

Welcome



Thanks Nick!

Sometimes a positive can come out of a negative. Perhaps a cliché, but like most clichés there is some truth to it.

That's what I feel about this year's Ryder Cup. If Europe had performed to the level expected of them the 16.5-11.5 scoreline could easily have been reversed. If that happened the Americans would have experienced four defeats in a row, three of them thumpings and the excitement levels would have dropped. Not to the same scale, of course, but it would have harked back to the days of American dominance when it was more an exhibition of great golf than a contest.

That was remedied when the rest of Europe – Seve, Bernhard et al – were brought in and the matches from '83 to 2002 became the most exciting events in all of sport, Nip and tuck, no-one could have made a fortune by predicting the outcome and that goes for the overall match score as well as the individual games.

But thanks to Nick Faldo it's levelled the playing field and it's game on again.

Right from the off, and his omission of the in-form Ryder Cup specialist, Darren Clarke, Faldo made a right pig's ear of his Captaincy. There were the photographed pairings which he described as sandwich lists; his David Brent-like speeches; his bizarre pairings – fourball specialists playing foursomes and rear-loading his singles when a fast start was required.

And what was he doing while his guys were in need of his support on the final afternoon? He was tossing cans of beer to the gallery and discussing matters with one of those men known only by one name – not Seve, Monty, Woosie, Ollie or even Tiger. Faldo was seen picking the brains of Spooky! Whatever the outcome of that particular Brain's Trust it didn't change the course of events and Europe went down with a whimper. Only General Custer could really look up to Faldo in terms of leadership.

But the good news is that when Terry Matthews and Jim McKenzie welcome the teams to Celtic Manor, it will be a much more inviting contest. America will be fired up to retain the Cup and will have Tiger Woods back in the team, while Europe will be looking to return to the form which made them dominate the early part of the Millennium. It's an exciting prospect.

One thing that does disappoint in terms of the Ryder Cup is that only those people with access to satellite television can watch the matches live. I know Sky paid for the rights to watch but it's a shame that it leaves the majority of the population to listen to the excellent Radio Five Live coverage or wait for the highlights which are on either extremely late at night or even the next day.

Golf would receive a huge popularity boost if the Ryder Cup, one of the greatest sporting events on any calendar, could be watched by golfers and non-golfers young or old.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott'.

CRICKET GROUNDSMEN HONOURED AT LORD'S

Four groundsmen were honoured recently at the home of cricket as they each received a Cricket World & Pitchcare Cricket Groundsman of the Year Award for 2008.

The awards, now in their fifth year, recognise the hard work and high standards achieved by cricket groundsmen in the recreational game and are split into four categories – ICC Europe, educational establishment, private club and local authority.

Treble the nominations were received for this year's awards compared to last year.

The presentations were made to the winners Ian Vautier, Phillip McCormick, Les Stephens and Graeme Flett by Head ECB Pitch Advisor Chris Wood and Director of ICC Europe, Richard Holdsworth, in the presence of sponsors and invited guests. In the morning, the winners took to their Executive Box seats to watch the Cocksbur Cup Club Cricket Final between Malden Wanderers and Kibworth and enjoyed lunch at the Lord's Tavern. Unfortunately, the weather closed in during the afternoon and the match will be replayed, however, the winners were taken on a behind the scenes tour of the ground facilities by Chris Wood which was an experience of a lifetime.



CAMPAIGN URGES INDUSTRY TO CHECK YOUR SPRAYER

The importance of well-maintained and carefully calibrated spraying equipment is being emphasised in a new campaign by the Amenity Forum.

Launched at this year's Saltex show, 'Check Your Sprayer' is aimed at everyone in the amenity sector whose job involves the spraying of pesticides.

The Amenity Forum has received sponsorship from Scotts to produce a leaflet, sticker and dedicated website to assist managers and operators in this key component of 'Best Practice'.

The leaflet and website contain essential information on how to comply with the Code of Practice including when equipment should be checked, who should check it, what training is required and what to record.

The Knapsack Operator Checklist stickers can be affixed to their sprayer where they will serve as a reminder to check the equipment each and every time it is used.

More comprehensive information is available at www.checkyoursprayer.co.uk

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

This year's Golf Management Competitions have recently taken place in the South West and South Wales Region. The format of the competition with clubs entering a management team which includes a member of the club's greenkeeping staff has once again proved popular, with each section event being well supported. Along with individual prizes for the members of the first, second and third placed teams the winning teams in each section received an Accupro 2000 Spreader piece of machinery for their clubs. BIGGA South West and South Wales Region would like to thank Scotts Turf Professional (UK) Ltd for their continued sponsorship of this event and the clubs for their support in hosting these days.

The winning teams from each section together with a representative from Scotts Turf Professional are pictured below.

The South West Section event was won by Chipping Sodbury Golf Club with the South Wales Section being won by Llanwern Golf Club and the South Coast by Southwood Golf Club.



Southwood GC

GROW BRITISH TO PROTECT NATIVE SPECIES

Grow British was the message from British Wild Flower Plants (BWFPs) whose 'Grow British' initiative was launched at Saltex.

"Many wild flower varieties are either imported or developed from cultivated seed stock," said BWFPs Marketing Manager, Ian Forster "and this can put our own native species under threat. I suppose the most obvious example of this is the Spanish Bluebell, which is now cross breeding with our British variety and in danger of wiping it out."

ASKERNISH OLD COURSE ...ALIVE AND WELL

So at last, after two years' hard work by Gordon Irvine, Alan MacDonald and the team, Askernish Old Course, an Old Tom Morris masterpiece, is open.

When Gordon first saw the towering dunes, the magnificent views of the Atlantic Ocean, a white shell beach running along the length of the links, the heather clad moors and rugged mountains, he declared he had found The Holy Grail. Gordon persuaded Golf Course Architect Martin Ebert, of Mackenzie and Ebert, to join him in this labour of love - and Martin charged the same fee as Old Tom did back in 1891, namely £9!

This is golf in the raw and how it used to be. Askernish is not only unique in design, but also in its environment on the internationally renowned machair, a fertile stretch of dune land supporting a wealth of rare flora and fauna.

The restoration of the 18 hole course has taken less than £100,000 and is a superb example of a truly sustainable golf course, only using local organic based seaweed fertilisers, no pesticides, or irrigation system, and all materials obtained locally. Even the ladies' tee markers are rocks gathered from the beach by Club Chairman, Ralph Thompson.

Many people have rallied round, intrigued by the romance of the project golfers have joined as life members, others have sent donations, and greenkeepers have lent their time and expertise. Elmwood College are hoping to use the course for greenkeeper training, Ransomes Jacobsen has generously contributed machinery, The Berkshire GC donated club house furniture, JHS Carpets donated a spike proof carpet for use in the new clubhouse, Maidenhead Mailing supplied all the printing, a local building company UBC donated local granite tee markers and The R&A have provided initial financial support and have since through The Golf Course Committee provided greenkeeping bursaries, and remain interested in the on going success of the project.

But this is only the beginning. The course is already attracting interest from all over the world, and the island has so many other attractions including trout and salmon fishing, wildfowling, and wonderful walking. So there is plenty to do if you visit this golfing treasure, but more help is needed to ensure the future of Askernish, and Gordon is presenting the full story at Harrogate Week 2009. Volunteers should contact Gordon Irvine, email: omegagi@hotmail.com, and sponsors or suppliers should contact Malcolm Peake, email: peakes@hotmail.co.uk

Malcolm Peake



Greenkeeper Alan MacDonald and Golf Course Consultant Gordon Irvine 7th Tee Askernish.



Kenny Dalglish drives in.

INTERNATIONAL DESIGN LECTURE

Ken Moodie, EIGCA President, was “delighted” that the EIGCA diploma students – 16 in number and from 10 countries - had the opportunity to listen to internationally renowned, Tom Doak, at this year’s Toro International Design Lecture, delivered at County Louth Golf Club, near Drogheda in Ireland.

“Tom Doak has been involved in many of the most exciting golf developments over the past few years. His minimalist approach is a welcome contrast to the mass land movements involved in some other developments,” said Ken.

Tom’s interest in the game of golf started as a boy of 10 years when he was able to play on a Geoffrey Cornish designed course called Sterling Farms, just ten minutes walk from his home, for \$1 a time.

He strongly believes in the benefits of networking and of travel. During his landscape architecture course at Cornell University he wrote letters to the best golf courses in the US, explaining that he wanted to be a golf course architect and would like to come and walk round and to take pictures. By age 20 Tom Doak had already visited and played such places as Merrion, Pine Valley and Oakmont.

After graduating he spent a year travelling in the British Isles. While in Scotland he caddied at St Andrews and gained much from his conversations with Walter Woods. His tour of the UK & Ireland covered 13,000 miles and 160 courses.

He now reckons that he has personally visited just about every great golf course in the world, gaining knowledge that he put to great use when writing “The Confidential Guide to Golf Courses” which was published in 1996. Indeed Tom was famous as a golf writer long before his skills as a golf course architect received recognition.

Tom worked for Pete Dye for three years after graduating and learned first hand about construction. He was taught how to run a bulldozer. “Now I have four or five of the best shapers who have ever lived working for me. They loved golf first and learned to drive the truck second – the other way round is harder.”

He illustrated his lecture with images from some of the great courses he has designed including Barnbougle Dunes, Tasmania; Cape Kidnappers, New Zealand; Renaissance Club at Archerfield, Scotland and the one which made him famous, Pacific Dunes Golf Club at Bandon, USA.

“Understanding construction is one of the keys to golf course architecture - that and the ability to visualise a topographical map in three dimensions, even when the land in question is covered in vegetation. Pete Dye once said, ‘Lots of people have opinions – only a few can get them on the ground’.”

Andy Brown, Toro Corporate Accounts Manager for Europe Middle East and Africa, said, “In Tom Doak we have someone who can really inspire the students to look at the whole business of golf course architecture and show them the way to go forward in their careers.

Hopefully they will get the opportunity to work occasionally on some outstanding pieces of land and to show what they can do.”



Photograph taken at County Louth shows Tom Doak (8th from left); Andy Brown of Toro (2nd from left); and Ken Moodie, EIGCA President (first on right)

TURNER GROUNDSCARE (CHESTER) GOLF DAY

Turner Groundscare (Chester) recently held their round of the qualifying round of this year’s John Deere Team Championship.

The event took place on August 7, at Hesketh Golf Club in Southport; the weather was glorious sunshine with 16 teams competing for the first prize of entry to the John Deere Championship event to be held at Turnberry on August 21.

The event was extremely close with the eventual winners being a team from Warrington Golf Club comprising of Paul Pearse, Duncan McPhee and Ray Bernard.

Rules and scoring were administered by BIGGA Regional Administrator, Peter Larter.

The picture (below) shows the Warrington Team being presented with the TGC Shield by Brian Spruce (Branch Manager TGC) and Kevin Pickering (Sales Manager TGC).



NEW NORTHERN LOCAL AUTHORITY AMENITY FORUM

A group of key Local Authorities have decided to form a regional forum and become a member of the Amenity Forum.

The Northern Local Authority Amenity Forum will have a two pronged approach. First to hold local meetings to discuss specific topics relevant to the group. Second it will have representatives on the Amenity Forum to work closely with the other members and establish a strong communication between these important groups.

One of the key objectives of the Amenity Forum is ‘Best Practice’ in the use of pesticides in amenity areas.

The decision to set up the group was made at a recent meeting arranged by Calderdale MBC with managers attending from Barnsley, Bradford, Doncaster, Kirklees, North Lincs, Oldham and Wakefield authorities.

BIGGA MIDLAND AND NORTHERN REGIONS

Accident Reporting And Health & Safety Workshop

The Midland Region is holding a practical Accident Reporting and Health & Safety Workshop at the Bedfordshire Golf Club on Tuesday, October 21, 2008.

The Northern Region is holding the same workshop at Childwall Golf Club on Wednesday, November 12, 2008.

The workshops will run from 9am to about 4pm and will involve practical exercises in groups looking at a simulated vehicle accident; health and safety hazards in the greenkeeping shed; a risk assessment on a hole and an interview with a disgruntled golf club chairman.

Attendance is open to BIGGA members and Golf Club Officials. Invitations will be sent out in September. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For more information please contact Peter Larter, Midland and Northern Region Administrator on: 01476 550115 or email: petelarter972@aol.com.

COURSE MANAGER WEDDING

A large number of Course Managers attended Robert Hogarth's recent wedding at Cardrona Hotel & Golf Course. Course Manager at Remedy Oak, Robert previously took on this role at Cardrona.



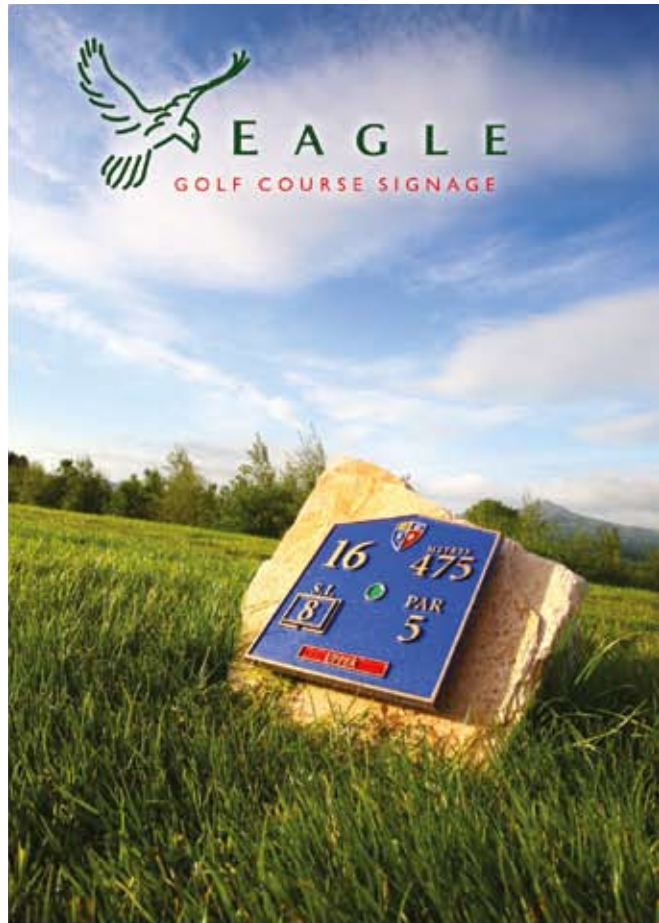
Back row L to R: Colin Noble, Hugh Morgan, Stuart Hogg, George Barr, Robert Hogarth, Paul Murphy, Ian McLeod and Ian Semple. Front row: Alec MacIndoe (left) and Donny Campbell.

KEY ENGINE POST

Kawasaki's European engine business has been given a boost with the announcement of a key appointment within the company's re-structured Engine & Power Products Division.

Having unveiled ambitious plans to commit more resource to the development of its industrial engine business targeting original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) for industrial, groundscape, turfcare and utility markets, the Japanese manufacturer has brought in experienced Horst Britze to help drive sales to record levels.

With nearly three decades of experience in the small engine sector on the import, export, sales and consultancy side, Britze is well placed to make a positive impact and is looking forward to the challenges ahead.



"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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HARROGATE WEEK 2009

A three night bed and breakfast package at the Cairn Hotel arriving on Monday, January 19 and departing on Thursday, January 22 is available for those members from the region wishing to attend the exhibition and seminars. The rates have been held at last year's prices with a single room being £222 and a twin room (sharing) £133.50 per person.

For further information and booking of these events contact Jane Jones, BIGGA Regional Administrator on: 01454 270850 or mobile: 07841948110.

BIGGA South West and South Wales region would like to thank the following patrons for their support of the region and these events: Gold Patrons - Ransomes Jacobsen Limited and Irritech Limited.

Silver Patrons - The Scotts Company, Countrywide Turf and Amenity, Vitax Limited, Avoncrop Amenity Products, W. T. and R.J. Jones and Ken White Signs.

MIDLAND SECTION IRRIGATION WORKSHOP

Twenty greenkeepers from the length and breadth of Britain converged at Gay Hill GC last month for the third and final instalment of the BIGGA Midland Section Irrigation Workshop.

Delegates were treated to expert training in the performance of golf irrigation systems from Peter Robin of Evenproducts Ltd.

The training focused on common problems and how simple inputs can make your life easier.

The training also included a practical session where the working pressure of a greens sprinkler was measured during working conditions.

Pressure drop was also simulated to see the exact effect on coverage across the green.

The unfortunate individual measuring the flow and getting rather wet was Gay Hill GC Course Manager, Paul Woodham. The course was packed with lots of practical information which certainly asked the question "do you actually know how much water you are applying?"

Peter added "it's fair to say that most aging golf irrigation systems could operate much more effectively if the operators understand the hydraulics that are taking place, including sorting out a few common misconceptions.

"This can increase the system's uniformity and in turn can reduce the problems associated with poor-performing irrigation systems".

CLUB HAS THE FAIR WAY AT HEART

Internationally renowned Sunningdale Golf Club has attained nationally recognised Investors in People status as part of its drive to be a centre of excellence - not just for golf but for employee satisfaction too.

The Berkshire club is famous for possessing England's finest golf course and for providing its members with the very best of traditional, discreet service. One of its tenets is that staff will anticipate and provide whatever is required - no matter how detailed the requests may be.

Sunningdale's Secretary, Stephen Toon, put the case for the club working with Investors in People to the governing Members' Committee after seeing its effectiveness at St Andrews in Scotland.

He said: "I had seen the benefits of Investors in People at St Andrews and suggested to the Committee that our service to members could be improved by following its guidelines. We found that while we had a high percentage of what was required for Investors in People, in terms of great leadership from the top and communication at the sharp end, we needed more structure across all the departments.

"We are proud of our staff retention, one of our greenkeepers retired recently after 50 years here. Long serving staff provide the continuity our members value, while newer arrivals bring with them fresh ideas, so creating the ideal combination. And, as a result of Investors in People, we have given everybody who works here a set of skills they didn't have before."



SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGIONAL SEMINAR

This year's annual seminar will once again be held at Cannington Centre for Land Based Studies on Thursday, November 20. The seminar theme is "The Disturbance Theory And The Thrill Of Real Golf" and is presented in association with STRI.

Presentations will be made by Henry Bechelet, Richard Windows, John Lockyer, Andy Cole, and Steve Gingell from STRI and Peter Hickling, General Manager of High Post Golf Club. The morning session will be covering The Disturbance Theory with the afternoon session based on measuring the benefits of the Disturbance Theory.

Entry for BIGGA members is £20 with non-members £30. Places for the day are limited and booking details and information will be sent to all Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in the region.