

BOND, JAMES BOND

For 41 years, Windlesham village has been running its annual pram race.

The idea is to run through the village collecting money from the several thousand people who come to watch. The race starts at the Brickmakers Arms in Windlesham village, which borders Sunningdale Golf Club, and finishes at The Sun pub in the centre of the village, it takes place every Boxing Day and anyone can enter.

A team of eight greenkeepers from Sunningdale Golf Club took part, constructing an Aston Martin D85 (from the film Goldfinger) pram with James Bond being their theme.

95 prams took part this year – the Sunningdale lads were fortunate enough to be issued with 007 as their pram number - and in total 751 people ran, all raising money for local charities in Windlesham, such as local schools, disabled sections of local cricket and football clubs, and the local British Legion.

“The race consisted of the arduous task of pushing our pram and running to all six pubs in Windlesham, stopping at each for a pint or a short, covering a total of about four miles,” explained Murray Long, Courses & Estates Manager at Sunningdale GC. “An awards presentation by the Major was held at the final pub with prizes for categories: Best Pram, Best Engineered Pram and Fastest Pram – needless to say very few people take part in the fastest after three pints! Unfortunately we didn’t come away with any prizes but had a great time.”



Sunningdale Greenkeepers ‘License to Thrill’. L to R: Dan Turner, Chris Sherrington, Murray Long, Dan Martin, Ben Kebby, Jamie (Jaws) Wilson, Steven Richardson, Fabion (Odd Job) Maissonny.

SCARLET AND GREEN

Scarlets RFC has moved into its new home stadium at the Parc Y Scarlets in Pemberton, Llanelli, the first UK rugby ground to feature a Fibrelastic turf pitch.

The new surface, installed by Inscapes, is maintained by Head Groundsman, Dean Gilasbey, and Assistant, Sion Bennett, with the help of a small but hard-working fleet of new John Deere machines, supplied by dealer Powercut of Carmarthen. Powercut have been John Deere dealers in South Wales for over 20 years, and as such their wealth of knowledge and high levels of service are greatly valued by customers.

The fleet includes a new TX Gator utility vehicle and 3520 compact tractor equipped with

ComfortGard cab and Galaxy low ground pressure tyres, and a one year old 2653B utility mower, all bought on John Deere Credit finance.

Dean returned to Llanelli earlier this year to oversee the installation of the Fibrelastic surface, having previously spent 13 years with the Scarlets before a three year spell working at the Ospreys Liberty Stadium in Swansea with Hewitt Sportsturf.

“I definitely believe this is the way to go as far as rugby pitches are concerned,” he said. “The reinforced construction means there is some elasticity in the surface, so there’s a better feel to the grass and overall the players get a much better experience.”

NEW JOB LOSSES AT JCB

JCB has announced a further 684 redundancies in the UK primarily as a result of the lack of credit available from banks to fund machine purchases and continuing low confidence. Production in the UK in the first three months of 2009 will be around 75 per cent lower than at the same time last year and an anticipated upturn in the second quarter now shows no sign of materialising.

JCB’s Staffordshire plants affected by the redundancies are: the World HQ, Rocester; JCB Heavy Products, Uttoxeter; JCB Compact Products, JCB Earthmovers and JCB Cecilly Mills Operations, Cheadle and JCB Cab Systems, Rugeley. JCB Transmissions, Wrexham and JCB Power Systems, Derbyshire are also affected.

In October GMB members voted for a shorter, 34-hour working week, a move which continues to protect a further 332 shop floor jobs. Last week - when there was no production at JCB – the company undertook its biggest-ever training initiative in its history, with more than 2,000 employees completing a programme which will result in achievement of NVQ and City and Guilds qualifications.

The latest job losses affect 593 shopfloor and 91 staff positions and are in addition to 1,000 redundancies announced since July. JCB employs around 7,900 globally, with around 4,800 in the UK. JCB has more than 4,300 employees in Staffordshire.

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