

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.