

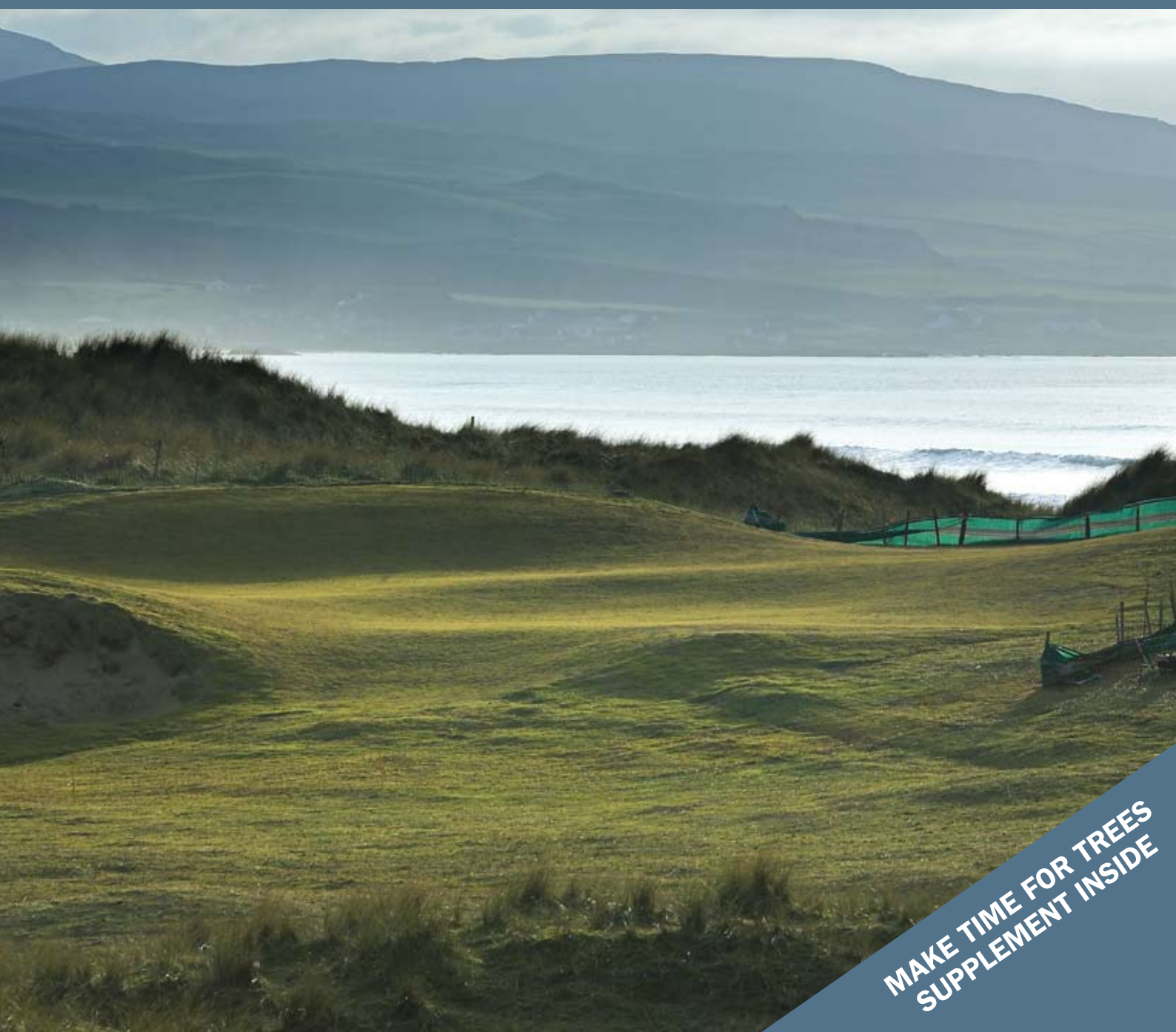


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Jeff Mills, Gavin Robson, Archie Dunn, Ian Willett,
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Chief Executive – John Pemberton

Email – john@bigga.co.uk

Communications Manager /

Editor – Scott MacCallum

Email – scott@bigga.co.uk

Sales Manager – Rosie McGilvray

Email – rosie@bigga.co.uk

Head of Learning & Development – Sami Collins

Email – sami@bigga.co.uk

Membership Department – Tracey Maddison

Email – tracymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us

Post – BIGGA House, Aldwark, A1ne, York, YO61 1UF

Email – reception@bigga.co.uk

Website – www.bigga.org.uk

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801



The official monthly magazine of the British
& International Golf Greenkeepers Association

Editorial

Communications Manager /

Editor – Scott MacCallum

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

Email – scott@bigga.co.uk

Assistant Editor – Melissa Jones

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

Email – melissa@bigga.co.uk

Design

Design and Production Editor – Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

Email – tom@bigga.co.uk

Advertising

Sales Executive – Kirstin Smith

Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833802

Email – kirstin@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane,

Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH

Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

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Cover photo: East Sussex National Golf Club



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Welcome



A Month of Ups and Downs

August was one of those good month-bad months for the game of golf. Obviously we've been overwhelmed by the Olympics and with golf not an Olympic Sport – if you ask me it never should be, nor should tennis or basketball for that matter – the game hasn't been high profile in August.

But, as I say, there were reasons for genuine elation but also for depression all wrapped up in one 31 day period.

First the good news. Pdraig Harrington's emergence as a genuine golfing superstar.

There are those who argue that his Open win at Carnoustie last year was more of a case of stumbling over the line than a triumphant march towards the Claret Jug. That may be true but this year's Open win at Royal Birkdale was much more convincing and we saw signs of Harrington becoming one of those players who can do exactly what they want when the pressures are at their most intense.

Those signs grew in size - and added neon to make them even more obvious - at the US PGA Championship when he came from no-where, he was in danger of missing the cut at one stage, and absolutely dominated Sergio Garcia and Ben Curtis over the back nine to win his third Major. Anyone who looked at his eyes over the closing four holes, in particular, could see a fire burning that probably only Tiger could extinguish.

The phrase "role model" is vastly overused, but it is fair to say that Pdraig Harrington is exactly what British and Irish golf, needs at the moment – a good guy who gets every ounce from himself in terms of achievement and a man who other people can relate to.

That's the good news. The bad news has been yet another year of awful summer weather. I was on holiday for the first half of August but learning what the weather was like back home made me shudder. Having got back midway through the month the weather hadn't improved and I'm sure there are a large number of courses which have been closed for a period during August.

That's what we don't need. Golf clubs need revenue from visitors and societies and lousy weather doesn't encourage casual golfers to hit the fairways – even if beleaguered courses have been able to remain open for play. Coming on the back of last year, which was the wettest summer since I don't know when and revenue was down, we really needed a bumper summer and that having failed to materialise it may well lead to calls to cut budgets.

Cries that standards are slipping will no doubt follow but golfers will need to get real and appreciate that Course Managers can only do as much as is possible from the resources he or she is given. Any reduction in resource will inevitably mean less can be done. It shouldn't be too hard a concept to grasp.

Just time to wish Europe's Ryder Cup team good fortune at Valhalla and to pass on best wishes to Superintendent, Mark Wilson, and his team for the final preparations and the week itself.

DEVELOPMENTS AT VITAX

Clive Williams retired in August after 39 years in the industry. Having worked for many major players, he joined Vitax Ltd as Commercial Development Manager in 1998 spearheading the company's expansion and significantly increasing the Vitax product range. So much so that following his departure two separate divisions will be created and the post divided between two personnel.

Mike King, heads the new Supaturf Division as Sales and Marketing Manager, covering the whole of the UK (including Southern Ireland) and dealing with Local Authorities and Contractors. Having joined Vitax three years ago from Supaturf, Mike will be in charge of a team of four with special responsibility for the Supaturf range of line-marking paints and chemical and line-marking sprayers. Mike started out in horticulture before moving into amenity and brings over 20 years experience to the post.

Joe Crawley, who recently returned to the company to accept a post with greater responsibility, will be in charge of a new Fine Turf Division developing business, introducing new products and offering technical advice through Vitax Amenity's established UK distributor network. Joe will answer to the title of Sales and Marketing Manager – Fine Turf Division.

Clive Williams is delighted with the expansion of the Vitax team. "Mike and Joe are two well deserving young men," he said. He is looking forward to a retirement full of French travel, fine wines and good food.



Clive Williams



Mike King



Joe Crawley

PGA LAUNCHES POWERPLAY GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

The PGA has added a new Championship to its 2008 schedule, featuring PowerPlay Golf - the exciting new 9-hole format featuring two flags on every green.

With a total prize fund of £34,000, the PGA PowerPlay Golf Championship 2008 offers one of the PGA's most attractive purses. It incorporates three regional qualifying rounds - with 24 golfers from each making it through to a £25,000 grand final.

In PowerPlay Golf, double Stableford points are awarded for birdies or better to the more difficult black 'PowerPlay' flags. Golfers must take exactly three PowerPlays during their first eight holes, with an optional PowerPlay at greater risk on the final hole, but need to choose carefully when to attack the course and when to defend their score.

The three regional qualifiers are at: Midlands: Bransford GC, Worcs – Tuesday, August 26; North: Oulton Hall GC, West Yorks – Tuesday, September 2; South: Wildwood GC, Surrey – Thursday, September 11

The final is at Frilford Heath Golf Club, Oxfordshire, on Tuesday, October 7.

GROW GREEN EVENT

At Harrogate Week, John Deere unveiled its new 7500 and 8500 PrecisionCut lightweight fairway mowers and its 7400 TerrainCut rotary. These mowers were joined by a number of other new model introductions at the company's recent Grow Green Event Staged over 10 days at the Luisenpark in Mannheim, Germany.

Available from this October, the 7400 TerrainCut rotary sets itself apart by offering an adjustable mowing width of 1.88m or 1.73m. This is designed to allow flat surfaces to be mown with minimal overlap between the units three separate 685mm decks. Over undulating ground, the decks can be closed up, increasing their overlap to help eliminate misses.

The 7400 can also be operated with an offset mowing position, the left and right decks extending out to 38cm beyond the full mowing width to allow the mower to work close up to a bunkers. This reduces the chance of the mowers weight damaging the bunker edge.

Moving on to the fairway mowers, the light fairway 7500 is a five by 22 inch gang unit with small diameter 5 inch cylinders for a tight cut. Fitted with a fixed and adjustable rear rollers, the cutting units are essentially heavy duty versions of the cutting units used on John Deere's latest 2500B and 2500E triplex greens mowers. Using the same chassis, both the 7700 and 8700 models utilise 22in ESP Extra Strength and Precision cutting units with 7 inch diameter cylinders.

The JX80 pedestrian mower currently sold in the UK has proven popular with golf users, despite the fact that it targeted to domestic user. This model is superseded by the JX90, with two commercial alternatives, the JX90C and JX90CB offering the added durability to suit professional use.

A key design change is the fitting of a steel frame around the engine, with AVS anti-vibration for the handles and new controls. Both 'pro' models meet the latest EU and HSE directives on operator safety.

The mid-chassis 3020 compact tractor series are now offered with 'drive-over' decks.



A turbocharged 36hp engine powers the 7000 Series, with a turbocharged and intercooled 42hp unit driving the 8500.

EMERGENCY WATER TANKS KEEP CLUB DROUGHT WATER COSTS DOWN

Tandridge Golf Club in Surrey has installed emergency water tanks to provide supplies in the case of drought.

Speedcut Contractors of Oxford constructed the three 84,000gallon tanks on concrete bases, complete with automatic circulation and transfer pipework and pumps.

The club is now able to store mains water when it is cheaper, during the winter months. Two years ago they were hit by a Drought Order, forcing them to tanker in expensive grey water (partly treated drainage water but unfit for drinking) to keep the greens alive.

The parkland course, with some heathland characteristics, is regarded as a testing course which was designed by Harry Colt, one of the foremost architects of his day.

Speedcut Contracts Manager Barry Pace said: "Tandridge is a superb golf course and these water tanks will ensure they have a supply of water for the greens during a drought without having to bring in expensive water."

The water tanks at Tandridge under construction



OHIO PROGRAMME

BIGGA member Paul McCormack, formerly of Kirkhill Golf Club in Glasgow, is currently working at Pine Valley Golf Club in New Jersey USA, as part of the Ohio programme. Paul, aged 21, will be based at Pine Valley, ranked number one in America, until October 2008. He is gaining valuable experience there before heading south for the winter to possibly Florida or Carolina.



EDWIN BUDDING AWARD

The International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) is announcing it will now be accepting nominations for the Inaugural Edwin Budding Award.

Edwin Budding was a pioneer who invented the reel mower in 1830, as well as the adjustable spanner/crescent wrench.

The IGCEMA's Edwin Budding Award recognises those who have made significant contributions to the golf course equipment industry, including those who have excelled in the business, history, design, engineering and maintenance of golf course equipment.

The award will be in addition to those known for their contributions to innovations in the turf equipment industry. The award will recognise those who think outside the box and who have dedicated themselves to improving the industry as a whole. The Edwin Budding award will be awarded to someone in the industry who meets the criteria as set forth by the Association and the Award Committee.

Nominations should be sent to: nominations@igcema.org.

You will receive a confirmation email stating that we have received your nomination.

The deadline for nominations will be October 1 and the winner will be presented the award at Harrogate Week.

For more information visit: www.igcema.org



TREES OFFSET CARBON FOOTPRINT

More than 600 trees have been planted on golf courses all over the UK as a result of Headland Amenity's initiative designed to offset the company's carbon footprint.

Following a prize draw, (the brain-child of Headland's Operations Director Mark De Ath,) which took place during Harrogate Week, nine Course Managers won 70 odd whips each, which were delivered in February and are now in the ground.

Kerr Rowan, Course Manager of The Carrick Golf Club has used his trees around the greenkeeping sheds so that in time they will create a screen. "This is a beautiful course with great views over Loch Lomond," he said. "We put the trees in two months ago and they're doing well."

The other winners are: Kevin Unsworth, Course Manager at the Royal Winchester Golf Club; Steve McAdams, Course Manager at Lytham Green Drive, Lytham St Annes; Chris Webb, Course Manager at Mid Yorks Golf Club, Pontefract, West Yorkshire; Cedrick Gough, Course Manager at Broadway Golf Club in Worcestershire; Jeff Dickinson, Course Manager at Springwater Golf Club in Nottingham; Rhys Thomas, Course Manager at South Staffs Gold Club in Wolverhampton and Roger Shaw, Course Manager at Ramside Hall Hotel and Golf Club in Carrville Co. Durham.

"It's a bit like sending coals to Newcastle for us," he said, "considering we planted 32 acres of trees when the course was built." Nevertheless, Roger's new trees are all in place, the majority on the right of the 18th hole.



ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY HONORS DOCTOR

Recently the Royal Horticultural Society awarded Professor James B Beard, PhD, DA of Texas, USA the Veitch Memorial Medal during a special award dinner at Hampton Court Palace in London. It is conferred on persons who have made outstanding contributions to advancement of the science and practice of horticulture. Dr Beard has served the international turfgrass landscape community for the past 50 years through his pioneering research concerning sustainable grasses, practical worldwide lectures, renowned writing, and international leadership. He is the first turfgrass scientist to receive this international honour.

PRESENTATION OF THE QUEEN'S AWARD

It was a day of celebrations for Managing Director Stephen Bernhard and the team at grinding specialist Bernhard and Company when they officially received the Queen's Award for Enterprise from the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, Martin Dunne.

The presentation took place on July 21 at the company's offices in Rugby and speaking at the event Stephen Bernhard, said: "We can be justifiably proud of this award which is a tribute to the entire team. And I want personally to take this opportunity to thank all our loyal supporters."

Stephen Bernhard also paid tribute to his father, thanking him for his encouragement and support. Jeffrey Bernhard started a landscaping business in Rugby in 1950, a nursery in 1955 and a garden centre - thought to be Britain's first - in 1960. He also set up a dedicated sports surface business in 1986. This trade involvement influenced Stephen's upbringing and encouraged him to become a horticulturalist in his own right, qualifying at Pershore.

Working initially in the family business Stephen concentrated on the grass maintenance aspects of the landscape company. From here he took an interest in Atterton and Ellis mower sharpening machinery that had a history dating back to the mid 1800s. And in the 1990s he became sole and outright owner of this company under the banner of Bernhard and Company, manufacturing and supplying Express Dual and Anglemaster grinders to sports facilities worldwide.

Stephen said: "This can be a great point for the business to find new directions in which to develop. It is also a time to reflect on how we can better serve our customers as they are the ones that put us here and helped us make the grade."



BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, made a short speech at the ceremony.



Stephen Bernhard with Martin Dunne Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire and Queens Award

THREE NEW DEALERS

Wiedenmann UK, renowned for its fast, deep Terra Spike aerators has announced three new dealers to cover south west England with immediate effect.

Rochfords Garden Machinery will represent them in Somerset; Masons of Chudleigh will represent them in Devon and Fairway Landscapes will represent them in Cornwall.

Wiedenmann Area Sales Manager, Chas Ayres said: "With such knowledgeable and experienced teams supporting the Wiedenmann brand, customers are going to be very well served."

THE R&A ANNOUNCES NEW GOLF CLUB RULES

The R&A has announced revisions to golf's equipment Rules, which are designed to enhance the benefits of accuracy by making playing from the rough a more challenging prospect in future.

The new Rules, which relate to club face grooves, are the culmination of an extensive collaborative research project between The R&A and the United States Golf Association.

This research shows that modern groove configurations can allow players to generate almost as much spin from the rough as is available from the fairway, resulting in a reduction in the value of accuracy.

"Our research has involved input from both Governing Bodies, including substantial laboratory work and player testing at all levels around the world," said Dr Stephen Otto, The R&A's Director of Research and Testing.

"Contributions from golf club manufacturers in particular have been considerable and they have welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the process."

The revised Rules will significantly increase the spin differential between shots from the fairway and shots from the rough.

The new Rules will augment the existing limitations on grooves and will affect all clubs (with the exception of drivers and putters), with the new regulations limiting groove volume and groove edge sharpness.

Essentially, larger volume grooves have the ability to channel away more material, such as water or grass, similar to the tread on car tyres. At the same time, sharper groove edges facilitate a better contact between club and ball, even in the presence of debris.

Both new regulations will apply to golf clubs with lofts greater than or equal to 25 degrees (generally a standard 5-iron and above) with only the rule limiting groove volume applying to clubs of lesser loft.

The Rules will apply to all clubs manufactured after 1 January 2010. Clubs manufactured prior to this date, which meet the current regulations, will continue to be regarded as conforming under the Rules of Golf until at least 2024.

It is intended that the new Rules will be introduced as a Condition of Competition at top professional level from 1 January 2010 and at top amateur level and in other professional events from 1 January 2014.

The R&A and the USGA will introduce such a Condition of Competition at their respective championships in accordance with this schedule.

The world's top professional tours for both men and women, and the organisers of golf's major championships, have all indicated their support for the new groove regulations and their intention to implement the Condition of Competition in 2010.

"We believe that this rule change is necessary to reinforce the importance of accuracy at the highest levels of the game.

However, beyond that the new Rules will be phased in very gradually," said David Rickman, The R&A's Director of Rules and Equipment Standards.

"The vast majority of the golfing public will enjoy many years' use of their existing equipment within the Rules and this, of course, will also apply to any purchases they make from manufacturers' existing model ranges."



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BIGGA ENVIRONMENT COMPETITION

BIGGA staff - John Pemberton, Chief Executive, Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development and Scott MacCallum, Editor & Communications Manager; recently attended an update meeting at 2007 competition winners golf club, Hollinwell (Notts).

The meeting was held with the Environment Competition sponsors and judges, to discuss progress made with the current competition and potential initiatives for future years.



MIDLAND GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY

A Midland Region Golf Management Trophy day sponsored for the 11th successive year by Scotts UK Professional was held at



Gay Hill Golf Club on August 6. Teams from 18 golf clubs enjoyed a course superbly prepared by Course Manager Paul Woodham and his staff. A "Shotgun Start" at 9.30am meant that many teams had a very early start to the day, but a welcome coffee and bacon bap on arrival prepared them for the task ahead.

Once again the format of 4 man teams playing a Stableford with the best 2 points scores on each hole counting proved very popular. The winning team, led by Course Manager Antony Bindley, was Kirby Muxloe Golf Club with 88 points. The team from Wellingborough Golf Club, led by Course Manager Ian Marshall, was 2nd with 86 points, and 3rd was the team from Glen Gorse Golf Club, led by Course manager Frank Kempster, with 82 points. Nearest the pin on the 10th was won by Richard Lowe from Drayton Park Golf Club, and longest drive on the 17th was by Paul Woodham, the local Course Manager.

The picture below shows the Kirby Muxloe Golf Club team, with Antony Bindley centre with the trophy, and Mark Rayner from Scotts on the right.

The Midland Region of BIGGA thanks Gay Hill Golf Club for hosting the event and Scotts for their continued sponsorship.

MAYOR OF IPSWICH VISITS RANSOMES JACOBSEN'S

The Mayor of Ipswich, Councillor David Hale and the Deputy Mayor of Ipswich Councillor, Inga Lockington, together with their respective consorts visited Ransomes Jacobsen's head office and manufacturing facility at Ransomes Europark in Ipswich recently.

The Deputy Mayor met one of the company's employees, Doug Shemmings who retired a few days after the visit, at a function in the town and expressed an interest in visiting the company. It only took a couple of phone calls and the visit was arranged.

The mayoral party were met by Managing Director David Withers and his management team and over a buffet lunch were given an overview of the company's history and the position it occupies today as one of the leading turf maintenance equipment manufacturers in the World.

After lunch the party toured the manufacturing plant, where they saw the production processes involved in the manufacture of today's modern grounds care equipment and spoke to several of the staff. The visit was completed with the party teeing off on the first hole of the company's new three-hole golf course, with the Mayor agreeing to return in October to perform the official opening ceremony.



NEW APPOINTMENT

After 12 months as the IOG's part-time Education & Development Officer, Ireland, Donal Kearney has now been appointed full-time IOG Regional Adviser, Ireland.

The move is another step in the IOG's Challenging Perceptions strategy and it complements the recent appointment of Ian Mather Brewster as Regional Advisor for the North. Both are new full-time positions created by the IOG.



ARE YOU UP TO SPEED?

In this month's article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, gives us an update on the importance of keeping up to speed with modern technology...

I am sure we can all relate stories of older or mature people and their use of mobile phones?

My 87-year-old father-in-law is a case in point, he has mastered the art of turning a mobile phone on and ringing our home number when he wants picking up from the railway station, now he wants to learn about texting!

I also have mastered the mobile, albeit the kids always laugh at the fact I have to find my glasses when a text comes in or when I need to use the phone – I know it is a sign of getting older but these are just a couple of examples of how nobody can, or indeed should, be afraid of modern technology.

The progress has been quite unbelievable in recent years and there is no end to its value in terms of greenkeeper education...

The speed of communication is fantastic whether it is through mobile phones or computers.

All ages now have access to these modern tools and greenkeepers are making the most of the opportunities to add to their knowledge base.

The GTC's latest data collection of learner/student information from its Approved Training Provider network has shown an incredible increase in registrations for the online learning delivery of qualifications now offered by several providers.

Greenkeepers gaining degrees online, whatever next?

Ignore the cynics; we as an industry know all the hard work over many years is paying off by the skills, based on the knowledge and experience gained by today's greenkeepers and Course Managers.

Many golf developing countries, where architects and constructors have been hard at work in recent years and there is little or no greenkeeper training system in place, are turning to the British providers and the GTC for assistance to develop a structure to suit their particular needs.

Yes you might sense a little blowing of the GTC's trumpet here but why not?

But which other countries have a range of qualifications to suit all ages, designed to multi-skill learners and has a network of providers

supporting a specialist industry with a variety of delivery methods? Not many!

However, we must not stop and think the work is completed, far from it. Investment to maintain standards and for the GTC to remain the independent, respected, authoritative organisation is essential.

The GTC must continue to lead on best practices in golf course maintenance and management. The current review of turf qualifications and apprenticeship schemes will allow the GTC to ensure all current issues including environmental legislation is incorporated into all turf qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks.



Online consultation through the Lantra and GTC websites is another example of how the internet broadens the opportunity to influence industry standards.

Back to the latest method of learning...

The online learning will be an important vehicle for this sharing of best practice.

With the sudden upturn in registrations on the higher education qualifications we also have not forgotten our roots and that is the craft level

of the profession.

The GTC now has its highly acclaimed learning materials available online. These are the same materials developed in partnership with the leading subject specialist individuals from our sector and used throughout the GTC approved centres.

These extensive materials can now be purchased chapter by chapter or as a total package.

I fully appreciate it is not everybody who wants to gain a qualification but access to information is so important to all of us.

It is the GTC's aim to share its work with as many greenkeepers and employers as possible in partnership with the approved providers.

must also add that hardcopies and CD format are still available for those who prefer these options of learning.

The World Wide Web is a fantastic resource and as I view the various turf websites including Associations forums, the greenkeeping community's willingness to support each other and share experience is so heart warming.

For those of you yet to join the cyber world there are still IT or computer courses available locally and you will be amazed at the age group having a laugh at the same time learning the basics of computing!

Check out what the GTC has to offer at its new online shop: www.the-gtc.co.uk

Employer or greenkeeper, have an input into the review of sports turf qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks by visiting: www.lantra.co.uk

I am tempted to finish with a text message using all the shortcuts but maybe I have to register on a special course for that!

*David can be contacted direct at the GTC on:
Email: david@the-gtc.co.uk or
Tel: 01347 838640*

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Industry Update

KIOTI TRACTORS MAINTAIN PITCHES FOR CHAMPIONS

Three Kioti tractors are playing an important part in keeping the pitch at the world-famous Headingley Carnegie Stadium in Leeds and its 35-acre training ground in top condition for the Leeds Rhinos rugby league and Leeds Carnegie rugby union clubs.

The stadium pitch is probably the most heavily used of any rugby pitch in the UK. It hosts around 80 matches a year involving the Leeds Rhinos, who are current rugby league Super League champions and World Club title holders, Leeds Carnegie and other teams. Sometimes three games are played in a single weekend, and the biggest gap between games is less than three weeks, according to head groundsman Jason Booth, who is the current Rugby Football League Groundsman of the Year.

As there is no time for full-scale pitch renovation, staff are kept busy carrying out small-scale repairs and remedial work continuously all year round. Verti-draining is carried out on the pitch at least once a week, as well as scarifying, top-dressing, spraying, seeding and brushing as required.

As part of a major up-grading of its ground-care equipment, Leeds Rugby Ltd chose three models from the Kioti CK and DK ranges supplied by Longs Groundcare Machinery Ltd, based in Leeds. The two smaller models – a CK20 and CK35 – work at the stadium, while the 50hp turbo-powered DK501 is based at the training ground.

Leeds Rhinos players and ground staff at Headingley Carnegie Stadium with head groundsman Jason Booth (centre), Ian Brown of Rustons Engineering (left) and David Long of Longs Groundcare Machinery (right)



MACHINES TAKE TO THE OPEN ROAD

Japanese manufacturer, Kubota, took to the road two years ago with a series of its Kubota Live! events.

Proving a resounding success in 2006, the event makes a welcomed return this year with 8 events taking place across England, Scotland and Wales. Running from 2 – 25th September, the event offers visitors a unique opportunity to view and drive the entire Kubota Tractor and Groundcare range, as well as its world leading construction equipment, and this year's events are set to be on an even bigger scale.

The event venues incorporate extensive demonstration areas and a purpose built off road 4 x 4 course to give visitors the chance to put the Kubota machines through their paces in realistic, working environments.

For further information and to register visit: www.kubota.co.uk/kubotalive or call: 0800 023 1111. Entry is free.



NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR

Laurence Scowen took over as Managing Director for DLF Trifolium Ltd recently after leaving Eurocaps, where he held a Board of Directors position as Sales and Business Development Director. Eurocaps, who contract manufacturer vitamin and mineral supplements, supply high street multiples, pharmacies, health food stores and mail order companies in the UK, mainland Europe and further afield.

"We are delighted to welcome Laurence to the company and feel confident that his experience and personality will help maintain our market leading position within the grass seed business," said David Keegan, who has been MD for DLF for 16 years.



MANAGEMENT TEAM STRENGTHENED

Leading sportsturf contractor MJ Abbott Limited has appointed Nigel Pritchard as Purchasing and Direct Sales Manager.

Nigel spent almost 20 years with John Davidson Pipes, where he became Technical Product Development Manager.

He has extensive knowledge of water management solutions and will be responsible for identifying and sourcing new product ranges to add to the company's growing offering to the professional market. He'll also be driving the company's technical and sales support, ensuring that customers receive first-class customer service from initial enquiry through to after-sales assistance.

BRITISH WILD FLOWER PLANTS IN BUTTERFLY WORLD

British Wild Flower Plants (BWFPs) is playing a significant part in the design and construction of Butterfly World, Clive Farrell's £25m project currently underway at St. Albans, Hertfordshire.

The specialist Norfolk nursery is responsible for the creation of a substantial wild flower meadow with a central garden celebrating the life of Dame Miriam Rothschild the famous entomologist, gardener and conservationist. "Ivan Hicks' design across the 26 acre site depicts the shape of a Butterfly," explains BWFPs' Ian Forster. "The wild flower meadow is within the proboscis, with the Rothschild garden at the centre. We're planting Field Poppies, Chamomile, Cornflowers, Oxeye Daisies and Corn Cockles to create a natural habitat for indigenous butterflies, and creating a garden of colour and water in honour of Dame Rothschild." Ian, who has designed the central garden, is basing it on a globe, surrounded by a spiral stream, bordered by nectar plants.



NEW GOLF DISTRIBUTOR

Huxley Golf Northern has taken on responsibility for the sale and installation of Huxley Golf's extensive range of golf practice, teaching and playing aids throughout North Wales.

Appointed initially in mid-2007 to look after northern England, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and parts of Cheshire, Huxley Golf Northern's newly extended responsibilities encompass the whole of Cheshire and the Welsh counties of Flintshire, Wrexham, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd, the Isle of Anglesey and northern parts of Powys.

Huxley Golf Northern's first project in North Wales was the installation of a 56-yard (50m) long all-weather practice tee for Royal St David's Golf Club, Harlech, Gwynedd.



NEW FACILITIES AT LINCOLN SITE OPEN

British Seed Houses' staff gathered recently to mark the completion of development work at the company's site at Witham St Hughs.

Located on the Nottinghamshire/Lincolnshire border, the company has operated out of the site for more than 30 years and purchased it outright in 2001. The decision was taken to expand the facilities to accommodate BSH's growing amenity seeds business.

Eighteen members of staff are now based at the modern office complex which also houses a seed testing laboratory. Seed is cleaned and blended on-site and the improved 80,000 square foot warehouses provide improved product storage and packaging, resulting in faster order response times.

BARONESS ON THE MOVE

Kyoeisha UK, manufacturers of Baroness fine turf mowers, has moved into brand new premises on the outskirts of Basingstoke.

The new 6000 sq ft warehouse and offices on the Hatch Industrial Park just off the M3 will be the new base for the sales and back up team being put together by Managing Director Ian Kerry. The new address and contact numbers for Baroness are: Unit 5, Hatch Industrial Park, Greywell Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 7NG. Tel: 01256 462591.



NEW APPOINTMENT

Etesia UK Ltd is pleased to announce that Phil Catley has been appointed Area Sales Manager for the South West and Southern England. In his new role, 26-year-old Phil will provide sales and support to Etesia's specialist dealers in



the territory, including involvement with local shows, demonstrations and open days.

Having started his career in the motor industry where he gained a Level 3 City & Guilds qualification as a Motor Technician, Phil has a sound engineering background. He left the motor industry to join Sharnford Horticultural Ltd in Leicestershire and later moved to Devon's Abbey Garden Machinery. As a result he has considerable knowledge and experience in outdoor power equipment, with a sales track record which covers a wide range of professional products.

JOINT VENTURE

SITR, the largest independent recycling group in the UK has announced a newly formed joint venture.

SITR will be the key UK manufacturer of the Dunweed range of landscaping and playground products.

Announcing its intent on changing the face of the tyre recycling market place, SITR has committed a £4,000,000 investment into the creation of the most modern tyre recycling plant in Europe.

ASTON VILLA STAYS SHARP WITH SUPER ATOM

Jonathan Calderwood, Grounds Manager of Aston Villa Football Club, needed a fast solution to keeping the pitch edges sharp when the new stadium surface was built two years ago.

"After the new pitch was laid the edges became flush with the rubber track surround," said Jonathan, a former IOG Groundsman of the Year, who was at the old Wembley Stadium and Wolverhampton Wanderers before joining Aston Villa five years ago.

"Using traditional edging tools up to the concrete divide would take us an hour. Then we discovered the Atom Professional Edger from DJ Turfcare - and the job now takes just five minutes."

He was so impressed that he has bought two more for the Aston Villa training ground at Bodymoor Heath.

The new training ground has three full size pitches, three goal kicking areas and a warm-up pitch. Alongside this are five full-size pitches in the old training ground, which is to become the Football Academy.

Aston Villa's Paul Mytton, Deputy Head Groundsman, with the Atom Professional Edger at the training ground



Membership



AN UPDATE FROM BIGGA'S MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

It was lovely to see so many of you visiting the BIGGA stand at Saltex this month, from those who were joining or renewing their membership to many members who just called in to say hello. We will be announcing the winner of the September prize draw to win an ipod and Nokia 6233 mobile phone at the beginning of October in the members area of the website (www.bigga.org.uk) and in November's issue of Greenkeeper International.

BIGGA Website

Some members have been in touch with us regarding having problems logging in to the members area of the BIGGA website, please can you check that you are using the website address www.bigga.org.uk and NOT [.co.uk](http://www.bigga.co.uk). If you continue to experience problems logging in, contact Brad in the membership office, (contact details below) for assistance.

Open Support Team

It may seem just a distant memory now, but well done to all those who were part of the Open Support Team at Royal Birkdale in July, the weather certainly posed some challenges, but as always, the team assisted the home greenkeeping staff in their usual professional and supportive way.

Being part of the Open Support Team is one of the great benefits of being a greenkeeper member of BIGGA, as Asa English, Greenkeeper at Charnwood Forest Golf Club in Leicestershire found out:

"To be included in the Open Support Team is a privilege. To work inside the ropes gives you a great buzz and to get so close to the play allows you to see the true skill of the players.

"It is a hard, demanding week but the whole experience is second to none and there is always a great team spirit within the camp! – An experience everyone should try."

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance

For those who hold greenkeeping membership of BIGGA, you automatically have access to legal advice and an insurance policy that might cover the costs associated with a range of legal issues.

See the full article in this month's Greenkeeper International.

This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members...

Scottish Region

Stephen Arnott, Central
John Blair, West
Sean McLean, East
James Murray, North
Bryan Ramsey, West

Northern Region

Kenneth Allsop, North West
Craig Bentley, Sheffield
Kevin Muldoon, North Wales
Adam Owen, North West
Philip Robinson, Northern
Ian Westerman, Northern
Andrew Wheatley, Northern

Midland Region

Dean Butterworth, Mid Anglia
Alex Clarricoates, East of England

Roy Cox, Midland

William Crowder, Mid Anglia
Anthony Foulds, Midland
Ian Glover, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Andrew Govier, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Timothy McCreadie, East Midland
Jack Timms, Midland
Keith Waterhouse, East Midland
Robert White, East Midland

South East Region

Ryan Angear, Surrey
Roy Britton, East Anglia
Richard Cotterell, Surrey
Gary Noble, Surrey
Stewart Reed, Essex

S West / S Wales Region

Daniel Blewett, South West
Andrew Gabb, Devon & Cornwall
Jamie Hughes, Devon & Cornwall
Edward Parsloe, South West
Robert Schilperoord, South West

Northern Ireland

Lawrence McIloroy

International

Marek Zubert, Republic of Ireland
Yasuhiko Oe, Japan
Shuji Ishimoto, Japan
Vicente Collpons, Spain

Student

Jonathan Day, Devon & Cornwall

Associate

Andrew Wight, Mid Anglia
John Farrell, East Anglia
Dave Pearce, South Wales

Corporate

Pamela Castle, Mid Anglia

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



Peter Boyd

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440

Mobile: 07776 242120

Email: pj.boyd@btinternet.com



Peter Larter

NORTHERN & MIDLAND

Tel: 01476 550115

Mobile: 07866 366966

Email: petelarter972@aol.com



Clive Osgood

SOUTH EAST

Tel: 01737 819343

Mobile: 07841 948410

Email: cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk



Jane Jones

SOUTH WEST & WALES

Tel: 01454 270850

Mobile: 07841 948110

Email: janejones1@btconnect.com

Learning & Development

Key Sponsorship:

UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF GREENKEEPERS

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...



September already – how did that happen? Is it just me, or is time moving faster these days?! Rachael and I have a busy month ahead of us attending Saltex, putting the finishing touches to and ensuring the smooth running of the final of the Toro Student of the Year Award, facilitating several Master Greenkeeper inspections both in the UK and the USA and then, of course we have Harrogate Week looming on the not so distant horizon - unbelievable!

Harrogate Week 2009

After several months of planning I am very pleased to say that the Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week, including the Continue to Learn Education Programme, is written and has been turned over to the design department to do their business of making it look presentable.

The 2009 programme features over 140 hours of education, an increase of more than 20 hours on the 2008 programme. There will truly be something for everyone – two day, one day and half day workshops as well as more than 25 FREE seminars.

The Definitive Guide to Harrogate Week will be distributed with the October issue of Greenkeeper International and full information will also be available on the Harrogate Week website – www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

The BIGGA Library

Rachael has spent many hours over the past month sorting out the BIGGA library, cataloguing books, magazines and videos as well as discovering all sorts of items in the storage cupboards, underneath the library shelves, that we never knew we had!

We have also found that we have many duplicate items and intend to list them on the website and make them available to Members, for just the cost of postage.

Any items not claimed will be available on the BIGGA Stand at Harrogate Week in January.

Learning and Development Subsidies

There is still money available in the Learning and Development Fund for subsidies for section

and region events. Subsidy applications should be made before the event takes place. Contact us for further information: 01347 833800.

Refund of Fees

Thanks to contributions to the BIGGA Learning and Development Fund, BIGGA is able to offer a Refund of Fees scheme that enables BIGGA members to claim 80% (up to a maximum of £350) of education and training course costs.

To be eligible you must be a member of BIGGA and have been a member for at least two

years, have paid your own fees and be able to provide proof of payment, have completed a course or component part of a course and be able to provide evidence of completion.

The course must not be subsidised, already, by BIGGA and must be relevant to your job as a greenkeeper. Members who meet the criteria can claim a refund of fees annually.

The application form is available to download from the Education section of the website or by contacting us.

Learning and Development Updates

Higher Education Scholarships



Supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarships have been awarded to:

- James Hutchinson
 - Online Foundation Degree in Sports Turf
- Adam Newton
 - Foundation Degree in Sports Turf
- Jonathan Oostendorp
 - Foundation Degree in Sports Turf

Continuing Professional Development

The new CPD year has now commenced. Claim credits for any training you attend from 1 July 2008 until 30 June 2009 and you could receive a Certificate of Continuing Professional Development.

For more information on this membership benefit contact the Learning and Development department or check out the Education page of the BIGGA website.

Learning & Development

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE AND PROFIT IN A CHANGING ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Barenbrug's Research and Development Manager, Jayne Leyland, discusses the findings of the company's latest STRI golf greens' trial

Given the current economic climate, golf courses would be wise to prepare for fierce competition for income, combined with escalating costs via prudent and informed planning for the future.

In a buyer's market, golfers will doubtless demand the best possible quality of playing experience for their money, so how best to keep and attract their custom? Concentrating budgetary investments on making noticeable key improvements, such as grass species exchange programmes, could make all the difference.

The results of Barenbrug's STRI (Sports Turf Research Institute) golf greens trial equips Course Managers with the latest information on improving both playing performance and aesthetics so that any investment made in this respect will be a positive one.

OPPOSING MAINTENANCE REGIMES

The trial's aim is to observe how both traditional and innovative mixtures and monocultures for golf greens' application perform under two opposing maintenance regimes – a 'standard' input and a 'relaxed' input. Following this first year of trial, further experimental assessments will be made beyond the establishment phase.

Two trials with eight mixtures and four monocultures (treatments) were sown at the recommended sowing rate on a sand-dominated rootzone at the STRI in July 2006. The trials were sown in a randomised block design with three replications per treatment.

Mowing commenced in August 2006 and reduced gradually from 30mm to 12mm by October 2006. Mowing was carried out three times per week during active growth and then as necessary during the winter period.

On May 3, 2007, a mowing height of 7mm was implemented and, at this time, the trials were also overseeded and top-dressed. Mowing was then resumed on May 17 at 10mm, with the

final mowing height of 6mm for the second trial achieved on June 8 and the final mowing height of 4mm for the first trial reached on June 19.

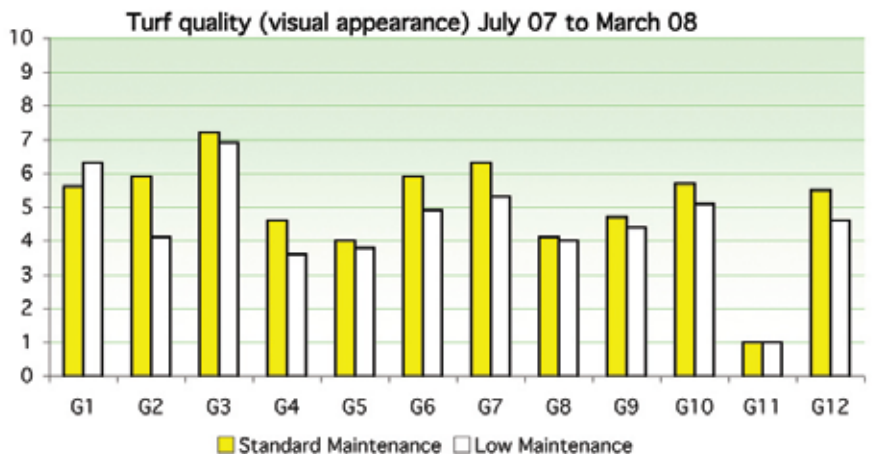
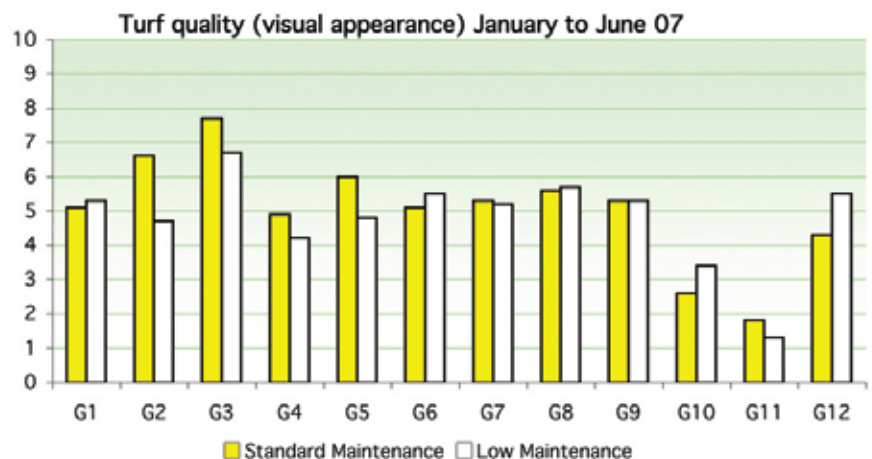
Assessments were made between October 2006 and March 2008 for disease incidence, turf quality (including its visual appearance), playing quality in terms of firmness, green speed and thatch depth, and botanical composition.

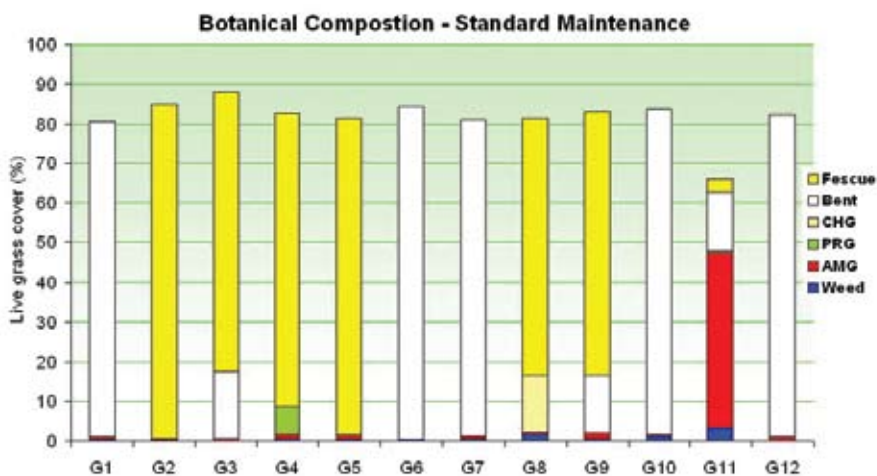
Key findings of the disease incidence assessment were that take-all patch was less severe in the low-input trial due, in part, to the increased fescue content, and that fusarium and red thread were generally less severe on the standard input trial, largely due to the reduced nutrient stress and healthier plants.

Overall, disease incidence undoubtedly influenced the turf quality assessments, proving that the selection of disease-tolerant cultivars is more important than ever, for both financial and aesthetic reasons.

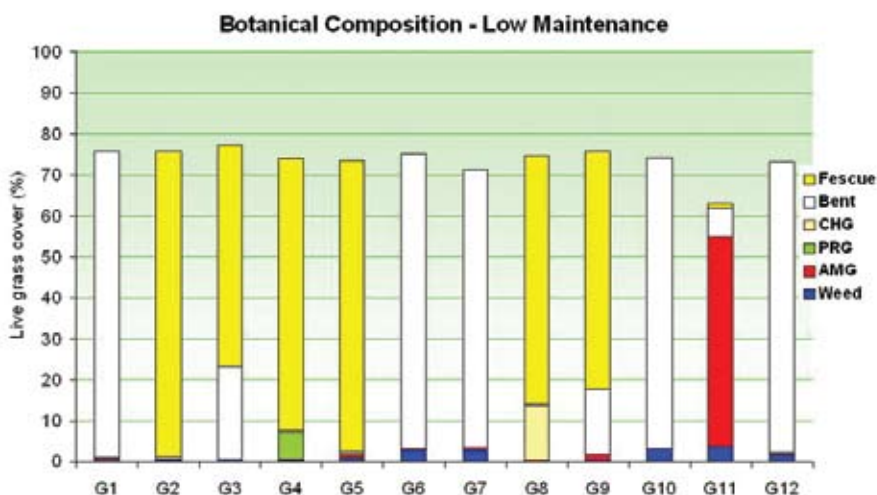
In order to gauge turf quality, we examined the impact of disease and nutrient status on sward density, species composition and the visual appearance of the treatments. Our 80/20 mixture – marketed as BAR 2 – was shown to have the most consistent turf quality and tolerance to fusarium to-date.

The playing quality tests showed that there are already significant differences between mixtures and species and that seasonal variations also play





Winter stress following insufficient nutrient input.



Late spring/summer growing conditions with increased nutrients.

their part. Assessments will continue and will be regularly recorded.

Finally, the botanical composition assessments showed that mowing heights and nutrient input significantly affect the botanical composition of the sward. Further conclusions will be drawn following a period of increased nutrient input.

THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

With the trial having been affected by the unusually high temperatures prevalent at the time of sowing, the challenges courses face due to climate change also became clear. The soaring temperatures continued for several weeks and had a negative impact on both germination and early establishment, despite the application of irrigation.

This factor delayed the implementation of the different management regimes until June 2007 and was also evident in the first series of experimental assessments, which began in October 2006. Seasonal variations were also shown to be significant in all assessments.

Rainfall also has an interesting affect on turf quality. Adequate nutrient input on free-draining, sand-dominant rootzone for successful establishment of even lower-input species like fescues was found to be essential. However, the high level of summer precipitation in 2007 had a particularly dramatic effect on demand, with fescues dominating the swards.

This shows that fast establishment is essential for successful species exchange programmes in order for them to offer continued savings into the future, with nutrient input now shown to be crucial to achieving this.

These findings are valuable as inclement summer weather not only negatively affects green fees and clubhouse spend, but also leads to a decrease in turf health and quality, with new and

more aggressive diseases and other environmental stresses requiring increased inputs for treatment and recovery. Hence species exchange can help courses overcome the challenges of climate change, ensuring 'survival of the fittest' in the sward.

In conclusion then, this trial has already highlighted some significant differences from the experimental assessments during the establishment phase. It is too early to say whether previously held positions have been categorically confirmed or countered. However, the findings to-date are a positive indication that the trial will yield information of great practical value on an ongoing basis, and particularly now it has 'opened for play' with simulated golf wear now being applied.

The results of Barenbrug's STRI golf greens trial are available in a handy fact file, which can be downloaded free from www.barenbrug.co.uk. Alternatively, copies can be obtained by calling 01359 272000 or emailing info@baruk.co.uk



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Growing success

YOUR GREEN GREEN GRASS OF HOPE

If legal problems arise, where would you turn for expert advice and guidance?

In today's unpredictable economic climate, the burden of pursuing costly legal action may take its toll on your finances. However, as a greenkeeping member of BIGGA you needn't worry. Thanks to Arc Legal Assistance, specialist legal advice is on hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week and if a legal problem does arise, you can rest assured that Arc's insurance policy will be there to help.

THE ARC BIGGA COVER

As a greenkeeping member of BIGGA, you automatically have access to legal advice and an insurance policy that might cover the costs associated with a range of legal issues, from employment problems and consumer disputes to personal injury claims. Also, for some legal problems, Arc will protect those closest to you – your partner, children, parents and parents-in-law.

As a leading provider of UK legal costs insurance, Arc provides real benefits and support when you need it most, delivered by fully qualified, professional lawyers from some of the UK's leading law firms.

EMPLOYMENT WORRIES

The Citizens Advice Bureau deal with over 400,000 employment related problems each year. The BIGGA scheme provides you with advice and support for a range of employment related problems. For example, Arc was recently contacted by a BIGGA greenkeeping member who had been subjected to sustained criticism from their direct manager over a period of 18 months. When it became too much, they decided to resign and contacted the helpline for specialist legal advice.

Arc's panel of expert lawyers started proceedings for constructive dismissal against their previous employer and, as a

result an agreement was reached with a cash award, company car and future reference for the member.

The BIGGA scheme can also cover the costs of arranging representation for you at internal disciplinary hearings with your employer.

LEGAL COVER FOR YOUR FAMILY

The scheme covers close family members for contract disputes and personal injury claims. Recently, Arc was called on to help a greenkeeping member's parents whose 18th century house was damaged by a storm. A visit by a loss adjuster revealed pre-existing damage to the roof, which had not been picked up by a full structural survey carried out on the house prior to the member's parents buying it. They contacted the Arc legal helpline, who advised them that a claim could be made for breach of contract against the original surveyor.

Subsequently, lawyers arranged for a further survey to be conducted on the house to calculate by how much the price had been affected by the roof problems. Legal proceedings were then issued against the surveyor and an out of court settlement was reached, with the member's parents receiving significant compensation for their troubles.

PERSONAL INJURY HELP AND ADVICE

Government statistics show that the number of accident claims increased by over eight percent in 2006-07 and according to experts this is expected to continue to rise over the next five years. When personal injuries do occur, it is clear that access to legal advice and support quickly is paramount.

If you, or a member of your family suffers an injury, the BIGGA scheme can provide you with prompt specialist legal advice. When Mr X was assaulted and badly injured by door staff in a nightclub, he contacted the helpline for advice. As a result of negotiations, Arc was able to secure a substantial amount of compensation for the member.

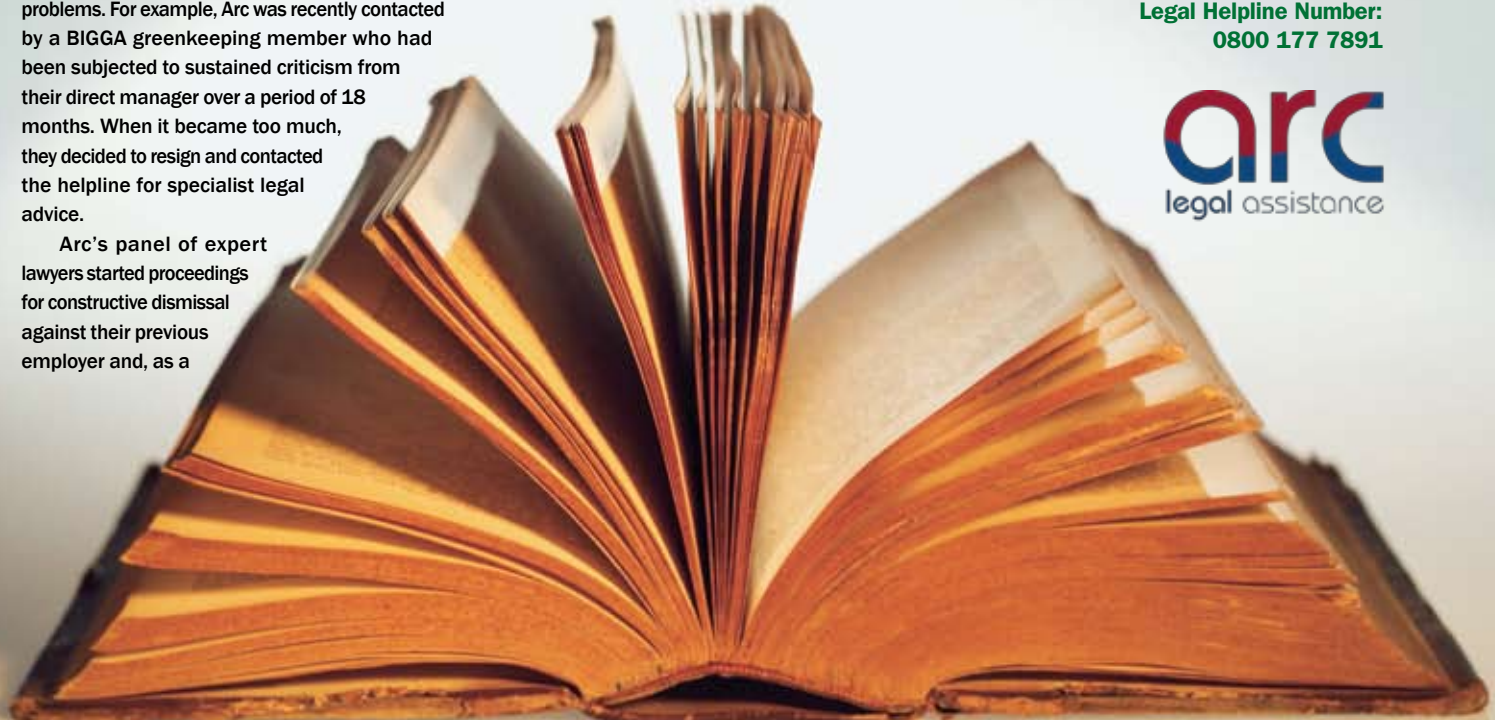
ABOUT ARC LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Arc was launched in early 2003. They have experienced rapid growth since then, which is a testimony to their understanding of the complexities of the legal insurance market in which they operate.

Arc have been working in partnership with Heath Lambert, the UK's leading independent insurance broker and employee benefits consultants, to provide the specialist legal costs and advice BIGGA members and their families need since early 2007.

Legal Helpline Number:
0800 177 7891

arc
legal assistance





The ProctorPave Grass system is designed to allow turf to be laid over the top of a load bearing plastic roll. According to the company, the system allows 100% grass coverage and 92% available root area. As well as car parks, the system can be used for paths and roadways.

CREATING SUSTAINABLE PARKING SPACES

By James de Havilland

It is a common problem. To attract players to a course, a club needs to offer a range of facilities that includes easy car parking. The trouble is any parking takes up space, with many clubs having partially empty car parks during slack periods with not enough room when hosting tournaments and other events. Getting the parking to demand ratio right is not easy.

There are other considerations that have to be brought into the equation. Assuming there is space to expand an existing car park, planning permission may make any desired expansion difficult. This particularly applies to clubs that are within an urban area.

There is also the issue of Sustainable Urban

Drainage Systems, SUDS. This can either rule out hard surface parking areas or make it prohibitively expensive to expand due to the need to install a well planned drainage or water retrieval system.

For many clubs the only option is to offer temporary parking to meet peak demand. Diverting overflow traffic into a driving range, practice area or other 'spare bits of grass' during tournaments and large events is common. The problem is heavy rain can turn these temporary parking areas into a mud bath.

A potential half way house is to consider systems that will either stabilise an area of turf to allow it to be parked on in all weathers or to expand hard surface parking using a loose gravel surface that has a water holding capacity compliant with SUDS.

In the case of meeting SUDS requirements, porous paving systems are often seen as an economical alternative to hard surface parking with a suitable drainage or water holding package built in. In really simplified terms, porous paving surfaces are typically made using a course porous base material with gravel on top.

To prevent the latter simply panning down and effectively mimicking a hard surface over time, the gravel layer is contained in a load bearing plastic block or mat with open pockets to contain the gravel. The mat takes the load, preventing the gravel panning down into the porous layer below.

Turf based systems are based on much the same idea, with turf growing on or through plastic load bearing grid. These support grids are



Note how the system is designed so the turf lies over the top of the plastic load bearing support. The turf will need time to establish before the surface can take a heavy load. The weight of vehicle that can safely park over this type of surface will relate to the material under the support grid.

typically made from blocks that are positioned and interlocked over a prepared surface. The plastic pockets are filled with soil and seeded - taking the load of vehicles.

A refinement of this approach is offered by the ProctorPave system. Instead of using plastic support blocks, ProctorPave is supplied in 20m2 rolls with a flexible grid base. This allows the roll to follow the ground contours, enabling the system to be installed on surfaces that are not level. It also allows the system to be used to create a road or pathway.

Offered in ProctorPave Gravel and ProctorPave Grass versions, the system is designed to be easier to install than separate block based systems, the Grass option allowing turf to be laid over the load bearing surface. The latter is designed to support the turf and not protrude up through the surface.

If you are faced with parking problems, it can pay to consider alternatives to 'traditional' hard surface parking. Porous gravel systems may help avoid problems with surface drainage, with stabilised grass possibly allowing the area to be used for something else or avoid planning issues.

This is a general outline, the actual installation of alternatives to hard surface parking areas having to take into account a whole range of issues. The point, however, is that a new, expanded or temporary car park need not need lorry loads of tarmac or crushed stone.

(Details on the ProctorPave system from www.proctorgroup.com)



The ProctorPave Gravel system can be laid over a porous base material (MOT type 3) to increase the storage volume of rainfall. A 200mm deep cross-section is claimed to store around 50mm of rain. This is important as it could mean an area of parking could be established without the need to install a surface drainage system.



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DRAINAGE PROBLEM? WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU CALL IN THE CONTRACTORS...

When it comes to sportsturf drainage, there can't be many companies in the UK more experienced than Wiltshire based MJ Abbott. From humble beginnings more than 40 years ago, they've established themselves as one of the industry's leading contractors. From challenging ground conditions to challenging weather, it's fair to say the company has learnt a thing or two along the way about the things that allow the smooth progression of a major drainage installation.

Contracts Director Nigel Wyatt shares his thoughts on the subject

Consultant-v-Contractor

If you're planning a major drainage project, you may wish to seek the advice of a consultant. This has several benefits. Consultants are independent so you get sound, unbiased advice. They'll be able to discuss their past projects with you and will make recommendations which suit your site and budget. Alternatively, you may want to oversee the project yourself and appoint a contractor. Here's how both processes work:

Contractor

Choose a reputable contractor, preferably one which is a member of the Land Drainage Contractors Association. The LDCA (www.ldca.org) publishes guidelines which set out the standard of workmanship and materials for sportsturf drainage. These guidelines are recognised by sporting bodies such as the standard to which sportsturf drainage should be installed.

Seek recommendation from your peers. Ask them about their relationship with the contractor. Were they happy with the workmanship? Did the installation go smoothly and, importantly, would they use them again?

When drawing up a shortlist, select up to three to choose one from. Ensure parity of specifications as tenders may differ significantly.

Consultant

A consultant will begin by undertaking a site investigation. From there he or she will produce a design, prepare a bill of quantities and a full specification.

They will assist you in the selection of a contractor and will issue tender documents. They will then evaluate the tenders and after the appointment of a contractor, they'll oversee the work.



Nigel Wyatt on site
Picture courtesy of Mike Beardall

What's next?

When the contractors' tenders have been received, remember to compare specifications as well as quotes. The cheapest quote may not necessarily be the best value for money. If any part of the tender is unclear, ask for further information.

Awarding the contract

When you've made your selection, agree timings and payment terms with the contractor. This may include retentions and the provision of aftercare once the job's complete.

Health & Safety

Be aware of your obligations relating to Health & Safety. If the project is expected to take longer than 30 working days (or 500 man days), then the golf club is legally obliged to appoint a qualified CDM (Construction Design and Management) Coordinator who will notify the Health and Safety Executive about the project as part of CDM (2007) regulations using a form F10.

The CDM Coordinator is responsible for appointing a competent contractor, ensuring that the relevant health and safety procedures are in place and that they're adhered to. Regardless of the need for notification, the contractor will produce their own health and safety construction plans which will include risk assessments, traffic management and method statements for the work being undertaken.

Carry out all necessary service searches for existing services such as gas, water and electricity. Make plans showing old and existing drainage, such as clay drains, available to the contractor.

Progress & Supervision

It goes without saying that you'll want the very best for your golf course. Carry out your own quality control checks by:

- Confirming that the on-site team are qualified and experienced
- Ensuring that suitable, well-maintained machinery is used
- Checking the specifications and quality of backfill materials (ie gravel and sand) when delivered



Drainage lines at Fairmont St Andrews - Copyright MJ Abbott Limited



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- Inspecting both the trenches and junctions before they're backfilled
- Expecting a clean and tidy site
Obtain a plan from the contractor showing the 'as constructed' layout.

How much will it cost?

Costs are determined by design and the design is determined by use, the present conditions and the resources available. This will take into account the Club's expectations, the quality of the facility and the standard of aftercare required.

Settlement

Settlement can occur in areas with high clay content in the subsoil. During times of drought, shrinkage of the soil particles causes the settlement of drainage trench lines and remedial work needs to be carried out to avoid depressions in the surface. You should make sure that remedial measures to cater for trench settlement are agreed in advance with your contractor. You should also discuss disturbance, reinstatement and aftercare. The construction phase will create disturbance and the timing of the project will affect it.

Aftercare

Most contractors will provide an aftercare service which may include watering, overseeding and fertiliser applications. It is generally accepted that the contractor should return the site to the state it was in prior to work commencing.

Summary

So, to get the installation that's right for you:

- Get good advice
- Talk to others who have had work done
- Employ a reputable contractor
- Don't necessarily go for the cheapest
- Get 'as built' drawings
- Be aware of the effects of the drainage installation on the playing surface

The Course Manager

Finally, a word about the Course Manager. Their role in any major project and their working relationship with the contractor is critical to its progression and successful completion.

Over the 30 years I've been involved with drainage projects across the UK, I've identified ten things that Course Managers can do to help their installation run smoothly. They are:

1. Forward the details of existing drainage and services, outfalls etc. to the contractor before the project commences
2. Be aware of relevant Health & Safety issues and regulations
3. When planning the process, consider the time of year. To minimise disruption to the course, installation should take place during spring, summer or autumn.
4. Tendering – Ensure there's an adequate turn around time during the tender process to allow the contractor to deliver the tender back – 10 days isn't sufficient!
5. Draw up a plan of working practices with your contractor so you are both aware of each



Trenching at Northop GC - Copyright MJ Abbott Ltd

other's expectations and limitations

6. Maintain open channels of communication – keep involved and up to date with progress

7. Approve all materials before use - Check the quality.

8. Be realistic – Have clear expectations and be prepared for a small amount of disruption to your course

9. Keep your Greens Committee informed on progress with regular updates so they can keep their golfers informed

10. Keep in contact with your contractor - Good client/contractor relationships are built over time as contractors become accustomed to the site and staff. When the project is completed, maintain contact with your contractor and keep them informed of progress. They are there to support you moving forwards.

Phil Chiverton has worked with MJ Abbott since beginning work at The Grove in February 2001. He believes that there are many advantages in maintaining an ongoing relationship with a contractor.

"Drainage is something we're constantly looking to improve. Working with Abbotts, we continually assess the situation to identify improvements we can make, whether that's sand or gravel banding or pipe drainage. Because they carried out the initial drainage works at the Club, they have our drainage network installed on their GPS, enabling us to map

out the areas which require attention."

"It's important to implement good working practices when contractors are on site. Before work commences, I sit down with them and put together a scope of works which includes method statements and risk assessments. I make arrangements for the contractor's on-site team to have access to showers and hot food and we talk about how we can complete the work with minimal disruption and damage to the course."



Trench at Northop GC - Copyright MJ Abbott Ltd

NORTHERN NEW BOYS

FEATURE

Machrihanish Dunes

Scotland is awash with exciting new golf developments. Mark Alexander speaks to the greenkeepers behind some of the most impressive new courses

The golfing landscape of Scotland is changing. The old guard of iconic courses is being joined by a new breed of designs etched out of the earth with more than a respectful nod towards the heritage of the past. With towering dunes, unforgiving gorse bushes and fast-running fairways, as well as a warming nip at the 19th hole, these new golf courses are designed to rub shoulders with the principalities of Troon and Dornoch and the legend of Machrihanish.

Despite the formidable legacy of Scotland's famous links, these young upstarts are far from shrinking violets, each being set in remarkable surroundings and featuring routings that emulate the styles of a bygone era. Rather than shirking away from their forbearers' achievements, this new lot are taking them head on.

Machrihanish Dunes

On a remote and wayward spindle of land that forms the Mull of Kintyre on Scotland's West coast, an audacious £30 million investment by an international business consortium is creating an oceanfront course that defies the modern principles of design and construction. Laid out by David McLay Kidd, the architect behind Brandon Dunes in Oregon, Queenwood and the new Castle Course in St Andrews, Machrihanish Dunes will follow the natural twists and turns of this prime

piece of links land for 7,300 yards. With six greens and five tees bordering the sea, it will be exposed to all that Scotland's magical west coast can throw at it.

The place is already home to the legendary Machrihanish course, made famous by its 428-yard, opening hole Battery which seems destined to be forever known as the greatest opening hole in golf. It's certainly the type of hole that every golfer would love to play with an opening drive that crosses the crashing waves that pummel Machrihanish Bay. Saying that, the rest of it isn't bad either. In fact parts of this ancient links look as if they have been touched by God, as Old Tom Morris implied when he came here to extend the original 10-hole course in 1879.

Today another keeper of the greens has arrived from St Andrews to make a bit of history. Euan Grant left his post as Head Greenkeeper of the Old Course in 2007. He was the eighth man to take up the post since Old Tom's retirement in 1903. He had been in St Andrews for just three years.

"After having done an Open in 2005, I'd pretty much realised my greenkeeping goals," he recalls.

"I was in a comfort zone and I felt I needed to push myself and the opportunities to do that weren't in St Andrews. At the end of my time there, I was responsible for a big team with a seemingly empty pot of money. We cut grass, raked bunkers and changed holes, but I wanted more. I wanted to make an impact."

He couldn't have chosen a better place. Machrihanish Dunes isn't merely a new links



Euan Grant, at his desk.

course cleverly positioned next to an old master. Brightside Leisure Development, the team behind the project, has already acquired two hotels in the area with the first reopening this summer sporting a new, boutique look. There are plans for luxury villas and a spectacular clubhouse as well as other projects in the offing.

And the course itself is certainly an eye-opener. Spread over 259 acres of prime links land, the course falls under a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Such a classification would make most developers wince, just ask Donald Trump, but Grant suggests the restrictions that surround the course and its construction have created a unique opportunity to shape golf holes as they were done in Old Tom's days.

"If you can imagine a modern architect sitting in his office designing a golf course to fit into a piece of land, they'd move hill and mountains to make it work," said Grant.

"We couldn't do that. The green sites were identified, rabbit damage became the bunkers



Rowallan Castle

and tee positions were shifted within reason to make the bunkers hazards. David routed the golf course through the natural landform, which is how it used to happen.”

In fact, the greens and tees were constructed by stripping turf off pre-determined areas and were then shaped and seeded. Beyond that, the team was severely restricted in what they could do but were required to tie in the green surrounds with the native fauna and landforms. More time-consuming was the redistribution of the stripped turf around the site, as Grant explains.

“Bare areas could only be filled with turf from the site, so when greens were stripped of turf, that turf was used to fill in damaged areas but the aspect, distance from the shoreline and elevation had to be similar. So a south-facing slope, three metres above sea level had to go to a south-facing slope, three metres above sea level. It was like a patchwork quilt and very labour intensive but we can genuinely say we did things correctly.”

Machrihanish Dunes is due to open next year.

Rowallan Castle

The Mull of Kintyre isn't the only place that presents a challenge for new golf developments. Just across the North Channel in Ayrshire, a prestigious golf, hotel and leisure complex is being developed on 600 acres of historic countryside. With an anticipated total spend of £70 million, Rowallan Castle Golf Club features two beautiful castles surrounded by rolling parklands. The oldest castle dates back to the 13th century and is the



Robert Johnson

birthplace of Elizabeth Muir; mother of Robert II the first Stewart king of Scotland. The second was added in the late 19th century and will provide the main accommodation for the new resort.

The estate was bought by Niall Campbell 19 years ago from Lord Rowallan's Trustees. It was a home-coming for Campbell, whose ancestors owned the estate between 1690 and the late 19th century, and became the setting for local-boy Colin Montgomerie's first design on home soil. Yet despite the neighbourhood ties, it took 12 years to get permission to develop the land and buildings, all of which are listed. The venture went to a full public enquiry in 1997 and eventually received full planning consent in 2001.

“There's quite a bit of legislation involved in this place, which I'm still coming to terms with,” said Robert Johnson, Rowallan's Superintendent.

“One of the reasons for the deep bunkering

is that the architect was restricted in how much earth he could move, so the bunkering, contouring of the greens and green complexes was how he made his mark on the golf course.”

After an 11-year stint at nearby Williamwood Golf Club and four years before that at Newport Golf Club, Johnston jumped at the chance of getting involved in a new-build project.

“Ross McMurray, the architect at European Golf Design, asked Jim Mackenzie, Celtic Manor's Director of Golf, if he knew anybody who would be interested in doing the grow-in and he suggested me,” said Johnston.

“I'd never been involved at such an early stage. I'd maintained golf courses, obviously, and I'd been involved in some reconstruction and design changes but to get in when the thing was just starting, well, not everybody gets that opportunity.”

Johnston arrived on site in June 2007, by which time the course was already taking shape.

“When I arrived, 50% of the construction work had been done and you could already see it was going to be a fantastic golf course,” he said.

He joined two of the estate's maintenance staff, who he's training up, and now hopes to amass a 10-man team with seasonals by the time the course is up and running.

Although the course is certainly taking shape, there's still plenty to do. “We're thinking along the lines of a full, perforated drainage system,” said Johnston.

“We've got a flash-flood system and existing field drainage at the moment, so it's not that we

don't have drainage; it's just that we don't have sufficient drainage to make this a top-class golf resort at the moment. Part of my brief is to look at the priority areas that are must-drain areas such as walk-ons, walk-offs, greens and tees. It's going to be an ongoing process."

The final spec looks impressive. As well as a 70-room hotel designed under the supervision of renowned hotelier Gordon Campbell Gray, there will also be a state-of-the-art spa, cinema and nine-hole par-three course as well as Europe's only playable 19th hole on the main course.

"The expectations are high," said Johnston. "It's a Colin Montgomerie course so it's got to be the top of the tree as far as presentation and

management is concerned. As a career move, it's a big step up the ladder."

Rowallan Castle Golf Club is expected to open officially next year.

Castle Stuart Golf Links

Located six miles east of Inverness and banking onto the Moray Firth, the site for Castle Stuart Golf Links provides fantastic views across the Kessock Bridge to the Black Isle and also to Castle Stuart itself. The stunning location of this new pay-and-play course is no accident however. The project's developer and co-designer has something of a reputation for hunting down

tracks with unbelievable potential and it looks like he's done it again.

Mark Parsinen made his name when he transformed a stretch of unremarkable Fife farmland into the striking contours of Kingsbarns. Here too, views played a major part in creating a course that regularly appears at the top of many golfers' wish lists.

His much-anticipated return to golf course development has utilised the same design principles that made Kingsbarns such an instant success but with the added interest of a 57-room boutique hotel with spa facilities, 148 resort-ownership lodges and apartments and a possible second links course. That said, much of the 7,000-yard course has



been routed along the coast in a similar fashion to Kingsbarns and all the holes have been orientated to take advantage of noted landmarks.

The layout, which was completed by Parsinen and Gil Hanse, was hugely dependant on the existing scenery and the landscape mosaic created by the onsite team, as Course Manager Chris Haspell explained. "The landscape has been really important to Mark and Gil, but we've also transported in heather and marim. When we've finished, we'll have planted around 5,000m² of sustainable heather and used about 200,000 plants to create that dune-edge look."

Haspell, who's been responsible for seeding and shaping at Castle Stuart and originally from Cheshire, ended a 12-year placement in Denmark to be a part of the project.

"The reputation of Kingsbarns was a big draw

as was working with Mark. The location was also important because it's nice to be in the Highlands. I mean, just look around you."

The setting is certainly stunning and the design is equally impressive which must have resonated with Haspell who was designing, building and remodelling golf courses in Denmark before his move to Scotland. But despite his construction credentials he believes his knowledge of fescue grasses secured him the job.

"I've done a lot of work with fescues and that's what they wanted to use here. Because of environmental restrictions in Denmark, we'd been dealing with it for a long time, indeed the six courses that I designed and built over there were done with pure fescue. So it just snowballed from there."

Apart from the location and specific challenges

associated with new builds, Haspell said working with Parsinen has been an extraordinary learning experience.

"In the 23 years I've worked in golf, working with Mark definitely was the best year for learning. Mark tends to have a view on things which is so detailed it's frightening. For example, the 13th green's level was set six inches higher so you couldn't see anyone on the fairway behind it but you still had the views to the Kessock Bridge. To almost get inside Mark's head and shape the things he wants has been fantastic."

Castle Stuart Golf Links is set to open in 2009.

Mark Alexander is a freelance journalist and photographer

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FEATURE



Whats your Number?

Name: Alex Edward

Company: Inturf

Position: Joint Managing Director

How long have been in the industry?
"19 years."

How did you get into it?
"It's a family business so getting in was easy – the hard bit has been the subsequent 19 years!"

What other jobs have you done?
"I've worked hands-on laying turf throughout the UK and France. I like to think that means I know the job from every angle."

What do you like about your current job?
"It's different and interesting compared to most jobs, I like the people I meet and the space that 600 hectares under production provides."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
"Mechanisation has drastically changed the way we operate with the



development in the early nineties of big roll installation and now automatic turf harvesters, and other wide area machines using GPS."

What do you like to do in your spare time?
"I am a keen road cyclist and mountain biker, I also run the odd half marathon."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
"Same place with bigger, better equipment and lighter, stiffer bikes!"

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?
"My business partner and brother, Stephen, and one or two very close associates who work with us."

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

Pick a number
"73."

Alex has picked Peter Lloyd from Korec to be interviewed next month

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GUIDANCE ON REDUNDANCY PROCEDURE

Due to the current economic climate, many employers are seeking assistance on the procedure for redundancy. Redundancy can be a difficult and complex matter and as such we would advise that competent advice be sought from an HR & Employment Law Advisor, as redundancy should only be considered when there is a 'true redundancy' situation as detailed below: A closure or intended closure of the business; A closure or intended closure of the area of the business where the employee works; A reduction or expected reduction in the need for the kind of work carried out by the employee; A reduction in the number of employees required to carry out the particular kind of work.

Initial Briefing Process: There must be meaningful consultation in the form of initial briefing with all employees affected prior to a decision being made.

A written statement should be prepared and employees issued with this at the end of the initial briefing meeting. It is also useful to put some anticipated questions on the back of the briefing sheet that employees are likely to be concerned about.

Initial Individual Consultation: Having embarked on this you then need to carry out individual consultation with the affected employees and this should last for a period of two weeks minimum.

During the initial individual consultation, it may be necessary to discuss again why the redundancies are necessary, as although the word redundancy is commonplace within the environment, when employees are faced with this, the likelihood of them taking everything in at the initial consultation meetings may be remote, as what employers have to remember is that their first thoughts are likely to be home, family and financial commitments.

Selection Pool: Where possible you should look at a pool for selection and from there identify positions for potential redundancy. You then need to identify the grounds upon which you will select for redundancy. There are occasions when employers use 'last in first out' as a method on its own, but many employers are reluctant to go down this route.

Selection Matrix: Employers looking at a selection matrix should do so ensuring that within it, are a number of characteristics – flexibility, length of service, performance, transferable skills, absence, sickness and disciplinary record can all be included within the matrix, as all of these are 'objective criteria' which can be measured.

From there you need to determine how points will be scored. For example, an employee with one year's service could score 1 point, 2 years, 2 points and so on. With sickness absence, you again look at the period of time you wish to measure this and an employee with no absences could score 5 points, 1 – 3 absences 4 points, 4 – 6 absences, 3 points. The more the absence, the fewer the points – someone with something like 12 absences would score no points. The same could apply to the disciplinary record – someone with no disciplinary warnings would score 5 points.

Further Consultation: When the definitive pool for selection has been made and you are aware of who individuals are, the employee should be brought back and informed of his/her redundancy. At this stage they should be shown the selection matrix and given an explanation as to how you arrived at their score.

Appeal: Employees should always be advised they have the Right of Appeal against selection for redundancy, to whom this should be made and within what timescale.

Representation: At every step of the way, employees are entitled to be accompanied by either an elected workplace representative of their own choice, or an accredited trade union representative.

THE RYDER CUP CHALLENGE

By Josh Webber



FEATURE

As an English turfgrass student, moving to the United States was no small step. On arrival at Valhalla Golf Club in June 2007, as part of the Ohio State Internship Programme, I quickly realised that accomplishing Valhalla's goals in preparation for this tournament was no small feat. In fact, the overall goal appeared as somewhat of an insurmountable quest. "This is for me," I thought. The sleeves had to be rolled up!

As I write, the countdown reads 59 days until the start of the 37th Ryder Cup. As the world's largest golf tournament draws closer, Valhalla starts to emerge in the spotlight as this year's host. Although this is no surprise, as the event is estimated to attract the attention of 600 million viewers in 177 countries and territories.

With 250 members, Valhalla is normally only accustomed to 18,000-20,000 rounds a year; however, this year it will become home to 45,000 people during tournament week alone. One million square feet (22 acres) of tents will be installed for merchandise, chalets and concession stands. Alongside this, 250 corporations will entertain guests with five star private tents.

The economic impact of the tournament for the city of Louisville is estimated to bring in \$115 million! As a result, the PGA of America this year will partner with a number of different individuals and organisations to contribute \$500,000 to local charities in the Kentucky and Southern Indiana area.

Jack Nicklaus set out with a signature design to create the first championship golf facility for the area. Home to 486 rolling acres, Valhalla is

20 miles east of downtown Louisville, Kentucky. Valhalla provides a links-style front nine with a more traditional, parkland-style back nine.

As far as growing grass in the transition zone, anything goes. For example, if you walk the fairways of eight local courses, you will find an equal use of the following grasses: Bentgrass, Ryegrass, Bermuda and Zoysia. Managing Bentgrass fairways here is basically a modified greens programme: applying 5lbs of nitrogen to greens and 2.5lbs of nitrogen to tees and fairways, applied as an autumn application annually. Spoon feeding is implemented as a liquid for the remainder of the year, as needed.

A-1/A-4 Bentgrass is used on greens and Pennway on fairways and tees. The use of Kentucky Bluegrass and Perennial Ryegrass in the semi-rough help provide a great contrast with the Zoysia produced around bunker faces, also a mix of Fine Fescues in the native long rough areas help maintain good overall definition.

Without a doubt, the weather that Valhalla is exposed to each year is the single most controlling factor, as every step of the management plan is governed by Mother Nature. So as not to be dictated by the weather, lightweight equipment is utilised in a variety of ways. Triplex greens mowers are used on fairways, both 36 inch and 61 inch rotary mowers are used for rough areas, while greens, approaches and tees are all hand cut.

When I stepped off the plane last June, it was smack bang in the middle of a drought. Temperatures were in the high 90s and a million gallons of water were being pushed out each night. You could say this had me shocked! However, after I had endured multiple sunburns and completed an

impressive rain dance, I faced devastation as total flood prevailed this spring. Great times! It was at this point I began to grasp a better understanding for the unpredictable weather here.

Desert versus jungle would be the best way to describe the harsh environment, as the temperature and humidity fluctuate so much. Pop up rainstorms and adverse winds can also prove challenging. This is where the problems really start. Combining so many different types of weather within a certain day can become very problematic, as each one has so many variables. This in turn requires a day-to-day management style, which is frustrating at times with goals to achieve. If we could control the weather, we would go through the tournament relatively worry-free.

In this climate, disease pressure is huge. For example, there can be multiple days where Pythium, Dollar spot and Brown patch could all be active on the same turf. Although many of the diseases found here are somewhat culturally controlled, a preventative fungicide programme is in place every year to ensure good plant health. Very few clubs can deal with the cost of managing Bentgrass in this climate simply because of this relentless disease pressure. The main tactic here, to help keep disease at bay, is ensuring that you have good control over your water and nutrient applications. Trying to be a bit shy on both as it is much easier to add than is to subtract.

Major renovations have been underway for the last three years in preparation for the tournament this year. The crew had the mentality of training for marathon rather than a sprint. Along the way, there have been some interesting developments. 7,560 yards will be the outcome if the course is

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Course Renovation

played to its full potential. Not hard enough? An additional 35 bunkers have also been added taking the course total to 62. The removal of 8,000 trees was critical in providing spectators a clear view of multiple holes, also allowing for tent pads to be extended and easily accessible. One of the biggest challenges during this renovation period was trying to maintain a Grade A golf course while under construction since there were so many other projects going on.

Five of the holes have been totally redesigned...

The 6th has been lengthened 80 yards, now measuring a whopping 500 yards and is the hardest hole on the course. Without doubt will become a key-hole this month.

The 7th is a definite risk and reward approach. Featuring a split fairway separated by a new water feature, this par-5, measuring 601 yards, is expected to become a focal point on the course.

Two par-3s have also been redesigned. The 8th has been extended 25 yards and has adopted an extremely challenging six tier green that allows for some interesting pin positions. Additionally, the 11th has been completely rebuilt during the renovation. The green has moved back approximately 30 yards and now sits on the edge of a hillside- left of the previous green.

A new waterfall has also been added to the signature 13th hole - a short par-4. This island green may be in reach as the PGA is now considering allowing the players to use the closer tees. This really could create an interesting strategy: grip it, rip it, and hope it stops!

The 16th hole is the longest of the par-4s coming in at an impressive 511 yards. This tree lined, dogleg right is guarded by two recently added central bunkers.

Following the Captains' visit last September, an interesting situation arose. Since input from them carries such great weight, we were eagerly awaiting their comments. However, much to our dismay, they thought that the newly-designed greens that were recently built were now too severe! And you can guess what that meant... Yes, we had to start over! Tough to swallow is not

the words, but it was a turning point.

Constant changes were made throughout. The 11th green was rebuilt five times causing a new spin on the word persistence, which was followed by the "No Problems. Only Solutions" approach. Perhaps the tweaking got a bit out of control, one might say.

As a result the greens were turfed last November, meaning that we came through the winter and into the growing season with a lot of young grass, which in this climate has been a real challenge. Now aiming to get them to tournament specifications we still have a great deal to achieve.

The Ryder Cup is indeed bigger than big, so how do you prepare yourself for the biggest? Henry Ford once said, "Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs." This is the mindset that Superintendent, Mark Wilson, has adopted and implemented at Valhalla..

The golf course is split into six zones, each with three holes. A zone leader is appointed for each and is responsible for ensuring that every last detail is taken care of on every hole, including the other workers that help tend to that zone.

I was fortunate enough to become a zone leader this year. Although, this management style was new to me, I can now see the benefits of its use first hand. It allows individuals to develop their own skills and their own way of thinking. Essentially giving you your own small golf course where you manage projects, prioritise, and delegate day-to-day goals and tasks. I am enjoying this position as I have been able to accomplish a number of goals I set myself and improve the skills I wanted to. Now assessing and approaching my work differently I can feel a development within myself.

Here's the secret plan! The golf course will be set up to reward the bigger hitters (apparently that's the Americans). Azinger and Wilson have worked closely together insuring the most is made of the home course advantage. Intermediate cuts have been made wider in the landing areas so that the Americans can hit bigger and not get penalised for it. Potentially this means they would have shorter shots into the greens making it a birdie-fest. With long rough surrounding the greens, they are hoping to ruin the Europeans well rounded short game. Don't worry guys this is all getting reported back to this year's captain, Nick Faldo.

During the tournament the crew will temporarily employ 80 additional staff members to take the total to 120. A large percentage of them are former employees, although we do have a few guys coming over to help me out with some European support.

The demands of a tournament of this scale are a huge challenge for everyone involved and the pressure will be on this month. It will be a huge effort on everyone's part. For me this has been as much a career challenge as a personal challenge. Dealing with the language barrier alone has been interesting. Nonetheless, I have found that the more I remove myself from my comfort zone the better I become. Being a part of this whole experience has really shown me how a passion for turf and a love for the game can bring people and nations together. Enjoy your Ryder Cup, I will.

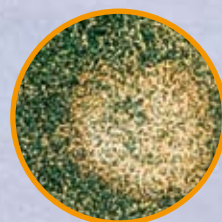


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MAKE TIME FOR TREES

Although they may look reliable, sturdy and big enough to look after themselves, trees, like the rest of us, need a little tender loving care every once in while.

Pruning, fertilisation and pesticide spraying can form part of a maintenance programme that allows trees to reach their full potential on a golf course, however forward thinking when planting these beautiful wonders of nature can help to avoid future problems and the need for the complicated process of tree removal.

In special supplement dedicated to trees, Melissa Jones talks to a tree surgeon, we also hear from an arboriculturalist, and various course managers/head greenkeepers divulge the secrets of their tree maintenance programmes.

STRAIGHT TALKING WITH A TREE SURGEON

Melissa Jones finds out from Tree Surgeon, Greg Whitton, exactly what his job entails...



What exactly do you do, what is your job title?

"I'm a Senior Arborist for Leeds City Council. In order to obtain this position you have to be a qualified tree climber. We tend to work in a group consisting of a couple of Senior Arborists and two trainees. A lot of my work consists of looking after trees at the side of the road, in parks and near council houses."

What kind of career opportunities does your job hold?

"Personally, I finished my degree in Business Management and started working for a civil engineering company. I saw a programme on the television about tree surgery and decided to do a basic qualification at Askham Bryan College to find out more about the subject."

"After discovering that tree surgery was for me, I enrolled on a 10 week short course at Merrist Wood College, which studied the practical aspects, such as pruning trees and how to work with dangerous tress, pest and diseases etc."

"The next step for me is the online course 'Technicians Certificate' I'm currently studying for through Myerscough College, this two part course

run over a year, will enable me to become more office based and eventually take on a managerial role, surveying trees."

"Most people I have met in this field have degrees or diplomas in arboriculture or have started out in apprenticeships and worked themselves up the ranks, a lot of them started out as groundsmen."

Why did you decide to go down the tree surgeon route?

"As I mentioned earlier, a programme on TV attracted me to this field of work. I'm very keen to run my own business and this career path will offer me this opportunity."

and we have to complete a certificate through the National Proficiency Test Centre (NPTC)."

What kinds of diseases do you come across when looking after the trees?

"There are a 101 different diseases that trees can get. Trees react differently to different environments. Most of the trees I deal with are by the side of the road so have been stressed by cars bashing into them, dogs weeing on them, not getting enough light or water etc."

"Trees on a golf course will be different in this environment and different factors i.e. types of fertiliser, will affect and disease them, golf ball damage etc."

“ I saw a programme on the television about tree surgery and decided to do a basic qualification at Askham Bryan College to find out more about the subject. ”

What satisfaction do you get out of your job?

"You are able to see the 'finished product'. This is how this 'hands-on' work differs from office work, in the office you cannot always see the goal but in this instance you can see the tree improving and growing and it's quite exciting."

What kind of health and safety measures do you need to have in place to undertake your work?

"Working for the council they are very keen on best practice. There are a lot of risk assessments and emergency scenarios to be completed and much of this is quite often common sense."

"As there are different roles within tree surgery, you need to be certified in each area that affects you. Health and safety measures are regulated

Useful Links

Colleges

www.guildford.ac.uk/College/MerristWood

www.myerscough.ac.uk

www.asham-bryan.ac.uk

Other

www.nptc.org.uk

www.ecotreecare.co.uk

www.treesurgery.com

www.trees.org.uk

www.rhs.org.uk

TREES AND SHRUBS FROM COLES NURSERIES



Supplying field-grown and container-grown plant material across the UK's urban and commercial planting schemes is not simple - especially when your range is vast in both number and variety and your 190 hectares of production land is spread over seven sites.

From a central position in the East Midlands, Coles supply plant material in their own fleet of vehicles to specifiers of planting schemes across the UK. With over 100 staff, Coles are committed to promoting and nurturing from within, ensuring the family-run nursery thrives as a professional business. The team's philosophy of Continuous Improvement ensures its' status as one of the UK's leading nursery stock growers, partnering a wide spectrum of customers in all fields of plant specification.

TREES

- Bare-root Trees
- Container-grown Trees
- Trees in Superroot Fielders (below-ground)
- Conifers
- Transplants & Hedging
- Fruit Trees

SHRUBS

- 2 and 3 litre Shrubs
- Specimen Shrubs (5 and 10 litre)
- Climbers
- Herbaceous Perennials
- Bamboos, Grasses & Ferns
- Roses

Identifying a shifting emphasis to all-year round planting, Coles have developed their flagship range of standard to heavy standard trees in containers. Along with their trees in below-ground containers (Superroot Fielders), this wide range lengthens the harvesting season, promotes healthier root systems, easier lifting and ultimately an impressive range of trees across a number of popular varieties. Both containerised tree ranges complement the all-encompassing bare-root tree varieties available during the lifting season from November to March.

Why choose Bare-root Trees?

- It is the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly way of creating an instant statement in any landscape.
- Trees are easy to handle and plant, important when considering Health & Safety requirements on-site.
- They are available from November to March in great variety, size and quantity.

- They are available in many native species.
- They produce a strong root system and canopy growth if planted in its' right season.
- They are less likely to sustain any root damage upon lifting than rootballed varieties, leaving a complete, intact root system.
- Lifting on the nursery is quicker and easier, reducing handling costs.

Why choose Container Trees?

- Coles have expanded their range of standard to heavy standard container trees, both in pots on the ground and 'pot-in-pot'.
- The Pot-in-Pot system involves the potting and growing-on of a bare-root tree in a 70 litre container which is, in turn, placed into a sunken container in the ground. This reduces water usage, provided by a drip-irrigation system and provides a sound anchorage for the base of the tree. This prevents excessive wind-rock and physical damage.
- Container trees are available all-year-round, enabling the client to make a large tree statement or display at any time of the year.
- There is no damage upon lifting as the tree unit is self-contained.
- Larger trees are quicker to establish after transplanting
- They widen the availability and successful transplant rates of those difficult-to-establish varieties.
- No special equipment is needed for lifting and transplanting.

Why choose Superroot Fielders™?

- Also known as a 'root control bag' or 'below-ground container', a Superroot Fielder™ is a bag in which a tree is planted and it, in turn, is planted into the ground to grow until ready for lifting.
- Trees grown in these 'bags' have a more vigorous, radial root system every time.
- They are grown in native, mineral soil, eliminating the need to use peat.
- The constriction of the roots penetrating the bag creates energy-rich nodules of carbohydrates which are resistant to dehydration during transport and supply a burst of new root growth upon transplanting.
- There is less chance of root-circling in the bag.
- The planting season is extended as there is no root disturbance upon lifting.
- They widen the availability and successful transplant rates of those difficult-to-establish varieties such as oak, beech and birch.
- Harvest of larger trees produces a smaller and more lightweight rootball, reducing handling and health and safety problems on-site.

To access the latest availability of all Coles Stock, you can visit www.colesnurseries.co.uk You can also view lists by purpose, e.g. street trees, shrubs for wet conditions, hedging, climbers, ground cover etc., or request your own tailored stock list.

Supporting and Promoting our Partners in Horticulture

Coles actively support industry initiatives and are contributors in Council and committees within the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) and are professional members of the British Association of Landscape Industries, the Institute of Parks and Green Space and the Arboricultural Association.

The NPS is now available online at www.gohelios.co.uk and a helpful database of the Top 100 Amenity Trees and Shrubs is also available at www.plantspec.info. Both are very useful tools to aid plant selection and all of Coles documentation and working practices are designed with the NPS at the forefront.

Looking forward

As part of a comprehensive programme of environmental and waste management, the 10 million gallon reservoir at the main container and field-grown tree unit is now fully established, rendering the site self-sufficient in water and repaying its' initial investment in three years.

Production trials continue, assessing recycled green waste compost as a soil conditioner and structure improver. The use of wild flower seeds on rested land to enrich the soil in preparation for replanting is encouraged. Both practices reduce the need for the use of chemical treatments to limit pests and diseases.

The company have also introduced an Integrated Pest Management programme within the two propagation glasshouses and four growing-on areas. The basic premise is to 'set a good bug to catch a bad bug', thus further reducing reliance on chemicals.

The new Container Tree Unit is nearing completion, which will boost capacity to 40,000 (in 10 and 45 litre pots, up to 5m high) by the end of this season. The Pot-in-Pot container trees range continues to thrive, building on the range's success and impact on the market for consistently high standard container-grown trees available throughout the year.

With refreshed beds and dispatch areas, renewed propagation facilities and the consolidation of tree planting on newly acquired fresh ground, the momentum continues this year at an award-winning company, proud of their commitment to customers, staff and the industry alike.

TREES AND FUN GOLF

By John Nicholson

SUPPLEMENT



Trees now form an integral part of many British golf courses, though this was certainly not the case 100 years ago when trees were not considered to be relevant to golf whatsoever, as all of the better courses were links. However with the evolution of golf architects such as Colt had identified that the heathland ecosystem represented similar qualities to that of the links, low fertility, sandy free draining soil and fine grass.

Colt had an intense dislike to playing golf in the winter on muddy clay based courses with broadleaf grass and soon realised that the heathland of Surrey and Berkshire offered the opportunity for all year round golf and classic playing conditions similar to the links. Further the heathland was poor

agriculturally therefore cheap to buy.

However heathland is a transitory ecosystem which will revert to woodland if left unmanaged, trees therefore became an issue and many people do not realise that heather is a woodland shrub which appears in gaps in the canopy. Therefore woodland management is needed if a heathland golf course is to remain intact.

The strategy of many of the traditional courses was to carry over a diagonal feature such as heather or a bund, however, a lot of older courses have been adversely affected by the encroachment of trees often forcing doglegs and removing the risk and reward from the shot. We should never forget that golf is played for fun and if this crucial element is lost then the popularity of the game will suffer and as finances get tighter this becomes even more pertinent.

The removal of trees in this situation is always politically sensitive as members think that it will make the hole easier, however, the carry often remains the same but becomes more appealing and tempts an adventurous shot; the one thing golfers have in common is that they think they are capable of shots that in truth they are not.

Trees bring out strong emotions in virtually everyone, many feel the removal of any tree should be punished by hanging however, there is a raised awareness that trees are only good if in the right place. My philosophy has always been that trees should form the framework in which the course is set but should have little relevance within the strategy of the course.

The doyen of strategic design Harry Colt stated:

'Trees are a fluky and obnoxious form of hazard, but they afford rather good protection, and if a clump of these exists at such a spot it might well be considered justifiable to leave it standing.'

H.S. Colt, Some essays on golf course architecture, 1920.

His comments are due to the strong three dimensional hazard trees form, this negates the skill of the talented player as whatever handicap a player is to play a chip from behind a tree is the same for all.

Woodland naturally regenerates around the perimeters or within gaps in the canopy therefore any areas of rough will eventually turn to woodland, this succession can often be rapid and goes undetected by those who view it on a daily basis. This has resulted in many courses losing land to woodland. Oak is regarded by many as a slow growing tree however it can put on up to 4 feet of growth in one season (not only upwards but also sideways) therefore significant amount of space can be lost each year.



Most woodland on a golf course is restricted by mowing regimes thus removing a woodlands natural ability to regenerate, therefore if sustainable woodland is to be achieved then a management policy is required to ensure a mixed age structure is created. A mixed age structure guarantees that as one generation of trees reaches senescence another is ready to take its place thus providing continuity of the landscape and its wildlife habitat.

Man has managed the woodlands of Britain since 1100bc, in one form or another, depending on his needs and it is often not realised that the face of what is thought to be natural Britain is manmade. The original woodland of southern Britain was predominantly Lime woods but Rule Britannia would never have ruled the waves if her ships had been made from Lime!

The misguided belief that woodland will manage itself is a dangerous philosophy, as man always intervenes by mowing or building on the edges of woodlands in exactly the spot where the woodland needs to regenerate. Woodlands are mobile and will therefore steal every piece of land available to them a policy is therefore required in order to ensure the woodland remains where the landowner requires.

If an edge is managed through mowing then the trees on the edges will become heliotropic (one sided looking for the light) this means that the tree puts all its energy into growing on only one side. Growth is therefore rapid and encroachment can occur in a relatively short period. If this adjoins a tee or green then it can have a detrimental effect on the agronomics and strategy of a hole. Tees can effectively be reduced in size creating excessive wear as players naturally favour the unimpeded line of play, both tees and greens can suffer from heavy shade and competition from roots which stress the sward and predispose the playing surface to disease. Further in winter areas can remain frozen and out of play for longer than necessary periods.

Therefore on urban courses, where space is at a premium, it is essential to ensure that the woodland edge is managed to safeguard the golf course. On more established courses encroachment may occur to such a degree that all of the strategy is lost and only one option from the tee is possible, hit it down the middle or into the trees. To give an example at Coombe Hill; this made for difficult but dull golf however once the edges were relocated (10-15 metres being gained either side) the course was able to embark on a more strategic bunkering programme which resulted in the club receiving the Golf World Award for best Renovation of the year in 2004 something which would not have been possible if the woodland had remained unmanaged. Further the course probably gained 2-3ha of land which was previously unusable how much would it cost to buy that amount of land in Kingston!

Finchley undertook a similar programme of woodland management finishing in 2005 and causing much debate amongst members and a lot of political pressure was placed on the course manager Craig Newton and committee to stop the programme in the first year. However both stood firm and the doubters are now quiet as the



benefits of the woodland programme are there to see, and the quality of the course and its set up for enjoyable golf has improved to such a degree that on a recent visit Ken Brown was even tempted to dust off his clubs.

Finchley is an example which many golf clubs could follow the course is set up so that it promotes fun golf with wide fairways, scenic woodland and great playing surfaces. The club now have the space necessary to review the bunkering in order to improve the challenge of the course without the need for penal golf with long rounds and lost balls.

Craig Newton, Course Manager said: "Before we managed the woodland many greens were closed in the winter for long periods, however, since the work was completed we have played continually on the greens 12 months of the year. Disease is far less frequent than in the past when we would have had to spray for Fusarium 5/6 times a year, however with improved light and air we have reduced this to 1 or 2 applications per annum. The grass sward is now much stronger I now have the

opportunity to keep the course in good condition for a much longer period.

"The woodlands were previously full of bramble and scrub which led to slow play and lost balls but now they feature bluebells, foxgloves and wild garlic and the majority of the members now really appreciate the attractive woodland that has resulted from the work."

Trees and woodlands offer many benefits they create important wildlife habitats for wonderful creatures such as woodpeckers and bats, they provide seclusion and protection and can act as attractive backdrops to golf holes. Sentinel oaks add majesty and in autumn trees can provide colours which brighten the day.

It is therefore essential to have sustainable woodland located in the correct position if a course is to reach its full potential, a net loss in numbers of trees but a positive gain in quality!

**John Nicholson is an Arboricultural Consultant for his company, John Nicholson Associates
Tel: 0191 3842556**

TALKING HEADS

Melissa Jones quizzes Course Managers across the UK and abroad on how they go about looking after the trees on their course.

	Describe your make-up of trees at your golf course?	How do you manage them?
 <p>Name: Walter Montross MG Club: Westwood Country Club, USA Position: Superintendent</p>	<p>50-50 hardwoods (primarily Oaks, Maples, Ash, etc) to softwoods (White Pines and Spruce). We are a parkland course just outside of Washington, DC. The course was over planted in the 1960's and 70's to provide screening and strategic alignment. Many of these trees are now overgrown and at the end of their normal life expectancy. Geographically the course is located in zone 7 or as we call it here, the transition zone. We have cold winters (not a lot of snow) and hot humid summers.</p>	<p>Yearly pruning, fertilisation and some select pesticide spraying. Removal when necessary.</p>
 <p>Name: Duncan Gray Club: Pines Golf Centre, Scotland Position: Course Manager</p>	<p>A mix of new plantings which are indigenous to our area and older woodland which consists of some forestry commission conifers. We also have a natural regeneration of mixed woodland on an old sand quarry which is now a wetland. All plantings have taken into account the needs of birdlife, e.g. elderberry and rowan, and the red squirrels love the abundant Hazel trees.</p>	<p>Removal of lower branches on new plantations to facilitate mowing in playing areas and use of round up, and mulching at bases to avoid strimmer damage and aid growth rate.</p>
 <p>Name: Adam Speight Club: Woodsome Hall, The North Position: Head Greenkeeper</p>	<p>We have a large mixture of both indigenous and non-indigenous trees. The higher percentage is Pine and Birch.</p>	<p>Annually, all trees on the course are thoroughly pruned, and all lower branches and suckers are removed. A spray of total weedkill is applied around the base to prevent any smaller trees being smothered and to stop the need for cutting machinery to get too close and colliding with and damaging the trunk.</p>
 <p>Name: Rob Rowson Club: Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, Midlands Position: Course Manager</p>	<p>At the Forest of Arden the Golf Courses are mainly made up of: Common Oak (Quercus robur) and Silver Birch (Betula pendula), but does have some Holly (Ilex aquifolium), Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna), Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) and Hazel (Corylus avellana).</p>	<p>Each year all the trees in the rough grass are pruned from the crown of the tree to allow light, but also allow the tree to grow to the correct shape. The big coppices or woodlands are managed on a yearly rotation, two to three areas are picked per year to thin out and remove any dead wood/broken limbs etc. All work is carried out between October and March.</p>
 <p>Name: Paul Worster Club: Minchinhampton, South West Position: Course Manager</p>	<p>Both Minchinhampton Courses are on well-drained limestone brash with a high soil pH. In 1970, members planted thousands of Scots and Lodgepole Pines (and Leyland Cypress) on our Avening Course, which were intended to act as nurse trees to Beech, Sycamore, Lime and Ash. To this end - the pines are now being thinned intensively.</p> <p>Our Cherington Course (1995), as the result of a Planning Condition has been planted with only indigenous deciduous trees and hedgerow species. Ash, Beech, Rowan Sycamore, Hazel, Hawthorn and Blackthorn etc.</p>	<p>We have on-going winter programmes of inspection - pruning, thinning and transplanting. We have very successfully transplanted huge numbers of 30 year old trees into more strategic positions using a JCB. The Greens Committee is very conscious of the need to constantly manage trees as an important part of the course for landscape purposes as well as strategy.</p>
 <p>Name: Martin Forrester Club: Essex Golf & Country Club Position: Course Manager</p>	<p>On our course at Essex Golf & Country Club, we have Oaks, Ash, Pine trees - a whole mixture.</p>	<p>The mature trees tend to look after themselves, whereas trees in the rough are limbed up by ourselves to allow mowers to travel in and around them. Trees in the longer rough grow naturally and tend to be checked when we get the time, and dead wood etc is removed.</p>

MAKE TIME FOR TREES

Do you handle work in house or bring in a contractor?	Do you have a club policy/issue precluding non-indigenous trees on your golf course?	How do you convince members that tree removal is a positive exercise?
<p>We use a tree company for large tree pruning, removal and stump grinding. We also contract out the spraying if it entails trees too large for our equipment.</p>	<p>Our policy is to keep the hardwood trees as healthy as possible (within economic reason) and let Mother Nature selectively remove the softwoods.</p>	<p>We have used arborists, the USGA and golf course architects to point out trees that need to be removed. In spite of all the expert testimony it is still a difficult process. We have a lot of tree huggers.</p>
<p>All work is done in house, by both greenkeeping staff and members - one of whom works for the forestry commission and has helped enormously with all aspects of tree management.</p>	<p>No written policy, but as the wildlife aspect is very important to me I will always go down that route.</p>	<p>Fortunately I am in a position where I don't have to convince members but my policy is not to remove unless there is a danger to golfers or the general public. Forward thinking when planting trees will avoid the need to trim or remove them in future because they have encroached on play lines or are causing shade problems.</p>
<p>We are lucky enough to have four members of staff with chainsaw certificates, so the majority of tree felling and pruning is done by the team. We do use outside contractors for any jobs which require a climber.</p>	<p>There is no set policy precluding non-indigenous species. All tree selections are made by the Head Greenkeeper. Over the past years we have tried to steer more towards native species such as Ash, Maple, Lime and Beech, among others.</p>	<p>We have an excellent membership who are fully aware that all the work carried out is for the benefit of the course, so whether it be free removal or new planting, the members see it as positive course management.</p>
<p>All the work out is handled in-house, unless one of the listed trees comes down, then Packington Estate, who own the land deal with the work.</p>	<p>All trees are checked and monitored by Packington estate, they deal with any issues and problem areas, these areas are then addressed by Packington or the Forest of Arden team.</p>	<p>There are a number of ways to show the members that the work you're doing is positive by writing news letter explaining the pros for doing the work, such as increasing wild grasses, developing and improving weaker trees, increasing wildlife and finally tidying the area. Show members a before and after shot before the work is carried out during a power point presentation at the AGM and listen to their point of view.</p>
<p>We handle all work in-house. Utilising four trained greenstaff chainsaw operators, one of whom is licensed to climb trees, and a selection of chainsaws. We hire in a stump grinder at the end of the season, and are just about to purchase our own chipper. The trunks are sold for fuel to a member, who operates a "Carbon-Neutral" Guesthouse locally.</p>	<p>We have a "Tree Sub-Committee". This is composed of an Arboricultural Expert, a Landscape Expert, the Course Manager, the Greenstaff Ecology Projects Coordinator, and a Chairman. The health of the trees together with strategy and landscape considerations is assessed, and the Course Architect is consulted on matters of strategy. Therefore the General Committee are able to present an informed case to the members.</p>	<p>The formation of the Tree Sub-Committee has helped immensely. Prior to that there was a significant reluctance on the part of the members to fell any trees, even the Leyland Cypress. Photographs of Leylandii removal have also demonstrated very clearly that this species is completely alien to the Cotswolds, and the landscape looks all the better for replacement with indigenous trees.</p>
<p>We handle all our work in-house. As we are a young course, we don't have any hundred year old Oak trees etc that need special care. If a job was too big and required a specialist, then we would bring one in.</p>	<p>We have no written policy.</p>	<p>I find that word of mouth usually works. We have a quarterly members newsletter and we write a course report explaining any work that is due to be done on the course. This is a good way of communicating with our members and explaining that the work is necessary for the health of the tree.</p>

TREES & SHRUBS

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TOOLS FOR TREES

Here are just a few products on the market that help with the upkeep of trees...

PRUNERS

ECHO Power Pruners® provide fast, easy and safe pruning for hard-to-reach applications. Loaded with features like lightweight design, comfortable controls, adjustable oiler, and Intenz™ guide bars make the Power Pruner a versatile tool that delivers commercial-grade tree care.



PPF-210: Fixed shaft Power Pruners cut thought jobs down to size.



PPT-260: Echo's most powerful Power Pruner is designed for the toughest jobs.

CHAINSAWS

Anyone using a chainsaw at work should have received adequate training in safe use.

Poor operator training and lack of attention can lead to accidents. The right protective clothing must be worn in order to minimise risks.

College and online courses in chainsaw training and maintenance are also available.

A pole saw or power pruner are useful if there doesn't happen to be a trained chainsaw operator on site as they offer less risk to the operator and the tree.



The 42cc, X-Series 8-42 from McCulloch has a super clean air filter system providing longer air filter life, reduced fuel consumption and increased power.

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.echo-tools.co.uk

www.flymo.com

www.diy.com

www.powertooldirect.co.uk

www.bellwoodtrees.com



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WHY THREE U.S. SUPERINTENDENTS ARE STUDYING FOR MASTER GREENKEEPER...

Maureen Keepin reports

Contenders from across the pond are due to start their studies towards Master Greenkeeper status. So what is the great appeal of this BIGGA qualification in helping them to manage courses Stateside?

Following visits to Harrogate Week (BTME) and high profile golf courses in the UK, as part of the GCSAA delegation sponsored by Bernhard and Company, superintendents from the United States are keen to 'up' their professional standing by becoming Master Greenkeepers.

Stephen Cohoon

A certified golf course superintendent in the US for 28 years Stephen Cohoon has spent the last nine years at Heritage Hunt Golf and Country Club in Gainesville, Virginia. A traditional 18-hole course, designed by Arthur Hills and built in 1999, the club currently has 350 members. In season 18 staff are employed to tend the 107 acres course with this reducing to 10 off-season.

Why become a Master Greenkeeper?

Stephen said: "The ability to grow your education forward is great as you do not want to stand still in this business because everyone will pass you by.

"I see Master Greenkeeper as a great way to develop professionally and learn some new management practices.

"This qualification is recognised worldwide and several people in the States have accomplished it and inspired me."

Visiting the UK gave Stephen the 'extra boost' to take up the challenge, "This is the optimum in greenkeeping and what everyone should be inspired to achieve."

Course aims

Speaking of his role at the club Stephen feels there have been massive benefits in the fact that he was involved in the original development of the course and given a free rein at that time.

His declared aim is to create and maintain the best facility he can by continually developing and improving areas.

One of his main focuses of attention relates to the selection of grass seed cultivars and he said: "Some of the newer creeping bent cultivar characteristics are particularly outstanding.

"We selected L-93 bentgrass for all of the greens, tees, and fairways because of its ability to withstand the cold winters and for its resilience in recovering from the hot humid summers."

There are extended periods in the summer

when the temperature is around 33 to 37°C with 80 to 90 percent humidity. In contrast winter temperatures dip as low as -12 to -15°C.

Irrigation is a key consideration in this area of the States. Summer months can often experience severe droughts, as recorded in 2007 when rainfall was 20 inches below the norm.

Stephen explained: "We are really in a difficult position in that it is too hot for cool season grasses and too cool for warm season ones.

"Water is therefore the vital key to keeping the grass in good shape."

Most of the irrigation water comes from storm water run-off. There is a system of six ponds which collect water – where it is either stored or gravity fed by a system of creeks and pipes to the irrigation pond. This system is supplemented by five wells, which are utilised during periods of extended drought.

One of the club's next aims is to create 11 acres of wetlands to encourage all bird and animal species and a wetland committee has already been appointed.

He said: "We are planting native grasses and perennial flowers as well as creating buffer areas around the golf course and storm water management ponds."

Challenging issues

"Many environmental measures have been taken over the years but it is vital we now communicate this message to members and players who are seriously concerned about these issues," said Cohoon. Augusta National has a dramatic effect on US perceptions and as a result the expectations of his membership are high.

"Everyone admires Augusta course conditions on TV but few realise it is not that easy to achieve. All Augusta's management is built around and focused on that one week of championship golf and this is the very top of the game."

Sean Sullivan

Putting the Master Greenkeeper process into action this year, Sean Sullivan is the certified golf course superintendent at The Briarwood in Billings, Montana, an area which has very little rainfall.

Covering 350 acres, the 18-hole privately owned club was built in 1982 and has 300 members. Designed by Bradford Benz and J. Michael Poellot staffing levels change with the seasons and school schedules.

In March to October there are six to 13 employees and from November to February three employees.

Why Master Greenkeeper?

Sean explains why he is keen to study: "I am sure master greenkeeper will help me to be a better manager. With nine out of 10 golfers saying the condition of the course is their top priority it has to be mine too. And I feel studying for this qualification will help significantly in ensuring I create the best possible standards."

Course aims

With two distinct designs, the front nine holes of the course are described as parkland with cottonwood trees following a creek running through the course. The back nine changes elevation dramatically through a series of hills and ridges, with a 350ft difference in the elevation at the lowest point on the front nine and the high spot of the back nine.

Currently using a 1960 vintage bedknife grinder from the Bernhard stable he added: "This area of the US is more unusual in that not every golf course owns a grinder, but you need to if you want the course to look its very best."

A key feature of his course is 54 black bunkers filled with coal slag, a by-product of burning lignite coal for power generation. "Samples of the material have been left in the UK with Stuart Yarwood, head greenkeeper at Lymm Golf Club."

The colour contrast between green grass and the black slag, in Sullivan's opinion is better than that of the white or neutral coloured sands.

Benefits include greater density, which prevents it blowing out of the bunkers even in winds of 50 to 60mph. Sean also cites reduced labour costs: "Because of its angular shape and black colour, weeds do not seem to grow in the bunkers and grass does not encroach into the edges. And minimal maintenance is required to return the coal slag back into the bunkers after being splashed out from wedge shots."

Billings is in the flood plain of the Yellowstone River and with rain and snow there is around 14 inches of moisture a year. This area is classed as semi-arid desert with very low humidity and water is essential to prevent areas turning into dirt.

Sourced from the Yellowstone River water is pumped along a 2.5-mile pipeline to the golf course, where it is stored in a 60 million gallon irrigation lake.

Challenging issues

Sean cites establishing seed or sod on alkaline soils and finding enough employees to maintain the course during the growing season as some of the issues.

A major challenge at Briarwood is getting



US greenkeepers visting BTME with Bernhard's Managing Director, Stephen Bernhard and BIGGA Past Chairman Billy McMillan

enough water to the golf course on a daily basis. More than one million gallons of water are used every night during the hot months – the temperature throughout the month of July averaging 96°F in 2007.

Water usage has been reduced by 30 per cent from 2006 to 2007 but still the club used 100 million gallons of water.

“We are installing a new pump station and looking at different types of grasses to help reduce this further,” said Sean.

“The most important issue in the world of golf today is conserving and using water wisely.”

Rafael Barajas

Situated just outside Los Angeles the Hacienda Golf Club was designed by Willie Watson in 1920. Hacienda is an old style golf course stretching at close to 7,000 yards from the back tees. Situated in a canyon in the city of La Habra Heights the course was designed using the natural terrain and is owned by its 400 membership. Here Barajas is certified golf course superintendent of the 18-hole course, which covers 187 acres, 100 of which are maintained.

Throughout the years many trees have been planted, making the course narrow and creating a lot of shaded areas that are challenging to maintain.

Hacienda has a team of 28 staff members to maintain the course, consistent with the expectations of the membership.

This includes Barajas, one assistant superintendent, a foreman, two mechanics for the upkeep of the maintenance fleet, one irrigation specialist, a spray technician, together with the remaining staff who perform various tasks.

Why Master Greenkeeper?

Always welcoming new challenges Rafael Barajas is looking forward to his studies for the BIGGA qualification of master greenkeeper: “Meeting the requirements of the master greenkeeper programme may be challenging but I hope it will motivate others to follow. This can only serve to make the industry stronger.”

A key motivation in greenkeeping for Rafael is mentoring young professionals and he feels this qualification will make a dramatic difference and assist him in this role. “I really want to encourage them to be better communicators within the golf community.”

Course aims

Now in his 13th year at the club he is aiming to bring the golf course up to the next level by creating even greater consistency and raising the threshold for standards.

“Our aim is to provide the right product and improve facilities. We are mowing to get a good consistency across the fairways, greens and tees and I am looking into a new sharpening system to improve course presentation further.”

In 2005 the golf course went through an extensive renovation project of all the greens, bunkers and some tees to lengthen the golf course yardage to keep up with golf equipment technology.

In the near future the club will undertake the re-grassing of all fairways and some irrigation updates.

Currently Hacienda is irrigated by a Toro Site Pro network 8000 computerised system. The water source is city or potable water with excellent pressure and is delivered to the golf course, so there is no need to store the water or have pumping stations.

Challenging issues

Rafael says his members have high expectations, as many of them are low handicap golfers.

Grasses are currently under the microscope. A bent A4 is sused on the greens, hybrid Bermuda 419 on the tees and the rough is a combination of cool season and warm season grasses. Fairways are common Bermuda and these will be overseeded in the fall of 2008 with perennial ryegrass.

“We are also looking at fescues to maintain very natural areas. Ones that require little or no maintenance because of the type of grass cultivars they are.

“Members here are very happy with change as long as we are doing things for the right reasons, either to conserve water or create a natural habitat for wildlife. Schemes that will help to protect the environment,” said Rafael.



Rafael Barajas at Royal Birkdale



STUDENT OF THE YEAR 2008 PREVIEW

FEATURE

Now in its 20th year, this competition, organised in conjunction with Toro, has grown and grown in popularity with the appeal of being named 'Toro Student of the Year' high on many BIGGA members agendas. Melissa Jones takes a look at this year's lucky finalists...

Travelling the width and breadth of the country this spring was Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development at BIGGA HQ, in search of this year's eight national contenders. Joined by BIGGA members Ian McLeod, Tony Smith and Les Howkins MG, as well as George McDonald, Trevor Chard and

John Pike from Toro, Sami and the rest of the judges, after many interviews, much discussion and copious cups of coffee, decided on the eight finalists to come to BIGGA HOUSE on Monday, September 15 for the grand final.

"The calibre of the candidates selected to go forward for the National Final is extremely high. Selecting the eight finalists was quite a task, but I am confident that they will make this, the 20th Anniversary of the Award, one of the most competitive and exciting finals to date." said Sami.

Let's take a look at the national contenders...

Name: James Canham
Age: 22
Club: Golf Club Gstaad, Switzerland



James is a blast from the past (as far 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.

Not satisfied with taking the silver medal, James, now 22, is back in the running for pole position.

"After two years at Weston Park I was offered the chance of a lifetime, to leave the UK to work as a greenkeeper at Gstaad Golf Club, a Swiss alpine course. I knew very little about Switzerland or the Alps but I had enough confidence in my ability to take the step into the unknown. I spent my first season at Gstaad GC as an Assistant learning their greenkeeping methods and local culture. I was able to make an impact on the course during this time and was promoted to Deputy Head the following season," said James.

Name: Paul Carella
Age: 20
Club: Bothwell Castle GC, Uddingston



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.

"As far back as I can remember all I have wanted to be is a greenkeeper," said Paul.

"Prior to working at Bothwell Castle GC, I studied at Elmwood College in Cupar, Fife, where I achieved my SVQ2, PA1 and PA6 certificates."

Paul has continued his studies while in his current post by attending GOSTA Training, where he has achieved three more certificates in SVQ3, PA2 and Introduction to Golf Course Design.

"I aspire to do the best I can in all aspects of my life and I eventually want to become a Course Manager of a Championship golf course," expressed Paul.

Name: George Pendrich
Age: 46
Club: Scotsraig GC, Taypoe



George recently returned to education full time in order to complete his HND in Golf Course Management.

With his full time education complete, he now spends much of his time on two Open qualifying courses, working at Scotsraig and playing at Downfield, where he has just been appointed Course Manager.

George, who won the Toro award for Best HN Golf Course Management Student at Elmwood College in 2005, was fortunate enough to be part of the BIGGA Open Support Team last year, helping out at Carnoustie.

Name: Mathew Wormald
Age: 24
Club: The Luffenham Heath GC, Lincolnshire



"I have had an interest in golf from an early age and discovered greenkeeping after spending a year in London working as an Estate Agent - I haven't looked back since.

"In my short time in greenkeeping I have attended The Belfry as a volunteer for the British Masters and I have also attended various seminars on aspects of greenkeeping," said Mathew, an Assistant Greenkeeper at The Luffenham Heath Golf Club.

Currently completing his NVQ Level 2, Mathew's ambition is to become Head Greenkeeper of a Championship course.

Name: David Jowes
Age: 43
Club: Tadmarton Heath GC, Wigginton



After spending 20 years in the motorsport industry as a welder fabricator, working for various race teams and running a workshop with 26 staff under his control, David made the brave decision to take a leap into greenkeeping.

"Becoming a greenkeeper was something that always interested me through playing golf, but was not financially viable till later in life. After making enquiries regarding a career in greenkeeping I obtained PA1 and PA6 at Morton Morrell College at my own expense, this was completed during my spare time to gain experience prior to applying for employment," said David.

David, who currently works as an Assistant Greenkeeper at Tadmarton Heath GC, was effectively headhunted by his now boss, Head Greenkeeper, Brian Owen.

"During my short time as a greenkeeper I feel I have gained considerable knowledge within this field of work. With my enthusiasm and determination I know I will go on to expand my knowledge of both theoretical and practical aspects of greenkeeping thus achieving my life long ambitions," said David.

Name: Graeme Roberts
Age: 20
Club: Hankley Common GC, Farnham



"I have been fortunate to live on golf courses all my life, and with my father being a Course Manager, I was always exposed to the world of greenkeeping. As a teenager, during school holidays I would work on the course. At first it was just basic jobs like divotting and raking bunkers, I then progressed to some of the cutting practices and other jobs," said Graeme, who currently works as an Assistant Greenkeeper at Hankley.

Graeme recently completed his NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf qualification at Merrist Wood and was accepted onto the Ohio Programme for trainee greenkeepers at the Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina.

"In all aspects of course maintenance I like to think I show great pride in the job I do, ensuring it is done to the highest standard and to the best of my ability, benefiting the golfers playing the course and allowing all the potential the course has to show," expressed Graeme, who joined the support team for the BMW Championship at Wentworth last year.

Name: Barrie Lewis
Age: 20
Club: Ratho Park GC, Edinburgh



Barrie is another student that's gone back to the future. In 2006, at the age of 18, Barrie made it to the grand final of Toro Student of the Year at BIGGA HQ, but sadly went away empty handed when Mike Emptage claimed the title - could this be his year for victory?

Barrie, who is currently studying for his N/SVQ Level 3, won Lantra Land Based Learner of the Year in 2006 and also achieved Student of the Year status for Level 2 Greenkeeping at Oatridge College.

"In the future I hope to gain further qualifications such as a HNC/HND. I would also like to experience the Ohio State project in America, or something similar in Australia. Ultimately I want to become Course Manager of a prestigious golf course, either at home or abroad," said Barrie, who was part of the support team at the Scottish Open at Loch Lomond in 2006.

Name: Greg Wellings
Age: 26
Club: Stockport GC, Cheshire



Greg, who is currently working towards his NVQ Level 3 at Reaseheath College, presently takes on the role of Assistant Greenkeeper at Stockport Golf Club.

"I feel extremely honoured to be nominated by Reaseheath College for this year's Toro Student of the Year competition. My tutor afforded me all the support I needed to complete my course via distance learning. It has been very productive to gain practical experience on the golf course to go with the theory I have been studying. This is a method of development I am comfortable with and will utilise as I continue to learn," said Greg.

"I am 26 years old and I want to be a Head Greenkeeper at a world renowned golf course. I realise this is a bold ambition but I am a determined and focused individual and I want to forge a successful career in the golfing industry."

You've heard from all eight National Contenders but who will excel in the Grand Final and win Toro Student of the Year 2008?

Entailing a further interview and the completion of a survey of Aldwark Manor Golf Course (evaluating nine of the holes), the grand final is sure to provide some tough competition.

Up for grabs is an amazing prize involving an eight-week trip to the USA, where, for six weeks, the University of Massachusetts will be home, as the lucky winner completes a residential Turf Management Course. Also included in the trip is a visit to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis and to the GCSAA Golf Industry Show next February.



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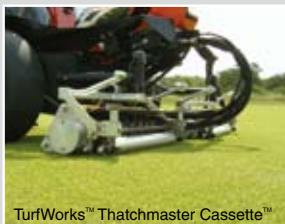


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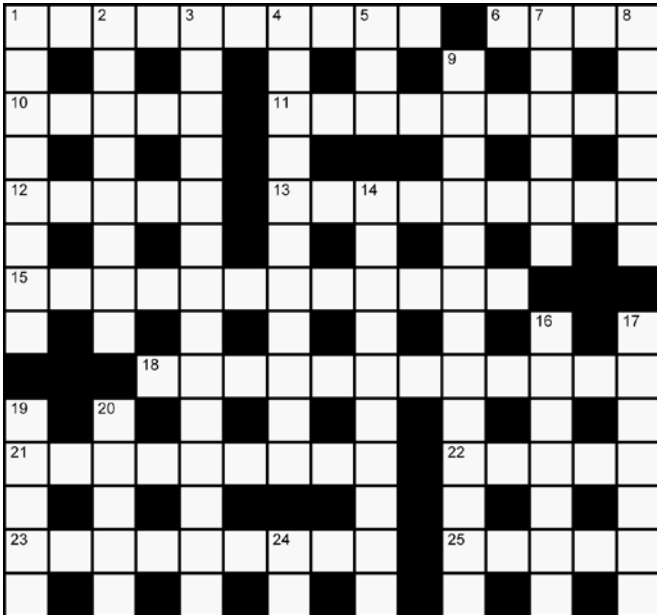
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In the Shed

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

- Arctic birds with feathered feet and white winter plumage (10)
- Pertaining to the ear (4)
- Further, additional (5)
- Adherence to conventional belief (9)
- Gate to a Shinto shrine (5)
- Prefabricated building designed for use during World War I (6,3)
- English entertainer who sang about his "Little Stick of Blackpool Rock" (6,6)
- Traditional term for caning, an erstwhile school punishment (3,2,3,4)
- Direction usually based on the position of the star Polaris (4,5)
- Official language of Cambodia (5)
- Point on the earth's surface directly above an earthquake (9)
- First Greek letter (5)
- Area of London with Mayfair to the west and Covent Garden to the east (4)
- In Greek mythology, the Titan who stole fire from Zeus (10)

Down

- High standing (8)
- Placed before or in front of (8)
- Margaret Thatcher's description of certain "permanently aggrieved" North Easterners (7,7)
- Position of potential within a new business venture (6,5)
- Bolt counterpart (3)
- Award given as a token of victory (6)
- Another name for the prairie wolf (6)
- Early meeting of influential businesspeople (5,9)
- Hastily gathered squad (7,4)
- American tree - anagram of REED PALM (3,5)

QUICK NINE-HOLE QUIZ

- In which city is Anfield football stadium?
- Zola Budd was blamed for the fall of which runner during the 1984 Olympics 3,000 metres race?
- In rugby league, how many players make up a team?
- Which club did Paul Gascoigne join from Tottenham?
- Who quit as England football boss in October 2000?
- How many players are there on a rugby union team?
- In which sport has Rachel Heyhoe Flint achieved worldwide fame?
- 'Do I not like that' is a phrase associated with which England manager?
- In sport, from which city does the American Football team the Vikings come from?

MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A,B and C.

B						4	5	6	1
8		1				9		7	
	A			C	1				3
5								C	7
			7			3	6	2	
			9		C	A		3	6
2			A		8	5		1	
			6	2	4			A	
	B	8							2
	7					C	2		8
		9			3			A	B
	3	A	4	8					1

SUDOKU

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

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



IN THE SHED

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.

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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.

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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.



Saltex New Products

LOW-DECIBEL BLOWERS

The all new low-decibel series of tractor mounted leaf and debris blowers from AgriMetal will be launched at Saltex.

The new range of blowers features a dynamically balanced aluminium impeller which provides superior airflow while requiring less energy to drive it. Its lightweight also reduces drive belt loadings reducing parts replacement and maintenance.

i www.agrimetal.com

DFENCE HELPS REDUCE DISEASE PRESSURE

Valagro has introduced DFence a liquid bio-stimulant which boosts the turf's natural defence mechanisms.

First year field experience - in renowned disease hot-spots of SW England - suggests that the product significantly reduces disease levels on greens.

The company say DFence works by neutralising toxins produced by pathogen attack; with the added potassium and phosphorous further strengthening cell barriers.

DFence is available through Countrywide this season. The best approach is to use it in advance of periods of high disease pressure, such as in the autumn, maintaining applications to build the plant's systemic acquired resistance.

i www.nutrecology.com

NEW FUNGICIDE

Rigby Taylor has launched a new fungicide product, Masalon.

Based on the active ingredient myclobutanil, Masalon was developed to help greenkeepers and groundsman who are faced with turf damage, caused by Fusarium Patch (*Microdochium nivale*). Rigby Taylor claim the product has excellent systemic properties, moving into the leaf within one hour of spraying, where it prevents disease establishment. Its preventative action offers excellent levels of turfgrass safety, especially to annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), which is particularly susceptible to Fusarium Patch.

i Freephone: 0800 424919

DEALING WITH MOSS

Avoncrop Amenity have launched two new products to help deal with moss, firstly a Hard Surface Moss Remover and Cleaner specially developed for use on concrete, paving and artificial surfaces to remove moss, algae and slime build-ups.

Secondly a liquid iron formulation developed for use in autumn and early spring on turf that has been infested with moss, the unique formulation will deter moss and harden turf during colder periods.

i 01344 426600

LOW COST HIGH-TIP RIDE-ON ROTARY

To help end users combat rising high prices when buying new outdoor power equipment and machinery, Etesia is launching an 'economy' high-tip ride-on rotary at this year's Saltex show.

This cost effective Hydro 124DH is powered by a well-proven 25hp Lombardini diesel engine and features high-tip emptying at a value-for-money list price - thus enabling commercial operators to achieve high output, faster working and, most importantly, greater profitability. Operated from the driving seat, emptying of the 600litre grass collector is at any height from ground level up to 1.8m to give good clearance over a truck or trailer.

i www.etesia.co.uk



VACUUM SWEEPER

Trilo (UK) Ltd will be releasing the new SG670, vacuum sweeper at this year's Saltex. It has a 250mm hose and 2 metre brush head with huge suction power and is built to the same high quality and with many of the features that come to be expected from a Trilo.

i 01638 720123
www.trilo.com

REMOTE TREATS THE PARTS THAT OTHERS CANNOT REACH

Terrain Aeration have launched the new Remote Terralift machine, the lightest, smallest most manoeuvrable member of the Airforce fleet to date.

Built to fulfil a demand, the new Remote Terralift has been designed for back gardens, trees, shrub beds, golf courses, parks, sports grounds, retail sites or anywhere with compaction and drainage problems in a tight spot.

i 01449 673783
or visit: www.terrainaeration.co.uk



DIVOT BAG

The Divot Bag is a recently launched new product.

The number of divots has soared, caused by advances in club technology and people using the wrong kind of shots. Greenkeepers the world over accept that repairing divots is a time consuming but crucial part of keeping a course in top-class condition. Often divot-filling teams struggle to keep up.

It's estimated that every time a player takes a chunk out of the turf on the fairway, it costs 5p to repair.

The Divot Bag is a simple solution to help keep fairways in top class condition and clubs across the world are realising the benefits. The divot Bag is provided by the club and sand buckets are placed at the first tee. Players fill their divot bag with a mix of sand and seed with the view to fill divots as they play.

The divot Bag comes in a range of colours and can be personalised with the club logo printed on the front.



NEW CHIPPER

Echo Bear Cat has launched the latest addition to their range of professional chippers. This is the largest Chipper available from ECHO Bear Cat, capable of reducing wood up to a diameter of 12" (30.5cm) to fine chips using four, 23cm long, reversible, heat-treated steel chipper blades.

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NEW ACCESSORIES INCREASE MOWER VERSATILITY

Rustons Engineering is now offering a range of attachments for the Grasshopper zero-turn mowers it distributes in the UK, including leaf blowers, sweepers, turf edgers and aerators.

The leaf blowers are available for the Grasshopper 700 and 900 series and feature a powerful PTO-driven fan unit that produces almost 4500litres of air a second at up to 240kph, enabling them to clear leaves and other debris easily from paths, golf courses, parks and other amenity areas. The nozzle can be adjusted a full 360° electrically from the seat, allowing the driver to blow autumn leaves off trees and complete leaf-clearing in a single visit.

01480 455151



SCARIFIERS FOR DOMESTIC AND PROFESSIONAL USE

Two new rugged lawn scarifiers have been introduced by Efco, the Italian based manufacturer of professional and domestic powered landscape and garden equipment.

Constructed on heavy duty tubular frames with steel decks, the machines feature tough, hardened steel spikes and a height adjustment system with a memory that ensures the machine can be set down at the same height when re-positioned.

www.emak.co.uk



NEW SPRAYER COVERS 500 ACRES

Rolawn has taken delivery of a state of the art sprayer that it believes is one of the largest available in Europe.

The Agrifac ZA3400P Sprayer is 48 metres wide when opened, and its 4,000 litre tank enables it to spray 500 acres per day. Key features include an auto-levelling device for the booms, GPS installed for auto shut off of nozzles for minimum overlap, auto steer and quadruple nozzle bodies for 4 different types of jet depending upon water volume and weather conditions.

www.rolawn.co.uk
www.topsoil.co.uk



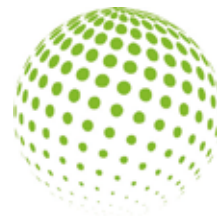
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Craig Gilholm, Course Manager, Royal Liverpool

“SGC are very professional - the finish achieved was beyond our expectations ”

Gareth Roberts, Course Manager, Hankley Common

	Timescale	MATERIALS USED	ACCURACY OF FINISH
LEVEL BY HAND	2-4 WEEKS	60 – 100 TONS	+/- 50mm
SGC LASER TEE RENOVATION	½ - 1 DAY	5– 10 TONS	+/-5mm

Laser Tee Renovation

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PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS

Scott MacCallum visited the Pesticide Safety Directorate to get some answers to the industry's burning questions on the future availability of pesticides in the sector and on the dangers of using illegal products.

In recent years dates have occasionally resonated around the industry proclaiming when the use of pesticides would no longer be allowed on golf courses – a sort of doomsday you could say. These has invariably been followed by the counter argument that it's all hot air and will never happen - common sense with prevail.

So what is the genuine position and what is in store for the greenkeeping industry over the next few years?

To get an answer to that and a series of other questions where better to go than the Pesticide Safety Directorate (PSD), which is the regulatory authority for pesticides in the UK and the body in charge of developing and implementing the legislation which comes out of Westminster and Brussels?

Grant Stark and Paul Adamson are senior officials with PSD and they took time to outline the work of the Directorate and explain the background to some of the stories we read in the press and rumours that whistle round the industry.

And the answer to the burning question?

Well, yes there are a couple of key dates 2012 and 2014 - but it mightn't be as bad as is feared, and strenuous efforts are being made to minimise the impact it will have.

"2012, will see the completion of the pesticide active substance review programme. There are something like 900 pesticide active substances in use across the European Union. The review programme will see that figure reduced to around 300 – 400 by the time work is completed in 2012-comparative figures for the UK are around half those for Europe as a whole," said Grant, whose work covers the amenity sector. "That's a substantial loss of chemistry right across the European Union. It might mean that some methods of control may prove to be difficult" he explained.

On top of this, the EU is reviewing the law which sets out the criteria pesticides need to meet in order to be approved for use in the future. Grant explained that the law which sets these criteria is being developed under a complicated process known as the co-decision procedure. This involves the Council (the EU institution which represents the member states) and European Parliament (which represents the citizens) coming together with the Commission to agree a text. Before they come together for their negotiations, they look separately at a proposal and come up with a

number of amendments.

Grant said that the European Parliament has taken a relatively precautionary view on the risks associated with the use of pesticides and want this bar to be set at a comparatively high level. This could result in substantially more products being taken out of the system. In general the Council takes a less precautionary view and would like the bar set at levels that reduce risk to acceptable levels while enabling users to maintain sufficient protection from pests and diseases. While everyone accepts that the bar should be raised the effect of the Council and Parliament's amendments are relatively far apart on where this ought to be. Despite this there appears to be an appetite in Brussels to reach a deal by the end of the year on the new law.

The 2014 deadline is an important feature of another proposed new pesticide law – a directive on the sustainable use of pesticides. All professional users of pesticides will be required to use 'integrated approaches' by 2014.

An integrated approach is one where you don't automatically think of pesticides as the first port of call, but instead go back to the beginning and look at the original design of how everything is

from a lot of member states. It should mean best usage practices being drawn from across the EU." So where do those rumours and headlines about blanket pesticide bans come from?

"The prospect of a blanket ban was raised in discussions on the sustainable use directive. The European Parliament considered on a series of amendments prepared by its Environment Committee – which took an extremely precautionary view on the risk associated with the use of pesticides and so proposed some severe restrictions, including bans on use in public spaces. The Parliament as a whole though was less precautionary and rejected calls for the more severe restrictions.

"Indications are that the Council and Commission are less precautionary still, so we await to see what sort of text emerges when the three institutions come together towards the end of this year. It's important to keep an eye on the discussions to make sure overly severe restrictions are not re-introduced, lobbying MEPs is an effective way of making your voice heard," said Grant.

He added that in his opinion golf was quite well placed to cope with the forthcoming changes, compared to other sectors, as he understood

“ There are something like 900 pesticide active substances in use across the European Union. The review programme will see that figure reduced to around 300 – 400 by the time work is completed in 2012 ”

set up so as to minimise the incidence of weeds coming through and consider a range of vegetation management options. A more sustainable approach if you like. "This approach is already very well embedded in agriculture and its use of pesticides. Many of the contracts signed between farmers and supermarkets make specific reference to farming in an integrated fashion. Greater use of integrated approaches in the amenity sector may help offset some of the difficulties associated with the loss of products" said Grant.

The new directive will require member states to set up national action plans for pesticides and work toward the reduction of risk from using them. Grant said that the directive is expected to include a number of 'best practice' measures on things such as training of users, distributors and advisors, testing of application equipment, protection of watercourses, public spaces and conservation areas. Grant explained, "We already have these sort of measures in the UK but they are missing

there was already a good knowledge of what is "best practice".

PSD puts a lot of emphasis on people going out and getting professional advice from organisations such as BASIS, who can guide users in the right direction. "Our understanding is that the golf course sector understands the need to use pesticides in a way which is consistent with 'best practice' and takes specialist advice. We would look to encourage all users to go out and look at their vegetation management strategies and investigate integrated management approaches - take a more holistic approach rather than just using chemicals," explained Grant.

What about the enforcement of legal controls on pesticides?

PSD was formed in 1987 following on from the first pesticide regulations which came into being the previous year. Initially it was a division of the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods before becoming an Executive Agency of DEFRA. It was

VIEW FROM THE AMENITY FORUM

An integrated approach to managing golf courses has been a priority for greenkeepers for some time. In fact within the amenity sector it has been the greenkeepers who have led the way with good management practices aimed at reducing, and hopefully eliminating the need to use a pesticide. But despite good management there will continue to be a need to use a herbicide, fungicide and/or an insecticide to establish and maintain first class turf. The question most greenkeepers ask me is how long will we be able to continue to have pesticides available to use? We are already losing the products we need to control worms, leatherjackets and the many other pests of turf. Herbicides are also being withdrawn – diuron, dichlobenil to name a few.

The UK has had a statutory legal framework for the control of pesticides use for over 20 years and overall it works well. This risk-based approach considers carefully evaluated scientific data, periodically reviewed by an independent body, it is a good system so why change it? These Regulations are backed up by a Code of Practice, training schemes to maintain up to date certification, and some very sophisticated application equipment.

We know that in Denmark no pesticides are allowed on golf courses but so far we have not seen any evidence to justify this decision – it is based on ‘concerns’ for safety! Is it a real possibility that this approach could be adopted in the new EU Directive for the sustainable use of pesticides? Greenkeepers need to know that the UK negotiating team are working very hard to get more support for the UK position as at the moment it seems that our approach is in a minority within the EU.

The decision will ultimately be made by MEPs voting in the EU Parliament in September/October and everyone who will be affected by the decision



must act now and contact their own local MEPs to make sure they understand the impact a prohibition on the use of pesticides in amenity situations will have. As Chairman of the Amenity Forum I will be writing to all MEPs again with a briefing note to raise their awareness. If you would like a copy to help you speak to your MEP contact Bob Joice at robert.joice@farmline.com , or Jon Allbutt at jon@jonallbutt.co.uk .

Jon Allbutt, Chairman, Amenity Forum

AMENITY FORUM CONFERENCE

The Amenity Forum is hosting a one day conference at the Heath and Safety Executive Headquarters in London on October 2.

Included on the programme Chaired by Ian Mearns, Vice Chair of the Local Government Association Environment Board, will be a Legislation Update on EU and UK Pesticide Policy delivered by Adrian Dixon, of the Pesticides Safety Directorate, and Jo Kennedy, of the Environment Agency, while Jon Allbutt, Chairman of the Amenity Forum, will speak on Determining the Usage and Usage Patterns of Amenity Pesticides across the UK.

Also included on the programme is a Keynote Address from Lord McKenzie, Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department of Work and Pensions with responsibility for the HSE, and Solutions to Best Practice Management - management from three managers in key amenity areas.

In total the day includes seven papers and a closing Panel Session and Chairman's Summary. Anyone seeking to attend should contact: Bob Joice, The Amenity Forum, 43 Park Drive, Mirfield, West Yorks WF14 9NJ or email: robert.joice@farmline.com

moved to its present home in York, in September 1994. It has recently become an Executive Agency of the Health and Safety Executive and its 180 staff carry out critical evaluation of accredited data that is provided by companies which want chemicals approved.

Paul is part of a team charged with policing the pesticide regulations in the UK and attempts to clamp down on the illegal use of unapproved products.

"In simplistic terms if a product is not approved for a job it is a breach of the law to use it. Indeed the way the law works is that all pesticides are banned unless they have specific approval" explained Paul.

The general tightening of controls on pesticides over the last 20 years has already lead to the loss of pesticides which we now consider to have unacceptable effects. Generally more toxic, persistent and potentially environmentally damaging chemicals have been replaced by more targeted, pest specific and less damaging pesticides.

"This reduction in availability can be a problem if you are dealing with hard to control pests or weeds and this may tempt people to use an unapproved or otherwise illegal product such as using an agricultural product in an amenity situation. The loss of some organophosphate insecticides, which although highly effective were also pretty indiscriminate in destroying beneficial insect species, means you really need to think

through your use of pesticides."

The use of illegal or unapproved products is something which Paul and his team spend a lot of time investigating and they have some severe sanctions for those who are caught using any unapproved chemicals.

"If someone is using an agricultural product in an amenity situation the risks are likely to be different to those which they are used to. It might be the risks are very similar but it could be that they are very different leading to real danger to the person who is applying the chemical."

"Or it may be that the environment suffers because the product gets into water more easily or is more concentrated. For each approved use of a product the risks and hazards to the operator and the environment are taken into account when approval is granted. Using the product in an unapproved way means that is no longer the case.

Paul is well aware of the pressures some greenkeepers are under to find the cheapest option to control a pest or weed but the dangers of using a product in a non-approved areas and manner are real.

"We have powers to seize illegal products and have them disposed off and to recover the costs from the perpetrator - it's one of the ultimate sanctions. If we take a case to prosecution the maximum fine for each offence is £5000 in a Magistrates' Court or an unlimited fine in Crown

Court and that fine may be against an individual or a golf club."

However, Paul is not a fan of prosecution.

"Prosecution is usually a last resort as it's very expensive and time consuming, from our perspective it is more effective to seize the offending pesticide and charge for disposal and to advise on how to avoid problems in the future. We can also issue enforcement notices which require corrective actions to be taken, and because these have no simple right of appeal they are an effective enforcement tool."

If people do go ahead and continue to use off-label products what's the worst case scenario?

"That depends very much on the product but effects could range from minor issues such as skin irritation to more severe effects. It is the operator who is put at risk initially and that is something I want to avoid," said Paul.

The same is true from an environmental perspective where unapproved pesticides may have a range of short or long term effects gradually degrading an eco system for example damage to watercourses or knock on effects on wildlife.

So the message coming out is despite the possible reductions in the availability of chemicals you currently rely on don't take unnecessary risks and use illegal or unapproved products. If you have not already done so, to take a look at your management practices to ensure that you are not caught out when 2014 comes around.





Hobbies

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

Name: Will Harris
Position: Machinery Manager
Club: Minchinhampton GC
Hobby: Restoring Cars

"As you can see - the car was a complete wreck when I came across it" commented Will - "but in the time it's taken to restore it I've fathered two children, and am well on the way to putting one of them through university! I originally got it as a potential 'babe magnet' - but lately it's developed into more of a retirement project!"

If nothing else - this amazing vehicle underlines Will's mechanical skills and patience.



Before...



After...

Minchinhampton Golf Club Machinery Manager Will Harris showing off his pride and joy - a Volvo 1800-S dating back to 1966, which he has restored himself, virtually from scratch.

IF YOU SOW IT THEY WILL COME

Level Par is a unique blend of velvet bent grasses from BSH. With unrivalled shoot density and a very fine leaf, the combination of Avalon and new Vesper produces an enviable putting surface. But the benefits don't stop there. Once established, the dense sward has a lower nutrient requirement than any other commercial bent grasses, so your greens won't cost the Earth.

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Letters

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Sunday, July 6 – Belleisle Golf Club

Another Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich, the weather is reasonable, but overcast with a light, slightly warm, west wind.

When I left Lenzie in the early morning it was wet and unpleasant. By the time I had passed the 'South Ayrshire' road sign everything changed with a distinct improvement, weather wise.

Again an excellent turnout, for what is now considered a family gathering, with the families ages ranging from 14 years old, to over 80, both male and female.

The competition followed the usual format, stableford, partners drawn in fours, and the best two scores counting – I must say, one of the more civilised forms for a game of golf.

Belleisle Golf Course never looked better, Kevin Johnson and his greenkeeping staff, are to be commended on their presentation of a course, manicured for the pleasure and pleasantry for a game of golf.

This year five greenkeepers competed to have their names inscribed on the quaich, but the hand of fate (or better golf) decided the winners were: D Hollingworth, L McClure, J Ridge, and R McGuire returning a remarkable score of 89 points.

The presentation of the quaich and prizes involved Harry's family. The quaich was presented by Harry's wife Jessie. Harry's daughter did an excellent job with the raffle, calling out the winners through the hand held microphones, which gave the afternoon an atmosphere of joviality.

All the children were in charge of setting up the raffle and Hugh, Harry's brother, was involved with the prize giving.

There was a new Diamond face this year, Harry's niece came over from America, and she said a few words about Uncle Harry and his commitments to the family.

This tournament has become a must, for the members of Belleisle, and her sister course Seafield, with everyone so involved, the golfers feel part of the family which makes the whole affair go from strength to strength – long may this continue.

The family wish to thank all who assisted, from those who donated prizes to others who made cash donations, not forgetting the small group who meet to organise and run The Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich.

A great tournament, a great day of golf in memory of a great friend.

Cecil George
Lenzie

Please email your letters to
Scott MacCallum, scott@bigga.co.uk
or Melissa Jones, melissa@bigga.co.uk
or post to:
BIGGA House,
Aldwark Manor,
Alne, York YO61 1UF

THANK YOU

On behalf of everyone at Royal Birkdale Golf Club I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the BIGGA volunteers for their support with bunker raking and fairway divotting duties during the Open Championship.

It is no exaggeration to say that we could not have managed without your help.

Once again many thanks for your valuable assistance, it is much appreciated.

Chris Whittle, Course Manager, Royal Birkdale GC

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Just a reminder that the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, is to be held on October 5 and 6.

Children's Heart Surgery Fund



30 July 2008

Mr John Pemberton
British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association
Bigga House
Aldwark
Alne
York
YO61 1UF

Dear Mr Pemberton

Thank you very much for the kind donation of £2,144.12, which you made to the Children's Heart Surgery Fund following the Golf Day.

The CHSF, a registered charity, continues to enhance the quality of care available to children with heart defects treated at the Yorkshire Heart Centre, Leeds General Infirmary.

As we endeavour to fulfil our aim through the provision of new equipment not available within NHS resources, grants which enable staff to increase their expertise, world renowned research projects and by creating a happy relaxed atmosphere for the children who often have to return for further surgery; I am most grateful to you for your support.

Our aim remains "each child a childhood" and your donation will be used towards this goal.

Yours sincerely

Debbie Exley
On Behalf of the Children's Heart Surgery Fund

Tel: 0113 392 8531
Fax: 0113 392 8074
Email: chsf@leedsth.nhs.uk
Web: www.chs.org.uk

Children's Heart Surgery Fund • E floor • The Jubilee Building • Yorkshire Heart Centre • Leeds General Infirmary • Leeds LS1 3EX



News from the Chief Executive

The relationship between BIGGA and the Greenkeepers Training Committee (the GTC) is often misunderstood. The GTC was established in the late 1980's to develop, monitor and maintain a set of national standards, vocational qualifications and associated learning material for greenkeeping, working within a Government approved structure. It is governed by a committee comprised of representation from the English Golf Union, the Scottish Golf Union, the Welsh Golf Union and BIGGA.

Until recently the R&A were also included. From the outset it was funded by way of a levy of 2p per male golfer who was a registered member of a club. The home Unions collected the fee and passed it on to the GTC while the European Tour and BIGGA made a contribution, the R&A then match funded the total sum collected. In 1989 the R&A published a discussion document of British golf course management entitled "The Way Forward" in which it is quoted, "It goes without saying that the 2p levy, while a start, is a totally inadequate contribution from golf clubs in terms of a really meaningful impact being made on greenkeeper education. There must be a continuous effort to raise this levy to a realistic figure with perhaps 50p a first target, increasing to £1."

Where is the GTC 20 years further on? The levy has increased, despite a certain amount of resistance from the Home Unions over the years, to an astounding 11.5p! The R&A will after this year cease to make a financial contribution, instead diverting its attention and resources to developing the game of golf overseas. Let's make no mistake that funding over the years has been significant and has helped the GTC to develop greenkeeper education to a point where it leads the way with British land based training and qualifications, so much so that its learning material is now being sought after by many of the emerging overseas greenkeeping associations.

The GTC in its current format is no longer a financially viable operation and attempts to increase the levy on the golfer, and/or perhaps include female golfers, have been unsuccessful. With a steady drifting away from club membership the Unions are finding themselves under pressure to maintain status quo let alone consider an increase. As the number of members starts to decline so does the income for the GTC.

One of the main questions that no one has yet managed to answer is "How do we get the casual golfer to contribute towards greenkeeper training?" The simple answer would be to apply a small levy to the green fee but it is unlikely that clubs will go along with this. They, I am sure, would see this as an erosion of their own income.

Unless a solution is found to the funding gap of the GTC then it may need to be wound up. Its role could then be taken over by either the EGU, the SGU or the WGU or perhaps somehow incorporated into BIGGA's Learning and Development Department. As a director of the GTC and as Chief Executive of BIGGA I have more than a passing interest in the future of the GTC and will continue to work with the Home Unions and David Golding (Director of Education, GTC) to try to find a workable solution.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



SCOTTISH REGION - CENTRAL

The Section had a successful evening on August 20, when David Cole, from Loch Lomond Golf Club, gave a presentation on the work involved in preparing and staging the Scottish Open. Thanks once again David and good luck in your new position at Loch Lomond, you have got off to a great start.

Following on from that, on Wednesday, September 10, at 7pm, we have Stan Kostka talking about wetting agent technology. Stan is Director of Research and Development with Aquatrols in the US and is on a visit to the UK. We are very fortunate to be able to attract people like Stan to come and share their knowledge with us and he comes on the recommendation of Richard Windows who recently attended a presentation by him. The event will be at the greenkeeping facility at Elmwood GC.

This is also the venue for the Section AGM which will be held on Monday, October 27 at 1.30pm, in conjunction with a presentation by Martin Heywood of Aquadrop, who will talk on improving the quality of your irrigation water. There are a number of their installations across Scotland, now including one at The Castle Course where we have been able to drop the bi carbonates from over 250mg/l to 150mg/l as well as lowering the ph.

The Committee will be proposing Gordon McKie, of St Andrews Links, as Chairman. Normally, Gordon would spend some time as Vice Chairman before taking the hot seat but with the departure of our current Vice, Alan Sharp, to Essex Gordon won't have the luxury of easing himself into the job.

The Committee is looking for nominations for a new Vice Chairman from October and would be pleased to receive nominations before the AGM. Please contact the Secretary, Andy Mellon.

We would also be pleased to hear of any particular educational events you would like, particularly for late February/early March. The Committee was thinking of staging some management training on items such as Managing people, confidence building, assertiveness and team building.

These courses are expensive to run so we would need some commitment before arranging them. We shall try and get some more exact costs and information and this will be posted on the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk - where we would also be pleased to hear your thoughts and comments.

The website has been quiet recently but hopefully it will pick up again now the golfing season is passing.

On the move has been Kevin Webster, from Milnathort GC to Leven GC. Kevin also got married in July and used to play off a handicap of one, welcome to the real world Kevin. Chris Ross, of the Dukes Course, also got married in early July and by the end of the month had lost his wedding ring. There's no truth in the rumour that his workmates organised a search party in 'Fat



Sam's nightclub in Dundee. Best of luck to you both for the future.

Finally, I believe Gary McCandless and Jim Smith have taken over Mike Dennis's role at Rigby Taylor following his retirement. Two people to replace you Mike, you must have been some guy, and you managed to play all that golf with Derek.

Gordon Moir



EAST

The regular topic of conversation among greenkeepers at present is the appalling weather, with tropical style downpours becoming the norm.

On Thursday, August 7, the greenkeepers at St. Boswells GC arrived at work to find most of the 9 hole course flooded when the River Tweed burst its banks. The following day the waters had receded but left behind mounds of debris in the form of logs, branches and silt. A huge clean up operation is currently underway.

On Friday, August 8, developers, Manor Kingdom, announced their intention to apply for planning permission for a major development at Rutherford Castle, near West Linton. The plans include a luxury hotel, houses and a championship golf course. The original course, which opened in the late 90's, was the brainchild of farmer Henry Wallace. The course designer at the time was Dalbeattie-based Brian Moore, of OCM Associates.

The committee have asked me to remind you of the following upcoming events:

Autumn Outing, September 9, Kingsknowe Golf Club;

Willie Woods, October 9, West Linton Golf Club;

AGM, October 30, Dundas Park - the AGM will be preceded by a lecture from Gary Smith, of Scotts.

The East committee is currently hard at work putting together a programme of lectures, on interesting topics, for the Autumn/Winter period. By next month, hopefully, I will have a list of speakers and dates for your diary.

I spoke briefly last month of price increases which many of you will have noticed with the rapid rise in costs of red diesel. This year you the end user will not have noticed the rapid rise in costs of fertiliser and grass seed, however next year all distributors will have to pass all or at least some of these costs on!

Until Next Month

Mike Dooner



NORTH

I start with the news that a sharp eyed member, namely John Geddes, spotted recently in the P & J a certain Dougal Duguid playing Westhill golf course and he had had a hole in one. If this is the same Dougal who was Chairman of the Section then John was wondering if you would be making an appearance at the next outing at Kirriemuir in your Mexican bandit attire.

Everyone I have spoken to recently is looking forward to the outing at Kirriemuir and hopefully we will have a good turnout.

Please get your forms into Dale as soon as you can. Jim assures me that the course will be in pristine condition and this will be even more of an achievement due to him being in the veterans' section! Sorry Jim couldn't resist.

In the coming month we have a team going down to play in the Norrie Whittock Trophy. Hopefully we'll have better luck this year. Hugh Mclatchie is playing along with two lads from Peterculter and one from Fortrose. Good luck lads and we hope to get a report on the day's event in next month's edition along with all the results and goings' on from Kirrie.

Two former work mates of mine are expecting. Well not them literally but their wives, but looking at them both you wouldn't dismiss it.

Well done Stephen Brown on your fourth but you've along way to go to catch up with Rossco Macrae, at Huntly, who is expecting his seventh. Are you stopping there Ross or are you going for the full football team? Anyway well done and I will report in due course how they get on.

The Head Greenkeeper of Portlethen GC, Aberdeen, Neil Sadler, has recently got married. On behalf of the Section I would like to offer our congratulations. Does this mean you'll be turning up at less outings now?

That's as much news as I've got this month people but again, sorry to keep saying it but it is your Section news and for it to be a worthwhile read we need as much info as possible.

Give me a shout on: 07813889374.

Hope to see everyone at Kirriemuir, faces old and some new ones if we can. Come along and see what it's all about. It really isn't that bad.

We have nearly 300 members so let's see how many we can get.

Have a good month

Ben Brookes

Murcar Links



Around the Green



WEST

Welcome to this month's report, sorry for no reports over the last couple of months, it's hard to write when there's no information coming in.

I attended the Scottish tournament at Irvine GC during June and had a fantastic day's golf, many thanks to Derek Wilson and his staff as the course was first class, as commented on by players throughout the day. Congratulations to all the prize winners.

On the football front we're still up for a challenge from any other Section so please get in touch to arrange a game.

This year's night out will be held at the Comedy Club, dates to be confirmed probably around the end of November, tickets will be on sale from committee members.

Our AGM will be held at Renfrew Golf Club during October, there will also be a seminar hosted by Scott's and golf provided at the end, date to be confirmed members will be lettered with more information.

We will be playing our annual match against the steward during November at Douglas Park GC, dates will be printed in my next report.

Hopefully by next month the weather will be a little better as it hasn't stopped raining for the last month, well that's all for now see you next month hopefully with more information on Section news.

Fraser Ross
07970 366 355



NORTHERN REGION - NORTH EAST

There were 29 teams of three playing in the Regional Qualifier of the John Deere Team Championship at Close House, of which 28 represented local clubs (John Deere pays £25 per team to BIGGA). The forecast was not good, but they were very lucky and seemed to avoid the rain for most of the day.

An enjoyable day was had by all with everyone commenting on the excellent condition of the course, our compliments to Brian Clark and his staff, thanks also to Steve Pope for representing BIGGA North East and for helping with the scoring on the day - Steve has helped every time with the competition and we couldn't do it without him.

First place (after count back) went to Barry Walker and his team from the City of Newcastle GC, who will have already played in at Turnberry by the time you receive this, 2nd was Alnmouth GC, 3rd Tyneside GC - only one shot separated those teams.

Congratulations are in order for Steven Richardson (my son) of Tyneside GC on his recent marriage on August 2. Also, welcome back to greenkeeping to Michael McKenna who has started working at Hexham GC after been out of the profession for a few months.

Hexham GC are in the news again - an extension to their current work shed is likely to get the go-ahead once planning permission is granted, work is expected to commence in late summer.

As you can see my email address has changed any news is welcome.

Jimmy Richardson
jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com



NORTH WEST

I am sure many people, more knowledgeable than I am, have said this: congratulations to Chris Whittle and all the staff that helped to make this year's Open so successful. The course was in magnificent condition as me and my Deputy, Simon, found out on the Tuesday.

We took time to visit Chris and his staff and were so surprised as to how laid back they were, with everything happening all around them, it was a testament to their professionalism and a pleasure to gain some inside information on the preparation of the course. Well done also to the Support Team, it could not have been easy with the weather conditions as they were.

Last but not least well done to John and Scott and all involved at BIGGA House in organising the Support Team and the facilities at The Open for the greenkeepers. I am always blown away with the organisation involved with The Open and it's great to know that the Greenkeeping Association forms a major part of it.

I know that every time I write these notes I ask for members to contact me but no-one ever does, well why don't you send any ideas you have on how you would like to see the Section go forward. Do you want seminars in the winter? Do you have suggestions for the spring seminar? Do you want to have functions where our wives can be invited? Are you happy with the format for the golf tournaments? Any views would be gratefully received.

I can be contacted on: 0151 2894625
or my email is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



SHEFFIELD

Firstly, I would just like to say sorry about the lack of news lately, please get in touch with me about anything at all then at least we will have some news in our Section!

On July 7, we held our annual competition at Grange Park Golf Club - who I would like to thank for giving us the courtesy of their course, it is much appreciated.

Thanks go to Steve Pickering and his staff for the excellent condition of Grange! Well done Steve.

Thanks also to Dave and Russ from Mansfield Sand for once again sponsoring the competition, everyone appreciates your support. Thanks as well to the catering staff for providing us with an excellent meal.

As usual there was some very good golf played, especially if you were from Chesterfield Golf Club (top three places), the eventual winner was Matt Kiegher with a nett 72, well done Matt.

The Best Gross winner was Darren Coop with a gross 75, well done Darren.

The results were:

1st M Keigher, nett 72;

2nd A Bunting, nett 73;

3rd D Coop, nett 74bb9;

4th S Brown, nett 74bb3 (watch your handicap!);

5th J Stevens, nett 74;

Nearest the Pin on 6th was won by A Unwin and on the 16th by A Riley.

The Guest Winner was Tony Dobson with a nett 76.

The Sheffield Section versus the Northern Section match was held at Ottley Golf Club - unfortunately we lost it 4-2, oh well better luck next time lads.

The day was organised and sponsored by Mike Brier, from Rigby Taylor, thanks for your support of both Sections.

Any news please contact me on: 07793111845
or email me at: jvl1967@sky.com

John Lax



NORTH WALES

With the kids going back to school and the days shortening autumn is well and truly in the air, with that in mind, don't forget to dig out your entry forms for the autumn tournament and AGM at Upton GC (ch2 .lee) on 8th October, the AGM was really well attended last year it would be impressive if we could keep that level of attendance again this year. Anyone who can't find their entry forms can get in touch with Jeremy Hughes if they want to book a tee time.

The BIGGA website now has details of regional fixtures and events, all you have to do is sign on to their site, www.bigga.org.uk and click on calendar/events it's that easy!

In local news Steve Roberts has taken his experience to a new club as he has taken up the position of Head Greenkeeper at Northop GC.

Bryn Roberts, of Eaton GC, married in Jersey in August I'm reliably informed, I'm sure we all wish him and his new wife a long and happy marriage.

On a sad note Paul Davies, of Conwy GC, passed away after a very short illness on July 9, aged 53, The Section as a whole pass on their sympathy to his family and friends.

Pete Maybury 07756001187

Johnny Evans

Johnny.Evans @tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION - MIDLANDS

Well what happened to the supposed drought we were promised for this summer? Strikes me that we have had a year very similar to last year. Come on now, all on your knees and pray to Ra to come out and play.

Please don't forget to attend our AGM which is being held at Fulford Heath GC on September 25, at 6:30pm. Please attend your thoughts are of great importance to your hard working committee. We cannot serve you if we don't know what you want!

The Section's thanks go to Nia Frost/Scotts for this month's calendar page. Please visit: www.scottspromotional.co.uk for your fertiliser needs.

Well that's about it for this month. If you want more in our notes then please inform me of any news on the well published channels.

Sean McDade



Around the Green



EAST OF ENGLAND

Well September has arrived and I am sure most people are saying, "where has the summer gone?" that's if we actually had more than a week of consecutive summer weather!

Everyone's thoughts will now be turning to autumn maintenance programmes, how much aeration and other work can be done to those surfaces we have so delicately prepared for the last few months. I am sure we will all be faced with the same question from members, "the greens looked so good, why do you have to do all this damage to them?" If anyone has any tips, or different techniques they are trying this year, and would like to share them with the rest of us, then let me know.

Our last golf day was held at Gainsborough Golf Club on July 8. A good turnout, reasonable weather and a well-conditioned golf course ensured a good day was had by all.

The day was won by Graeme MacDonald - finally winning an event after coming close in the last couple. Second place went to Rob Bemment and third place to Brian Robinson. The Trade winner was Ian Collett and James Sharp got Nearest the Pin.

Many thanks to all at Gainsborough Golf Club for making us feel so welcome and to Toro and Nigel Lovatt for sponsoring the day.

Our next event is our match vs the secretaries, which will be taking place at Radcliffe on Trent on September 24. The team will be being organised by Rob Welford so he will let those playing know in due course.

Our Section champions for the year are as follows: Steve Hopkins, Main Order of Merit. Rob Bemment, Under 25s Order of Merit. Gary Cooper, Trade Order of Merit.

National Championship Qualifiers, sponsored by Kubota, are as follows: Graeme MacDonald, 0-9 handicap; Brian Robinson, 10-18 handicap; Chris Wilkinson, 19-28 handicap.

Congratulations to all above champions and to everybody who won prizes during our individual golf days this year. Also many thanks to all competitors, organisers, golf clubs and sponsors for making our golf days a success.

A reminder about our final two golf days of 2008, they are the AGM Texas Scramble at Belton Park on October 2 and our Christmas pairs bring and win event at Holme Hall on December 8 - more details nearer the time. A winter education program is also being put together, details to follow soon.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club
Steveimmingham@aol.com
www.eastofenglandbigga.com



SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Thursday, August 7. I should apologise for not participating in last month's magazine but I'm not going to. News was scarce, I had not been on holiday, no babies, no weddings, no golf tournaments and the only major forthcoming events were my Ruby anniversary on July 13 and my birthday on August 2. Not wanting to bore you with the details I will only say that I have never looked so dashing and my wife so lovely, that is of course if you forget about our wedding day back in 1968. I can still remember...

The match against the members of Wimbledon Common GC on July 18 was postponed so some of the selected team were invited by Gavin Kyle to play his course at Knole Park - Just two nights before I had accidentally kicked the leg of my bed while returning from the privy. The air was as blue as my left foot was going to look in the morning and it was still very sore when we teed off two days later at Knole Park.

Being made of true British grit I said nothing and kept my pain to myself. Ron Christie and Tony Bremer, my playing partners, knew nothing of my suffering until I was trying to negotiate my trolley around an ant hill, I kicked the said hill with my injured foot and fell head over heels with a heart rending "Agh!" and landed on my back with feet and legs in the air. My playing companions, with much compassion, only fell about laughing when I got to my feet unaided and declared that I had no broken bones. I hobbled the rest of the course with only my wonderful birdie on hole 3 as compensation.

You will be pleased to know that my foot is much better and ready for the challenge of Sunningdale GC on September 1 and Richmond GC on Sept 18.

You will remember the lost father in July's edition and may be wondering what happened. Well Paul Robinson has laid claim to baby James Owen and I am pleased to report that father, son and mother, Gemma, are all very well.

Graeme Roberts, son of Gareth, at present working in America has been nominated as a finalist in Toro's Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition. Well done Graeme and the best of luck. Mark Pennel, Drift GC, was the first to text a new pitch mark repairer and was much impressed as was his 18th green. Matt Lawrence, Guildford GC, is expecting a second addition to his family at the end of August and exclusive details will appear here when the time comes. As you can assume from this month's 'news' I am desperate and will write about almost anything including in-growing toenails, your favourite hairdresser and even your first night at the line-dancing club.

Brian Willmott



KENT

I truly cannot believe that I am writing September's magazine report already - this year has just been a blur!

Lots to report on this month for a change. Firstly, yours truly is celebrating 25 years as a greenkeeper! I could wax lyrical for pages of this magazine about the many highs and a few lows I have experienced in my time on the four courses I have worked at but, in a nutshell, all the high points revolve around the many professional greenkeepers I have met in my career and our combined focus on producing a fine golf course for our guests. The best years, however, have been here at Birchwood. A combination of decent employers, employees, golfing clientele and, ultimately my involvement with BIGGA and you guys on the Kent Section have kept me going through the odd moments when the clouds have appeared. Long may it all continue and here's to the next 25 years!

On to golfing issues and what an Open Championship we have just witnessed at the truly magnificent links of Royal Birkdale. Congratulations to everyone involved in producing and hosting a memorable competition. Pdraig Harrington was not even expected to play at the start of the tournament due to a wrist injury but his back nine on the final day was just perfect golf played by a true gentleman of the game. All of our courses get a boost when such a great Open Championship is staged, especially when it is won by such a popular British character, so many thanks to all who helped in it's success.

Back in Kent we recently played our Summer Tournament at Canterbury Golf Club. Many thanks to Mick McGarret and his team on producing a great test of golf for us on the day. Thanks also to our gracious hosts at Canterbury Golf Club for the courtesy of the course, a great dinner and for donating a couple of prizes. Results were as follows: 1st Wayne Syers, 42pts; 2nd Barry Bradshaw 39pts; 3rd Paul Rudkin 37pts; 4th Kev Morris 36 pts.

I wouldn't normally mention who came fourth but our esteemed Chairman, Kev, was truly gutted that he was beaten by one point to the prizes! The Handicap hatchet man will definitely be looking at Wayne Syers' 24 handicap before our next event. Barry Bradshaw also won Nearest the Pin and Duncan Kelso's prize for the Longest Drive of the day was a trolley. This wouldn't normally merit much of a mention but Duncan has never used a trolley in his life and he did his best to see how many people he could trip over with it by parking it strategically behind his chair at the post golf meal!

Although I played like an old donkey on the day, the practice obviously did me good as a week later I managed my first (and probably only) hole-in-one while playing with Kev Morris in his Captain's Day event at Redlibbits! Many thanks to Kev for the invitation to play on his superbly presented course and providing me with a memory to be treasured forever!

Don't forget our next event is now upon us and is to be played on the

links of North Foreland GC, on September 24. We are not due to meet up until 10.30 on the day so plenty of time for us guys "Way Out West" to make the very worthwhile trip across to this glorious section of Kentish coastline. Entry forms are, as ever, available online at: kentgreenkeepers.co.uk Please do fill them in and send them to me at Birchwood Park as we need to be able to confirm numbers with host golf clubs for their catering requirements at least a week prior to the event. Also we still have a couple of slots available if anyone would like to nominate themselves to host an event early next year. Please contact Kev or myself if you are willing to have us at your course.

I'm off on my summer holidays now down to the south of France.

Keep smiling guys! Best of British (and French!)
Rob Holland



ESSEX

Only a few days to go before my staff and I entertain the Section at Three Rivers, this is made doubly hard as our sister club Stock Brook, The Country Club has their annual three day Pro tournament and Pro-am in the same week and staff from Three Rivers help out for the three days of their tournament. We shall over come as they say. Though by the time you have read this it will all be a thing of the past.

P Tuckwell Ltd, in conjunction with John Deere, have just hosted the Essex round of the John Deere Team Championship at Abridge GC, Hot of the press as I have just returned from the course that was presented in pristine condition and every one who played came away with only good things to say about the course Thanks to Geoff Smith and his team and Abridge Golf Club for a very enjoyable day and to James Tuckwell and Neil Peachey for entertaining us all so well. 20 teams took part on the day.

The results are as follows: 1st Warley Park GC, Net 60; 2nd Lexdon Wood GC, Net 61; 3rd Abridge GC, Net 61 on count back; Nearest the Pin, Fernando Teixeira, Three Rivers; Longest Drive, Will Sjoberg, Epping. Abridge Golf Club go to the final at Turnberry as the first two teams contained Professionals.

The winter (why we call it the winter tournament, I don't know as we are still in autumn) tournament beckons and we descend on Bently GC on October 2. I'm sure Mark Stopps and his staff will have the course in top class condition for the day. 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.

Arnold Phipps-Jones www.essexbigga.co.uk
Please contact me at essexbigga@talktalk.net
or: 01206-852.353 / 07764-862.337



Around the Green



SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

I started last month's report with Education - Education - Education. I'm probably going to start this month's with Rain - Rain - Rain. Monday, July 28 - we had 27mm in just under 20 minutes and a mini-tornado to boot. Knocked the tops out of dozens of trees, and completely ruined all 120 bunkers. I had to close all the bunkers for the next two days for emergency repairs. Often after a thunderstorm or heavy rain, we'll get the odd bunker with washout - but never ever all of them. In 34 years on golf courses I've never seen anything like it.

Thank God for the petrol Sand Scorpion with a front blade. What a machine for dealing with the big bunkers. Smaller bunkers needed a layer of soil and stones scraping away by hand, and then the Mantis to loosen them up. This is probably only the first stage, as some of the sand is completely spoiled - contaminated with sub-soil and stones. The only remedy is to remove it all in the winter, and start again. It did cross my mind that we could replace all the sand, and then get the next mini-typhoon to put it back to square one again. The bitter irony of this storm was that it came on the very day that we commenced a borehole pump test to investigate whether there is sufficient groundwater for fairway irrigation. Answer - yes - plenty!

Happily, conditions were much more benign for the Summer Tournament at The Bristol. This beautiful new course featured superb views of the two bridges into Wales, manicured fairways, firm fast greens, and good food. This was our first visit, and our thanks go to the Crown Golf Organisation and Laurence Pithie for hosting the event, and particularly to David and his team for the preparation of the course.

Grateful thanks on behalf of the Section. Unfortunately the turnout was a bit disappointing - my apologies also - however, this is your Section, your Association - please do use it. Getting together with other greenkeepers is so important.

More congratulations to the Section Team, captained by Wayne "The Special One" Vincent after the 4-2 trouncing of the South Wales Section at St. Pierre recently. As Wayne said - "always nice to go over the bridge and come back with the trophy!" Speaking to Steve Chappell earlier today, he said the course was fantastic, the food excellent, and plentiful, the weather for once was kind, and "the only thing wrong was the bloody result"! Nothing personal guys and see you next year. Our huge thanks to St. Pierre for allowing us the course yet again.

Thoughts are turning towards the autumn\winter education season. There will be the opportunity for further Excavator Safety Training courses - please let me know by email if you're interested. The first one is likely to be in Somerset so please let me know your early interest. I've been approached by a couple of Section members asking for a seminar specifically on the maintenance and renovation of Bunkers. (In view of the above - this mightn't be such a bad idea for me!) We hope to hold a day or half day on

the construction\reconstruction of bunkers hosted by Laurence Pithie and Richard Whyman early in the winter. Again, please let me know interest. Also - please suggest any other subjects which may be of interest. We would certainly consider further Management Training with Frank Newberry, but again, we need numbers so please let me know.

The AGM is at Marlborough GC in October. This is your chance to speak directly to your committee to try to change anything you don't like about the Section. It is also your chance to put your name forward to serve on the committee to definitely change anything you don't like. So please do make every effort to attend this day, and support your hard working committee. They, like me, are ordinary working greenkeepers who put up a lot of their time because they believe in a strong section and industry. Do please support us.

Finally, if I could close on a personal note. Some private remarks made by me some time ago, have recently appeared in an article in a commercial golf magazine. The article appears to criticize BIGGA for offering poor education. As the BIGGA South West Section Education Officer, I find that rather an odd context in which to place them. My apologies for any embarrassment caused.

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

Greetings to all and welcome to my last Around the Green. What! No more notes from Joe!? So, why the sudden departure? Well I am glad to inform you all that I have been promoted at Vitax and now hold the position of Sales & Marketing Manager for their new Fine Turf Division. I've been so busy and travelling all over the UK the last few months that I am not getting the time to put the reports together the way I like to and also not catching the news and info. When the Golf Day at Burley took place I was in Scotland! The change also means, with much regret that I have to stand down from the committee. I would like to say a very huge thank you to Tony Gadd and all the guys for their help and of course to Jane Jones our fantastic Regional Administrator. But before I get too emotional I would like to add that I still aim to get to some of the Golf Days and would still like to offer my help at the Seminar and of course will still call in to see people at their clubs.

The Summer Tournament was held at Burley GC on Thursday, July 10. The day was an invitation day and as usual turned out to be a great social occasion. The staff and members at Burley were very friendly and helpful. The Section would like to thank Burley GC for their fantastic hospitality and courtesy of the course. A special mention to Alan the starter (so it seems my position for Mr. Starter is under threat!) and Anne who provided a great service with the starter cards. The sponsors for the day were Tacit and we would like to offer a big thank you to them for their continued support. The golf course was in excellent condition and much praise must be given to Tony



Locke and Derek Place for the hard work and effort put in to presenting the course. The food was absolutely amazing by all reports so a big thank you to the staff that served and cooked for us. It sounds like I really did miss a great day! The results were: 1. Tony Gadd & Ray Hunt (B.O.S Captain), 43pts on count back; 2. Kevan Glass & Tony Hindmarch, 43pts; 3. Tony Locke & Richard Moyle (President Burley), 41pts. Longest Drive – Dave Ross. Nearest the Pin – Rob Wills.

The next golf day is the Autumn Tournament which is to be held at Salisbury & South Wilts GC on Thursday, October 9. If you would like to play please contact our Tournament Organiser Kevan Glass at the following address: Apartment 1, Forge Side Court, Lepe Road, Langley, Southampton SO45 1SS or on mobile 07859 053054 or on email: glassy2003@hotmail.com.

I am really pleased to announce the return of Chris Sturgess to the committee and that he will be taking over the Around The Green article every month from now on so if you have any news for the section please contact Chris Sturgess on: 02380 492084 or Mob: 0777313 8409.

Joe Crawley



DEVON AND CORNWALL

Since my last report we have had our summer meeting at Lanhydrock Golf Club in which we had a 'friendly match' - Devon versus Cornwall - where attendance was high on this eagerly anticipated day! The format was 4BBB in which Devon just came out on top winning four matches to three, well done all the Devon players and hard luck to Cornwall. We hope to make this an annual event as it proved to be very popular and enjoyable.

Our thanks go out to Martin Morgan, the Head Greenkeeper and his team, for the superb condition of the course and I have to say certainly one of the prettiest courses I've played, also thanks to the weather or perhaps Abi, our Secretary, for her foresight on the date chosen - we we're blessed with the best day of the year so far!

Tee times were in the afternoon so we had a hot and cold buffet early in the evening which was most enjoyable, our thanks to the catering staff and all at Lanhydrock for a wonderful day. Thanks as usual to our sponsors, Symbio and Toro for the day.

Our first autumn/winter meeting will be at St Mellion, in October, where we have a free trip to BTME as our main draw prize. On the subject of St Mellion, a big thank you to Mike Bush (Course Manager), for his time showing us around in August with all construction work and changes that they are currently undergoing!

Finally details of the workshop in November: Autumn Workshop 2008 - "Communicating with committees"

This workshop will help participants develop a more confident and relaxed approach to presenting. Participants will be more aware of their presentation style and how to adjust it to their audience. Simple techniques will be developed in order to improve self-confidence. Focus will be given on how to make the message of the presentation consistent and compelling. Help will also be given on deciding on the correct visual aids.

The workshop will take place on November 4 at Launceston GC. Cost is £60 (including lunch and refreshments). This course is kindly being subsidised by BIGGA thus offering you some excellent training at an extremely good price. Please contact Graeme Gallimore as soon as possible to confirm your place. A £30 deposit will be required.

Graeme Gallimore
graeme.gallimore@btinternet.com
07782247472

Jerry Cole
greenwaysjrc@aol.com
07764 224582

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

BIGGA's Regional Administrators



Peter Boyd
SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND
Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440
Mobile: 07776 242120
Email: pj.boyd@btinternet.com



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
Tel: 01476 550115
Mobile: 07866 366966
Email: petelarter972@aol.com



Clive Osgood
SOUTH EAST
Tel: 01737 819343
Mobile: 07841 948410
Email: cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST & WALES
Tel: 01454 270850
Mobile: 07841 948110
Email: janejones1@btconnect.com



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ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

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ANSWERS:

- Liverpool
- Mary Decker
- 13
- Lazio
- Kevin Keegan
- 15
- Cricket
- Graham Taylor
- Minnesota

MONSTER SUDOKO

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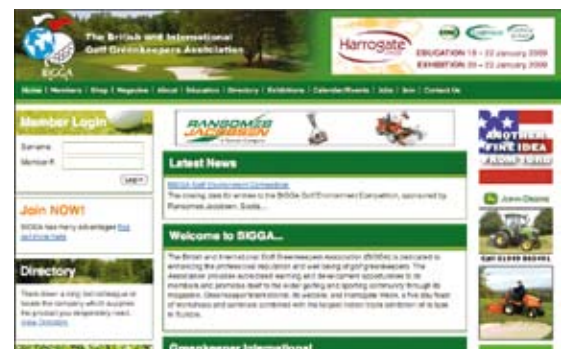
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Chairman's Column

WHATEVER THE WEATHER

As I write we are only in the middle of August and we are getting into holiday season in terms of school holiday cover - the guys among you who are also parents will know what a hassle that can be.

At The Belfry we need to make the most of our quiet times, and August is generally a quieter month in terms of corporate golf, we also want the guys to have some rest-bite before tournament preparations for the Quinn Insurance British Masters in September.

We will be stepping up the hours from after the Bank Holiday in August until the end of the event.

I would like to thank the guys who applied to work at this year's event, we have now notified all the successful applicants and we have final numbers now going into the event.

It has been a strange year but I have been seeing all the bent grass population doing better than in previous years. The golf course is in good shape in terms of preparations, and mainly the bunker renovations are the biggest jobs, checking for sand levels is something that needs attention.

The main concern for the late September event is daylight hours and rainfall. Any delay due to weather means we could struggle to get the event through four days.

Weather wise, this month has been a complete wash-out for the first 15 days of August, we are now starting to see loss of revenue in terms of buggy and trolley use, it feels more like winter golf with rakes and roping off out there.

This is when you wish you were working on a links course or in warmer climates. As you all know in these commercial venues, these lines of revenue are crucial to the business and the decisions we have to make are not only greenkeeping agronomy based but also we have to take account of the business interests in terms of cash flow which pays the wages in a resort.

I would like to recognise Paul Woodham, Course Manager at Gay Hill GC, for the training workshops that he puts so much in to for irrigation and Health & Safety. Once again Paul has hosted a course and it has been really well received with people travelling from far afield which proves there is a big need out there for training. So thanks for that.

We have the IOG Saltex show at Windsor on September 2, 3 and 4. We hope to see many visitors this year on the BIGGA stand and a recruitment drive for new members.

I will be attending the Toro Student of the Year final at Aldwark Manor on Monday, September 15. I am very much looking forward to meeting future stars within our industry. It will be a great day.



I am sure we are all looking forward to the Ryder Cup, as it is not far away as all the Majors have now passed. We are now approaching the final qualifier at Gleneagles and I am sure Nick Faldo will have some thinking to do about his wild cards as it is getting very tight within the qualifying group. I would like to wish Scott Fenwick and his team at Gleneagles all the best for that tournament.

I am looking forward to seeing all our volunteers and anyone within the industry at the Quinn Insurance British Masters here at The Belfry. More about this in next month's column.

Kenny Mackay
Chairman



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