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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



10 YEARS ON...

Earlier this week I was standing, camera in hand, taking a picture of Prince Edward unveiling the plaque to commemorate the opening of the new Bernhard & Co offices in Rugby. It was 10 years ago, give a week, that I was standing, camera in hand, taking a picture of Prince Andrew, as he unveiled the plaque to commemorate the opening of BIGGA HOUSE.

I remember the occasion because the Prince actually told me it was the worst picture of a plaque unveiling he'd ever seen – he wasn't looking at the camera and the plaque was still covered - and we all trooped back to the plaque and did the picture again. In mitigation it was due to a borrowed, but unreliable, digital camera, but I genuinely felt that having taken the worst picture of Prince Andrew in action ever was a great claim to fame and have dined off the fact since. I'm currently awaiting comment from Prince Edward to discover if I've improved any!

So much water had flown under the bridge since the opening of BIGGA HOUSE on October 21, 1998, not least that Neil Thomas, the Executive Director of BIGGA, at the time is no longer with us.

Neil had steered the Association from its inception in 1987 to the stage that new offices were necessary and was extremely proud of the strides BIGGA had made. He continued at the helm until he was taken seriously ill with a brain tumour in mid 2003 and died the following February. As I write Seve Ballesteros is fighting a brain tumour, and our thoughts go out to Seve and his family, and this again brings back memories of Neil, and his proudest day when the new offices were opened.

Two of the other honoured guests back then were former Deputy Prime Minister under Margaret Thatcher and BIGGA President Viscount Whitelaw and Secretary of the R&A Sir Michael Bonallack, who was to take over as President when Viscount Whitelaw died the following year.

The magazine that marked BIGGA HOUSE's opening, November 1998, contained a report of the Hayter International match held in Atlanta, Georgia; an article by Laurence Pithie MG on the benefits of having a dedicated Golf Course Mechanic; a piece on Ramside GC, in the North East, and an article by Roland Taylor - who, sadly, is also no longer with us, on gang mowers and how they are drawing towards retirement.

National Chairman at the time was Gordon Child, who 10 years on, is still in fine fettle – using two new hips to propel him around the golf course, often in a score below his age!

In many ways 1998 seems like only yesterday but in other ways it's a lifetime away. Where will we all be on October 21st, 2018? is a question to be asked with quite a bit of trepidation bearing in mind the people mentioned above who are no longer with us. However we can all hope that we'll be enjoying the fruits of our labours, lying back, soaking up the sun on some Caribbean island, safe in the knowledge that we are financially secure and that our savings and investments are locked away somewhere safe.

There's a novel thought for November, 2008.

NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY

August saw BIGGA Scottish Region return to Auchterarder Golf Club for their annual Team Competition, featuring the five Sections within Scotland.

Auchterarder was one of the few places in Scotland not affected by the weather and this must have delighted the organisers of the Johnnie Walker Tournament at Gleneagles only a sand wedge from the fairways of Auchterarder Golf Club.

The Central Section were hoping to make it three in a row, but with a blustery wind and tough pin positions, it took its toll on some of the teams. The ever-reliable North Section finished in 2nd place on a total of 100 points. The team comprised Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead GC; Warren Beveridge, Ballindalloch GC; Muir Ross and Fraser Downie, both Peterculter GC. The worthy winners, after their one and only success 10 years ago, were the West Section with a winning total of 105 points, Team Captain, Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC; Brian Hillen, Drumpellier GC; Alasdair Read and Alan Syme, both Williamwood GC.

The winning Captain Douglas thanked Bayer and their Scottish representative Kenny Liddell for their continued sponsorship of the event. Thanks go to the Captain and officials of Auchterarder for the courtesy and facilities of the golf club and to the Secretary Barry Johnston for his assistance in organising the event.

Special thanks to Archie Dunn and his staff for all the hard work and congratulations in presenting the course in such excellent condition despite the many days of rain they have had to endure this season.

Next year's event will once again be held at Auchterarder Golf Club on Thursday, August, 20, 2009.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator



OUR APOLOGIES

In the last issue (October) of GI, regrettably, some of the text was missing from the article 'Making the Appliance of Science Simple'; because of this error, we have reprinted the story this month in full.

BEST GOLF GROUP FOR SECOND YEAR RUNNING

Crown Golf has been named Clubhouse Golf Group of the Year for the second year in succession at an annual industry awards dinner hosted by Clubhouse magazine.

The Golf Group of the Year category in the Clubhouse Awards recognises venue and operational excellence. Crown Golf was successful in a group which contained Burhill Golf and Leisure, The Club Company, De Vere and Exclusive Hotels.

In its Clubhouse Golf Group of the Year application, Crown Golf was able to demonstrate strong membership growth, investment in the game through the launch of its Academy network, which includes an innovative new disabled teaching programme, grass roots golf development via special open days for women and children, operational excellence in sales and marketing, and a major contribution to the game's legacy through the £100m redevelopment of the St Mellion International Resort in Cornwall.

ALL IN THE NAME OF CHARITY

A host of celebrities including Jamie Redknapp, Matt Dawson, Michael Vaughan, Keith Duffy and Paul Collingwood took part in Sir Ian Botham and Ronan Keating's Charity Golf Classic at the exclusive Archerfield Links Golf Club in Scotland on September 15-16. The event raised more than £ 132,000 for Beefy and Ronan's charities - Leukaemia Research and Cancer Research UK.

Throughout the two days, golf was only interrupted by a gala dinner, charity auction and top-class entertainment.

HARROGATE WEEK 2009

The Scottish Region is pleased to offer the following package for the Holiday Inn, Harrogate (formerly, Moat House Hotel). The accommodation is from Monday, January 19. Three nights Bed & Breakfast in en-suite rooms on 19, 20 and 21 January, 2009. Cost will be £165.

In 2009 Harrogate Week Seminars are free of charge. The workshops that are available can be viewed on the Harrogate Week website and in the 2009 Harrogate Week Booklet.

To obtain a booking form for the accommodation contact the Regional Administrator, Peter J Boyd on: 0141 616 3440/07776 242120 or email: pj.boyd@btinternet.com

ANNUAL TRADE MATCH

On Tuesday, August 19, teams comprising of greenkeepers and trade of the East of England Section met at Immingham Golf Club, to do battle in their fourth annual match.

The greenkeepers, led by Section Chairman, Allan Walker, arrived full of confidence having been victorious in the past three fixtures. However, this year's trade team, led by new skipper Gary "Azinger" Cooper of STG Amenity Supplies, whipped the trade team up into a frenzy beforehand and sent his team out ready to win at all costs.

The course was presented in excellent condition by the Immingham greenstaff, despite a morning of rain and a greensmower hydraulic oil leak. However, the sun came out as the teams arrived on the first tee.

The greenkeepers were hampered by the late withdrawal of a player, however Les Howkins manfully took on the role of last man standing against the trade pair of Peter Larter and Ian James.

The trade team began well winning the first three matches, but the greenkeepers won the next two games to leave them needing a point in the final game to retain the trophy. Despite the valiant efforts of Les up the 18th, the trade pair won the game by 1 hole and gave the trade team an overall victory of 4 - 2.

The picture (below) shows victorious skipper Gary Cooper, left, gratefully accepting the trophy from losing skipper, Allan Walker.

The trade members can bask in their glory for a year, but the greenkeepers will be back next year to claim back the cup.



NO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR EU PESTICIDE ROUTE

The British Government does not support the negotiations currently underway in Brussels on chemical regulation.

That was the message delivered to the Amenity Forum Conference, in London, by Lord McKenzie, the Government Minister with responsibility for the Health and Safety Executive.

"Unfortunately the negotiations in Brussels have not proceeded as we would have wished. The emerging text would, in our opinion, deliver a regime which could remove access to an excessive number of pesticides without any corresponding reduction in risk to the environment or human health.

"The measure is, therefore, disproportionate and not compatible with the concept of sustainability. Consequently we are unable to support it. We do hope, however, that suitable amendments will be made as the negotiations continue this autumn."

Opening the Conference held in the HSE headquarters, Lord McKenzie, revealed that other challenges currently being faced include a tightening of restrictions on amenity use.

"I am aware that the European Parliament has called for 'substantial no-spray zones' adjacent to healthcare facilities and there are elements within the Parliament who would like a complete prohibition on chemical control in amenity areas. I would like to reassure you that the Government does not view such measures as being based on a scientific assessment of risk.

"We will not recommend the adoption of such measures and will do all we can to influence the debate."

Lord McKenzie expects the negotiations to conclude later this year or early in 2009 and said that the Pesticide Safety Directorate would work with and advise stakeholders on arrangements for implementing new legislation.

Dr Neil Higgs, of East Malling Research, reported on the research he had undertaken looking for non-herbicide methods of controlling weeds.

Among the ways he had tested were Infrared, freezing, UV Radiation, electricution, flaming, microwave, steaming, hot water; laser, hot foam and brushing.

However, he discovered that herbicide is still the most cost effective method of control with the other methods taking longer and requiring to be carried out more frequently.

GREAT SUPPORT FOR GRAHAM WOOD

A Charity Golf Day in support of Graham Wood, who spent 32 years as Head Greenkeeper at Dunbar Golf Club, and 37 years in all, held at the club in September, raised a substantial amount of money towards his welfare.

Graham suffered a stroke early last year and was hospitalised until very recently when he was allowed home.

The money raised will go towards a powered wheel chair and other aids to making Graham's life as comfortable as possible.

The Charity Day was organised by the golf club, with a great deal of help from Stuart Greenwood, Graham's close friend and Course Manager at nearby North Berwick Golf Club, it attracted a huge field – with a double shotgun start, and 54 teams, some starting on several tees, to accommodate the many who wanted to support the event.

The greenkeeping industry came out in force to support with many companies supporting the event.

Among the celebrities to take part were footballers, Pat Nevin, Murdo McLeod, Darren Jackson, David McPherson and Billy Dodds; rugby stars Doddie Weir and Duncan Hodge and former Leader of the Scottish Conservative Party, David McLetchie.

As well as the golf there was an auction, full of attractive lots, conducted by former Scottish Rugby Captain and Dunbar resident, Peter Brown, and a raffle.

Graham's wife, Helen, and daughter, Lisa, were in attendance in the evening as Club Secretary, John Archibald, announced how much money had been raised.

NEW OFFICE OPENING

HRH The Earl of Wessex officially opened the new Bernhard & Co offices in front of staff and invited guests at a special ceremony in October.

The Earl was shown around the new offices in Rugby and watched a grinding demonstration presented by UK Sales Manager, Steve Nixon, before being introduced to the staff and the various guests who had flown in from all over the world to commemorate the day.

"Our visit by Prince Edward was the culmination of a lot of hard work and detailed planning by many of our Rugby based team. It goes without saying that the honour of having His Royal Highness come to open our offices is something I and all the Bernhard team feel immensely proud of.

It was also a well deserved recognition of the Queen's Award for Enterprise.

This event also gave us the opportunity to bring several very important industry representatives together from across the world. We were proud to host senior executives from the GCSAA, FEGGA, GCSAI, and FEGGA as well as several well known industry leaders at the opening ceremony, reflecting our interest in promoting international relations. An added plus was the initiative to involve Land Rover in our celebrations who hosted the group of international visitors at the Land Rover Experience and provided several vehicles for the week."



Dean Cleaver, of FEGGA; Kenny MacKay and John Pemberton, of BIGGA, Tracy Coburn and Michael Loughran, of the GCSAI chat with the Earl and Stephen Bernhard.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS FULFILLED BEAUTIFULLY

Ashe Warren Farm has become a leading grower of Wild Flower Turf, the fastest growing medium in the UK for diverse uses such as landscaping projects on domestic and commercial sites as well as civil engineering schemes and green roofs.

This breakthrough in technology is the result of a combination of soil-less turf with native wildflower seeds, grown on a compost bed. Advanced research and many trials have given this turf the guarantee of establishing a wildflower meadow, using a specialist seed mix that acts as a weed suppressant, a production process that does not require the turf to be cut resulting in an undamaged root structure and best of all, a turf that requires very little maintenance.

Ashe Warren Farm, originally an arable farm, has expanded this specialist turf to such an extent that it is now converting more land to cater for the local, national and sometimes international demand.



A COURSE WITH A DIFFERENCE

The much awaited Ransomes Jacobsen International Golf Course was opened officially by the Major of Ipswich last month.

The three hole course, designed by Howard Swan and James Edwards, of Swan Golf Designs, will give Ransomes Jacobsen staff the opportunity to road test new equipment in their own back yard and offer guests the chance to put their short game through the toughest of examinations.

In addition to Swan Golf Design the course benefited from support from Rainbird Europe, who supplied the irrigation system; Tarmac Topsport, who provided all the rootzone material, and Barenbrug, who were responsible for all the various grass types used.

Each hole has a different construction so that machinery can receive different tests.

Recently appointed Head Greenkeeper is Rory Ferguson, son of Ipswich Town's Groundsman, Alan. Rory works on site four days a week and the remaining day at Writtle College.

"This has been a great project and we are so pleased with the result, which reflects the quality of the team we put together," said RJ Managing Director, David Withers.

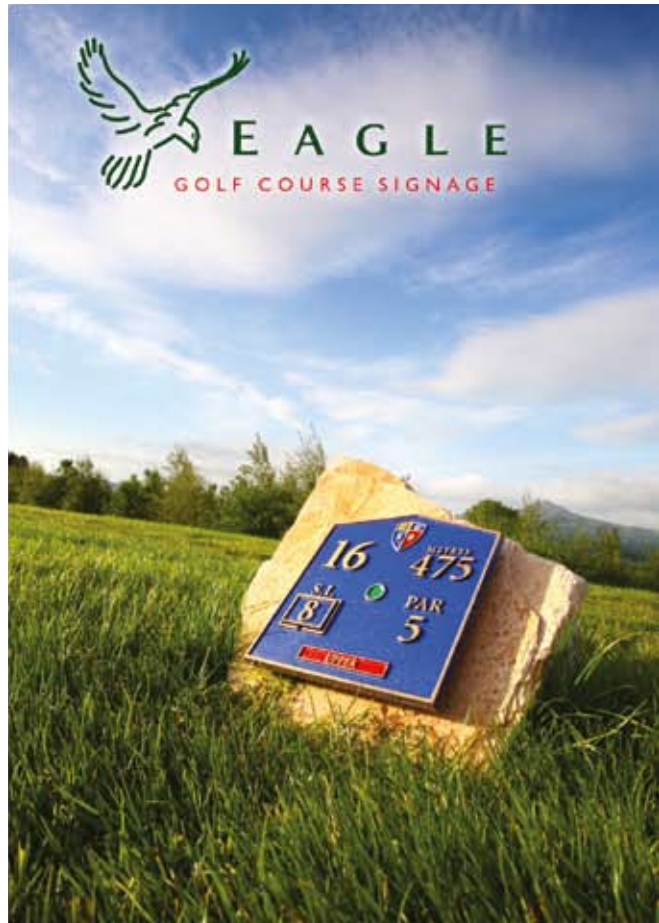
"We have about 1000 visitors a year coming through our Ipswich facility and we can now demonstrate our machines as well as our acknowledged environmental leadership," he added.

The three holes, Heather, Sand and Water measure 93, 82 and 49 yards respectively off the back tees and they are built round a superb water feature.

The 1st green has Bar 2, a slender creeping red fescue, chewings fescue and two browntop bents. The 2nd, Bar Fescue, a mixture of two slender creeping red fescues and two chewings fescues with the 3rd, an all browntop bent mixture of 50% Barking and 50% Heriot. Each of the tees boasts different mixes.



The Major of Ipswich, David Hale, cutting the ribbon in the presence of David Withers.



"WE SET EAGLE A VERY TOUGH DESIGN AND TECHNICAL BRIEF, BUT THEY CAME BACK AND GAVE US A SOLUTION THAT'S EVERY BIT AS IMPRESSIVE AS THE COURSE AND THE CLUBHOUSE."

"EAGLE REALLY DID GO THE EXTRA MILE, AND THE RESULTS ARE JUST SPECTACULAR."

PAT SMITH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF GOLF, DUN LAOGHAIRE GC

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NEW MANAGEMENT APPOINTMENT

European Turfgrass Laboratories Ltd has announced the recent appointment of Sharon Bruce as Laboratory Manager. Sharon has worked at ETL for more than 10 years, many of them as Assistant Laboratory Manager, so she is already quite a well-known face at Harrogate and other educational and turfgrass trade events.

ETL was the first outside the United States to gain full accreditation for what is commonly-referred to as USGA rootzone testing.



SCOTTISH GREENKEEPER PLAYS TOP AMERICAN COURSE

Grant Moran, Assistant Greenkeeper at Mortonhall Golf Club, Edinburgh will be winging his way to New York this month, on a four day free trip including a day's golf at either Pine Valley or Winged Foot.

Standing in for his colleague Head Greenkeeper, David Fraser, who won the Vitax Dial-In for Perfect Hydration competition, Grant will spend three full days in America including at least one night in a hotel in the Big Apple before heading out of town to enjoy his day's golf.

Vitax's Dial-In for Perfect Hydration competition was open to all turf managers opting for a site survey followed by a recommended, tailor-made hydration programme incorporating Aqua-Aid products.

SUSTAINABILITY IN GOLF DEVELOPMENT

The Golf Environment Organisation has announced the launch of a partnership project that will define a new model for sustainable golf development.

Setting out a vision that all golf development should have positive environmental, social and economic impacts, this project will produce freely accessible, constructive and relevant guidance to:

- Raise standards in land use planning and zoning for golf development
- Help streamline the decision making process for development control officials
- Integrate environmental and social issues into the heart of golf development proposals
- Facilitate collaboration across the golf, government and environmental communities

This initiative will support golf course architects and developers in creating resource efficient, ecologically rich, unique and sympathetic landscapes, which integrate into local communities and economies.

Government and NGO communities will also directly benefit from this guidance - using it to inform land use planning, policy creation and feedback during development control.

In a time of increased energy costs, land use restrictions, limited water availability, climate change impacts, and heightened public awareness and expectation, GEO will present new ideas and approaches for profitable, sustainable development.

FINANCE FUNDS IMPROVED FAIRWAYS

A five year contract hire with maintenance package from John Deere Credit has allowed The Oaks Golf Courses, at Oaks Park, in Carshalton, Surrey to acquire an extra mower for their fleet, and to improve their fairway cutting regime.

The Oaks, at Epsom, was named after the original manor house built on the property, and one of its later owners, the 12th Earl of Derby, gave his name to another famous horse race. Horses of a different kind power the new John Deere fleet on the 18 and 9 hole pay & play courses and 16 bay floodlit driving range.

"The finance option allowed us to upgrade the whole fleet at one time, and the competitive rates offered by John Deere Credit meant we had the flexibility to order an extra 2653B mower within the same budget. This meant we have been able to improve the overall fairway cut, with more definition at three different levels, something we simply couldn't have done with the machines we had before," explained Head Greenkeeper Phil Benn, who has been at The Oaks for 19 years.



THANK YOU

Can Rita and the boys and I take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kind thoughts on the tragic loss of our daughter and sister Heather. The support we as a family received during this sad time helped see us through this traumatic experience, we were overwhelmed by cards, flowers, emails, letters and telephone calls, making us aware we live in a world of great friends and wonderful people.

It is the first time we as a family have had such a tragic experience within our immediate family. When, in the past, family and friends lost a loved one, I have always found it difficult to know just what to say, now on the receiving end I still find it difficult.

We as a family will treasure the memory of Heather in our hearts forever, she has left this us all with a legend of happy memories, and we are the richer for having shared our lives with her, she was much loved and will be greatly missed. In this predominately male family she was loved unconditionally and we will miss her sparkle, wicked sense of humour and free spirit she was and always will be Our Heather.

We are delighted to learn that donations at the funeral raised £1200 for the Shooting Stars Children's Hospice, in Hampton Hill, Middlesex. Thank you to all who contributed.

From all the McMillan's our thanks to everyone in this industry that we are all so much a part of, for all your kind thoughts at this difficult time.

From Jack, Rita & All the McMillan Family



IT'S ALL MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

In this month's article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, gets into the festive spirit (not)!

As we move towards the festive season and all the hype that goes with it, those of us who - should I say have seen more Christmases than others - take the big build up with a pinch of salt.

Hands up all those who prefer to leave the preparations for the big event to their partners?

Maybe you begrudgingly help with the "big shop" just to ensure that all the goodies you enjoy find their way into the basket - or should I say baskets!

What about that last minute dash on Christmas Eve to the shop for the main present? Come on we have all been there...

What can we all learn from this time of year and how does it relate to greenkeeping? I would like to mention a couple of areas which might just ring a bell or two.

Marketing and planning...

Shops and hotels especially start their marketing programmes so early in the year I for one just switch off until it suits me, not them, but one thing we cannot ignore is their persistence!

In the competitive world of golf, we are seeing a tremendous amount of competition for the golfers' money from, as you would expect, the proprietary clubs - but even the traditional members clubs can no longer expect even loyal members to automatically fork out their hard earned wages without assessing value for money.

While there will always be those clubs whose product is of such a premium, golfers will pay to play. Even these facilities must have a marketing policy.

It is a fact that 82% of clubs in England have no waiting list and many have reduced or waived entrance fees - such is the competition for the golfers cash.

We know from various websites that many Course Managers have to review budgets with their employers as the current financial economy is biting even harder, but as with the last recession, those companies who continue to invest in training will survive.

I digress for a moment! Government schemes such as 'Train to Gain' are grossly under spent and Skills Brokers have been given flexibility with the training providers to provide training to meet employers needs, so contact your GTC approved training provider to see what courses are on offer to ensure staff development stays on your clubs agenda and you will find it need not make a major hole in your course budget.

Back to marketing, all levels of greenkeepers will, from now on, be seeing an increase in the amount of focus from our training providers on customer care and marketing within courses.

The GTC has ensured that within the National Occupational Standards, from which all qualifications are developed, customer care is included and Course Managers should be invited to contribute to management meetings to discuss future business developments, as often they have excellent ideas for improving the 'product' but frustratingly never get to share their vision.

The very latest communication and marketing techniques will be shared by training providers to give our side of golf the skills and knowledge to have an input in the business.

"Failing to plan is planning to fail" and I guess we can all relate to that quote?

Equally as important as having a good marketing plan for the business is forward planning and for the golf course, this must involve the Course Manager.

A course, environmental or health and safety plan should involve all key personnel and still after many years of campaigning some golf clubs fail to include the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, this I find unbelievable.

Rest assured the GTC will continue to ensure all qualifications have all aspects of management

included in both vocational and academic qualifications. Short courses covering these subjects will also be included on programmes organised by BIGGA.

Planning, budgeting and marketing are management skills which in today's modern Course Managers job role are the norm, but for many, new territory.

As many golf club budgets get tighter, we must ensure "our" sector of golf gives our greenkeepers the opportunity to train to become managers - and these skills do not stop at course management. We already know several Course Managers who have taken on additional responsibilities off course and we listened to the added skills they required when they moved into their new job roles.

Rest assured the GTC will meet these needs through discussions with Directors of Golf, Course Managers, training providers and employers.

If you feel you can help us identify "new" skills that help bridge Course Managers to Directors of Golf please contact the GTC.

We are regularly reviewing the Industry Skill Sets as seen on our website and we need industry input.

We at the GTC are planning for the future and that includes our budget - but that's another story, maybe it's time to write my letter to Father Christmas!

If you feel you can help, contact David direct at the GTC on Email david@the-gtc.co.uk or Tel: 01347 838640

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Industry Update

NEW EURO HQ

Kawasaki's Engine and Power Products Division officially opened the doors to its new European head office recently.

The global Japanese manufacturer has put in place a new structure for the development of the company's engine and power products business. The new division which has moved from Amsterdam now operates just outside London.

While the rest of Kawasaki Motors Europe's business will continue to be conducted from the European headquarters in the Netherlands, the decision to move the engines and power products administrative office to the UK is designed to create a dedicated department to develop these key business areas in the future.

As well as a new engine and power products department for Europe and a new structure, a larger team has been put in place under the direction of Senior Product Manager for Kawasaki's European Engine and Power Products' business Jack Ford.

GOLF ADMINISTRATORS DREAM TOOL WILL ALSO GIVE PLAYERS AN EDGE

A new on-line management system for golf clubs - www.intelligentgolf.co.uk - offers an advantage to their members on the course as well as off it.

Intelligentgolf, the brainchild of software developer and creator Jamie Abbott, enables players to see where other players have scored well or not so well in any official tournament in which they have played.

All the details of every birdie, par, bogey, double-bogey or worse are logged into the system which is then available for all the club's registered members to view.

Because the system is internet based, members can review their stats, book tee times, enter matches and tournaments and even download handicap certificates.

Intelligentgolf is also a valuable administrative tool, designed to be easy to use so that it is no longer necessary to have one person sitting at an old PC in a corner of the clubhouse keying in scores. Instead it creates a hierarchical way of administering every facet of the game - anytime, anyplace, anywhere at the convenience of the administrators.

ROYAL VISITOR PRESENTS QUEEN'S AWARD TO JCB SERVICE

HRH The Duke of Gloucester recently presented a Queen's Award, marking export achievement, to JCB Service for providing parts and service back-up to thousands of customers around the world.

JCB Service - based at the World Parts Centre in Uttoxeter - received the Queen's Award for Enterprise after increasing overseas sales by more than 36 per cent between 2004 and 2006.

The Award - in the International Trade category - was presented to Group CEO Matthew Taylor at a ceremony at the World Parts Centre attended by many of the employees who contributed to the success.

"JCB Service is very proud to have been chosen for this Queen's Award, which is the 23rd for the JCB Group. It is well-deserved recognition of the achievement of the people gathered here today and their colleagues around the world. It is a fitting tribute to all their hard work," said Matthew.

"The World Parts Centre is at the heart of our worldwide dealer and customer support network - which includes facilities in Paris, Madrid, Singapore, Shanghai, Sao Paulo, Savannah in the USA and India. Very shortly, our new Moscow warehouse will be fully operational - and next on our list are the Czech Republic and United Arab Emirates - evidence of our ongoing investment in service support."



The Duke, left, presents the Queen's Award to JCB CEO Matthew Taylor.

ALL-WEATHER GREEN HELPS TOP GOLFERS FINE TUNE THEIR PUTTING STROKE

The recent upgrade to the Huxley all-weather putting green installed at Dr Paul Hurrion's Quintic putting laboratory has resulted in even better ball roll on a surface that remains consistently true and even throughout the year, irrespective of weather conditions.

Laid originally in 2003, the Huxley all-weather putting green is an important element of Quintic's professional sports training, analysis and consultancy services, said Dr Hurrion, one of the UK's leading sports science consultants and performance analysts.

"Upgrading the green to the very latest Huxley all-weather putting surface has produced measurable improvements across the board," commented Dr Hurrion.

"The result has enhanced the experience of golfers who use our services. Regular Quintic visitors include three-time Major Championship winner, Padraig Harrington, along with other members of the European Ryder Cup team and PGA European Tour."

MEMORIAL GARDEN RECOGNISES LEGACY OF HARRY FERGUSON

The life, work and inventive genius of tractor pioneer, Harry Ferguson, have been officially recognised in the creation of a memorial garden less than 50 metres from the farmhouse in which he was born and grew up in County Down, Northern Ireland.

Formally opened by his grand-daughter, Sally Fleming, the memorial garden has as its centrepiece a striking life-sized bronze sculpture of Harry Ferguson leaning on a farm gate with, appropriately, spanner in hand.

The opening of the garden marked the culmination of almost 10 years planning and fund-raising by the Harry Ferguson Celebration Committee, a group of Ferguson and Massey Ferguson tractor enthusiasts who wanted to establish a fitting memorial to the inventor of the hydraulic three-point linkage which first saw light in 1933 on the Ferguson Black tractor, now housed in London's Science Museum.



COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE GOLF RE-AFFIRMED

Ransomes Jacobsen has re-affirmed its long-standing commitment to sustainability in golf through its appointment as the official and exclusive partner of the Golf Environment Organisation's (GEO) latest project.

The company will partner in the production of international Sustainability Guidelines for New Golf Development.

David Withers, Managing Director at Ransomes Jacobsen said: "We are an environmentally aware organisation and market our products using the strap line 'Driving Environmental Performance', but this is much more than a marketing slogan. We are totally committed to the ethos of sustainable golf and have clearly demonstrated our support as sponsors of BIGGA's Golf Environment Award and the STRI's Sustainable Golf Course Management DVD."

"We are also the initiators of an industry-first programme for the environmental disposal and recycling of redundant mowers and turf maintenance equipment, known as ELMO. We are delighted to accept GEO's proposal to partner this project and to see the body go from strength to strength."

With the funding and support now in place, this high profile project will run for two years and deliver strategic and practical guidelines for the planning, design and construction of golf courses, which will be of value to: Investors, Developers, Designers, Course owners, Governments and Environmental organisations.

ALL IN THE NAME OF CHARITY

A special gold-painted Bobcat S175 skid-steer loader will be auctioned later this year to Bobcat dealers in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) to raise funds for the 'Schools for Africa' campaign by UNICEF. The auction of the unique Bobcat loader is the latest initiative in the 3-year collaboration between Bobcat EMEA and UNICEF Belgium.

A second Bobcat S175 "Heart of Gold" loader will be put on permanent display at the reception area of the Bobcat plant at Dobris in the Czech Republic.

To emphasise the link with the children being helped by UNICEF, the auction of the golden loader is timed to close the day before St Nicholas' Day. The dealer winning the auction will be invited to come to the Bobcat EMEA headquarters in Brussels a week later, on Saturday, December 13 2008, at the annual company Christmas party to hand over a cheque for the winning bid to a representative of UNICEF Belgium.

Information about 'Schools for Africa' is available at www.schoolsforafrica.com

THE NEW INDIA REVEALED!

The championship course at the Karnataka Golf Association in Bangalore will be ready for play this month, after a two-year renovation project.

The original Peter Thomson course has been redesigned by Howard Swan and his Swan Golf Designs team and rebuilt completely to the most modern of standards and performance expectations.

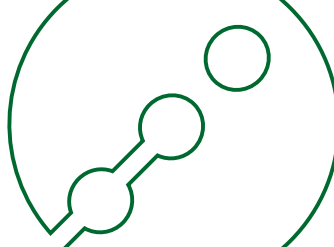
The 7100 yard par 72 layout will be unveiled with new greens, tees, bunkering, and irrigation system together with new grassing throughout.

Much attention has been given to the design of the fairways, raising them above the flood plain, and enlarging the course's water features so that, even in the worst of the Southern Indian monsoons, the course recovers quickly for play.

"We are delighted that the objective in raising the bar at KGA has been achieved and that the first nine holes of the course, opened after completion of the first stage of the renovation, are proving playable even in the most inclement of weather.

We look forward to seeing the full 18 holes opening soon," said Howard.

Membership



AN UPDATE FROM BIGGA'S MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

BIGGA Members save money...

...at Harrogate Week, which is fast approaching, the dates for your diary are Sunday, January 18 – Thursday, January 22, 2009.

With last month's magazine you will have received 'The Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week 2009', which, hopefully, you have had the chance to read. Inside you will find a choice of workshops and seminars covering a huge area of topics. You will probably find some that are "interesting but not for me", while others will have triggered that "ah ha" moment, whatever your reaction there is certainly something of interest for everybody. Don't leave it until the last minute, book today.

Remember, as a member of BIGGA you are entitled to a 50% discount when booking a one-day workshop and 55% discount when booking a half-day workshop and the seminars are free. Visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk for more information.

BIGGA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Will be held during Harrogate Week on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at 5.15pm in the Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre. The AGM is open to all members, however, only full Greenkeeper Members are entitled to vote. Remember to bring your current membership card to gain entry. Please make every effort to attend; your support is greatly appreciated.

Winners of the September Prize Draw

We are pleased to announce that David Anderson, a new BIGGA Member in the West Scottish Section, has won the ipod and Michael Grant at Swinley Forest Golf Club, is the winner of the Nokia 6233, well done to you both.

This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members...

Mark Humphrey, East of England
Paul Martins, Mid Anglia

Scottish Region

David Anderson, West
Sam Dixon, North
Ross Hood, Central
John Kelly, East
Craig MacDonald, West
George Oliver, East
Steven Thomas, East

South East Region

Samuel Brealy, Kent
Christian Brown, London
Sean Bullock, Surrey
Iain Burrowes, London
Rob Cox, Essex
Sean Eady, Essex
Sean Eckett, London
Stephen Ellis, Kent
Ben Harwood, Sussex
Thomas Kenny, Surrey
Michael Mann, Surrey
Timothy Smith, Kent
Tom Snewin, Surrey
Neil Stopps, Essex
Brian Sullivan, London
Lewis Thatcher, Surrey

Northern Region

Ian Austick, North East
Duncan Barker, North East
David Blank, North West
Ian Clough, North East
Richard Coulson, North East
Matthew Harness, North East
Adam Harrison, North West
Jack Hetherington, North East
Allan Martin, North West
Karl Parry, North Wales

S West/S Wales Region

Trevor Eddolls, South West
Carl Hicks, South Wales
Mike Jupp, South Coast
Bradley Milburn-Anderson, South West

Midland Region

David Bangham, Midland
Gary Buckle, Mid Anglia
Paul Buckle, East of England
Nathan Corden, East Midland
Freddie De'Ath, Mid Anglia
Michael Grant, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Martin Green, Mid Anglia
Stuart Horwood, Berks/Bucks & Oxon

International

Lukas Boettcher, Germany
Gary Collins, Republic of Ireland
Anders Linnet, Germany
Carsten Marker, France
Lars Stenberg, Sweden

CONTACT US

By telephone - 01347 833800 (option 1 for Membership.)



Tracey Maddison
Email: traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk



Justine De Taure
Email: justine@bigga.co.uk



Brad Anderson
Email: brad@bigga.co.uk

Other useful telephone numbers
(for greenkeeper members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
02075 603013
Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891

BIGGA's Regional Administrators



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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



GOLDEN KEY



Golden Key Individual Members

JH Greasley; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Frank Newberry; Christopher Lomas MG, Lee Strutt MG.



SILVER KEY



Silver Key Individual Members

Ade Archer; Steven Tierney; Paul Jenkins; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Steve Dixon; Sam Langrick.

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, provides a departmental update...

The last month has seen the Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week hit the streets, the final of the Toro Student of the Year Award and the results of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, all in all a busy month for us here in the Learning and Development Department. By the time you read this Rachael and I will have taken a deep breath and have hurtled headlong into the planning and preparation for Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2009.

Without all the political voting experienced at the Eurovision Song Contest, I'll get down to the results of the 2008 competitions:

Toro Student of the Year 2008

Having seen the front cover of this magazine you've probably guessed that the winner of the Award and the Scholarship to the University of Massachusetts, is Mathew Wormald from Luffenham Heath Golf Club, representing Brooksby College. Congratulations go to Mathew and to his course tutor Richard Barker. Richard will be joining the BIGGA group attending the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans in February 2009.

The runners-up who will be attending the Continue to Learn Education Programme at Harrogate Week 2009 are James Canham, from Gstaad Golf Club, representing Myerscough College and Paul Carella, from Bothwell Castle Golf Club, representing GOSTA Training Ltd.

Congratulations go to all the finalists who presented themselves in a truly professional manner.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2008



The judges of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition completed their deliberations and the results are:

- National Winner - Caldy Golf Club
- Regional Winners:
 - Scotland - Loch Lomond Golf Club
 - Northern - Fairhaven Golf Club
 - Midlands - The Enville Golf Club
 - South West & South Wales - Royal St David's Golf Club



- South East - The Beaconsfield Golf Club
- Best New Entry - Silloth on Solway Golf Club
- Special Initiative - Bearwood Lakes Golf Club

Caldy Golf Club will be the recipient of a cheque for £2000, the Scotts Weather Station, a plaque for their clubhouse and for a year, the Trophy.

The Best New Entry, Special Initiative and Regional Winners will all be awarded a cheque for £500 and a plaque.

The presentation of the prizes will take place on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at 10am as part of the Opening Session and Awards Ceremony at Harrogate International Centre.

The following golf clubs have been Highly Commended and will be sent a certificate:

- Hankley Common Golf Club
- Minchinhampton Golf Club
- The Bedfordshire Golf Club

Congratulations go to all the winners.

Learning and Development Updates

Higher Education Scholarships



The most recent scholarship has been awarded to James Lindsay - Foundation Degree in Sports Turf

Library Books

We have added one new book to the library in the last month:

The Computer Book - Getting Things Done on Your PC. Windows Vista Edition.

Free Books

As mentioned in my article in September, we have some duplicate library books available to members, free of charge except for postage and packing. The list of books, with the p&p cost can be found at www.bigga.org.uk/education/free-books/.

Don't forget Harrogate Week!



For Workshop availability and information on the Continue to Learn Education Programme contact Rachael Duffy on: 01347 833800 ext: 522.

IMPROVING A NATIVE PRAIRIE GRASS FOR TURF

By Eric Watkins

In the United States, increased attention has been focused on the environmental effects of turfgrass areas such as golf courses and home lawns. In Minnesota, the most well-known of these efforts is the ban on phosphorus fertilisers for turf areas in the Twin Cities metro area (Horgan et al., 2003). This legislation has since been extended to include all 82 counties of the state. Plant breeders need to develop new options for golf course managers and greenkeepers so that further restrictions of commonly-used turfgrass inputs do not negatively affect the golf industry in the US.

Grass species that are native to North America should be better able to cope with our environment and could lead to overall reductions in inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides, and water. Prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), a bunch-type grass native to the Great Plains of the United States, has shown the potential to be successfully used as a turfgrass in lower-input environments (Mintenko et al., 2002). The species is widely distributed throughout much of the western United States (Hitchcock, 1950) and it can also be found throughout much of Europe and Asia (Dixon, 2000). Based on data that has been collected in recent years, this species appears to perform well in Minnesota under low-input conditions (no irrigation, limited nitrogen application, and no fungicide or insecticide applications).

Prairie junegrass has several attributes that would make it a useful low-input turfgrass including: tolerance of droughty and alkaline soils, tolerance of sandy areas, survival of low and high temperature extremes, and reduced growth rates (Dixon, 2000). 'Barkoel', released by Barenbrug Holland, was the first cultivar of this species specifically developed for use as a turfgrass; however, this cultivar was developed with ecotypes from Europe (Alderson and Sharp, 1994). We have initiated a prairie junegrass breeding programme with the ultimate goal being the development of a cultivar using germplasm native to North America that can be used for golf course roughs, parks, home lawns, low-input athletic fields and roadsides.



Fig 1

Challenges

It is clear that this grass has several traits that make it a potentially great low-input turfgrass. Unfortunately, there are several challenges that will need to be overcome before our goal of a useful turf cultivar can be accomplished. The primary challenge that we are encountering with native germplasm is very low mowing quality due to tough vascular tissue that is found in the prairie junegrass leaf. This trait may have some advantages (wear and traffic tolerance, summer stress tolerance, etc.); however, the high amount of leaf shredding that can be seen after a mowing would be unacceptable to turfgrass managers (See Fig. 1).

Turfgrass establishment may also become a major issue in this species. The slow vertical growth rate of prairie junegrass, which can greatly reduce mowing frequency, makes it an attractive option for low-input environments. While this trait is advantageous in an already-established turf, slow growth rate during establishment can lead to poor turf density and increased weed invasion.

This species can survive in very dry conditions; however, it may do so by going dormant. Turfgrass managers would prefer a grass that cannot only survive dry conditions, but also stay green during stress. We are screening our breeding material for drought tolerance in order to find plants that are able to maintain green color throughout periods of stress.

Although we have not yet identified any diseases that are a major problem with this species, rust and leaf spot do appear under certain conditions in our turf plots (See Fig. 2). We are continuously selecting for disease resistance in our breeding populations.

Although turfgrass quality is the primary breeding goal of our programme, in order to be used by consumers, a turfgrass cultivar must be able to produce sufficient quantities of seed. Yields from our nurseries in 2007 and 2008 indicate that seed production in Minnesota should be possible; however, it is unknown if it can produce economically adequate amounts of seed that can be efficiently harvested and cleaned.

Germplasm

The major limitation when developing a breeding programme for a 'new' species is the availability of germplasm from which a useful cultivar can be developed. During the past several years, we have collected throughout the north central United States. To this point, we have made collections in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota (See Fig 3), Nebraska, and Colorado.

When collecting, we are primarily focused on plants that exhibit good colour and high amounts of seed production even under dry, hot conditions. Seeds are collected from plants in native stands and then planted in the greenhouse. Eventually, seedlings are transferred to a breeding nursery where they are allowed to cross once they have gone through one winter in the field (See Fig. 4). The best plants are then allowed to cross and harvested seed is then evaluated for important traits.



Fig 2



Fig 3

Evaluation

We have used material from our collections along with germplasm from government collections to establish multiple research trials that will address the aforementioned breeding challenges. Currently, we are collecting data on mowed spaced plants in order to determine if there are individual genotypes and lines in our collection that possess unique traits that can be utilised in the breeding programme. Characteristics that we are evaluating include leaf density, colour, mowing quality, disease

resistance, vertical growth rate, leaf texture and drought tolerance. Other trials that are currently in progress include seed production evaluations and turf trials. Plants that perform well in these evaluations will be advanced in our breeding programme. Eventually, after several years of breeding and evaluation, a group of elite plants will constitute a new cultivar of this species.

Future Plans

Developing a new cultivar of any grass takes several years; this is especially the case for a somewhat undomesticated species such as prairie junegrass. During the next few years, our programme will continue to make germplasm collections throughout North America. We are currently working on expanding prairie junegrass research efforts by collaborating with other researchers throughout the US. Once we are able to develop a viable turfgrass cultivar, there will also need to be research conducted on the proper management of the species.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal of our project is the release of an improved prairie junegrass cultivar that can be used by golf course managers and greenkeepers and other turfgrass managers. This will lead to an improved environment and reduced costs. This research is important because it is imperative that turfgrass managers are provided with viable options for low-input environments. As environmental awareness continues to increase, golf courses and other turf areas will be expected, and often required, to reduce inputs such as fertilisers, fungicides and insecticides. Improving the genetic potential of a native species such as prairie junegrass may solve future turf management dilemmas that arise due to environmental concerns.

Acknowledgments

This project would not be possible if not for the generous support from the following organisations: United States Golf Association, United States Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service, Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation, and the Grant-in-Aid programme from the Graduate School, University of Minnesota.

About the author

Eric Watkins is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Horticultural Science at the

University of Minnesota (USA). Eric received his Ph.D. in Plant Biology from Rutgers University in New Jersey. His research focuses on the development of low-input turfgrass cultivars for use in cold climates. Research activities involve germplasm improvement of several cool-season turfgrass species including tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass. A major focus of his research is breeding native grasses such as prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*) and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) for use as low-input turf. He is also involved with turfgrass cultivar evaluation and other turfgrass science research. Eric teaches three undergraduate turfgrass science courses.

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Fig 4

TORO

Count on it.

SPLISH, SPLASH. I WAS...ER, PLAYING GOLF?

The National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, didn't enjoy the best of weather but when it came to the golf the cream certainly rose to the top. Scott MacCallum reports from East Sussex National GC.

First things first. No-one drowned or was blown away. I say that because the weather on the opening day of the 2008 BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota was such that either scenario was perfectly feasible.

The rain and wind combination was truly horrendous and it is a tribute to East Sussex National's Course Manager, Scott Litchfield and his men, that they got the West Course playable at all.

As it was, the two day medal competition was

shelved and became a Stableford on the opening day with a one day medal on the second, over the East Course.

The rain had begun on Saturday night and didn't stop until the middle of the Sunday afternoon but it didn't stop the greenstaff from preparing a superb test for a field of very talented BIGGA members. With preferred lies in operation tee shots were producing splashes of water when they landed and balls were plugging all over the course. It makes it all the more remarkable that the greens were as fast as they were true. Countless players were racing their ball past because they couldn't equate the horrible conditions with greens of such pace.

The Championship was sponsored for the second successive year by Kubota, who were

represented by Sales and Marketing Director for Tractor and Groundscare Products, Dave Roberts, and Colin Hennah, the local Area Manager. Colin had to stand in on the photographs when Dave had to leave on Monday morning for a meeting.

But despite everything some great golf was played and history made as +1 handicapper, David Simpson, from Crieff GC, became the first man successfully to defend the BIGGA Challenge Trophy, and thus become the Champion Golfer of the Association for the second time in a row.

Playing with two other +1 handicappers David emerged on top with a fine round of 74 giving him a two shot advantage over the rest of the field.

"I wasn't expecting to win as I'd been poor most of the season but I'm absolutely delighted to become the first person to defend the title.



Neil Geiring, Archie, and Scott Litchfield enjoy a laugh



Kenny Mackay tees off

"I'd much rather have played it over 36 holes but the weather was against us but I'd say it was a better test of golf than last year and the field was stronger with more low handicappers in it," said David, who along with his work colleague and fellow competitor, Tom Adams, had a 12 hour drive to get home, arriving at 7.30am the next morning.

David scrambled well over the early holes until he got into the swing, but he felt that he had missed a few opportunities on the way home.

"The greens were superb, but extremely tricky to read," he said.

"I am hoping to return to Burnham and Berrow next year to try and make it three in a row but it will be a tall order," said the 30 year-old.

With the destination of the Challenge Trophy

being fought out among the elite golfers in the field, the Challenge Cup for Best Nett was a realistic target for the majority of the field, and it was a closely contested affair.

The man who emerged with the spoils was 14 handicapper, David Fellows, Course Manager at Cocks Moors Wood GC, with a score of 70.

Ironically the first time I saw David play during the Championship was on the 3rd of the West Course the previous day when he four putted. He obviously used that day to hone his game for a determined assault on the main event the following day. It worked!

Fellow David – Fellows – had finished in the prizes a couple of times in the last four years but this year rose to the top.

"It's the biggest thing I've ever one. Anything

with the word "National" attached to it is special while it's against my peers on some very special golf courses," said David.

He was five over at the turn and in good shape and then went par, bogey, par bogey to give himself a real chance but a double bogey, double bogey finish meant he just scraped home.

"I'd targeted bogeying every hole on the way home but it didn't quite happen but that's why I'm a 14 handicapper."

On that four putt the previous day David took the positive from it.

"I knew then that it was all about the putting and getting the speed of the greens and I worked on that. It was down to hard work and luck on the day," said David, for who next year's venue of Burnham and Berrow is one of his favourite courses.



All the trophy winners

The Associate Competition was a real nail-biter! Andrew Cornes, of Acorn Golf, finished like a train, with a magnificent final four holes, including a par at the intimidating final hole par-4, to claw his way to the top of the leaderboard and lift the inaugural BIGGA Challenge Bowl.

The Sunday Stableford actually suited the players closer to the rear of the field as the weather improved dramatically after lunch and Brian Robinson, of Belton Woods GC, took advantage with a superb 37 pts.

The Regional Team Trophy was played for over the second day and the South East Region

made full use of home advantage clinching an eight shot win over the Midland Region.

Next year's BIGGA National Championship will be played at the superb Somerset links of Burnham & Berrow GC, near Weston-super-Mare, on October Monday 5 and Tuesday 6, 2009.

"It was great to be involved with the National Championship again this year, to see some familiar faces as well as meeting many new competitors. Although the weather did its best on Sunday, there was no dampening the commitment and enthusiasm of the players in the competition, and they were rewarded with some great weather on

the Monday," said Dave Roberts.

"Congratulations to David who won the consecutive title for the first time I believe. I am sure that made the long journey home to Crieff much shorter. The organisation by BIGGA and the excellent facilities at East Sussex National, made this a special event again and all of us at Kubota were very proud to sponsor the tournament again," said Dave, who showed his own golfing prowess with a few holes in the slightly better weather on the Sunday afternoon in the company of John Pemberton and myself.



BIGGA Challenge Cup winner, David Fellows (left) and BIGGA Challenge Trophy winner, David Simpson (right).

RESULTS

BIGGA Challenge Trophy (Best Gross)

- David Simpson, Crieff GC, 74
- 2. Lawrie Tremlett, Lewes GC, 76, (BIH)
- 3. Gary Burgess, Grange Park GC, 76

BIGGA Challenge Cup (Best Nett)

- David Fellows, Cocks Moors Wood GC, 70
- 2. Darren Burton, North Foreland GC, 71
- 3. David Badham, Stockley Park GC, 73

BIGGA Challenge Plate (Stableford)

- Brian Robinson, Belton Woods GC, 37pts
- 2. Antony Kirwan, Lexden Wood GC, 36pts
- 3. John Ganley, North Warwickshire GC, 35pts
- 4. Chris Bitten, Stoneham GC, 34pts

BIGGA Challenge Bowl (Associate Prize)

- Andrew Cornes, Acorn Golf, 82 (Nett)

Handicap Prizes

- +1-5 Mark Blacknell, Nottingham City GC, 73 (Nett)
- 6-12 Graeme Millar, Pitlochry GC, 73 (Nett)
- 13-24 Stuart Playle, Sandy Lodge GC, 81 (Nett)
- Nearest the Pin, Mark Blacknell, Nottingham City
- Longest Drive, George Morgan, The Mendip GC

Regional Team Trophy

- 1. South East. 445. J. Hughes, 76; B. Wallis, 76; M. Henderson, 75; D. Badham, 73 G. Branchett, 74; D. Burton, 71.
- 2. Midland. 453. S. Scott, 76; J. Ganley, 78; K. MacKay, 77; M. Blacknell, 73, B Holt, 79; D. Fellows, 70.

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FEATURE



Once again, the level of entrants for this year's Toro Student of the Year competition surpassed all expectations and it was up to the judges to make some tough decisions in a fierce final at BIGGA HOUSE. Melissa Jones reports...

As a student having to juggle both work and study requires hard work and dedication. This year's finalists are a prime example of what time and effort can achieve.

Eight anxious greenkeepers visited BIGGA HOUSE on September 15 to be quizzed and probed within an inch of their lives and given the task of completing a report on Aldwark Manor GC (evaluating nine of the holes). On the judging panel this year were: John Pemberton, Chief

Executive of BIGGA; Jeff Mills, from the BIGGA Board of Management; Peter Mansfield from Lely (UK) Ltd and Sami Collins, BIGGA's Head of Learning & Development.

After an exhausting, nail-biting wait, finalists: James Canham, from Golf Club Gstaad, Switzerland; Paul Carella, from Bothwell Castle GC, Uddingston; George Pendrich, from Scotsraig GC, Tayport; Mathew Wormald, from Luffenham Heath GC, Lincolnshire; David Jones from Tadmerton Heath GC, Wigginton; Graeme Roberts, from Hankley

Common GC, Farnham; Barrie Lewis, from Ratho Park GC, Edinburgh, and Greg Wellings, from Stockport GC, Cheshire, were put out of their misery as BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, announced this year's winners.

Overall winner and Toro Student of the Year 2008 was Mathew Wormald (24) representing Brooksby College.

Mathew's amazing prize involves an eight-week trip to the USA, where, for six weeks, the University of Massachusetts will be home, as he

OF THE YEAR 2008



FEATURE

Back row L to R: Peter Mansfield from Lely (UK) Ltd, BIGGA Chairman Kenny Mackay, Graeme Roberts, Jeff Mills, BIGGA Board Member Tony Smith, Barrie Lewis, David Jowes, BIGGA Head of Learning & Development Sami Collins, BIGGA Chief Executive John Pemberton. Front row L to R: George Pendrich, James Canham, Mathew Wormald, Paul Carella, Greg Wellings.

completes a residential turf management study course. The trip also includes visits to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis, the Toro Irrigation Division and to the GCSAA Golf Industry Show in New Orleans next February.

Runners up were James Canham (22) representing Myerscough College and Paul Carella (20) representing GOSTA Training.

James was a blast from the past (as far as this competition goes), 2004 saw him claim runner-up position at the age of 18, while working as an

Assistant Greenkeeper at Weston Park GC.

"The award serves as inspiration to all student greenkeepers with enthusiasm and ambition. It's a memorable and highly rewarding experience; a credit to both BIGGA and Toro," said James.

Paul, who is currently working towards his NVQ Level 3, has worked at Bothwell Castle for four years now, taking on the role of Assistant Greenkeeper.

"I would like to thank BIGGA and Toro for organising and running the final. I had a great

time and met a fantastic group of people. I would also like to thank Bothwell Castle Golf Club's Garry Anderson, Head Greenkeeper, Alasdair McDermid, First Assistant, Stewart Carbray, Assistant and my lecturer, Iain Forbes and GOSTA Training Ltd, for supporting me through my education," said Paul.

James and Paul both win a trip to Harrogate Week 2009, where they will be invited to attend the Continue to Learn Education Programme as well as the social events.

AND THE WINNER IS...

2008 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner, Mathew Wormald, couldn't be happier and feels as though he's finally found his path in life. Melissa Jones reports...

Mathew has always had an interest in golf but greenkeeping was the last place he expected his career to take him.

"I went to university not knowing what I wanted to do and opted for a business and marketing degree, as that offered a wide spectrum of management and I knew it would stand me in good stead for almost anything," explained Mathew, who has a handicap of 18.

After finishing university Mathew went to London to work as an Estate Agent.

"I was awful at it. I couldn't lie and didn't sell many houses," laughed Mathew. "I decided to come home. I worked at a farm for a couple of months, during this time I saw the vacancy at Luffenham Heath advertised, I applied, got the job – the rest is history."

Mathew has been at the club for two years now and feels as if he has finally found his path in life.

"It's awesome, I love it. Greenkeeping makes me burn inside. Every single aspect of turfgrass management you can think of excites me. It's just so interesting and indepth," enthused Mathew.

At the end of this month Mathew will have completed his Level 2 in Sportsturf Management at Brooksby College with the help of tutor Richard Barker – BIGGA Chairman 2002.

"It's nice that the college is now getting some publicity. To win the award coming from Brooksby is even more satisfying, I hope it makes people sit up and realise how good the college is".

Mathew couldn't be more thrilled with his achievement and his bursting enthusiasm for the industry is plain to see.

"People just don't understand how passionate I am about greenkeeping. I cried to my mum on the phone. It means that much to me that I got back to my hotel room and cried. It's been a long two and a half days and I don't think it's completely sunk in yet.

"The only person that can hold you back is yourself, if you really want it, you have to go for it. Greenkeeping is a fantastic industry to be in, you can travel the world with a career in greenkeeping if you wish.

"It's been so draining. It's an amazing experience but nervewracking. I've been awarded the prize for a reason - because people believe in me. I want to be Student of Year for a reason and for people to see me and say 'I saw him 10 years ago and he's done what he said he would.'

"Going to America will add to the depth of what I can learn. When I first started greenkeeping and found out about the award it instantly became something I wanted to work towards. I always put that little bit of extra effort in when doing



Toro Student of the Year 2008 Mathew Wormald representing Brooksby College.

my college work, it's been 18 months of hard graft to get here."

It seems that preparation was the key to Mathew's success.

"For the final interview I explored every single area of the competition. I phoned America to find out what books and areas I would be studying if I got through, and bought and read a couple of them so that I had a better understanding of what getting myself into."

Mathew also came up three weeks prior to the final at BIGGA HQ to complete his course report and phoned 2007 winner, Avon Bridges, and 1994 winner, Euan Grant for their advice on what to look out for and what to expect at interview. Mathew also took the time to read through our BIGGA website, as well as Toro's.

"I walked into the interview and for the first time in my life I wasn't nervous," he beamed.

"You know when you work so hard for something and you actually achieve it. It's just an amazing feeling. I just nailed it! It worked. When I get to go to America it's gonna be even better. I can't wait to get my teeth into it and gain a better, more scientific understanding" smiled Mathew.

"Hopefully I'll be able to bring some good ideas back from America, amalgamate them with British greenkeeping and move forward from there."

"The way technology is going, greenkeeping is going to get really exciting over the next 10-15 years, with companies like Toro pushing the boundaries

with irrigation. It's time for British greenkeeping to embrace it and move forward."

Appreciative of the support that BIGGA have given him, Mathew is also keen, after he has been in greenkeeping for a number of years and been around the world, to open peoples eyes to what BIGGA is and what we do,

"Maybe I'll be Chairman one day, with a bit of luck," he laughed.

Mathew's goal is to become a Head Greenkeeper at an Open venue. Once he has achieved that, he is keen to work on new courses and new builds, advising people on how to manager their golf course.

"I had Royal Troon in my sight but that might be a little too soon! I love Troon as a golf course and would love to work there, it would fulfil my childhood dream really."

Mathew wants to thank Avon Bridges and Euan Grant for their advice, and BIGGA and Toro for the opportunity of a lifetime.

"It's just been awesome. People that have gone away disappointed need to realise they have got through to the final and if they want something that bad they will eventually get it. I wish everyone the best of luck for the future. Just to get through to the finals is a cracking achievement for everybody."

Mathew would like to thank Luffenham Golf Club for their support throughout the competition and for their continued support while he is away in America.



Organised
by BIGGA

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

Harrogate Week 2009

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MOVING WITH THE TIMES

John Pemberton, BIGGA's Chief Executive, outlines proposed changes to the Constitution that are to be put to members at the AGM in January

Setting the Scene

Some while ago the then BIGGA Board of Management recognised the need to develop the Association beyond greenkeeping into sports turf generally. Over the years, working with the GTC in particular, BIGGA has developed the formal training and education of greenkeepers and has successfully become a training provider in its own right. Much of what has been achieved has a natural synergy with the role of the sports turf groundsman and this led to talks in 2007 between representatives of the BIGGA Board and the IOG Board, regarding a possible merger. The basic concept being that one united organisation would be better placed to represent and develop the interests and education of those working in the maintenance and management of sports turf.

Merger talks sparked off a great deal of industry debate and speculation, some of which became very passionate at times. The trade companies embraced the notion with open arms and a great number of people, members and non-members in both camps, welcomed the suggestion recognising that perhaps a unification should have taken place years ago. The more the two organisations talked the more administrative hurdles came to light but never were the BIGGA Board discouraged on the grounds of a mis-match

between greenkeeping and groundsmanship. Sadly the potential operational problems ruled the day and the IOG withdrew after 10 months of in-depth discussions.

Moving Forward

Following the collapse of the merger talks, the Board were even more convinced that greenkeepers and groundsmen had a great deal to share and that the way forward for BIGGA and the sports turf industry would be for the Association to embrace groundsmen as members on an equal footing to greenkeepers, at an equal rate of subscription. To this end a working party has, over the last six months or so, been looking at how this could be achieved, what the consequences would be for existing members, which key industry partnerships could be developed and how administratively the changes could be achieved.

At its latest meeting on October 14, the Board approved draft proposals for changes to the Constitution to allow sports turf groundsmen to become members together with a draft simplification of the membership structure. The fundamental governance of the Association would remain unchanged; it would remain an organisation for its members, run at the highest level by its members. Nothing, however, can progress

without the backing of the members at a General Meeting and consultation will take place over the next two months prior to the AGM in January at Harrogate.

The Board is not of the opinion that if the proposed Constitution is approved by the members that there will be a sudden influx of groundsmen, who will then seek to take over the Association. There will be a systematic recruitment programme that will include attractive offers to the larger golfing/sports turf establishments where membership is currently under represented, coupled with a drive on individual membership. Rest assured that the proposals protect the rights and benefits of current members who have a great deal to gain rather than much to lose.

Some of the strengths and advantages of the proposed development include:

- A unified voice for sports turf employees
- A better chance of having impact at Government level
- Enlarged local representation enabling 'new blood' to come into the administration and management of Regions and Sections
- The opportunity for greater support for Region and Section activities
- Improved influence over the development



of the structure and content of national qualifications

- An enlarged membership base would increase the Association's buying power thereby providing the opportunity to improve member benefits
- Improved financial stability through new commercial opportunities
- Better provision of short training and education courses on a local and national basis
- The opportunity to develop a National Centre for Sports Turf based at Aldwark Manor

Next Steps

Members can obtain a copy of the proposed Constitution upon request from the following sources:

- Headquarters
- Regional Administrators
- Section Secretaries
- Any member of the Board of Management
- The Members' area of the BIGGA website (Downloadable Forms)

If you wish to discuss the contents of the document then please do not hesitate to contact either myself, a member of the Management

Team at Headquarters, a member of the Board of Management or a Regional Administrator. The views of the members are important and I would hope that any concerns will be addressed before the AGM. While there will be an opportunity to debate the draft Constitution at the AGM I would hope that prior consultation will keep this down to a minimum, so that the matter can be dealt with in a professional way. During November I, together with Tracey Maddison (Head of Membership Services), will be attending the conferences of both the South West and South Wales Region and the South East Region. We will also attempt to visit some of the Section events and will try to keep members advised of our plans through the Bulletin Board on our website. By the time that you read this I will have started a discussion forum on the Bulletin Board where I will respond to Members as openly as possible.

I have detailed, in the section on the right, the main proposals for the revised membership Categories that form part of the draft Constitution. In the Board's opinion the Association must accept that change is inevitable if BIGGA is to develop. We are all aware of the changing face of golf and unless we are proactive in managing the change then we are in danger of having to contract. Your Board needs your support please think carefully about the consequences of not giving it.

REVISED MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1 Full Member

Any person employed in the maintenance of sports turf at a sports facility.

Split into: -

Category A = Manager

Category B = All other greenkeeping or grounds care employees who have gained a minimum qualification or who hold a minimum of three years continuous relevant experience.

**(Incorporating: Category A - Course Manager, Head Greenkeeper. Category B - Deputy Course Manager, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, First Assistant, Greenkeeper aged 21 years and above, Greenkeeper aged 20 and under and Mechanics)*

2 Associate Member

Any person employed in the maintenance of sports turf at a sports facility and is not eligible to be a Full Member.

(Incorporating unqualified aged 21 years and over and unqualified aged 20 and under)

3 Life Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any Full Member recognized as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

(Proposals for the election of a Life Member shall be made only by the Board of Management following Regional Board nomination and the election shall be by the Association in General Meeting.)

4 Retired Member

Any Full Member who has been a member for a minimum of 5 consecutive years and has retired from work.

(Incorporating Retired Member (full) and Retired Member (limited benefits)).

5 Student Member

Any person studying full-time towards an appropriate qualification in turf management.

(Incorporating full time Students).

6 International Member

Any person employed in maintenance of sports turf outside the UK.

(Incorporating International Course Manager and International Member).

7 Affiliate Member

Any person who does not come within the provisions of categories 1-6 above.

(Incorporating Associate and Corporate categories of membership).

8 Honorary Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any persons recognized as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

** notes in italics are to clarify changes to the present structure*

TEAM WORK AND TEAM BUILDING

By Melissa Jones



When Head Greenkeeper, Richard Hollingworth, called to say his team were about to put their newly acquired skills into action and complete a project on their parkland course at Rudding Park, I was eager to meet the team and check out the plans.

The greenstaff commenced work on a new hole at their parkland course in September.

“Building the hole is a way of helping our greenkeepers to use the skills they are acquiring through their studies,” explained Head Greenkeeper, Richard.

Building in-house the greenkeepers will be able to construct the hole to the standards they want with no corner cutting. The staff will also be able to view the construction from a greenkeeping and players point of view – as they are all keen golfers. They will be involved in all the decision making processes.”

PLAN OF ACTION:

- End of August '08 – areas have been marked out for the hole and green. Greenstaff have begun to chop down trees, while being sensitive to the environment and only removing those that are diseased or dead.
- September '08 – construction started.
- October/November '09 – seeding (if the weather is good).
- April '09 – seeding.
- April/May '10 – completed and open for play.

As they are in charge of the operation and costs, the greenstaff have the benefit of being able to change things, if needed, as they go along.

WORK BASED LEARNING

Rudding Park prides itself on investing money and time into training its staff.

“The whole ethos here is that everybody should be able to do everything. This allows you to have flexible staff, if anyone is off sick or has an emergency there are no problems. We have 16 year olds joining us and within a space of six months they have been shown strimming, mowing tees and greens, cutting fairways etc, etc. Within six months we then have a member of staff that can do nearly everything,” said Richard.

It's very much the same with education and study at Rudding.

“We push our staff on to cultivate their knowledge, improve their personal skills and the golf course. Their personal development is key to us – the more motivated our greenstaff, the happier they will be.”

The greenstaff are very much into team building and bonding, they go out en masse once a month to play golf, and check out other courses.

“Everyone gets on with everyone,” enthused Richard.

“It's more of a profession for them than just cutting grass. It's not a 9 to 5 job that just generates income, it holds a genuine interest for each of them and is a career.”

Three members of the Rudding Park greenstaff are currently studying for NVQ's and have a tutor from Myerscough College, Preston visit them every four weeks to assess their work and give feed back on their progress to the Head Greenkeeper.

Greenkeeper, David Pinder, as part of his NVQ Level 3 in Sportsturf, has to complete a construction job and gain experience of planning, ordering, getting quotations and quantifying. Therefore, this is the perfect opportunity for him to put his new-found skills into action.

LEARN AS YOU EARN

NVQs and Apprenticeships are designed for employees in the industry who wish to gain competence in their operations and gain a broad understanding of Sportsturf Operations.

They are ideal for greenkeepers in employment as they are delivered in the workplace using qualified, industry experienced assessors, and course content can be tailored to suit the needs of each individual student/workplace.

Tutorial times are agreed at suitable work times and all observations and assessments take place while staff complete their usual work activities.

Achievement of a nationally recognised qualification at NVQ Levels 1, 2, 3 or 4.

“Work based learning is more appropriate to our surroundings and works best for our staff. Rather than be in a classroom, Andrew Kenworthy comes from Myerscough every four weeks to assess the



Head Greenkeeper Richard Hollingworth.



Part of the plans for the new hole.

students' work and works, more or less, one to one with them without any distractions. We are able to monitor and assess the greenkeeper's progress from seeing the lecturer. We can plan jobs so that their job sheets criteria are met and they can use every piece of equipment," explained Richard.

The greenstaff's personal development is key to Rudding Park:

"If the staff are motivated they are happier in their work," said Richard.

"Because the staff are physically doing the job as they go along, they seem to be getting more out

of it and can actually SEE what is happening and the consequences etc. They are looking more at the science and asking questions such as: What fertiliser do I need to apply to get the best out of the plants? What cultural things can we do to stop this disease instead of spraying a fungicide?

"Matters and problems with construction are discussed as a group and I am explaining as we go along with the hole construction. The team are beginning to understanding the depth of greenkeeping and golf course management," concluded Richard.



Left to right: David Pinder, James Kelledy, Brandon Stanford, Richard Hollingworth, Robert Hilton, Danny Millar and Karl Walker.

Rudding Park greenkeeping team are:

Richard Hollingworth, Head Greenkeeper

David Pinder – College student NVQ Level 2 working towards Level 3

Danny Millar – NVQ Level 2

Robert Hilton – NVQ Level 2

Karl Walker – College student NVQ Level 2

James Kelledy – College student NVQ Level 2

Brandon Stanford – Currently applying for NVQ Level 2. Commencing college course Spring 2009

Liam Williamson - Currently applying for NVQ Level 2. Commencing college course Spring 2009

USEFUL COLLEGE CONTACTS:

Myerscough:

01995 642294

www.myerscough.ac.uk

Writtle:

01245 421858

www.writtle.ac.uk

Askham Bryan:

01904 772277

www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Brooksby Melton:

01664 850850

www.brooksbymelton.ac.uk

Elmwood:

01334 658856

www.elmwood.ac.uk

Guildford College, Merrist Wood Campus:

01483 884000

www.guildford.ac.uk

Hadlow:

01732 853261

www.hadlow.ac.uk

Plumpton:

01273 890454

www.plumpton.ac.uk

Warwickshire:

01926 318285

www.warkscol.ac.uk

Reaseheath:

01270 613242

www.reaseheath.ac.uk

Oatridge:

01506 864800

www.oatridge.ac.uk

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.



NOISE INDUCED HEARING LOSS

RAISING AWARENESS FOR GREENKEEPERS

By Herbert Barker

Over the next few months Greenkeeper International will be working in conjunction with vibration testing services Fivesquared to discuss the implications of Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS), Whole Body Vibration (WBV) and Noise. Number two in the series is Noise Awareness, discussing the measures that greenkeepers can put in place to prevent a loss of hearing.

OVERVIEW

As with last month's article, Hand-Arm vibration, the European Commission introduced legislation 'harmonising' noise levels in the workplace for all member states, and gave each state three years to effect this. The UK 'version' became law in the form of the 'Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005)'.

Many clubs have implemented noise management for greenkeepers, while others have done little, or decided that it doesn't affect them and have 'shelved' any action.

This article is designed to give a brief overview of the problems of Noise Induced Hearing Loss and the solutions.

NOISE LEVELS FOR GREENKEEPERS

Our research has shown that some, but by no means the majority of golf clubs, have implemented best practice management systems for controlling noise exposure in their golf clubs and more specifically their greenkeepers exposure levels.

Noise can be a difficult subject to grasp, with numerous different types of hearing protection available what is the best for your greenkeepers and which type will offer the correct level of protection. During our recent research we found that some golf clubs offer their staff different types of protection, some golf clubs leave it to the greenkeepers themselves to choose which type they prefer to use, but, more importantly, is the hearing protection offered or chosen the correct type and suitable for the job?

WHAT IS IT?

Hearing loss caused by prolonged or regular exposure to loud noise is a widespread recognised problem affecting many workers.

Hearing loss can be temporary or permanent. Temporary deafness is often experienced after leaving noisy places, such as a club, or party. Although hearing recovers within a few hours, this

shouldn't be ignored. It is a sign that continued exposure to noise could cause permanent damage.

Permanent damage can be caused immediately by sudden, extremely loud, explosive noises.

The majority of hearing loss, however, is usually gradual, due to prolonged exposure to noise. It is only when damage caused by noise over the years combined with normal hearing loss - due to ageing - that people realise how deaf they have become. Hearing loss from prolonged exposure is usually incurable.

Many tools, machines, and processes used in industry can produce noise levels likely to cause hearing damage to anyone within the vicinity of the noise source and in some cases, those some distance away, by reflected noise.

It is safest to regard regular prolonged use of any tool or machine causing loud noise as suspect.

As a general rule, noise may damage your hearing if you have to shout over background noise to make yourself heard, the noise hurts your ears, makes your ears ring, or you are slightly deaf for several hours after exposure to the noise.

Hearing loss can be caused by factors other than noise, but noise induced hearing loss is different in one important way - it can be reduced or prevented altogether.

Loud noise can damage the hearing of young people as easily as the not so young.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE IT?

Prolonged loud noise exposure affects the tiny hair cells in the inner ear which send electrical signals to the brain. Once damaged, these cells no longer respond to sound and so hearing decreases.

Loss of hearing at higher frequencies.

When hearing impairment begins, the higher frequencies are often lost first, which is why people with hearing loss often have difficulty in hearing the high pitched voices of women and children.

Difficulty in understanding speech.

Loss of high frequency hearing can also distort sound, so that speech is difficult to understand, even though it can be heard. Hearing impaired people often have difficulty detecting differences between certain words that sound alike, especially words that contain S, F, SH, CH, H, or soft C sounds because these sounds are in a higher frequency range than vowels or other consonants.

Tinnitus

Hearing loss is not the only problem. Tinnitus (ringing, whistling, buzzing, or humming in the ears) may also occur. This condition can also lead to disturbed sleep.

Sufferers from any symptoms of hearing loss should initially report their symptoms to their supervisor, so that if required, appropriate health surveillance can be initiated.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Those whose jobs require regular frequent use of noise producing tools and equipment (hand-held or ride on), or in the vicinity of these machines, are most at risk.

These occur in industries, including:

- Road and railway construction/maintenance
- Construction
- Forestry/Gardening/Greenkeeping
- Foundries
- Light and heavy engineering
- Mining and quarrying
- Stone masonry
- Wood working

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

The 'Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005)' puts obligations on employers to assess, control, and manage noise exposure in the workplace.

The challenge is to determine which information is correct and current. This can be confusing. To protect successfully your workforce from Noise Induced Hearing Loss it is vital that employers have an effective Noise Management System to - Assess, Measure, Monitor, Control, and Manage any noise risks.



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Employers are obliged to provide information and training for employees to ensure knowledge of health risks, health surveillance, noise management systems, safe use of equipment, and awareness of noise problems in the workplace.

Assess

The first stage is assessment – “Do I have a problem?”

This can be achieved with a simple questionnaire asking the present workforce whether they are suffering from any symptoms of hearing loss.

The responses to the questionnaire will determine the next stage which is Health Surveillance, involving audiometric testing.

Potential employees should be questioned on previous work which may have entailed noise from power tools; and leisure activities which may involve high noise levels.

Health Surveillance

Employers are obliged to provide Health Surveillance for any of their workforce using equipment producing noise of 85 dB or over to prevent symptoms appearing or existing symptoms from becoming worse. Noise Induced Hearing Loss is incurable and if no precautions are taken then symptoms will usually get worse with time.

Specialist health surveillance may be necessary for employees with hearing loss symptoms, so they can be assessed as to the severity of hearing loss.

Noise Levels of Equipment

Sources from which employers can obtain noise data for tools, or machines are:

- Manufacturer’s Literature
- Equipment Suppliers
- Internet databases
- Research Organisations
- Trade Associations
- HSE
- Vibration Consultants
- Measurements in the workplace

Of these, the most accurate tends to be Measurement in the workplace, which gives noise levels for YOUR tools or equipment operating under YOUR working conditions.

Having obtained noise levels under working conditions, employers should determine the highest noise producing tools, machines, or processes and attempt to re-design the job or process to eliminate the use of these tools in the processes. This may not always be possible, but should be the long term objective.

Noise Measurement & Definitions

Decibels (dB)

Intensity of sound is measured in decibels (dB). The scale runs from the faintest sound that the

human ear can detect, which is 0 dB, to over 180dB, the noise at a rocket pad during launch.

Decibels are measured logarithmically. This means that decibel intensity increases by units of 10, so each increase is 10 times the lower figure. Thus, 20dB is 10 times the intensity of 10 dB, and 30dB is 100 times as intense as 10 dB. As a rough guide, an increase of 3dB doubles the intensity.

Frequency Weighting (A) & (C)

To address the way that the human ear responds to sounds of different frequencies, measurement of noise is given a weighting to correct for this. This weighting is known as an ‘A’ weighting and measurements are expressed as dB(A). Impulse, or high intensity short duration sound, is measured similarly and classed as ‘Peak’ levels. Peak levels are also ‘weighted’ and expressed as dB(C).

The legislation set lower values for noise levels when it was implemented in April 2006.

Daily Exposure Lower Action Level 80 dB(A)

In practice, this means that workers exposed to noise at this level, up to the Upper Action level, who determine that hearing protection would be beneficial, can request such protection; must be issued with it, but it is not mandatory to wear it.

A Lower Action Peak Level of 135 dB(C) was also introduced.

Daily Exposure Upper Action Level 85 dB(A)

In practice this means that employers must issue suitable hearing protection to their workforce and this protection must be worn at, (or above) this level.

It should, however, be noted that issuing hearing protection for users should be considered in line with the Regulations, to prevent hearing damage – but should not be regarded as a permanent solution but only as an interim measure whilst other procedures to reduce noise are considered and implemented.

An Upper Action Peak Level of 137 dB(C) was also introduced.

Daily Exposure Limit Level 87 dB(A)

In practice this means that whatever type of hearing protection is issued, the noise reaching the wearer’s ears (underneath the protection) must not exceed this level.

A Limit Peak Level of 140 dB(C) was also introduced.

Hearing Protection

The main types of hearing protection are:

- ear muffs – which completely cover the ear.
- ear plugs – which are inserted in the ear canal
- semi-inserts – which cover the entrance to the ear canal

There are many types of hearing protection on the market, and employers should ensure that the protection supplied is suitable for the highest noise level that may be present for the particular job, and employees are trained in fitting the particular type used.

Selecting hearing Protection

Ideally select a protector so that daily exposure is reduced to between 80 dB and 75 dB at the ear. Avoid protectors resulting in less than 70 dB at the ear - this is ‘over-protection’ and can cause ‘isolation’ of the operator.

Hearing protection is now available marked with an ‘SNR’ number (Single Number Rating) to indicate the degree of attenuation provided by the protector.

MONITOR, CONTROL AND MANAGE

Daily Noise Exposure Level

It is not only intensity of noise that can produce hearing loss, but also the length of time exposed to that noise. During noise measurements, an average noise level (Leq) is produced and this is used with the time exposed to that noise, to produce a Daily Noise Exposure Level, (L EPd).

If this noise level is the only noise that workers are exposed to, then monitoring and control of noise levels becomes relatively simple and this will be the workers’ Daily Level. If, however, workers are exposed to several different noise levels, then each of these (along with time exposed) must be calculated. Using suitable formulae, these individual totals are combined to give a Total Daily Noise Exposure Level which is compared against the Action and Limit Levels, to determine if workers are at risk and what appropriate action to take, if necessary.

There are several methods in use to manage noise exposure, but the simplest is a system whereby noise values can be converted into ‘points’ (using suitable formulae) and the tool or equipment is ‘tagged’ with this information.

The operator simply has to note the number of points on the tag, and multiply by the time used (while noise is produced) to determine how many points have been used on each separate use of tools or equipment.

There is a ‘daily’ maximum number of points, and as long as this is not exceeded, then the operator will not exceed his daily noise level.

This is an effective, real time, management system, in use by many of Fivesquared’s clients – including local authorities, public utility companies, large construction companies, and several golf greenkeeping departments.

Article written by Herbert Barker

– Technical Manager

Fivesquared

– Vibration Management Solutions

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LIVING ON THE EDGE

Scott MacCallum travelled all the way to the eastern edge of England to a golf club which has a history of producing fine greenkeepers.

North Foreland Golf Club couldn't be much closer to continental Europe if it tried. Just outside Broadstairs, in Kent, and set on a cliff top, the club boasts some of the finest views to be found anywhere – "A view of the sea from every tee" is the club slogan. North Foreland had a Lookout Post during the First World War which was permanently manned for four years.

And just to reinforce the fact that the course is perched on the edge of England and closer to mainland Europe than most of Britain's populations centres, Course Manager, Dan McGrath, finds that when he ventures onto the 13th green he gets a text message welcoming him to Belgian Telecom! When he heads a little inland again he's

welcomed back by his home provider.

Dan has been Course Manager at North Foreland since 2005 and has not regretted the decision he made in taking the job for one minute.

"When I looked at the club I could see the huge potential. For one thing it's built on chalk which is the best thing to sand – some would say it's better than sand," said Dan, in his soft Irish accent.

"We are on greens all year round and we haven't got a single drainage pipe on the whole course. When we stripped the first bunker for renovation I asked where the drainage trench was, and was expecting to find shingle, but the guys said they'd never seen drainage here and had no experienced in how to install one. When I'm showing them how a herringbone system

works I've got to take them to another course to see one in action."

North Foreland has an enviable record of producing high quality Head Greenkeepers, among them Peter Wisbey. Peter spent 22 years at the club, then spent a number of years in Portugal, before returning to the post of Courses Manager at Woodhall Spa with the EGU. Duncan Kelso, Course Manager at Kings Hill and Steve Byrne, at The Wisley, both worked under Peter before becoming successful Course Managers in their own right.

Dan worked under both Duncan and Steve and it was they who pointed their young protégé in the direction of their former proving ground.

"I worked at Fota Island, under Steve Byrne straight from college and gained experienced of



North Foreland's reservoir

working at an Irish Amateur before going to the Old Head for the grow-in," recalled Dan.

At the age of 19, and hearing of another grow-in project, this time with Duncan Kelso at Kings Hill, in Kent, Dan took the brave step for a young lad and crossed the Irish Sea for a new life.

"Modern grow-ins are brilliant and are the best thing to learn how a golf course works," he explained.

He left Kings Hill in 2003 and joined Crown Golf, for a short spell before the job at North Foreland was advertised. Both Steve and Duncan encouraged him to put in for it.

Not having been with Crown Golf for long, Dan was a little apprehensive about applying for another job but he did so and was invited for interview.

"I basically went for the interview for the experience and felt that I had nothing to lose. That's when you are most relaxed. It all went well and a day later they called me and offered me the job," said Dan, recalling some good news which caused a few logistical problems at home.

"We were in the process of moving from

Maidstone to Surrey to be nearer my Crown Golf job and it was as we were filling boxes that the call came through. My in-laws were packing a van, expecting to drive up the M25, and I had to tell them that we'd be going in the opposite direction."

Since arriving at North Foreland Dan has become more admiring of the club.

"You couldn't buy this site," he explained.

"It has a good name, is known within the history of the game and was an Open Qualifier and really only needed tweaking around the edges."

He identified that the turf was good – indeed Alistair Beggs, of the STRI, recently said that North Foreland had the best fairways he'd seen in quite some time. The one problem was the greens which were a combination of rye, meadowgrass and bent.

"It's a combination that is notoriously difficult to manage," said Dan, whose first purchase on arriving was a Wiedenmann.

"We can pencil tine, top dress and roll and the golfers don't even realise we've been in. We're blessed with the machinery we have nowadays,

but saying that the volume of golf has increased. We have 1100 members and over 40,000 rounds a year," he said.

"The fescue doesn't like verticutting but at certain times of the year the rye was getting very woody so we needed something to lift it up so we went for verticutting which was good in one way but which was having a negative effect on the fescue. It was a Catch 22 situation. It was good for rye but not much good for the fescue which we'd overseeded.

"So we decided on daily brushing to lift up the rye without removing it. That's what we've done for the last two years – using a drag mat every morning.

"I'd say we're winning the battle very slowly."

Among the other tweaks, since he took over, was to take a look at the staffing and the working practices of the greenkeeping team.

"I wanted to freshen things up a bit and change a few of the structures. For example, the guys had been going out cutting the greens, then coming in for a cup of tea, going out for their next

job and then coming back in for lunch. I wanted them starting at 6am, actually working on the course at 6, and I needed to know who could buy into the new practices – who was on side and who wasn't. Everyone had the same chance to impress and, interestingly, it was the younger guys who left the club and the older ones who are still here.

"I'm absolutely delighted with the motivated and loyal team I now have."

Dan has a policy of recruiting people from the local area and has employed many who have been made redundant from their previous jobs and are looking for a second chance.

Dan sees a huge advantage in taking people who have had no previous experience.

"They haven't been tainted by low quality training so if they carry out jobs to a poor standard, and continue to do so, it's my fault, not the fault of anyone who has trained them before.

"For the first six to 12 months we train them from scratch in-house to find out if they are

suited to the work, then send them to either Hadlow or Merrist Wood Colleges," said Dan, who revealed that he had 127 applicants for one trainee position.

"Nine times out of ten it has been successful and we get guys who are keen to take advantage of a second chance. You find they have worked in offices or factories and want a total change."

In addition to the fine 18 hole test of golf at North Foreland there is one of the finest short courses to be found anywhere, which enables many people to hone their short games or discover whether golf is going to be for them.

Out on the course the biggest project which has been undertaken in the last few years was a new irrigation system to replace the 34 year old version, which drew from the mains and which leaked constantly.

"We'd repair one leak and 20 metres down the line another leak would pop up and it was always on a Bank Holiday that it went wrong!"

An Irrigation Consultant was brought in

to design the system and put the work out to tender while the club chose to appoint Dan to project manage the work and appoint a series of contactors to undertake the various aspects of the project.

"We decided that we wanted a borehole and a reservoir to take away the reliance on mains water and earmarked an area of ground to the left of the 8th hole for the reservoir."

One company undertook the trenching and laid the pipe; one dug the reservoir; another put in the lining while another drilled the borehole. There was also an electrician contracted.

"We saved quite a bit of money overall and even more by installing the sprinkler heads ourselves in-house, which was brilliant for our guys who got a chance to do it. The pipework was all there and they had to put on the swing joints and then the heads themselves."

One problem emerged when an archaeological dig found some remains and a shelf had to be left in the reservoir floor so as not to disturb



anything but they ended up with 850,000 gallons of capacity.

“They found a spear head and a piece of pottery, which, between you and me, looked like something from IKEA!”

The irrigation project was started in November, 2007 and completed at the end of April, 2008.

Dan found it a tough but rewarding period – 14 hour days, and available and around whenever the contractors were on-site.

“But now I have an irrigation system that I know inside out because it was done from scratch. The best thing we did was to get the borehole to feed the reservoir and the reservoir to feed our storage tank so if the reservoir pump goes down we still have the borehole which can go straight to our tank. If the borehole goes down we still have the mains.”

Another on-going project is chalkland grassland regeneration.

“The site had been taken over by ivy, due to no management in the long chalkland rough and

smothering the native grasses.

“Working with Kent Wildlife and with the backing of the STRI we are now three years into the programme and the results have been amazing. It involves using a flail mower and scarified with all the cuttings being collected. This is done on a rotation cycle and the material is composted.”

Dan has immersed himself in the area and thoroughly enjoys the quality of life that working at North Foreland has afforded him.

“It’s great for my wife here, while our two kids absolutely love it. We just live 200 metres from the beach and when I get home from work I meet the kids and a few minutes later they’re swimming in the sea. I walk to work and I walk home. I don’t have a car. As of six months ago I now do have a truck for work but I keep it on site. There’s just no point in taking it home.”

Having joined the long line of talented greenkeepers at North Foreland Dan is lapping up the experience, even if he has to go through Belgian Telecom to tell everyone about it.



Dan McGrath





MAKING THE 'APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE' SIMPLE

Scott MacCallum visited Scotts' Levington Research Station and learned just how much goes into producing the products you use on the golf course.

We all like things to be straight forward and get irritated when they become even a little bit complicated. For example, we love it when we switch on our computer and everything boots up perfectly, but when there is a little glitch and it doesn't work instantaneously we turn into Mr Angry, particularly if we are left hanging on a premium rate helpline.

It's the same on the golf course. You want to put an application on the course as part of a turf management programme, or to counter a disease which may have developed, you want to know that everything is in place to enable you to do just that. You also want to know that the action you are taking is going to be effective.

The Scotts Company, a BIGGA Golden Key supporter, prides itself on using cutting-edge technology to produce effective products for use on the golf course, and making life as simple as possible for its customers.

"We only develop a product if we are sure it is going to improve on what is already available or if it's a new addition to the product portfolio, one that is going to make a real difference to the end-user" explained UK & Ireland Sales Manager, Nick Martin.

"Scotts is an extremely innovative company. We make a huge investment in research and development across the world and right here in the UK at Levington. The development of a new product can take many years, from the initial stage of identifying a need moving through the chemistry to testing and registration," he added.

Scotts was launched in 1868 when an American soldier, Orlando McLean Scott, left the Union Army and embarked on a new business venture with the mission statement, "Farmers need, and shall have, clean, weed-free fields". OM Scott made its name as one of the America's leading distributors of horse-drawn farm equipment before adding a farm seed business to its portfolio.

In 1907 Dwight Scott, his elder son, identified just how important the garden lawn would become in American culture and began offering grass seed by mail order and in 1916 the company received an order for 5,000 pounds of Kentucky Bluegrass from one of the first golf courses to open in the States - Brentwood-in-the-Pines, on Long Island, New York.

The UK business unit of Scotts Professional was formed in 1991 and is based in Ipswich. Its research station, unique to the UK, is located a few miles away in the village of Levington. It covers 7.1 hectares and boasts two 2,000 square

metre golf greens, one built to USGA guidelines and the other a traditional push up green, as well as other areas which replicate the various areas on a golf course.

"The greens aren't the best in Europe but they're not meant to be. We use them to test our plant protection products for example, to measure how effective they are at preventing and treating turf diseases. Our greens are managed and maintained in a way that enables us to test those products in natural conditions," explained Dave Steward, UK & Ireland Marketing Manager, as we strolled around the impressive facility.

"The greens are large because we split them into three and use them on a three year rotation to give the trial areas time to recover," he added.

There is also an area which has been overseeded with weeds - more expensive than high quality grass seed, would you believe - so prototype herbicides can be given a genuine challenge.

Among greenkeepers, Scotts is probably best known for its fertilisers such as Greenmaster and Sierrablen. The company is at the forefront of controlled-release fertiliser development and the key roles of its scientists is to produce coatings which react in certain ways to specific temperatures and soil conditions. The Levington soil is high quality which is great in normal circumstances,





but to ensure fertiliser trials are not distorted by a soil rich in nutrient the Trial team - there are 15 people who work at the Research Station - have stripped an area and replaced the soil with a sand mix which is virtually nutrient-free. A small garden shed to the side of one of the trial areas contains a £30,000 piece of reverse osmosis equipment which, aside from something you'd expect to find in a Tardis, lowers the electrical conductivity of the borehole water. That way, any improvements are purely down to what is being tested and not from any of the existing nutrients in the soil or water.

In addition to the turfed areas there are greenhouse areas and flowerbeds as the Station is used for the testing of Scotts' consumer and ornamental horticulture products as well as those for the turf market. Indeed, testing on plants like poinsettia and cyclamen can amplify any pros and cons of a test more than a test on a particular grass type, so there are cross over benefits to be had from trialling such an extensive portfolio at one site.

We visited the area being used to test the company's new seed range.

"We acquired the rights to the Tee to Green range and have also been developing our own varieties which originally came from Oregon. These contain salt and drought tolerant varieties. We're carrying out extensive testing in European and UK conditions and have been extremely pleased with what we have seen so far," said Nick, as he took another opportunity to study the test plots.

Scotts' product development always has the job of the end-user in mind. Greenkeepers who are under pressure to have their course looking perfect prior to a tournament and to maintain its health and appearance despite difficult winter weather conditions look to applications of iron as a useful tool. To highlight the benefits of the site, Trials Officer Roger Page, undertook a demonstration of Effect Iron, a product which was launched at Saltex the following week after four years in development. A two metre square patch

was sprayed with the promise that it would have noticeably greened up within three hours.

Not being able to resist a sneaky peak, we had a quick look 45 minutes later and there was a definite difference in the sprayed patch and the area around it. This was more pronounced when we did return after the full three hours.

Walking around the Station you can't fail to be blown away by the vivid colours and smells of some of the test plants but the experts are not distracted by this gardening explosion they are more concerned by objectively marking each plant to see how it measures up against its peers.

The investment in Levington is huge because product testing in the UK is tightly controlled by the PSD.

"All tests are carried out to the required regulatory standard so that products can be registered when required. Scotts regards compliance with legislation as a minimum requirement," explained Dave.

The trials, in addition to discovering whether Scotts is sitting on a new wonder product, also allow testing to see what application rates are optimum. Modern day pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and the like require much lower doses than their predecessors to produce the same, or significantly better results, because they used the latest, modern active ingredients in their formulation. That can only be beneficial for all.

All Scotts' development, production and operational processes are scrutinised to assess environmental impact and continually improve the company's environmental profile. Key to the structure of the process is ISO 14001, the international specification for environmental management systems which outlines the requirements for establishing an environmental policy. As well as its own corporate responsibility, Scotts is keen to promote environmental awareness among end-users and has been a key sponsor of BIGGA's Golf Environment Competition along with Ransomes Jacobsen, Syngenta and, as of this year, Golf Monthly.

"We see tremendous benefits in being involved. Looking at some of the past winners they are superb ambassadors for the game of golf in showing just how much expert conservation and environmental work goes on. There is an amazing amount of diverse wildlife on a golf course that you wouldn't get if the golf course wasn't there and managed in an environmentally-responsible manner," said Dave.

In addition to environmental impact, efficacy has been at the forefront of the minds of all leading chemical companies. With so much attention being drawn to the game of golf and European-wide restrictions on chemicals, much research goes on to provide the most effective products at the lowest application rates and often replacing older products which complied with older regulations but which have been overtaken by more advanced chemistry.

Keen to promote the responsible use of pesticides, Scotts has sponsored the Amenity Forum's 'Check Your Sprayer' campaign launched at Saltex.

"We promote integrated pest management solutions. Sometimes a chemical is not the best option. It is just one of the tools in the kit that should only be used when it's needed. That is the advice we give," explained Dave, who added that their entire sales force are BASIS and FACTS qualified to give advice.

"If you have a healthy plant it is much less susceptible to disease, so it doesn't need as much outside help."

Scotts has no doubt about the benefits of being a BIGGA Golden Key Supporter and contributing to the Learning and Development Fund.

"We've always supported education and training not just in the golf world but also in the sports and the growers side of our business. Just as our scientists are working hard to find solutions to everyday problems on the golf course, greenkeepers' learning must continue, so we're pleased to support BIGGA in its ongoing provision of training and education to the industry."



There is no denying that trees can make a huge difference to the look, feel and playability of a course. A good mix of young and mature specimen trees is common on more recently constructed courses. Here it can pay to consider managing the younger trees. Judicious pruning mixed with re-planting and even complete tree removal needs to be thought through. Although it is not easy, try and think how the trees will impact upon the course in 10, 15 and 20 years time.

KEEPING THE BITS YOU DON'T MOW TRIM

By James de Havilland

Managing hedges, trees and non-mown areas is all part and parcel of running a modern course. With increased pressure on labour and budgets, getting this work completed can be a headache. But less so if you think ahead and have the right kit to make maintenance easier.

Trees really do make a massive contribution to the golf environment, but they do bring with them a number of management issues. Leaves and pine needles in autumn, a great thirst for water in dry periods and hazards associated with low, dying or fallen branches. Managing trees may not be at the top of your agenda, but the influence they have ensures they cannot be ignored.

One area that often needs attention is dealing with low or dangerous branches. In most cases these may be fairly easy to get at. If the branch can be sawn off from the ground using a bow saw, then great. The chances are there will be few health and safety issues to worry about. More realistically, lopping off a branch will certainly involve getting up to the branch.

Start mixing a work cocktail that includes height, ropes, chainsaws and ladders and you have the ideal ingredients for a trip to Casualty or worse. Thankfully, modern risk assessment rules these practices out. Some courses will also have trained chainsaw operators who know how to lop branches at height safely. But what about those circumstances where an overhanging branch needs tackling and there is no-one on site with the training to deal with it?

It is here where a pole saw or power pruner can be useful. Used with care, these tools can remove a substantial branch without damaging the tree and, more importantly, with far less risk to the operator than using a chainsaw.

Most chainsaw and brushcutter manufacturers produce what is essentially a brushcutter power unit and pole with a chainsaw head in place of a blade or line trimmer. Indeed a number of manufacturers can supply multipurpose units with hedge trimmer, brushcutter, chainsaw and other attachments.

There are essentially two main types of dedicated pole saw on offer. The first are fixed

length units with a reach to the tip of the saw to just under 3m. The second are telescopic units that may extend to perhaps 4.50 to 5m. The saw element, incidentally, will typically comprise a bar of 10, 12 or possibly 14". Professional backpack engine units, with a hydraulically powered saw, are also offered. These go up to 6m, but are not cheap at around £950 plus.

Telescopic pole saws are likely to be more versatile but also more expensive. A high quality rigid pole saw will be priced from £400, with telescopic units carrying a premium of at least £50 to £100. Reach, incidentally, should not be confused with actual cutting height. For safety, the pruner needs to be operated at 60 degrees to the branch. This is to allow the latter to fall and not land on the operator.

Pole saw two-stroke engines tend to span 20 to 30cc and 0.6 to 1.5kW output. In most cases, a body harness is supplied to help support the weight of the tool when moving it around, but a support harness may also be supplied for use in work. Dedicated pole saws will be supplied with a basic shoulder harness aimed at providing limited



A tractor mounted flail hedge cutter will produce a clean cut on regularly maintained hedges, with the capacity to reduce a hedge to a manageable height even if it has been left uncut for several years. As a rule, the thicker the material a flail has to cut, the less attractive the finish will be. Pictured unit typically used by an agricultural contractor. Great for course boundary hedges.

support. This is fine for occasional use, but it will not be as effective as the more complete harness designs that can be supplied by some manufacturers as an option. These bear the weight of the engine and allow the operator to pivot the saw from the attachment point and onto the branch.

A big advantage of this system is that it spreads the weight of the pruner across both shoulders. When dealing with higher branches, however, the saw will still need to be raised out of the support to provide the necessary reach.

Working a pole saw is straightforward for thin, lighter branches. These can be cut in one action from the top down. Thicker and heavier branches need cutting with care. It is best to cut back towards the trunk progressively in sections to reduce both the weight and volume of material falling. This will help protect the tree and prevent a long branch swinging back and clouting the operator.

For a clean cut at the trunk, larger branches should be undercut by a third before sawing through from the top. The aim is to produce a clean cut that allows the 'wound' to heal quickly and prevent disease entering the tree. As a guide, keep the cut

close to the trunk but retaining enough branch bark at its base to grow over and heal the 'wound'. In practice, getting a clean cut from a pole saw is not easy simply because the saw element is a long way from the operator.

Capacity wise, most pole pruners will tackle a 40cm diameter branch if the saw chain is sharp. Tackling a branch of this size is not necessarily recommended, but it does show engine power is not the key issue but a good sharp chain is the key.

As a rule, it is always better to prune lightly and leave a cleanly cut truncated large branch. In most cases it is best to leave cutting branches right back to the trunk to a trained arboriculturist, particularly on specimen trees.

Extended hedge trimmers

Although it is stating the obvious, the two key elements to a good hedge trimmer are the power unit and the blade. But a vital aspect that turns an effective tool into one that is easy to use and not over tiring is good ergonomics. This assumes

added importance when it comes to using an extended unit; a heavy, poorly designed trimmer will soon fatigue the operator.

Dedicated extended reach hedge trimmers will come with a choice of double or single sided blades and cutting widths of up to about 0.60m or 24 inches. The length of these trimmers will vary, but as a guide 150 to 250cm is typical with retail prices ranging from £400 to £500 for a dedicated unit. A longer blade will weigh more and may not be more productive.

Multi-purpose units

Arguably the best option to look for is a unit that has interchangeable tools; these can include a saw, trimmer, brush and light cultivator, the latter possibly being an ideal tool for fluffing up a bunker. Such units are priced from around £400 and make a versatile choice for a golf club.



FEATURE

The Stihl CombiSystem is available with four different CombiEngines, and the eleven CombiTools. These include a choice of hedge trimmers, a pruner, cultivator and lawn edger, a grass trimmer, brushcutter, scrubcutter, powered sweeper and bristle brush. With the shaft extended using the HT-KM extension, the power pruner Pole Saw makes working on low branches safe and easy.

Powered by a 23.6cc two-stroke engine, the 6.2kg Echo PPT2400 power pruner from Countax has a telescopic shaft that will reach from 2.74m to 3.83m. The 12" cutting unit can reach up a further 1.59m when fitted with an additional extension. Tools like this are great for dealing with hard to reach branches.

Is your course subject to a TPO?

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999. A TPO is made by the local planning authority (usually a local council) to protect specific trees.

Although it is possible to make TPOs on any trees, in practice they are most commonly used in urban and semi-urban settings. A TPO is to protect trees for the public's enjoyment. It is made for the 'amenity' of the tree or woodland, and this can include its nature conservation value but more often means its visual amenity. However, it does mean that if a tree is not visible or accessible from a public place - even slightly - a TPO will not usually be enforced.

TPOs can be placed on any trees including hedgerow trees but not hedges themselves.

There are (presently) four types of TPO, although any one Order can contain any number of items which can be of one or more types.

These types are as follows:

1. Individual: can be applied to an individual tree.
2. Group: can be applied to a group of individual trees which, together, make up a feature of amenity value but which separately might not.
3. Area: a type of TPO not normally made now but still common, as formerly this type was used frequently. It covers all trees in a defined area at the time the order was made.
4. Woodland: covers all trees within a woodland area regardless of how old they are.

TPOs are public documents and can be inspected at the local planning authority's office, or sometimes online. Attached to the TPO are usually a schedule and a map. The schedule shows the type/s of TPO which make up the order, and often gives details of the species of trees affected. A map gives the location of the TPO and shows individual trees or areas as appropriate. How a TPO map and the Order itself are interpreted can be a bit tricky. If in doubt, it really pays to seek advice.

A TPO can date back to 1949, so you may not be aware that tree in your care are protected. This will be less likely on any course that has been sold within recent years but if in doubt it can pay to check. TPO legislation has altered in recent years and continues to be reviewed.

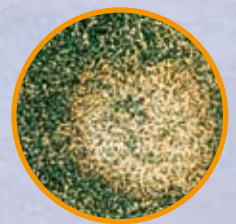
Are trees within a Conversation Area automatically covered by a TPO?

Conservation Areas are designated by local authorities for building and landscape conservation. The definition does not cover nature conservation or trees in the broadest sense. To work on trees within a Conservation Area, however, it is necessary to give notice in writing to the local authority six weeks before undertaking any work. Some local authorities may place a TPO upon a tree subsequent to an application having been made to remove or work on the tree.

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YOUR DRAINAGE ON YOUR GOLF COURSE

By Geoffrey Davison



Neat one-pass slit installation by sand injection



Fine sand slits at close centres

Sports-turf drainage in general, and golf course drainage in particular, has come a long way since the simplistic days of “just putting some pipes in wet areas”.

Before making decisions about any drainage problem ask three questions and make sure that the answers are made with full knowledge of up-to-date technology. Only by having this approach can the best results be achieved at the lowest possible costs.

Question 1.

WHY EXACTLY DOES AN AREA HAVE A DRAINAGE PROBLEM?

Answer 1. All wet ground is the result of rainfall, recent or perhaps much earlier. There may be one or more reasons why, at times, this precipitation causes some areas to be unduly wet:

- (a) Rainfall in excess of the existing pipe drainage capacity.
- (b) Soil Texture not sufficiently permeable.
- (c) Soil Structure compacted.
- (d) Surface run-off from higher ground.
- (e) Sub-surface seepage from higher ground.
- (f) “Saucer” surface contours.
- (g) Intensive use – eg. Pathways.
- (h) High water table.

Until the causes are correctly diagnosed, the most effective cures cannot be established.

Question 2.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE REMEDIES?

Answer 2. All the eight possible causes listed above have to be taken into account:

(a) Existing pipe drains. Measures such as repairing broken pipes and clearing blocked outlets are sound maintenance. It may be that the existing pipes are working but that there are too few of them. However, if the pipe system is generally mal-functioning the best and most cost effective course may be to leave it to make whatever contribution it can and to install a new well designed pipe system into the area.

(b) Soil Texture. Very few soils have a texture which provides ideally high permeability. The progressive addition of suitable sand does help but basically it is a case of having to accept that the soil texture is what it is!

Sand slits can provide an effective soil by-pass route for excess water.

(c) Soil Structure. Although it is very difficult

to change Soil Texture it is possible and very beneficial to create and maintain a good open Soil Structure. Really effective and frequent aeration is essential, not only for drainage but also for healthy root growth and good quality turf.

(d) Surface Run Off. On bare soil, surface run-off from sloping ground is obvious. On grassed areas it may not easily be seen, but it still happens and must be intercepted before it reaches the playing surface. Swales, ditches, pipe-drains with permeable backfill to the surface or combinations of these may be required.

(e) Sub-Surface Seepage. Many thousands of tonnes of water are held within the sub-strata of nearby, or even distant, higher ground. This water is under great pressure especially when it is deep within hills. It may take hours or even centuries to make the, sometimes long, journey, but if it can force its way out, it will do so. Wet areas can be formed at points where this underground water has travelled through the sub-strata and come to the surface. Deep drains are needed to intercept this flow before it reaches the playing surface. Pipes in the actual wet areas may not be the answer.

(f) Surface “Saucers”. It is surprising how often it is not appreciated that some wet areas are actually surface “saucers”. Surface water cannot escape and the slopes feed it towards the



Profound aeration creates countless millions of tiny cracks and fissures



Trenching to install a pipe drain



One pass narrow sand slitter



Rapid, one-pass installation of small sand slits at close

centre. This is often the case on greens! Adjusting the surface contours to provide run-off points is an effective remedy

(g) Intensive Use. Severe compaction on limited areas such as pathways may require very intensive drainage, or perhaps the turf could be replaced by other material.

(h) High Water Table. This may be a feature of the location. Lowering the level is possible but expensive. A professional survey may be required. Individual wet areas can be isolated by deep ring mains, sometimes with an automatically controlled pump. With the water table height reduced within the ring, normal drainage can be installed.

Question 3.

HOW EXACTLY CAN THESE CURES BE IMPLEMENTED?

Answer 3. These points apply to fairways and rough. "Greens" are dealt with separately as another item at 4 below, as also is "Installation" at 5 below.

(a) Existing pipe drains. If the existing drains are sound but too far apart, new drains can be installed to increase the drainage capacity by bisecting the spacings. On fairways, problem

areas will usually need pipes to be at not more than 5m centres.

The overall drainage capacity can be further enhanced by crossing the pipes with sand or sand/gravel slits @ 90degrees to the pipes and @ 1m centres. Wider spacings are proportionately less effective. Such major slits need to be 40mm to 50mm wide by 250mm to 300mm deep. Tested good quality back-fill is essential. Gravel or granules can be used but only if covered by a topping of good sand. Gravel or granule back-fill up to surface level is not cost effective. It is soon in-filled by fines and ceases to function. It is also a playing hazard and detrimental to the texture of the top-soil.

Where new pipe systems or sand slits are to be installed, always bear in mind that the key to modern drainage technology is "intensity". Fewer drains or fewer slits cost less but are less effective. The design of new pipe drainage really needs to be part of a comprehensive plan which includes other measures such as sand slitting, ditching, etc. Sound professional advice about this may be good value.

(b) Soil Texture. Sand top-dressing is beneficial to the playing surface but it takes regular applications over many years for it significantly to change the texture, and therefore the permeability, of the root zone material. Only a suitable depth

of a soil with a texture which has a particle size distribution of not less than 75% sand can provide the desired high permeability. Good fertile soil may not be highly permeable, but it can grow good strong turf; let it do that and impose the required permeability by installing a well designed intensive slit drainage matrix.

(c) Soil Structure. The value of creating and maintaining an open soil structure cannot be over-emphasised. It is hugely beneficial to root growth and grass health, and absolutely essential for good drainage.

Yet this prime requirement rarely receives the necessary regular and effective attention. The occasional application of a (perhaps outdated and not very efficient) aeration machine totally fails to achieve what is required. The objective of aeration is to increase the ratio of voids-to-solids within a soil's structure. In order to "make space" for this to happen, an aeration machine must either take out cores or, slightly and evenly, lift the surface. Machines which merely make holes or slits in the turf by poking the surface really achieve very little.

(d) Surface Run-Off. Inspections of individual areas readily show where the water is coming from. Adjusting the surface contours by temporarily removing the turf and re-shaping the formation grades can create wide and mow-able interception



Narrow trenching for slit drains



Neat clean trenching

swales. It may be possible for these to lead to discharge points, but in some instances ditches and/or pipe drains with permeable fill to surface level may also be required.

(e) Sub-Surface Seepage. It may be difficult in some cases to know exactly where the seepage is coming from. Trial holes may be required to establish both the direction and depth of the flow.

Interceptor pipe drains need to be appropriately deep and backfilled with suitably permeable back-fill. It also may be necessary to install a full-depth vertical water-proof membrane on the lower side wall of the trench before backfilling it in order to arrest flow which is occurring at various depths.

(f) Surface Saucers. Turf can be neatly cut and placed to one side while formation levels are slightly re-shaped to form one or more run-off points. With the soil cultivated and firmed, the turf can be re-placed immediately so that there is only minimal interruption to play.

(g) Intensively Used Areas. Depending on where it is situated, there is a choice between turf with very intensive localised drainage, or replacing the turf with some other pathway material such as woodchip, finely chipped stone, gravel, etc.

If turf is the choice the drainage pipes would need to be crossed by closely spaced major sand slits which in turn may need to be crossed by minor slits @ 250mm centres.

(h) High Water Table. Where parts of, or even entire, golf courses have been built on areas with a high water table, there is always the temptation to wish that they had been built somewhere else! However, they are where they are and can be very pleasant courses.

A high water table can be a difficult, but not insuperable, problem.

Localised areas such as part, or perhaps all, of a fairway can be dealt with by installing a suitably deep and continuous outer ring drain. Unless a pipe from this can lead to a lower outlet, it will be necessary to construct a deep chamber which is evacuated by a submersible pump controlled by a float switch. The evacuated water will have to be fed into an outlet which discharges outside the ring main. Normal drainage can then be installed within the ringed area which now has a lowered water table. Where larger areas require major works, a professional survey and expert advice is required.

Installation

Who does the work?

Major schemes are best carried out by proven specialised contractors.

They have the required machines and experienced staff. Good contractors will charge fair but competitive prices. Major contracts will require substantial outlay. All quotations must be made to the same detailed design and specification. Any bid which is much lower than the others is always suspect and best not accepted.

Where funds are in short supply, a lot can be achieved by carefully planned in-house operations. This is especially so on smaller areas and where skilled green-keeping care is required to provide a neat finish. Most drainage contractors really do not want this smaller type of work.

A long term in-house programme can be implemented over a period of years as and when the green-keeping staff have the time available. Work need not take place when ground conditions are unsuitable or when it would interfere with the playing schedule.

Suitable equipment can usually be hired, but it is much more convenient and less costly

for a club to own at least the one essential small specialist machine. A compact tractor mounted trenching machine which is capable of excavating larger trenches for pipe laying, and also neatly cutting out narrow trenches for sand slits, is always useful on a golf course. Trenching is often also needed for irrigation and other work apart from drainage.

Conclusion.

Pipe drains can take away excess water. Sports-Turf Drainage requires that this water must penetrate down to the pipes much more rapidly than the slow rate which is permitted by permeating through soil.

There are only two options. The soil has to be replaced by a sandy root-zone mixture or it has to be by-passed by an intensive sand slit matrix.

Modern Sports-Turf Drainage is not as complicated as brain surgery but it has now become a fairly complex technology. Scheme design and specification are crucial. Time spent in considering the various points outlined in this article will help to achieve the best results at the lowest costs.

Geoffrey Davison is always happy to have entirely complimentary telephone discussions on any aspect. His number is 01568 797024.

Contact Details

North Staffs Irrigation – 01785 812 706
 Speedcut contractors Ltd – 01865 331 479
 Turfdry – 01283 551 417
 Duncan Ross – 01257 255 321
 Philip Dixon Contractors Ltd
 – 01772 877 289

Please also see Page 61 in the Buyers Guide section for further information

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NEW PRODUCTS



RANGE OF SPECIALIST TOPSOILS EXPANDED

Rolawn has expanded its range of specialist topsoils. Following the introduction of Beds & Borders Topsoil in spring, two further additions have been introduced; Vegetable & Fruit Topsoil and Turf & Lawn Seeding Topsoil.

www.rolawn.co.uk



FAREWELL TO PITCHMARKS

A Berkshire company has recently launched an innovative product that they claim could mean an end to pitchmark damage for good.

The 'Pitchmark Repairer' evolved from an idea by West Berkshire Golf Club Professional, Paul Simpson, who was concerned at the damage consistently caused to greens by unrepaired pitchmarks. Aware that many players were either reluctant to repair their marks or found bending down difficult, he set out to find a solution that would be practical, robust, inexpensive and easy to use for all golfers.

The Pitchmark Repairer is a small device made from glass-filled nylon that simply fits over the end of the putter grip, enabling golfers to easily repair pitchmarks without bending. It is secured with a patented sliding collar mechanism and fits all normal grip sizes. The Pitchmark Repairer fits easily into a pocket or can be attached to the player's bag or belt.

www.pitchmarkrepairer.com



GET READY TO BE BLOWN AWAY

Bernhard & Company has launched a specially selected range of new turf products featuring powerful Debris Blowers and Recirculating Turf Vacs.

The new PTO Debris Blower comes in two models, the DB2700 and DB3600. Completing the line up is the new powerful engine-driven Debris Blower DB1800, which can be towed by most utility vehicles.

Three models feature in the new Recirculating Turf Vacs range - the TV40 and TV60RE, which can be towed by most utility vehicles and the tractor-mounted TV60RH.

www.bernhard.co.uk



EXPANDED RANGE

Leading British manufacturer Dennis has expanded its range, introducing a petrol engine version of its renowned Premier cylinder mower, which is popular with sports clubs, football stadia, contractors and local authorities.

For customers who prefer not to use diesel, the Petrol Premier offers the opportunity to purchase a top quality, heavyweight mower which gives an enviable striped finish.

www.dennisuk.com



PEDESTRIAN ROTARY

In time for the 2009 cutting season, Etesia is launching the PRO51X - a rugged professional 51cm pedestrian rotary designed to withstand the rigours of commercial use.

Plenty of power is essential for any rotary mower to give top performance. With this in the forefront of their minds, Etesia has chosen an engine from Honda's professional range to power the PRO51X - the GXV160. This commercial grade air-cooled OHV unit produces ample power to deal with the toughest of grass, yet still has some in reserve. The machine is self-propelled and has variable forward speed allowing the operator to adjust the mower's travel to suit prevailing conditions.

www.etesia.com



NEW DEEP TINE AERATOR

Groundsman Industries has launched its new Deep Tine Aerator model 30D 6150.

Available accessories include a large range of quick change tines for solid, needle and hollow-coring plus the proven Flex-blade Core Collector Attachment to core and collect in one pass.

www.groundsmanindustries.com



ROLLER MOWERS

Now marketed through Broadwood International, the Wessex ProLine Series of Professional Roller Mowers, are proving a solution for the sports turf, local authority and amenity contractors market.

The ProLine is currently available in 1.8m, 2.4m, and 3.0m versions with on-site demonstrations available.

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www.broadwoodintl.co.uk



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GOLF – THE CURE FOR THE GRUMPY OLD MAN

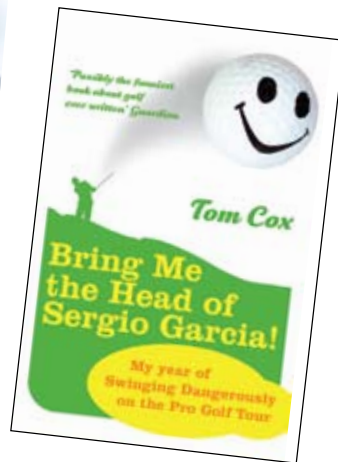
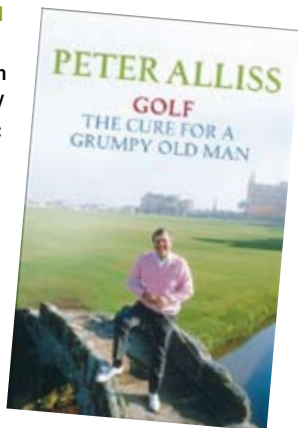
Peter Alliss has been entertaining huge TV audiences for the BBC and ABC in America for many years. In this new anecdotal but thoroughly practical book, Peter Alliss sets out to promote golf as the answer to middle-aged discontentment.

Peter Alliss has no difficulty giving compelling reasons as to why golf is the perfect game for adults - breathtaking scenery, fresh air, camaraderie and instant therapy.

He describes how to go about taking up the game, what equipment is necessary to buy and who to contact for lessons. With the aid of line drawings, he describes the basic techniques of golf, how to maintain a consistent swing and how to build up self-confidence.

Golf - The Cure For A Grumpy Old Man is aimed at regular golfers whose skills have deteriorated and would-be golfers who need the guidance as to which path to follow. Alliss's humorous but always-helpful book will confirm the great game as a really accessible and hugely enjoyable pastime to pursue for both men and women.

Available from all good bookshops.



BRING ME THE HEAD OF SERGIO GARCIA!

Tom Cox, the author of three books: Nice Jumper, which was shortlisted for the 2002 National Sporting Club Best Newcomer Award; Educating Peter and The Lost Tribes of Pop.

Founder of The Society of Secret Golfers, Tom Cox's latest book tells the story of how he devoted himself to golf.

Bring Me The Head Of Sergio Garcia! is available from all good book shops.

NEW PRODUCT GUIDE

Rolawn has produced a new Trade Product Guide.

Containing information on the Company's expanded range that in addition to turf and topsoil, now includes soil improver, lawn seed and fertiliser and bark, the guide details specifications, key benefits, applications and pack sizes for each product.

The Trade Product Guide is available from Rolawn Depots...

[0845 604 6085](tel:08456046085)
 email: info@rolawn.co.uk

NEW FUNGICIDE

Syngenta recently launched the new fungicide, Instrata, boasting unique contact and systemic action. The exciting introduction of Instrata will see the first new contact active ingredient for turf for over 25 years and will include the most comprehensive three-way activity, tackling all stages of the life cycle of a broad-spectrum of turf diseases.

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Tony Hawes, Course Manager, Potters Bar Golf Club



Whats your Number?

Name: Stephen Bernhard
Company: Bernhard & Co
Position: Managing Director/Chairman – or Chief Bottle Washer?!



How long have you been in the industry?
“44 years in all, where over 35 have been specific to golf and turf.”

How did you get into it?
“My family has always been in the horticultural business. I started Bernhard and Company after having worked in our landscape business, running the design and turf side of things.”

What other jobs have you done?
“In this business, there isn’t much I haven’t done - mechanic, machine operator, tree mover, landscape contracting, nursery production, agronomy, greenhouse manufacturer and wholesale operations - all leading toward specialisation in our area of turf maintenance. I am a qualified international truck driver too.”

What do you like about your current job?
“It changes constantly - and I like seeing my staff grow, taking over more and more of the company. I have a brilliant team and I’m very proud to

work alongside them.”
What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
“Two of the most significant changes I have seen in my time are the lower heights of cut and the importance of green speed. They have had a big impact on golf course maintenance practices throughout the years.”

What do you like to do in your spare time?
“I love to paraglide in any mountain region around the globe.”

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
“Above a mountain, suspended under my wing and watching the condors circling with me.”

Who do you consider your ‘best friends’ in the industry?
“I have many in this industry, but John Malinson has put up with me for a long time!”

What is your lucky number?
“Don’t really have one but 7 will do.”

Pick a number: “55”

Stephen has picked Stephen Fell from Lindon to take part in next month’s feature.

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BULLYING AND HARASSMENT AT WORK

One area of workplace relations that has received increasing headlines in recent years is the topic of bullying and harassment at work. Indeed, ACAS, the government sponsored employment advice service has even prepared a leaflet on the subject.

As the title suggests, the terms 'bullying and harassment' are often used interchangeably but, of course, conduct may constitute bullying or harassment – not necessarily both.

Harassment is defined by the ACAS Code as "unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual and may be persistent or an isolated incident". The key is that the action or comment is viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Most of the headings contained in the definition are unlawful conduct under various pieces of UK discrimination legislation.

Bullying is far harder to characterise but is again defined by ACAS as "offences intimidating and malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient". The leaflet then goes on to give a number of examples too numerous to be repeated here due to space constraints. Further details can be had from the ACAS website:

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=797>

The trend in recent years has been for anyone who is subject to management they dislike or disagree with to claim they are being bullied when, in reality, they are merely being asked to perform the job

they are required to do. In that context, one man's strong manager is another man's bully and sometimes the dividing line between the two can become blurred.

However, if you consider that you are the victim of bullying and/or harassment in the workplace then you have a number of legal remedies open to you. In the first instance, however, we would always recommend that your first port of call, wherever possible, would be an informal discussion with your manager. Often, the perpetrator is simply unaware of the affect they are having on the victim and an informal discussion can work wonders.

However, if this does not resolve the situation, the club is required to have a formal grievance procedure which is likely to enable you to raise the matter with the Greens Convenor and/or the Captain of the club in order to achieve a resolution.

If that fails, as a last resort, you have a right to bring a claim in the employment tribunal for constructive dismissal as long as you have at least one year's continuous service with your present employer. If your claim is not of harassment on one of the discriminatory grounds listed above, then no qualifying service is likely to be necessary.

We would, however, caution that you do not take this step without first obtaining expert legal opinion as to your prospects of success as constructive dismissal is notoriously difficult to prove in an employment tribunal.

Finally, if your health suffers as a result of adverse treatment at work then you may have a claim for personal injury. Once again, you will need to speak to a specialist solicitor if you feel you have a claim in this regard.

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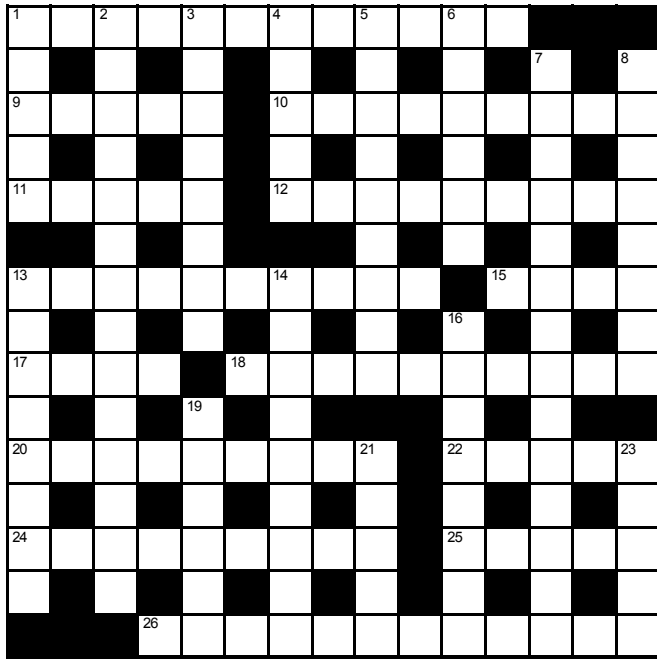
www.lastec.co.uk



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 Usually erroneous piece of lore passed on by word of mouth (3,5,4)
- 9 Cause to become hardened to the effects of something (5)
- 10 Most avaricious (9)
- 11 Brazilian city whose name is the Portuguese word for "Christmas" (5)
- 12 Casual - or hostile - meeting (9)
- 13 Name often attributed to an earliest example of the bicycle (10)
- 15 Operatic piece, usually elaborate, for solo voice (4)
- 17 Metropolis (4)
- 18 In law, such evidence that is required to correctly establish a case (5,5)
- 20 Series of fourteen books used in some but not all versions of the Old Testament (9)
- 22 Freshwater fish, also called rainbow fish (5)
- 24 Title (meaning "sign of God") given to high ranking Muslim clerics (9)
- 25 Subsequently; looking for? (5)
- 26 Musical with Nathan Detroit as one of its leading characters (4,3,5)

Down

- 1 Constellation which contains Rigel and Betelgeuse (5)
- 2 Person who unnecessarily demands physical evidence of something before believing it (8,6)
- 3 Dreamer, romantic (8)
- 4 In golf, a score of two strokes under par on a hole (5)
- 5 Expressionist masterpiece by Edvard Munch (3,6)
- 6 American author who created the frequently used Bourne character (6)
- 7 Funds made available for new business enterprises (7,7)
- 8 Engage in astronomy or be a woolgatherer (4-4)
- 13 Card game also called chemin de fer (8)
- 14 Elevated stronghold - Greek word meaning "high city" (9)
- 16 Napping (3-5)
- 19 Furniture decoration which looks like gold but is made from brass (6)
- 21 Pale, blanched (5)
- 23 Site of 1917 WWI battle, also referred to as Passchendaele (5)

QUICK NINE-HOLE QUIZ

1. What is the oldest stroke used in competitive swimming?
2. How many mushrooms does a bar billiards table have?
3. What is the world's largest legal bookmaking firm?
4. What is the most travelled sports team?
5. Who first scored a century and took 10 wickets in the same test match?
6. What year did Mexico City host the Summer Olympics?
7. Who did Bjorn Borg beat for his first Wimbledon title?
8. What football player was known as 'the black pearl'?
9. What is the name of the white ball in snooker?

MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A,B and C.

D	1	5		F	8		4	2		B				
0	F	7		2	C	E			9	B	1	5		
	E	6	B	D						1				
4					3				0		8		9	
9	A				6	5		8	2	4	0	E	1	7
	1	3				D		F				A	9	
	C	F						7				D		
		0	A		3									
								E		9		2		
		6				7						F	8	
	D	C				A	8					4	6	
F	8	7	A	9	0	B	6	5					3	D
A		5				B			C					4
				3					B	5	2		D	
		9	1	8	D			2	6	3		7	5	A
			B			F	7		9	4		6	3	E

SUDOKU

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

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



News from the Chief Executive

It is now 10 years since we moved into BIGGA HOUSE and as I reflect over those years I realise how so much has happened to change the Association and to change the industry in which we all work.

BIGGA has continued to establish itself as a key body within golf and through the development of closer working relationships it has grown to become an integral part of the management of the game.

Greenkeepers are at long last beginning to be recognised for their professionalism and their value to the club and, while there is still much work to be done, I would ask you to cast your minds back and look at how things used to be in the so called 'Good old days'.

The Association has enjoyed a period of growth on the back of the development of golfing facilities and its improved positioning has enabled it to influence conditions of service and the general education of all greenkeepers, not just those of its members.

However, the halcyon days of the early to mid 90's are over and golf is facing some serious challenges with a changing attitude towards club membership, environmental pressures, the demand by the golfer for better value for money and latterly a sharp decline in the economy to name but a few.

There is no doubt in my mind that some greenkeepers will lose their jobs through redundancy and as long as the employer acts in accordance with the law then there is nothing anyone can do. I also see some golfing establishments closing down over the coming years, there are simply too many golfing facilities in relation to the number of players. There is a drive by the game to recruit and retain golfers but in reality this is not having much effect.

It seems a gloomy outlook for the next 10 years and 'where do we go from here?' you might ask. I believe that there still are opportunities for BIGGA and that while there is no doubt that it is not going to be easy, I remain positive in my thinking both for the Association and for its members.

As you will read elsewhere in this issue of Greenkeeper International, the Board has approved draft proposals on the inclusion of groundsmen within the Association that will be put to the members at the AGM in January. BIGGA has come from traditional roots from a very traditional thinking industry, it must now think wider than golf and look at developing into the key body for those people employed in the Sports Turf industry.

Working with the Greenkeepers Training Committee, and in fact as part of its Board structure, we have made the greenkeeper education system the envy of many other industries, both in the UK and overseas, and have created a model that they strive to emulate.

As an example of this I am hoping that very soon we will be in a position to announce the launch of an industry specific national qualification that carries the logos of the Association, the GTC and its constituent members.

If the members approve the change in the Constitution then is there any reason why BIGGA and the GTC, working with key industry partners, could not develop Aldwark as the National Centre for Sports Turf?

During the coming weeks you will be reading and hearing much more of the proposed changes to YOUR Association and I ask you to consider very carefully the consequences of not embracing a change that your Board sees as being in the best interest of you and your professional organisation.

Your support is vital to the future success of your industry, think back to yesteryear and then hopefully realise that we must move with the times and embrace change not resist it.



SCOTTISH REGION - AYRSHIRE

Hello everyone, hope you are all well and have not succumbed to pneumonia or any similar condition due to the ridiculous summer weather! Can't wait for winter as it has to be better than our previous weather, surely?

Went to the doctor because I thought I had that SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) but he told me I was just depressed because the weather's crap?

On the bright side, we had good weather and a great time meeting up with the County Down Greenkeepers, at The Pines, on September 19, for our annual match, now in its third year. Although the recent wet weather left the course soft in places, the greens were firm and dry - a credit to Duncan and his staff.

At our third attempt the Ayrshire Section, lads prevailed 5 1/2 to 2 1/2. The match was played in good spirit, as always, however, it was definitely the spirits that prevailed later that evening!

I just want to thank Duncan for the use of the course and facilities and his son, Bruce, and staff for the catering at the club. I also want to thank all the players for making it such an enjoyable day, especially the lads traveling over from Northern Ireland. Thanks guys. I am already looking forward to defending the Shield across the water next year.

The following Thursday saw us at the Pines once more for the Autumn Outing and Second and final leg of the Daval sponsored Harry Diamond Jug. Numbers on the day, it must be said, were disappointing especially considering we'd had a dry week and weather on the day was glorious. There was a great atmosphere in the club after the golf and I am sure those present had a good day.

Alec really must learn some new jokes though! Only kidding buddy! Again our thanks to Duncan, Bruce and the staff there for keeping the beers and soft drinks (was still not feeling too good from weekend celebrations!) coming and for serving up some delicious food.

Results were as follows: Harry Diamond Jug - M. Lothian, 64pts. 1.1. R. McBeth, Pines GC, 33pts; 1.2. R. Adams, Turnberry GC, 28pts; 1.3. S. Higgins, Ardeer GC, 27pts; 1.4. G. Morrisson, Largs GC, 27pts. 2.1. M. Lothian, Turnberry GC, 31pts; 2.2. D. Gray, Pines GC, 27pts; 2.3. P. Tulloch, Irvine GC, 25pts; 2.4. G. Ross Royal, Troon GC, 24pts.

Trade Prize - Peter Boyd, BIGGA Regional Administrator.

Recently, not for the first time, I have become aware that some members feel they get little or nothing out of their BIGGA membership apart from their monthly magazine, which on the whole doesn't justify their subscription. While I can understand why some may feel this way, I believe one must look at the bigger picture to Membership. The management of BIGGA from HQ, Board of Management, Regional Administrator's, through to Section Secretaries and Committee member's are, I believe, all working for the advancement of greenkeepers by showing the profession to be pro-active in its approach to among others, educational and environmental issues. The Association shows the greenkeepers' commitment and allows us to take our rightful place as an integral part of the golf industry.

I like to think of membership in terms of those immortal words of John F. Kennedy who stated, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but, what can you do for your country!"

Bye for now

Denis Tweddell (denis.t@hotmail.co.uk)

07939 104701



CENTRAL

Along with many other people in the industry, some of us were at Dunbar Golf Club on September 19 for the Graham Wood Charity Day. Graham was Head Greenkeeper at Dunbar for many years until he had a stroke over a year ago and has been unable to return to work. Dunbar Golf Club organised this day for him which took the form of a Pro/Cel Am with two shotgun starts at 8am and 2pm. There were various auction and raffle prizes and they raised a considerable amount of money for Graham and his family. The course was in excellent condition although needless to say, the central Section never won a prize!

As I write this, the weather has at least turned drier if also a little colder. At St Andrews, Carnoustie and Kingsbarns, the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship is being staged and it has been pretty nippy first thing, as staff go about preparing the courses.

I am sure most thoughts have by now turned to renovation and winter work programmes. Following such a wet summer aeration is probably more important than ever, yet I have heard stories of how, because green fee income is down, some clubs have decided to cut spending and contractors coming in to carry our aeration work has been dropped. Amazing! On the Strathtym Course, at St Andrews, we hired in contractors with Dryjects to aerate our greens in September. Like a hydroject, a nozzle injects water at high pressure into the greens, but in addition, sand sucked into the hole immediately afterwards and leaves the surface fairly smooth. The sand has to be kiln dried and we used a tonne per green. Along with the machines coming from Portugal and having to close the course for a day, the operation wasn't cheap but the finish was much better and far less time consuming than having to brush sand down a hollow core or vertidrain hole. There should be some pictures on the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Some of us from the area were fortunate enough to be invited to Castle Stuart, near Inverness, at the beginning of October, for a game on the new course there on one of their preview days. It will prove to be a stunning golf course with tremendous views over the Moray Firth. Mark Parsinen, the owner, Stuart McColm, Chris Haspell and their team have made a fantastic job with the build and grow-in and it will prove a very popular venue when it opens in July 2009.

Gordon Moir



EAST

I start this month's report on a sad note with the news that John Eadie, the former Head Greenkeeper at Bathgate Golf Club, died on September 17 after a short illness, he was 67.

During the years I knew John he was always the perfect gentleman who was well respected and liked by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife, Anne, son, Colin, and daughter, Lorna. Our thoughts are with them at this sad time.

The much-delayed East Section Outing was held on October 9, at West Linton Golf Club, and the following report is courtesy of Tom Murray.

The results: Scratch: Kenny Mail, West Linton, 73pts (Stewarts Quach).

Best Nett: Chris Yeaman, West Linton, 79-12-67 (Watermation Bowl). 1st Class: Winner: Keith Burgon, Goswick, nett - 70 (Thorntrees Cup). Runner

up: Stuart Ferguson, Dundas Park, nett-72. 3rd: Tom Murray, Ratho Park, nett-72

2nd Class: Winner: Chris Yeaman, West Linton, nett - 67 (Russell Cup). Runner up: Robbie Murdoch, Dundas Park, nett - 75. 3rd: Colin Irvine, Muirfield, nett - 72

Veteran: Alastair Holmes, Seahouses, nett - 72. Trade: Stuart Clayton, Scotlube, nett - 72 (Daval Bowl). Best Newcomer: Benn Macleod - nett - 76. Nearest Pin: Alister Holmes. Long Drive: Ian (Tiger) Lauder: Thos. Sherriff's. The Booby Prize: Tom Brannan.

Thank you to West Linton Golf Club, Chris, and his staff, the course was in excellent condition - well done guys.

I had the privilege of playing golf with our Chairman, Stuart Ferguson, who taught me some new golf shots out on the course, he is a very modest chap but will give golf lessons at a good rate!

It was nice to see some "auld faces" from the past, namely Jimmy Neilson, Jackie Dalrymple and George Stavert.

Last but no means least, a big thank you to our BIGGA Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, who is always on hand to help out - thanks Peter.

On September 19, the Graham Wood Charity Golf Tournament was held at Dunbar Golf Club. A total of 52 teams of four participated with two shotgun starts at 8am and 2pm. I understand from those participating and from my own observations that the event was extremely well organised and went like clockwork from start to finish. The buffet in particular was extremely well received, although I reckon George Thompson had my share as well as his own! With the Golf Event and Silent Auction which followed, a substantial amount of money was raised for Graham and his family.

Until next month
Mike Dooner



NORTH

First things first this month, the Chairman of the Section pulled me up at the last meeting about my use of the word 'veteran'. He says that he is not a veteran. You either are or you aren't. There are other names that could be used such as 'senior' or 'old timer'. What do you think he should be referred to? Feel free to get in touch with me about it and maybe I could include them in the next edition, if they are printable!

I received a phone call from Dale the other day to say that two of his staff are getting married. I asked him if George and Patrick had rekindled their relationship but unfortunately, he said no. He did however say, that Joanne O'Neill and Matthew Smith had got engaged. On behalf of the Section, may I congratulate you and fore warn you that the whole Section is expecting an invite! Well done.

By the time you read this Section news, the AGM will have been held at Meldrum House. I'm jealous I wasn't there but hopefully there were quite a few faces, as we had a good response for the Kirriemuir outing. The day at Kirriemuir was fantastic, I think you will all agree.

The results are as follows: Nearest the Pin: Winners John Geddes, Kevin Spowart, Chic McDonald. Sweep: 1. Matty Smith 2. Ryan Stott 3. Hugh McLatchie 4. Kevin Spowart.

Guest Winner: Derek Bond Snr. Trade Winner: Kevin Brunton BIH. Committee Trophy: McLatchie. Veterans: 1. McLatchie 2. Jim Macormack. Apprentice: Mark McLaren. Class 3: 1. Surpise McLatchie 2. John Geddes 3. Josh Lester. Class 2: 1. Ryan Stott 2. Kevin Spowart 3. Paul Sharp. Class 1: 1. Headgreenkeeper at Kirriemuir 2. Kevin Fowler 3. Patrick Wood. Scratch: 1. Matty Smith 2. Neil Sadler. The winner of the Mark Main Trophy (Best Nett



Around the Green

over the 2 outings) with a combined score of 141 was Mr Robert Patterson of Royal Aberdeen. Well Done.

The weather on the run up to the outing had been pretty miserable. In fact, the day before the competition the course was closed. When we played the course on the Thursday it was in tip top condition, despite the terrible weather, so full credit to Jim and his boys for being able to put on a display like that for us. Can you call off the lynch mob now Jim? Thanks.

It has been brought to the committee's attention that there are still a number of trophies missing. If anyone has any of the following trophies can they please get in touch with me on: 07813889374. The Toro Trophy, The George Hamilton Trophy, Trades Trophy and the Apprentice Trophy. Thank you.

It is on a sad note that I report the death of Gavin Cameron, who was an Assistant Greenkeeper at Royal Aberdeen for over 11 years. Gav left the club in 2007 to work in the oil industry. It was while working in Baku, Azerbaijan, that he tragically died in September. He proved to be a very capable greenkeeper and hard worker. He liked a laugh and was very quick witted with the general banter. His passion was "The Dons" and there were many a good debate in the bothy. The staff at the club were stunned to learn of his death and on behalf of the Section and the Royal Aberdeen, us boys pass on our sympathy and condolences to his family and partner, Kara.

You as members of the North Section can now read about our own news on the BIGGA website. If you put in your membership name and number and then go into the members page, look at the column on the left, there is a new section called Your Pages click on it. Then click on North for our Section and this will let you into our new site which Dale updates on a regular basis, it is full of information and pictures.

Any news for the next edition please drop me a line.

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links GC



WEST

Well, still no change in the weather, it was disappointing that September's forecast was good but the warm weather didn't arrive.

A warm welcome back to Ronnie Myles who has returned north after a couple of years working down south, Ronnie has taken up the post of Course Manager at Buchanan Castle Golf Club - the Section wishes you all the best in your new post.

This year's night out will be held at the Curry Karaoke, on Friday, November 28. The price will be £25 per head, this includes a 5-course meal, karaoke and disco until 1am. Come along and have a great night, tickets are going fast so please get in contact to snap one up, the venue is in Elderslie Street, Glasgow.

This year's autumn outing was held over Elderslie Golf Club, it was a fantastic day with 45 in attendance. Jonathan Clelland and his team did a fantastic job, as the weather the previous day was horrendous.

Many thanks to the Captain and committee for the use of their course, we would like to wish you all the best for your centenary next year. Many thanks also to the bar and catering staff, as the service was first class. I would also like to mention the west Section Committee for all the hard work carried out arranging these outings.

The prize winners on the day were: Scratch - Allan Syme; 1.1 Callum Morrow, 1.2 Jonathan Clelland, 1.3 Gerry Bruen; 2.1 John Barr, 2.2 Sandy Brolley, 2.3 Colin Kennedy; 3.1 Kevin Cross, 3.2 Craig Drummond, 3.3 Michael

Maxton. Trade prize - Jim Smith, Visitors prize - Peter Boyd, Apprentice prize - Andrew Orr. Well done to all the prize winners.

This year's Norrie Whytoch Trophy was held over Auchterarder Golf Club and for the first time the West Section won - well done to the team Douglas Macintosh, Brian Hillan, Allan Reid and Allan Syme. Well done to Archie Dunn and his team for the first class condition of the course, thanks to Peter Boyd for his hard work arranging the day and to Kenny Liddell, from Bayer, for their continued support.

A first class day was had by all at the recent Graham Wood testimonial day held at Dunbar Golf Club. The Section would like to wish Graham and his family all the best during his time of recovery a substantial amount was raised on the day well done to all involved.

On the education front we will be arranging a seminar for spring next year with a range of topics, also a trip to Marr Hall to see how the course has developed in the grow in.

On the training front GOSTA training, situated in Glasgow, offers a wide range of courses to suit all areas of our market you can get in contact on 01415563999.

Well that's all for now see you next month

Fraser Ross
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NORTHERN REGION - NORTH EAST

Hasn't he done well - that's James Leighton, formerly a work colleague of mine at Hexham GC - James who had worked under the supervision of Head Greenkeeper, Mal Lathan, for nearly three years gaining his NVQ levels 2 and 3 before moving onto Slaley Hall. There he worked with then Course Manager, David Cuthbertson, who has since moved on to Rockcliffe Hall - I believe he had tried to persuade James to move with him but he had declined the offer, as he wanted to stay at Slaley Hall to gain experience for the forthcoming seniors tournament. Along came Steve Cram as the new Course Manager, gave James further training and the insight of preparing for a major competition.

Well it looks like its paid off, as James applied for a job after the Seniors, with Wentworth GC, had the interview and accepted a job as Assistant Greenkeeper - he started there on September 29 - now that's ambition for you knowing that you are prepared to move away. He has followed in the footsteps of three other greenkeepers from the Section that have moved south in recent years, those have been: Ed McCabe and Paul McDowell, both from Seaham, and Craig Handyside, from Gosforth. All I can say James is best of luck, and enjoy.

Well other news is that with all the rain we had many courses suffering with flooding. Take Rothbury having five feet of water through the clubhouse and workshed, resulting in all their machinery becoming totally submerged and the likes of Arcot Hall, Ponteland, having been closed for days with flooding, and Tyneside having the same problems but only playing 16 holes as their 17th and 18th have been closed. I have never seen so much surface water on those fairways, the drains just could not cope and the pond at the 2nd is still a lake. Let's hope the winter is going to be kind to us for a change.

Barry Wilson, from Stocksfield GC, rang me to say he had been involved in an accident while riding his scooter resulting in him being hit by a car and ending up with a broken leg. I told him to get in touch with the Legal Helpline as by the time you read this he could be claiming monies for being off work, although it's not a great deal but it can work out quite a bit



depending how long you're off also anytime spent in hospital you will be paid for. All I can say Barry is "Get well" it has been a while since you have played in a Section event.

Jimmy Richardson



NORTH

It's now the end of the golfing season and yet again, the leaf collecting has begun. Did we even have a summer this year? I have just returned from a short break in Scotland and unbelievably we got caught in a blizzard. That's right, snow in September. That's bad, even for Scotland! If we are in the grips of global warming, I wouldn't mind seeing some of it!

While I was getting my bits frozen up North, this year's Autumn Golf Tournament was taking place at the fantastic Alwoodley Golf Club. I have heard that the course was playing very tough and looking at the scorecards my sources were correct. A huge thank you to Phillip Taylor, and his team, and everyone at Alwoodley for a superb course and great hospitality. I must also thank Ed Carter, and the Scotts Company, for their sponsorship of the day. The winners were: Division 1.1 Dave Collins 1.2 Dean Gosney 1.3 Rob Gee. Division 2.1 Frank Stewart 2.2 Steve Trowlesdale 2.3 Paul Danskin. Division 2.1 Richard Smith 2.2 Peter Colley 2.3 Ken Christie. Trade: 1. Glen Baxter, 2. Mel Guy. Nearest The Pin: Derek Chew and Dean Gosney.

While on the golf front can I remind you all that this years winter golf and AGM will be held at Halifax Golf Club on Thursday, December 11, teeing off at 10am. Can you please let me have your name and entry fee in plenty of time (at least a week).

I will finish this month by congratulating Simon Rothwell on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper of Marsden Golf Club. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Simon good luck in his new position.

Adam Speight
07739 319060



CLEVELAND

The Section Autumn Golf Tournament was held at South Shields Golf Club on October 1. I feared the worst as the weather on the Tuesday was horrendous and my thoughts were with Phil and the lads trying to set the course up for the 'Experts' the next day. I needn't have worried as the weather on the Wednesday was sunny and breezy and the course was superb. We know that we always say that the greens were good as a matter of courtesy but the greens were fantastic. Many congratulations to Phil and the lads. A good turnout of 18 golfers and everyone who played was extremely complimentary with their comments about the whole course. Those of us who dined were very impressed with the food - top quality and plenty of it too! Thanks go to the catering staff especially from Fat Boy SlimFat (Pembo). Results of the straight Stableford tournament were as follows:

1. Phil Hargrave, of South Shields GC, (local knowledge?) 39 pts. 2. Mark Cooper, South Shields GC. 3. Pembo. Ian Stuart, Seaton Carew GC, whacked the 'Longest Drive; Richie Hood, Houghton-le-Spring GC, was 'Nearest the Pin' and Ian Pemberton, Cleveland GC, was the best on the Par 3 holes. Jamie Applegarth, of Rigby Taylor, was victorious in the Trade section just pipping Alistair Whitby, Lloyds Limited. Well done to you all.

Speaking of Rigby Taylor I would like to sincerely thank Jamie and his Directors for sponsoring the day. Over £500.00 worth of prizes were provided by them and this added to an already fantastic day. On behalf of

the Cleveland Section - we thank you!

Other nice prizes were supplied by Aitkens, Tacit and Turfcare Specialists. Thanks go to you too! A final thank you goes to Tony Burge, Richmond GC, who guarded the prizes, collected the money and the cards. The pair of us chatted about several topics. Tony recalled some of his tales about his time in greenkeeping - very funny. I told him to write a book. We also put the world to rights!

The next golf outing is our 'Bring A Bottle Christmas Day' at Cleveland Golf Club, on Wednesday, December 3. Tee off 10.30 until 11.30 with a maximum of 30 places. Please book a place with Pembo on: 07791 695 768. A tenner up front must be sent to Ian before the day. His address is 6 Rosewood Court, Marton, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS7 8QR. Ian will not accept money on the day! Be warned! We had a great day last year so get there this year! Pay up now and don't forget your bottle!

That evening is the annual turfcare 'Greenkeepers versus the Groundsmen Quiz' at Mount Oswald Golf Club, South Road, Durham City. Starting at 7.30pm - it is a really good night. TSL buy your first drink on arrival and feed you half way through. We also have a few questions, some daft games and lots of laughs. Just turn up and enjoy.

Hoping to see you all at these events.
Terry Charlton (07831 214879 with any news)



SHEFFIELD

Welcome again everyone, time really flies when writing these Section notes it doesn't seem two minutes since I was writing the last notes.

The Sheffield Union greenkeepers competition was recently held at Doncaster Golf Club and a fantastic day was had by all who attended. I would like to give a big thanks to all the Greenstaff at Doncaster for the excellent course they provided. The competition was won by Darren Coop. Well done again Darren.

I have recently received correspondence from headquarters informing me that all Sections have been given a space on the BIGGA website. This space can be used as a newsletter to inform members of section events. I will update this space soon. There are links on the website directing you to our page. If anyone has anything they would like on this page then please don't hesitate to contact me.

Unfortunately that is all from me this month, I hope you all have a good November and I will speak to you all again in December.

James Stevens
jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com



NORTH WALES

Hello again North Wales! It's at this time of year I wish I worked on a links type course, I personally am getting a tad fed up with going into work and finding another six foot of leaves to be shifted off the course - I don't know who suggested that the way forward is to remove coniferous plantations in favour of native deciduous but I'd like to shake them warmly by the throat!

The Autumn Tournament and Section AGM took place at Upton Golf Club on October 8 and a full write up on the day and results will be posted in December's 'Around The Green' column.

The Christmas tournament is only around the corner taking place this year at Prestatyn Golf Club, on December 3, this day is normally well attended



Around the Green



so get your booking forms in early! I am also sure Dave Parry will give us a course we can all be jealous of on the day.

It's normally at this time of year that Andy (Acorn) Cornes reminds people that are staying at Harrogate to make sure of their room reservations as they might find that they're sleeping under the stars if they don't! Talking about Harrogate it has been suggested that the bus that the Section runs every year to BTME be changed slightly to either leave earlier, so we have a more reasonable length of time at the show, or even change the day to Wednesday instead of the usual Tuesday - member input as to your preferences to your local committee member.

We are very short on local news this month, so short in fact that I actually don't have any at all! Please help me out with some local interest news for next month, email and phone numbers appear at bottom of this column.

Pete Maybury 07756001187 petemayb66@aol.com

Johnny Evans Johnny.evans@tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION - MIDLAND

Our autumn event was held at Fulford Heath GC and despite the never-ending rain we have all had to cope with this year, the course was in fine fetal. Our thanks to Kim and his fine team, oh and Billy for producing the course so wonderfully. The results of the day were: 1.M. Hughes. 2.D. Fellows. 3.A. Foldes. 4. R. Beacham. 5. S. Scott. 6. L. Swann. 7. S. Thompson. 8. G. Turner. Our thanks to Campey's Turf Care for sponsoring the main prize table. Nearest the Pin: M. Hughes and Longest Drive: S. Thompson, thanks to Sherriff Amenity. Also thanks to Turners for refreshments around the course. We also held our AGM before the evening meal; your committee is to remain as previous with the additional welcoming back of Andy Smith. There were no comments or questions raised from the floor or by proxy. Our greatest of thanks to Fulford for affording us such a wonderful day, and I didn't realise that there was a portrait of me garnished with a couple of black swan quills in the clubhouse.

Congratulations from the Section, and all the lads at Wrekin Golf Club, to Andrew Dalton and his lovely bride Kelly Vaughan, who were married at the end of August - a wonderful honeymoon was spent in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. However, I hear Andrew may require a change of underwear following a water-plane flight to the island. All the best mate and congratulations on your Deputy position down there in the south.

What's this I see on this month's calendar page, the 17th at Penn with mist crawling out of the dell, our Chairman must have had an art attack. Our thanks to Whitemoss for sponsoring this month's page - for you rootzone etc needs visit www.whitemossec.co.uk

The Christmas tournament is to be held at South Staff's Golf Club on December 3, with tee times starting at 10:30am and a full English breakfast from 8:30. The cost being £25, also a 'bring a prize/receive a prize' of £6 will help all to enjoy the day. It is hoped that Peter Baker (ex. Ryder Cup Vice Captain and European Tour Pro) will be giving an after dinner speech and a Q & A session. However, such is dependant upon Peter's commitments. If he is unable to attend then a comedian will be employed.

Just a note to say the trip to John Deere Headquarters has been re-scheduled for December 11.

Looking forward to seeing you at South Staff's and wishing all a Happy Christmas.

Sean McDade

EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all,

Firstly, this month I have to mention something that I forgot to write about in last month's magazine.

On August 23, members of our Section were invited to go behind the scenes at RAF Cottesmore to watch the work done on the Harrier Jump Jets. This was organised by Steve Hopkins who works on the aircraft as well as looking after the 9-hole golf course on the base. The day began with a talk by a couple of pilots about the work being done out in Afghanistan, talking about what the conditions are like and the sort of missions they are involved in. This was followed by a tour of the workshops where Harriers are completely stripped down to their shell and rebuilt with new wiring, guidance and weapons systems. It makes taking cutting units apart look like child's play!

The afternoon consisted of 18 holes of golf played over the 9-hole course built on the base. Steve Hopkins had the course presented in excellent condition and many good comments were received on the condition of the course especially with the limitations he has to work with.

The golf was followed by an excellent meal served up in the Officers' Mess, where beer was also available for £1.20 a pint, bless Her Majesty and her armed forces.

Many thanks go to Steve Hopkins and everyone at RAF Cottesmore for allowing us in to visit and putting on a very interesting, informative and enjoyable day for everybody.

September 24 was the date of our annual match versus the Secretaries' Association. This years venue was Radcliffe-on-Trent Golf Club. The day was well supported by greenkeepers (and a few trade ringers) and secretaries alike. Many thanks go to all at Radcliffe for their hospitality. The match was won by the greenkeepers by 4 ½ pts to 1 ½.

October 2 was our autumn Texas Scramble golf event and Section AGM held at Belton Park. The golf day was very well supported and played on a golf course in superb condition, especially given the weather the day before. Many thanks to Gary Poole and his staff for the course presentation and to all the catering staff for the excellent meal afterwards. The day was sponsored by Colliers and the halfway house provided by Supatee.

The results were as follows: 1. A. Walker, G. Poole, C. Chamberlain, B. Robinson; 2. S. Beverly, R. Moody, S. Calvert; 3. G. Merrison, C. Wilkinson, P. Fell

The AGM followed the meal and was attended by roughly 25 people. All reports were well presented by the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. Several changes were made at committee level, they are, Russ Moody replaces Les Howkins as Vice Chairman after Les moves down south. Bruce Hicks replaces Rob Welford as Section Secretary after Rob decided to step down after three years in the job. Steve Hopkins has taken up the vacant position on the committee.

It was also decided to increase the cost of golf days to £20 for everybody from next year. This is because the increase in costs at golf clubs means we currently make a loss on several golf days. It is also aimed at bringing more money into the Section so we can provide more education and training for our members.

There was also a debate over the number of golf days we currently have, some people thought that we have too many, with work commitments meaning not everybody can attend every event. It was decided that as most of next years fixtures are booked that we would carry on as we are but will review it next year at committee level.



Congratulations are to be passed on to Russ Moody and Rob Bemment, who have been awarded a two-night stay at Harrogate Week 2009 for services to the Section throughout the year. This year the room is kindly sponsored by Gary Cooper, of STG Amenity Supplies.

Ending on a sad note, I would like to pass on condolences from everyone in the East of England Section to Chris Wilkinson, of Lincoln Golf Club, on the sudden passing of his father. Our thoughts are with him and his family at this difficult time.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club
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BERKS/BUCKS & OXON

November! Doom and gloom, credit crunch, rain and a soggy pot noodle, are things looking up? Most certainly.

Described by the club as "one of those odd stretches of land intended by nature for a golf course, but hitherto unrecognised", it had poor shallow sandy soil of little agricultural use where gorse and heather were indigenous and where stone and peat had been extracted. It was, in fact, a veritable golfer's paradise.

The Annual BB&O meeting will be held this year at one of the finest courses throughout the British Isles to boast 54 holes of championship golf.

On November 20, The Blue Course at Frilford Heath Golf Club will be the venue for the Turkey Trot and AGM, the club has offered us there facilities to host our event and this year celebrate its centenary - a perfect chance to test your skills at this prestigious golf course, so if you have yet to fill out your entry form don't delay get it in quick.

Congratulations to Tim Jenkins, from Chiltern Forest Golf Club, who has just started his first job as Head Greenkeeper at Princes Risborough Golf Club in Bucks.

Bob Wilson has been at Princes Risborough Golf Club since 1992 and has been seen casting his spell at many a BB&O golf day over the years. Bob will remain part time at the club and promises to visit the Section events in his retirement. Have a great retirement.

If you have any news or views do not hesitate to get in touch, see you all soon

Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.com



MID ANGLIA

Twenty-seven golfers competed for the summer tournament held at Silverstone Golf Club. Credit must go to Steve Cherry and his team for producing the golf course to the highest standards despite the poor weather conditions (how many times have I written that this year!) and our sincerest thanks to Silverstone Golf Club for hosting us. Sponsor of the day was Tacit and many thanks to Mark Day for providing the prizes. Thanks also to the other trade members for supporting the day.

In what turned out to be a very hotly contested competition, Steve Cherry emerged triumphant to take first prize with 37 pts closely followed by M. Lambert, 36 pts, on countback from third placed Gavin Simkin also on 36 pts. Miles Wood and Frank Whittle were 4th and 5th respectively on 35 pts and the trade prize went to none other than Simon Banks on 34 pts. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive were both won by Martin Turbayne.

The next golf event will be the Turkey Trot to be held at Dunstable Downs Golf Club on Thursday, December 4. Please get your entries of teams of four in as soon as possible as it is always a popular event. Meetings are in the process of being arranged for 2009 and details will follow as soon as venues are confirmed.

If you and your respective clubs would be interested in hosting a future event for the Section, please let a committee member know. We are extremely grateful to the clubs that host the events and without their support it would be difficult for us to organise regular competitions.

On the training and education front, the Section plans to hold a First Aid at Work Course for AP1. The course is to be held in January over three and a half days, with a further half-day of examinations/assessment, at Berkhamsted Golf Club. The course will be subsidised by funds for education and the end cost will be around £110 per person. There are only 10 places available so if you are interested in attending please contact Gerald Bruce by emailing: gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk places will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Various spraying courses are also being organised for February and dependent on interest PA1, PA2 and PA6 courses will be covered. Again, these courses also attract some funding. Additionally, if there are any other relevant courses or qualifications that members would like to undertake please don't be afraid to ask. You've guessed it...gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk

Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@advanta-seeds.co.uk



SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Tuesday, September 23. I'm writing this very early, for tomorrow I'm off on my holiday to the island of Elba and I hope that by the time I return, in two weeks, you will have looked at your atlas and found where Elba is so that you can tell me where I have been. Bonaparte spent some time there a few years ago so if it's good enough for him it must be far too good for the likes of me.

We played for the Cresta Cup, at Richmond GC, on September 18 and their new course manager and new Surrey member, Les Howkins MG, had the course in excellent order. The weather was dry, warm and sunny and had it not been for my tennis or golfers elbow - I don't know which and neither does my doctor (his excuse being that he doesn't play any sport) - I am sure that my score would have well exceeded the 24 points I silently suffered for. But enough of me, I do hate it when people go on all the time about themselves, the result was, after some embarrassing mix up with the cards: 1. Dan Nordsworthy, 2. Derek Cunliffe and 3. Jim Russell. Sorry to Stuart Clayton for losing, what should have been a prize-winning card.

The result of the Surrey v Essex v Sussex golf match at the Dyke GC, on September 26, will appear in the December edition as will the result of the England v Scotland match at Hankley Common GC on November 5. There's sure to be some fireworks to look forward to in this annual friendly get together.

The Surrey Turkey Trot (team event) is at Betchworth Park GC, on December 11, followed by the AGM. Any questions for the committee need to be received, in writing, two weeks prior to that date.

Well that's all folks, apart from reminding you that by the time you read this my holiday will be well and truly over.

Brian Willmott



Around the Green



KENT

Hi guys, firstly a brief report on what had to be one of our best days out ever at North Foreland Golf Club. Personally, I have never played a course presented so well in this country ever. Many congratulations to Dan McGrath and his superb team on the course condition and organisation of the whole day to a meticulous standard. Even the weather stayed fine for us and Vic Maynard's refreshment wagon did a roaring trade in supplying the elixir of life to the tired and weary.

Vic's stocks on board were given the sternest of tests as our battle-wearied chairman rode shotgun on the buggy after declining to actually play golf on the day due to a recent eye operation. Get well soon mate. Think I might try something similar soon! Thanks to Vic and Ernest Doe's yet again for providing such a great service on the day. Thanks also to our sponsors for providing a few prizes that were very gratefully received.

Results as follows: 1. Duncan Kelso, 2. Darren Burton, 3. Gary Branchett, Longest Drive - Paul Wilkie, Nearest the Pin - Darren Burton, Trade Prize - Larry Pearman.

After such a great day all I can say is the hosts of our next event have a very tough act to follow...hang on...that'll be me at Birchwood!

Yes, it's that time again for our annual Christmas (sorry) extravaganza at the home of golf in North West Kent. This year's shindig should be a corker as we are hoping to introduce a couple of fun variations into the playing format on the day as well as the usual laugh-a-minute entertainment that normally accompanies these events. As usual, we shall be competing for the coveted Scotts Shield, as well as a host of other prizes. Yes, mark November 27 in your diaries folks. Please see the website for details of the day and the all-important entry forms.

We do need your confirmation of attendance/non-attendance asap please guys for the catering and also so we can organise the groupings by handicap. If you haven't done so already (thanks to those of you who have) could you please send us your email address via the contact us tab on the website which will make the whole communication process so much easier.

Don't forget our AGM shall also follow the golf at some point in the evening as well as a Christmas raffle to help smooth things over when you eventually get home!

Well I need to go and make sure my course is up to scratch for all of the discernable clientele of the elite greenkeeping fraternity.

Looking forward to welcoming you on the day guys. Best of British.

Rob Holland
kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



ESSEX

Please note this important announcement: The Christmas Team Challenge & AGM has been moved to Thursday, December 4.

The Winter Stableford at Bentley Golf Club has just taken place with a good turn out of over 50 players taking to the start line with some good scores and quite a few disasters to report - all those ditches and the odd water hazard to contend with!

Well done to Mark Stopps and his team for presenting the greens in such a consistent state and the course for its excellent condition.

Thank you to the club for allowing us to play, to the catering staff for the

meal that's got to be the best we've had this year, followed by the welcoming speeches after the dinner and the fantastic humour during the raffle, it made the end of the day a joy.

The results are as follows: Overall - Andy Cracknell, Orsett Golf Club. 1.1 Tony Barker, North Weald Golf Club; 1.2 Richard Dunmow, Channels Golf Club; 2.1 Sam Anderson, Three Rivers Golf & Country Club; 2.2 Dougie Fernie, Upminster Golf Club. Trade - Andy Turbin - Ernest Doe & Sons; Guest - P. Lewis, Bentley Golf Club; Longest Drive - R. Surridge; Nearest the Pin - Tony Barker, North Weald Golf Club.

On September 26, 10 members of the Section played in the annual triangular Section event against Surrey and Sussex at The Dyke Golf Club, near Brighton, Sussex. Sponsored by Ernest Doe and Sons the event was held in glorious sunshine, but with a keen wind that made the golf interesting. The course was in excellent condition and I for one enjoyed myself immensely. Although Essex came last we by no means disgraced ourselves. The camaraderie between the teams was great with lots of banter and good will.

The results are as follows: Sussex 294 - Surrey 288 - Essex 275.

We look forward to continuing this competition again next year in Surrey.

Entries and teams will shortly be due in for the Christmas Team Challenge and AGM at The Essex Golf & Country Club on Thursday, December 4

Details and links to all our sponsors can be found on the website along with links to other interesting sites with up to date information and other things.

Anyone with news please contact me at essexbigga@talktalk.net or: 01206 852353/07764862337

Arnold Phipps-Jones
www.essexbigga.co.uk



SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

Some good news to start this month, Ian Henshaw, Paul Bishop's Deputy at Castle Coombe, has gained promotion and is moving to Mannings Heath Golf Club, in Sussex, as Course Manager. This club is a sister club to Castle Coombe and is a 36-hole complex with a prestigious hotel. Ian is moving from this area to take up this position. Paul congratulates him on his promotion and wishes him well in his new post. Ian also worked for me for a while during 1997 and I would also like to wish him all the very best.

We had a warm welcome at Marlborough for the Section Autumn Tournament and AGM on October 9.

The course was wonderfully presented, and on a beautiful, sunny, still autumn day was an absolute pleasure to play. Thanks to Mark and the team for the excellent presentation job on the day, and congratulations to Robin Greaves who displayed all his management prowess by arranging to have the greens hollow cored the week previously, and then had the foresight to book his annual holiday to ensure he was thousands of miles away! Only kidding Robin - the greens were still pretty darn good. Thanks very much to Marlborough for hosting the day - it is always a pleasure to play there. In fact, I was reminded of the mid-1970's when Marlborough was just nine holes, and the second time around was off different tees making long par threes into short par fours etc.

At the following AGM, Chris Sealey gave a very upbeat appraisal of the year's events and was very pleased with progress on education events in particular. Attendance at golf events had been down slightly, which is due in part to the difficult year and credit crunch etc, and he announced a radical



overhaul of the fixtures to try and provide new impetus for next year. We will be holding an "Away Weekend" at a South West resort club in late April, and this will replace the early tournaments. A coach will be provided - so watch this space and await announcements when the fixture list comes out.

The election of officers saw Chris Sealey re-confirmed as Chairman, Robin Greaves, as Vice Chairman and Regional Representative. This is a slight re-shuffle around the Secretary's' position, with Nobby receiving more help from Chris Sealey, with the Patronage Scheme, and Paul Worster, with communications; Tim Morgan, with Fixtures, and Roger Neale, as Assistant Secretary. Spreading the load among several other officers will allow Nobby to continue as Treasurer, and to continue to run the golf competitions and raffles etc. Other appointments were John Keenaghan, as Regional Representative; Wayne Vincent & Paul Garland, as Team Captains, and Peter Hampton, as Trade Representative. James Braithwaite had stepped down as Vice Chairman, and grateful thanks were recorded for all his efforts over the past 11 years.

Chris Sealey mentioned next year's National Championship, which is at Burnham & Berrow. He hoped that as many members as possible would find time to play and support the event, and in addition to a sponsored singles place - the Section would also sponsor a team. Roger Neale had represented the Section in this year's recent event at East Sussex National. He finished fourth in the first day's Stableford, but wasn't quite so good on the second day. Roger had asked that his thanks be recorded for the place, and Chris reminded the meeting that this was made possible by the generous support of our Patronage Partners.

Paul Worster thanked the members present for their support for the Education Events he had organised during 2008. This was going from strength to strength, but was only made possible by members participation. Any education can be organised - please specify what you want, and we will try to lay it on. Participation is a key word at all levels in BIGGA. It is only by member's participation that it possible to function. Paul issued a plea to all, to try to visit other greenkeepers who don't currently participate and pass on invitations to events. This would help immensely in boosting attendance.

Chris closed the meeting by informing everyone that he would personally write to all clubs over the winter, to point out the benefits and importance of releasing greenkeepers to attend events, and thanking the clubs for the support offered to BIGGA.

On a sad note, members may be aware of the recent death of Bob Gates. Bob was Chairman of the Section and of the National Association in the 1970's, and was a stalwart member of the Association for many years. He retired in 1992, and with his wife Joy, spent a very happy retirement clock and furniture making, and playing golf at Westonbirt - where he had been greenkeeper for many years. He was an Honorary Life Member of BIGGA and will be fondly remembered by many.

Finally, in my new capacity as helping Nobby with communications, you will find I prefer to use email extensively rather than write dozens of letters. I have email addresses for a good number of Section members, but could I ask the following.

Please - if you have just started using email, send me your address. If you change your existing ISP (Internet Service Provider) and get a new address - likewise please send it to me - in fact everyone, just send me a quick email now - do it tonight - you don't even have to say anything other than including your name, but it logs your address onto my system. The rest is then easy. In addition, if I send you an email, just send me a quick reply - that means I know you've received it. There is likely to be one postal mailshot only next year, which will contain the Fixture List. It will then be up to you to get in touch with Nobby to register for events. All details will be provided - I am sure we will get used to it. This will considerably reduce the admin burden and allow us to function more efficiently.

All details, Fixture List, and reminders etc will be sent out in late winter.

Paul Worster
01453 837355
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

Hi folks, as I write this report it is the week of the Autumn Tournament at Salisbury & South Wilts so I hope you have all enjoyed the day.

I have had my holiday and had a great time - want to see my white bits?!

Alex Macombie can now be contacted via Facebook and we all hope he and his family are doing well in Denmark, we hope to see him at the Christmas Tournament which is being held at Tony Gadd's Barton-on-sea Golf Club on Wednesday, December 10.

Please remember that I do not run the tournaments any more, Kevin Glass, from Brockenhurst, does, he can be contact via email: glassy2003@hotmail.com or phone: 078559 053054.

If you have any news you might think useful to the Section email me at: chrismaggisturgess@tiscali.co.uk

Until next month
Chris Sturgess

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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The Scotts Company is the world's largest horticultural company in the world with products for both the home and garden and professional markets. We are a global \$3billion company and we continue to grow.

The Role

We are looking for someone to take responsibility for maximising the sales effort for acceptance and growth of Scotts' Products in one of our core markets, Turf & Amenity. Reporting to the Turf and Amenity Sales Manager your key responsibilities will include:

- Developing and implementing annual sales action plans
- Managing all accounts and prospects
- Maintain and strengthening customer relationships
- Produce progress reports to communicate and share with the team
- In conjunction with marketing develop sales communications including promotions for end users.
- To represent the company in trade shows and seminars

To be successful in this role you will also have a good understanding of Microsoft packages. Proven success in a sales role is essential, along with the self-motivation and initiative needed to achieve individual and Company goals.

An industry-recognised qualification e.g. BASIS & FACTS, will be advantageous but is not essential. Evidence of technical understanding of the nature of the product range and a general understanding of the Amenity Market will be required.

The role will involve some overnight stays

Benefits

Benefits include: company car, bonus, 26 days annual leave, a contributory pension scheme, health insurance & excellent development opportunities

To apply please send CV & covering letter to Vicky Rondeau:
vicky.rondeau@scotts.com

GREENKEEPER VACANCY

Roehampton Club is an exclusive, private members' sports club, set in 100 acres of parkland, close to Richmond Park. Originally established in 1901 it offers arguably the finest range of sporting and leisure facilities in the London area including; an 18-hole golf course, 29 tennis courts, 5 squash courts, 4 croquet lawns and Health Club. We are currently looking for a Greenkeeper to join our Grounds department to assist in the daily operations of the Golf Course by ensuring the efficient preparation of the course.

Whilst full training will be given, the ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications and competencies:

- NVQ Level 2 or equivalent in Sports Turf Maintenance.
- Pesticide application – PA1, PA2a, and PA6
- Good communication skills.
- Appreciation of Health and Safety.

Applications should be sent to HR Manager,
Roehampton Club, Roehampton Lane, London, SW15 5LR
or hr@roehamptonclub.co.uk

Closing date: 30/11/2008



St. Boswells Golf Club Greenkeeper

This is an ideal opportunity for a committed, self motivated greenkeeper to impose his/her style on this gem of a 9 hole course along the banks of the Tweed.

Applicants should be qualified to a NVQ Level II.
Spraying certificates beneficial (PA1, PA2, and PA6).

Please apply in writing, including your C.V.
before 1st. December, 2008 to:

Club Secretary, St. Boswells Golf Club,
St. Boswells TD6 0DE.



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Greenkeeping can offer you a career for life and a lifetime of learning



Student Membership of BIGGA (for those studying full-time)

Greenkeeping is a rewarding and challenging career choice for all ages and abilities from school leavers to those considering a career change, let BIGGA help you develop your career as a greenkeeper by becoming a Student Member.

Membership of BIGGA will provide you with: -

Greenkeeper International

The Association's much read magazine packed with up to the minute information and features providing you with valuable research and perhaps even helping you with your assignments. Delivered FREE to you door monthly.

Membership Handbook

Providing you with an extensive guide to the products and services relating to the fine turf industry and the contact details of the major companies supplying those products and services. The Handbook also includes a comprehensive greenkeeper membership section.



Harrogate Week



Entry to a world class trade event. The Trade Exhibition has over 200 exhibitors and 8,500 visitors. There can be no better place to 'Continue to Learn' than taking part in the education programme. Students will find much that will demand their attention including seminars of specific interest. On production of your Student membership card you can attend the seminars FREE of charge. Not to mention the fantastic networking opportunities available throughout the whole of this week, another valuable way of learning...from those already in the industry.

On Course Field Guides

To aid with your study further, Student members are entitled to receive a FREE copy of each of the field guides available in the series. Produced in a handy to use and read format. Thanks to the contributors to the BIGGA Education and Development Fund there are five in the series: -

- Golf Course Grasses;
- Identification and uses of the main grasses found in golf course rough;
- Identification of trees and shrubs on the golf course;
- Identification of damage caused by mammals and birds;
- The major diseases and pests of fine turf.

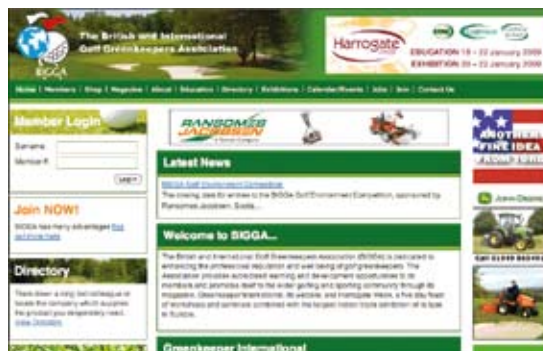
BIGGA Lending Library

Can't find the book you require in your local library or College Resource Centre? Why not check our library listing to see if the BIGGA lending library stocks the title for which you are looking? The lending library is available to all BIGGA members, allowing them to borrow up to two books for up six weeks, the only cost is return postage.

BIGGA Website

Check out the latest Jobs online by visiting www.bigga.org.uk

Application Form - for an application form either download a form from the BIGGA website at www.bigga.org.uk/join/membership-forms/ or contact the membership team on 01347 833800 option 1 for membership.



Chairman's Column

WAITING FOR THE FROST

It has been a very busy month on the back of our golf tournament. I was straight off to East Sussex National Golf Club for the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota.

On arrival I was absolutely amazed with the size of the resort as a whole, the new hotel looked impressive, the whole stay was fantastic. On the Sunday morning we woke up to torrential rain, not a shock for weather so far this year, but naturally disappointing. It was decided, to be fair to everyone in this year's championship, instead of a two day championship the competition would change to a one day Stableford competition with a new trophy as well.

Monday was a fantastic day weather-wise, only turning poor towards the end; it enabled us all to see East Sussex Golf Club at its best - on that note, I would like to thank the Course Manager, Scott Litchfield, and his staff for their efforts and producing a great golf course.

I would like to congratulate the winners. Firstly, the BIGGA Trophy went to David Simpson, who won it for the second year running and travelled all the way from Crieff in Scotland. The BIGGA Cup went to fellow Midlander, David Fellows. The BIGGA Plate, which was for the Stableford competition was won by Brian Robinson. And the BIGGA Bowl was won by Andrew Cornes, on behalf of the trade. Overall, a good event and it was great to see people travelling from far and wide to attend.

The Board of Management meetings were my next diary appointment. We discussed the budgets, strategies for 2009, the AGM in January and for a proposed new membership structure, incorporating additional categories for fellow groundsmen in other areas of sport to become full-category members. This was supported by the Board unanimously and gives us a chance to increase our membership within the sports turf industry. I hope that with the support of the members too it will improve our standing, allowing us to not stand still and cope under the demands of the current financial climate.

I also attended Stephen Bernhard's new HQ opening at Rugby in October, in the presence of HRH Earl of Wessex. A very interesting and busy day and it was great to meet Prince Edward.

A poor start to the month of October although it has started to dry up nicely with some strong winds. Frost looks not too far on the horizon, however. It is good to have a nice, dry sunny, spell, despite the cold. The biggest problem for this time of year for Parkland greenkeepers is the leaves. They create so much work for the guys and with pressure from golfers over this next month or two it will be a continual job. It takes up a lot of the working weeks' labour. People think we are out of season but it is as much in season as ever with these workloads.

We are looking towards the winter and preparing for our projects in 2008/2009. I can't believe we are heading into the fourth quarter of the year already, as our planning will now concentrate on this time along with all the general maintenance the quieter season affords.



2009 – Harrogate Week

By now you should already have seen the Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week 2009. There is so much additional education and free seminars this



year, it really will be a fantastic opportunity for all our members to attend and sharpen their skills. We are giving great initiatives, I do hope as many of you as possible will be planning to come and support Harrogate Week 2009.

Budgets! It is a tough time to be looking at the figures. Obviously, with all the rising costs versus the downturn in revenue, it is going to be a hard year in 2009 and trying to set the right budgets is no easy task. I know it is on everyone's mind but hopefully there will be a positive end to the year within the industry and we can see improvements in this area.

Finally, I will be attending the Icelandic Greenkeeping Conference from 24-26 October. As always I look forward to meeting some new people within the industry, and I am to give a presentation on golf course management within a resort, incorporating sustainability and environmental issues.

Kenny Mackay
Chairman

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