

Incredible Journey Revisited



LEFT: The original run in 1959 and ABOVE: The old team celebrate their achievement 50 years on by handing over a haggis to David Jordan.

Five former students, who rode a Ransomes Matador mower non-stop from Edinburgh to London's Hyde Park in just four days, got back together recently to commemorate their epic journey.

Back in 1959, Tom Hudson, Mike Smith, Mike Savage, Hugh Tansley and John Wilson, who were students at Hatfield Technical College and former employees of the De Havilland Aircraft Company, wanted to test the reliability of small petrol engines.

So, they hatched a plot to see if they could drive a small petrol-engined mower from Edinburgh to London.

They contacted Ransomes, Sims and Jeffries, and Mark Grimwade was tasked with assisting the students.

The mower was slightly modified with a larger sump added to the 288cc Villiers engine to provide enough lubrication for the non-stop 400 mile trip.

The five left Edinburgh Castle in Easter 1959 with Tom Hudson driving the first leg and the others crammed into a Bedford Dormobile. A haggis was placed in the grass box of the mower to be presented to the Keeper of the Royal Parks in London - a Scotsman - at the end of the journey.

Four days and three nights later they rode into Hyde Park to be met by the Royal Park's staff, Ransomes management, a BBC television crew and the press.

The haggis was handed over and a ceremonial strip of Hyde Park grass was mown.

Fifty years on, Mike Smith contacted Ransomes Jacobsen who readily agreed to support the reunion.

Earlier this summer, the Operation Matador team, all now in their early 70s, arrived at the University of Hertfordshire, with a replica of the Ransomes Matador mower, complete with the original number plate and signage.

They then travelled to Hyde Park, where they re-enacted the completion of their journey by mowing a ceremonial strip of grass and presenting a haggis to the Assistant Parks Manager, David Jordan.

"We are absolutely delighted to be in a position to help the Operation Matador team celebrate their epic achievement of 50 years ago.

"It would be difficult to replicate what they achieved, even today, and it was a remarkable feat," said David Withers, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen.

"It says a lot about the quality of the equipment we built back then; a tradition that we carry on today.

"After 50 years, I'm delighted that all of the team are still with us; that we're still producing quality turf care equipment in Ipswich.

And we're still producing the Matador mower, albeit with some technological enhancements from the original!"



JCB MACHINE GIVES LIFT TO LIVING LONDON ART PROJECT

A JCB machine gave a lift – literally - to one of the UK's most inspirational art projects as a living monument was created in the shadow of one of London's most famous landmarks.

For 100 days, a total of 2400 people from across the UK will individually occupy the empty Fourth Plinth, in Trafalgar Square for an hour each through day and night as part of an extraordinary artwork

created by the celebrated sculptor Antony Gormley and entitled One & Other.

The JCB Loadall telescopic handler, swung into action under the gaze of London Mayor Boris Johnson, to lift the first

of those 'artworks', housewife Rachel Wardell, of Lincolnshire, six and a half metres into the air, enabling her to take the small step to becoming the first human occupant of the plinth.



RFS president John Besent, left, presents the James cup to Dr Terry Mabbett

RFS Award Winner

Forestry consultant and Greenkeeper International contributor, Dr Terry Mabbett, has been awarded the James Cup by the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) for a paper reviewing the spread of Bacterial Bleeding Canker - *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *aesculi* – in the UK.

The paper, published in the RFS Quarterly Journal of Forestry (QJF) in October 2008, looked at how this aggressive form of bleeding canker is killing both white flowering and red flowering horse chestnut trees of all ages; at current research into the disease and at the lack of available control measures.

Terry who lives in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, fears that Bacterial Bleeding Canker could be as devastating for the horse chestnut as Dutch elm disease was to the English elm. He warns that local authorities, estate and woodland managers may need to consider planting alternative trees, especially amenity trees, such as walnut, in its stead.

The James Cup is presented by the RFS annually to the author of the best original article for the year in the QJF. The award was presented to Dr Mabbett at a meeting of the RFS London Division in Kew Gardens by the RFS President, John Besent.



The Scottish National Tournament

Cathkin Braes Golf Club, Thursday 11 June 2009

The 2009 Scottish National Tournament was held at Cathkin Braes Golf Club, near Glasgow.

The course sits high on the hills above the City of Glasgow and has magnificent views over the Lanarkshire valley and Glasgow. The good weather could not have been better, a lovely sunny day with just a slight breeze just to make things interesting.

With nearly 90 competitors taking part, everyone was looking forward to playing this fine moorland course. From the beginning the players were not disappointed. The course was in superb condition and Douglas McIntosh and his staff have to be congratulated on producing a first class golf course and one that the members of Cathkin can feel extremely proud.

Scoring was excellent with several fine scores being returned and of course the usual tales of woe about what could have been. Handicaps varied from three plus players in the field, right through to the maximum handicap allowed 24.

The Champion golfer for 2009 was Gordon Sangster, a member at Cathkin Braes Golf Club who, despite having put in a hard shift in the morning returned a fine 70. Gordon who is currently playing off plus 1 is the current Club Champion of Cathkin Braes. The Handicap Champion was young Elliott Gaughan, only 17 years of age, from Hags Castle Golf Club, who returned a magnificent 72 -7- 65.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and, hopefully, they will all be available to defend their trophies at the 2010 Championships at Murcar Golf Club, Aberdeen.

Our thanks go to the Captain and Committee of Cathkin Braes Golf Club for the courtesy and facilities afforded to the players. Thanks also to David Moir, Secretary, and the staff of the club for their assistance prior to and during the Championship.

PRIZE LIST

SGGA Challenge Cup Scratch Champion

Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes GC, 70

Friendship Trophy Best Nett Handicap Champion

Elliott Gaughan, Hags Castle GC, 65

Ransomes Trophy First Class

1. Archie Dunn, Auchterarder GC, 71 (BIH);
2. William McMeiken, Turnberry Hotel, 71; 3. Kenneth Stirling, Kingsbarns, 71

Pattison Trophy Second Class

Duncan Gray, Pines GC, 67; 2. Gary Semple, St. Andrews Links, 72; 3. Jim Wilson, Langlands GC, 73 (BIH)

STRI Trophy Third Class

Gordon McKie, St. Andrews Links, 73; 2. William Kelly, Hags Castle GC, 75; 3. Kevin Cross, Williamwood GC, 77 (BIH)

Dick Aitken Trophy Best Head Greenkeeper

Alan Patterson, St. Andrews Links, 72 (BIH)

M & M Trophy Best Assistant

Craig Wylie, Glasgow GC, 70

Souter Trophy Best Apprentice

Brian Ramsay, Glasgow GC, 75

SIGGA Trophy Best Veteran

Kenneth Mitchell, St. Andrews Links, 73

St.Mungo Trophy Team Trophy

(Best 4 net scores)
West Section Elliott Gaughan, Hags Castle GC, 65; Craig Wylie Glasgow GC, 70; Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes GC, 71 Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC, 72 Total = 278

Patrons/Trade

Alistair Eccles, British Seed Houses, 66

Qualifiers, National

Championship

Gordon Sangster, Club; Cathkin Braes GC
Elliott Gaughan, Club; Hags Castle GC

Peter J Boyd, Regional Administrator

John Deere Announces Biggest Ever Golf Product Launch

John Deere Golf has its customers to thank for the latest new products it is unveiling at their recent European launch.

Pointing to the vital feedback the company receives from its customers, John Deere says operator needs, along with industry experience, have guided the development of each new piece of equipment.

The 2009 line-up – John Deere Golf's largest product launch to date – also draws inspiration from earlier products, combining existing solutions with advanced innovations in engineering.

“John Deere's Feedback programme is all about listening and reacting to what our customers have to say about our products, so that we can design the right equipment with the exact features they're looking for,” said Gregg Breningmeyer, Director of Sales and Marketing for John Deere Golf.

New products include a range of mowers, cutting units and a sprayer, all of which are designed to enable operators to work efficiently and achieve a higher quality finish on golf courses and other sports turf areas.

The 2009 line-up includes:

- Quick Adjust 5 and Quick Adjust 7 cutting units
- 220e E-Cut hybrid walk-behind greens mower
- 7500e and 8500e E-Cut hybrid fairway mowers
- 8000e E-Cut hybrid fairway mower
- 7200 PrecisionCut trim & surrounds mower
- 8800 TerrainCut rotary roughs mower
- HD200 SelectSpray turf sprayer



Wiedenmann UK and Ernest Doe Join Forces

“Keep it simple,” was the key theme for around 30 Head Greenkeepers, contractors and local authority managers who attended a workshop at Diss Golf Club, Norfolk. Hosted by Ernest Doe and Wiedenmann UK, the event featured two motivational sessions from golf course management expert, Laurence Pithie.

“All industries at the moment are under pressure to complete tasks more efficiently and more quickly. Ours is no different,” said organiser, Eddie Jack, Groundscare Sales Specialist at Ernest Doe, North Walsham.

“Laurence stressed how important it is not to over-complicate working practices, to do the basics to the very best of your ability and

not lose sight of the fundamental requirements of your business.”

Outdoor sessions included an up-close inspection of the Wiedenmann fleet of Terra Spikes. Chas Ayres, Wiedenmann UK’s Sales Manager, demonstrated many of the benefits of deep tining and decompaction that Laurence Pithie had addressed earlier and culminated his presentation with a “race against tine” - three Terra Spikes - the XD, the XF and the XP all going head-to-head in a race off using different spacings and tine lengths.

“It was a fun way to end what had been a really purposeful and enlightening workshop, said Eddie Jack.

European Turfgrass Laboratories Ltd Re-accredited

European Turfgrass Laboratories Ltd, based in Stirling, Scotland are pleased to announce that they have been re-accredited by the A2LA (American Association for Laboratory Accreditation) in the Geotechnical/Putting Green Materials field of testing (Certificate No. 903.01) for the seventh time. ETL have been accredited in this field since 1997 and this accreditation is now extended until April 2011.

Accreditation is a key component to the business and it ensures that ETL remain on the soil physical testing laboratories list approved by the USGA - currently, 1 of 10 such laboratories in the world to achieve this status.

The re-accreditation process is carried out every two years where an external assessor from the A2LA visits the laboratory and audits the quality management system, the premises and the staff. This constant monitoring ensures that ETL remains one of the leading sportsturf testing centres in the world.

ETL’s scope of accreditation includes analysis required for testing to the 2004 USGA Recommendations. Copies of this scope are available upon request. Information about all the laboratory services and prices can be downloaded from the new ETL website: www.etl-ltd.com.

Exclusive Agreement for Farmura

Farmura has signed an exclusive agreement with E-Nema GmbH to distribute its biological products Nema-green (Chafer Grubs) and Nemastar (Leatherjackets) in England, Scotland and Wales.

With increasing pressure on chemical usage the need for biological sustainable alternatives is going to grow in the future.

Farmura has been seeking a partner to provide these alternative products for some time and E-nema is a leader in this field. The products have been tried and tested in Europe and are being used with great success on golf courses.

Water Environment Regulations Update

The Water Environment (Oil Storage) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 came into effect in April 2006 and are law. There is now less than a year to go before full compliance of this legislation is required.

Are you prepared? Here are the main parts;

The regulations come into effect in three stages:

- Where facilities that commenced after 1 April 2006, new tanks must now comply.
- Where facilities commenced before 1 April 2006, existing tanks that are at significant risk (for example, if they are located within 10 metres of any surface water or 50 metres of a borehole or well) must comply by 1 April 2008.
- All remaining existing tanks must comply by 1 April 2010.

All of the following oils are included in the regulations;

- Petrol
- Diesel
- Mineral oil
- Heating oil
- Lubricating oil
- Waste oil
- Vegetable and plant oil

The regulations apply to any kind of container which is used and stored on premises above ground, whether inside or outside a building. This includes

fixed tanks, intermediate bulk containers, drums (oil drums or similar containers used for storing oil) or mobile bowlers.

Premises covered include;

- Industrial businesses
- Commercial businesses
- Institutions (residential and non-residential)
- Farms

There are few exemptions but these include;

- Oil stored in vehicles
- The storage of oil on premises used wholly or mainly as a single private dwelling, with an oil storage capacity of less than 2,500 litres. [New or altered tanks should comply with applicable Regulations under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.

The regulations go much further than their English counterparts and are considered more thorough. Full details of the act can be seen on the following website; www.sepa.org.uk/water/regulations/regimes/pollution_control/oil_storage.aspx

Here you will find useful links to more detailed information and advice.

www.course-care.co.uk
Tel: 0845 600 3572
info@highspeed.co.uk



GOLF MANAGEMENT TROPHY DAY

Sponsored by
**Scotts (UK)
Professional**

A Midland Region Golf Management Trophy Day sponsored for the 12th successive year by Scotts UK Professional was held at Newark Golf Club last month.

Teams from 14 golf clubs enjoyed a great day on a superbly presented course, prepared by Course Manager, Graeme Macdonald and his staff. One or two heavy rain showers made the day more challenging, but the course stood up really well. Everyone was made to feel very welcome by all the staff and members at Newark Golf Club, and our thanks are extended to all at the Club.

The established format of four man teams playing Stableford with the best two points scores on each hole to count. The home team led by Course Manager Graeme Macdonald became the first club to win this event on home soil with 85 points; Stourbridge Golf Club was 2nd with 83 points on countback, and 3rd was Trentham Park Golf Club also with 83 points. Nearest the line on the 7th was won by Barry Gaynor, from John O'Gaunt Golf Club, (his drive was actually on the line!), and Bill Tyler, from Rothley Park Golf Club, won nearest the pin on the 17th hole. The photograph shows the winning team from Newark Golf Club receiving the trophy. From left to right: Lew White, Chairman of Green; Barre Ramsbottom, Club Captain; Graeme Macdonald, Course Manager; David Collingwood, Club Secretary, and Simon Hardcastle from Scotts.

The Midland Region of BIGGA thank Newark Golf Club for hosting the event and Scotts for their continued sponsorship.

*Peter Larter,
Midland Regional Administrator*

Rufford rootzone system used in modernisation and restoration project on Wentworth's famous West Course



Mick Higgins (left) and Jonathan Skelton (centre) of Rufford overseeing the project with Course Manager, Chris Kennedy.

Rufford's specialist rootzone system, TurfStart, is being used in the modernisation and restoration of Wentworth's West Course. Work began in June to reconstruct and modernise all 18 greens and surrounds on the West Course to a USGA specification, replacing the current poa greens with colonial bent grass.

The new greens are being constructed with TurfStart to encourage faster establishment and healthier grass.

The rootzone system is a combination of graded sand, a blend of organic amendments, Devon lignite and a controlled-release fertiliser. Supplied by Rufford from its quarry at Redhill in Surrey, the rootzone has been specially designed for the Wentworth project to full USGA specification.

In previous projects, both seed and turf grown using TurfStart has succeeded in a much faster establishment than turf grass grown using conventional construction techniques, producing a root mass up to 60%

greater and increasing the rate of ground cover by as much as 60%.

"Our TurfStart rootzone system has repeatedly proved itself in establishing healthier greens in a much shorter space of time. It lends itself perfectly to the West Course modernisation scheme and we are delighted to be part of the team assembled to deliver one of the most important projects in Wentworth's history," said Mick Higgins, Rufford's Technical Manager.

"This is something we've wanted to do for some time and I'm very pleased that the opportunity has now arisen," said Chris Kennedy, Course Manager at Wentworth Club.

"The objective is to produce a USGA specification consistent surface of the highest quality on every green on the West Course. Working closely with Ernie Els, the 7-time Champion on the West, we have reviewed each green so as to ensure that they become a fitting test for the modern day golfer while staying true to Harry Colt's original vision."