/SVQ's in Sports Turf."

The GTC continues to promote assessor training to Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers and in some cases Deputies as it is without doubt they who are best placed and qualified to train, motivate AND assess the trainees registered on a work-based qualification. The introduction of vocational qualifications to the sector was a massive change in policy from the pass/fail examinations, but it is important to ensure the system works in accordance with both the National Standards for Sports Turf AND Assessing.

The culture of on-the-job training is not new to greenkeeping, but the training and assessment planning between the centre, the learner and the assessor at the golf course still needs to be explained and agreed at induction. The training aspects are best delivered at the golf course, the knowledge can be through part-time release to a centre or again can be gained on-the-job by using the nationally agreed learning materials or even on-line, leaving just the assessment. If a person achieved the old D32/33 assessor award they don't have to gain the new A1 qualification. All the chosen centre would need to do through the Internal Verifier is to ensure the person is up-to-date with the assessor standards and centre documentation.

David adds: "I'm assured by centres that while they have their own assessors they rely heavily on Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers to actively be part of the assessment process, however, please play your part to improve the system and if you are not yet an assessor and you have staff registered on a N/SVQ, we can train you."

Golf club employers who have a qualified assessor on site have the added advantage of not needing to release trainee greenkeepers for days of assessment away from work.

"Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers train and assess every day of their working lives and staff development benefits everybody so let us continue to develop on-the-job assessment by making sure it's a naturally occurring activity all the year round." David concludes.

46 YEARS SERVICE

Walter Cole, Head Greenkeeper at Longcliffe Golf Club, near Loughborough, has recently retired after a remarkable 46 years with the club.



Walter Cole (far right)

Walter enjoyed his time at the club and witnessed the greenkeeper's job become ever more demanding bringing with it new challenges. The course has changed its characteristics over the time I've been here and lost its heathland," said Walter at the East Midland Section event held at the course to mark his retirement.

"I arrived at Longcliffe in September 1961 and it was a beautiful heathland course then with only a few patches of thorn here and there while the only trees were the silver birches near to the 6th green and in the woods.

"I know that beauty is in the eye of the beholder but I really did prefer the open, sunlit, dry course with its fine wiry grasses and lovely swathes of heather to the dark, damp (even on sunny days) and shaded course which we have now.

"However it is still a lovely course and I shall miss it," said Walter.

Among the staff he brought through and sent on their way to Course Manager jobs are three well known BIGGA characters, East Midland Chairman and Charnwood Forest Course Manager; Gavin Robson, National Board of Management Member and Burton GC Course Manager, and Past BIGGA Chairman, Richie Barker.

"They used to play some terrible practical jokes on me," laughed Walter, of whom Gavin revealed had never used a strimmer in his life.

"That's right. By the time they'd come in I was a Head Man and it wasn't my job. I do recall Gavin moaning about always having to do the fly mowing and I hear the same moans from his guys now!" he joked.



GCSAI PRESIDENT'S CUP

The sun shone brightly on the Southeast region as they lifted the inaugural GCSAI President's Cup sponsored by Scotts.

The event held at the PGA National Golf Course in Palmerstown Co Kildare was hotly contested with the Southeast beating the Southwest by the narrowest of margins. Colman Warde, Scotts' Sales Manager for Ireland and Nick Martin, UK Sales Manager, were both in attendance to see the action for themselves.

Colman commented: "We were delighted to be associated with this great event and see the competition played so competitively on such a wonderful course. We hope that it will become one of the top social greenkeeping events of the year."



The winning Southeast team

YOUR CHANCE FOR GLORY

JSM Limited, the Toro & Hayter dealer covering the south-east of England, is sponsoring a day five-a-side football tournament to be held on May 28, 2008.

Entry is open to all greenkeeping and grounds care staff working for organisations located in the Company's trading area of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, South London and East Berkshire. The tournament will take the form of 10 minute matches played in four pools, which will generate the four pool winners to move into the semi-finals and then the final where the winners will lift the JSM Cup.

Entries must be in by early April and places will be limited to keep to the four pool format and time frame. The first matches are envisaged to kick-off at around 1pm with the prize giving and barbecue rounding of proceedings at around 5.30pm. More details and entry forms are available from JSM Limited, 0845 026 0061.



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SPRING WORKSHOP

The Devon & Cornwall Section's Spring Workshop will be held at Fingle Glen Golf Club on Wednesday, March 5, 2008.

The aim of the day is to refresh the grey matter on subjects such as sustainability, water and nutrient management, grass breeding and selection.

Guest speakers will include: Andy Cole, STRI; Dr Neil Baldwin, Amega Sciences; Brian Robinson Director of Seed Research and Stephen Denton, Grass Seed Development Manager, both from Rigby Taylor; also Christ of Plant Breeder Top Green Europe.

The cost will be £16 for Section Members and £12 per additional member from same club.

Please invite non-members such as your Chairman, Captain and Secretary etc - the cost of the day for them will be £25.

Please make cheques payable to: BIGGA Devon & Cornwall and return to: Graeme Gallimore, 8 Shilson Terrace, Launceston, PL15 9AP.

Include how many will be attending and from which club. Should you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on: 07782247472 or email: graeme.gallimore@btinternet.com

HILTON TEMPLEPATRICK EVENING

Frank Ainsworth, of Hilton Templepatrick Hotel and Country Club, near Belfast hosted one of his greenkeeper evenings recently and it proved a huge success. Among those invited and talking at the evening were Walter Woods, Jack McMillan Ken Seims and Aiden O'Hara. Frank hosts such an event every couple of years and it gives greenkeepers an opportunity to mix with some of the top names in the industry and share experiences.



BASILDON GOLF COURSE LANDFILL PROTEST

Friends of Basildon Golf Course believe the intended importation of inert landfill threatens both the lungs and arteries of Basildon.

As part of the 'improvement' of Basildon Golf Course, Basildon District Council has approved plans drawn up by 'Jack Barker Golf' to import 120,000 cubic metres of 'inert material' (in phase 1 alone); a large tipper lorry can carry 15 cubic metres so this is the equivalent of 8,000 lorry loads. The landfill will be used to create a driving range and to start the process of creating mounds of earth up to 6 metres (20 feet high) between the fairways, and the Friends of Basildon Golf Course estimate that 167 semi-mature trees will be destroyed in the process. We believe that the total amount of landfill to be imported is 312,000 cubic metres (20,800 lorry loads).

On Monday, January 13, Tilbrook's, solicitors acting for 'Friends of Basildon Golf Course', residents living close to Basildon Golf Course in Essex, issued Judicial Review proceedings at the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London.

Classified as green belt land and within a mile of the town centre, the former farmland was professionally designed as a golf course in 1967 and is well-regarded among golfers. The land forms part of the Thames Terrace Ridge stretching from Vange to Langdon Hills which is treasured by conservationists because of its natural beauty and diverse wildlife.



John Toplis, Secretary of Friends of Basildon Golf Course, said that he had researched the activities of the developer, Jack Barker Golf, in other parts of the Country and found that planning permission for 'improvements' at several other golf courses had been refused.

Lead campaigner and Chairman of the Friends of Basildon Golf Course, local resident Mick Toomer, said: 'This is nothing more than a landfill operation thinly disguised as golf course improvements. If it goes ahead the dust will pose a serious health risk to local residents many of whom are elderly and already have respiratory problems. Worst still those who voted to inflict this on such a vulnerable community are Basildon District Council Councillors, the very people who should be working to protect them.'

Detailed background information can be found at www.basildongolfcourseelp.com



ATTRACTING THE GOLFER

David Golding, GTC's Education Director encourages all Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers to "prepare their cases" for the new golfing season....

While we at the GTC work with our representative bodies to encourage golf club employers to appoint competent qualified staff to manage the golf course, we must also ensure training courses are available to provide the skills so vital in today's business world of attracting golfers to your course.

Short courses should be oversubscribed around the country when the training providers organise courses to cover all the important aspects of managing the golf course, but sadly I still hear that courses are being cancelled due to lack of support.

I find this a very worrying sign, especially as the majority of golf clubs are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and/or retain members and to attract the important additional income from the visiting golfer.

I am sorry for repeating the fact that the GTC will continue to promote supervisory and management training but this has been a priority for the sector for many years and while the maintenance skills are almost a daily part of the routine of a Course Managers work, we must support the specialist training for them to prepare the case to the owner/committee, Chairmen/women for the resources required to maintain the course to the highest standard possible.

In my experience very few Committee Chairs actually purchase equipment and materials without direction from the Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper. It is usually the other way round and this is where a competent Course Manager is such an asset to the business - research products, machinery etc and make the case for all major purchases adding value to the golf course both in the short and long term.

The financing of such equipment will be a crucial factor and this is where the trade can assist with the presentation of the case for...

I know for many this is basic presentation skills however I do still hear and read where greenkeepers are so frustrated that their club won't provide new working facilities or equipment even when there are major health and safety issues both for the employers and employees.

There has to be a partnership approach between the club and the Course Manager and this is where the Home Unions through seminars and workshops will continue to promote best practice in maintaining and managing golf courses.

We know there are some excellent examples of the partnership approach and often these double-acts will be spot lighted to show just how progress can be made without the whole membership having to be involved in the decision of whether to engage an apprentice or to purchase a new piece of equipment.

Obviously major purchases or course alterations will require discussions

at the highest levels, but should all fall within the Course Policy Document.

The key to this is as a Course Manager is do you have the skills to manage?

The GTC has its Provider network of colleges and independent providers (Frank Newberry, Brin Bendon et al) and with BIGGA still support funding specialist courses to cover all the supervisory and management skills, be prepared to put your case forward.

From my own experience as a Course Manager it often appears "we" want the equipment for use on our own back garden and not to improve the golf course for the benefit of the golfer.

I think the trick is to prepare the case in a manner that the owner/ committee views, as "we cannot afford not to agree to the Course Managers recommendations!"

This is where a good Chairman/Convenor or Secretary Manager can also be the key partner in the presentation "party".

I also appreciate that preparing cases very often involves early planning for the budget rounds within a club or business, but again with training this can become another vital skill in the armoury of the modern Course Managers arsenal.

The GTC, as previously mentioned, is also about ensuring education and training advice is available to both employers and greenkeepers and to work with those providers who understand the requirements of our specialist sector.



For more information on the work of the GTC please visit the GTC website: www.the-gtc.co.uk or direct on Tel: 01347 838640 or email golf@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC is supported by:





Industry Update

NEW HAND-ARM VIBRATION REPORT

Echo have released a new issue of their hand-arm vibration report, based on comprehensive tests of the full range of Echo power tools. The report shows the vibration levels measured on each tool with a low frequency weighting filter applied (as specified in the British Standards) which quantifies the relative importance of different frequencies and corresponds to the way vibration is imparted into the hands and causes damage.

The tests were conducted by the Industrial Noise and Vibration Centre Ltd under laboratory conditions, and were made in three orthogonal directions using an accelerometer attached directly to the handle of the products, as close as possible to the operator's hand.

The measured vibration for each tool in all three directions is presented in the report. The frequency weighted RMS vibration $a_{h,w}$ is representative of continuous ("finger on trigger") tool operation.

The daily usage limit presented in the report for single tool operation is based on not exceeding a vector sum action level of $2.5m/s^2 - 5m/s^2$ in an eight hour day, with no other exposure to high vibration.



Results of the tests have highlighted a number of Echo products which have particularly low vibration levels. These include the new HCR-161ES Hedgecutter with a vibration figure of just $2.6m/s^2$ and the new SRM-265ESU brushcutter with a vibration figure of just $1.9m/s^2$.

The Echo Hand-Arm Vibration Report is available on request, call 0870 4055574 or email sales@echo-tools.com for a copy.

GOING TO WORK AT OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP VENUE

A Tycrop MH-400 materials handler/top dresser has been added to the machinery fleet at Royal Birkdale Golf Club with the aim of bringing long-term benefits to the Lancashire links course. Its first major task is to assist course manager, Chris Whittle, in his preparations for the 2008 British Open Championship, taking place at Royal Birkdale from 17 to 20 July.

Supplied by Turfmech Machinery through local sales and service dealer, Turner Groundscare, the MH-400 was selected by Chris for its ability to apply top dressings quickly and evenly across large areas with minimal surface marking.

"We are aiming to further increase the firmness of all fairways ahead of the Open Championship and needed a suitable machine able to apply effectively the selected medium sand top dressings," explained Chris. "I knew that Paul Smith, head greenkeeper at Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, had been using an MH-400 for a number of years so I phoned and asked for his opinion. He told me that the machine was not only an excellent top dresser, but its other capabilities had totally revolutionised the way that materials are moved and handled on the golf course."

Following Paul's recommendation, Chris Whittle arranged with Turfmech a demonstration of the MH-400. Carried out in October, it took less than 30 minutes to convince Chris that the machine was right for the job.

"First and foremost, it did the principal task that we wanted it for really well," he commented. "Spread pattern is very even and both the application rate and bout width can be altered easily. I also like the machine's walking-beam suspension which keeps all four wheels firmly on the ground across undulations and the fact that it can be used as a bulk re-loader of greens top dressers out on the course. Materials are offloaded quickly and cleanly from the MH-400 using a combination of moving belt floor and hydraulically-raised rear end."

Delivered to Royal Birkdale in early November, the MH-400 was in top-dressing action the same day, completing all 18 fairways in a little over two days. "The speed and accuracy of the machine have to be seen to be believed," said Chris. "All the signs show that the dressings are having the required effect and further applications are now planned in the spring ahead of the Open Championship. From my standpoint, the machine does everything that is claimed for it and you cannot ask for more than that."

EUROPEAN LAUNCH

John Deere has announced the expansion of John Deere Golf Irrigation into Europe for the first time. The company has been providing water management products and solutions in the USA since 2006.

From early 2008, a comprehensive line of state-of-the art John Deere golf irrigation heads, rotors, valves, internal replacement assemblies and accessories will be available through selected John Deere dealers across the EAME region (Europe, Africa and the Middle East). The new range will be featured on the John Deere stand at Harrogate Week.

"We are very pleased to offer this new product line to our golf and turf customers," says David Thorne, John Deere's EAME sales & marketing director. "Up to now, customers in this region of the world have been offered a limited range of competitive irrigation products and solutions."

"Coupled with John Deere's industry leading equipment and dealer parts and service support, this announcement gives us the ability to provide truly unique and comprehensive solutions for golf and turf industry professionals. As the official golf course equipment supplier to the PGA Tour and the Ladies European Tour, John Deere can be trusted to provide greenkeepers with the tournament level quality needed on today's golf courses."

GREENS SWEEPER PROVES IDEAL FOR CLEANING AND RENOVATING

An important new application has been found for Turfmech's SQRL walk-behind green sweeper.

Extending the SQRL's primary function of collecting and removing hollow cores, scarified material and other debris from fine turf is the ability to pick up soil and vegetation from synthetic golf and practice tees to leave a clean and neatly groomed surface.

The SQRL's additional capabilities were uncovered by Graeme Clarkson, head greenkeeper at the Worcestershire Golf Club, an 18-hole parkland course laid out in the lee of the Malvern Hills.

"We purchased the SQRL originally to mechanise greens' clean-up after the Graden scarifier-aerator had done its work," explained Graeme. "Used for the first time last autumn, the SQRL did a first-class job, saving us a great deal of time and effort in getting the greens quickly back into play. When the work was completed, the machine was put away with no thought that it would be back in action again within six weeks."

The synthetic surfaces benefiting from SQRL treatments are winter tees installed in mid 2007 on the club's three par-3 holes. Commissioned by the Worcestershire to help take the pressure off natural grass, the tees were constructed using a high quality all-weather turf with a high fibre density able to accept a tee peg without the need for a filler. Brought into play in late October, the tees were starting to suffer from a build-up of mud and grass clippings being walked onto the surface by golfers during periods of wet and frosty weather.

"The staff did their best to clean the surface with a hard brush and back-pack blower, but the appearance of the tees was starting to draw adverse comments from members," commented Graeme. "The club was on the point of asking the supplier for advice when I suggested using the SQRL to clean-up and refurbish the pile. The results were superb, with each tee being restored to an as-new finish in less than 10 minutes."

EXPERTS COMBINE

A specialist aeration company and the landscape design section of a well-known group of garden centres have joined forces to ensure that homeowners get the best from their gardens.



Nick Mansell, Project Manager for Notcutts Design and right - Steve Oates of Terrain Aeration working with the Arforce Tracker

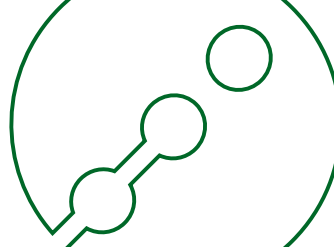
Terrain Aeration, the one metre deep, compressed air de-compaction experts, often called upon to treat badly drained, waterlogged lawns have been giving customers grass after care advice for many years. But following a recent contract for Notcutts Design, (the landscaping and design wing of Notcutts Garden Centres) this advice has expanded to include a comprehensive plant guide, pinpointing the right plant for the right situation.

David Green, Terrain Aeration's MD says that not only do homeowners need to know about his company's aeration process, (which breaks up compaction by injecting compressed air one metre below the surface) but also how to care for their lawn after treatment. "As well as cutting regularly, treating the grass for any disease or insect pests, spiking once a month, feeding, weeding and scarifying and top dressing every autumn, we also point out that rainwater from patios, decking and shed roofs should not, if possible, be allowed to run onto the lawn," he says. "If, at the end of the day, the situation is totally unsuitable for growing grass – the garden could be completely over shadowed by the canopy of a mature oak carrying a Tree Preservation Order for example – then the home owner will be better off abandoning his lawn and using suitable plants instead."

Malcolm Veitch, senior designer at Notcutts Design (whose family has been in the landscaping business for over 50 years) says that he is delighted to be providing plant information alongside Terrain Aeration's grass growing advice. "All too often people will plant something totally unsuitable, an exotic for example in a cold, north facing spot and then they're disappointed when it dies," he explains. "What both companies want is people getting the best from their gardens."

Notcutts' "Plants For Specific Situations – Soils And Climate" will be handed to homeowners free of charge alongside Terrain Aeration's "Aftercare Following Airforce Terralift Aeration" lawn care letter, once aeration treatment is complete.

Membership



VANESSA DEPRE, MEMBERSHIP SERVICES OFFICER, UPDATES US ON MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Harrogate week



Thank you to all the members that came to visit the BIGGA Stand at Harrogate Week. It was a great show for Membership and we have lots of new members that will be listed in the magazine next month.

Mechanics Membership

Don't forget that BIGGA now has a category for Mechanics too. BIGGA Mechanics members will receive the same benefits as Greenkeepers except that they will not be able to vote at section level.

If you are working as a mechanic or you know someone who would like to join just give us a ring on 01347 833800 and select option one.

BIGGA Merchandise

BIGGA members and golf clubs with members get 10% discount on all BIGGA clothing. This includes the waterproofs. We have several waterproof suits available in different price ranges.



We can also embroider your clubs logo on the clothing if required. Give us a ring now on 01347 833800 for more information.

Goodbye

I will be leaving BIGGA at the end of February to move back to Belgium. Although my time at BIGGA has been quite short it has also been very sweet.



I have enjoyed every moment and have met some truly amazing people along the way. I would like to thank all the BIGGA staff, Section Secretaries and members for making my time here so enjoyable. I wish you all the best for the future.

BIGGA WELCOMES

SCOTTISH REGION	
William Forsyth	North
Paul Cranston	East
Stuart Adamson	Central
James Atherton	Central
Steven Howie	Central
Craig Berry	Central
Kenneth McAllister	Central
William Swan	Central
Michael Gartshore	Central
NORTHERN REGION	
James Dennett	North Wales
MIDLAND REGION	
Matthew Hatton	East Midland
Paul Wintle	Midland
David Smith	East of England
SOUTH EAST REGION	
Paul Butler	Surrey
Neal Tregaskes	Kent
Mark Bell	Kent
Peter Hawkes	Surrey
SOUTH WEST & WALES	
Mark Wells	South Wales
NORTHERN IRELAND	
Mark Thompson	Northern Ireland
INTERNATIONAL	
William T Green	Overseas
Albert Schwelmer	Overseas
STUDENT	
Karolina Hofferova	Central
Benjamin Vernon	Berks/Bucks & Oxon

Learning & Development

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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



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SAMI COLLINS, HEAD OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES AN UPDATE



As the Rolling Stones sang, "It's All Over Now". Harrogate Week 2008 is just a memory and an air of calm will hopefully begin to descend over the Learning and Development Department. Rachael will be ably holding the Fort, as I'll have done an unlikely impression of Wonder Woman and whirled my way to Orlando and the Golf Industry Show followed by a well-earned week's holiday.

On my return, life in the Learning and Development Department will move up a gear as we start to implement all the ideas and improvements that have been sitting on the shelf since Ken retired and Harrogate Week consumed every working minute.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2008



After months of plotting and planning we finally kicked off Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2008, on Sunday 20 January. Most things went like clockwork and those that didn't, we fixed fast!

The workshops were a great success with reports that the Stress Awareness workshop should be compulsory for everyone – the delegates even got a massage thrown in, so they were very happy. The Introduction to Golf Course Design saw holes being designed with plasticine along with eight foot stickman golfer – perhaps you had to be there to experience that one!

We had great attendance at the Fringe Sessions and have received good feedback on the speakers. Now the fun begins – planning Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2009.

BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

Supported by



Ransomes Jacobsen is once again supporting the BIGGA Higher Education Scholarship Scheme.

All greenkeeper members of BIGGA, in or about to enter higher education could apply for a scholarship. Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. Type of education course
2. If you are a BIGGA Member
3. Number of years as a BIGGA Member
4. Contribution to BIGGA
5. Previous Training and Development
6. If the course contains an environmental module

Applicants should be aware that:

The fund may award scholarships of up to 50% of the cost of the course however, it will typically be capped at £1500.

If you are awarded a Scholarship your name and the course that you are studying will be included on the BIGGA Website and in Greenkeeper International.

The first recipient of 2008 is James Billington for an On-Line Foundation Degree in Sportsturf.

Refund of Fees

The Refund of Fees scheme, supported by the Education and Development Fund, enables BIGGA members to claim 80% (up to a maximum of £350) of education and training course costs.

To be eligible for a refund, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a member of BIGGA and have been a member for at least two years.
2. Have paid your own fees and be able to provide proof of payment e.g. receipt/credit card slip or statement.
3. Have completed a course or component part of a course and be able to provide evidence of completion e.g. certificate/end of course report etc.
4. If you are starting a course in 2008, you may apply for a refund to be paid on course completion as in (3.) above.
5. The course must not be subsidised, already, by BIGGA.
6. The course must be relevant to your job as a greenkeeper e.g. N/SVQ, National Certificate/Diploma, Spraying Courses, First Aid, Engineering, Language courses etc.

Application forms for both the Higher Education Scholarships and Refund of Fees are available on the Education page of the BIGGA website or from the Learning and Development Department.

Learning & Development

MANAGING TURF DISEASE THROUGH EFFECTIVE ITM

By Simon Elsworth

An outbreak of turf disease can ruin all the hard work put into preparing the playing surface for any sporting event. Integrated Turf Management (ITM) has an essential role in countering turf disease, through a carefully controlled combination of nutrition, irrigation and maintenance.

Some turf managers and agronomists refer to ITM as an “Art”, inferring a level of mystery with little science or technical skill involved. In reality, it takes a greater level of knowledge of all the facets of turf management, and a better understanding of the way they interact – combined with the best practical know-how of the turf manager – to make ITM work effectively.

Turf disease problems are undoubtedly on the increase for all turf managers: Earlier disease attacks; More aggressive pathogens; New disease appearing; Longer periods of disease attack.

Turf disease issues are being exacerbated by: Climate change; Environmental pressures reducing managers’ options; Player demand for ever higher quality turf.

The fact is turf quality judged as fine by players 10 years ago, would be deemed unacceptable by many today. The pressures placed on turf – and those responsible for its management – have increased accordingly.

THE TURF DISEASE TRIANGLE



The incidence of turf disease will be affected by: Environmental conditions, Disease pathogens present, The type of turf - All three factors must be present and, with an ITM plan, turf managers must decide which of the factors they can successfully influence to redress problems more effectively, and where the role of fungicides can be most effectively employed to minimise the impact on turf quality.

THE ENVIRONMENT

If environmental conditions are not suitable disease development will be slower, or may cease altogether. Managers must also recognise turf stress brought on by environmental conditions, such as drought or water logging, can also make turf more susceptible to disease attack.

The weather is the primary factor in the equation and, for the most part, is outside the turf managers’ influence. However, modern weather forecasting can predict when disease will strike and can enable managers to tailor turf management programmes to prevent damage. www.greencast.co.uk gives local disease forecasts and weather information to support the implementation of an ITM plan.

Furthermore, there are management practices that will influence the local environmental conditions and may, where practical, be adjusted by turf managers: Irrigation, Drainage, Turf nutrition, Mowing height, Maintenance programmes.

Recognising where there are environmental weaknesses can help predict where disease may be a greater problem, such as a shaded green that lies damp for most of the day will be more susceptible to Fusarium Patch, for example. Although it may not be practical to cut back surrounding trees, it may be a focus for remedial drainage work, to sweep off dew first each morning and to treat as a priority with a preventative fungicide if disease is forecast.

Turf managers do also need to understand the environmental conditions that favour each individual turf disease pathogen. Alleviating the conditions conducive to Fusarium, for example, may make the turf more susceptible to Anthracnose.

THE DISEASE PATHOGENS

Detailed analysis of most fine turf situations will reveal many of the primary disease pathogens are already present in the thatch or basal leaves – awaiting the right conditions to break out. The role of ITM is to minimise those conditions.

However, disease can also spread from outside sources. Domestic lawns, roadside verges and untreated amenity grass areas can all give rise to aerial infections.

Effective use of fungicide programmes will assure high quality turf in the short term by suppressing the disease pathogens. It will also reduce the

disease pressure and the sources of inoculum to enable ITM practices to work more effectively in the long term.

For effective treatment, turf managers must be able to identify the target pathogen and understand the best route for its control – both in the selection of the appropriate fungicide and its application timing, as well as the optimum ITM solutions.

THE TURF

The composition of the turf – in terms of grass species and variety – is a key factor in the susceptibility to disease. However, disease is only one element of turf management, and other attributes of the turf use will be the primary factors in selection. In the short term, it will be a matter of managing the turf that is there, although in the longer term it may be possible to change the composition of turf through seed and management.

In most cases bents and fescues provide the most consistent surfaces and the inherent disease and stress resistance will have an important role in maximising the success of ITM strategies. While they have proven difficult to maintain at the low cutting heights required to achieve satisfactory ball speed on many soil types, the advent of the PGR to achieve better quality turf at raised cutting height could further extend the attraction of fescues and bent turf.

Poa annua is found in many fine turf situations and, with the right management, can produce outstanding quality playing surfaces. However, *Poa* is generally far more susceptible to disease attack, which can be made worse with heavy play and low cutting height.

Rye-grass provides the most hard-wearing, resilient sports turf surface of immense value in an ITM regime, but has traditionally proven difficult to create a high quality tight-cut surface. New varieties, which can be cut down to 5mm, may increase the attractiveness, but will still require intensive management and nutrition to maintain quality.

FUNGICIDE ROLE

ITM can minimise the effects of disease, but in many practical situations it cannot eliminate the problem sufficiently to maintain high quality turf all year round.

Fungicides remain a key component of turf disease control within an ITM programme. A good ITM plan will, however, help to achieve the best results from any fungicide application, as well as extending the length of time of protection – which could help to reduce the total number of fungicide applications required over the course of the season.

The key elements of fungicide selection are product choice and application timing. For product choice, the aim is obviously to select a fungicide that will give good control of the primary target pathogen. Secondly, since there will be a number of pathogens present at lower levels, an effective broad spectrum fungicide will help reduce the level of other diseases. An application in July where Anthracnose is a problem, for example, may also control Take-all, Leaf Spot, Brown Patch, Rust and Fairy Ring that may occur at the same time, as well as reducing any Fusarium Patch that could flare up when conditions turn cool and wet in the autumn.

More recently, with the advent of more effective preventative fungicides, ITM plans have begun to look at fungicide application prior to disease symptoms breaking out, which can provide better results from lower inputs of modern products with lower environmental impact, and avoid issues of visible damage.

Utilising the knowledge of how different fungicides physically work on the developing fungicide pathogen, STRI trials have shown the best turf quality can be maintained by well-timed applications after disease has landed on the turf leaf, but before it has had the chance to germinate and penetrate into the plant. Later applications still have curative activity and will stop disease sporulating and spreading, but prevention is better than cure.

ROTATION, ROTATION, ROTATION

An effective ITM fungicide plan must also include provision for fungicide rotation, using products with different modes of action to minimise the risk of disease developing resistance to any one group of fungicides. If a pathogen population begins to build up resistance to a dicaboximide fungicide, for example, switching to a demethylation inhibitor (DMI) would still offer complete control. The STRI (www.stri.co.uk) provides a valuable list of product groups and activity to minimise risk of resistance developing.

HOW DO YOU MAKE AN ITM PLAN?

Site assessment – Identifying what pests and disease are likely to pose a threat and where the risk is highest. Create a map of high risk situations.

Set thresholds – Decide what level of pest or disease damage is acceptable to managers and players, and when action will be required.

Identify management options – Look at all available options, including cultural, biological, genetic and chemical. How should each one be used and to what degree?

Build pest profiles – Record outbreaks on your turf area: type of disease; conditions that favour it; treatments to control etc. Accurate identification of pests and disease is essential to put in place the right plans.

Create a proactive turf management plan – How you are going to treat the problem. Record work carried out to control the pests and disease.

Evaluation – monitor the results and continue to update the plan: did the treatments work?; can anything else be done to improve conditions in future?

Simon Elsworth is Head of Syngenta Professional Products for the UK and Ireland, including development of the specialist turf business and the web-based decision support system for turf managers, www.greencast.co.uk



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ROTARY MOWERS: EVOLUTION IMPROVES THE BREED

By James de Havilland

At one time, the rough started where the fairway ended. Now there are semi-roughs or intermediate roughs and non-fairway areas that are mown to a standard that would have passed muster as a fairway not so long ago. How these areas are mown will obviously depend a great deal on resources and how the course is managed. For some, a rotary mower is the ideal tool.

There is no point getting tangled in the debate over cylinder versus rotary mowing for rough areas or tees and green surround either for that matter. Off fairway mowing will have so many variables that making blanket comments is pointless. What cannot be denied is that rotary mowers have evolved; there are a range of models that can consistently produce a good, clump free finish to suit differing demands and applications.

This development has certainly helped many courses bring semi-rough and rough areas up to the standards that the modern game demands, in some cases helping to tame areas to the point where a cylinder machine has subsequently taken over. The key issue is that there is a mower choice to suit pretty much every demand.

There are some interesting rotary models to consider too. The Toro Groundsmaster 3500-D is offered with the now well established Sidewinder cutting system. This enables the three decks, offered in a choice of 68" or 72" overall widths, to be offset by up to 24" to either side of the mower.

For those unfamiliar with the system, key advantages include being able to mow up close to the edge of a bunker without the weight of the mower compromising the wall or using the offset to alter wheelings each time an area is mown.

John Deere has a different take on moving decks with its all-new 7400 TerrainCut. Offering a nominal width of 74" from its three 27" decks, the two outer decks are mounted to allow them to be drawn in to reduce the cut width to 68". The idea is that this will increase the overlap with the central deck, eliminating the chance of inter-deck misses over large undulations. Courses built on former agricultural land with ridge and furrow areas may well want to give this machine a try. It is designed to hug awkward terrain when necessary but expand out to its full width on level ground.

This is not the only trick up the sleeve of this thoughtfully designed mower. The JD 7400 system also allows either of the outer decks to be pushed out up to 15" from the standard working width. Like the Toro

Sidewinder, this allows close mowing up to a bunker edge or around a tree. The difference is that the other two decks remain in place. According to Deere this can help ensure the mower remains stable when working on a steep bank.

John Deere has also replaced its established 3245 C five 21" deck model with the new JD 8800. Fitted with an all-new power unit as used on the new JD8500 and JD8700 fairway cylinder models, the new model number matches up with its 88" mowing width. The five spun cast decks are of a similar design to those used on the JD 7400, their narrow 21" width enabling them to follow ground contours for a clean cut.

Jacobsen also take this rotary sector seriously, the company having at least eight ride-on models to choose from. These include the 192" HR 9016 with its potential to mow 16.5 acres/hour (6.7ha/hr) at the productivity end. The AR250, with its five 22" side-discharge or mulching units, has a still wide 88" cut and the rear rollers leave a good striped finish.

The Jacobsen AR5 has a slightly greater operating width at 90" and a different style of deck designed for mulching with a rear flap for rear discharge if required. This model will deliver a finish good enough for surrounds and intermediate roughs, the three deck AR3 suiting tee surrounds and around bunkers.

It is interesting to take a look at the decks on offer. Turn them over and take a look and it is clear that there is more to a rotary than just its blade. Even these vary in design. The Contour Plus rotary decks fitted by Toro to its Groundsmaster 3500, 4500 and 4700 models, for example, have air pockets in the deck that help draw the grass up so it is evenly cut. This is said to help in wet conditions.

Match contour hugging with carefully designed systems to help reduce the risk of scalping, and it is clear a modern rotary can help produce a good, even finish. Modern decks also have greatly enhanced clipping control, reducing the risk of clumps, even when mowing in less than ideal conditions.

For some, a rotary mower will never be anything other than a glorified brushcutter. For others, a rotary mower is the tool to keep a course consistent, with few penalties for members whose balls stray a few feet of the fairway. There are no definitive answers when it comes to mowing, but few will argue that maintaining consistency is easier if the right tools are available.





Powered by a 36hp turbocharged diesel, the all-new John Deere TerrainCut has three 27" decks. The 'Width on Demand' system enables the mowing width to be set at the standard 74" on level ground or reduced to a narrower 68". This will allow undulating ground to be mown with no fear of inter deck misses. All three wheels are powered to optimise traction



The controls on the John Deere 7400 are extremely simple. All it takes to adjust the mowing width or push out an outer unit is the touch of a button. The mower is a joy to use, with low noise and vibration levels



As demonstrated by this Jacobsen AR3, ride-on access to difficult to access areas is a key rotary mower strength. This particular model is purpose designed for this type of work, three-wheel drive and a pokey 33hp diesel combining traction and power



Jacobsen offer huge rotary model choice, the pictured HR 6010 having a 60hp power unit and mowing width of 116" or 127". Designed for tough rough mowing, the HR 6010 is just one of the company's offerings. Those seeking a finish good enough for intermediate roughs and the surrounds of greens and tee should consider the 90" Jacobsen AR5

Jeff Anguige, Toro's UK sales manager, suggests US golf equipment manufacturers have responded to the demands for rotaries that meet the UK's diverse weather patterns.

"Toro Groundsmaster rotaries are designed to work in all weather conditions", he says.

"Though every course is different and subject to a variety of conditions, our rotary mowers cope successfully and consistently achieve a quality finish. The Groundsmaster range has different blade options, including atomic blades. Unique to Toro, these give a superior finish and provide better grass dispersal through the large rear-discharge aperture. The optional recycling accessory also allows the operator total control over how cuttings are dispersed. A modern Toro rotary is designed to cope with the wide range of summer conditions prevalent in the UK and Ireland."

These sentiments are echoed by John Deere and Jacobsen. A modern rotary mower should deliver a good finish in less than ideal conditions, with modern designs including those that can mulch or rear discharge according to end user needs.



The Toro 3500-D with Sidewinder is a well proven design, its decks delivering a good finish. The ability of this model to work close to a bunker wall, hedge or tree adds to its versatility



MEET THE CHAIRMAN

Kenny MacKay is an ambitious, driven man and as Scott MacCallum found out he will be giving his year as Chairman his full attention

If BIGGA's new Chairman invests just a fraction of the commitment and energy on Association business that he has used in his own greenkeeping career, you can be sure the future is in good hands.

Kenny MacKay doesn't stand still, not for very long anyway. As Director of Golf Courses & Grounds at The Belfry he is used to packing as much into a day as is humanly possible - in modern parlance, going "eyeballs out" then paying for it later.

"I go flat out for about six weeks, then take a holiday when I either sleep or go down with something," he explained, while revealing that he'd been laid low over that Christmas holiday.

But don't go worrying that with such a huge job Kenny will not have the time to devote to BIGGA business over the next 12 months.

"Personally, I think the size of the job here makes it easier to take on the Chairmanship because I have so many more guys on my team than most large staff with team leaders and a structure which makes it easier for me to delegate," he said.

That's not to say Kenny didn't take time to think it over when Billy McMillan called him in November 2006 to ask if he'd consider becoming his Vice Chairman, and in line to become BIGGA's 21st National Chairman.

"I spent a week talking to people before making the decision. Obviously I discussed it with Maria, my wife, first and she said that if I thought I could do it, bearing in mind how busy I was, I should do it. I also spoke with Quinn UK, including Nigel Gray the Operations Director for Quinn UK, who is my direct boss. They felt it was quite a feather in The Belfry's cap as well as my own," said Kenny, who also spoke with Billy and John Pemberton about the time commitment that is required from the Chairman.

Having give the answer in the affirmative Kenny can look forward to what his year as Chairman will have in store.

"I'm a busy type of person anyway and while I feel there will be pressure I do feel I'll handle it. I'll pick and choose the things I'm going to do and know that I won't be able to accept every invitation which comes my way.

"Billy has been a fantastic Chairman, as I knew he would be. I didn't actually do much to stand in for him at all, but that might not be me this year. That's the beauty of a different Chairman as there are many different ways of tackling the role."

Kenny was born in Glasgow and brought up in East Kilbride. A mad keen golfer and footballer he reached a very acceptable standard in each –

playing junior football (the equivalent of lower non-league in England) and being a 2 handicapper at Torrance House Golf Course.

My ambition really was to be a golf pro and with 2 being a decent handicap at the time I could probably have done it. I did speak with John Dunlop, the pro at Torrance House, but there was no real money in it and I just couldn't have afforded to be a pro," said Kenny, whose love of Glasgow Rangers is well known among the greenkeeping fraternity.

With that, he initially became an apprentice welder at Browns, of Cambuslang, but that wasn't to be a long term career as he didn't enjoyed it and left after six months. He then did a variety of jobs and travelled around Europe until he reached his mid 20s when he decided he needed to buckle down.

While doing work for some friends in Bournemouth he found himself working at Queens Park Golf Club, working in the bar and helping out the Head Greenkeeper, Bob Walker, also playing for the scratch golf team.

Greenkeeping appealed to him and, having decided that he'd enjoyed life for long enough and that a career was required, he looked into Elmwood College and signed up for a full time National Certificate.

The six week work placement which accompanied the course was carried out at St Andrews under Eddie Adams and when he finished his course he was fortunate enough to get a job working on the construction and grow-in of The London Club courses – incidentally with his new Vice Chairman and current London Club Courses Manager, Peter Todd.

"I went from Assistant to First Assistant within the space of six months at The London Club and worked there for about four years, during which time I studied for a HNC and HND at Elmwood via distance learning, before I got a great break when I went to Hanbury Manor as Assistant Course Manager. I spent 14 months working under Sylvain Duval before he left and I became Course Manager."

Quite a steep learning curve and all more so when you consider that not long after he took over the English Open came to Hanbury and Kenny had the added responsibility of preparing for a European Tour event.

"Things were certainly happening very quickly – boom, boom, boom, boom – but I really enjoyed the buzz of Tour events."

He did three English Opens at Hanbury and when the tournament moved to the midlands and Forest of Arden, under Marriott, the hotel group which had recently bought Hanbury Manor, Kenny was asked to move to the Forest - in effect, moving with the tournament.

"Once I'd established myself at Forest of Arden I became Group Golf Courses Manager where I oversaw course management at all Marriott courses and assisted the Course Managers in raising standards."

Using a system of agronomic bench marking covering areas grass species, thatch levels etc, developed with agronomist Robert Laycock, Kenny was able to identify areas where improvement at certain courses was not at the expect levels and often the reasons for it and put actions in place to address the issue.

"For example, sometimes you'd see that a thatch level had increased since the previous test and establish that, for instance, the Course Manager had been put under pressure by a Director of Golf or Hotel Manager and aeration had suffered. By presenting the figures we had I could go in and demonstrate that a more intensive aeration programme was needed."

Kenny remained at Forest of Arden and Marriott for another three to four years before he was approached by the new owners of The Belfry,



the Quinn Group, about taking over at the four time Ryder Cup, and multiple Tour event, venue.

It's a huge job. With three 18 hole courses and a desire of both the owners and Kenny himself to take them to a new level of condition presentation and condition there is not a moment to rest. With the Quinn Direct British Masters in September, and live on BBC, those Belfry standards are very much under the microscope.

"One of my strengths is solving issues and putting things in place which are ideal skills for preparing for Tour events and we've done a lot of work since I got here, thanks to the fantastic investment we've had from The Quinn Group,

"Drainage was a big issue on the Brabazon Course, particularly on the front nine and we've worked hard to get the drainage flowing through the site as well as improving the irrigation."

While the Brabazon Course itself has come on leaps and bounds as a golf course, since the Ryder Cup was first played over it in 1985, further improves have recently been made with improved bunkering and a radical change to the 6th hole on which the fairway has been levelled and the green moved behind the lake making it a much more interesting challenge for both pros and the many many visitors and corporate guests who flock to The Belfry.

"We have also changed the strategy for the PGA Course to make it much more of an inland links to The Brabazon's manicured parkland. This means that visitors to the hotel can enjoy a completely different golfing experience if they are playing both courses during their stay."

Kenny and his team are very strong on environmental issues on the golf course and did well in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Scotts, Syngenta and Ransomes Jacobsen last year.

"We do a lot of mulching and saved 50% of our irrigation water reduced our fertiliser inputs while we've take out a large number of trees in the last two years and also planted and moved some specimen trees in strategic areas as part of our woodland management programme - the new hotel which is planned for The Belfry will be the most environmentally

friendly hotel ever built. However I make no bones about the fact that this is a highly manicured golf resort. That's what it is marketed as and that's what it is."

For all that Kenny has risen through the greenkeeping ranks he has not experienced working at a conventional members' golf club.

"Some guys are much better and more experienced in working for committee type clubs. I could be like a fish out of water in that situation whereas I'm suited to more commercial resort venues and I'm aware that people might say that it's alright for me with a staff of 40 while he's only got five. It would be easy to shoot me down and if I were in their shoes I might be saying the same thing. I do believe it's a case of sharing rather than preaching and we can all learn from each other," said Kenny, who puts the passion he has for attention to detail down to his time at The London Club where it was drummed into every member of staff.

As Chairman Kenny has an ambition to increase the membership levels to new heights.

"We have around 6500 members now and I estimate there are around 14-15000 greenkeepers in the country, so I'd love us to have a membership of 10,000 plus. It might take us another five years but I think it can be done and with initiatives of new group memberships and new categories for mechanics, and potentially groundsman in the near future, I'd love to see it," he said, adding that he was also keen to work on the perception among sections of the membership is that the Association is not as open as it could be and also would be very happy to talk to any individual about issues that they have with the Association.

Whatever time he does have outside of his job and, for the next 12 months, BIGGA Kenny enjoys with his family. Maria and he have three children Iain (12), Ruth (10) and Cameron (2) and where he did spend time on his own golf he now follows Iain, who is a good young player, playing on the British Junior Tour and competing at national and hopefully international level.

Kenny is an ambitious guy, whether it be for his career, his Association or his family and you can be sure that within the next 12 months he will work hard to make ambitions become reality.



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IRRIGATION: A TECHNOLOGICAL LEAP

Golf is becoming more sophisticated in every respect. Professional golfers now have their own coaches, personal trainers, sports psychologists, dieticians; golf club manufacturers use technology which is one step up from that employed by NASA on the Space Shuttle while the materials used on golf courses themselves - grass swards, sands, rootzones, chemicals, organic and otherwise, is simply mind boggling if compared to when the game of golf was born and even just a few short decades ago.

So it's no surprise that the field of irrigation has taken such a technological leap in the recent past and is likely to maintain its advance.

Put simply irrigation is the act of watering a plant and in the early days a watering can or hose pipe was the only way of ensuring the turf didn't curl up at the edges.

Things moved on to basic systems which then became automatic with larger clubs employing dedicated irrigation technicians, with other clubs giving a member of staff the added responsibility of being the irrigation man on the team.

Things have now taken a further jump forward with evapotranspiration meters ensuring the correct amount of moisture is returned to the leaf and the ability to operate an irrigation system via internet access from anywhere in the world!

These developments are exciting John Deere who announced their arrival as an irrigation company servicing the UK and Europe, at a press conference in Manheim, Germany, last autumn, having launched in the States in 2006.

"The big issue at the moment is water which has become a very scarce resource and as a result is becoming more and more expensive," said Graham Williams, John Deere's Director of National Accounts and Dealer Development.

"That means that the control of the irrigation system is becoming more and more important while sensing is also uppermost in the minds of greenkeepers."

To highlight the point Graham explained that in Spain currently, water is in such short supply that if a golf club were to run even a basic tees and greens system it would cost the equivalent of £200 a night to irrigate the course.

"So you can see how the costs can mount up."

To counter the cost issues irrigations systems are becoming much more accurate and can now be set to run by the second rather than a minute, as was the case with previous systems.





“Greenkeepers now want to ensure that all they are doing is replacing the moisture which has been burnt off during the course of a day in evapotranspiration, so much more accurate systems are required and it also means that irrigation water is not wasted.”

The other innovation, which will have a major impact on golf course maintenance, is the ability to operate a system via the internet.

A wall mounted control panel as part of a central control system will include a modem which uses similar technology to a mobile phone but just carries data rather than voice and data.



“It means that from any internet link, anywhere in the world, you can log in and operate or set your irrigation system and it is much quicker and less expensive than current remote systems,” explained Graham.

“We recently priced a system in Ireland and discovered that the cost of the GSM card required to operate the modem is around €6 (euro) and with this system you don’t need to buy a pc and a whole bundle of software to make it work. So it’s quite competitive when you think about it.

“And it means that you can be anywhere in the world and if you can get a pc connection to the internet you can take a look at your irrigation system. And not only that if you have a problem, with a password, our dealer or supplier can go in as well,” said Graham, who added that with services centres in Paris, New York and California there is service support for 20 hours of the day.

Couple that ability with sensing systems like a rain gauge or an evapotranspiration meter and the system can be overridden if you’ve set it to go off and there has been an unexpected downpour all day.



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STUDENT LIFE: CAREER PROGRESSION

Starting a student-based series of articles, Melissa Toombs gives a flavour of the courses currently available to Sports Turf students

Now, opting to further your education and widen your horizons can be viewed in two ways - All night parties, copious amounts of alcohol, long lie-ins and a piece of paper at the end of it all telling you you're qualified - OR - A serious lack of funds, having to work part-time, debts, copious amounts of stress and late night study sessions to meet assignment deadlines.

Obviously I'm demonstrating two extremes here, but what with inflation rising quite significantly over the past year and house prices on the increase previous, money can prove to be a huge worry – Even for the laid back potential student.

More and more people are opting to further their education through day-release study, apprenticeships and work-based learning because in these scenarios, with a little bit of hard work, you can actually have your cake and eat it.

WORK-BASED LEARNING

Work Based Learning at Writtle College currently has around 100 young people who are enrolled on apprenticeship schemes with employers throughout the Eastern Counties.

The College can help you find a suitable workplace and arrange your day release training. They will also arrange for a specialist member of staff to visit your workplace to offer guidance and support, as you work your way through your portfolio of evidence.

APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship schemes are designed for school leavers but in some cases it is possible to start at the age of 19. The aim of the apprenticeship is to successfully complete NVQ Level 2, plus Key Skills qualifications, gain work experience and earn a wage.

There are no formal entry requirements but upon application you will need to take a basic skills test. You must be employed and work for a minimum of 30 hours per week. Attendance is usually on a day release basis but because the scheme is based on work circumstances and the

requirements of employers, attendance at College may be as little as one day a month. Every eight to 10 weeks a member of staff will visit you to assess and review your progress. (The successful completion of an Apprenticeship is equivalent to three GCSEs at Grade C.)

You may then choose to return to full-time education and start a National Certificate or National Diploma or continue on to the NVQ Level 3 should your work circumstances allow.

ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIP

The Advanced Apprenticeship is designed for you if you are working towards supervisory or management level at your workplace. The aim of the scheme is to complete an NVQ Level 3, Key Skills and technical certificate. As with the Level 2 apprenticeship certain industries require candidates to complete work-related short courses. Although there are no formal entry qualifications, an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification is recommended. You must also be in full time employment.

College attendance and work place reviews will be the same as a standard apprenticeship.

By successfully completing an Advanced Apprenticeship you will have achieved a standard of training equivalent to three A levels at Grade C or above. This can open the door to Higher Education qualifications such as a Foundation Degree or Degree.

THE INDUSTRY

The Sports Turf industry is a far reaching area for study; much work has already been undertaken by the industry bodies to support students in their studies.

Sports Turf study begins at level 2 for those who wish to develop their skills and knowledge at craft level. Students can choose either the NVQ Level 2 which is for those with at least one years industry experience or the National Certificate. The NVQ is a part time one year course while the National Certificate is two year part time.

CONTENT

Areas of study include: preparation, maintenance and repair; identification of weeds, pests and diseases; machinery/tractor operation and maintenance; improving work practices and relationships; health and safety and the establishment of new turf surfaces and plantings. The National Certificate includes the study of plant and soil science.

SPECIAL FEATURES

All practical tasks are based on current industry practice and techniques. NVQ assessment will be through observation in the work place and the compilation of a portfolio of evidence. National Certificate is college based modular assessment culminating with an on-line (GOLA) test at the end of the course.



WHAT NEXT?

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be well placed to take the next step in your career progression in moving onto the NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Maintenance.

NVQ LEVEL 3

This course is at supervisory level and is best suited to those students employed as 1st Assistant Head Greenkeeper/Groundsmen or working towards this position.

CONTENT

The course deals with: resource acquisition; planning projects; developing and using information systems; developing skills and understanding of staff management; IPM (Integrated Pest Management) systems; creating grassed and planted areas; management and design of irrigation and drainage systems; managing maintenance programmes of turf and planted areas and managing health and safety of staff and clients.



SPECIAL FEATURES

Students enrolled on this course at Writtle College have, in recent years, been involved with large construction projects undertaking the building of three golf greens and surrounding plantings to enhance the area. Development and use of presentation skills to improve speaking abilities is a topic enjoyed by students allowing them to develop their public speaking skills in a safe environment. Discussion on new innovations in the industry is also fundamental to the structure of the course.



WHAT NEXT?

After completion of the Level 3 students are adequately prepared for under-graduate study in the HE sector. Here the student can broaden their understanding and developing their opportunities in the turf industry, getting to grips with the deeper issues of turf culture. The courses available at present are the Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Management, leading to the BSc in Sports Turf Science and Management or a BSc Green Space Management.

INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

If you would like to employ an apprentice, please read the following checklist.

- 1 Can you provide a full range of work experience in your occupational area including some formal 'on the job' training?
- 2 Do you need to train a young person to fill a gap in your workforce or for future expansion of your organisation?
- 3 Does your workplace comply with all current Health and Safety regulations? (Advice can be offered in this area.)
- 4 Do you have current Employers Liability Insurance in place?
- 5 Would you be prepared to let your apprentice attend college and support them in their gathering of evidence?

For further information or to apply for an apprenticeship scheme contact Work Based Learning at Writtle College on 01245 421612.

BIODEGRADABLE STAKES



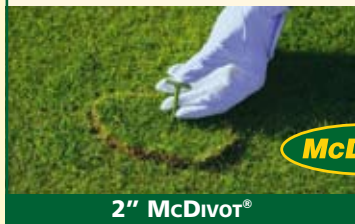
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HOBBIES



Hobbies

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



Name: David Allen

Hobby: Volcano Climbing

Club: Singing Hills Golf Course, Southwick

Position: Assistant Greenkeeper

How and when did you get into volcano climbing?

"I've been interested in volcanos since I was young and I've always enjoyed climbing. When I was 14 I went to Wales with my school and was introduced to rock climbing and mountaineering – I loved it.

"I'd always wanted to travel and Peru had always appealed to me – desert, mountains, volcanos and a beautiful coastline. After being made redundant in 1995 I decided to go travelling for six months around Peru and Equador and it wasn't until I was confronted with a volcano that I thought, this would be different."

What is it about volcano climbing that appeals to you?

"It really wasn't something I had thought about until I did it. To climb right to the edge of a live volcano, look down and see the lava bubbling, is really exciting."

What's the most exciting volcano you have climbed?

"My partner and I went to Java, Indonesia, about a month after Mount Merapi had blown its top. We had hoped to climb it, however we did get quite close to the lava flow but the exclusion zone prevented us from getting as close as we'd have liked.



"As Java has hundreds of volcanos, with 10% of them active at any one time, we ended up climbing Mount Bromo. We managed to get right to the edge and see the lava bubbling. I really enjoyed that."



WIND TURBINES ARE VITAL FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET

By Ian Watson and Robert Hall

Most scientists predict dire consequences if we do not reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The resulting global warming will upset the delicate climate equilibrium and cause havoc during this century. Oil and gas supplies have a finite life. Our previous Governments made a drastic mistake in not investing the profits from our oil and gas wells in developing renewable sources of energy. We will now be faced with having to buy oil and gas when supplies diminish and prices rise.

The Governments of China, India and other developing countries have decided to compete in the global market to bring prosperity to billions of people. They need huge supplies of oil, and gas and coal which is a double whammy rocketing prices and more pollution. Soon the supply of these fossil fuels may not be able to meet the demand.

Golf Clubs, farmers and other land owners could make a real contribution

to reducing our carbon footprint by harnessing the power of the wind. This clean and plentiful source of energy could be our salvation. Scotland is very fortunate in having the highest average wind speed in Europe. Wind turbines are the most reliable and certain ways of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. When the wind blows above 4 m/s the wind turbines start generating electricity. That allows fossil fuel power stations to reduce their output and hence the amount of carbon dioxide emitted to the atmosphere is reduced. If 50 percent of relatively small land owners (golf clubs, farmers, quarries, landfill sites, estates, crofts, etc) installed two 800kW wind turbines in Scotland we would be well on the way to meeting our targets of 10 % of generated energy from renewable sources within the next three years and 20% by 2020. With on shore and off shore wind farms, hydro power, solar energy, wave and tidal power we could integrate with other European countries to form a grid. According to Airtricity Director Chris Veal "If the wind's blowing

strongly in Scotland it may not be blowing strongly in Germany but by linking wind turbine generators into the same grid we hope to achieve a more reliable, predictable source of power “.

We have helped one farmer obtain planning permission for an 800 kW horizontal axis wind turbine in the central belt. It was a prolonged struggle. Environmental Health Officers and Planning Officials work to protocol. The noise rules for large single wind turbines are based on the revised Planning Advice Note PAN45 which is a copy of ETSU R 96. It is 11 decibels more stringent than the PAN56 rules for industrial noise! PAN45 base the noise assessment on back ground sound levels, which as everyone knows, varies from minute to minute, hour to hour, week to week, month to month and season to season. Ten minute recordings of back ground noise could vary by 25 decibels in a 24 hour day. The graphical method of correlating actual sound measurements with wind speed and the specific noise of the wind turbine for wind farms is far too elaborate and expensive for a small number of large wind turbines.

We have submitted a new methodology for wind turbine noise testing and evaluation to Mr. Richard Lochhead MSP, The Scottish Government Minister for the Environment. A much better and more consistent and reliable way of preventing noise nuisance would be to eliminate the need for background sound measurements by zoning all areas into say five noise categories from NC 1 to NC5. NC 1 would be an area of outstanding natural environment with virtually no human made noise. NC5 would be a very industrialised area, or near airfields, motorways or railways. We believe this rational method will be fair for both developers and citizens who wish reasonable and strict control of noise pollution. We are confident that we can convince civil servants and elected representatives that our proposed methodology is infinitely better than the revised PAN45. This will make it possible for golf clubs, farmers and others to obtain planning permission for one, two or three large wind turbines provided the wind turbine noise complies with the NC category. The surplus electricity could be sold to the grid giving golf clubs an additional source of income while making a valuable contribution to saving our planet from a disaster.

There have been planning applications for small wind farms near where we live. There is a very active minority who campaigned against these planning applications. Their spurious statements include the effect of low frequency sound energy on health, noise nuisance, threat to birds of prey and so on. These campaigners were silent while living in relative luxury when most of our electricity was generated by coal fired power stations which spewed out sulphur dioxide and other poisonous gases, killing and making ill children and adults and causing acid rain which blighted vegetation and lowered the PH value of our reservoirs, lochs and rivers with disastrous consequences to angling and the tourist industry. Their real reasons for opposition to wind turbines are because they do not like the look of them and they fail to understand the desperate need for increasing reliance on renewable sources of energy. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. When we see these majestic machines we are filled with admiration at the ingenuity of the Engineers who have devised and developed a means of converting wind power into electrical energy without polluting the environment and without causing the death of children. They have also made a significant contribution to reducing carbon dioxide and global warming.

We have had a sympathetic response from a well known Scottish bank which may consider favourable rates for lending money for such a worthy cause as installing wind turbines. Grants and subsidies may be available to help meet our national targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

The main requirements for installing wind turbines are:

- Reasonably high average wind speeds
- Conveniently situated for connection to the grid
- A location such that noise and flicker would not disturb the neighbours

- Visual impact would not be detrimental to the tourist industry

There are four main ways that golf clubs, farmers and other land owners could benefit financially from installing a small number of large wind turbines:

- Greatly reduced electricity bills
 - By selling surplus electricity to the grid
 - When there is no oil you will still have electrical power
 - Possibly in the future by selling your carbon credits (Refer to “What’s your quota?”)
- OR
- Leasing some land to a wind turbine developer

We need to know how many golf clubs, farmers and small land owners are interested in finding out more about the installation of a small number of large wind turbines. If there is a sufficient number we would have more power to convince the Scottish Government to change the flawed noise rules. This first step is essential to make it possible to obtain planning permission at a reasonable cost and within an acceptable time.

Ian Watson is Proprietor of and Robert Hall Engineer/Acoustician of SNV Consultants. If you are interested in wind turbines and want to help to rectify the noise rules write or email SNV Consultants, 4 Kirkland Avenue, Blanefield, Glasgow G63 9BZ. snvconsultants@btconnect.com

WHAT’S YOUR QUOTA?

Fred Pearce in the New Scientist 17th November 2007

“Much of the carbon dioxide that is warming us today has been in the atmosphere for decades, even centuries. While developed countries only contribute about 50 per cent of emissions today, they are responsible for 80 per cent of the human made £0, that is already there.

“Cutting emissions needs to be done in as fair a way as possible, and since Earth has a limited capacity to absorb CO2, one equitable solution would be to divide the remaining capacity among the world’s population. Many see an idea known as “contraction and convergence” as the best way forward. This idea has been kicking around for more than a decade, but is currently most associated with a British MOO called the Global Commons Institute. If implemented, it will mean that global emissions have to contract overall, while converging on a single per capita figure. Current emissions for a global citizen are about four tonnes of CO2 per year, on average. This figure will ultimately have to drop to below 1 tonne.

“The formula was initially dismissed as hopelessly idealistic, but it is now gaining new credibility. Most recently, the German chancellor Angela Merkel backed the idea of national targets based on per capita emissions. Earlier this year, the UK’s then environment secretary, David Miliband, took the debate one step further. He said that within a decade we could all carry a card that recorded our annual carbon emissions entitlement. Every time we filled up our cars with fuel, booked a flight or made an energy intensive purchase, our card would be debited.

“Sure, the rich would be able to buy their way out of the limits. But they would have to buy the extra carbon credits they needed for that flight to the Maldives or to light their 20 bedroom mansions. The more energy efficient among us could make money by selling spare credits to them. At the end of the day, there would only be a certain volume of emissions allowed. And the smaller that volume, the better for all of us.”

www.newscientist.com

17 November 2007, NewScientist, pg 41

EMPLOYMENT LAW AND THE WORKING TIME REGULATIONS

BIGGA's Management Support series produced by Xact



In the last edition of The Greenkeeper we advised you of one change in the Working Time Regulations, namely the extension of paid holiday, which was effective from 1 October 2007. Those rights will be further extended in April 2009.

The Working Time Regulations also introduced the concept of the 48-hour week. In short, this means that employees, unless they have signed an Opt Out Agreement, are prohibited by law from working more than an average of 48 hours averaged over a 17 week period. Clearly this has serious implications for golf club employees, where relatively little work can be done in the winter months but conversely much more requires to be done in the summer when there is more daylight and the grass is growing!

Fortunately, the framers of the European Directive were aware of this problem and allowed member states to provide for a longer reference period in certain "special cases" in which case the reference period can be extended up to 26 weeks. One such special case occurs where, "There is a foreseeable surge of activity".

This, we believe, covers golf courses and therefore clubs can feel reasonably confident that, as long as employees do not work in excess of 48 hours over a 26 week period, they are not in breach of the Regulations. However, in some parts of the country, particularly in northern Britain, even that may not be a long enough reference period where daylight hours are considerably longer.

Where employees wish to work longer hours than the Regulations allow they will have to have signed an Opt Out Agreement, which requires to be carefully worded and legally compliant to be effective. An Opt Out will permit the employee to work longer hours without the employer facing legal consequences. It should be noted that the EU are planning to scrap all Opt Outs once they get the agreement of member states. However, no date has been set for their removal.

The Xact Group currently provide state of the art health and safety advice to golf clubs. We have recently added a similar employment law/HR service, which can provide both advice and draw up the necessary documentation to assist in any employment law/HR issue.

For further information on this or any other aspects of our employment law/HR service please feel free to telephone us on 0845 665 3006.



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?



Name: John Nicholson
Position: Principle
Company: John Nicholson Associates

How long have you been in the industry?
"14 years, working on predominantly golf courses."

How did you get into it?
"I always had a love of the traditional British golf course and a passion for great architects, such as Harry Colt, and could see many of the wonderful courses from the 1920s and 30s were being destroyed by the ingress of scrub and woodland. I was aware no one was giving practical and achievable advice to golf clubs regarding woodland and heathland management. I therefore embarked on a mission to ensure clubs had the right trees in the right place rather than the wrong tree in the wrong place!"

What other jobs have you done?
"I also have a business that deals in 19th and 20th century art."

What do you like about your current job?
"It's great to see the results of the work, the effect on the design strategy is immediate and the following season the benefits to the playing surfaces become evident. It is always nice when you achieve results and go from being the enemy to the vector for improvement. I love working with Ken Moodie and Ken Brown doing the strategy

for golf courses, they are both very knowledgeable and we all have a love of the traditional British style course."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
"The biggest change I've seen in the industry is the difficulties many clubs are having with finance and membership numbers. I strongly feel clubs that don't invest in their courses will find it increasingly difficult to compete as proprietary clubs are becoming increasingly competitive."

What do you like to do in your spare time?
"I play golf and love country sports and the arts. I should say I play at a links course, no trees!"

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
"Alive I hope."

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?
"I hope most of my clients regard me as a friend, as well as a colleague, along with all my associates, Ken Moodie and Ken Brown and Mike Edwards."

What do you consider to be your lucky number?
"I don't really have one."

Pick a number "6"
John has picked Richard Campey from Campeys Turfcare



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.

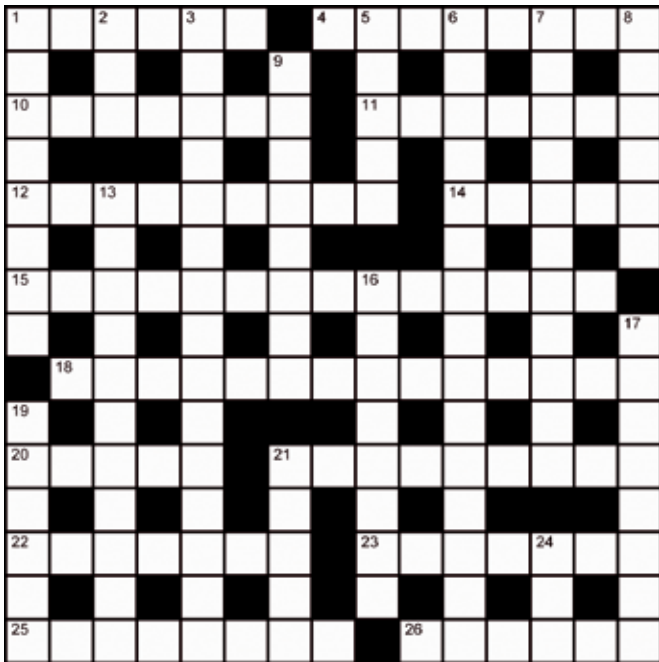
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Gesture of respectful greeting (6)
- 4 Substance obtained through compound reaction (8)
- 10 Person (7)
- 11 Word made up of initial letters of other words (7)
- 12 Language also called the Taal (9)
- 14 Make improvements to text (5)
- 15 Birthplace of Pogues singer Shane MacGowan (9,5)
- 18 Mischievous or dishonest behaviour (6,8)
- 20 Provide (food) (5)
- 21 Greek philosopher who taught Alexander the Great (9)
- 22 Four-stringed Hawaiian guitar (7)
- 23 Kenya's capital (7)
- 25 Native of the main island of French Polynesia (8)
- 26 Familiar routine of e.g. comedian (6)

DOWN

- 1 Emergency treatment area of hospital (8)
- 2 Alcoholic drink distilled from fermented molasses (3)
- 3 Colloquial name for a wealthy residential area (11,4)
- 5 _-up, a warning that something is about to happen (5)
- 6 The spoken voice of Madonna's 1990 hit Vogue (7,8)
- 7 Hiding (11)
- 8 11th letter of the Greek alphabet (6)
- 9 The study of armorial bearings (8)
- 13 General suggestion of accuracy (4,2,5)
- 16 Voracious, extremely hungry (8)
- 17 Star-shaped symbol used in text (8)
- 19 Collectively, supernatural forces, beings etc. (6)
- 21 Sports venue, a Latin word meaning "sand" (5)
- 24 Japanese sash worn with a kimono (3)

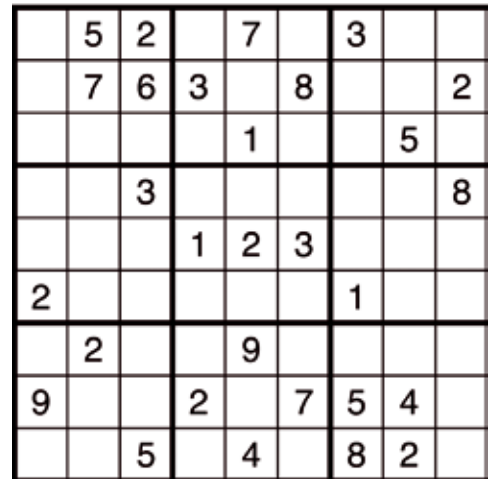


QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

- 1 Which TV character has sisters called Daisy and Rose?
- 2 What are the first names of the twin girls in Barts class in The Simpsons?
- 3 What do Germans do with a 'handy'?
- 4 Who won the Golden Boot at the 1986 football World Cup?
- 5 What is the capital of Mauritius?
- 6 Which football team has the nickname of the 'Bluebirds'?
- 7 With which sport would you associate Nick Skelton?
- 8 Which football team has the nickname of the 'Blades'?
- 9 How many faults does a competitor get if they knock a fence down in showjumping?

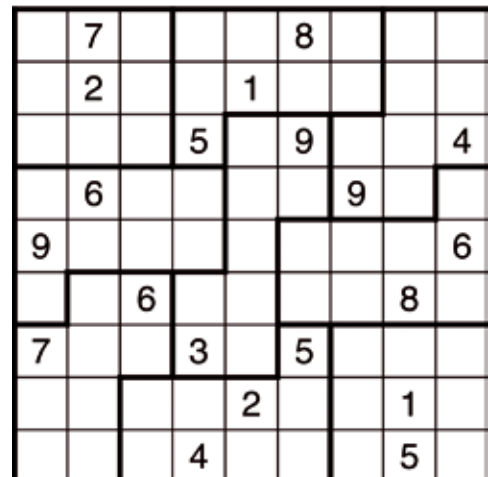
MONSTER SUDOKU

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



SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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



IN THE SHED ANSWERS ON PAGE 60



IN THE SHED



CREEPING SOUTH

Scott MacCallum meets up with Robert Hogarth who travelled from Scotland to meet the challenge of managing creeping bent greens at one of the finest new courses in the UK

Remedy Oak Golf Club, on the edge of the New Forest, didn't exist five years ago. It was then a mixed forest and the seed of an idea in the mind of Bill Riddle, a successful businessman and owner of the nearby pay and play 45 hole Canford Magna golf and conference centre.

If you visit Remedy Oak now you'll see fantastic golf holes cut through majestic woodland and you would happily wager a handsome amount that the course had been there for at least as long as the neighbouring clubs which help make the Dorset area such a fine golfing destination - Ferndown, Broadstone and Parkstone.

Remarkably, the project was carried out very much in-house with respected architect and former professional, John Jacobs, advising on the design alongside a local team which worked closely with Bill Riddle. Between them they designed the course and create a very valuable golfing treasure.

"The people who worked on the construction of the course ought to be applauded for their sensitivity. It would have been very easy to have become carried away and cut down far too many trees," said Robert Hogarth, who has been Course Manager since February 2006, having travelled south from Cardrona H&GC, in Peebles.

No matter how well established the Remedy Oak course appears, having just being open for 18 months, just one step onto the putting surfaces immediately identifies it as a very modern golf development, with its immaculate set of creeping bent grass greens which immediately give us all the misguided belief that we'll start to putt like Ben Crenshaw.

Indeed, it was the opportunity of working with creeping bent which attracted Robert to the south coast.

"I'd been fascinated by creeping bent for some time having talked to people about it and read up about it on websites and it has long been an ambition of mine to work with the grass at some stage in my career," he said.

"I even remember Payne Stewart at The Open at Royal Birkdale in '91, when Tom O'Brien had such a terrible time with his greens, talking about how they should use Penn. It would have been completely unsuitable, and proves just how little pros know, but it does show that it was about then."

The decision to use creeping bent came after watching the success of the grass at Queenwood under the stewardship of first Ian, and then Cameron McMillan.

"It was Ian who got me really excited about creeping bent. It is something completely different to what we've been used to working with."

But it's all very well having a dream, making it reality is the tough bit, but Robert is not a man who allows obstacles to stand in his way.

"I remember reading Greenkeeper International back in 1994 when I was at my nine hole course in the Scottish borders, Innerleithen, and the job adverts all said, 'Must have USGA greens experience'; 'Must have automatic irrigation experience' and thinking how the hell am I going to get that experience.

"By early 2000 I'd installed two irrigation systems, worked with John Soutar on redesigning new USGA greens and build an 18 hole championship course to USGA spec with a full irrigation system. That didn't happen by accident. I'm a positive person and I made it happen."

When the opportunity arose at Remedy Oak, and Robert was called to interview, he was immediately impressed by what he found.

"The moment I drove up to the gates there was a sense of anticipation and a feeling that there was something very special behind those gates. When I drove home, after the interview, I had a very good feeling about it."

And his experiences of working with creeping bent have lived up to all his expectations, both negative and positive.



Robert has a staff of 12 and he estimates that between four and five of his team are there purely because of the demands of creeping bent. “That’s partly because of the size of the greens – we have 1.9 hectares of putting surface, which is the equivalent of two regularly sized 18 hole courses, With the high standards demanded we move between hand and triple cutting.”

The team top dress fortnightly to counter the fibrous nature of creeping bent while they have had issues with Nematodes and Take-All Patch.

“I’m waiting for the greens to catch an STD as it’s about the only thing they haven’t caught!” he joked.

“We foliar feed because of the Nematodes and I do all I can, not to stress the plates.

“It’s extremely challenging and you can never relax with these greens. If you think you’ve got it cracked something will come up and kick you. But there is an awful lot of good advice out there, more all the time, because more and more people are using them in Britain and Ireland,” said Robert, who added that the club policy is to be cautious regarding the greens during the winter, moving to temporaries if there is any doubt, and he keeps the membership updated via website and email.

With so much work and worry associated with creeping bent, why do it?

“The upside is absolutely fantastic putting surfaces. We run average green speeds of 11.5 to 12 with no effort at all and we cut all year round at 3 mil – creeping bent doesn’t like its height of cut to be altered. You really do get a very tight surface 12 months of the year,” said Robert, who revealed that as part of test and after consultation with the membership they ran them at 14 for the Club Championship.

“We wanted to push them and we did it with no stress to the grass plant.”

“Obviously creeping bent does suit everybody but being on the south coast with limited rounds – somewhere between 15 and 20000 a year – and at a high end membership who are prepared to pay for the privilege we can do it.”

As you would expect, poa infiltration is an issue and Robert uses both chemical and cultural controls to hold back the tide.

“This is poa country as it thrives in the shaded warm conditions so we use Primo Maxx which restricts the seed heads, while, culturally, we hand pick using our own staff, students and the clubhouse staff on quiet days.

“We won’t win, we’re just fire fighting, but we’ll do what we can. Like Cameron at Queenwood we’ll replace the collar turf to reduce the poa infiltration from it being walked onto the green but that will merely extend our period of not having poa.”

The lifespan of creeping bent greens at a high standard is reckoned to be around six or seven years before poa takes over and replacing them is then the option.

“I know of people who are having creeping bent turf grown for them a year in advance but it will be very much for the members to decide if they want the high end surfaces. If they do they will have to pay for them via a levy.”

One thing that Robert does point out with his, and any new development, is that while his tees, greens and surrounds are top quality the fairways are just a little behind.

“In an ideal world it would be fantastic to have the resources to maintain fairways to the same level as the rest but in terms of sheer area it’s just not possible. We do still top dress fairways and are working on upping the nutrient level but they do take much longer on grow-ins and are always the last thing to come.

“In many ways we’re the victims of our own success as everything is to such a high standard it shows up the fairways a little bit, but we’re conscious of it and are working towards improving them.”

Robert is absolutely delighted with the team he has assembled at Remedy Oak and is full of admiration for the quality and volume of work the guys get through.



Robert Hogarth, Course Manager



The greenkeeping team



“The standards they have produced over the last two years has been incredible and they should be applauded for that. The job couldn’t have been done without them, especially Alan Magee my Deputy. I couldn’t do without him.

“The club does recognised the skills of the greenkeeping staff but a lot of the members would be shocked at the amount of work they get through in a week to prepare the playing surfaces for them. But they do really appreciate what they are given.”

The course itself could not be more tranquil and you don’t come across any houses or car noise during a round. It is a real haven for wildlife with badger sets, otters, kingfishers woodpeckers, herons and deer. While I was looking out the clubhouse window a fox wandered across the 18th fairway.

For a red haired Scotsman how has Robert coped with his move south on a personal note.

“Well I miss the Rangers big time and I’ve had to come to terms with the fact that a pint was £1.60 in my local back home and here it’s £3. But I’ve been made very welcome by the other Course Managers and made good friends already.”

He’s had to throw away his thermal vest with temperatures on average 10 degrees hotter than in the Borders.

“I struggled in the heat the first summer, we ‘gingas’ are not known for our ability in the heat and exhaustion is an issue as the woodland holds the heat in.

“Our staff are supplied with PP kit – suncream, insect repellent, sunglasses



etc - and they are encouraged to take water out with them.

“Our brothers in Spain have a siesta but we don’t. We batter on and forget that we are reaching temperatures which are the equivalent of the Mediterranean and don’t rest up.”

Indeed, but you can be pretty sure that Robert and Remedy Oak will not rest until it is as good as it possibly can be.

“Remedy Oak is very much Bill Riddle’s legacy to golf,” added Robert.



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ALL OF HARROGATE'S A STAGE, AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERE PLAYERS...

Scott MacCallum butchers Shakespeare just to get a heading for his Harrogate Week review...

Every Harrogate Week is different but at the same time every Harrogate Week is the same. It may sound silly but it's true. It's almost as though BIGGA provides the stage – Harrogate International Centre and the town itself - and the cast are the exhibitors and visitors. The subject of the play we put on is always centred around the fine turf industry but it is the variations each year which makes it all so compelling.

For many, Harrogate Week starts on the Saturday when they arrive in town ready for one of the Workshops which start on the Sunday. With many people still in town on the following Friday it is indeed a full Harrogate Week!

As Editor I leap into action on Monday morning, so I arrived late afternoon on the Sunday ready for dinner with some of BIGGA's Board of Management Members and the speakers who had conducted the Sunday workshops, and those who were about to start on the Monday.

A suitably early night followed – you have to pace yourself during Harrogate Week, a hard lesson learnt several years ago – and I was ready for action on Monday morning.

An early breakfast where the conversation was dominated by the weather - It was absolutely abysmal and made me exceptionally pleased that I'd travelled the night before and not that morning. The torrential rain was to have a major impact on what was the busiest day of the Show build-up and HIC staff did say that it was the worst set-up day they'd ever experienced. The build-up teams were exceptional, however, and over the course of the day the Show began to take shape, although it wasn't until extremely late into the night that everything was completed.

Travelling was also extremely difficult on the Monday with roads close to Harrogate, and in many locations beyond, flooding and making driving extremely difficult. Indeed even the main railway line between York and Harrogate was closed due to flooding for a period.



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Initially I assisted Sami Collins and Rachael Duffy as registration provides an excellent opportunity to meet and greet many familiar faces and a significant number of people for the first time.



Once everything was underway I, and then the “real photographer”, Steve, took shots of the Workshops in action which provided us with some unusual potential images for the magazine.

The highlight of the evening was BIGGA’s latest event “Have We Got Views For You!” (below) held in the Majestic Hotel.

Five of the best known and most agronomically knowledgeable personalities in the industry – Walter Woods BEM; Jack McMillan MBE; Andy Campbell MG CGCS; Ken Siems MG CGCS and Stan Zontek, from the USGA, were provided with comfy chairs and an unlimited supply of water and peppered by questions from HWGVFY Chairman for the evening, Roger Greenwood, and the audience.



What an entertaining evening it turned out to be.

Roger kicked off by asking them what their fondest memory was? Andy's was hugging Walter after he'd received the Old Tom Morris Award in America a few years ago; Walter's was his idol, Nick Faldo, winning The Open over The Old Course in 1990 when the course couldn't have been in better condition; Ken's was the first time he'd visited a Maintenance facility at the age of 14, while Jack's was seeing all the faces he'd worked with and was comfortable with over the years. Stan's was a family scrapbook.

Roger followed up by asking about the worst memory, the highlight of the answers being Walter's 1984 Open when the weather turned against him and Ken, who spent a Christmas Eve with his team hand washing 7,000 metres of turf.

The first question from the audience came from Ian Semple, of Old Fold Manor, who asked about the viability of using creeping bent turf in the UK and he was quickly followed by Andy Mellon, of Elmwood College, asking for views on the Disturbance Theory.

The evening raced on with anecdotes for all quarters with Frank Ainsworth, of Hilton Templepatrick GC, from the body of the audience. BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack OBE was also in attendance and enjoying every minute of it, particularly Walter's stories from St Andrews when, of course, he was Secretary of the R&A.

Kerran Daly, of Gog Magog GC, asked what lessons the panel had learnt over the years with Andy saying to take more time, not be such a demanding boss and that a career is a game of snakes and ladders, not just ladders. Ken felt that he'd become more humble since the arrival of his first child.

David McIndoe of Killarney, asked where golf would be in the future. Stan said there were more golf courses closing down in the States than opening and that they would renovate old courses and introduce new grasses to them; Andy felt that conditioning would continue to improve; Ken felt there would be more attention paid to environmental management and that "forget oil – water is the biggie!" Walter felt that there were too many courses and Jack said that the "crazy popularity" that golf had enjoyed was over and that it was now Dad's army who were playing the game with an average handicap of 18.6 and no desire to play overly long courses.

After over two hours the evening was over. Thanks went to all participants and it was agreed that it had been a great success.

A great prelude to the opening of the Show at 9am the following day with National Chairman Billy McMillan (below) wielding the official shears and slicing the green ribbon stretched across the door to Hall M, thus declaring the Show open. Billy became the first of what was to be 2800 visitors on the Tuesday.

The first main event of a day, which was to feature Royalty, was the presentation of Awards in the Queens Suite.

Those honoured included the winners of BIGGA's Golf Photography Competition; Hollinwell Golf Club the overall winner of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts and Syngenta and the other regional and special winners; CPD Certificate winners and the 47th and 48th Master Greenkeepers – Darren Anderson MG of Abergele GC, and Steve Okula MG, from Golf de Joyenval, in France.





Hollinwell GC, overall winners of the BIGGA Environment Competition award

The final presentation was to the latest recipients of BIGGA's Lifetime Achievement Award the aforementioned Walter Woods BEM and Jack McMillan MBE. They followed in the footsteps of Sir Michael who was BIGGA's first Lifetime Achievement winner and fittingly it was Sir Michael who made the presentation to two very emotional greenkeeping legends.

If visitors felt there was a little more security around HIC on the Tuesday than usual it wasn't anything we'd done. HRH The Prince of Wales was in town in the afternoon to open the newly refurbished Royal Hall. He didn't visit any of the Halls but he did stop and chat with some of the crowd gathered outside which included Lawrence Gale, Editor of Pitchcare, who was rewarded with a handshake. Who said Lawrence would never amount to anything!

With the Halls going like fairs it was a shock to discover that it was now 5pm and time to venture down to the Ransomes Jacobsen Underground Food Court for the Exhibitors' Reception. It is a wonderful new facility which provides plenty of food options and seating for visitors and exhibitors alike.



The next event on the schedule is one which grows every year. It's the Bernhard Reception which has been a fixture at Harrogate Week for the last eight years. A total of 80 BIGGA members have now travelled across the Atlantic to the GCSAA Show or in the case of the first group the Canadian Show as part of the Bernhard-sponsored BIGGA delegation, while in the last two years 20 GCSAA Superintendents (below) have made the reverse trip to Harrogate.



Darren Anderson receives his Master Greenkeepers certificate



Steve Okula receives his Master Greenkeepers certificate



Jack McMillan MBE & Walter Woods BEM receive BIGGA's first Lifetime Achievement award



With many former members attending the reception the numbers just grow and grow and it is a huge tribute to Stephen Bernhard and his team that so many former Delegation members are now prominent members within BIGGA.

The evening was topped off with an admittedly rushed pizza in the company of fellow BIGGA staff and our Board of Management Guardian, Mark Dabell, who had travelled down from St Andrews for the Board Meeting and the AGM.



Wednesday, traditionally the busiest day, witnessed record numbers with 3959 visitors through the doors. The Park n Ride, in its second year, is gaining in popularity as people realise that in addition to it being free and saving on parking charges, it is a simple way of getting to the Halls.

Once inside though, getting from A to B always took much longer than anticipated with human obstacles and familiar faces keen to talk in every corridor.

The Kubota-sponsored Media Centre was a buzz of activity with the press being informed of new products and company initiatives throughout the day.

Close of play brought the AGM where following an eloquent and well prepared proposal by Life member Cecil George, it was agreed that a



Billy McMillan hands over the reins to Kenny Mackay

fund should be set up with the purpose of ultimately purchasing land for the Association to build its own golf course, clubhouse/HQ and Centre of Excellence. Immediately after the proposal had been voted through Cecil presented Billy McMillan with the first donation to the fund. It was during the AGM that Billy handed over the reins of the Association to Kenny Mackay, Director of Golf Courses for The Belfry, who in turn introduced his Vice Chairman, Peter Todd, Courses Manager for The London Club.

From there to the Past Chairman's Reception back in the Majestic Hotel. Among the guests were Gordon and Marian Child, both looking extremely well. Gordon is about to become Vice Captain at Churston GC. He's playing regularly off 5 and he's broken his age a mere 18 times! Even Tiger can't claim that.

The final day witnessed 1882 visitors through the doors over 500 more than in '07 and a few dozen more than in '06.

Among the highlights of the day was the R&A Conference which attracted delegates from clubs all over the country and beyond. The audience of 100 comprised Golf Club Officials, Chairmen of Green, Association



Life members, Cecil George and Past Chairman, Billy McMillan



Duncan Weir of the R&A

representatives as well as a number of Course Managers. It was good to meet up with Mike Harris, Editor of Golf Monthly, who has just agreed to become a Media Sponsor for the Golf Environment Competition to join fellow sponsors, Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts and Syngenta.

And so to the grande finale and the banquet, which this year was graced by the tallest man ever to visit Harrogate Week. Martin Bayfield is a former England and Lions second row and at six feet and 10 inches is the old man who can make BIGGA's own England and Lions second row, Peter Larter, look a little on the short side.



Martin Bayfield

Martin, now a journalist and broadcaster gave a hilarious insight into the differences between football and rugby and some interesting nuggets from rugby and his previous life as a policeman. With his range of accents he had everyone in stitches and when The Blue's Brothers took to the stage – late replacements for the unwell Diana Ross tribute act – everyone was in the mood to party.



The Blues Brothers

The following morning and no-one could quite believe that another Harrogate Week had come and gone. Breakfast was taken and goodbyes were said and we looked forward to Harrogate Week 2009 January 18-22.

The stage will be the same but the cast and storyline slightly different.

See you there!

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT MANUAL...

BIGGA's Education and Development Manual has been re-launched with the sponsorship support of John Deere.

The on-line manual provides users with the information they need on recruitment, induction, training and career progression using video clips, written information downloadable documents and useful web links.

"The manual took many months to develop and we feel is one of the most valuable tools available to BIGGA members. The support of John Deere has enabled us to ensure that the Manual is promoted as widely to the people who it is design to assist – the greenkeeper. Our sincere thanks go to John Deere for their support." said John Pemberton, BIGGA's Chief Executive.

"John Deere is delighted to be sponsoring the new BIGGA Online Training & Development Manual," says the company's Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division Manager, David Hart.

"We have been supporting BIGGA's educational activities for a number of years through donations raised by the John Deere Team Championship golf tournament, and we felt this was an ideal way of making a specific contribution in a vitally important area of the Association's work."

The Manual is available to BIGGA members on the BIGGA Website – www.bigga.org.uk



SAD NEWS...

The week started on a very sad note when Ian Cowie, one of the contracted staff brought in to prepared the Halls, collapsed and died while fitting carpets.

Ian was only 34 and the condolences of all BIGGA staff and all who attended Harrogate Week to out to Ian's family and friends.

RECENTLY FORMED...

Duncan McGilvray, Managing Director of enviropro H²O, outlined the aims of the recently formed company during a press call at the Show.

Duncan, a well known greenkeeper prior to his move into the irrigation industry, explained that he and Operations Director, Simon Leathley, were well placed to provide a bespoke service to golf clubs.

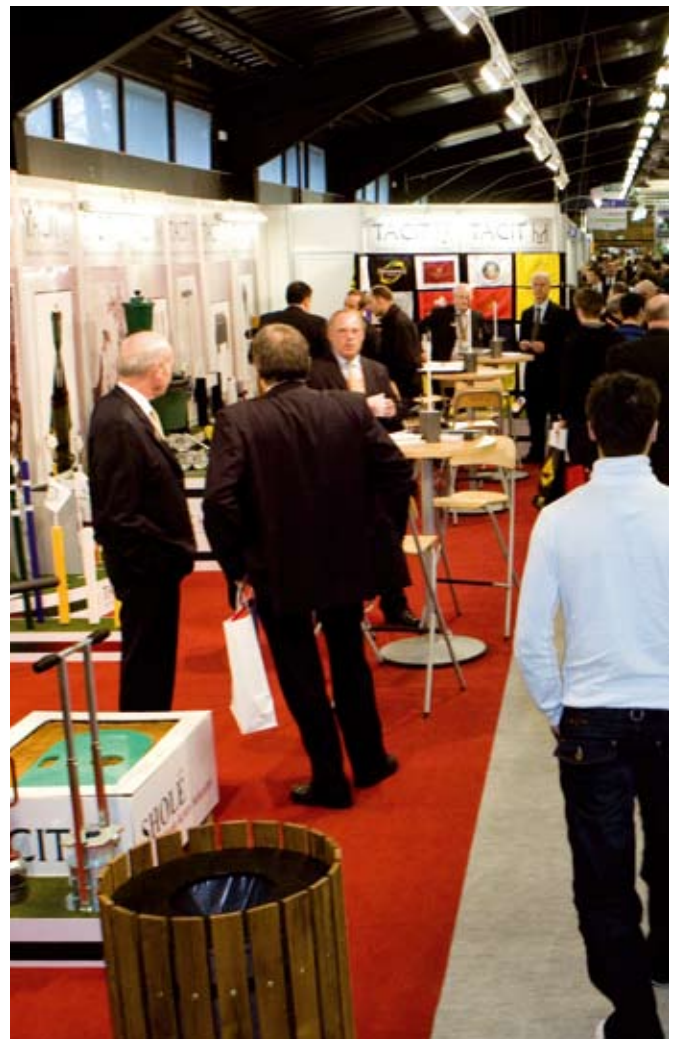
“We offer all aspects of irrigation system design, installation service and repair and with a combined 52 years experience of golf course irrigation we are confident that we can assist golf clubs,” explained Duncan.

AMENITY FORUM...

John Allbutt, Chairman of the Amenity Forum, described the lobbying work which had gone on prior to the important Brussels’ vote into possible pesticide bans during a press briefing at the Show.

“We personally wrote to and emailed every MEP in the country and then fielded all the subsequent calls from the MEPs themselves or their advisors and I firmly believe that had a significant say in how the vote eventually turned out.”

John, who was joined by Ken Seims and Gavin Robson, BIGGA’s representatives on the Amenity Forum, and the Forum Secretary Bob Joyce, said that despite the vote coming down in against the blanket ban on pesticides in public much work had to be carried out to ensure that good practice was in place in all aspects of pesticide usage to lessen the chances of the amenity sector being targeted again.





FIVE YEARS OF UNSUNG HEROES

Kester Clarke, Head Groundsman of Ipswich Cricket Club, Suffolk and Tim McCreadie, Course Manager of Royston Golf Club in Hertfordshire are the latest turf professionals to join the ranks of Terrain Aeration's Unsung Heroes, all of whom were invited to attend this year's awards.

Tim McCreadie, nominated by past STRI judge Tim Lodge of Agrostis, along with Royston Club Secretary Sean Clark was praised for his painstaking, ten-year restoration of the course, which is on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Steve Gingell, agronomist and Southern Area Manager for the STRI, speaking on behalf of his fellow judges Gordon Child (BIGGA) and Derek Walder (IOG) said that Tim has done a splendid job working under strict specifications. "As the course hosts both Anglo Saxon and Bronze Age burial mounds, is owned by The Conservators of Therfield Heath and Green, and home to the rare Chalkhill Blue Butterfly he has



had to keep it as 'natural' as possible, while maintaining it to a high, playing standard," he commented.

Kester Clarke, nominated by Club Chairman Graham Denny has turned what was, in 2002, two fields of corn, into a ground, which is fast becoming the envy of other clubs. "Kester has planned and planted boundary hedges, shrubs and trees, installed fencing and spent numerous hours ensuring the grounds and wickets are in immaculate condition for weekend and midweek representative matches," said Gingell. "The club, in the words of the Chairman, owes him a huge debt."

The Unsung Hero Awards are organised by Terrain Aeration in conjunction with their sponsors Pitchcare and Greenkeeping Magazine. The winners receive holiday vouchers, a framed certificate and lapel badge from Terrain Aeration and a cheque for £200 from the sponsors.



Many thanks to this year's sponsors – Ransomes Jacobsen, who sponsored the Careers Fair, Job Shop and Underground Food Court; Kubota, who sponsored the lanyards and Media Centre; John Deere, our badge sponsors; The GTC, who sponsored Continue to Learn and Toro, our bag sponsors.



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Harrogate
week

NEW SERIES OF TRACTORS

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ROTARY MOWER

Ransomes Jacobsen has launched an all-new out-front rotary mower, the Ransomes HR 3300T, specifically designed for the UK and European municipal and contractor market.

The R&D programme behind the launch of this new machine has been unprecedented with Voice of the Customer (VOC) research driving all stages of the design process.



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.

01473 270000
or visit: www.ransomesjacobsen.com

KEEPS COURSE SHARP

DJ Turfcare claims that the Atom Bunker Edger is unique in the golf industry and trims bunkers up to eight times faster than any other edging device.

Light and manoeuvrable it leaves a sharp clean finish with none of the backache associated with a normally arduous chore on the golf course.

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NEW SEED CATALOGUE

British Seed Houses' 2008 golf seed catalogue is now available to download from its amenity website at www.bshamenity.com.

Simply click on the banner at the top of the homepage to save the PDF document quickly and easily to your desktop. Catalogues for native flowers, seeded turf cultivars, sports mixtures and landscaping mixtures are also available.

The 2008 BSPB/STRI Turfgrass Seed Listings booklet is also available to download from the website, free of charge.

www.bshamenity.com



TURFCARE SYSTEM

Lloyds & Co. Letchworth Ltd claims the Maredo Turfcare System is one of the most unique products to be launched on to the turf care market.

The machine has been developed to give added value to the budgets of today's fine turf managers.

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GOLF SAND SLITTER

Blec has launched the Sand Injector.

Specifically developed to improve drainage on golf greens, fairways and tees, the new model measures one metre.

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SEMI-ROUGHS MOWER

John Deere's new 8800 TerrainCut semi-roughs mower features five independent 21in rotary decks, giving a total mowing width of 88in. It replaces the existing 3245C machine, and will be available from spring 2008.

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REVOLUTIONARY GRINDERS

Building on the highly successful 3000 range of grinders, Bernhard and Company announced its latest product evolution – the Express Dual and Anglemaster 4000DX.

With end-user needs driving all stages of the design process, the Express Dual 4000DX is bigger, taller and has improved safety guarding.

The new Anglemaster 4000DX was designed to match the speed, ease and accuracy of its Express Dual counterpart.

i www.bernhard.co.uk



POWER PRODUCTS

Kawasaki Motors UK has launched the PowerProducts 2008 range.

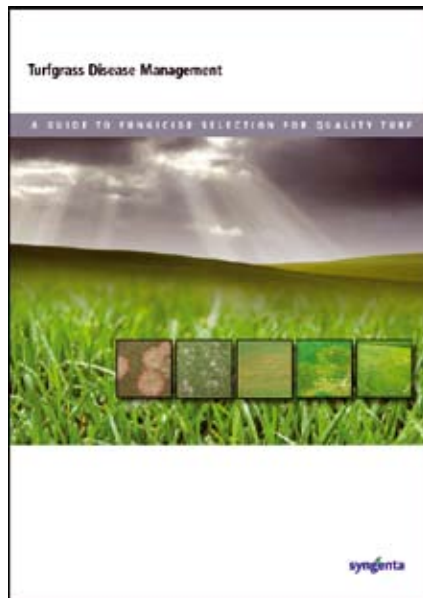
Included in the range are: The Handheld Blower with grip throttle, the latest HG650A Back Pack Blower with handle grip and the 27cc 2-stroke short shaft articulated Hedge Clipper.

i www.kawasaki.co.uk

NEW GUIDE

Syngenta has published a new Guide to Turfgrass Disease Control, containing all the detailed information to enable turf managers to make more effective decisions on disease control and creating higher quality playing surfaces.

Embracing the principles of Integrated Turf Management (ITM), the Guide addresses key areas of risk assessment, identifying potential problems and selecting the most appropriate course of action to minimise turf damage.



To accompany the Guide, Syngenta has also published a wall chart of the key factors and points to consider in creating an effective turf disease management programme. Copies of the Guide and the wall chart are available by emailing customer.services@syngenta.com

They can also be downloaded from the dedicated turf management website.

i www.greencast.co.uk

SOFTWARE EASES SET UP

The Jupiter Series 5 ATI precision grinders have incorporated new software to provide easy set up procedures when using the automatic grinders.



The new version 3 software identifies the various applications available for simple selection, including a dedicated programme for bed knife grinding with variable traverse speed. A new electronic braking facility also adds to the ease and accuracy of set up.

Any Golf Course that has 25 or more cylinder mower units should seriously look at investing in their own Hunter relief grinder, particularly as Hunter Grinders now offer a range of finance packages to spread the cost over a period of time easing the financial burden.

i 01207 270316
or visit: www.huntergrinders.com

PLANT AND SOIL TREATMENT

The appliance of science has resulted in the launch of a revolutionary new product, with the potential to transform the way that growing is done in the UK.

Quick-Sol is environmentally friendly, biodegradable and non-toxic and has been certified in its existing markets for organic use. Evaluations are well advanced for certification to the European equivalent standard. It can also dramatically reduce water requirements, one of our most precious resources, without affecting quality or productivity.

i www.quick-sol.com

New Products



NEW PRODUCTS

INNOVATIVE NEW ROLLER

R&K Kensett has launched the Graden Greens Roller.

This roller has an innovative split head that eliminates the possibility of 'ridging' on softer surfaces – a problem with previous rollers.

01883 342632
or visit: www.kensettsports.com



DE-ICING SALT

Rolawn has launched a de-icing salt. Available in a bulk bag containing approx 0.73m³ when packed, it is a high quality low moisture rock salt designed for de-icing paths, roads and car parks to help prevent accidents and injury. Screened to 6mm and containing an anti-caking agent to maintain spreading properties even after prolonged storage, it is suitable for both domestic and commercial applications.

0845 6046085
or visit: info@rolawn.co.uk



THE NATURAL WAY TO GARDEN

Mendip Forestry Ltd has introduced two new additions to the Pro-Grow Range of Natural Gardening Products – Pro-Grow Woodchip Mulch and Pro-Grow Premium Pine Bark. Both products are certified by The Forest Stewardship Council, (FSC) and are made from timber from well-managed UK forests.

01373 465767
or visit: www.pro-grow.co.uk



VERTICAL ACTION AERATOR

The Sisis Arrow is a vertical-action aerator designed for golf greens, tees and approaches, cricket squares, bowls greens, contractors and local authorities.

This heavy-duty machine, with 10hp engine, utilises hard-wearing components used on the well-proven Aer-Aid Javelin. The Arrow has a working width of 600mm, variable forward speed and reverse.

01625 503030
or visit: www.sisis.com



WORKING AGAINST ALGAE

Rigby Taylor has launched a new formulation of Mascot Qualgex, a surface biocide for professional use against algae, moss and lichens on external hard surfaces.



This fully HSE registered product chloride, in addition to the main active ingredient, now contains citric acid which physically scorches moss foliage allowing the active ingredient better access and a penetrant system.

0800 424 919
or visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

NEW AROUND THE GLOBE

Finland based company Actioneco recently launched the Actioneco, a greens mower they claim is totally unique and the first of its kind in the world.

Actioneco is an electric lithium-ion battery-powered, servo motor-driven electronically-controlled environment upkeep machine. It is designed specifically for golf courses, sports grounds and parks.

It is economical. With one quick charge, a full day's work can be put in. A full battery charge costs only about one euro.


Actioneco is non-polluting and practically silent. It won't disturb players, leave oil residues that tarnish playing balls and it doesn't damage the course.

 www.actioneco.com



PEDESTRIAN ROTARY MOWER

Etesia has launched a new 'long range' pedestrian wheeled rotary – the Pro 46 PHG. Powered by a well-proven 5.5hp Honda GCV 160 engine, this 46cm walk-behind lawnmower has a large capacity 2.5 litre petrol tank designed to allow the operator to complete a full day's work without the need to re-fuel.

 01926 403319
or visit: www.etesia.com



OUTFRONT

Lely UK Ltd, the UK distributor for Yanmar equipment, recently launched the Yanmar GE 350 outfront ride-on mower.

Attachment of front mounted decks to the GE 350 power unit is a simple and quick operation for rotary decks (with a 1.5m and 1.8m rear discharge), as well as options for flails, a brush or a blower.

 01480 226800
or visit: www.yanmar.co.jp



DUAL DRIVE

Rivendell has launched the 510 GOLF 20" 12-blade professional fine turf mower with dual drive system, shaver blade and turf brush as standard.

Specifically designed for golf courses, the 510 GOLF features uprated components for even greater reliability and accuracy.

 www.rivendell-projects.co.uk



RANGE OF AERATORS & DECOMPACTORS

Campey Turfcare has been appointed as the sole UK and Ireland distributor for the Imants range of aerators and decompactors.

Imants BV is based at Reusel in the Netherlands and has been producing its own forged and smithed steel tools since 1885. Since developing one of the first spading machines in the 1960s, the company has specialised in innovative groundcare equipment.

The Imants RotoKnife slitter-aerator has recently been redesigned to offer even more functions, making it a highly versatile groundcare implement. Regular slitting results in a denser and healthier grass sward, and also helps to eliminate thatch and black layer.

The latest Mk II version of the Shockwave decompactor, named the Revenge, utilises a central all-gear drive for increased durability and a torque limiter on the pto rather than shear bolts, reducing downtime and boosting operator safety.



GOLF CAR

E-Z-GO has launched its new, much anticipated fleet golf car – the RXV – engineered to deliver reliability, superior performance, operating efficiency and safety through an array of enhanced features and innovations.

The RXV is available in electric and petrol models. The existing TXT model, introduced in 1995 and the best-selling fleet golf car in the company's history will remain a key component in E-Z-GO's lineup.

 www.textron.com





News from the Chief Executive

I think it's fair to say Harrogate Week 2008 has set a new benchmark for the event. The number of visitors was a record and in these troubled times the event provided the lift to everyone's spirits that was desperately needed. Thank you to all those who supported the show, either as a visitor or as an exhibitor, and the only question that remains to be answered is 'How do we do better next year?'.

If there were any doubts about Harrogate being a suitable venue then those doubts were dispelled as turf professionals from around the world came together to share their experiences, take part in education or visit the largest indoor exhibition of its kind in Europe. Despite the success of 2008 some of the major manufacturers will keep to their earlier strategy and will not be rebooking a stand for 2009. This is of course disappointing, it's a decision that affects the 'feel' of the show and has a large detrimental effect on the finances of the Association. There is already a queue of exhibitors waiting to move or expand into the space they will leave and the real dilemma arises when we try to integrate them into the event for 2010. It is highly likely they will not be happy with what is on offer since, in line with tradition; existing exhibitors will be given priority. Planning now begins for next year and by the time you read this I will have posted on the BIGGA website an invitation for members to contribute their ideas.

At the AGM Cecil George put forward a well reasoned out case for the creation of a Golf Course Development Fund that received the support of the majority of members attending. Over the coming years efforts will be made to raise the funding to buy some land upon which can be built a golf course and clubhouse that could not only serve as the Association's headquarters but could also become a centre of greenkeeping excellence. Following the adoption of the proposal Cecil made the first donation and any members wishing to contribute should send their cheques to me made payable to 'BIGGA Golf Course Development Fund'. Donations can also be made by credit card by contacting a member of HQ staff. In due course the minutes of the meeting together with a copy of the Annual Accounts will be available on the website.

In general the golf market is coming under more and more pressure as golfers expect higher all year round standards. Some of this pressure is being passed onto the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and I will be looking at how greater support can be given to those finding themselves in this situation. It is apparent there is a management skills shortage and during the coming weeks Sami Collins, in consultation with David Golding of the GTC, will be looking at devising a series of short management training courses. The Education and Development Fund will continue with its policy of career development grants and I am pleased to confirm that Ransomes Jacobsen have agreed to renew their funding for grant aid to those members pursuing higher education. More details of these schemes can be obtained from either Sami or her assistant, Rachael Duffy.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow members of staff for their efforts before and during Harrogate Week. It is often overlooked that we carry out many of the tasks along side our regular jobs and in fact only two members of staff have the event as their main role.

John Pemberton



SCOTTISH REGION – CENTRAL

Not much to report this month in the Central Section. The Committee is meeting with Elspeth Coutts, formerly of SGEG, around the time you will receive this magazine to see if there is any way we can utilise Elspeth's skills and knowledge to the advantage of any clubs in the area. So if there are any of you out there who feel they could benefit with some input into any environmental points then please contact either myself, Andy Mellon, or any other Committee member and we can perhaps put you in touch with Elspeth.

Best wishes to Richard Cutler and his family on his move from Montrose to Jersey where I am sure the weather will be much warmer. Another who may be on the move shortly is Gordon McKie, Head Greenkeeper on the Old Course at St Andrews as he considers many of the offers from Hollywood which have come his way since his appearance on the BBC Scotland documentary "Behind the Greens" about golf in St Andrews, which was shown on the BBC on St Andrews day. Although the programme as a whole got poor reviews, the greenkeeping aspect of it came across as very professional and many people have commented on how interesting that aspect was. Gordon came over extremely well and, along with his team, was a credit to the industry.

We are in the process of arranging a couple of educational evenings for late March/early April and as soon as anything is finalised we will be posting it on the website. www.biggacentralsection.org.uk The Spring outing will be at Lundin Links GC on Thursday, April 24.

A newsletter will be sent out with the mailshot for the spring outing around the end of April which will have details of other education events for the year.

Finally, if anyone in the area would like a few thousand pitchmark repairers for their Club free of charge, then please contact me on 01334 466676.

Gordon Moir



NORTH

Hope Harrogate went well for you all and it fulfilled your expectations. Certainly with Toro and John Deere there it swelled the numbers. It's a great social event too, many friendships have been struck up at Harrogate.

It is with regret that I have to report the death of Ian Marsh who was a greenkeeper at Fraserburgh GC. Ian worked there for 13 years and enjoyed his job greatly. It was a tragic accident and he leaves behind family and partners who will mourn his loss. John Geddes and Hugh McClatchie represented the north Section at his funeral and Peter Boyd attended on behalf of BIGGA.

Simon Donald who was an apprentice at Peterhead GC has left the job to

Around the Green

work in the oil business. This is another example of good greenkeepers leaving the trade to earn more money elsewhere. I think in years to come this is going to be a major problem in the profession because these young guys are the future Head Greenkeepers but there may be shortage if the current trend doesn't change.

There's not much else happening in the Section at the moment, except it's bloody cold.

If you have any stories or news let me know on grassman351@aol.com.

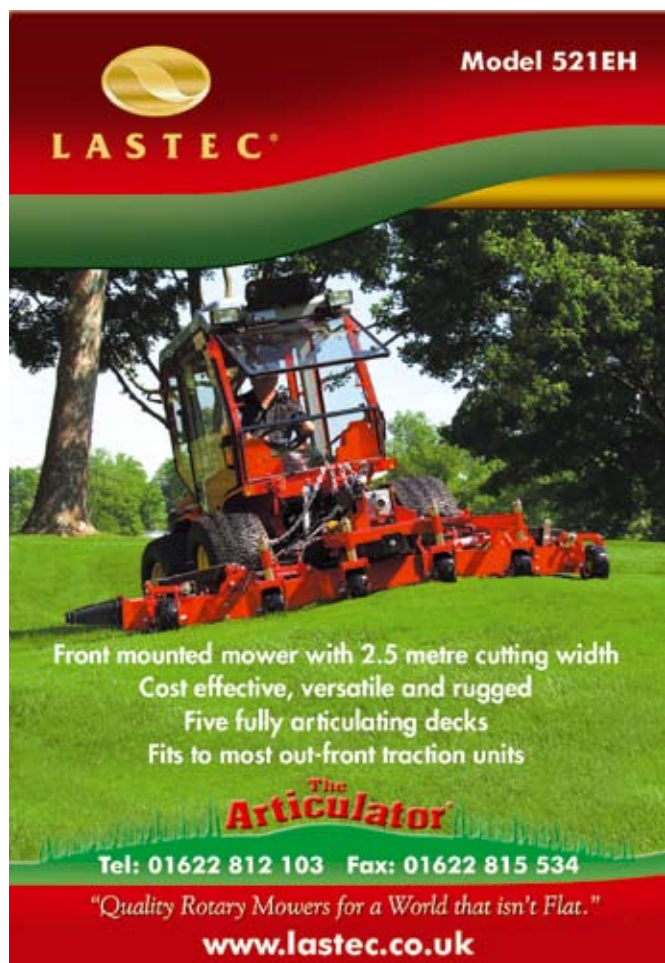
Robert Patterson



WEST

Well a warm welcome to the New Year, I hope all members enjoyed their time over the festive period.

As I sit and write this report I can hear hail stones hitting off my window and after 90 mile per hour winds last night my fence is down again, I



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Front mounted mower with 2.5 metre cutting width
Cost effective, versatile and rugged
Five fully articulating decks
Fits to most out-front traction units

The Articulator

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www.lastec.co.uk

hope the next couple of months weather is kind before the start of the season.

I'm just back from visiting Gordon Kerr at the new course being built on the Erskine Hospital grounds, Marr Hall. I was very impressed how the course is coming along at this early stage, I think the course will develop into a fine challenge for the future.

I hope to arrange a course walk over the next couple of months so anyone interested give me a phone.

This year's Patrons award winners are Michael Maxton, East Kilbride, and Barry McCulloch, East Renfrewshire. Well done lads on winning your awards.

The Patrons' dinner was held at the Terraces Hotel in Stirling and dinner and entertainment was its usual high standard, well done to Peter Boyd for arranging such an enjoyable day, and to the patrons for there continued support. I hope the boys enjoy their trip to Harrogate.

I would like to welcome Ken Seims, from Loch Lomond Golf Club, on to the West Section committee and hope you will enjoy being part of the team.

The fixture diary for 2008 will soon be ready so you can plan your dates for the rest of the year.

The first outing will be East Renfrewshire for our Spring Outing on April 24, this is a fantastic Golf course so get your entries in early.

We have a new member this month, Andrew Orr, from East Kilbride Golf Club Welcome to the Section there will be plenty of things happening over the year so come along and meet some of your fellow members.

I will be arranging a couple of seminars over the next few months and information will be available on the BIGGA website.

There are also training courses that can be arranged to suit your needs so please get in touch for further information.

Well that's all for now, by the time you read this report Harrogate will be over for another year and I'm sure it will have been a great one.

Fraser Ross

07970 3660355 Karen.ross@tesco.net



NORTHERN REGION – NORTH WEST

By the time you are reading these notes Harrogate will have come and gone. I hope everyone who attended thought it was worth the effort and enjoyed the experience.

Around the Green

We will shortly have a list of all the golf days and these will be sent out to you all. I also hope that a few more of you get in touch and contribute to the Section notes, if you have any tips (horses included) or anything you think the Section might be interested in please get in contact with me. If you have any news you can contact me on 0151 2894625 my email is jshieehan@blueyonder.co.uk or the Section Secretary, Bert Cross on 0151 7245412.

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

I will start this month by wishing you all a belated Happy New Year for 2008. I hope that it is a very successful for you all, both on and off the course.

December 6 saw the last competition of 2007, which was held at the extremely windy Crosland Heath Golf Club. I understand that only Nigel Coultish was blown over, which, considering the weather conditions - wasn't bad going! The course itself was in marvellous condition and a true credit to Philip and his team, so a huge thank you to all of them and to everyone at Crosland Heath Golf Club for their hospitality on the day.

A massive thank you also to County Mowers and Toro for sponsoring the day and providing such an excellent prize table.

The AGM was also held at Crosland Heath and there are a couple of things which came out of the meeting to inform you of. Firstly, the cost of entry to Section golf days for trade members will be rising to £20 with effect from the Spring Tournament. Secondly, the Section is looking into running a coach to this year's Open at Royal Birkdale. If you are interested in joining us for what should be a fantastic day out then please get in touch as soon as possible and we can start planning pick-up points and costs.

The Committee are also planning another seminar, and the date we are looking at will be sometime around the end of March; I will confirm date, location and speakers in next month's report, which hopefully will also include a full finalised fixture list for this year,

If anyone has any news that they would like to pass on via the magazine then please just let me know.

Adam Speight 01274 638366 07739 319060



NORTH WALES

I don't believe we've had Section notes in Greenkeeper International since October last year so there's a little bit of catching up to do. Royal St David's Golf Club at Harlech was the venue for the Christmas competition and AGM. The day went off swimmingly even though it was blowing a hoolie. A big thank you to Royal St David's for hosting the

event. Congratulations must go to John and Roger Kerry and the greens staff for the beautifully presented course (thanks lads it was in great condition) and the catering for the gorgeous food.

The competition was won by Aled Hughes' team with an excellent 77 points, 2nd was Rick Sinker's team with 74 points, 3rd was taken up by Haydon Jones' team with a very respectable 71 points, Nearest the Greens where taken by Lion Kerry on the 14th and Adam McColl on the 18th .

The AGM saw Darren Anderson MG and Wendy O'Brien stand down and three new members taking up places these are Jonny Evans, of Carden Park, BIGGA stalwart Don Pemberton, of Bryn Morfydd, and Peter Maybury, of Vale of Llangollen.

The job of writing the Section notes has been jointly taken over by me and Jonny Evans after Andrew "Acorn" Cornes has done such a wonderful job of trying so hard to fill the column - Thanks it's a lot harder to do than it looks!

The spring seminar will take place at Abergele Golf Club on March 13. The main subject will be the new BIGGA Safety management system (SMS), an all round approach to golf club safety management. Booking forms will be with you soon. Don't miss out this will be essential material to know!

The Spring Competition will take place at Llanymynech Golf Club on May 14, your booking form for this and all other competitions this year will be with you soon, please return your entries to Jez Hughes ASAP.

Harrogate as always was an education in everything material and cerebral. I hope you came away as I did, with a lot of new machinery, equipment and management ideas to mull over, although it's always good to meet up with old friends at the same time.

It is planned to make more of our own Section news, whether it be marriages, promotions, retirements or news you think would be of interest to, or you want to share with the Section. Johnny's and my own email and phone numbers will be published in this year's fixture list in due course if you want to contact us. Belated congratulations to Darren Anderson on his marriage, Henlle Park opened their new club house at Christmas - Quite an edifice it's supposed to be as well by all accounts - and The Vale of Llangollen golf club celebrate their centenary this year

*Peter Maybury 07756001187 or Petemayb66@Aol.Com
Jonny Evans 07917584728 or Jonny.Evans@Tesco.Net*



MIDLAND REGION – EAST MIDLANDS

Our Section Christmas Tournament took place on Thursday, December 13 at Longcliffe Golf Club and was played there as a tribute to their retiring Head Greenkeeper, Walter Cole. Walter was due to retire in January from Longcliffe after over 40 years service and our best wishes go out to him for his retirement.



We had a good turn out of 32 for the golf, including Scott MacCallum from Headquarters, and although Walter did not play on the day he spent the time walking round the course catching up with old friends. The winners of the day were Ian Abrahams and Chris Bates with 43 pts, 2, Andy De Wet and Gary Thurman 42 pts. 3. Asa English and Peter Larter 42 pts and 4. Paul Frith and Tim Allard (In the Prizes Again!) 41 pts. The Longest Drive was won by Stuart Raybould and the Nearest The Pin was won by Scott MacCallum (won't be inviting him again!) Our thanks go out to Walter and his staff for presenting the course to its usual high standard and out thanks go to the club for courtesy of the course and the caterers for an excellent Christmas Meal. Just to remind everyone that the annual Go-Karting is booked for Wednesday, February 20 at 7.30pm, and there are still a few places remaining if you are interested. Please contact Dan Rodgers, Secretary 07745 227224 to reserve your seat!

Dan Rodgers



MIDLAND

Due to a technical error, I sent January's notes a week too late for publication (at least P.Woodham was on the ball with his excellent education opportunities). However they were posted on the Section's excellent website. Please forgive me for reiteration within February's webpage. If you are using our website then the committee and I would like to thank you for utilising this service and indeed perhaps contributing to such. Our thanks must go to Leigh Swan for his great efforts in producing our superb website. The easiest way to visit our site is via the BIGGA website and click-on Midland Section website.

I would like to begin this month's notes with an apology to T.H.White Email: grassredditch@thwhite.co.uk as I forgot to thank them in December's notes for their kind sponsorship of the calendar. While we are at it our thanks to Abbey Mowers: www.abbeymowers.co.uk for January's sponsorship. Also our thanks to this month's sponsor's www.turnergroundscare.co.uk Please consider them when making purchases in their relevant industries. Without the sponsorship of our many kind friends our Section would not be served as well as it is. Our thanks to all our sponsors.

Our Christmas event was held at Whittington Heath GC. The course was in superb condition, and the greens were as good as you can get at that time of year. Our thanks to Mr.T.Morris (C.M.) and his fine team for preparing the course to such a high standard. Such is a credit to you all. Furthermore, our thanks to the Captain Mr A Jarrot for his very warm welcome. The results of the day were: 1. H. Middlebrook & S. Scott; 2. J. Ganley & P. Rainsford; 3. A. Jones & D. Fellows; 4. N. Couchman & R. Thomas; 5. T. Morris & A. Jarrot. Our thanks to the main prize table sponsor's M. Chamberlain/Tacit. Longest Drive & Nearest the Pin were won by S. Thompson & A. Jones respectfully. Our thanks to N. Tyler/Alpha Amenity.

Now then, we have of course four events for 2008. Such being the great venues of: Spring Kidderminster, Summer Stourbridge, Autumn Fulford

Heath, Christmas TBA. The efforts of our Comp. Secretary and by the grace of the aforementioned Clubs cannot be underestimated. If we are to enjoy the benefits of such great opportunities we must utilise them, if not we shall lose such grace as afforded to us. So please support the Section's golfing events by attending them. To aid such we have cut the cost of entry down to £20, however such shall still include a three-course meal. What great value for money, 18 holes of golf and a great meal, with a superb prize table (£250) and great company. What more do you want?

Wishing all a suburb New Year from your Committee. Yes, your committee, so use them. Remember that they give their time freely. It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome two new members to the committee: Richard Beacham, of the Wrekin GC and Adam Jones of Penn G.C. Finally, I would like to thank Keith Swan Penn GC for his sterling efforts as our handicap calculator. Handicaps and scores can also be found on our website. Please send me any news or thoughts on the usual lines as found on the calendar.

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all. Hopefully this will find you all well recovered from Harrogate Week. I am sure many things will have been learned to help us through the forthcoming year and all will have had a successful show. Full report next time.

Tuesday, December 4 saw our Christmas Tournament at Market Rasen Golf Club, where a large inflatable Santa and a snowman greeted us in the car park. The course was in excellent condition and our praise and thanks goes to John Hewson and his staff. Sponsorship was provided by LMS, many thanks to Dave Hampshire and his guys for an excellent prize table and also for their halfway house sponsorship right throughout the year.

The format was betterball pairs Stableford. 1st place went to Gary Cooper and Chris Wilkinson with 46 pts. 2. on countback went to Bruce Hicks and Tito Arena with 44 pts. 3. Dave Smith and Ian Batty with 44 pts also. Longest Walk went to Allan Walker and Nigel Marshall.

The East of England Section has decided to sponsor a greenkeeper through an NVQ college course. This is open to greenkeepers from all courses at all levels that do not qualify for free education. Anybody interested in this is asked to write to Allan Walker with reasons why they should be chosen.

The chosen applicant will be based upon dedication to the job support for our Section and BIGGA and have the backing of their golf club.

All interested applicants should contact Alan Walker on allan@jaxbaby.plus.com. Office: 01733 380883.

We are looking at arranging a social evening in the summer, go-karting has already been suggested.

Around the Green



Any other ideas should be sent to Allan at the above addresses. Everyone is reminded that our website is up and running and make full use of the service that it provides.

A seminar is being organised by Rigby Taylor to be held at Elsham Golf Club. This will be held in February, however the exact date is not known at this point. The main topic of the day will be "The Disturbance Theory". Further details will follow.

The first three golf days of 2008 are: April 16 at Pottergate, May 20 at Burghley Park; June 12 at Cleethorpes. Regular golf day reminders will be put on here and on the website, a full list will be sent out before the season starts to put on your mess room walls.

Finally many congratulations to Les Howkins, of Cotgrave Place GC, and his wife Julie on the safe arrival of baby, Aimee. All nappy-changing tips will be gratefully received as I count down to March 17! Many thanks.

Steve Beverly *Immingham Golf Club*

Steveimmingham@aol.com www.eastofenglandbigga.com



SOUTH EAST REGION – SURREY

Tuesday, January 8. The Turkey Trot and AGM were held on December 13 at Tyrrells Wood GC. The frosty start meant that everybody had balls bouncing all over the course and most scores reflected the difficult conditions. Many thanks to Billy McMillan, and Tyrrells Wood GC, for allowing play so that we could all enjoy a lovely Surrey course with its superb and picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. We only had one player wearing a sombrero which enabled Craig Mills to win with 40pts. Jim Russell, that now, not so well rounded figure from over the border, came 2nd with 35pts. Dave Gibbs crept into 3rd place with 33pts and also won Nearest the Pin. The Longest Drive was delivered by Gavin (now that's a long one) Kyle. The day was sponsored by John Shaw Machinery and we thank them for the excellent prizes.

The AGM was held before we sat down to a culinary delight produced by the clubs chef and catering team - Many thanks to them for an excellent Christmas dinner.

The acting Chairman, Tony Bremer, gave his year's report and thanked the outgoing Chairman, Anthony Freeman, for his many years of hard work for Surrey. Tony also noted that it was a pity Anthony could not use his electric trolley, presented to him by Surrey committee, due to the frost. No written questions were received prior to the meeting and the committee was returned en bloc with the addition of Ron Christie, who will take over the role of Secretary from John Ross who will be our new Chairman.

I hope you all had a good Christmas and if you are going, I'll see you at Harrogate.

Brian Willmott

KENT

Well here we are well into 2008. How many of us, I wonder, have stuck to our New Year's resolutions? Have you cut out those saturated fats, midnight treats and excesses of the demon drink?

More importantly, how many promised themselves they would shave a significant number of strokes off their golfing handicaps and resolved to go up the range or play a few holes after work each and every day in order to reach an impossible target?!

At least if an improved handicap was your New Year's resolution you won't necessarily need to stick to all the other things you promised to cut down on. Golf differs from every other sport in that an individual's size and shape isn't too important. You don't need to be 12 stone, be seven feet tall or do 100 metres in 10 seconds flat. No, there are some very fine and happy golfers out there who are anything but athletes!

We constantly strive to perfect our individual games yet never attain it. At least we don't blame the greenstaff though!

Here on the Kent Section we are doing all we can to improve your game by plying you with as much golf as possible this year. Our much-lauded five event golfing calendar kicks off in earnest next month at The London Club on March 25.

We are expecting a big turn out so get your applications in early!

Well, I'm off now for nine holes followed by a pie and a pint. Good luck to all of you who are blessed with more willpower than me!

Rob Holland



LONDON

Firstly from all of us at London Section we would like to thank Martin Smith, his team of Greenstaff and all in the Clubhouse and Pro shop at Porters Park GC for providing a great days golf for our last fixture of 2007.

The results are as follows: 1. Northwood GC, 2. Sandy lodge GC 1, 3. Sandy Lodge GC 2, 4. Brookmans Park, Longest Drive - David Badham and Nearest the pin – Ben Burnham.

Thank you to Mick Fance and Scotts for their sponsorship and providing us with some great prizes. The Scotts trophy has been going now for four years and the attendance gets better year on year.

For those that aren't aware the London Section website is now up and running so please visit us at www.biggalondonsection.co.uk and let us know what you think.

The websites aim is to provide you the member with all the latest news of what's going on in and around our section, if there is something that



you feel is missing that you would like to see posted on the site, then please let us know via our Contact us page.

Our First fixture of the year will be the A.T Oliver Toro Trophy (spring cup) at Northwood GC on Thursday, April 10; the book is now open for entries.

For 2008 we will no longer be sending out entry forms, reminders only.

For booking please either contact us through our website or if you do not have Internet access then please call us on the following number 07903121760.

The Avoncrop Amenity Knockout Competition is now open for entries. You are required to enter a team of two. Trade members are also welcome.

The competition will be played either at your home club or away at your opponents.

A full description of the competition will be posted on our website. To enter please follow the same instructions as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Aaron Percival



EAST ANGLIAN

Well, here we are again then. Another year older and deeper in debt - 'St Peter Don't You Call Me 'Cause I Can't Go' Some will know the rest. I digress - hope you are all well, ready for another battle with the new committee. Don't forget to give the Chairman a "Be Your Own Lawn Expert" book at the first meeting, then at least he'll know what a daisy looks like! Happy New Year.

It was a lovely day at Thorpeness back in December, only -4 degrees c (greens were a bit firm!) 120 plus souls turned up, those that played, which was most of them, teed off at 9.00 am sharp for the shotgun/SAM start and we didn't launch the lifeboat. We were all back for the quietest AGM on record at 2.15 pm (ish) and Christmas lunch was served at 2.45 pm (ish).

In between all that, some golf was played, and if the loo seat was being played for, Tomo would have won it yet again, before we had started. His wolfhound 'Toby' had wandered off and just as our main sponsor for the day, Mike Moss, from CMW, was about to tee off, Tomo called "Toby" quite loudly from a nearby tee. Mike stopped, looked around and addressed his ball again. Yet again, Tomo called. Mike stopped as before, swore briefly, started again. All was quiet until Mike had reached the point of no return. "Toby" came the shout. Mike's ball went in the bushes, followed by a lot of Anglo Saxon and 'Toby' came running up the fairway like nothing had happened. Happy Days!

The more serious among us did manage to scrape together a few points: 1. Rookery A Team with 56.2 pts; 2. Rushmere with the Eaton B Team

(not me - surprise, surprise) with 56.7 pts; 3. Rushmere Hackers with 57.5 pts. The free for all Longest Drive sponsored by Earnest Doe was won by Michael Buck (2'6"). The 0 - 15 Handicap Longest Drive sponsored by Prime was won by Chris O'Dowd (3'). The 16 - 28 Handicap (proper golfers) longest drive sponsored by Ben Burgess was won by Rob George. Nearest the pin: 2nd Hole - sponsored by Aitkens, was won by Adrian Brown.

7th Hole - sponsored by Tomlinson Groundcare, was won by John Squirell (must be a joke about nuts there somewhere). 10th Hole - sponsored by Lely UK, was won by Dennis Smith. 16th Hole - sponsored by Bartram Mowers, was won by Danny Perring (fix!) Nearest the Pin in two shots on the 6th hole - sponsored by Tacit, was won by Terry Mills.

David Morsley, Club Captain, presented the prizes and once again our friends from the trade did us proud. Our main sponsor for the day was CMW - followed by: Bartram Mowers, Textron, Tacit, Rigby Taylor, CMW, Sisis, A & K Supplies, Midlube, Collier Turf Care, Aitkens, Scotts, Earnest Doe, Ben Burgess, Sherriff (of Nottingham), Toro, Tomlinson Ground Care, Consultant Clarkson, Headland, Atterton & Ellis, Lely UK, Baileys of Norfolk and Tower Chemicals.

Our thanks must go to Ian and the lads for a super course (one day I'll play it in the summer). Also thanks to Stefan and catering staff for 'lully grub' - and thanks Thorpeness for putting up with us once again.

By the way, all officers were elected en bloc (that's French for 'as you were') - and dear old Ernie's bottle of port was presented to 'Scottie' for persistence in greenkeeping. Sorry for the nickname, but no one seems to know his real name. I'll find out and let you know in the next edition of 'Men Only'.

Mick Lathrope



SOUTH WEST AND WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

Hard to think that by the time this hits the shelves, it'll be mid-Feb, and we'll all be thinking about the new season, coring greens, top-dressing, making the first fertiliser applications and hitting the ground running for the first full club comps of 2008. Scary.

The first Section meeting of the year will be at Kingsdown GC on February 21 - we're hoping to incorporate some education from Bernhards Grinders with it, so watch out for your invite.

Back in December of last year, we were made very welcome at Burnham & Berrow GC for the 2007 Christmas Tournament. On a beautiful winter day, the course looked at its sparkling best, with newly revetted bunkers, big fast greens, narrow winding fairways, and spectacular views across the Bristol Channel. Links golf at its very best. Richard Whyman took time out from his busy schedule to give us a course walk to show off his handiwork. The greens are slowly being converted from bent to fescue - forget Poa Annua - I hardly saw any on the greens. Richard overseeds with a fescue mix twice per year spring and autumn, and aerates his greens every month using a vertidrain with pencil tines in

Around the Green

winter, and a hydroject in summer. He feeds monthly with liquids using 45 kg\Ha of both N & Potash, and includes compost-tea in the mix. He top-dresses monthly, and verti-cutting has been reduced from 10 passes to 5 passes per annum. He hosted the English Ladies Championships, the West of England Championships, and is preparing for England Boys in 2011. The height of cut on the greens is 5.5 in winter (Richard tries to cut every day in winter) and down to 4.5 in the summer. This regime easily achieves speeds of 10.5 to 11 feet. Richard proudly showed us the new practice green facility which was constructed by Mike Smith and finished by the greenstaff, as well as a look at the new maintenance facility with its impressive vehicle lift. Thanks very much to Richard for putting so much time and thought to the tour.

The tournament was won by Wayne Vincent with 38 points despite his recent handicap reduction to 12. The full result was as follows: 1. Wayne Vincent, Cotswold Hills 38 pts; 2. Lauchlan "Jock" Millar, Burnham & Berrow – 35 pts; 3. Gary Cook, Enmore Park, 32 pts. Wooden Spoon - Mike Harris, 0 points. (Still out there somewhere).

John Keenaghan also presented the Order of Merit prizes for 2007.

Thanks very much to Richard and the team for the outstanding condition of the course, to the caterers for preparing such a nice meal for so many people, and to Jock Millar for welcoming us on behalf of the club. I might also mention Nobby Knight, who put in his usual immense amount of work to make the event such a success, and last but not least, to all our Patronage Partners and the Trade, who put up so many of the raffle prizes – I should think everyone went home with something.

Back at Minch, we recently were treated to a very interesting members evening entitled "An Evening with Angwin". We had an hours' talk on Meteorology from Richard Angwin, who was every bit as smooth in real life as he is on the telly. After spilling the beans on David Garmston's wig collection and Alex Lovalls love-life, Richard told how he progressed from a lowly weather observer to TV forecaster by taking an Open University Course, and how when he was recruited to appear on the BBC he insisted on giving the forecast a local flavour by blending in news of local events etc as well as the actual forecasting. He gave a comprehensive history of Meteorology and early weather forecasting, with examples from ancient Egypt (such as seven years of feast and famine around the Nile Delta), through to the need for weather forecasting in Napoleonic times when more warships were lost to bad weather than due to enemy action, and WW2 when bad weather forecasts prevented Hitlers invasion.

He came right up to modern times after reminiscing how the Met Office used to rent the Lyons Cakes computer in the 60s to run simulations and make calculations – unbelievable in this day and age they didn't have their own, and how the computers were eventually installed at Bracknell to modernise forecasting. The Met Office rent out services (and forecasters) to the BBC, the Armed Forces, and to Energy Companies (it's very important to know when a cold snap is coming so that energy such as imported gas can be purchased on the futures market at reasonable prices, rather than having to be purchased at the last minute at high rates). The Met Office even provides services to such diverse groups as farmers, pheasant breeders, and pigeon fanciers. Richard closed with how times are changing – from a mini-ice age in the 1600s – through to the current "global warming" phenomena. It is an interesting thought, that we are now breathing gases which have been locked away in frozen ground for millions of years. The most sobering thought of all was the

Siberian Bog – a huge tract of Siberia which is still permafrozen (just) - but should it continue to thaw will release staggering amounts of methane into the atmosphere, and drastically accelerate global warming. All of it inconveniently true. How about some details of your winter & spring programmes etc?

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk 01453 837355



DEVON AND CORNWALL

The members were greeted with a hard frost for our Christmas meeting at Okehampton Golf Club. The competition still took place, albeit on temporary greens, and the hospitality afforded us by the Club was second to none. Our sponsors for the day were: P J Flegg and Irritech and I would like to thank Paul Watson for organising everything, especially the traditional beer tent out on the course. I would also like to thank Roger Davey of Irritech for his continued support of our Section.

A fantastic Christmas lunch was enjoyed by everyone and we were entertained afterwards by The Somerset Paddies.

The competition was won by Adam Bridgewater, of Yelverton, and Patrick Twitchin, of Teignmouth. The day was rounded off by the famous Devon and Cornwall raffle, where just about everyone won a prize.

By the time you guys read this, BTME would have come round once again and I'm sure you would have all had a wonderful time. There is always a good turn out from the Devon and Cornwall Section and with our trip being a total sell out since October last year, this year is no exception.

Important dates for your diary: Wednesday, February 13 - Section Meeting, Tavistock Golf Club; Wednesday, March 5 - Spring Workshop based on Sustainability, Fingle Glen Golf Club; Wednesday, March 12 - Section Meeting, Royal North Devon Golf Club.

After several years, this will be my last "Around the Green" column and my successor is Jerry Cole. I wish you luck Jerry as these Section notes can sometimes be a bit of a brain drain, especially on a cold Winter's night. Good luck mate!

Steve Evans

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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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PREFER MIGRANTS TO POOR QUALITY BRITISH GRADUATES

Published in the Daily telegraph 31-12-07 (Your Vote)

“Labour’s drive to boost the number of people going to university has produced a generation of poor quality graduates who are being out classed by migrant, business leaders warned yesterday.

“More British students are gaining degrees but they still struggle with basic English and Maths, leaving employers more inclined to recruit people from Poland and central Europe, it was claimed. The Government policy to increase the number of degrees has been criticised in some quarters for encouraging the rise of “Mickey Mouse” qualifications such as Golf and Sports Turf Management.

“Richard Lambert, the director general of the CBI, said many bosses believed standards had fallen with the rapid in student numbers. In a speech to university vice-chancellors, he warned “If businesses can’t find the skills or work attitudes that they need in the national workplace, they can perfectly well recruit them from elsewhere” He went on “ I’ve lost count of the number of times that employers have told me depressing stories about how the skills and employability of their central European – often Polish recruits compare favorably with those of the domestic pool”.

“Bill Rammell, the minister for higher education, defended the rise in student numbers. He said “We are widening participation in higher education to overcome disadvantage and unlock the talent within our society, wherever it is to be found”.

In response to the above ‘Prefer migrants to poor quality British graduates’

Published in the Daily telegraph 31-12-07 (Your Vote)



I don’t want to enter the debate about employers choosing migrant workers over British graduates, but what has really incensed me is that once again degrees in golf and sports turf management have been

criticised as “Mickey Mouse”. Well here we go again!

In 2005, Michael Howard, then leader of the opposition, tried the same tactic and criticised golf and sports turf management degree, among others, as being unsuitable subjects for higher academic study.

Having advanced my career through the Sports Turf Industry, from a practicing groundsman to lecturing, I can categorically state that “I wouldn’t be where I am today without my degree”. With respect, people like the CBI Director General, Richard Lambert, have lost the plot and obviously have no idea about the sports turf industry. Try telling anyone with a sports turf related degree such as a Masters, Bachelor of Science or Foundation Degree that they are Mickey Mouse!

The non-specialist media’s unjustified criticism of our highly skilled industry is only serving to feed the apathy that already exists towards our sector. I suggest that Mr. Lambert and Co should learn to value and respect sports turf professionals both for their qualifications and for their contribution to society.

With the Olympic Games only four years away and the government investing millions in the event, I am sure that all spectators will expect our sports facilities to be in first class condition for the world’s athletes/participants. Who will manage and maintain these facilities for the games and afterwards if not highly qualified, professional and experienced grounds staff?

The Minister for Higher Education Bill Rammell makes a valid point in your article when he says: “We are widening participation in education to overcome disadvantage and unlock the talent within our society”. At Reaseheath College we are able to offer exciting and valuable career options to school leavers, career changers and for those already in the industry who wish to pursue continued professional development.

In particular, the Foundation Degree in Golf and Sports Turf Management has proved a particularly successful vehicle by providing a balance of practical and academic work, therefore making graduates more employable. We have worked with employers to ensure that these higher qualifications have been specially tailored to deliver what the industry wants.

Practical experience in ‘real’ work situations, backed up by appropriate academic study and research, ensures that our graduates are in high demand in a growing global leisure market.

Yours faithfully

Gareth Phillips NDT
Senior Turf Lecturer
Reaseheath College
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 6DF

P.S Now that the merger talks between the IOG and BIGGA have ceased. Recent publicity has suggested that both organisation’s will be working closely together on matters of interest. In the interest of our industry I urge both parties to seriously promote Golf and Sports Turf Maintenance issues at the highest level possible. If our leading industry representatives/membership organisations do not step up to the plate then we will always be looked on unfavorably and with increasing apathy from most quarters, our industry players a major role in most people’s lives and it should be recognised as such.



In the Shed

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C	U	R	T	S	Y	C	H	E	M	I	C	A	L
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- Hyacinth Bucket
- Sherri and Teri
- Make a phone call with it
- Gary Lineker
- Port Louis
- Cardiff City
- Show jumping
- Sheffield United
- Four

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

1	7	4	2	9	8	3	6	5
5	2	9	6	1	4	7	3	8
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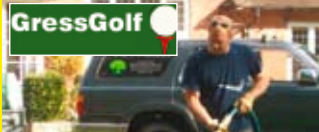
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Baberton Golf Club

Greenkeeper

Baberton is an 18 hole private club set in approx 100 acres of Heathland on west side of Edinburgh. We currently have a vacancy for an experienced Greenkeeper to help us to continue to improve the standards of our course, already one of the best in Edinburgh.

Applicants will be preferably qualified to a minimum of NVQ Level 3, or equivalent, plus PA1, PA2 and PA6. Operation of chain saw qualifications is preferred.

The successful applicant will be able to

demonstrate being punctual, organised and enthusiastic. He/she will have his/her own transport. Some weekend work is required.

A competitive package is available, dependent on qualifications with further training opportunities.

Please apply in writing with full C.V to:

Bernard M Flockhart
Club Manager
Baberton Golf Club
50 Baberton Avenue
Juniper Green
Edinburgh
EH14 5DU

Closing date for applications is 29th February 2008.



BUCHANAN CASTLE GOLF CLUB has a vacancy for a HEAD GREENKEEPER

Buchanan Castle Golf Club, situated in the Loch Lomond National Park, is a historic and scenic 18-hole parkland course. The club is currently developing a Driving Range and 9-hole par 3 course.

Candidates with the following attributes are invited to apply:

- A highly motivated individual with a proven track record
- Experience in parkland course management
- NVQ Level 3 or equivalent
- Spraying and other certification an advantage
- Working knowledge of IT, Health & Safety, COSHH and other relevant legislation
- Possess the ability to lead and motivate staff
- The ability to deliver effective performance management to produce and maintain high standards of work on the Golf Course

We offer a competitive salary along with pension contribution. A house in the grounds can be provided if required.

Apply in writing including CV by 14th February 2008 to:

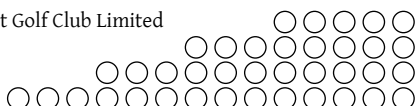
The General Manager
Buchanan Castle Golf Club
Buchanan Castle Estate,
Drymen, By Glasgow G63 OHY

Cleckheaton & District Golf Club Limited

483 Bradford Road

Cleckheaton

BD19 6BU



An experienced NVQ Level 2 Greenkeeper is required to join our professional Greenkeeping team. The members of the much-respected 18 hole parkland golf course pride themselves on the quality, presentation and continuous improvement of the course.

Located just off the M62 this opportunity will be attractive to a hard working and ambitious greenkeeper with a passion to contribute, develop and improve.

A competitive salary will be offered consistent with experience and qualification.

Please apply by sending a CV with a covering letter to the Chairman of Greens at the above address.



The Belfry

★★★★



Business, golf & leisure in one resort.

The Belfry is the world famous venue for golf. Would you like to share the passion and become part of the greenkeeping team that ensures our customers live the ultimate golfing experience? We are currently looking to interview for the following positions over 2008.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

At least Level 2 NVQ Sports Turf Management or equivalent.

Preferably at least 2-3yrs experience.

39hr contract.

Opportunity of working the Quinn Direct British Masters September 2008 and gaining excellent tournament experience.

TRAINEE GREENKEEPERS

Preferably at least 1yrs experience.

SUMMER STAFF / STUDENT GREENKEEPERS

April/May – October.

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Including working at the Quinn Insurance British Masters September 2008 and gaining excellent tournament experience.



CHIPPING SODBURY GOLF CLUB
Est 1905

INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF:

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

This busy private members Club established in 1905 and situated at the foot of the Cotswolds is very popular with visitors and golfing societies, Chipping Sodbury is a very forward thinking club and has just been asked to host the English County Finals in 2009.

An enthusiastic hard working Greenkeeper with at least 3 years experience is needed to join an already highly motivated team, applicants should be N.V.Q. Level Two or equivalent, Spraying certificates would be an advantage but not essential. This position may well ultimately lead into the First assistant's position.

This is an excellent opportunity for a highly motivated Greenkeeper to further his/her career.
Salary negotiable according to experience and qualifications.

Please e-mail or send C.V together with an application letter for the attention of Bob Williams info@chippingsodburygolfclub.co.uk

Chipping Sodbury Golf Club,
Trinity Lane,
Chipping Sodbury,
Bristol BS37 6PU
Tel 01454 319042

www.chippingsodburygolfclub.co.uk

Golf Club Manager

Enniscrone Golf Links, Co. Sligo
www.enniscronegolf.com
E-mail enniscronegolf@eircom.net

Reporting to the management committee, the Manager will be required to plan, direct and coordinate the day to day activities of the club and ensure that all services and facilities are maintained to the highest standards.

The position involves the management of the golf course, club house and bar to ensure that all aspects of the Club are run efficiently with emphasis on quality service.

The successful candidate will be a golfer with excellent communication and leadership skills. The person will have a strong business background and will be expected to have a hands-on approach to marketing and administration of the overall facility. The ideal candidate will have all relevant agronomy skills necessary for effective links course management.

This challenging position will require a high level of initiative, commitment, energy, a flexible approach to working hours and excellent interpersonal skills.

Candidates may apply by email or by post to The Hon. Secretary, Enniscrone Golf Club, Co. Sligo. Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, 22nd February, 2008.



1ST ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

See our 18 hole course on our website & download an application form now. The position is to help supervise a team of up to 5 staff and deputise in the Head Greenkeeper's absence. Must have the ability to lead by example as this is a hands on position. The applicant should be qualified to at least NVQ 2 or its equivalent & have a minimum of 3 years experience. They must also possess a sound working knowledge of Health & Safety regulations. Pa1, Pa2 and Pa6 Spraying Certificates an advantage. Knowledge of golf preferred.

Salary negotiable in accordance with experience. No accommodation available.
Applications in writing, with full CV.

Mr. J. Carter, Head Greenkeeper, The Craythorne, Craythorne Road,
Rolleston on Dove, Burton upon Trent, Staffs. DE13 0AZ
admin@craythorne.co.uk www.craythorne.co.uk



Service Engineer

We are seeking an experienced technician to join our busy service team, working with professional grass cutting machinery, compact diesel tractors and other specialised equipment including Toro, Hayter and Kioti brands. Therefore, diesel and hydraulic experience is preferred. The position may also suit applicants with experience of diesel engines and general plant or vehicles looking to develop their career in a specialised field.

The position will involve mobile customer support for which a vehicle is provided. Ongoing training provided together with an excellent salary package.

Please phone or write for an application form.
Tel: 0845 026 0061

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ROCKLIFFE HALL

Mechanic & Qualified Greenkeepers

OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN A NEW TEAM!

Rockliffe Hall (www.rockliffehall.com) is a prestigious five star resort development in the North East of England consisting of a 63 bedroom hotel, Spa and 18 hole golf course with Academy.

Rockliffe Hall Ltd is looking to recruit a fully qualified Mechanic, to set up maintain and service the fleet of greenkeeping machinery at this new development. We are also seeking Greenkeepers, qualified to NVQ level two with at least two years experience. Previous experience of working on growing in a course would be an advantage but not essential.

The course is under construction and due to open in 2009. With bent grass greens, full irrigation and the Company's commitment to quality, this promises quickly to become one of the top golf venues in the UK

The mechanic's role will encompass the planning and set up of workshop and stores and working closely with the Course Manager and Deputy to develop best practice in preventative maintenance and safe working.

The successful candidate will have previous experience of managing a full fleet of this nature and working and contributing within a team environment.

Applications from suitably qualified and experienced candidates should be sent to Davy Cuthbertson, Course Manager, Rockliffe Hall Ltd. Stoer House, 1, Polam Road, Darlington, DL1 5NW or e-mail imdavy@aol.com

www.rockliffehall.com



Kenilworth Golf Club

Formed in 1889, Kenilworth Golf club is an 18 hole, private members club and is looking to recruit:

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

The ideal candidate must have:

- A minimum of 6 years Greenkeeping experience
- NVQ III or equivalent
- PA1, 2 and 6 Spraying certificates
- Ability to lead and motivate staff in the absence of the Head Greenkeeper
- Ability to maintain high standards

Assistant Greenkeeper

The ideal candidate must have:

- A minimum of 3 years Greenkeeping experience
- NVQ II or equivalent
- Ability to maintain high standards and work in a team
- Spraying certificates would be an advantage

Please apply in writing or by email, with CV to:
The Secretary, Kenilworth Golf Club, Crewe Lane
Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2EA
E-mail: secretary@kenilworthgolfclub.co.uk

Salaries appropriate to qualifications and experience

KING'S LYNN GOLF CLUB

HEAD GREENKEEPER

A PRIVATE MEMBERS CLUB ESTABLISHED IN 1923 AND SITUATED IN WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN IS A BUSY MEMBERS CLUB, POPULAR WITH VISITORS AND GOLFING SOCIETIES AND OFFERS AN 18 HOLE PAR 72 SSS 73 WOODLAND COURSE

This is a great opportunity for a committed, hands on, enthusiastic, motivated and hardworking Head Greenkeeper to lead and manage a dedicated team.

A salary in accordance with BIGGA recommendations but at the higher end of the salary scale will be paid. The successful candidate will be responsible for the management of the course and its continuing development and is expected to have the following qualifications and skills:

- Qualified to NVQ level 3/4 or equivalent to HND Golf Course Management/Master Greenkeeper PA1, PA2, PA6 Spraying Certificates
- Be able to develop and implement a course management plan
- Understand Health & Safety and Environmental Management issues
- Have considerable experience in working on woodland courses
- Knowledge of irrigation systems
- Proven leadership and motivational skills
- Ideally a minimum of 5 years experience at Head Greenkeeping level

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence
Please apply with a full CV and current salary to:
The General Manager, King's Lynn Golf Club,
Castle Rising, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6BD

Closing date: Friday 29th February

COURSE MANAGER



Letchworth Golf Club is seeking an appropriately qualified Course Manager to join our Club Team.

Letchworth Golf Club has recently celebrated its centenary, and has hosted the county championships for both men and ladies in recent years. The course is set in a picturesque parkland environment, has a well developed mature 18 hole course that is undergoing a major 3-4 year re-design programme and so offers the successful applicant a unique opportunity to be instrumental in reshaping the course and its greenkeeping facilities.

The successful applicant will be:

- Qualified to NQV3 or higher and possess spraying qualifications, PA1, PA2 & PA6
- Have a sound working knowledge of irrigation system maintenance, repair and ideally installation
- A highly motivated and communicative individual with a proven record in man-management skills and the ability to identify and motivate the staff to deliver their full potential. The ability to lead and work with an established greenkeeping team is essential
- Must be computer literate and have the ability to manage budgets, costs suppliers and resources to maximum effect
- Project management and plant experience would be an advantage along with the essential knowledge of all relevant Health & Safety legislation
- Being a golfer is desirable

A competitive salary is available to the successful candidate.

If you are interested, please send your CV with a covering letter to

Niki Hunter, Secretary, Letchworth Golf Club, Letchworth Lane, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 3NQ or alternatively via email to Niki@Letchworthgolfclub.com

Closing date for applications 29th February



1st March/April
to 30th September/October 31st

We are looking for enthusiastic, hardworking individuals to join our team during the 2008 golfing season. Loch Lomond is a Tom Weiskopf /Jay Morrish – designed inland course, located in the North West of Scotland.

Experience and Training would include

- USGA Greens Management
- Drainage installation
- Construction projects
- Preparing for The Barclays Scottish Open event in July 2008
- Operation and maintenance of an extensive fleet of turf grass equipment
- Intergrated pest management (IPM)

This could be a fantastic opportunity to gain valuable experience and expand your knowledge in turf grass management.

You can find further information about Loch Lomond on our web page
www.lochlomond.com

To apply for a position or find out more information please send a covering letter and C.V. to:

David Cole, Golf Course Superintendent, Loch Lomond Golf Club,
Rossdhu House, Luss (by Alexandria), Dunbartonshire, G83 8NT
Scotland.

or tel. 01436 655333

Email: david.cole@lochlomond.com



DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

Malone Golf Club, a 27 hole championship golf course founded in 1895 and situated in 300 acres of rolling wooded parkland on the outskirts of Belfast, invites applications for the position of Deputy Course Manager.

The Club offers excellent working conditions with a large fleet of modern greenkeeping machinery.

Reporting to the Course Manager, you will possess strong supervisory skills in order to communicate and organise the day to day tasks within the greenkeeping team. You will have an eye for detail and ensure that high quality standards are maintained at all times. You will also:

- Have a minimum of 5 years greenkeeping experience
- Be qualified to NVQ3 standard or equivalent
- Hold spraying certificates PA1, 2 and 6
- Have a sound working knowledge of Health & Safety Regulations

Application forms may be obtained from:

Nick Agate, Club Manager, Malone Golf Club, 240 Upper Malone Road, Dunmurry, Belfast BT17 9LB.
Tel: 028 9061 2758
E-mail: manager@malonegolfclub.co.uk

Completed forms should be returned by 29th February 2008. Malone Golf Club is an equal opportunities employer.



MIKLAGARD GOLF

Miklagard Golf Course is situated approx 18 miles North of Oslo and is only a 10 minute drive from Oslo international airport. The principle function of the course is to be the premier facility of its kind in Scandinavia. The course has USGA spec greens and was designed and constructed by the Robert Trent Jones II Corporation.

We are currently seeking:

GREENKEEPER

We are seeking an ambitious individual to take on this challenging role in developing the Course Maintenance Team. Working alongside the Courses Superintendent to promote a professional attitude to golf course management, this position will entail maintaining our golf course to the highest possible standards. Spraying certificates & Chainsaw certificates are preferred however not essential as training can be provided. Salary negotiable.

HEAD MECHANIC

We are seeking a mature qualified person to take on this prominent role in developing the Course Maintenance Team. Working alongside the Course Superintendent to promote a professional attitude to machinery management, this position will entail maintaining our large fleet of maintenance machinery to the highest standards. The position is a key one within a large team. No accommodation is provided, although help shall be given to find suitable accommodation. A competitive package shall be offered to the successful candidate.

Applications in writing enclosing a current CV and Marking your application 'Confidential' to ianross@c2i.net or to the address Below
Ian Ross, Miklagard Golf AS, Postboks 87, 2041 Klofta

RECRUITMENT



NORTH HANTS GOLF CLUB

REQUIRES A

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

North Hants Golf Club is located in Fleet on the western edge of the sand belt, which cuts through Surrey, Berkshire and Hampshire. A delightful heathland course set amongst pines, oaks and silver birch. Founded in 1904, North Hants Golf Club is an 18 hole private members' club and is home to the Hampshire Hog and Hampshire Rose, premier amateur competitions. Originally designed by James Braid, it has also seen the influence of Harry Colt and more latterly Donald Steel.

We are looking for an ambitious, reliable, hard working and highly motivated Deputy Course Manager.

The successful candidate will be a key member of the team, assisting in the future development of the course and will desirably have the following qualifications and skills:

- Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent
- PA1, 2 and 6a Spraying Certificates
- Chainsaw Certificate
- Ability to lead and motivate staff with, and in the absence of, the Course Manager
- Good communication skills
- Conversant with up to date Health and Safety Regulations
- Knowledge of irrigation systems
- Ability to produce and maintain high standards of work

An excellent salary is offered for the successful candidate. Accommodation is not available.

To apply please send your CV and covering letter to:-

The Course Manager
North Hants Golf Club, Minley Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 1RF

Email: coursemanager@north-hants-fleetgc.co.uk

PLEASINGTON GOLF CLUB OPEN REGIONAL QUALIFYING COURSE

REQUIRES AN ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for an enthusiastic, hard working greenkeeper who is highly motivated and able to work as part of a team.

You should be qualified to NVQ level 2 or equivalent and spraying certificates would be an advantage.

The successful applicant will be encouraged to undertake further training to progress within the industry.

Written applications, including full CV should be sent to:

Course Manager, Pleasington Golf Club, Pleasington, Blackburn, BB2 5JF

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
FRIDAY 29TH FEBRUARY



SUTTON GREEN GOLF CLUB

Require an ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER



We are looking for an enthusiastic hard working and reliable Greenkeeper to join our existing team.

Applicants should have a minimum of 3 years experience in modern Greenkeeping.

Qualifications preferred / No accommodation

Applications with full CV to:
Nathan Kim-Sing, Head Greenkeeper, Sutton Green Golf Club,
New Lane, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 7QF



The Royal Malta Golf Club (RMGC) invites applications for the position of:

MECHANIC

The RMGC is one of only sixty or so 'Royal Clubs' in the world. Established in 1888, the Private Members Club is the only course on the sunny islands of Malta.

We are currently seeking an enthusiastic and ambitious person to take on this prominent role within our team. Working closely with the Head Greenkeeper to promote a professional attitude to machinery maintenance, this position will entail maintaining our fleet of machinery to the highest standards.

Requirements:

- Relevant mechanical and Greenkeeping qualifications
- Up to date knowledge of health and safety regulations
- Sound knowledge of golf course equipment including servicing, cylinder grinding, record keeping and stock control
- Ability to work under own initiative
- A good knowledge of golf would be an advantage

Salary (package) negotiable according to experience and qualifications.

If interested, please send C.V and covering letter to:

Email: chairman@royalmaltagolfclub.com

Post: Attn Chairman, Royal Malta Golf Club, Aldo Moro Street, Marsa, MRS 9064, Malta GC

Applications to be received by not later than 15th March 2008

Lawncare Technicians

One based in East Herts/West Essex and other in Warwickshire.

TopGrass is made up of two successful independent, rapidly growing, lawn care companies. We seek individuals who want to develop their careers in line with the growth of the business. Initial salary £18-20K plus bonus.



Skills and experience we are looking for: an ability to work on your own and unsupervised, a turf or lawn care background, an ability to converse with clients, willing to learn more about lawns, practical strong work ethic.

PA1 & PA6a desirable, full driving license essential.

Please send CV's to:
TopGrass (UK) Ltd,
4 Birdingbury Road,
Marton, Rugby, CV23 9RY

or see www.TopGrass.net



GREENKEEPER

Stockley Park is an 18-hole golf course, which is currently undergoing some exciting new developments. We currently have a vacancy for an experienced greenkeeper to become part of our team and assist with our expansion programme.

Applicants must be qualified to a minimum of NVQ Level 2, or equivalent, plus PA1, PA2 and PA6. Operation of chain saw qualification preferred but not essential. The successful applicant must be reliable, hardworking and highly motivated in return a competitive salary will be offered.

To apply for this position please forward your CV for the attention of:
Neil Gibson, Head Greenkeeper, Stockley Park Golf Course, The Clubhouse,
Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1AQ



Course Manager

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club located between Cardiff and Swansea on the South Wales coast has an excellent 18 hole Championship Links course, host to many prestigious championships including the Walker Cup and the Amateur.

We wish to appoint a highly capable Course Manager in this important role. The successful applicant will be responsible for all aspects of course maintenance and management and will join our existing management team to further develop the potential of this famous course.

Royal Porthcawl has a world wide reputation as a premier club delivering the highest standards and the warmest hospitality. In 2008 we will host the Welsh Amateur and in 2009 & 2010 the Ryder Cup Wales Seniors Open.

Highly motivated and experienced individuals with the following attributes are invited to apply for this outstanding opportunity.

- Minimum of 3 years experience as a Course Manager or Deputy gained at a high profile course to include tournament experience.
- Proven leadership and man management skills with the ability to optimise the performance of the Greenkeeping team.
- Have appropriate agronomic experience and the ability to develop effective course management strategies
- Be financially aware with the ability to create and operate budgets and be computer literate.
- Good knowledge of and the ability to implement Health and Safety legislation.

You will be joining an employer committed to excellence and the continuing personal development of its employees, the remuneration package offered will reflect the importance of this position and is negotiable depending on experience and qualifications.

Please send your CV with covering letter detailing your experience to: Martin Bond, Secretary by email at: martin.bond@royalporthcawl.com or by post to Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, Rest Bay, Porthcawl, CF36 3UW.

Closing date for applications is Monday 3rd March 2008

The Bigga Training & Development Manual, sponsored by John Deere, is an invaluable tool for everyone working within the greenkeeping industry.



The BIGGA Training & Development Manual

FREE USE FOR MEMBERS

This online manual provides users with the information they need on recruitment, induction, training and career progression using video clips, written information, downloadable documents and useful web links.

A valuable membership benefit the manual can be accessed via the BIGGA website on the Education, Jobs' and Members' areas. Simply log in using your surname and BIGGA membership number on the Home page.

Designed around a theme of 18 holes users can gain access to training records, job specifications, job descriptions, sample contracts of employment, appraisal forms and details of continuing development.

How to access the BIGGA Training & Development Manual

1. Go to the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk
2. Click on the Members area, the Jobs page or the Education page and click on the BIGGA Training Manual link.
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.



Chairman's Column

Hello and best wishes to all BIGGA members. My name is Kenny Mackay, Director of Golf Courses and Grounds at the Belfry. I'm honoured to be your new Chairman this year. When I received the call from Billy McMillan it didn't take me long to accept as after talking to Billy I knew how important a role it would be to help develop the Association and move it forward. I think this role was made easier for me to accept while working at The Belfry as I have a large team with experienced Head Greenkeeper's and Manager's, able to conduct day-to-day business and keep the place running as normal, even though we are holding a European Tour Event in September. Obviously my schedule will change through that period in preparation. Apart from that I am looking forward to the year ahead and getting heavily involved in my BIGGA duties.



between 14000-16000 greenkeepers employed in the UK, and we currently have a membership of 6500, that's just 43%. By looking at new categories of membership and finding out why some greenkeepers are not members we hope to attract them into the Association. I believe we can make major strides in membership numbers over the coming years.

I'd like to thank Billy McMillan following his year as Chairman and his extra effort with the IOG merger talks. It shows the support from his club and its staff and how important that is in allowing him to commit a lot of extra diary time he probably did not allow for. He conducts himself in a professional manner and even though there were a lot of frustrations through the negotiations the work will not be lost, we will use information from the meetings to take the association forward. I didn't carry out many duties as Vice Chairman as Billy was able to commit to most of them. I don't think I will be in that situation for 2008 as my position will be slightly different, although I will be making every effort to attend most things. I am looking forward to working with Billy as past chairman and any tips I might need in this year will be very welcome.

I'd like to introduce the new Vice Chairman, Peter Todd, Golf Course Manager at The London Golf Club. I've known Peter since we worked together in the early 90's. I think he will contribute his management skills to the boardroom as he works at a high end golf club with members and a committee focusing on the business side. This should prove a big asset to the board and Association.

One of my ambitions this year is to continue to work on the membership sub committee to potentially increase our membership through open communication and trying to target non BIGGA members, focusing on large groups of Greenkeeping departments. I estimate there is

I would like to see the Association continue to expand and develop, moving forward through what will be a very tight financial year of trading, but with the right application and attention we will go into 2009 favourably.

Another outstanding Harrogate Week show was put together this year with lots of education and exhibitions to suit all areas of the Greenkeeping and golf associated industry. Here are some of the highlights:

Monday night - Have we got views for you? A question and answer session with Jack MacMillan, Walter Woods, Ken Siems, Andy Campbell and Stan Zonek. They gave us great insight into some of the things they have been through. We had some fantastic debate on all issues. Over 100 people attended.

Tuesday - Ribbon Cutting with Billy McMillan, Sir Michael Bonallack, John Pemberton and myself.

The show opened up to the public today. We then proceeded to the opening session where the presentation of BIGGA Awards took place followed by the keynote speakers. We recognised two new Master Greenkeepers; some CPD awards, the Environmental Awards 2007, and the lifetime achievement award to Jack MacMillan and Walter Woods - a very special moment in their careers.

We were then entertained by Spike Jefferson, Squadron Leader of the Red-Arrows. He gave us

some insight into their world and their search for perfection, team work and self criticism. A truly remarkable session, thought provoking.

Tuesday evening - Bernhard's Delegate Reception, with 10 Superintendents visiting from America and the Canadian President. It was a very pleasant evening with the awards for 10 greenkeepers, who are all off to America, sponsored by Bernhard.

Wednesday - I managed to get round some of the stands and chatted to the exhibitors, with positive feedback about the attendance numbers and the shows continued popularity. I then made my way to EGU Lunch who sponsored the day for Golf Club Secretaries with a day of education and workshops.

The AGM followed into the evening. It was well very attended with the highlight for me being Cecil George who put to the floor a vote for BIGGA to start a savings fund within the Association to contribute towards development and buying our own golf club and HQ in the future.

Wednesday evening - We attended the Past Chairman's Dinner where we recognised Billy for his contribution in 2007, and his golf club official for their joint effort in allowing him the time to commit to the role, in view of such a heavy schedule with the IOG merger meetings.

Thursday - Today was my first official duty as BIGGA Chairman to open the R&A Conference. Very well attended. 'Moving towards greater sustainability' was the subject of the day. I then moved onto the press conference for my new role as BIGGA Chairman.

Thursday evening - The banquet was very well attended. It was great to see exhibitors, greenkeepers and all roles that contribute to the golf industry mixing together. Wonderful food, atmosphere, and entertainment provided by Martin Bayfield, who gave an excellent after dinner speech on his experiences in the rugby and sporting world.

The Blues Brothers tribute band and disco wrapped up a great week of effort for everyone involved.



Kenny Mackay

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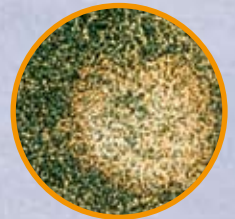
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