

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

- One Tractor: Two Sets Of Wheels And Tyres
- Course Feature: Caldy Golf Club
- Overseeding: Get Better Results This Season
- The Importance Of Aeration

£5.20
MARCH | 2009

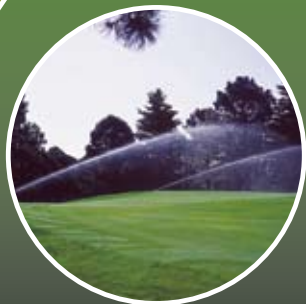
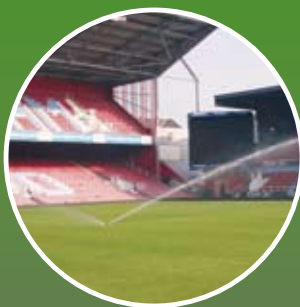


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CARBON FOOTPRINT**
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Welcome



Getting it Wrong!

It's only when you see someone else getting it wrong in outrageous fashion that you appreciate that we're not that bad after all.

It was those very thoughts which entered my head when I heard about the problems in Antigua with the Second Test between the West Indies and England. How it could have got to the stage where only ten balls could be bowled before deciding that it was too dangerous to continue is totally beyond me. It was the shortest Test Match in the history of the game but it will be remembered for more

than just that record. Indeed those ten balls included many aborted attempts to get to the end of their run ups by the opening bowlers.

In golf the European Tour carry out several pre-event visits by the Tournament Director and their own greenkeeping staff to establish if there are any long term problems or minor tweaks to be made to ensure that the course is ready for a top quality sporting event. These are dealt with in plenty of time to ensure when the players and officials arrive there are no horrible surprises.

In Antigua everyone and his dog seemed to know that the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium was a disaster borne out of poor construction when it was being built and that any attempts to play the match would be fraught with difficulty. But the players still got as far as starting the match, risking injury not to mention ridicule from the rest of the sporting world. It would suggest that the on-going monitoring that the European Tour carries out on a routine basis doesn't even occur in the most simplistic of fashions in Test cricket.

That's not to say that other sports are immune from problems. In golf we had the situation in Australia where the greens were so slick it was impossible to stop a ball on them and play had to be abandoned when the wind got up slightly. In football, floodlight failure causes the occasional abandonment while who can forget the ludicrous abandonment of the 1993 Grand National when the starter tried to call back the runners after a false start using only a rolled up flag. Each is daft in its own way and perfectly preventable, given a little forethought, planning and appropriate checking procedures, but they are still dwarfed by the magnitude of the Antiguan farce.

If I had been a fully paid up member of the Barmy Army and decided to nip over to the West Indies to cheer on the boys after they had gone one down in the Test Series I'd be more than a little disappointed, not to mention severely out of pocket. Sporting authorities need to be on the ball enough to prevent such debacles from taking place.

Cricket certainly doesn't have its troubles to seek. Having just heard the announcement that American billionaire Sir Alan Stanford, the major benefactor of West Indian cricket and more recently English cricket, is being investigated for fraud by the US authorities that funding may dry up.

It doesn't rain but it pours for the game of cricket but many of the problems are avoidable.

Scott MacCallum
Editor



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PUTTING THE ENVIRONMENT FIRST

Scott MacCallum visits 2008 Environment Competition winner Caldy and discovers a club where environmental management is on every agenda

When Caldy Golf Club was announced as winner of the 2008 BPGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Bannerman Jacobson, Scott, Spink and Golf Monthly, it was the culmination of a dream, not to mention a bit of hard work, for Course Manager, Carl Crocker.

Carl had led the competition while at Clontarf Golf Club, in Essex, and when he arrived on the island in 2004, he found, in Head Greenkeeper, Ian Farrell, a real commitment when it came to environmental work advancing the club to move forward as a club.

"On Clontarf I did some great work with the STPA, Bob Taylor, and we carried on doing the same sort of things when I came up here," said Carl.

And it would be far to say that what has been achieved at Caldy more than makes them an enviable Environment Competition Champion.

"We won the Northern Region Award in 2005 and the feedback then was that we could bring the clubhouse side of things on board so we could go even further and not to just also win. Our Section Manager, Gail Cropper, got to board and made real improvements in the clubhouse."

Carl had higher priority and organizing yourselves slightly differently was the key.

"We have put out glass recycling boxes in places and it was just a case of making a few phone calls. The services are out there or little or not out in the club but just take the trouble to investigate," he said.

The initiative was well received with the management, further negotiation, and a new road built at the clubhouse, but everything the Caldy team does has environmental considerations.

The Award presentation during the 2008 Week unfolded that commitment.

"It was accompanied by a Paul Capson and BPGA member who, without any prompting, turned

to me and said that we had to look on from here, that BPGA Vice Chairman, Paul Weston, Course Manager of our former Memberclub Caldy had to show how much the club had moved forward for the environment."

Carl has managed to acquire a couple of trophies in this last year golf clubs which he has to live management strategies.

"When Ian and Gail took over as Chairman and Manager - they even got me a sweatshirt with that on it - but here I'm only known as Chopper, as I haven't been quite so aggressive, but then we haven't needed to be."

to build an old tip. That tip is managed now and is a conservation area that we have to look after for the phone has now gone."

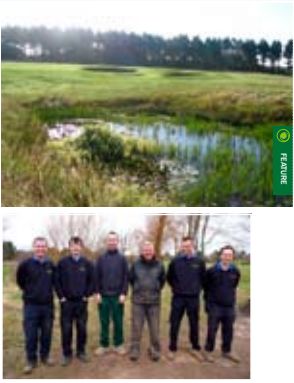
The common theme of planting trees and then reporting trees to BPGA perfectly with no ongoing

he said, adding that he knows of clubs where the policy is written in stone that trees should not be touched.

"Conservation not preservation should be the motto," he explained.

"The work was carried out in 2005, the weekend year on record, and many members thought we'd completed the course. However, due to the strong character of the Captain, and particularly the then Green Chairman, Sam Dickinson, they carried on not finishing a job they had expected to complete and Ian Farrell, when it had been scheduled for completion in March/April before the main golf season. But a golf course is a fantastically regenerative place and if people want to go and have their trees brought to me where the drive are," said Carl, who although not at the club when the work was done has certainly benefited from it.

"That system is the foundation of us many of the things we've done since. For example, we've been able to carry out some work when before it would have been too wet and I know that whatever we are doing we do more than that. So members form a drive," said Carl, looking back at a project which featured in the May 2002 edition of Greenkeeper International.



The Caldy Team with Ian Farrell, far left.



6 When I was at Orsett I was known as Chairman Masquerade - they even got me a sweatshirt with that on it - but here I'm only known as Chopper, as I haven't been quite so aggressive, but then we haven't needed to be.

Course Manager, Carl Crocker

environment is something Carl has seen.

"The game hasn't been around for 20 years and you can't expect to play over the current updates and have them manage themselves."

The club made a huge breakthrough around the turn of the century when it addressed a chronic watering problem and spent around £200,000 putting in a comprehensive drainage system.



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FEATURES

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Scott MacCallum visits Caldy Golf Club

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Paul Lowe, Course Manager of Bromborough GC and Derek Hartley, Green Chairman, offer some advice



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A closer look at what a carbon footprint consists of and offer advice as to how you can go about reducing yours...

45-48 The Importance of Aeration
By Philip Threadgold



33-44 Reducing Your Carbon Footprint



33-44 Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

Cover photography courtesy of Rigby Taylor



ERIC KULAAS WINS EDWIN BUDDING AWARD

Eric Kulaas, Equipment Manager at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club in St. Vincent, Florida, is the second winner of the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association Edwin Budding Award, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen.

The Award was created to recognise technical professionals in the turf equipment sector whose actions have gone above and beyond the norm to help shape the golf industry into what it is today. Edwin Budding was one of those individuals who helped define golf, not as a player, but as an engineer. He designed the first cylinder mower, which has shaped golf as we know it today.

Eric was selected by a committee of industry professionals chosen by IGCEMA back in November 2008. He was presented with his award by David Withers, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, at a ceremony at Harrogate Week.

“The IGCEMA wanted to recognise individuals who demonstrate the same qualities as Edwin Budding; influence significant change in our industry above and beyond normal day-to-day work. IGCEMA has created an award for actual, measurable accomplishments, to make an accurate judgment of contributions made to the industry, and reward those contributions,” said David.



David Withers (far left) of the award sponsors, Ransomes Jacobsen, and Eric Kulaas (third from right) with representatives from IGCEMA at the presentation of the Edwin Budding Award.

AERATION RESTORES

Six thousand square metres of severely compacted turf at St. James' Park, London are on the way to recovery, following one-metre deep compressed air de-compaction treatment.

Terrain Aeration was hired to treat turf areas compacted during the Olympic Handover Concert last August.

“After the concert we were left with severe compaction in the area behind the temporary stage,” said Assistant Park Manager, David Ellis.

Terrain Aeration employed its largest terralift machine, Airforce along with the smaller lighter model, Airforce Scamper to treat the area, inserting a one-metre probe and injecting compressed air at two metre spacings on a staggered grid pattern.



EIRIAS PARK HOSTS FIRST NORTH WEST SHOW

Groundsmen and Greenkeepers from all over the North West will be converging on Eirias Park Stadium, Colwyn Bay this month (March 18) for the first one day seminar and trade show specifically organised to serve the region.

This joint, non profit making initiative by Conwy Borough Council and Vitax Amenity includes a free seminar programme with subjects ranging from

‘A Biological Approach to Pest Management in Green Flag Parks’ by Becker Underwood to ‘The Use of Selective Weed Killers and Weed Control Products’ by Vitax Amenity.

Working demonstrations of ‘line marking’, ‘spiking and slitting’ and ‘sandbanding’ will take place in the central arena, which will be encircled by trade stands representing companies and

organisations as diverse as Tacit, Sisis, Denby Plant Hire and The Welsh College of Horticulture.

The Eirias Park show is on Wednesday, March 18 at Eirias Park Stadium, Colwyn Bay from 10am to 4.30pm.

For further information on either visiting or exhibiting contact Colin Turner on Tel: 07816 849559 or: 01756 791482.

FIRST CITY AND GUILD CLASS

BIGGA Life Member, Bob Moffat, has uncovered a photograph from, he thinks, the late '60s or early '70s containing some well known personalities within the industry, who were the first to sit City and Guilds exams in Scotland.

Bob, who now lives in Hampshire, recalls the background to the C&G programme being set up.

"To the best of my memory it was one day I met a person on the 18th fairway of Cathkin Braes GC, where I was Head Greenkeeper, in the late 1960s or early 1970s. That person was Charles Crossan, Head Teacher at Woodburn House, and he asked if I had anything to do with, the then, SIGGA. I was the Secretary. The next question was would the Association be interested in training to City & Guild standard as he was very interested and would contact C&G and would come back to the Association.

"My reply was that I would bring the matter to Committee. I am pleased to say that is where

it all started," said Bob.

"Cecil George, of Lenzie GC, and myself were the first Greenkeepers to become practical examiners at Woodburn House."

Below is a photo of what Bob believes is the first class to sit C&G.

"There are many familiar faces among them, anybody recognise these people? I have some names as on the list below.

"Ronnie Bunting, Jim Grainger, Chris Kennedy, Lauchlan McGill, David McIndoe and Bill Paterson. These lads may be in the photo. The two beside Cecil are Mr Crossan and Mr Macdonald, both teachers."

Please send in any old greenkeeper pictures you may have to scott@bigga.co.uk



WINNER CHOOSES EDUCATION

Andrew Flemmings, from Filey Golf Club, was the lucky winner of a £50 voucher for BIGGA merchandise having had his ticket drawn from the hat on the Vitax Amenity stand at Harrogate Week 2009.

Andrew, whose ticket also invited him to the "Stress Relief on a US Open Course" seminar conducted for Vitax by Colin Burns, General Manager

of Winged Foot Golf Club, was delighted. "I'm going to spend the prize on a BIGGA's education course," he said.

New National BIGGA Chairman, Peter Todd did the honours while the "hat" was one of Vitax Amenity's new Supaturf Spreaders on display on the stand.

APOLOGY

Last month's article "Quality Control at Hewarth GC" unfortunately did not include contact details for the contributing companies: **Full Circle Irrigation Services**, Tel: 01423 799900 email: info@fullcircleirrigation.co.uk, and **John Deere Ltd**, Tel: 0800 085 2522 Website: www.johndeere.co.uk.
Our apologies to both companies.

THE GRASS IS GETTING GREENER

Harrogate Week 2009 provided the perfect opportunity for Barenbrug to catch up with one of its key customers – Perranporth Golf Club.

Perranporth was central to the development of the specialist grass seed breeder's BAR 22 all-fescue mixture after it participated in a species exchange overseeding trial in spring 2006.

Head Greenkeeper, Bill Mitchell, said that the course continues to reap the benefits of the programme Barenbrug's Research and Development Manager Jayne Leyland devised.

"Avoncrop Amenity's John Palfrey introduced me to Jayne and the team during Harrogate Week 2006,"

Seven mixtures were trialled across Perranporth's greens and tees, with the results from the mixture synergies sown leading directly to BAR 22's development, which features 30 per cent Hardtop hard fescue and a blend of Chewings and slender creeping red fescues, and boasts a superior winter green and drought tolerance.

Starting in spring, Bill is now set to overseed with the mixture he helped create in order to achieve full species exchange.

"I was very happy with the trial results. In particular, the grass held its green through the winter, which is important for golfers, and we now plan to continue the programme into the aprons and approaches," said Bill.



From left, Barenbrug's David Singleton and Jayne Leyland with Perranporth's Head Greenkeeper, Bill Mitchell, and his Deputy and brother, John Mitchell.

ON COURSE FOR GREAT THINGS

A Jack Nicklaus signature golf course – only the second in Ireland – the first Dave Pelz Golf Academy to be built in Europe, a Grade 1 listed castle, 11 acres of man-made lakes and a drainage system the length of the Grand Canyon are the central features of what is believed to be Europe's largest landscaping contract.

Killeen Castle, to the north west of Dublin, is the centrepiece of a 560-acre golf resort development that will include a five-star hotel,

championship quality golf course and 162 residential properties.

The castle, originally built in the 12th century, was once home to the Plunkett family and Earls of Fingall; in the 19th century the ninth Earl replaced it in the style of Windsor Castle, but the building was gutted by fire in 1981. It has now undergone a nine-month, multi-million dollar refurbishment by architects Michael Collins & Associates, in which 50 masons cleaned and restored every brick and stone by hand.

Maintenance of the 18 hole, 7650 yard golf course, which is due to open this spring, is already being carried out by a team of 10 greens staff led by course superintendent Mark Collins and assistant Robert Kane, using a fleet of John Deere equipment supplied by local dealer Dublin Grass Machinery (pictured). In all around 270 acres of the estate are devoted to golf, including the course and academy, which is designed to improve putting and short game skills.



Paul Dixon (centre) receiving his certificate from Sadie Chalkley, Chairman of British Hardware Federation and soon to be the first woman president of BHF Group, and BHF Group managing director Alan Hawkins.

HUNT STARTS FOR NEW TYPES OF WASTE TO BE RECYCLED

The search for additional waste materials that can be reused and recycled, rather than needlessly dumped in landfill, has been launched by the Waste Protocols Project - a joint Environment Agency and WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) initiative.

The Project, set up in 2006 to help industry make better use of waste materials by clarifying in Quality Protocols how and when waste can be freed up from regulations and used with no further risk to the environment, has identified a range of materials that can be turned into new items rather than discarded.

To date 11 materials – including non-packaging plastics such as old drainpipes - and waste cooking

oil that can be transformed into biodiesel – have been reviewed by the project. In total this first wave of protocols, over the next 10 years, are projected to save businesses and industry more than £400 million, create a £280 million market in the materials and divert 17 million tonnes of waste from landfill.

Martin Brocklehurst, the Environment Agency's Head of Environment Protection External Programmes, said: "The Waste Protocol Project is an exciting initiative that is already making a positive impact on both industry and the environment. But we don't want to stop here. There are more types of waste that could be treated as a resource rather than rubbish and because it takes time to develop

a Quality Protocol we want to start identifying more potentially suitable materials now.

"For Quality Protocols to be effective and divert waste from landfill, reduce pressure on precious natural resources and reduce businesses' overheads in this tough economic climate, it's vital that industry bring their technical expertise to the table. We need industry's help to ensure that the waste materials with the greatest potential for recycling and reuse are selected."

Application forms can be downloaded at www.environmentagency.gov.uk/wasteprotocolsselection and, once completed, submitted to wspgroup.com before 12noon on Wednesday 8 April 2009.

THE INTEGRATION OF SPORTS TURF LANDSCAPE STAFF INTO BIGGA MEMBERSHIP



Some of the facts...

- BIGGA is a professionally managed and forward-looking organisation dedicated to the training, education and continuing professional development of all its members.
- Only groundsman involved in the maintenance of sports turf are being considered for Full Membership.
- There are a great number of non-member greenkeepers and BIGGA will be implementing a recruitment drive in the spring.
- BIGGA is not in financial difficulty.
- The Board believes that BIGGA membership offers good value for money.
- Courtesy golf is not a right of membership and will always be at the discretion of the golf club. The inclusion of groundsmen should not adversely affect this.
- There is little likelihood of a mass joining by groundsmen thereby 'swamping' the current greenkeeper membership base.
- Greenkeepers and groundsmen have a lot that can be shared when it comes to education and training.
- BIGGA's name will not change if groundsmen are allowed to join
- Greenkeeper International can adopt a more holistic approach to sports turf.
- Trade companies are looking for a more dominant organisation to deal with in the Sports Turf sector.

Anyone who wishes any further information regarding the above should contact John Pemberton at BIGGA HOUSE.

FOCUS ON FIELD DAYS

The European Turfgrass Society has lined up an exciting and informative programme for its Field Days to be held in Valencia, Spain, on Tuesday 21 and Wednesday, April 22.

Details were confirmed at an ETS board meeting in November, hosted by Prof. Diego Gomez de Barreda, of the Universidad Politecnica de Valencia.

Taking advantage of this opportunity to meet at the Field Days, ETS members are invited to attend the ETS General Assembly, which will also take place at the April event. Further details will follow in the forthcoming members' newsletter.

And looking further ahead the programme of ETS Conferences and Field Days up to 2012 has now been confirmed: 2010 Conference: Angers - France; 2011 Field Days: Brussels - Belgium; 2012 Conference: London - UK.

For more information visit: www.turfgrassociety.eu



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NEWS

HALLAMSHIRE OPTS FOR EXCLUSIVITY

Hallamshire Golf Club has signed a Toro agreement. The Sheffield club, which recently celebrated its centenary, had always shied away from committing to a single machinery manufacturer, but its positive experiences with its existing Toro kit convinced the committee to agree to the five-year deal.

Course Manager of 25 years, Gordon Brammah, commented: "We're a long-standing Toro user, but we've used a range of machinery in the past. I've always gone for the machine that did the job, rather than stick to a single manufacturer. But the greens staff and I have always been highly satisfied with the quality of our Toro machines and so when we decided to look at an exclusive package."

Hallamshire's new fleet includes four Greensmaster 1000s, a Greensmaster 3250-D, two Reelmaster 3100-Ds with Sidewinder, a Reelmaster 6500-D with DPA cutting units and a Groundsmaster 3500-D. Gordon says that the mowers are "doing a very good job" maintaining the 18-hole course.



From left are Lely's Jeff Anguige, Hallamshire Golf Club Director David Westaway, Course Manager Gordon Brammah, Lely's Nigel Lovatt and YTM's Tony Dodson, with the greenkeepers behind.

NATIONAL SKILLS CHALLENGE SHORTLISTED FOR AWARD

The National Skills Challenge, designed to encourage youngsters to get into golf, has been shortlisted for The Sports Industry Awards 2009. The English Golf Union (EGU) and the English Women's Golf Association (EWGA) worked with creative digital experts, Nemisis, to develop the online application to encourage children into the sport.

The Sport Industry Awards is Europe's largest and most prestigious commercial sport awards. The National Skills Challenge has been shortlisted for the category 'Best Promotion of Sport by a Governing Body'.

The National Skills Challenge has played a key role in a number of structured initiatives, delivered by the EGU and EWGA, that have helped junior membership of golf clubs increase by around 8,000 since 2004. County organisations are also welcoming the positive results and 26 have registered to deliver the activity locally to complement the work undertaken at national level.

REGIONAL SEMINARS

Amenity Land Solutions will be staging three half-day regional seminars in March looking at some of the future options available for complete weed control in amenity situations.

This topic is of particular and growing relevance following the passing by the European Parliament of 'The Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive', which requires significant cuts to be made in pesticide use by 2010.

Among those who will benefit from attending are Local Authority staff, contractors, landscapers and others with responsibility for managing or implementing weed control in amenity areas and other open spaces.

The dates and venues for the three seminars are: Thursday, March 5: Twickenham Rugby Stadium (Obelensky Suite); Tuesday, March 10: Wolverhampton Wanderers FC's Molineux Stadium (Executive Lounge); Thursday, March 12: Manchester City FC's City of Manchester Stadium (Players Wives' Lounge). All seminars run from 10am until 1pm and will be followed by a buffet lunch. The speakers at all three seminars are: Jonathan Carr, Managing Director of Amenity Land Solutions; Paul Clifton, Bayer Environmental Science; Dr Dominic Lamb (and/or Manda Samson), Monsanto.

Those wishing to attend any of the seminars need to reserve a place by registering at: www.amenity.co.uk

OFFICIAL RANGEFINDER OF THE ENGLISH GOLF UNION

SkyCaddie has been announced as the Official Rangefinder of the English Golf Union just weeks after the organisation took the groundbreaking decision to allow distance measuring devices in all its championships in 2009.

Having put in place a three-year agreement, SkyCaddie will this year support 18 EGU Championships, provide SkyCaddie GPS units at a special rate to county players via the EGU County Coaching network and supply SkyCaddies for use by the EGU's England squads.

Jackie Hitchcock, SkyCaddie UK managing director, said: "We are delighted to be working so closely with the EGU, especially as they have such strong links to the amateur game at elite, county and club level.



QUALITY ASSURED SCHEME



In his latest article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, explains the introduction of a GTC Quality Assured Scheme for Centres, Colleges and Training Providers.

Regular GI readers must have noticed that during recent months this column has continued to remain positive despite the trend of negative publicity both within the national media and the golfing press.

Like many organisations, the GTC now has to operate within a much reduced budget but I guess we are fortunate, we are still in business!

This is still very much down to the continued support from our supporters (shown on this page) but I only hope that during the next few months and years the GTC can now focus on what the "game" often takes for granted - well maintained golf courses.

I suppose it is credit due to many people that we have a worldwide respected structure of training, education and qualifications for greenkeepers – a structure that has something for everybody, whether you are an employer, greenkeeper or somebody considering entering the profession.

A key role of the GTC is to direct employers and students to those Centres and Training Providers who have met criteria designed to ensure that quality turf education and training programmes, are available.

It is important to understand that many colleges, organisations and individuals offer turf education, training and qualifications but the new GTC Quality Assured scheme with its own logo will increasingly become a benchmark for quality.

The introduction of a GTC Quality Assured Scheme is the result of a period of review, by the GTC's Technical Committee, of the current criteria by which a network of Approved Training

Providers has been promoted to employers and greenkeepers.

The entire current network of Providers has been invited to join the Quality Assured Scheme and from April 1 you should be looking out for the new GTC Quality Assured logo as this will be a sign that the Centre or Training Provider has met the GTC's new criteria.

The GTC will be updating its approved network of providers. There will be Centres who have met the new criteria where formal greenkeeping qualifications are offered. There will also be Training Providers who have met the new criteria introduced for companies and individuals, who offer training courses mapped to the national occupational standards but not offering nationally recognised qualifications.

The review of the Provider network will ensure the GTC in association with its supporter organisations, direct employers and students to those Centres and Training Providers who have met the revised criteria.

It should be noted that there will still be many establishments and organisations offering both qualifications for greenkeepers and informal training courses, but the GTC will promote only those who are committed to working with the GTC.

Work-based training, an apprenticeship scheme and academic qualifications including B.Sc and M.Sc are now all available, offered by a network of private providers, Colleges and Universities throughout Britain.

The fact that the GTC has continued to work within the Government guidelines on education allows us to have a major input into the national standards for greenkeeping from which the range of qualifications are developed.

The GTC, while being involved in standards and qualifications, are still working to try and ensure funding support is available to make training affordable.

We regularly see new schemes introduced to hopefully allow the Government to meet its targets for the Skills Agenda but all of this spin relies on industries, such as the GTC, with its Centres buying into the current system.

The Higher Education sector has increased fees for academic qualifications and I can only say that, while the GTC supports the Centres seeking to offer the HE courses, not all employers see the benefit of these types of qualifications.

During the last 12 months one of the GTC Centre's has recorded a dramatic increase in student numbers for the Foundation Degree (HND in Scotland) and this is encouraging as it is an excellent qualification designed to give students the opportunity to study for a HE qualification part-time while remaining in work.

The costs for this course are subsidised by the Government but nowhere near the amount of funding given to meeting the Skills Agenda.

It is therefore down to employers to support employees seeking to study but the ongoing Bursaries available through BIGGA and the R&A have helped many students.

That's all for this month folks, coming next month news on The R&A – GTC project involving Approved Centre turf staff through "S Factor" workshops throughout Britain starring the Gingerbread men, among others.

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GTC Education Director

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GTC is supported by:





Industry Update

INDUSTRY UPDATE



The site at Cropvale

NEW TRIALS SITE AT CROPVALE

Specialist grass seed breeder Barenbrug has established its own UK amenity research site at Cropvale, in Worcestershire.

Barenbrug already operates an extensive UK trials programme in conjunction with the STRI backed up by global trials conducted by the Royal Barenbrug Group. However, this new site will strengthen Barenbrug's ability to test new and innovative cultivars specific to UK conditions as well as respond to market and climatic requirements more quickly.

Sowing on the 15-acre site will commence in spring this year, with the synergy of mixtures being one of the key areas for study, as Jayne Leyland, Barenbrug UK's Research and Development Manager explained: "The expansion of our UK trials programme into our own dedicated research site is an important development for us. Cropvale will demonstrate first-hand the synergy of mixtures that include both new, existing and 'in-development' cultivars, furthering our understanding of effective grass seed blending."



NEW AREA MANAGER

Tacit has appointed Steve Milton as their new Area Manager for the West of England and Wales.

In his new position Steve will be responsible for the development and execution of Tacit's business strategy in West of England and Wales.

Before joining Tacit, Steve has worked in the catering and leisure sectors, delivering a bespoke service to many varied customers.

And for many years has had a rather masochistic hobby of watching his beloved Bristol Rovers.

NEW REGIONAL DISTRIBUTOR IN SCOTLAND

Scotia Plant Ltd (part of the Ballyvesey Group) has been appointed Scotland regional distributor for Terex United Kingdom Limited. They will cover and distribute the full-line range of Terex Construction compact equipment, covering the Scottish borders from Forfar in the East and Fort William in the West.

Product lines on offer will include: Mini Dumpers, Site Dumpers, Backhoe Loaders, Pedestrian Rollers, Vibratory Rollers, Mini Excavators, Midi Excavators, Wheeled Excavators, Wheeled Loaders, Mixers, and Compaction Plates. In addition Scotia Plant will promote the Genie® Telehandler range.

NEW UK DISTRIBUTOR

Countax has been formally appointed distributor of Shindaiwa power tools for the UK.

Shindaiwa's range of brushcutters, hedgetrimmers, power blowers and chainsaws are ideal for domestic and professional use, and are currently available via a network of specialist dealerships throughout the UK. Countax Sales Director, Mark Osborne, commented: "We are delighted to be appointed UK distributor for the Shindaiwa range, and are looking to raise the profile of this exciting range in the market place, as well as extend the availability through a larger dealer network. The Shindaiwa products compliment our current range, and are ideally suited to our customer profile."

NEW GOLF CARS FOR SPANISH RESORT

Valle Romano Golf and Resort at Estepona in Andalusia is the latest Spanish golf club to invest in the electric version of the E-Z-GO TXT golf car. Local E-Z-GO distributor Green Mowers delivered the vehicles to the 150 hectare resort which features an 18-hole championship golf course designed by Cabell B Robinson.

Valle Romano is a luxury, high-quality development lying between the Sierra Bermeja mountain range and the Mediterranean Sea. The golf course, which has a gentle and undulating topography, occupies some 60 hectares.



ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL

It's been a busy year for Hamilton Academical FC – not only did the team win promotion to the Scottish Premier League, but the club also installed a brand new pitch.

The Accies had to replace the artificial pitch with a traditional grass one – and install under-soil heating – after gaining promotion to the Scottish Premier League (SPL). So there was no time to lose at the end of the 2007/2008 season if the club was to ensure it was ready for kick off again at the beginning of August 2008.

Enter Souters Sports, a specialist sports turf contractor offering sports turf construction, reconstruction, drainage, aeration and maintenance of all natural grass playing services carried out the work.

THE ELS CLUB RANKS HIGH

Dubai Sports City's The Els Club golf course has won two prestigious international awards.

The Els Club was named the 'best new international course' by Links Magazine and selected as a finalist in the "International Courses" category of the 2008 Golf Inc. Development of the Year contest.

This prestigious recognition establishes The Els Club as one of the leading golf courses worldwide.

"The Els Club at Dubai Sports City is a golf development that will stand up proudly against the best in the world for decades to come," said Ernie Els, its designer.

"The awards put The Els Club in the company of truly great international golf destinations, having already exceeded my own architectural and operational expectations," added Els.

The Els Club is championship golf course designed by three-time major winner Ernie Els. The course offers a luxury golfing experience combined with five-star service and notable prestige.



Membership

This month
BIGGA welcomes
the following new
members...

AN UPDATE FROM BIGGA'S MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

BIGGA Membership Categories are streamlining

From 1st April 2009 we will be streamlining the membership categories. Currently, a member has from over 20 fee structures to choose from this will be simplified.

Why the change?

To improve administration procedures within the BIGGA Membership Department, to help new and existing members when renewing and joining the Association and to help simplify the administration for employers who pay their employees membership subscriptions.

What are the changes?

1. Full Member

Any person employed in the keeping of the green at a golfing establishment.

Split into: Category 1A = Greenkeeper in a Managerial Role, i.e. Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper
Category 1B = All other greenkeeping employees who have gained a minimum qualification or who hold a minimum of three years continuous relevant experience.

(Incorporating: Category 1A - Course Manager, Head Greenkeeper, Category 1B - Deputy Course Manager, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, First Assistant, Greenkeeper aged 21 years and above, Greenkeeper aged 20 and under and Mechanics)

2. Associate Member

Any person employed in the keeping of the green at a golfing establishment and is not eligible to be a Full Member.

Split into: Category 2A = Greenkeeper aged 21 and over (no minimum qualification, less than three years continuous experience)

Category 2B = Greenkeeper aged 20 years and under (no minimum qualification, less than three years continuous experience)

(Incorporating unqualified aged 21 years and over and unqualified aged 20 and under)

3. Life Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any Full Member recognised as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

(Proposals for the election of a Life Member shall be made only by the Board of Management following Regional Board nomination and the election shall be by the Association in General Meeting).

4. Retired Member

Any Full Member who has been a member for a minimum of five consecutive years and has retired from work.

(Incorporating Retired Member (full) and Retired Member (limited benefits)).

5. Student Member

Any person studying full-time towards an appropriate qualification in turf management.

(Incorporating full time Students).

6. International Member

Any person employed in the keeping of the green at a golfing establishment outside the UK.

(Incorporating International Course Manager and International Member).

7. Affiliate Member

Any person who does not come within the provisions of categories 1-6 above.

(Incorporating Associate and Corporate categories of membership).

8. Honorary Member

At the discretion of the Board of Management any persons recognized as having contributed in an outstanding manner to the Association or profession.

NOTE: The notes in italics are to clarify the changes to the present structure.

Winners of the Magazine Gift Subscription offer at Harrogate Week

Congratulations to Clive Walton, Calverley Golf Club, Anthony McGeough Richmond Golf Club and Ian Noble, Moors Valley GC, who are the winners of the magazine gift subscription for introducing a member at Harrogate Week.

NORTHERN

Tim Pearson.....Cleveland
Matthew Thompson.....Cleveland
Euan LittleNorth
Shaun Collier.....North East
Peter WroeNorth West
Robert Mann.....North West
Daniel Hall.....North West
Kevin Sweeney.....North West
Tim Mason.....North West
Peter MooreNorth West
Alan MartinNorthern
Steve Gott.....Northern
Roy HaywoodNorthern
Lee CarpenterNorthern

MIDLAND

Greig Easton.....Central
Leigh CarterMidland
Nicholas FallowsMidland
Mark ColeMidland

EAST

Nicola TownendEast
Marc Gentles.....East
Ross Ovens.....East
Brian Hunter.....East
Gloria DeanEast Anglia
Craig Judge.....East Anglia
Simon JacksonEast Anglia
Stephen Willmot.....East Midland
Matthew Farrant.....East Midland

SOUTHERN

Paul Wilding.....Essex
Chris Clements.....Essex
Luke Fitz-JohnEssex
Richard GoodingSurrey
David Cox.....Surrey
Arthur Howel.....Sussex
Paul Kennedy.....Kent
Keith RogersKent
Allen Smith.....South Coast
Christopher Marshall.....South Coast
Daniel GriffithsSouth Coast
David Taylor.....South West
Leigh MordySouth West
Robert CleishamWest
Clive SelbySouth Wales

NORTHERN IRELAND

Jamie McCuneNorthern Ireland

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

Greenkeepers Support Services 0800 174 319

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...

At last the mornings are brighter and the evenings are lighter, this surely means that Spring is well on its way? It's bound to snow now!

Spring is a great time to re-evaluate your goals and figure out what it is you want to achieve and in the current climate it is more important than ever. As a member of BIGGA you are ensured our help with any issues that you may have, however, it is important to remember that you hold the key to your future – you are responsible for your own professional development.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)



BIGGA's Mission Statement

includes 'BIGGA is dedicated to the continuing professional development of its members...'. The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme run by BIGGA is free of charge to all greenkeeper Members.

The CPD Scheme has several benefits to you, it helps you:

- to keep track of your training achievements
- to adapt out dated skills
- to show your employer that you are a true professional
- to give you a means of showing prospective employers that you have continued to develop your education and training beyond the minimum level
- to update skills and knowledge on a regular basis
- to give you the skills to cope with change

You can gain CPD credits for attendance at a wide range of educational events, Harrogate Week and the BIGGA AGM as well as Section and Region events and AGM's.

It is simple to join the scheme, just download an application form from the education pages of the BIGGA website, complete and return it to the L&D Department. You can claim for any events that you have attended since 1 July 2008. To claim points, you either sign a register of attendance at the event (if available) or send in a credit claim form with proof of your attendance (certificate or signature from the organiser).

A BIGGA Certificate of Continuing Professional Development will be awarded to those members who accumulate 10 CPD Credits annually from 1 July to 30 June.

Once you have been awarded five successive Certificates of Continuing Professional Development will receive a BIGGA Diploma of Continuing Professional Development.

For further details on the scheme visit the website or telephone the L&D Department.

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2009



Application forms for the Toro Student of the Year Award 2009 have been sent out to the training providers in the UK. If you have an outstanding member of staff who is currently on N/SVQ Level 2 or 3, a HNC, HND or Foundation Degree, why not contact their college tutor and discuss nominating them? This also goes for those of you who are studying on any of the courses mentioned. Put yourself forward to your tutor – you could win a life changing experience, a six-week scholarship to the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts courtesy of Toro.

Remember – the nomination must come from the college tutor.

New Library Books



Dictionary of Plant Sciences - Michael Allaby

Fundamentals of Turfgrass Management - Nick E. Christians

Superintendent's Handbook of Financial Management - Raymond S. Schmidgall

Poa Annuua: Physiology, Culture and Control of Annual Bluegrass - J M Vargas

Applied Turfgrass Science and Physiology - Jack Fry

Turfgrass Problems, Picture Clues and Management Options – Eva Gussack & Frank Rossi



LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

PUTTING THE ENVIRONMENT FIRST

Scott MacCallum visits 2008 Environment Competition winner Caldy and discovers a club where environmental management is on every agenda



FEATURE



When Caldy Golf Club was announced as winner of the 2008 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Golf Monthly, it was the culmination of a dream, not to mention a lot of hard work, for Course Manager, Carl Crocher.

Carl had first entered the competition while at Orsett Golf Club, in Essex, and when he arrived on the Wirral six years ago he found, in Head Greenkeeper, Ian Farrall, a real comrade-in-arms when it came to environmental work allowing the club to move forward at apace.

"At Orsett we'd done some good work with the STRI's, Bob Taylor, and we carried on doing the same sorts of things when I came up here," said Carl.

And it would be fair to say that what has been achieved at Caldy more than marks them down as very worthy Environment Competition Champions.

"We won the Northern Region Award in 2005 and the feedback then was that if we could bring the clubhouse side of things on board we could go even further and not be just also-rans. Our Secretary/Manager, Gail Copple, got on board and made real improvements in the clubhouse," explained Carl, adding that giving environmental issues higher priority and organising yourselves slightly differently was the key.

"We have put our glass recycling processes in place and it was just a case of making a few phone calls. The services are out there at little or no cost to the club if you just take the trouble to investigate," he said.

The on-course work has been extensive with tree management, heather regeneration, and a new reed bed at the forefront, but everything the Caldy team does has environmental considerations.

The Award presentation during Harrogate Week reinforced that commitment.

"I was accompanied by a Past Captain and R&A member who, without any prompting, turned

to me and said that we had to kick on from here. Also BIGGA Vice Chairman, Paul Worster, Course Manager at past winner Minchinhampton Golf Club told us how much the club had moved forward after winning the competition."

Carl has managed to acquire a couple of nicknames at this last two golf clubs which tie in to his tree management strategies.

"When I was at Orsett I was known as Chainsaw Massacre – they even got me a sweatshirt with that on it – but here I'm only known as Chopper, as I haven't been quite so aggressive, but then we haven't needed to be."

Carl took members on course walks to explain the philosophy of tree management to back up the presentations he did in the clubhouse. One of the areas he concentrated on was most apparent from the clubhouse window.

"One of the club's main assets is the estuary but you couldn't see it from the clubhouse because of the Corsican Pine growing on a bank, while there was a big belt of Scots Pine that had been planted



FEATURE



The Caldly Team with Ian Farrall, far left.

to shield an old tip. That tip is now grassed over and is a conservation area itself so the requirement for the pines has now gone.”

The common flaw of planting trees and then expecting them to flourish perfectly with no on-going

he said, adding that he knows of clubs where the policy is written in stone that trees should not be touched.

“Conservation not preservation should be the adage,” he explained.



“When I was at Orsett I was known as Chainsaw Massacre – they even got me a sweatshirt with that on it – but here I’m only known as Chopper, as I haven’t been quite so aggressive, but then we haven’t needed to be.”

Course Manager, Carl Crocher

maintenance is something Carl has seen.

“The pines hadn’t been thinned out in 30 years and you can’t expect to plant even the correct species and have them manage themselves,”

The club made a huge breakthrough around the turn of the century when it addressed a chronic waterlogging problem and spent around £300,000 putting in a comprehensive drainage system.

“The work was carried out in 2000, the wettest year on record, and many members thought we’d completely lost the course. However, due to the strong character of the Captain, and particularly the then Green Chairman, Tom Dickinson, they carried on not finishing a job they had expected to complete until July/August, when it had been scheduled for completion in March/April, before the main golf season. But a golf course is a fantastically regenerative place and if people were to go out there today they’d struggle to see where the drains are,” said Carl, who although not at the club when the work was done has certainly benefited from it.

“That system is the foundation of so many of the things we’ve done since. For example, we’ve been able to carry out winter work when before it would have been to wet and I know that whatever we are doing we are never more than 15 metres from a drain,” said Carl, looking back at a project which featured in the May 2002 edition of Greenkeeper International.



Bunker work at Caldy

One of the major innovations introduced in the last two years has been the club's reed bed which they developed in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

"Our reed bed was originally designed to drain into the estuary but the Environment Agency were nervous about it as it is a SSSI and a Special Bird Site. We decided, therefore, to insert a loop and recycle the water back to our sheds for washing purposes. I believe we were the first club in the country to do this and I think it was one of the main reasons for us getting the Award. It has made a massive difference to the club. Also, we had the enjoyment of doing the work ourselves while the club saved money."

As he had done when talking to Phil Stain, at Hollinwell Golf Club, several Course Managers have contacted Carl to ask about the reed bed, taking advantage of the vast amount of knowledge and experience that is at the fingertips of any BIGGA member who just cares to pick up a phone or access the website.

"It's been nice having guys ring us up out of the blue to ask questions and we try to help however we can."

The tee building and bunker renovation programmes are other areas where the environment is considered and Caldy saves money.

"We have tee building and bunker renovation programmes under way and we bought a new turf cutter which follows contours much better than our old one to enable us to re-cycle more turf than we had previously been able to do.

"Two years ago we saved between £1,500 and £1,700 worth of turf when we built three

new tees and that in itself paid for half of the turf cutter and again this winter we have saved another £1,000 worth. Having the right tools for the job is very important to the club and that investment in machinery pays off all the time.

"You can go out and aerate greens when the conditions are right, or do a top dressing pass in two and a half hours and disruption to members is minimal while it saves us time which can be spent on other jobs."

The bunker programme sees around a dozen bunkers being rebuilt or added each winter.

"We had six new USGA spec greens built several years ago and the bunkering which went with them wasn't particularly sympathetic to what was already at Caldy, which is a James Braid design," explained Carl.

"The new bunkers were much more Americanised, with big shapes and lots of sand, and we are a windy course with a lot of sand blow," said Carl.

The club decided to create a Caldy template for a bunker so that new bunkers would blend in with the old.

"We create a revetted shape for a bunker but only bringing the revetting up as high as we can bury with the sand. What that gave us is a solid wall to pull soil over and create firm mounding ready for turf. It means we build much smaller bunkers in keeping with Braid's originals but they also gather the ball making them just as good a strategic challenge as before and we're able to mow right up to the edge. They are connected to the existing drainage."

The cost benefits are there to be seen.

"Some of the bunkers built with the USGA greens required 25 tonnes of sand to fill them. That came down to three or four for the new models while in 2003-04 our top up was amounting to 50 or 60 tonnes a year, now we are down to under 20 tonnes a year and that will come down even more when we've completed the whole programme. With the cost of aggregates, which is not likely to come down, that is a significant saving," said Carl, who added that the course will ultimately have eight bunkers more than originally following the work.

Several years ago Carl heard that Purdis Heath Golf Club had bought a polytunnel with their winnings from the Environment Competition and thought it was such a good idea that, given similar circumstances, he would like one too.

"I thought it was a great idea and we are looking at sourcing one now. It would need to be substantial – eight to 10 metres – and we could grow our own shrubs and continue with our programme of growing gorse and heather from seed."

Another beneficiary of the prize is Ian, who Carl had put in charge of the environmental work at the club.

"Ian lives three and a half miles away, near Royal Liverpool Golf Club, at the top end of the Wirral Way and we've bought him a bike so he can get to and from work in an environmentally friendly manner. It takes him 17 to 18 minutes but with the new bike that time will come down," said Carl.

It's that sort of commitment that has marked Caldy Golf Club down as a worthy winner of the 2008 competition.

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Golden Key Profile

FEATURE



A PEARL AMONG COMPANIES



Scott MacCallum meets up with Dave Roberts, of Kubota, to discuss the company's 30th anniversary and the last five years of developments

In 2004 Kubota UK celebrated its 25th anniversary and the company produced a splendid silver painted compact tractor to commemorate the occasion. Five years on Kubota's 30th anniversary is upon us and Sales and Marketing Manager Dave Roberts is a relieved man.

"I'm not sure there is a colour for a 30th anniversary, but thank goodness because it costs a lot of money to respray tractors so I think we'll be sticking with orange," explained Dave.

However, anyone approaching a 30th wedding anniversary should note that, while Dave can be happy not to have to paint a tractor, wives will be looking for some pearls!

The last five years have raced by for Kubota UK with the company undertaking some major development and change within that time.

"We've had some new products which have really taken off, and they have been into different markets. At one end we've launched ride-on mowers into the consumer end of the market, which is all about volume, and we have had to develop our distribution channels to get the product out. At the other end of the scale is our larger tractor agricultural range which is not so much about volume, although we are building on that each year, but breaking into a very mature and aggressive market which is dominated by a small number of companies," explained Dave.

And that in a nutshell is what Kubota is all about. The company has in Dave's words "many strings to his bow" giving it protection if any one sector of business suffers a downturn. That strategy does involve working very hard to ensure no one sector is ever neglected.

"It takes a lot of energy and resources to work in so many sectors and it is a very fine line

to walk to ensure that we continue to develop new business but also to keep an eye on our core markets," explained Dave, as we sat in his office in Thame, Oxfordshire.

"The backbone of our business is still compact tractors and the markets they serve, grounds care, golf course management and horticulture are key to us and we can't afford to lose that business."

Kubota is market leader in the production of compact tractors but Dave admitted they are a big fish in the relatively small, compact tractor, pool and that it is difficult to expand sales or market share in that area.

"When you look at agriculture we are a very small fish in a massive pond and the potential is huge for us. Even if we grow our share of the market by a single percentage point it can mean a lot of tractors and a lot of money to us."

Kubota launched a range of agricultural tractors last year – the M40 series which offer



golf market has surprised us as we originally felt that they were a little over engineered compared with many of the vehicles Course Managers were running around in. We felt with the heavy duty chassis and engineering that went into it, that they would be more attractive to rough terrain users."

With that in mind Dave and his colleagues had fairly modest objectives and targets but just around that time the market exploded as people began looking for diesel utility vehicles instead of petrol driven quad bikes.

"Course Managers were deciding to by one of ours rather than two from another manufacturer or were working on an extended lifetime using our utility vehicle and getting better lifecosts" explained Dave, who said that they struggle to keep up with demand for the first two years after their launch.



“ The backbone of our business is still compact tractors and the markets they serve, grounds care, golf course management and horticulture are key to us and we can't afford to lose that business. ”

"We've learned an awful lot and are now much better equipped to go after a market which has grown to include even more makes."

In recent years Kubota UK has rededicated itself to the golf market with Dave recognising its importance to other sectors of their business.

He admits that in the past they may have looked at golf as just one, relatively small element of the business and devoted resources in time and marketing proportionately to it.

"I came into the Sales Management role seven years ago and added Marketing five years ago and I looked a little more closely at the various sectors we were operating in. It became apparent that golf provided quite a large proportion of the 30-60 horsepower tractor market in particular, as there are a lot of golf courses on this little island that need tractors, even with the advent of self propelled machinery."

According to Dave, tractors are the unsung heroes of the industry.

"They don't get looked after like cutting equipment, washed down and dried off and parked in the shed every night. The tractor tends to be left sitting in the corner with its loader on, but they are basic work horses and every golf club still needs something to load topdressing and tow the trailer to the bunker renovation site," said Dave, passionately.

But there were other reasons to ensure renewed focus on the golf market.

"Golf is a very high profile arena for us. A lot of people play golf, a lot of people with big houses play golf and a lot of people with big houses need

to buy Kubota tractors and when they see Kubota at the golf club they will think if it's good enough for the Course Manager of my golf club it's good enough for me or my business."

Dave brought Kubota back into Golden Key membership five years ago, and two years ago took over the sponsorship of BIGGA's flagship golf event, The National Championship.

Kubota has sponsored the events held at Dundonald and Glasgow Gables in 2008 and East Sussex National last year and have been delighted with their investment.

"We see sponsoring the National Championship as a great way to get profile, kudos and credibility within the greenkeeping fraternity while keeping investments levels realistic. It has to work for us and the Golden Key Membership and the National Championship sponsorship works very well for us," said Dave.

tractors from 60 to 95 horsepower – and these have enjoyed a favourable welcome by the industry with the company benefiting from the fact that it is somewhat easier to size up a tractor to meeting the horsepower demands of the farming industry than it is to turn larger vehicles into quality compact or mid-sized tractors.

"It is easier to make them bigger than to make a big one smaller and if you look at our main competitors who have a very strong pedigree in agriculture, when it comes to compact tractors, they are using Japanese technology" said Dave, who reiterated the point that Kubota produce all its own engines, all its own transmissions with the watch words, quality, reliability, durability and simplicity.

The other main area of growth for Kubota has been through the arrival of its utility vehicle the RTV 900.

"It was launched in 2005 and its success in the

Looking forward at the golf industry as a whole Dave, a positive thinker, believes that the weakened pound could potentially see golf tourism return to the UK and more outside money coming into golf clubs.

And in terms of product development engine technology will keep advancing in line with the emission targets that are being brought in.

"By 2014 the emission targets are going to be very very stringent and diesel engines will only be allowed to blow out what amounts to fresh air. That's quite a challenge for an engine manufacturer."

He also feels that Bio-diesel has dropped off the agenda for the time being for cost reasons.

"Bio fuels will be part of the plan to get emissions down but I don't think that it will be the great answer to everything that we thought it was five or six years ago. To produce a gallon of bio fuel takes an awful lot of energy and these things have got to balance out."

On product development Dave has some good news for tractor operators with comfort top priority.

"Forget the CD player now it's got to be the MP3 player. Forget one cup holder, it's got to be two, while seats are becoming ever more comfortable. it's all got to be done without increasing the overall weight of the tractor. They are really advanced these days" said Dave.

But one thing that won't be changing is the colour of the Kubota fleet. This year it will remain orange and you won't be seeing that pearl coloured tractor to mark 30 years of Kubota UK.





ONE TRACTOR – TWO SETS OF WHEELS AND TYRES

By James de Havilland

Tractors come in such a huge variety of shapes and sizes these days it is easier than ever to buy a unit that is just right for a range of jobs. A concern, however, can be the tyres. Are the ones fitted as versatile as the tractor?

Not so long ago you had a limited choice of cleat agricultural, diamond pattern industrial or a block pattern turf tyre. Now tractor suppliers are offering an increasingly broad range of standard tyre, with factory fit options often including specialist turf designs. Sometimes, however, you may still want something else.

This need not be a problem. Tractor dealers can often work with you to come up with a new tyre package to suit a very specific need. But this can

also be the point where you start to compromise the tractor. Opt for nice fat flotation rubber, and the tractor will possibly be compromised when it comes to working on a hard surface. Fat tyres can also make it difficult to access some sites. And do you want to risk these tyres on jobs better suited to narrow, harder rubber?

There is an answer to saving costly flotation rubber, but it is an added expense; investing in two sets of wheels and tyres. This idea is hardly new, with numerous golf courses and contractors having become accustomed to swapping over tractor tyres as necessary. The trick is to make the job as straightforward as possible.

A decent trolley jack, level firm ground, axle stands and powerful air wrench can make a

wheel swap pretty simple. A torque wrench is also needed to ensure the wheel nuts are evenly tightened.

The snag can be when it comes to actually working with larger and heavier wheels. For one person, this can make wheel swapping a real chore.

The answer is a wheel changing unit. These slide under the raised wheel and then use an integral jack to raise a set of support rolls onto the wheel to allow its easy removal. The same unit can then be used to securely move the removed wheel to where it will be stored and then used to pick up the replacement.

When fitting the replacement wheel, the support rolls allow the wheel to be rotated so



Even the front tyres on a large tractor can be difficult to fit and remove. A wheel carrier, such as this unit from Sam Moreton & Sons (Farmers Tyre), makes the job not only easier but safer too.



Standard agricultural pattern tyres can quickly destroy turf, but this type of tyre is often the best choice for general purpose duties...



...turf tyres opening up another set of applications for the tractor. Two sets of wheels and tyres can make a great deal of sense.

it is correctly lined up with the hub. This can be a problem when 'manually' refitting a wheel, particularly if the swapped wheel is of a different diameter.

As an aside, wheel changing needs to be included as part of your standard risk assessment. Although it is common practice to leave a tractor supported only by a jack, axle stands or suitable blocks should also be used to ensure the tractor cannot fall should the jack be accidentally released.

It is also important to check the wheel nuts are correctly tightened and it is well worth re-checking these nuts after the tractor has been in use for a few hours. A torque wrench should always be used to tighten nuts evenly.

Where do you go for advice?

It is all too easy to assume that a tyre wholesale company or fitting outlet is also a tyre specialist. The reality is that it can take some shopping around to find someone who really understands your needs and can source the right tyres. When looking for alternative tyres, first determine what existing tyre and wheel rim are fitted. If these are not doing what is asked of them, identify what the problem is.

In most cases it will be that the tyres footprint and inflation pressures are incompatible with what you wish to achieve. At this stage, the solution will seem to be obvious. Fit as large a set of

tyres as possible onto the existing rims. As long as the diameter of the tyres matches those of the originals, the axle ratios on 4WD equipment should remain the same. The problem is that this is actually more difficult to achieve than may at first be appreciated. This can be due to low inflation pressures or the fact that some tyre diameters will vary according to how much air is in them.

Do not be afraid to mix and match different brands or patterns of tyre between axles. As long as the rolling diameters marry up on 4WD axles to prevent torque wind up, there will not be a problem. A specialist will be able to offer advice and come up with tyres to meet specific needs.



Trailed equipment, to include top dressers, are often offered with a choice of tyre size plus the option of two or four wheels across the rear of the unit. All this is wasted if the drawbar weight is transferred to the ground via skinny rear tractor tyres.



Taken at the Michelin test plant in France, this picture is often used to illustrate the difference a tyre can make to soil compaction. Although too extreme for turf, the key point is that a tyre with good flotation is less likely to compress the soil enough to stop air penetrating the root zone.



When looking to fit large flotation rubber to a tractor, seek advice. Fat tyres can foul mudguards and, if they have a different rolling diameter to standard, alter the tractor's gear ratios. Front and rear tyres need to be matched on 4WD models.



Tight budgets can make swapping to softer rubber difficult, but a tyre specialist may hold stocks of part worn tyres, sometimes fitted to a rim. A tyre that is past its best for on-highway use may well be fine if confined to turf or low speed work on hard surfaces.



Some older tyre types are often inflated to needlessly high pressures. Try letting out some air, but mark the tyre and rim to check for tyre creep and look for any excess bulging. If the tractor has to carry a heavy load you may need to up the inflation pressure.



When considering alternatives to standard tractor tyre offerings, remember a wheel rim can have its central 'dish' position varied to allow a wider tread to be fitted with no risk of fouling the tractor's bodywork.

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OVERSEEDING

GET BETTER RESULTS THIS SEASON

Overseeding can provide a highly cost effective route to introducing desirable new grass varieties and improving turf quality on greens, tees and fairways. But success for many has, in the past, been limited. Keith Kensett gives his top tips and advice to get better results this season.

Get into the groove to over seed

In recent years seed breeders have developed some superb new varieties of bent grasses and fescues that are better suited to changing UK growing conditions and respond more effectively under sustainable Integrated Turf Management programmes. Overseeding gives the opportunity to gradually introduce the new varieties, with the advent of new techniques to assure faster and more consistent results.

New equipment, such as linear groover machines, can achieve far more reliable germination and establishment, while new techniques such as using a growth regulator programme to reduce competition from the existing sward while the seedlings establish, further improves the chances of success.

Overseeding is also going to become increasingly important with the advent of new selective herbicides which, in trials, have successfully taken out aggressive, low-quality rye grasses, while leaving desirable fescues and bents. Overseeding will be an integral part of filling the gaps to quickly restore turf quality and prevent invasive weeds and grasses establishing.

Solve problems

So how do we assure the best possible results? Overseeding into a strong, well established turf that is growing well can, with the right techniques, prove highly successful. But if the programme is being used as part of a rejuvenation of tired, poor turf, managers must first assess why existing turf is struggling - as trying to establish new seedlings into conditions where existing plants can not thrive is almost certainly doomed to failure.

Drainage must be put right before starting, with verti-draining and sand-injection potential

options to alleviate compaction. If it is an area subjected to heavy wear, overseeding with wear resistant varieties will help longer term, providing walkways can be diverted long enough for plants to get established. The soil pH may be a factor, where again choosing the right new variety to over seed will help, but it could prove more effective to cure the cause first. Shade is also an issue, but introducing shade tolerant varieties can enable defining landscape features to be retained along with improved quality turf.

Where once overseeding was considered an early autumn operation, in practice it can be undertaken at any time from early spring and, with the trend towards milder, more open autumns, extended right through to mid-October. Overseeding in spring and summer, when soil temperatures are rising, can help achieve faster germination and, providing there is sufficient moisture, stronger establishment. For irrigated tees and greens, overseeding can take place at any time during the growing season.

Regulate competition

One major advance that we have seen in recent years is the use of a Primo MAXX programme to regulate growth of the existing sward prior to overseeding. This essential part of the over seeding programme reduces competition to the establishing seedlings and enables them to get started more effectively. Further applications - once the seedlings reach the two leaf stage - promotes tillering of the seedlings to fill gaps and encourages faster, stronger rooting. Keeping the turf in regulation also reduces the frequency of mowing and any stress on the establishing seedlings.

The Syngenta programme, developed following research by STRI, advocates that where turf is actively growing an application of Primo MAXX





Keith Kensett with slot seeder

should be made three to five days prior to the planned over seeding. This is followed by a half rate application once seedlings are up and established, with a three-quarter rate four weeks later and then back into the standard programme.

Remove thatch

From experience, the thatch poses the single greatest threat to successful over seeding. Thatch prevents seed making good contact with the soil. If seeds do germinate, the poor air flow will exacerbate seedling diseases and damping off. Seeds growing in thatch are likely to quickly burn off under any drought stress. Reducing thatch is an essential part of the over seeding process programme.

It is possible to over seed after hollow tine coring, and brushing in seed with a sand backfill. But in practice, some of the seed is buried too deep in the holes to ever emerge, whilst generally two of three seeds per hole will try to establish - with each competing for water, light and nutrients and resulting in three poor plants instead of one good one. Even with coring at 5 cm spacing, it is still only 400 new plant spacings per m², which will have little beneficial impact on overall turf quality.

Studies by the USGA have shown that hollow tine coring will impact on less than 5% of the soil surface, compared to around 15% with a Graden machine cutting groves in the soil to remove unwanted material and create an effective seeding slot.

Linear groove

Overseeding into a linear groove cut into the turf is far more likely to prove successful. Seed distribution is infinitely more uniform, it can all be placed at precisely the right depth for optimum establishment and, most importantly, there is far better seed to soil contact that is essential for effective germination and strong, rapid establishment. Typically, with a Graden

Water management

Irrigation is probably the most crucial factor under the greenkeepers' control. During germination the surface ideally needs to remain permanently damp, as a good indication that there is sufficient soil moisture available. The more sophisticated the irrigation system the better this can be achieved.

Once germination has occurred, however, water applications should become more infrequent and heavier, allowing time for the surface to dry between applications to reduce the risk of damping off diseases developing. Good air flow through the dethatched sward will help, but a fungicide application such as Heritage can help to reduce the incidence and effects of disease attacks.

Over sown turf will be subjected to the same management and mowing regime as the existing sward, to maintain playing conditions. But where possible, raising the height of cut even one or two mm can make a significant difference in

helping the seedlings establish. Again the use of Primo MAXX is an advantage, with cutting height raised slightly to alleviate stress, with no loss of playing quality or ball speed on the greens. The soft new leaf growth of the new seedlings means it is essential to ensure that cylinder mowers are razor sharp and carefully set up to avoid tearing and damaging the leaf.

The new seedlings will also require sufficient nutrients to promote strong root growth and establishment. Take special care to ensure there are sufficient macro nutrients - N, P & K - but also manganese and magnesium trace elements important for new seedlings. Experience last year highlighted that, in wet conditions, nutrients can be quickly lost, especially on light soils or sand-based constructions. Feeding little and often can help to alleviate stress on new seedlings and established turf.

With an on-going programme of over seeding, turf managers can now successfully introduce new grass varieties, to significantly enhance turf quality and improve future management.

About the Author

Keith Kensett is the director of R&K Kensett Ltd, which specialise in the renovation of all sports turf surfaces. Kensett Sports are the sole UK importers of the Australian Graden turf management equipment.



(Above) Keith Kensett's results from trials undertaken at Hadley Wood Golf Club in Hertfordshire.



(Above) Overseeding STRI trial - untreated left, Primo right.

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SO YOU HAVE JOINED THE COMMITTEE...

Paul Lowe, Course Manager of Bromborough GC and Derek Hartley, Green Chairman, offer some advice

Firstly, may I congratulate you on your appointment? You must feel very proud, all your friends and peers voting for you at the AGM. You must be a popular figure at the club...I hate to be the bearer of bad news but this popularity won't last.

This is a light hearted article aimed to prepare you for the rollercoaster ride that is the 'Greens Committee'.

Let me start by listing some common mistakes we committee members make while in office, hopefully these can be avoided.

- Pleasing everyone
- Second guessing - I don't know
- Greens meeting calamity
- Not trusting the experts
- Trying to achieve the impossible
- Neglecting your prized possession...your greenkeeping team

Pleasing everyone is impossible. The problem you are going to face is that golfers are human beings. Complex, emotive and passionate - especially when it concerns their golf. No two golfers are the same. From the dear old grandma who plays a few holes on ladies day and then supports the clubhouse with her cup of tea and half sandwich, to the young gun with the 300yd drive and ego to match. How can you please everyone when they are so diverse? The fact is you can't.

Then you have our favourite, the compulsive moaner; those members who are only happy when they are complaining. It's not personal, it's just the way they are. It's only a small percent, but boy they can make some noise after a few pints and a bad round.

Trying to please this lot is certainly impossible, they are unappeasable. Trying, will ultimately and certainly have a detrimental effect on the course and the work needed to maintain the course. The skill is determining who is a compulsive moaner and who has a genuine complaint. If you get this wrong then you are wasting your time - time that ought to be best spent on the genuine concerns. You will get criticized, it's part of the job.

Avoid second guessing at all cost. Just by saying "I don't know" will get you out of difficult and

sometimes confrontational discussions. Remember to follow it up with "I will ask the experts". Don't fall into the trap of second guessing. Remember that it's human nature to question what they don't understand. Greenkeeping is a very complex profession; it takes many years of studying and experience to reach the dizzy heights of Headman. Don't expect your members to grasp this complex subject and don't you expect to grasp it yourself. Just ask the greenkeeper, and report back. You could even ask the greenkeeper to explain to the members personally; after all he is the expert and will be able to explain better than you can.

The committee greens meeting - formal Green meetings are set on a regular basis. This gives the greenkeeper the opportunity to reveal his progress and problems in a formal manner and vice versa. The Green Chairman and Greenkeeper should always discuss the agenda before the meeting and everyone should have the agenda before a meeting. This gives everyone ample time to prepare. Encourage open lines of communication; the outcome being surprises at meetings are kept minimal.

Never intentionally wait for a meeting to attack or even gets one over the greenkeeper or anyone else. This is poor practice, poor teamwork, poor management, poor conduct, and poor communication and is not acceptable at a meeting. If you corner a wild animal, it will bite and attack you. Humans are no different. This only encourages discontent and communication breakdown. Good teamwork and open communication is a more productive way of working.

Trusting the experts. You have just got on to the committee; you're full of gusto and want to change the world. You're under pressure - peer pressure, there's no bigger pressure placed upon your shoulders than your mates at the bar. Well hold on... take a deep breath and calm down a moment. Golf courses have been around for hundreds of years, and during those years they have made many mistakes. Sadly the mistakes keep repeating, why? Maybe because we keep listening to our mates and failing to trust the experts.

It sounds ludicrous but it is very common. You employ your staff, you spend the club's money on



college education, training them, and you send them on seminars, workshops and conferences. You buy them the latest books, magazines and publications to keep them abreast of new initiatives. You may appoint a consultant, a person who is at the peak of all greenkeeping knowledge and education with a string of letters after their name. Your consultant will visit a vast amount of courses seeing firsthand the successes and failings of others and relay this invaluable knowledge back to you. Then, your highly educated staff, your highly regarded consultant is undermined because you choose to listen to bar room talk.

You may disagree with certain matters. But before you start expressing your opinions, why not read some articles, go on the internet and Google the subject...make an educated opinion, instead of an emotional one. I know it's difficult, but now you are on the committee it's part of your responsibility to communicate and educate



Your greenkeepers will have attended workshops and seminars

yourself. The most important part of communication is listening. Listening to the experts!

Trying to achieve the impossible - AKA the Augusta syndrome. By all means be the best that you can be, but it's important to be realistic. Budget, weather, landmass, soil type, membership are just some of the factors you need to work with. No two courses are the same, so to expect to emulate Augusta at a traditional members club and after a hard British winter is like expecting your family BMW to win the F1 championship.

Work with what you have got here, work with Mother Nature. Artificially changing your course to emulate another is never as good as the more natural approach. Just look at the top 100 courses and you will see that they work with what's natural. If you work against Mother Nature she will win, like all women they are far superior to us mere men. She also has a bigger budget.

Don't neglect your prized possession...your

greenkeeping team! Remember now that you are on the committee, you are an employer. Yes, as an employer, you have the same duty and lawful responsibility as every other employer:

- Health & safety
- Welfare & working conditions
- Bullying & harassment
- Stress awareness
- Training and development

These are just a few of the things you need to be aware of. Every employer needs to protect their staff from bullying and harassment to dangerous practices - golf courses are no different. You have a duty of care.

Ensure your staff has the appropriate PPE and working conditions:

- Is the maintenance department up to modern legal standards?
- Do the machines comply with modern EU regulations?

• Do your members bully and harass your staff?

• Do your staff members have a development plan?

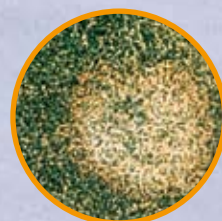
It is imperative that both the greenkeeping team and the committee have respect for each other's role. Why not join your greenkeeper; learn from him, respect him, walk the course with him and ask questions...become a valued member of the team. Listen to the advice that you pay for, trust your consultant and greenkeeper. Take a day out with your greenkeeper and go to Harrogate for the BTME show, attend the seminars and conferences, dream about winning the lottery and what shiny new machines you could buy. Then buy your greenkeeper a pint afterwards.

Develop a good working relationship with your greenkeeper and become part of the team - Together Everyone Achieves More - TEAM. Corny, I know, but so true.

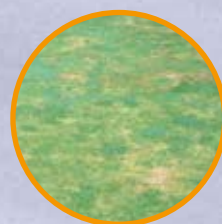
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REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

A closer look at what a carbon footprint consists of and advice as to how you can go about reducing yours...



Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

Climate change is becoming more and more of an issue in our day-to-day lives and was certainly a hot topic at our annual Harrogate Week show earlier this year. Take the freak snow storms the UK suffered during the month of February, would these have happened or have been as intense if we had thought about reducing our carbon footprints earlier? Many golf courses had to close for at least a week during this month, hitting hard the already diminishing pockets of clubs. With the 'recession' in full swing and adverse weather conditions becoming a more regular occurrence, surely it's time to take heed and start making some changes.

This supplement aims to open our eyes to the environment and offer advice and tips on how we can work together to help prevent climate change. Melissa Jones reports...

What Is A Carbon Footprint?

A carbon footprint is a measure of the impact our activities have on the environment, and in particular climate change. It relates to the amount of greenhouse gases produced in our day-to-day lives through burning fossil fuels for electricity, heating and transportation etc.

The carbon footprint is a measurement of all greenhouse gases we individually produce and has units of tonnes (or kg) of carbon dioxide equivalent.

A carbon footprint is made up of the sum of two parts, the primary footprint (shown by the green slices of the pie chart below) and the secondary footprint (shown as the yellow slices).

1. The primary footprint is a measure of our direct emissions of CO² from the burning of fossil fuels including domestic energy consumption and transportation (e.g. car and plane). We have direct control of these.

2. The secondary footprint is a measure of the indirect CO² emissions from the whole lifecycle of products we use - those associated with their manufacture and eventual breakdown. To put it very simply - the more we buy the more emissions will be caused on our behalf.

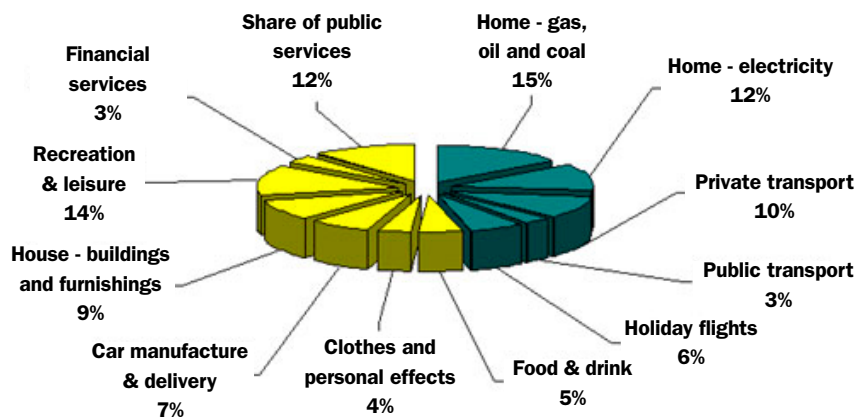
Info taken from:
www.carbonfootprint.com

Curious As To The Size Of Your Carbon Footprint?

The following are a few of many websites that can calculate your carbon footprint:

www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx
www.footprint.wwf.org.uk
www.whatsmycarbonfootprint.com/calculate.htm
www.co2savings.co.uk

FACT: Did you know...Electricity is one of the biggest producers of carbon emissions, so every time you make a coffee or turn the television on you are adding to global warming.



WILDFLOWER MIXTURES

A beautiful vista can be created by using the new low and slow growing grasses combined with a dedicated range of wildflower mixtures now available from Rigby Taylor.

Areas sown with seed from this individually created Mascot Environmental Flora Range play a crucial role in helping to foster biodiversity within the environment. With serious concerns about declining wildlife populations from sparrows to bumble bees these sites will help to provide a natural haven for our animals and insects. Parks, open spaces, highway verges, corners and non-used areas of sportsgrounds, together with areas of rough on golf courses can all benefit from this approach.

With native wildflower species including cornflowers, ox-eye daisies, poppies and ragged-robin (all a far less common sight than they used to be) a sowing of these quality seeds can help to redress nature's balance and ideally are sown in the spring or autumn period.

Wild flora mixtures are designed to suit a wide range of soil types from chalk and limestone, sandy, heavy clay, woodland, through to coastal. In addition bespoke site-specific native mixtures



can also be created. Traditionally sold as an 80% grass seed and 20% wild flora combination the average sowing rate is 5 gms/m².

To reduce maintenance costs once these wild flora areas are established only occasional mowing

is required, so also benefiting the environment.

What better than a combination of sustainable grasses and a mass of stunning natural wild flora to create an impact for the public and members of clubs to enjoy?

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The Perennial Ryegrasses *Greenway* and *Ace* give fineness of leaf, and density with the ability to continue growing at low temperatures. Both blend well with Fescues and Browntop Bents and their low crowns mean they can be maintained at much lower cutting heights.

The Slender Creeping Red Fescue *Lanai* and the Perennial Ryegrass *Greenway* provide dense growth early and late in the season, reducing stress and increasing sward density during the autumn, winter and spring periods.

Mascot R116 is a unique mixture that accepts greater wear and tear than traditional products and maintains year round colour through the combination of species used.



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Talking Heads

	How has climate change affected your course in recent times?	How have you overcome these problems?
 <p>Name: Gordon Moir Position: Links Superintendent Club: St Andrews Links, Central Scotland</p>	<p>I'm not sure if you can relate things to climate change or just the natural process and weather patterns but we have been combating coastal erosion over the past 12 to 15 years, but looking back over periods of history it is nothing new. We also commissioned a survey on rising sea levels early in 2008. Other than that, I would say that the seasons are appearing to merge but then, this winter has been the coldest for some 15 years, especially the period from October to Christmas.</p>	<p>We had done some protection work on the coast in 2001 - which we repeated last September/October.</p>
 <p>Name: Rob Holland Position: Course Manager Club: Birchwood Park Golf Centre, Kent</p>	<p>Climate change has had an effect on our course over recent years. More extreme weather patterns are emerging which we have had to respond to. Most importantly for us as a predominantly society orientated venue is maintaining high standards of presentation and playability, during the severest of conditions.</p>	<p>We have increased our aeration programme to ensure maximum filtration of excessive rainfall and promote deeper rooting during drought periods. Maintaining a focus on what you're trying to achieve is vital to see through the harshest of conditions.</p>
 <p>Name: Paul Worster Position: Course Manager Club: Minchinhampton Golf Club, Gloucestershire</p>	<p>Weather patterns have become far more erratic and difficult to predict. A sequence of dry summers gave way to two extremely wet and cool summers; winters have been largely non-events until this year. The courses have been overplayed under poor conditions which has affected presentation at times.</p>	<p>It has been necessary to step up certain operations such as light sanding, traffic control, and aeration when conditions allow. A word of warning - sometimes it is better to skip an aeration process rather than forging ahead at all costs under poor conditions.</p>
 <p>Name: Colin Webber Position: Course Manager Club: Portmore Golf Park, North Devon</p>	<p>In 1987, the hurricane that wasn't, totally demolished our family farm buildings - that was the first time that I had heard of global warming or climate change. This eventually along with the last recession and a new trunk road saw the demise of our farming activities and in 1993 we opened the doors for business as Portmore Golf Park. The last two wet summers have affected income significantly with a reduction in golf course income falling by 16 percent, both from membership and more significantly pay and play. Both club and county matches have being cancelled and on too many occasions the normal club competitions have been reduced to 9 holes, frequent trolley bans have been in place. I have had many upset customers.</p>	<p>Since mid December we have had significantly less rainfall, trying to get the surface water away has proved difficult we tried a ground breaker - it is early days yet but it has improved some areas and made some worse. Walkways and surrounds have been improved by top dressing with compatible pure sand, the introduction of hedgehog trolley wheels has made a massive difference, no more trolley bans.</p>
 <p>Name: Ceri Richards Position: Technical Sales Manager Company: Avoncrop Amenity Products Ltd</p>	<p>Yes. I have noticed milder winters mean that greenkeepers are cutting right up until Christmas, whereas, even 20 or so years ago - I remember long frosts that started in October. This has also led to an increase in leatherjackets that are no longer killed off in hard frosts.</p>	<p>The best way is to view it as a challenge! Longer cutting seasons have been made easier by advances in mower technology and pests and diseases can still be treated, for the moment.</p>
 <p>Name: Thomas Murray Position: Head Greenkeeper Club: Ratho Park Golf Club, Edinburgh</p>	<p>Wetter/milder months during the winter have brought problems, certainly to older constructed golf courses with poor drainage, causing more course closures and the risk of more fungal diseases.</p>	<p>We are working on improving our drainage throughout the course. Pruning and thinning trees to allow more light and air flow throughout our parkland course.</p>

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

What measures have you and your club put in place to reduce your carbon footprint?	Does your golf club recycle? If so, what?	What advice can you offer golf clubs that are struggling to cope with erratic weather conditions?
<p>No specific measures, although we try and act sensibly in our transport plans, orders, deliveries etc.</p>	<p>We recycle all our grass clippings and other materials from the course such as any gorse or bushes we cut back which we chip and compost. Also any sand/soil from repairing bunkers/any construction work is recycled and used again in either divot mix, topdressing material or in new construction work. Nothing like that leaves the site. Above that we recycle all paper from our offices etc and most of the glass, plastics and cardboard from our clubhouses and golf shops or that which is collected on the golf courses in the rubbish bins. Other items recycled include printers, cartridges, computer monitors, metal.</p>	<p>Have an audit carried out to see if your drainage system and irrigation system are as efficient as they can be.</p>
<p>As one of the Burhill Golf Centres, we have instigated a thorough environmental policy which encompasses all 10 of our courses. We are committed to preserving our local environments for our communities and enhancing habitats for all indigenous flora and fauna. We regularly monitor all waste management to ensure our individual sites maintain a high degree of professionalism towards a continual reduction in our carbon footprint.</p>	<p>At the moment we recycle cardboard and glass at the clubhouse. Our aim over the next couple of years is to install recycling bins at some of the tees for golfers to put relevant empty packaging into so they can see our commitment to maintaining the environment they play in.</p>	<p>Never be surprised with the British weather! Extremes of heat, cold and precipitation rates at both ends of the scale at a time of year when it really shouldn't be happening are going to become the norm. Have a plan, stick to it and always be prepared.</p>
<p>The Club has recently had an "Energy Audit" carried out. It revealed that 90% of our energy usage was in the clubhouse and an action plan was designed to reduce energy use. As a result, we have been able to target certain areas such as changing the existing lighting throughout the Clubhouse to low energy bulbs, which should reduce energy use by an estimated 20% annually. Money saved each year through such schemes is to be placed in a budget, which will finance the next stage of energy efficiency improvements in the following years.</p>	<p>This club recycles paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, glass bottles, aerosols, used engine oil and filters, cleaning fluids, and we compost everything from the golf course - including greens grass clippings.</p>	<p>The biggest piece of advice would be not to panic and over-react. Golf courses are outside and are subject to influences largely beyond our control. Good dialogues including facts and figures are essential to keep the lines of communication open with your membership. I try and concentrate on good standards of presentation under adverse conditions, rather than trying to fight the conditions themselves.</p>
<p>The greens are USGA and we have changed to pure fescue which has meant that chemical fertiliser usage is virtually nil and only a small amount of organic N is being used. We have not used a fungicide in 14 years. I recently commissioned a carbon footprint analysis and we currently produce 84.98 tonnes of CO2! 53.99 % of which is on electricity and 29.05% diesel! A lighting audit on the clubhouse alone showed that simply by changing light bulbs gave an annual saving of £1400! Recycling our waste has reduced our wheellie bin cost by half.</p>	<p>We recycle all cardboard, glass, tin and plastic with hopefully the food waste being composted in the near future. I recently had a visit from a wind turbine expert, there are currently grants available of 20 % of the total cost of any renewable energy projects. In the very near future any excess energy that you produce from a renewable source, will be paid at around 30p per unit, the payback period could be as little as five years on a turbine that has a life of 25 years, so free electric.</p>	<p>As greenkeepers you will have massive powers of observation, use them to look at your own business, you will find that your customers like what you are doing as well (as long as you tell them) not just from an environmental or cost saving angle, but aiming toward a totally self-sustaining future can only be good for all of us, we have all got to do something to reverse the effects of the last 80 years, get outside your box and give it a go, life is what you make it.</p>
<p>Because of the recent mild, wet summers I have seen golf clubs diesel bills rising due to the extra cutting required. So some clubs are considering the economics of using PGR's - I also think that the recent economic downturn will force golf clubs to bring in energy saving measures due to financial pressures, rather than a desire to cut CO² emissions.</p>	<p>I see that most golf clubs I visit now have separate skips for cardboard and plastic (but again, this was mostly brought in due to local authority rules rather than a decision by the club to become greener). Most chemical companies now package their fungicides, for instance, in much smaller packaging than in the past, as small as 500g per hectare for instance. Most greenkeepers I know recycle plastic containers.</p>	<p>As I said earlier, view it as a challenge. Look out for leatherjackets and also diseases like Anthracnose and Dollar Spot that have become more prevalent due to the changing climate. Show your club that you are 'doing your bit' to save energy by presenting a report on the subject ASAP.</p>
<p>The control of grow regulators on turf have seen a reduction of grass cutting throughout the golf course. More use of re-cycled products that are available today.</p>	<p>On the golf course side we recycle cores from greens and surrounds, tree prunings, leaves from trees, tree posts and glass bottles. Our future plans are to recycle water, grass cuttings, cardboard, paper.</p>	<p>My advice would be on putting together, with the backing of your club committee, and possibly seeking professional advice on a long term policy plan for improving golf course drainage and environment on the golf course.</p>

FACING UP TO GREENHOUSE GASES

By Maureen Keepin

Recognised as a worldwide problem a dramatic rise in greenhouse gases - in particular carbon dioxide – called for drastic action.

As a result, in December 2007 the 'Kyoto protocol' was signed by 174 countries with the objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The aim was to encourage those undertaking polluting activities to become more efficient in their production processes through international exchange allowances for carbon dioxide (CO²).

Put into place jointly with the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), these negotiable allowances permit industrialised countries to benefit from carbon credits following investment in these cleaner technologies.

A carbon credit unit is generally taken as one tonne of greenhouse gas being equivalent to one tonne of CO².

Brian Robinson, Director of Seed Research at Rigby Taylor said: "This issue is not just about large industrial concerns as we all have a vital role to play in reducing greenhouse gases."

HOW THE CARBON CYCLE WORKS

Research demonstrates that man's activity contributes to an annual increase of 6.5 Petagrammes (Pg) of CO² per year, which equates to more than 6,000,000,000 tonnes.

Nature is a wonderful thing and around half the carbon produced is reabsorbed by the biosphere through increased photosynthesis and in the oceans by dissolution.

Problems arise because more than 3 Pg of CO² per year are not sequestered – contributing to a substantial increase in greenhouse gases.

The carbon cycle is the biogeochemical cycle by which carbon is exchanged between the biosphere, rocks, oceans and the atmosphere. The cycle is made up of carbon sinks, where carbon is stocked, and fluctuates between them.

There are three types of cycle for carbon stocking:

- Short term e.g. the atmosphere, which renews its carbon every five years.
- Middle term e.g. humus in the soil or in a forest which can stock carbon for a few hundred years.
- Long term e.g. erosion of limestone rocks over more than 300 million years.

In a growing forest every one tonne of dry wood has the potential to stock 1.8 tonnes of CO² for several hundred years. However where trees decompose or the forest burns this carbon enters into the soil or the atmosphere as CO².

The earth's topsoil is a most valuable carbon sink as it stocks more carbon than all the earth's vegetation and atmosphere combined. The quantity of carbon stocked in the earth's soils is estimated at 1.600 Petagrammes.

This topsoil or humus is formed by the action of the decomposition of micro-fauna, fungi and bacteria into organic plant residues, which can stay in the soil for hundreds or even thousands of years.

And worldwide the most fertile soils are the chernozems found beneath natural grassland extending across Russia, the Ukraine and Canada.

Where the rapid mineralization of humus takes place losses can be in the order of 10 tonnes/per annum/per hectare in temperate climates and reach a few hundred tonnes in tropical areas.

Consequently even small changes of sequestration per square metre can produce significant changes to the global equilibrium of carbon.

WHAT IS THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT?

The greenhouse effect we hear so much about is a natural process that warms the atmosphere. It is caused by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and is made up of:

- water vapour (55%)
- carbon dioxide CO² (39%)
- methane CH₄ (2%)
- ozone (2%)
- nitrous oxides (2%)
- chlorofluorocarbons (CFC-11 and CFC-12)

Greenhouse gases absorb part of the sun's rays reflected from the surface of the earth (infra red) that cannot escape into space.

Importantly methane as CH₄ is 21 times more effective as a greenhouse gas than CO².

So how does methane form? When an animal or a plant decomposes by fermentation or putrefaction in the absence of oxygen methane is produced.

Much of the methane present in the atmosphere is of a natural origin, including marshes. However important quantities are now also released from landfill sites and animal stock and these need to be curtailed.

On course for cutting your carbon footprint

Reducing carbon emissions is vital and greenkeepers and grass have a pivotal role to play.

Climate change is a big debate and people ask 'is it occurring, yes or no'?

Over the years, travelling around the world, Director of Seed Research at Rigby Taylor, Brian Robinson, reports more and more evidence that it is happening.

So how do clubs maintain their facilities in the best way possible while having regard to the

amount of carbon dioxide they are producing?

Brian Robinson said: "For the industry, BIGGA and individual clubs dramatic changes in weather patterns are putting increased pressure on everyone.

"We need to produce good conditions 365 days of the year and presentation demands are increasing in all sports, whether it is golf or soccer."

And it is here the small grass seed has a vital role to play, offering considerable benefits in relation to reducing the carbon footprint.

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE MATTER

A dedicated programme of field trials by leading grass seed breeder Top Green has revealed that increased root mass is a key to CO₂ capture and sequestration.

Grasses contribute to carbon sequestration through the development and decomposition of leaves but the root system is also vital.

Grasses have fibrous root systems with an average dry root mass of 1,5 kg per m², which represents about 70 percent of the total plant mass*.



*Effect of management intensity on sward productivity of a permanent meadow Stypinski P. Mastalerczuk G. 2002

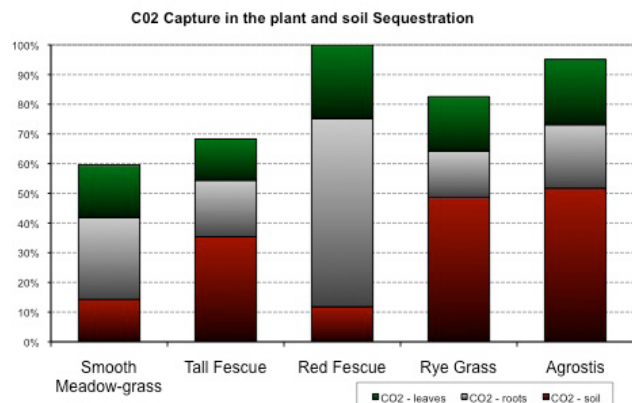
TOPICAL TRIALS

A current seed breeding programme at Les Alleuds in France by Top Green, in liaison with UK seed agent and supplier Rigby Taylor, is taking into account the amount of carbon each grass plant species can capture.

Brian Robinson said: "This will help clubs and councils to select seed which is most beneficial to the environment."

By increasing the capacity of grass to take in CO₂ emissions through the use of ecologically important grass mixes Rigby Taylor is now looking at the formulation of new mixes. These have been specifically designed to actually improve the take-up of CO₂ emissions, Brian added: "And we will be putting markers on a new Top Green range of grass seed mixtures clearly identifying each species' ability to capture carbon."

This will considerably aid managers in adapting sustainable landscape methods in order to reduce their carbon footprint.



DEMONSTRATING AMOUNT OF CARBON LOCKED IN BY VARIOUS GRASS SPECIES.

HOW LOW MAINTENANCE GRASSES ARE REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

By Maureen Keepin

Two highly emotive subjects are climate change and the impact on the environment from carbon emissions. And turf grass breeders are seeking solutions to these by introducing cultivars with slow re-growth characteristics and reduced clippings yield.

Helping to reduce the impact upon the environment these grasses are proving vital and grass seed development manager at Rigby Taylor, Stephen Denton, said: "This is an important factor clubs and councils should consider when selecting mixtures for use on areas that are either difficult to maintain to a given standard or involve high machinery use."

Grass is vital to our wellbeing. Through photosynthesis, turfgrass and other green plants take in carbon dioxide and water. Using the power of sunlight, the plants then release oxygen back into the atmosphere. Scientific studies have shown that 25 square feet of turfgrass can provide enough oxygen for one person for an entire day. And impressively golf courses can provide enough oxygen for an entire neighbourhood.

CLIPPINGS YIELD

Clippings trials undertaken at Top Green's trial station in Les Alleuds France have been looking at how reducing clippings and the subsequent reduction in mowing frequency can affect carbon emissions.

Looking at both high and low Nitrogen input situations; yields were collected, measured and recorded. Results taken from the two situations revealed that an average clippings yield of 6.5 tonnes was produced per hectare of area.

There were significant variations between both species type and variety. The graphs below demonstrate results from the trials carried out.

These two tables look at an Environmental impact study on clippings yields both for individual species and a mixture.

It can be seen from table 1 that tall fescue produces over nine tonnes of clippings whereas perennial ryegrasses produce under four tonnes. A mixture produces about 6.5 tonnes.

While tall fescues produce higher than average clippings yields, benefits from their exceptional drought tolerance and reduced water consumption requirements of only 25mm of water per annum need to be considered for future water conservation needs.

In table 2 we looked specifically at ryegrass varieties and found that Greenflash produced

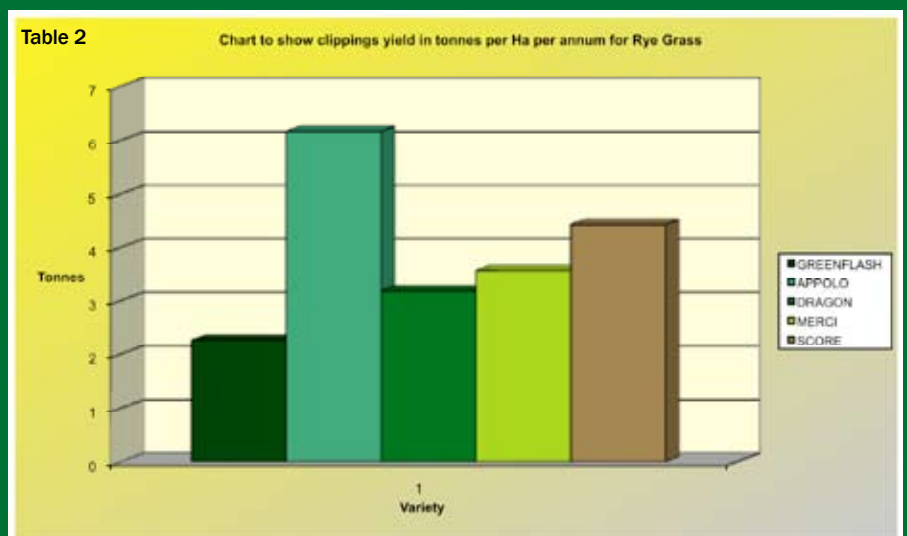
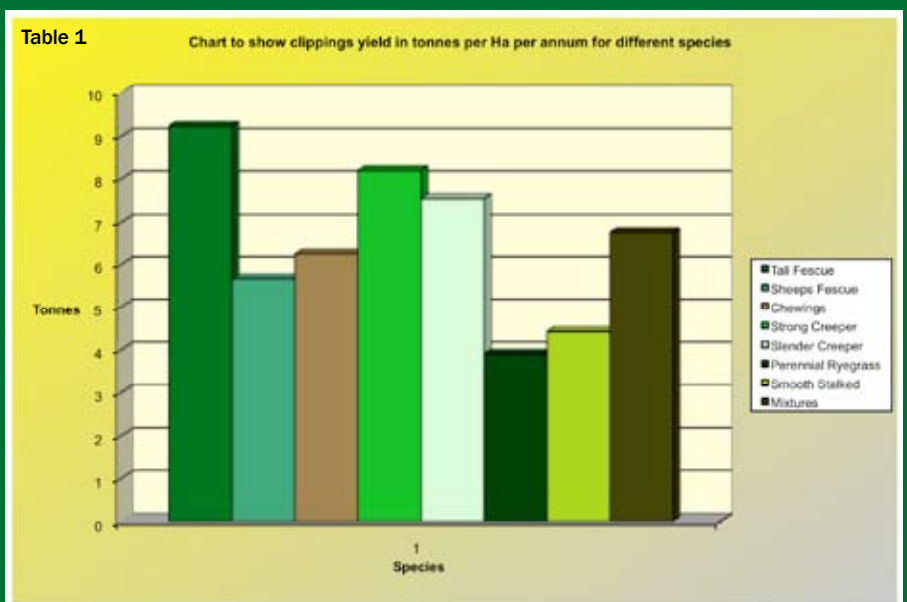
2.27 tonnes of clippings per annum, the lowest amount of clippings of those tested.

The worst varieties produced 7.32 T/ha.

The best variety in trials Greenflash produced 1.56 T/ha.

The difference between the best and worst varieties was 5.76 T/ha.

As it costs on average £40 per tonne to dispose



GREAT GRASS

In our towns and cities we use grass for golf courses, sportsfields and amenity areas.

Stephen Denton, Grass Seed Development Manager at Rigby Taylor commented: "We often take these sites for granted. We should not, as grass fulfils a highly complex role in the urban ecosystem."

It is vital for life as one hectare of grass produces enough oxygen for 150 people to breathe.

And grass contributes significantly to carbon sequestration through CO² capture in the grass species.

of clippings the savings that can be made over a year per hectare are substantial = £230.

The results from grass cutting trials undertaken by Richard Barton and his team at Torbay Council are impressive. He has reduced his cuts from seven or eight per year with a traditional MOT mix to three or four on a new low maintenance mix incorporating these new varieties. This produces savings in time, labour, wear and tear on machines and fuel costs - plus the added benefit of reducing the council's carbon footprint.

These results are more impressive, given the wetter weather conditions experienced in 2007, which resulted in a significant increase in grass growth.

When looking to cost out a maintenance regime for any given grass area on a golf course, from fairways, tees to roughs, or public playing fields, or roadside verges, knowing what grass seeds you have is all-important. By using these new variety mixtures a dramatic difference can be made to the turf manager's budget and also in a small but significant way improvements made to our environment.



Stephen Alderton at Les Alleuds trial grounds

Further benefits of grass include:

- Filters dust and particles from the air which is extremely important for golf courses and parks in urban situations.
- Grass, together with other plants, helps to regulate the temperature.
- Parks and gardens benefit as grass acts as a filter, absorbing rather than reflecting noise.
- Helps to filter water into the water table thereby helping to avoid flash flooding and runoff.
- Slower growing cultivars help to lower maintenance costs and reduce the carbon footprint.
- Reduced clippings saves on disposal costs and the impact on the environment.
- Greater drought resistance gives great looking grass without using our valuable water resources.
- Quicker establishment provides greater protection from soil erosion.
- Cultivars more able to cope with waterlogged conditions give greater stabilization and improved grass cover.
- An increased ability to withstand windchill provides greater growth throughout the seasons and a more even and harder-wearing sward.



HOW TOP GREEN CUTS ITS CARBON FOOTPRINT

A new grass seed production regime set up by the Top Green group has put in place a five-year field rotation cycle which produces little CO² emissions and optimizes production.

First year cereal is planted – second year clover – third, fourth and fifth years grass seed.

Direct drilling techniques in the second and third years means less CO² is lost from the soil through ploughing - as ploughing kills humus through burying it.

Company objectives of this grass seed breeder include reducing the carbon footprint at the seed production stage, through to field production, on to the end-user and the landscape.

For further information on grass seed selection contact:

Brian Robinson, Director of Seed Research at Rigby Taylor on: 01483 446900.

REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The developed western countries are producing more and more carbon emissions therefore it is more important than ever to start minimising your footprint. We need to lead the way. Melissa Jones reports...

Here's a list of simple things you can do immediately. These will start to reduce your contribution to global warming. The items in this list will cost you no money at all and will in fact save you money:

- Sign up to a green energy supplier, who will supply electricity from renewable sources (e.g. wind and hydroelectric power) - this will reduce your carbon footprint contribution from electricity to zero
- Turn it off when not in use (lights, television, DVD player, Hi Fi, computer etc.)
- Turn down the central heating slightly (try just 1 to 2 degrees C)
- Turn down the water heating setting (just 2 degrees will make a significant saving)
- Check the central heating timer setting - remember there is no point heating the house after you have left for work
- Fill your dish washer and washing machine with a full load - this will save you water, electricity, and washing powder
- Fill the kettle with only as much water as you need
- Unplug your mobile phone as soon as it has finished charging
- Defrost your fridge/freezer regularly
- Do your weekly shopping in a single trip
- Hang out the washing to dry rather than tumble drying it
- Go for a run rather than drive to the gym

The following is a list of items that may take an initial investment. They should pay for themselves over the course of one to four years through savings on your energy bills:

- Fit energy saving light bulbs
- Install thermostatic valves on your radiators
- Insulate your hot water tank, your loft and your walls
- 35% of heat generated in the house is lost through the walls. Installing cavity wall installation to a medium size house could reduce your heating bills by up to £100 per year
- By installing 180mm thick loft insulation you could stop about 25% of your heating escaping through the roof
- Recycle your grey water
- Replace your old fridge/freezer (if it is over 15 years old), with a new one with energy efficiency rating of "A"
- Replace your old boiler with a new energy efficient condensing boiler

Travel less and travel more carbon footprint friendly:

- Car share to work, or for the kids school run
- Use the bus or a train rather than your car
- For short journeys either walk or cycle
- Next time you replace your car - check out diesel engines. With one of these you can even make your own Biodiesel fuel.

As well as your primary carbon footprint, there is also a secondary footprint that you cause through your buying habits. If you buy foods out of season at the supermarket, then these will have either been flown or shipped in from far away - all adding to your carbon footprint.

- Reduce your consumption of meat
- Don't buy bottled water if your tap water is safe to drink (especially if it has been shipped from far away)
- Buy local fruit and vegetables, or even try growing your own
- Don't buy fresh fruit and vegetables which are out of season, they may have been flown in
- Try to buy products made closer to home (look out and avoid items that are made in the distant lands)
- Buy organic produce
- Don't buy over packaged products
- Recycle as much as possible
- Think carefully about the type of activities you do in your spare time. Do any of these cause an increase in carbon emissions? e.g. Saunas, Health clubs, restaurants and pubs, go-karting etc.

In addition there is your footprint at work. Do you leave your computer and monitor on when you are away from your desk? Do you leave the lights on when you leave the office? Do you print documents unnecessarily - and could you print two pages to a side and double sided?

A Closer Look at Bio-diesel

Using Biodiesel is a brilliant way of reducing your carbon footprint, it is biodegradable and non-toxic, and is a fuel that can be used in any diesel powered vehicle. Because biodiesel only releases the carbon dioxide that has been previously absorbed by the plants when growing, it has no negative impact on the carbon cycle.

Biodiesel can be made from processed waste vegetable oil – that has maybe come from your clubhouse kitchen - and used to run any diesel motor. The natural cleaning properties in Biodiesel mean that it is actually good for your car, it can help to clean injectors, fuels lines, pumps and tanks – plus it's extremely cheap.

Words of warning:

- Anyone can make biodiesel but you may need to pay a small amount of duty on the fuel
- If you intend to use cooking oils, make sure that they do not contain animal fat. The use of animal fats as a fuel is illegal as it falls under a specific waste legislation
- Check your car manufacturers warranty – some manufacturers will not honour the warranty should you use a fuel different to that advised

FACT: Research is currently underway into the use of algae in biofuel production. Algae has the potential to yield much higher quantities of oil and can be grown on sewerage plants and other alternative areas, taking the pressure off conventional farm land.

Useful Websites:

www.co2savings.co.uk
www.whatsmycarbonfootprint.com/reduce_transit.htm
www.environmentalgreensystems.co.uk
www.envirogreenbiofuels.com

Rainwater Harvesting

This is a low cost option that simply involves the collection of rainwater from surfaces on which rain falls. Generally, water will be collected from the roofs of buildings and stored in rainwater tanks. All you need is to capture this rainwater and direct it from roof gutters to your rainwater storage tank.

Info taken from
www.carbonfootprint.com

Grey Water: The Facts

Not only is water a scarce resource globally- it also takes a huge amount of energy to move it around - all adding to your carbon footprint. Grey water is the solution.

Money goes down the plug-hole

Most consumers are very wasteful when it comes to water usage. In Western economies, we take water supply for granted and use huge quantities of potable water - often for non-essential purposes and - worst - sometimes we just pour it straight away. An increasing number of us now have water meters fitted to our homes - meaning that we are quite literally pouring money down the drain.

So what can you do? Clearly, we can all make efforts to cut down on our use of water by simple means - but also domestic water treatment equipment is now available to help householders and golf clubs to recycle used potable water ('Grey Water') and also to harvest rainwater. We like to think of this as Green Water.

Giving Grey Water the Green Rinse

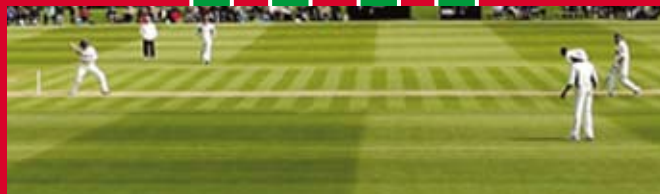
With the right treatment, you can put Grey Water to good use in applications such as laundry, toilet flushing, and also for plant watering - for which the phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients provide a good food source. Grey water provides many benefits. You can install a home UV filtration system from a number of suppliers globally.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF AERATION

Philip Threadgold looks at the important research work into aeration carried out by Dr Donald McGregor, at Royal Holloway College.

Most of us take for granted the quality of the air we breathe and that oxygen is critical to the maintenance of life on this planet. What fewer people realise is that oxygen and CO² are also critical to life in the soil.

Scientists have long regarded the soil as a “black box” into which it was best not to peer too closely. However, modern analytical techniques have opened up this world and enabled us to understand the processes that govern life in the soil.

The predominant life forms in soil are microbes; bacteria and fungi that break down dead plant and animal material and recycle the nutrients making them available to plants. These beneficial microbes also require oxygen to grow, and a build up of CO² is detrimental to them too. Without soil microbes, life above ground would not exist.

However, soil is a physical structure, consisting of aggregates, with air or water-filled spaces between them in which most of the microbes live. Any soil can become compacted by pressure imposed by human feet or machinery, meaning that the spaces between the aggregates become fewer, gaseous exchange with the atmosphere is reduced and oxygen content decreased. If this happens, the microbial population will suffer and, subsequently, the above ground community will too.

In sports turf, compaction is a frequent occurrence and machines, such as the Verti-Drain, have been developed to open up a compacted soil, to allow oxygen and water to enter it and CO² to leave. No previous study has ever asked about the consequences of aeration for the microbial community. Here we examined how aeration can affect soil microbes, using cutting-edge analytical techniques.

A hidden world beneath the surface

That grey zone where the worlds of turf grass cultivation and microbiology intersect is an intriguing region about which swirls a confusing amalgamation of facts, half-truths, and downright speculation.



Aeration is certainly one of the most common cultivation practices. In this area of study, the research work of Dr Donald J. McGregor, conducted at the Royal Holloway campus of the University of London, breaks new ground in establishing a greater level of understanding. According to Dr McGregor, there is much that we simply don't know about microbes and their interactions with plants and other living things in the soil. This complex set of biological processes make up what he calls “the hidden world” beneath the surface.

Just a few years ago, it was impossible for aeration equipment manufacturers – and their customers – to know how effective their products were without understanding the composition of microbial communities in the soil around the turf grass. The research work at Royal Holloway

marks a turning point in that regard.

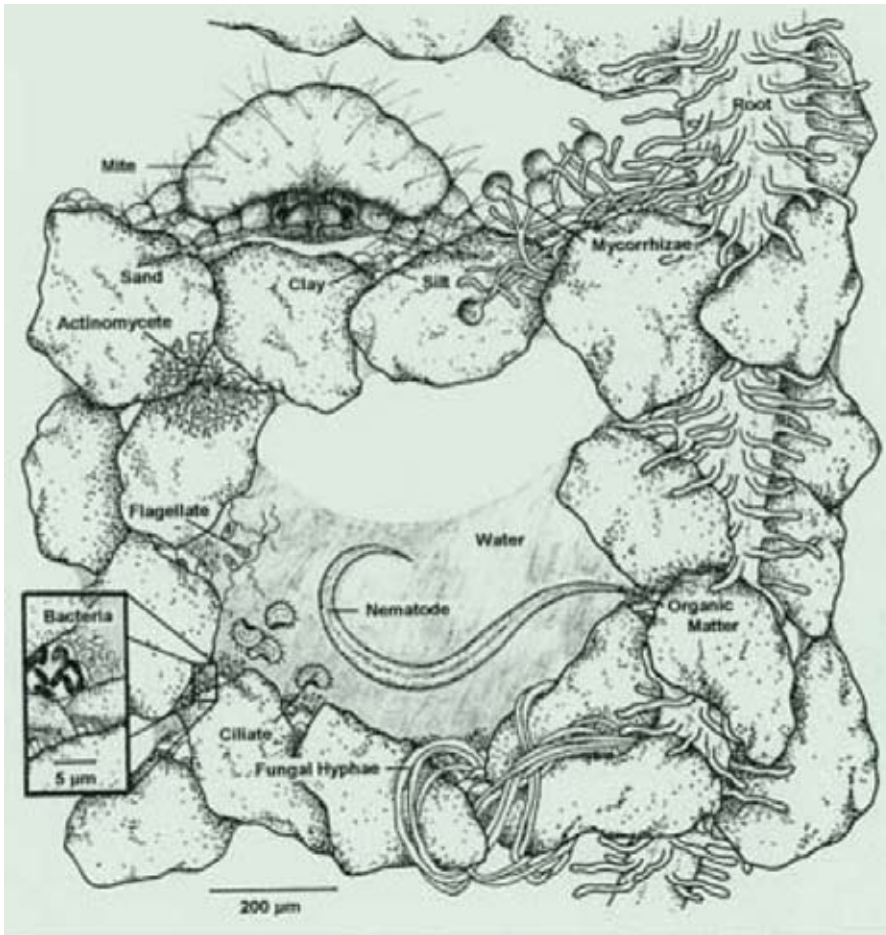
In a very real sense, microbes are a turf manager's best friends.

“Microbes are the foundation of everything we see around us; without them we would not exist,” claims Dr McGregor.

“If anything goes wrong in the environment, the microbes are an early indicator. They will show subtle changes before anything else.”

Anyone with an interest in healthy turf grass is familiar with the basic processes that make up what we'll call the soil habitat. What biologists are discovering, however, is that this habitat is full of surprises. Did you know, for example, that the characteristic “fresh smell” we've all sniffed right after it rains is the scent of chemical secretions from mysterious microbes called actinomycetes,





A pictorial representation by Kim Luoma

organisms that seem to be halfway between bacteria and fungi? Even today, no one is sure exactly what these microbes do. One thing we are sure of, when it comes to microbes, is that some are aerobic and others are anaerobic, and that only the aerobic ones show a strong benefit to turf grass.

But microbes are only part of the picture. They exist in the soil structure right alongside earthworms, organic matter, plant roots and other living and once-living things – the so-called “biota” in the soil. Within this biota we find incredible diversity – aerobic and anaerobic, acidic and basic, wet and dry, and the list goes on. This diversity – and the interdependence of the life forms involved – is the very core of understanding this soil habitat. It is the interactions of these elements that influence all aspects of turfgrass health, and which have a strong relationship with practices like aeration.

When you stop to consider what microbes are capable of, in a biological sense, the effect is mind-boggling:

- Enhancement of plant growth
- Enhancement of drought resistance
- Disease protection
- Reduced need for fertilisers
- Control of *Poa annua* without using chemicals

And those examples are just biological. Microbes do even more when you examine their roles in the chemical and physical processes of the soil habitat:

- Breakdown of organic compounds
- Breakdown of cellulose and lignin
- Formation of humus
- Soil stabilisation
- Nutrient cycling
- Nitrogen fixation

It’s fascinating to contemplate that all this activity is going on beneath the surface but let’s not forget that the appearance of the turf plants is also affected. In fact, it is the highly visible condition of the grass, whether it appears healthy or unhealthy, that gives an indication of a healthy and productive soil habitat – or the lack of it.

The complex interdependent concept of the ‘soil habitat’ provides a scientifically useful basis for turfcare professionals seeking answers to cultivation challenges.

Aeration isn’t new. For most of this century, mankind has been poking holes in the soil based on the belief that it helped the grass grow.

Aeration is really the technique, not the machine, and there are a great many ways to aerate, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. What turf professionals have known for years is that machines like the Verti-Drain work, but no one could provide the scientific reason why.

Clearly, aeration was a popular cultivation practice, but how rooted was it in biological processes? When a Verti-Drain tine breaks the soil surface, penetrates down to a desired depth, and performs its “heaving” motion, what is happening from a biological standpoint, and how and why does that affect turf health?



Dr Alan Gange and Dr Donald J. McGregor

This dilemma recently attracted the attention of the academic community, specifically Dr Alan Gange and Dr McGregor at Royal Holloway, where the Department of Biological Sciences sees some 40 faculty members and 400 students routinely explore timely issues in biology, ecology, zoology, biochemistry, and molecular biology.

While Royal Holloway isn’t the first institution to delve into research on microbial activity, it has taken on the task with a rather unique twist. Rather than simply counting the number of microbes in the soil, their research involved analysing the composition of the soil’s microbial community – exploring in the process whether or not aeration had an effect on that community, in particular, the “good” aerobic microbes with the potential to benefit turf plant growth.

“I’ve given lots of turf talks in the past, usually on environmentally friendly products which are designed to increase microbial populations,” noted Dr Gange.

“What really caught my attention was when people told me that many of these were not all that effective. It led me to believe that one could probably get the same effect, increasing the



good microbes in the soil, by simply aerating it. So I approached Redexim Charterhouse, to see if they were interested in helping us determine if that statement were true.”

According to Dr Gange, this is the only study done that attempts to link aeration to the numbers and diversity of the microbial community in the soil.

“Ecologists couldn’t look at the diversity of the microbes before because the technologies were not really available until the last few years,” he said.

“So, we’ve had 10 years of just counting the numbers of microbes without anyone profiling the composition of that community in the soil. And no one’s made the connection to aeration before.”

While Dr Gange may have started the ball rolling, it was Dr McGregor who chose to do the research for his thesis “The Effect of Cultivation on Microbial Communities in Sports Turf Soils”. The research experiment took three years to complete and nearly six months to analyse and write up.



Verti-Drain



Beneath the surface

Anatomy of an experiment: Aeration and Microbes

With some assistance from Dr Gange, Dr McGregor conducted two trials: one on two clay-based football fields at the school, and the other at the sand based turf at Liphook Golf Club, in Hampshire.

Feeling a little like an “environmental detective”, Dr McGregor designed the experiment in a way that entailed dividing the football pitches into individual plots, some of which were aerated while others were not.

“These were pitches that were used by the college football team on a regular basis, and so were subjected to normal or above-normal real world stresses, like any other sports turf,” he said.

He added a degree of complexity by aerating

at certain times of the year.

“Some areas were aerated in spring only, others in summer only, autumn only, winter only, while other plots were aerated in all four seasons,” he said.

A control group of plots on the football pitches were not aerated at all.

Like the football pitches, the test area at Liphook was divided into individual plots, with each one coded for a schedule of aeration at different times of the year.

A comprehensive series of measurements were then taken – of pH, water content, gas content, atmosphere, compaction, and make up of the microbial population and community structure – on all the plots at regular intervals before and after aeration, the exact timing of which depended on the technique and the weather conditions.

Soil samples were taken and returned to the lab at Royal Holloway for analysis. Some tests were done in the field, including those measuring the degree of compaction with a penetrometer.

Static and dynamic changes

According to Dr Gange, a variety of soil properties were constantly exerting varying degrees of influence on the soil microbial community, and the turf grass.

Some of the properties were inherent to the soil such as: texture (clay, sand, etc.), pH level, and other things relating to the physics of the soil. Other soil properties were dynamic in nature including: gas content, water content, and the most dynamic of all, compaction.

“You get compaction, you aerate to relieve it, and then it’s played on and gets compacted again,” notes Dr McGregor.



Key findings

Among the factors that influence microbial activity in the soil are: temperature, water, and oxygen – all of which exerted transient changes on the microbial community.

The importance of water and oxygen in influencing microbial communities bears out the value of compaction relief through aeration. In this experiment, there are a number of benefits that were found to have a direct connection to the use of the Verti-Drain for turfgrass aeration -

Soil Physical Characteristics: The effects on the soil are the most significant result of the treatment, where it reduces compaction in all seasons on both clay and sand-based sports turf, and significantly improves oxygen levels.

Microbial Structure: Microbial community structure is affected by treatment, but the strength of the response is season dependent and qualitative in nature. The main effect of the aeration was to change the microbial community structure in favour of more aerobic microbial groups, a factor that is believed to have a profound influence on organic matter dynamics and nutrient supply in sports turf soils.

Aesthetic Characteristics: Changes in the soil and in the microbial structure also yield improvements in appearance. In this era of televised golf and football games, the visual appeal of the

sports turf is often the target of commentary, and viewed as a key indicator of the health and condition of the turf.

Dr Gange stresses that oxygen is a huge consideration, in that unchecked compaction will prevent root growth by causing a shortage of oxygen in the soil and preventing it from being able to filter water down to the root zone.

“Once a root zone becomes anaerobic, anaerobic bacteria will flourish, and generally they are toxic to plant life,” he says.

Dr McGregor believes that the key is the prevalence of macropores versus micropores.

“The larger the size of the pores, the more ‘connectivity’ between pores and the greater the ability of the soil to permit gas exchange and water percolation. This may be the real reason why aeration works in a beneficial way in microbial communities,” says Dr McGregor.

“These larger pores also help prevent run-off of water and make irrigation more efficient.”

Clays, which have more micropores and fewer macropores, tend to have more physical barriers set up in the soil structure that may prevent bacteria from getting to the organic matter to degrade it.

“When you Verti-Drain you’re loosening up the soil so you encourage this connectivity of pores,” he adds. Also, clay soils require a greater frequency of aeration than sand based soils.

In the experiment, oxygen concentrations varied from area to area – likely because pore size and connectivity differed from one area to another. And from season to season, oxygen varied because of differences in the biota, including roots, earthworms, bacteria, and other life forms. It is this interconnectedness that reinforces the concept of “soil habitat” to explain the dynamic aspect of such interactions.

“This experiment indicates that encouraging development of microbial communities, particularly aerobic ones, is in the best interest of the average turf plant. Aerobic microbes are more metabolically productive.

“The chemical reaction that goes on within the respiration system of an aerobic microbe creates more energy, whereas an anaerobic microbe does not use oxygen and cannot achieve the same level of efficiency. The soil habitat is literally a healthier one with such an enriched energy budget,” said Dr McGregor.

The greater the number of aerobic microbes in the community, the greater the level of biological processes: decomposition and nutrient cycling go hand in hand with remineralisation.

“Enhancement of plant growth is also going on, and it can be either direct or indirect,” Dr McGregor says.

“And the natural competition between microbes, aerobic versus anaerobic, can have a useful effect against pathogens that could harm turf plants, since some microbes in the soil produce antibiotics that are antagonistic to the pathogens.”

One of the most important findings of Dr McGregor’s work is the revelation of the transient benefits of the Verti-Drain on microbial communities.

“The benefit doesn’t last when compaction returns. Sports turf is subject to compaction on an ongoing basis, and so the benefits of aeration are only sustainable when the activity is routinely repeated. Without it, microbes can go into a kind of hibernation if they are deprived of the necessary access to oxygen and water.”

Redexim Charterhouse, funded the research and would like to thank the Royal Holloway, University of London, and in particular Dr Donald J. McGregor for preparing his thesis.

About the Author

Philip Threadgold is a director of Astute Consultancy Ltd.

BUYERS’ GUIDE

Useful contacts

Keith Driver – Tel: 01273 679994

Garfitts – Tel: 0114 2513344

Topturf Irrigation (services) Ltd

– Tel: 0870 8720081

Terraine Aeration – Tel: 01449 673783

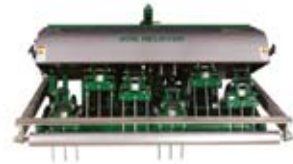
For further information see page 68

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partners in turfcare

A QUICK GUIDE TO...

Moving Trees

FEATURE



soon as the heat goes out of summer, until the end of March.

Trees can be moved outside these times, however a slightly smaller tree is selected and the necessary aftercare (watering) has to be increased.

While tree spades have floatation tyres, the timing of works, to utilise periods of firm ground can be prudent within a golf environment.

7. Additional Costs

The watering of the trees and the requirement to guy (to aid stability during establishment) are additional costs that should

be allowed for.

Your tree mover should guide you to the trees that do not require guying when choosing trees to transplant.

8. Ground Level

Trees and planting locations selected should ideally be on level ground, as any slopes will cause part of the rootball, if planted on level ground to be exposed and the opposite side below ground (unless the slopes at both locations match).

These areas require dressing with soil.

Guide by...

Ruskins Trees & Landscapes Ltd
- www.ruskins.co.uk
T: 01277 849990
F: 01277 849991
M: 07770 868675

Robert Wilkins, Operations Director:
robertw@ruskins.co.uk

1. A Fantastic Resource

Many golf courses have fantastic resources of young and semi mature trees that can be cost effectively transplanted using tree spades.

Trees are moved to replace lost trees, define fairways and greens, allow for tee relocation and every year to keep up with the improvements in drivers, by adding new or reinforcing old hazards and planting along boundaries to keep balls in bounds.

2. Young Plantations

Trees are typically sourced from young plantations or screens and often are selected as part of thinning of these areas.

3. Instant Maturity

The trees add instant maturity in their new locations and savings of up to 90% can be generated when purchasing new trees.

4. Tree Spades

Tree spades are generally available in three sizes, large 2.1 metre diameter, medium 1.5-1.6 and small 1-1.1 diameter.

Trees up to 20cm diameter can be moved with the larger spade.

5. Choose Carefully

It is prudent to select trees that are within the capabilities of each spade and if your course has never used a tree spade before, a visit by the operators will assist the choice of trees and confirm numbers that can be moved during a hire period.

6. Correct Timing

Typically, during a days hire, 12-15 trees can be moved.

The optimum time to transplant trees is from as



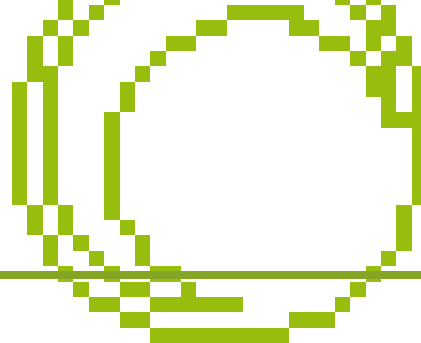
You could be doing so much more with eAurora Central Control.

Introducing the first web-based central control system in golf irrigation. One that requires no desktop software and gives you all the functionality you'd expect of a central control system – right from your home or wherever you like. For a demonstration, contact your John Deere dealer.

www.JohnDeere.co.uk



New Products



SIMPLE AND SAFE

Sisis has designed storage frames for two of their most popular implements – the SisisVariseeder 1300 and Sisis Osca 2 brush.

Storage frames, obviously, have advantages as far as Health & Safety are concerned but will also make handling and fitting the implements to the tractor simple and safe. The implement can easily be positioned at the tractor linkage and attached with minimum effort. They can also be used to protect the implements during movement and storage around the depot as they are fitted with castor wheels for ease of movement.

i 01625 503030
www.sisis.com



NEW FAMILY OF POWER UTILITY EQUIPMENT

Ditch Witch has introduced a new family of power utility equipment. The new Zahn series consists of three power units, the R150 (15hp), R230 (23hp), R300 (30hp) and a set of inter-changeable front ends that will revolutionise the industry. The Zahn series have been designed to be more versatile, more powerful, more productive and features articulated steering for increased manoeuvrability, enabling the front end to perform like a dedicated unit, elevated operator's platform for greater visibility, traction assist and cruise control.

i 01792 895906
www.ditchwitch.com



INNOVATIVE ADDITION TO RANGE

Spaldings has announced the introduction of a powerful 12V 55-watt magnetic halogen work lamp. The lamp is designed for a variety of lighting applications and the magnetic base and 360° swivel head provide the user with ultimate freedom to work in the darkest of conditions. This high performance and energy efficient lamp joins the ever-expanding range of Spaldings' workshop lighting.

i 01522 507 500
www.spaldings.co.uk



LOW EMISSION

New from Echo, is the PB-500 backpack blower with new Stratified Scavenging engine, ideal for clearing leaves, litter and debris. The new PB-500 produces an incredible 1014m³/h air volume and a maximum air speed of 42.4m/sec using the newly developed 50.8cc stratified scavenging engine from Echo, with significantly lower emissions.

A new design of fan and fan housing enables increased air speed and volume, and an improved debris protector ensures that the air intake is fully protected from leaves and debris, maximising airflow capacity.

i www.countax.com



BRAINS AND BRAWN

Toro has launched the next generation of its industry-leading range of wide-area rotary mowers – the new Groundsmaster 5900 Series in the form of the 5900 and 5910 models, which boast cutting widths of 4.9 metres.

Both models are equipped with an ultra-powerful and efficient 99hp Cummins turbo diesel engine, which enables them to mow at an impressive rate of five hectares (12.5 acres) an hour – that's one whole hectare (two-and-a-half acres) in less than 15 minutes!

i www.toro.com
01480 226800



NEW FORMULATIONS CUT COSTS

Headland Amenity has expanded two of its popular fertiliser ranges, offering the customer a wider choice of cost effective, low temperature performing products.

Multigreen 28-0-0+3MgO joins the well established Multigreen granular fertiliser range, (known for its longevity and consistent performance) featuring a 73% controlled release portion offering temperature-dictated release of nitrogen over 4 to 5 months.

The addition of sulphate of ammonia to this new formulation enhances the product's early season fast-start performance, providing rapid green up and improved colour at low soil temperatures, an effect that is further assisted by the inclusion of magnesium.

Solufeed NK 15-0-25+MgO joins Headland's water soluble range, with a new formulation combining sulphate of ammonia with potassium nitrate and magnesium.

i 01223 597834
www.headlandamenity.com



CORDLESS ANGLE GRINDER INTRODUCED

Spaldings has extended their electrical tool range with the introduction of the Hitachi 4 1/2" disc cordless angle grinder. Weighing just 1.9kg the Hitachi angle grinder is lightweight and compact, easily fitting into the tractor toolbox for in the field repairs and maintenance; where a corded tool is both impractical and limiting.

i 01522 507 600
www.spaldings.co.uk



NEW OUTFRONT MOWER

Equally at home on long grass, quality sports turf and rough roadside verges, the new Wessex ProLine TGX out-front flail mower from Broadwood International is designed to fit all popular out-front power units, including John Deere, Shibaura, Kubota, New Holland etc.

As well as cutting grass superbly, the ProLine TGX's flail cutting action leaves no unsightly grass swathings as occurs with rotary blade mowers. Clippings are spread perfectly evenly, which is particularly important when mowing sports turf.

i www.broadwoodintl.co.uk
01202 601050

MOSS PROBLEMS HIT FOR SIX

From the DJ Turfcare stable of specialist products for the grounds care industry come two new products to eliminate moss from hard surfaces. DJ Turfcare has become distributor for two new products called Batimoss CR and Batiface.

Batimoss CR is a biodegradable solution for removing moss, lichen and algae from all surfaces, including delicate and painted areas.

Batiface is a powerful solution for quickly removing moss, lichen and algae and renovating most surfaces such as tarmac to 'as new' within minutes. This product is ideal for removing slippery moss on paths and hard surfaces.

i 01483 200976
email: sales@djturfcare.co.uk



REGULATING RODENTS

Spaldings has extended its rodenticide range to include two new rodent bait boxes. The new additions have been carefully chosen to explore the natural behaviour of both rats and mice and will offer further assistance in rodent regulation. The robust bait boxes have been designed for both indoor and outdoor use allowing for total treatment of an infested area.

i 01522 507 500
www.spaldings.co.uk

NEW ARTICULATORS

Two new Articulator mowers have been introduced by Lastec. The model 3300 is a light weight, fully articulating five-deck rotary ride-on with zero turn and a 2.4 metre cut. The new model can fold its outer decks at the flick of a switch to reduce transport width to a mere 78in.

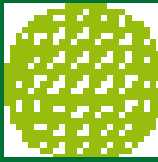
i www.lastec.com



before



after



Hobbies

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

Name: Bruce Hicks
Position: Head Greenkeeper
Club: Boston Golf Club
Hobby: Musical Theatre

How and when did you get into musical theatre?

"As with most things in my life I just "stumbled" into it when my wife became the Secretary of the local Operatic Society. While attending the society's summer BBQ I fell into conversation with the then Chairman who asked me "do you sing at all?" As a boy I spent eight years as a Chorister so my answer was yes but "not for many years". Anyway to cut a long story short several burnt sausages and cans of Stella later I found myself agreeing to audition for their next production (HMS Pinafore) as they were short of men for the roles."

What is it about the theatre that appeals to you?

"It is not easy to put into words, but for me it is probably the test of your memory, commitment, confidence, vocal skill and quick wittedness for when it starts to go wrong. Oh and I nearly forgot the applause at the



end is also quite nice. It is rather a strange hobby to pursue but the level of detachment from my day job is huge as I can honestly say that never once have I stood in the wings waiting for my cue and been thinking about my golf course, which is probably another good reason for me pursuing it. Although it is only considered amateur theatre, the standards are extremely high and my own vocal range and skill has been improved after attending hundreds of rehearsals and working with many different professional musical directors."

What have been your most memorable performances?

"Yeomen of the Guard with Nene Opera which was performed at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Buxton Opera House to an audience of about 1000. Also South Pacific where I played the character "Stewpot" and sang "There ain't nothing like a Dame" one night to a front row that consisted of my then Lady Captain and many members of her Section! But probably one of the best was Fiddler on the Roof (alas not Tevye but Avram the bookseller) which I did with my wife and two children in the cast, a real family experience and an award winner in the eyes of the National Operatic & Dramatic Association."

HUMAN RESOURCES

BIGGA's Management Support series produced by Xact
www.xact.uk.com



CHANGES IN DISCIPLINARY RULES

As some of you may know, the Employment Act 2004 introduced certain changes to the conduct of disciplinary and grievance procedures in the workplace. From October 2004, it became mandatory for employers to follow certain procedures prior to the dismissal of an employee.

These included: Writing a letter to the employee setting out the allegations against him/her and advising the employee that they are required to attend a disciplinary hearing. Setting out the complaint in writing and giving the employee the opportunity to be accompanied at any subsequent disciplinary hearing. Thereafter, any decision to dismiss was required to be confirmed in writing and a right of appeal offered.

This procedure was prescriptive - any failure to follow it resulted in a dismissal being automatically unfair. It meant the employer could offer no defence to the dismissal being unfair. Similarly, if the employee wished to raise a grievance against the employer, for example in respect of discrimination or failure to pay holiday pay or appropriate wages etc. they, in turn, also required to follow a similar procedure by: Putting the grievance in writing. Waiting at least 28 days before raising the matter at an employment tribunal.

The object of ensuring employers, and employees alike, followed these mandatory procedures, was the fallacious belief that by introducing such measures it would reduce the spiraling number of claims that were being brought before employment tribunals. Unfortunately, the reverse proved to be the case and both employers and employees became more intent on ensuring they followed the procedures and therefore getting

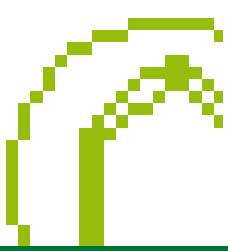
beyond first base rather than using the time for resolution of the dispute which had been the intention behind the legislation.

The Government subjected these rules to review and they will now be abolished with effect from April 2009. In their place, the Government has introduced a new strengthened ACAS Code of Practice. If an employer fails to follow the new Code and an employee is unfairly dismissed, an employment tribunal will have the discretion to increase any award by up to 25% for that failure. Similarly, if the employee fails to appeal against his/her dismissal, an employment tribunal will be able to correspondingly reduce any award by up to 25%.

Employees will not now be required to raise grievances prior to bringing complaints for non-dismissal matters but, again, a tribunal will be able to take this factor into account when assessing an amount of compensation should the employee be successful in their claim.

Neither of these changes, however, diminishes the fact that both employers and employees are still being encouraged to resolve any differences in the workplace informally between themselves rather than resorting to litigation which automatically raises the temperature in any potential dispute and, accordingly, reduces the possibility of the two parties maintaining a successful working relationship in the future.

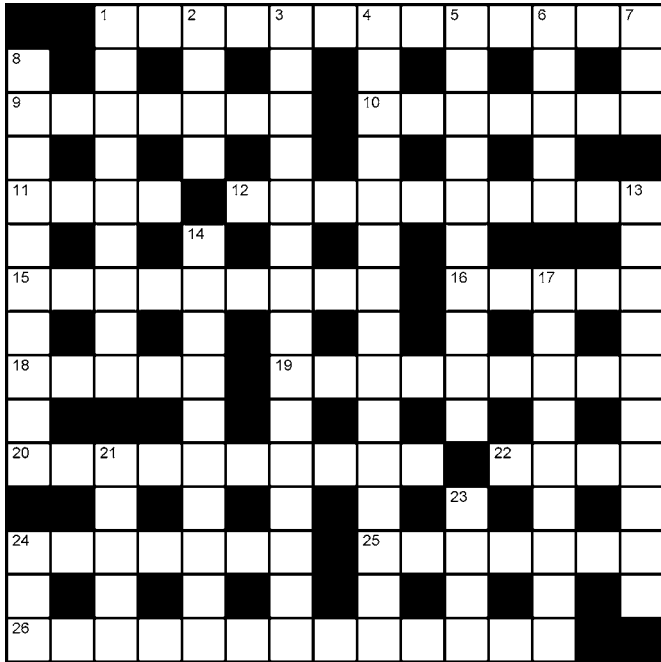
The lesson must be informal resolution of disputes is always better than the formal route and we at Xact would certainly recommend if you have a dispute, of any description, with your employer you should attempt to discuss this informally prior to embarking on costly litigation which may not achieve the desired result.



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

- 1 2000 film starring Mel Gibson and Helen Hunt (4,5,4)
- 9 Make work, put into service (7)
- 10 Lengthen the duration of something (7)
- 11 Gardening implement; immoral man (4)
- 12 Claimed by oneself, usually without justification - soi-disant (4-6)
- 15 Communist official assigned to indoctrinate the military (9)
- 16 Jewelled headdress (5)
- 18 Informal, often pejorative word for money (5)
- 19 – City, formerly Saigon (2,3,4)
- 20 Lacking thought or emotion (10)
- 22 Equipment used to join together two draft animals (4)
- 24 Test of local knowledge? (3,4)
- 25 Islamic spiritual leader (7)
- 26 Climbing plant also known as old man's beard (10,3)

Down

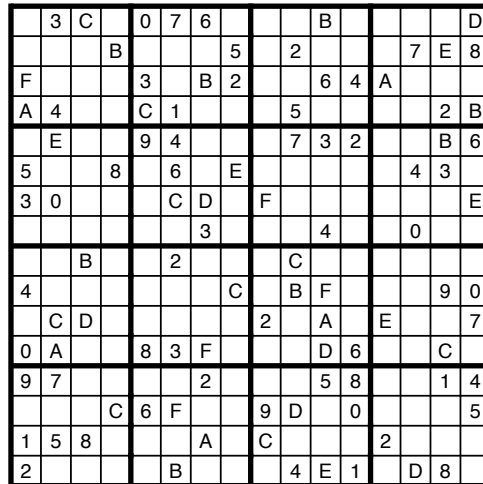
- 1 Alcoholic drink consisting of Scotch and green ginger wine (6,3)
- 2 Extremely enthusiastic (4)
- 3 Viennese dish of deep fried breaded veal cutlets (6,9)
- 4 1989 Holly Hunter film, a send-up of beauty contests (4,11)
- 5 Of heavy traffic, such that slow-moving vehicles are almost touching (4,2,4)
- 6 Be of use (5)
- 7 2240lbs in the UK, 2000lbs in the US (3)
- 8 Course of academic subjects (10)
- 13 Extreme form of rock music inspired by thrash (5,5)
- 14 Written works (10)
- 17 Feeling that arouses active hostility (9)
- 21 Venomous snake noted for expanding its neck skin to form a hood (5)
- 23 Muslim pilgrimage (4)
- 24 Set to rivalry or opposition (3)

QUICK NINE-HOLE QUIZ

1. In golf what is the name given to the grassed area between the tee and the green?
2. In which game would you find cover point, silly mid off and square leg?
3. Who at the 1984 Olympics, won the 100m, 200m, the print relay and the Long Jump?
4. Which sport featured in many of the Beach Boys earliest hits?
5. Which sport uses asymmetrical bars, rings and a pommel horse?
6. Who won Wimbledon every year from 1976 to 1980?
7. Which Grand Prix team's world champions have included Emerson Fittipaldi, Niki Lauda and Alain Prost?
8. What is the name of the method of training a horse to carry out a set routine of movements?
9. Which sport was originally called Mintonette?

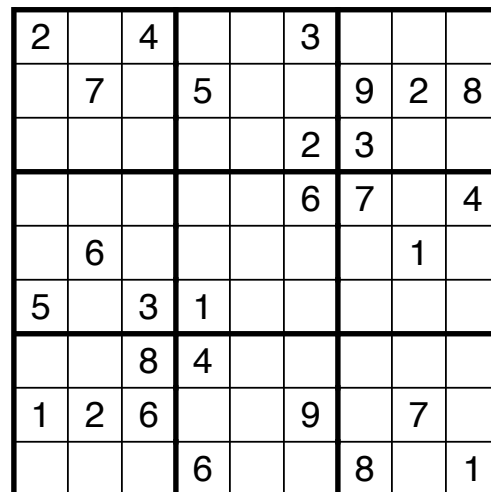
MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A,B and C.



SUDOKU

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



IN THE SHED ANSWERS

can be found on page



IN THE SHED



News from the Chief Executive

Having had the approval of the membership at the AGM to convert the Association to a limited company the Board have tasked me with organising the legal work necessary. I have had preliminary meetings with solicitors and accountants to establish what needs to be done, by whom and by when. It is going to be an immense task but one that perhaps should have been done some while ago.

In the past the main deterrent has been the lease on the land at BIGGA HOUSE that is held by myself and a Past Chairman in favour of BIGGA. Once incorporated, then BIGGA can hold the lease in its own right but past owners of Aldwark Manor, in whose grounds BIGGA HOUSE sits, would not approve the changes. The current owner, Q Hotels, has taken a much more positive view and has sanctioned the changes. It is likely that BIGGA Limited will commence trading on 1st July and in conjunction with the accountants I am looking at the viability and advantages, if any, of splitting the commercial activities from the membership based activities and perhaps applying for status as a charity. We are hoping to maximise the revenue and minimise the tax burden!

The Board at its next meeting in March will be looking to fix a date for an EGM with a view to progressing its proposals for the better integration of sports turf groundsmen into BIGGA. Now that the Constitution has been changed to allow for voting by proxy everyone will have the opportunity to influence the future of their Association. We all acknowledge that there are still a great many greenkeepers who are not members and this we will attempt to address over the coming months. It is a matter of fact, however, that a lot of these non-members never will join for a variety of reasons. They have no interest in belonging to a professional association, they do not value being a member, they do not play golf or, perhaps, they are not interested in the more formal training and education that helps career development. It is also a matter of fact that in a commercial world it is numbers that count and BIGGA needs more members to be able to progress.

Let us not get carried away with the notion that greenkeepers are potentially going to be swamped by groundsmen. If BIGGA widens its base to cater for sports turf in general, just as the IoG has always done, then I would see a gradual influx of groundsmen taking place over a number of years. At the moment there are many, many groundsmen who do not belong to the IoG and so perhaps we can be of greater appeal. It's not about challenging the IoG more about offering a second choice that could help secure a better future for the Association and the industry.

We have tried the merger route and that failed but it did highlight how much greenkeepers and sports turf groundsmen have in common. Let's wake up to this fact and try to capitalise on it. If BIGGA does not embrace this concept soon then I have genuine concerns that another organisation will enter the membership arena and that is the last thing we need in today's economic climate. Golf is going to be hit hard by the recession in 2009 and some greenkeepers will lose their jobs as certain clubs struggle to balance the books. There is nothing BIGGA, nor any other body for that matter, can do about this if clubs act within the law. I hear criticisms of Greenkeeper International and the lack of jobs being advertised these days. I wish the critics would realise that there is a reason for this – there are very few vacancies and even then some are being filled by referral.

I seem to be always having a moan but I find it frustrating. BIGGA has grown on the back of the development in golf over the past 15/20 years. The Association has met many of its goals but in a shrinking market with overheads increasing and a decline in revenue how does it progress? The future rests with you, the member.

John Pemberton



SCOTTISH REGION - AYRSHIRE

Hello all, hope you're all well and looking forward to a good spring and longer hours in the sunshine?

Starting with Harrogate, I felt the show was well attended and the decision to make the seminars free a huge success. In fact, some missed out due to size of the rooms and I'm sure this will be rectified for next year. Quality and content of the seminars was high and I particularly enjoyed Colin Burns' (Winged Foot GC) and Gordon Irvine's (Askernish) presentations.

Another highlight was to see Ayrshire's own, if adopted, George Brown receive the Lifetime Achievement Award for services to the profession. George gave one of his trademark speeches and when he finished off by dedicating the Award to his lovely wife, Brenda, there was more than a few moist eyes in the room. When the photographer moved in for his shot of George with his Award, he asked George if he could "hold it up a bit", to which George quickly explained he'd had a bit of trouble with that lately!

Oh and I can't forget to mention Marshall Sloss' kind invitation to a whisky tasting event on the Wednesday afternoon in his room, with a bottle of his roommate's (Martin Lothian) Glenfiddich. Marshall assured the attendees that Martin had insisted that he could help himself to the malt, as it was brought to be drunk. This proved acceptable to us! After catching up with Martin and thanking him for his benevolence, he remarked "Aye, that's fine I was just hoping to o' been there n'aw!" or words to that effect. Cheers Dip! All in all a most enjoyable week.

Thursday, April 30, is the date for the Spring Outing to West Kilbride Golf Club. Get you're entries back to Derek sharp, as I'm sure this will prove a popular venue!

The Greenkeeper's v Secretaries Match will be contested at Strathaven Golf Club, on May 12.

The Scottish Greenkeeper's National Tournament takes place on Thursday, June 11, at Cathkin Braes Golf Club, in Glasgow. Hopefully we'll have a good turn out from the Section, as there will be a good bit of silverware to defend from the haul taken at last year's competition!

Auchterarder Golf Club hosts the annual Norrie Whittock Trophy, on August 20.

Irvine Golf Club hosted a presentation from Martin Ward (Symbio) on Monday, January 26. There were over 20 greenkeeper's in attendance and although the subject matter was academic in nature I'm sure everyone took something from it. I know I did! On behalf of the Section I would like to thank Irvine Golf Club for their support and to Martin Ward for an excellent, thought provoking, seminar. Thanks also to Jim Paton for expressing the Section's appreciation on the day.

Finally, footballers, and I use the term loosely, are required for our match against the West Section due to be played at Cambusdoon, Alloway, on Saturday, March 21, from 10am. Anyone interested in a run out can get in touch with me at: denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or: 01292 475309.

The plan is to have a friendly, yet competitive, match, some lunch and refreshments in the clubhouse then possibly into Ayr for further refreshments and an honest explanation of where the West lads got their tactics wrong!

Denis Tweddell



CENTRAL

I am sure you will all by now be coming to the end of your winter programmes and hopefully now be looking forward to some more better weather this coming spring. Certainly at St Andrews it has been a busy winter period with the guys having done an excellent job in re-building our bunkers in preparation for next year's Open.

My own staff and I will be heading down to Turnberry for a course visit to see how preparations are going for this year's Open. Check out the website to see how things went!

At the end of February many of the Section members enjoyed a great and very informative day at The Castle Course, where STRI held its latest seminar "The Art of Objective Greenkeeping", this was very well attended with over 50 members being in attendance, a big thanks to Richard Windows, Henry Bechelet, Andy Cole, Lee Penrose and Alastair Beggs for a great days education and also to Gary Smith, from Scotts, for so kindly sponsoring the day.

The committee has been working hard over the winter month's putting together an educational programme for the coming year and hopefully full details will shortly be available on the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

You will shortly be receiving our annual newsletter along with the Spring Outing invitations to Scotsraig Golf Club on April 30.

The annual Scottish Conference was held recently at Carnegie College, in Dunfermline where we all again enjoyed some quality speakers, well done to all concerned, and to Peter Boyd, for organising such an excellent day - and also to some of the committee who assisted in organisation of the day in Peter's absence.

Towards the end of March we shall be holding an evening seminar on drainage, look out for details nearer the time on the website.

Anyone with any news they would like included in the "Around the Green" Section can email Gordon Moir at: gordon.moir@standrews.org.uk

Gordon McKie



EAST

I will start my report for this month by saying that the members of the East Section were pleased to hear that Graham Wood has been made a Life member of BIGGA - this was passed at the AGM at Harrogate. We hope Graham will be able to attend some of our fixtures in the near future.

Patrons' Award winners, Joe Robertson and Adam Sherwood, enjoyed

their visit to Harrogate. They both thought the exhibition hall was interesting and enjoyed meeting other greenkeepers and representatives from different companies throughout their time at Harrogate.

They attended several seminars, one on the US Open and another about aeration with the STRI, which were very good.

All the seminars were very informative and easy to listen to and understand.

Joe and Adam would also like to thank the East Section for nominating them and BIGGA for organising their package to Harrogate - all would not be possible without the patrons' backing. They sound as they both enjoyed their time at Harrogate.

After a blaze of pre-publicity, Scottish Borders councillors have finally given the go ahead for a £50 million luxury hotel development at Rutherford Castle, near West Linton.

The developers, Manor Kingdom, in conjunction with the De Vere Hotel Group, also plan an upgrade of the existing golf course to championship standards. With job losses and cuts on hours for many of our members, it makes one wonder where the customers will come from to patronise all these new developments.

In late November, Keith Purves, currently working at Kingsbarns under the expert eye of Innes Knight, flew out to commence a three month work placement at Royal Melbourne Golf Club. A Selkirk lad, Keith worked previously at both Galashiels and Melrose Golf Courses before moving south to further his career at the Forest of Arden.

Since speaking to Innes at Kingsbarns, the latest is that Keith has decided to continue working in "Aussie land" as the sun is always shining and the beaches are great!

(Good on you mate).

We are nearing the start of the golfing season for our courses let's hope the weather is a bit kinder to us this season.

Our Spring Outing to Eyemouth Golf Course is nearing so blow off the dust from these golf clubs and come along to what will be a very enjoyable day at Eyemouth - I am sure Mark Pagan and his greenstaff will have the course in good order for us.

Members, please look on the 'Region and Section Pages' (which can be found on our BIGGA website - www.bigga.org.uk - for dates of fixtures for the east Section.

If you have any stories or information that might be of interest that we can publish on our Section news please contact me.

Until next month
Tom Murray



NORTH

Hopefully by the time you read this month's article, everyone will be clear of the snow and ice that has wreaked havoc across Britain. At this present time the North of Scotland is experiencing such temperatures as -15. We haven't had those sort of temperatures for a number of years. If you have been saving those painting jobs for this sort of weather then now's the time to do them. If you've already done them then you can only paint things so



Around the Green

many times. It's that cold the water has frozen in the sheds and we have to go up to the club to get water and go to the toilet.

Everyone I've spoken to recently have said that they are well into their respective winter programmes. As I've mentioned, this depends on the weather conditions. Most clubs are managing to get out and do some bits here and there whether it be limping up trees, ditch work or general tidying up.

Congratulations go to Paul Sharp, of Peterculter Golf Club. One of my neighbours has told me that you have recently been promoted to Course Manager. Well done. This person also told me that at the same club, one of its staff namely, Warren, has lost a stone. Well done keep it up. We won't recognise you at the next outing.

Over at Meldrum House there are a couple of pieces of news. Richard Mullen and his wife, Claire, have had a second child, Lucy. I just hope you've plenty of money in the bank, Richard. Also Stu Addison and his wife are expecting their first child. On behalf of the Section may I wish you both congratulations and I will put in an announcement when the time arrives.

The Scottish Chairman, John Geddes, has asked me to thank Thorntrees Amenity and Mike Dooner for inviting himself and Robert Patterson down to the Castle Course to have a look round at the set up. John did say that he had a very nice meal and a great day. Thanks Mike, for making an old man very happy.

Dale Robertson has also asked me to thank Symbio for the seminar that was held recently at Newmachar. It was very well attended. Altogether there were 42 delegates attending so that was impressive.

It is about that time of year again when the 200 Club recommences. It is the biggest earner for the Section and is well supported, so if you get a ticket through your door then please support the Section. Thank you.

I think that's all I can ramble on about this month. I've tried to string it out a bit. I was asked to do this job because the committee thought I could spin a story. I haven't got a clue what they're on about.

Until next month...

Ben Brookes
07813889374



WEST

A chilly welcome to this month's report, as I look out the window snow is falling - it makes a change, we haven't seen snow for a long time.

Harrogate Week was very well attended by the Scottish Region which is a great testament during these hard times. It was great to meet up with some old pals and share a few drinks over at Christies and Wetherspoons.

I spoke to Dennis Tweedle, from the Ayrshire Section, and we hope to arrange a football match during March, so if anyone is interested give me a bell.

On a different note Derek Duthie, from Richard Aikens, were involved in car accident in January and will be off work for some time, you can still contact him on the mobile, we hope you make a speedy recovery in time for the start of the golf season.

The fixture Diary for 2009 should be out over the next few weeks so check the post to find all information for the year ahead.

One date for your diary is the Spring Outing, which will be held at Caldwell Golf Club, on May 7, so come along for a good day.

As I said in my last report, I hope to have some education days planned over the 2009 season - as soon as dates and speakers have been confirmed I will let you know through the BIGGA website: www.bigga.org.uk

A visit is planned to Mar Hall Estates, around April/May time, to see how the course is coming along before it opens later in the year, if you would like to come along you are most welcome, give me a call for details of arrangements.

On the Committee front we would be happy for some younger Assistant Greenkeepers to come forward and try their hand on committee, to bring some new and fresh ideas to our Section.

Well that's all for now, see you next month with more Section news.

Fraser Ross
07970366355
karen.ross@tesco.net



NORTHERN REGION - NORTH EAST

Well I hope everyone who took advantage of Terry Charlton's generosity once again, by providing transport and food/drinks to BTME enjoyed themselves. Many thanks on behalf of the Section and while on the subject of Terry we have purchased a new trophy for the spring competition, which will be called the TSL. It is replacing the Quaich for Best Nett for Assistants - I think that's the least we can do for Terry and his company for all their support over the years.

Greenlay is holding an Irrigation Open Day at Heworth Golf Club, on March 18, regarding the John Deere water system, no doubt greenkeepers will be told in due course. Another piece of news, Ravensworth Golf Club purchased quite a bit of machinery from Greenlay at the end of last year, that being a new greens machine, rough cutter and a sprayer hope that quells any rumours that you have heard.

Tyneside Golf Club are in the process of changing the 15th hole, they have altered the angle of the yellow marker tee box so that it points to the left in order to stop frequently hit drives that land on the first tee, therefore making it a dog-leg to the right instead of a straight hole. Work on the right side of the hole will be taken up by planting 15 trees at four metres high, therefore forcing you to play left and hopefully making it safe for the golfers teeing off at the 1st. The trees have been carefully selected to give all year colour with the spring, there is cherry blossom followed by a contrast of bark changes with the maple, oak and other trees.

Well it looks like the recession is kicking in now and I'm afraid one or two courses are already laying off staff. I reckon any golf club that hires summer workers will be doing the same; unfortunately it will be the course that suffers, as you all know we can't do without these people. How long will this last? Looks like a couple of years - let's hope we have a drier summer.

Jimmy Richardson



NORTH WEST

The committee has been very busy over the last month sorting out the North West and North Wales seminar and the venues for the year ahead. By the time you all read these notes they should be finalised.

The first tournament is the spring tournament at West Lancashire Golf Club on Monday, May 18 - this will also be a National Championship Qualifier.

If anyone has any news of births, deaths - or marriages or divorces for that matter - please let everyone know and get in touch with me on 0151. 2894625 or email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



NORTHERN

While writing this, the snow is again starting to fall as the country is in the grip of the worst winter weather for 20 years. With most courses closed for well over a week already, it doesn't look good for them opening this week either!

January 13 was the date for the re-arranged AGM at Cookridge Hall Golf Club. A huge well done and thank you to John Wilde who was the only non-committee member to turn up! It was decided at the AGM that the cost of entering all golf events will rise to £20 with immediate effect. This £20 fee must be paid by cheque, a minimum of one week prior to the event. Failure to pay will result in your place being cancelled (no exceptions will be made!).

You should all by now have received completed fixture lists which were kindly sponsored by John Dobson, of Greensman Ltd, so thank you John for your support. If you haven't received a list the fixtures are as follows: Spring Tournament - April 29 - Pannal Golf Club; Presidents Day - July 1 - Branshaw Golf Club; Sheffield Match - July 21 - Abbeydale Golf Club; Invitation Day - August 25 - Howley Hall Golf Club; Autumn Tournament - September 15 - Pontefract Golf Club; Winter Golf - December 10 - Ilkley Golf Club.

This year's Spring Seminar has been arranged for Tuesday, March 10 and will be held at Cookridge Hall Golf Club, Leeds. With the kind sponsorship of both Headland Amenity and Rigby Taylor, the theme of the seminar is "What You Need To Know About Grasses for Golf".

We have three fantastic speakers for you, namely Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity; Brian Robinson, Rigby Taylor, and Steve Prinn, Senior Sports Turf Lecturer at Askham Bryan College. The seminar is limited to 50 places and is free of charge to members of the Northern Section, including buffet lunch on the day. Anybody wishing to attend please get in touch with me ASAP.

Adam Speight 07739 319060



CLEVELAND

Hi all hope you're well. Not much to report this month as there has not been much news passed onto me. Hope you all enjoyed Harrogate Week - a big thank you to Terry Charlton for putting on his bus again.

As I sit writing this newsletter, we are still about three inches deep in snow at Bedale and it does not look as though it is going to melt any time soon.

A couple of dates for your diary are as follows: On Tuesday, February 24, there is a quiz night at Teesside Golf Club. The quiz starts at 7pm but could all committee members be there for 6.30pm for an informal chat about events for the coming year.

David Snowdon will be giving a talk on the uses and abuses of wetting agents on Tuesday, March 10 at 7pm, again at Teesside Golf Club.

Those who don't turn up will defiantly miss a good night. David is a very knowledgeable guy and his talks are always very informative and funny at the same time, with a chance to ask questions afterwards.

The Spring Golf Day will be held at Blackwell Grange Golf Club, on Tuesday, April 7. The day has kindly been sponsored by Lloyd Ltd, our local Toro and Kubota dealer.

Tee off from 10am to 11am. The price is £14 which includes a round of golf, a meal and a raffle so come on you can't grumble with that, even in a credit crunch!

The money must be paid up front in full, a week in advance, by March 31 in order to organise the catering.

Can all entry money be sent to either Ian Pemberton, 6 Rosewood Court, Marton, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS7 8QR, Tel: 07791695768 or Kevin Scarce, 11 Stapleton Close, Bedale, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL8 2UA Tel: 07921817857 or alternatively you can give the money to Alister Whitby of Llyod Ltd when he does his usual rounds.

Cheques are to be made payable to "Cleveland Section BIGGA" Last year's Spring Golf Day was at Blackwell, and the course was in great condition, let's just hope the weather is a bit kinder to us this year.

I think Phil Graham, from Bishop Auckland, is in training to become Disney's next sleeping beauty, his training started at Harrogate where he managed 16 hours sleep. No pin pricks just beer!

John Talbot, at Middlesbrough Golf Club, is eagerly awaiting the snow to melt, he and his lads are going to be very busy with course alterations, which include three new fairway bunkers on the 2nd, two fairway bunkers on the left hand side of the 18th, a new 18th tee and finally refurbishing a bunker on the right of the 18th fairway.

Any news to: kevscarce@aol.com

07921817857

Kevin Scarce



Around the Green



SHEFFIELD

Hello everyone, my apologies for the lack of news last month.

As I write this news it is currently snowing – it's the second week of it now and it is starting to get a little tedious. I am sure everyone will agree the days start to become like weeks when you are in the shed all day - but I'm sure it has given us all a lot time to catch up on important maintenance work and all our maintenance facilities are immaculate from top to bottom.

Unfortunately we had to cancel our winter lecture day with Geoffrey Davison, on February 5 due to the weather conditions, although by the time you read this I hope we will have rearranged it for a new date. Also, we should have some news soon about a visit we have planned, all members will be informed about this when we have something more definite.

I also hope that by the time members read these notes the new Sheffield Section website will be at an advanced stage - as a committee we hope this website will become a cornerstone of our Section and give us a platform on which to move the Section forward. If any members have any suggestions for the website then please feel free to contact me.

We also hope to have the 2009 fixture cards out to you shortly, they will hopefully be sent to you with the first golf competition invitation. Once again thanks to Aitkens and particularly Peter Fell for producing the cards for us.

I will finish on a positive note. As you read this the winter will be behind us (fingers crossed) and we will all be preparing for our spring renovation work. This is an important time for us greenkeepers and an enjoyable one preparing the course for the coming summer months.

I hope you all have an enjoyable March and I will talk to you all again in April.

James Stevens
Section Secretary
jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com



NORTH WALES

Hello again, I hope you're all starting to get back somewhere near on track after the big freeze of January and February.

I have to start this off with an apology, I didn't get the chance to advertise the seminar at Carden Park, on February 17, because the February column went to print before the dates were finalised, to anyone who went, I hope the day was informative and helpful in any plans you might have in bunker construction or drainage work. I have to thank Carl Crocher, Course Manager

of Caldly Golf Club, and Rob Heath, of Souters Sports Drainage Consultants, for their informative and interesting presentations. I would also like to thank Johnny Evans for the hard work he has put in behind the scenes setting this seminar up, also Carden Park for the use of their facilities.

In with your fixture list and competition form you would have received a form asking for your name, contact number and email address, please fill these in and return them, the information you provide will strictly remain solely for the use of North Wales BIGGA and will not be shared with any other organisation or group. This information will help us to reach our goal of being able to email fixture lists, competition forms and other information directly to our members throughout the Section.

In other local news, once again I find myself singularly without any news. If you know of anything that might be of interest then drop me an email or text or call either contact on bottom of this column.

Pete Maybury
07756001187
or petemayb66@aol.com

Johnny Evans
Johnny.Evans@tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION - MIDLAND

Well let's hope that the Holocene period has finally ended and that a return to the pathogenic suppressing Devensian has returned, particularly considering the economic constraints that many a budget may well be imposed with over the next few years. What's the crazy fool on about now? At last we have had bug suppressing, root zone fissuring, growth suppressing/ carbohydrate saving, good hard old fashioned penetrating frosts. We have all either said or heard "what we need are hard frosts". Let's see what difference such makes to the coming year's qualities of our courses.

My apologies for the lack of notes last month, this was due to a problem with my email. Consequently I must therefore thank three sponsors of our fine calendar. January's was sponsored by Whitemoss for rootzones, turf dressings and sands; Mike Whitehouse on 07795 395 669. Web: www.whitemossec.co.uk February's was sponsored by ALS for Sportsturf Products and Contract Services (01952 641 949 www.amenity.co.uk). And finally our thanks to Osprey for your Water Management needs - 01939 236 677 www.ospreywmg.com - for this month's calendar page. If you have not received your calendar via the postal sponsorship of P. McCrannor, or by the good grace of N. Tyler and T. Cheese please contact me and I shall ensure that you receive your copy of what is yet again a fine and free perk of being a member of the Midland Section. You shall also see that the Section's golfing events are listed within the calendar, and also the closing dates for entry. The reason for the closing date to each tournament is to make sure that we do not over book or indeed under book the requiring numbers. If we over book it often costs the section, if under booked it could cause disappointment, thanking you for your cooperation.

The golf is confirmed as: Spring - Wychwood Park (De Vere) May 11 at £25. Summer - Harborne July 8 at £20. Autumn - Burton October 16 at £20. Christmas - Woburn December 4 at £30. We have yet again tried to keep the cost of entry to £20 but due to the extra costs of the Spring and Christmas



events we have had to increase the cost, but surely the slight extra is still a bargain. All four venues are of the highest standard and our thanks to Rhys for securing such wonderful opportunities. Further details can be found on the fixtures card as sponsored by Sherriff Amenity/Nigel Tyler.

And finally, congratulations to Jamie Blake for his promotion to Course Manager at Broadway Golf Club. I'm sure that your father would be very proud. And should you hear on the wind Pomp and Circumstance, (in the words of the composer) "Don't be frightened, it's only me!"

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all. Back to business again following a few days escape at BTME in Harrogate. The show seemed to be well attended despite all the problems around at the moment. Thanks must be given to everyone at Headquarters for putting on a good week of events, especially to Sami and her team for the vast array of education available which was no doubt the main focus for a lot of people during the week.

Sitting here looking out at yet more rain, with a golf course that just about has nine playable holes, I wonder how many more people are facing the quandary of keeping courses open to keep members happy and maybe scrape the odd green fee, compared to closing down and giving the place a rest for a while. Golfers tend to stay away as the rain falls, yet as soon as it stops and the sun comes out they expect the place to be open. Oh well, it will soon be spring.

By now everyone should have received a fixture card for 2009. This year it has been kindly sponsored by Aitkens so many thanks to them. Fixtures are as follows: Toft, April 22; Elsham, May 20; Kenwick Park, June 25; Boston West, July 23; Abbotsley vs Trade, August 14; Boston vs Secretaries, September 23; RAF Cottesmore & AGM, October 15; Seacroft Xmas Bring & Win, December 15.

Most of the matches during the summer will tee off at 1pm or 1.30pm, however full details will be given nearer the time. Cost this year is £20 for everyone. All golfers of any standard are invited and a draw is done on the day. If anyone is interested and has not attended before, don't be scared, we are a fun Section who will make anyone feel welcome.

Once again this year we are running our Order of Merit, again kindly sponsored by Simon Banks, along with Under 25 and Trade Orders of Merit, which will run over the first four events. We are continuing to run our National Championship qualifiers which are based in handicap classes and based on best results from three of the first four events.

One final note is to wish Eric Berridgeall the best in his retirement. Eric has been Head Greenkeeper at Orton Meadows Golf Club since it was built. Best wishes from all in the Section.

Please remember our website and forum pages at:
www.eastofenglandbigga.com
 Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.
steveimmingham@aol.com



BERKS/BUCKS AND OXON

The worst of the snow looks to have passed even for the month of March; there are several well-known weather sayings. One of these, dating from the 17th Century, is thought to help you use March's weather to forecast that of May. And goes as follows: "So many mists in March, so many frosts in May". In other words, you will see as many frosty days in May as there were foggy days in March. But is there any meteorological fact behind this saying? I will let you decide, as over the last few months we have experienced some of the most severe winter mornings of the last decade.

Golfing events in 2009 have now been confirmed and some great venues to look forward to. Burford Golf Club kick off the season, hosting the Spring National Qualifier on April 30. Oaklands Park Golf Club will host the Summer Tournament on June 18 followed by the Autumn Invitational at Donnington Valley Golf Club on August 13 and finally the Turkey Trot at The Oxfordshire on December 9 to finish off the year.

Gareth Acteson will be organising the ever popular Rigby Taylor Pairs for 2009 and can be contacted on 07734 856 924.

With regards to the social calendar, Adam King a man with local knowledge, is planning a cricket match at Radley College, near Abingdon, where you will have the chance to test your bowling, batting and fielding at one of the most prestigious sporting grounds in the country followed by tea and sandwiches in the historic pavilion overlooking the cricket square, not to be missed, keep your eyes on the website for further information.

On March 26, at Frilford Heath Golf Club, the Section has organised an educational seminar which will feature Chris Lomas, from The Berkshire Golf Club; Murray Long, from Sunningdale Golf Club; Tim Lobb, Golf Course Architect. Topics will include tournament preparation, design, construction and installation of irrigation and water usage. Details and booking can be found on the Section website.

After winning a green card on the lottery to emigrate to the USA a few years ago, Jake Snyman will be going west and uprooting and moving to Austin Texas to start a new life with his family at the University of Texas Golf Club in America. Jake has been working under Adam King at Radley College, for the last few years and from all the Radley staff and fellow greenkeepers far and wide, we wish Jake and family a safe trip and best of luck in his new career and life abroad.

Just a quick mention to Gordon the Hun - who thought he might have got away with it. It was Gordon's his first ever Harrogate Week experience this year and it certainly won't be his last, after a few wee nippy sweeties at the bar, Gordon left his bath running and managed to flood all and sundry at the hotel - one I just can't let him forget.

As usual if you have any news or views please contact the Section Secretary, Adam King, on: ajk@radley.org.uk The new website for the Section is: bbogreenkeepers.co.uk

Let's hope for a good long summer!

Mark Day
mark.day@tactigolf.co.uk



Around the Green



MID-ANGLIA

A quiet month, this month which is just as well as hopefully, by now, all have recovered from Harrogate and the batteries are recharging ready for the onslaught that spring will bring.

Not much to report either other than the spring tournament is still to be confirmed but will most likely be at Hatfield London Country Club at Essendon in Hertfordshire on April 21. The summer competition has yet to be arranged, the autumn leg is at Mid-Herts Golf Club on October 7 and the "Tour" concludes at John O'Gaunt Golf Club on December 7.

Although it is a little late by the time this goes to print, congratulations to Roger Clark for chalking up a half century - and amazingly he doesn't look a day over 60!

Now if anyone can offer a friend of mine some advice it would be most welcome. For a while now he has suspected his wife of having an affair. The usual signs are there: The phone rings but if he answers, the caller hangs up. His wife has been going out with "the girls" a lot recently, although when he asks their names she always says "just some friends from work, you don't know them". When she comes home, quite often he is sure he can smell male aftershave on her clothes. He has tried to observe who is dropping her off back at their house but his view is obscured so just recently he took to hiding in the garage to get a better view. She came home around midnight the other night and as the car drew up my friend crouched down in the garage behind his golf clubs when he noticed a hairline crack where the grip meets the graphite shaft on his 3-wood.

Is this something he can fix himself or should he take it back to the pro-shop where he bought it?

Craig Spooner
craig.spooner@limagrain.co.uk



SOUTH EAST REGION - SURREY

Monday, February 2. We have had in excess of 12 inches of snow - and it's still snowing. There will only be few greenkeepers at work in Surrey today and those that have managed to get in will be putting out the 'course closed' and 'no sledging' signs, then giving the sheds a quick early spring clean before going home to get under their wives' feet. I managed a walk to the local shops for milk, beer and wine, just in case it keeps snowing. Be prepared is my motto, this could be a long white week. I have not seen snow as deep as this in Surrey ever before and if this is global warming I don't want to see an ice age.

Harrogate has come and gone but it is always a pleasant change to have greenkeepers visit me on the stand instead of me driving all over the South East of England to call on them. We were able to entertain a few of our customers on the Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and it is always gratifying to know how much they enjoy themselves. Ronny, Dougie and Roger sampled the chippy on Tuesday while Gavin followed the wrong group out of our hotel on Wednesday and we, that includes John and Bob, never saw him again until the next morning. I haven't used surnames just in case there are any possible repercussions or recriminations and if there are, I know and saw nothing.

I have just received a text from Jon Budd telling me that he has written and had a book published and I was going to offer a prize for guessing the title but Jon has since text again with that information. I had expected 'The Greenkeepers Guide to the Galaxy' or maybe 'Lady Chatterley's Greenkeeper' or even 'Noddy and Big Ears visit Saltex'. How wrong can you be, Jon's book is entitled '40 Buddy Marvellous Years' in which Jon reminisces on his life, the universe and everything - and would you believe it I'm not even mentioned. Well done, I hope it's a huge success and if so, will you help me with mine, it will consist of my ramblings taken from Around the Green over the past years and will be called 'Stop the Van I Want to Get Off'.

Brian Willmott



KENT

Snow, snow and more snow. The worst snow we have seen in this neck of the woods for two decades has virtually shut every course for days on end. At least I've got plenty of time to write this report for a change!

I shall begin with my verdict on Harrogate week 2009. Even though the show was slightly smaller than usual, I, for one, thought it was probably the best one I have ever attended. There were several reasons for this. Firstly I was asked to attend a meeting hosted by BIGGA HQ about the future direction of the magazine. The couple of dozen people who were invited were all extremely committed individuals and a lively debate with the Editor, Assistant Editor and Designer present should ensure some changes very soon.

Secondly, the show itself was alive with energy. The exhibitors I spoke to all said that although numbers were probably down, there were more senior representatives from all walks of turf management which made the trip worthwhile for them. The BIGGA AGM I also thought was very interesting. The proposed inclusion of Groundsmen to our midst did seem to be a confusing avenue to be taking at first, but a far more sensible route to go down once it was explained face to face. It was refreshing to hear how, in the face of criticism coming from every angle, our Association is willing to listen and change. Lastly, I also attended a meeting for Section Secretaries. Again a few people were concerned about some constitutional matters but I think most of us would have left content with how the Association is being progressed by Head Office. All in all, then, a very worthwhile trip.

Back in Kent we are busy preparing for the winter Olympiad 2012. The finishing touches are being applied to the toboggan run and ski-jump on my 15th hole. I've been sweeping the car park daily so that should be good for curling. Various birds are ice-dancing on the lakes and I reckon my guys will



be favourites for the “who can build the biggest snowball competition” Gold medal. I’m probably favourite for the “Who can get hit by most snowballs”. As long as the snow isn’t yellow, I don’t care!

Our fixtures for the year begin in earnest this month with our spring qualifier being hosted on the links of Walmer and Kingsdown. We are truly privileged to be allowed to play this James Braid designed, delightful course in its centenary year. Alternatively, if this snow hasn’t cleared our national qualifier will be decided by a tournament of Super Swing Golf on the Wii at my house. Bring your own beer! Seriously though, please be sure to contact me or Kev as soon as possible to confirm your place at Walmer, it promises to be a great day for all. Full results and exploits of the day to follow soon.

Lastly, I would like to thank all our sponsors for 2009 who have graciously given us their support for the year. I will give them all an individual mention next month.

Roll on summer. Best of British

Rob Holland
kentgreenkeepers.co.uk



ESSEX

As I write this we are in the throws of the coldest spell for many a year. Around the corner should be warmer weather but who knows.

I spent a couple of days at Harrogate week back in January and linked up with Don Clark (Section Chairman) to attend the AGM, information from which you will no doubt have read in this magazine either this month or in the last edition.

At the beginning of February, I completely revamped and changed the website over to a new host, the reason for this was to be able to have more control over the way the site was laid out. It has enabled me to be given the chance to get the most up to date information out faster. I can input most things within minutes of receipt, even when I’m away from home as long as I have access to a computer.

There will be a full list of events, information, photographs, our sponsors, useful links and much more, plus downloadable entry forms and anything that Martin (our Secretary) throws my way.

Along with anything that I receive from the Region or BIGGA Headquarters.

The site is there for you all, so I would appreciate some input from you in the Section. Look us up: www.essexbigga.co.uk

Tony Kirwan is on the lookout for clubs to host four golf days next season. So if you would like to be considered please contact Tony at: antz16@btinternet.com

As I was sat writing these notes, I received an email from Tony Barker, Course Manager at North Weald Golf Club, he wished to inform you all that he is leaving the club to take over ownership of Loughton Golf Club. It’s a big step up from managing someone else’s. I for one wish him much success for the future.

Ian Denny, late of Symbio, has taken his place. Ian had been a greenkeeper in the Essex Section, before he went to work as a representative for Symbio.

Tony wishes Ian good fortune in his new roll, as I think we all do.

The Section Seminar will have passed when you get this bulletin, but be sure, I will give you the news of the event, in the next month’s news.

Any information for this inclusion on this page or on our website should be sent to me at: essexbigga@talktalk.net or on: 07764862337.

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer



SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION - SOUTH WEST

It’s difficult to know whether to laugh or cry during this miserable winter weather. I’m sitting writing this with three inches of snow on the ground, and wondering whether or not I’m going to get to Gatwick tomorrow for a week in Madeira (or more likely a week in the terminal at Gatwick if the weather gets much worse). At least the course is nice and quiet at the moment - I well remember working at a previous club which was right in the edge of town, and it only took a couple of centimetres of snow for the whole course to be swarming with kids on makeshift toboggans. By 4pm on a snowy day, any and every moveable item of course furniture (and some of the toboggans) would end up in one of the course lakes. I remember being really upset as a young apprentice being forced into the waters’ edge on a rope and floundering around trying to drag the “Captains Bench” out of the pond, only for the Secretary, red-faced, to fling open his window and bellow – “what the hell do you think you’re doing – you’ll damage the blasted liner!”

Just now plenty of frustrated Seniors & Ladies, but hopefully by the time this is published we’ll be much nearer spring.

Harrogate Week was an outstanding success – happily even the weather was just about okay. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard on it. Well done to everyone who attended from the South West; you helped make the week a huge success. Next year will be even better, and HQ welcome any suggestions for education themes and subjects, which could be emailed to rachael@bigga.co.uk (or me). Chris Sealey worked tirelessly for the Section as usual during the week, canvassing our Patronage Partners and introducing Simon Broome – winner of the annual sponsored place - to demonstrate the good use of their sponsorship funds.

Jane Jones, Laurence Pithie and I are sitting on an Industry Liason panel at Cannington College. Cannington is looking to improve their services and range of training courses available in the South West. One suggestion is to make better use of their Golf Course with practical training sessions. We would welcome your suggestions, as the employers, as to what you want for your staff – for example short courses, bolt-on type learning, more involved science and botany courses, or even just simple “mower” training. Drop any one of us an email with ideas or requests – or mail Will Bowden, the Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Programme Manager at bowdenw@bridgwater.ac.uk

Here in the Section, we’ll make more short courses available as interest dictates – Occasional Users Chainsaw Training is proving popular – I would point out this is not CS30 or CS31 which a Tree Surgeon would need, but this “Occasional Users” version allows for us to legally use a chainsaw as part of our daily duties on the golf course. There will be further Excavator Safety Training, and also the latest initiative is dry-stone walling. Please contact

Around the Green

me for further details, and please monitor the bulletin boards on the BIGGA website for up to the minute details.

Back here in the Section - Jon Jarvis emailed me with an addition for your diaries: Ladies Nite, at Bath Racecourse, Friday July 31, tickets £11 each, first race 6.05pm, email Jon Jarvis at jonjarvis2@hotmail.com if interested - it's possible the golf club bar will be open prior to event. Thanks very much to Jon for making these arrangements.

We still hope to run a Section "Away Weekend" at Dartmouth and are looking at April 3/4. The cost is likely to be around £180 per person with a sponsored mini-bus. Please get in touch with me straight away if you're interested.

Finally, because I'm feeling completely fed-up just now I've turned to my wife for a little input. She is a medical receptionist, and recently came home with a list of "misprints" from hospital typists. I thought I might share them with you, but if you are squeamish, or easily offended, you might be better off skipping this bit...

He was in his normal rudest of health, until his aeroplane ran out of fuel and crashed. Her husband said she is very sweaty and clammy, and was very hot in bed last night. She was examined - x-rated, and sent home. This patient has no previous history of suicides. Patient has two teenage children but no other abnormalities.

By the time he was admitted his rapid heart had stopped and he was feeling better. An examination revealed the patient is circus sized. The patient was to have a bowel resection. However, he took a job as a stock-broker instead. The lab test indicated abnormal liver function. When she fainted her eyes rolled around the room. Patient was seen in consultation with Doctor Smith who felt we should sit on the abdomen and I agree. Discharge status - alive - but without my permission.

Well I did warn you - and we thought greenkeeping was dangerous. The moral is to stay away from doctors! Good luck in the aeration season and look forward to a mild spring with gentle showers and no frost.

Any news welcome - Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

At the time of writing this month's report we in the South Section are in the grip of the worst snowfall for 18 years. Extra days off for Assistant David and myself!

The committee met at Chris Bitten's club in late January and had a very good but long meeting. I have been advised to inform you all to look at the BIGGA website (www.bigga.org.uk) for up to date information about the Section, including the fixtures for 2009. At this time not all fixtures have been arranged but should be available from Chris Bitten so phone him on: 07796887633 or: 02380679385.

Due to lack of interest the Jim Fry Trophy will not run this year but we hope to next year.

The numbers of members in our Section is 261 as at the end of December.

Two fixtures are being held at Barton On Sea this year - the Course

Management Trophy on June 1 and the annual match against the Secretaries on June 14. Other venues are Parkstone for the spring tournament and Hampworth for the summer.

Please phone me or email me with any news you think we would all like to be informed about.

Until next month

Chris Sturgess 07773138409
chrismaggsturgess@tiscali.co.uk



DEVON & CORNWALL

First off on behalf of everybody in the Section I would like to offer our condolences to Abi Crosswood, our Section Administrator, after her recent family bereavement.

Our January meeting was held at the lovely Yelverton course on the edge of Dartmoor where we held our 'individual medal' qualifying competition for the BIGGA National Championships. We had three different categories, 0-8 h'cap, which was won by Jason Brooks, from Torquay, with a 75. 9-16 h'cap won by Gavin Moore, from Launceston, with 73 and the 17-28 h'cap was won by Eric Barber with a 75 after a four way count back, congrats to all and good luck at Burnham!

The course walk was taken by George Pitts, Course Manager, with around 30 in attendance. Thanks to George for his time and effort and to his team for the use of their superb course, in lovely condition. Thanks also to Yelverton for their hospitality and to the catering staff for the wonderful meal.

Stuart Dymond, a very knowledgeable and much respected Course Manager and one of our original committee members, retires shortly after 49 years in greenkeeping. Stuart started at Bude moved to North Wilts and for the last 24 years has been in charge at St Enodoc. Congratulations Stuart and on a personal note I would like to wish you good luck in the future!

Congratulation also to Billy Mitchell who was presented with the Unsung Hero Award at Harrogate, something many of us feel is long overdue and thoroughly deserved! As Bill has been one of the stalwarts of the Devon & Cornwall Section since the beginning. Billy has been at Perranporth for nearly 45 years and is currently in charge and has been for a number of years. Well done Bill and thanks from us all!

The Devon & Cornwall Section would like to thank Pete Bond and 'The Greenkeeping Depot' company for sponsoring the mini bus to Harrogate this year. A total of 11 from the far West of Cornwall all the way up and all the way back, a big thanks to Keith Kemp for getting everyone there and back safely. Cheers drive!

The two students from Duchy College who were sponsored jointly by the Duchy & Section to go to Harrogate were Adam Mitchell, from Tehidy Park, and Tim Parker, from Woodbury, (both NVQ 2). I understand they were a credit to themselves, the College and the Section alike and had a lovely time. They found it very educational and would highly recommend it to any future Duchy students!

Jerry Cole 07764 224582
Greenwaysjrc@aol.com



SOUTH WALES

Hello everyone/Sut mae?! Hope you are all well.

Firstly, an apology for a few errors in last month's column, the date for the Parc y Scarlets evening was February 17 and not the 10.

But before anyone sues me for wasted petrol and/or post traumatic stress for spending a Tuesday evening in Llanelli, let me just say that the information given to me by the sponsors was believed correct at the time of going to print - so there!

I also still cringe when I am reminded that I congratulated our Secretary, Steve Chappell, for being picked to go to America with Bernhards, only to hear a few days after the magazine went to print that the trip had been cancelled! Sorry Steve!

So, here are the final two dates for the winter series of evening lectures: Tuesday, March 10 - A talk by Mark Hunt, of Headland Amenity - Pencoed College - 7pm until 9pm. Tuesday, April 14 - Cardiff City Old & New - 5.30pm until 8.30pm - A tour of the new CCFC stadium with Stadium Manager, Wayne Nash, followed by a talk on top dressings and rootzones by Nick Gray, from Bathgate Silica Sands. Please note that all known 'Jacks' will be searched on arrival at the site for Swansea City shirts that they may attempt to bury under the pitch.

Still on education, our Section's Spring Seminar will again be held at Royal Porthcawl on Thursday, April 23. Details of speakers will follow in next month's magazine.

The following night (April 24) sees the return of the IOG Annual Dinner. Many Greenkeepers have attended this excellent event in the past and a good time is usually had by all.

The event offers you the chance to take your loved one (or if she can't make it - the wife) for an excellent meal, a chance to put faces to names and then to boogie the night away! Please contact Steve Chappell if you are interested.

The Section's golf days will be starting in late spring (details to follow.) If you haven't attended our golf days in the past or maybe you've stopped attending for whatever reason, why not give it a go? You can be assured of a warm welcome and a chance to play some great and varied golf courses that we are blessed with in this beautiful country of ours. So whether you're on the Cardigan coast, or the Welsh Marches, we would be only too glad to see you.

Finally, just to let you know that my wife, Donna, finally saw sense and instead of giving birth on the day of the Wales v England Rugby International, decided instead to have our baby three weeks early. Carys Evana was born on January 26 weighing 7lb 3oz. Both mother and baby are doing well. Dad, however, can't wait to get back to work to have a rest!

If you have any info that you would like mentioned in this column, please contact me on the following number/email address:

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07831 168645
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Links Manager
Royal Liverpool Golf Club



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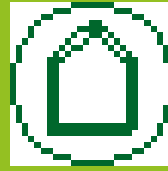
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Letters



In the Shed ANSWERS

BIGGA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dear BIGGA

Please could I pass on my thanks to all the many friends, colleagues and associates, not just at BTME but also from various parts of the world, for their warm and kind words.

During these past 55 years, I have been most fortunate to have worked, and been in the company of likeminded greenkeepers and golf enthusiasts, sharing experiences and knowledge of various golf course management programmes – sometimes through attending seminars and more often than not, over a pint of two!

To be awarded this honour is a most flattering and humbling experience, especially to follow in the footsteps of Sir Michael Bonallack OBE; Jack MacMillan MBE; and Walter Woods BEM. Indeed it has been a most fascinating journey.

Thank you all so much.

George Brown
Turnberry Golf Course & Estate Manager

MISLEADING GRINDING ARTICLE?

After reading an article 'is relief grinding essential to achieving the perfect cut?' in the December issue I felt slightly confused and questioned my own beliefs and practices.

I felt the writer was writing for their own gains and did not even mention the importance of maintaining a quality bottom blade, which is the most critical aspect of ensuring the perfect cut.

I strongly disagree with certain aspects of the Charmian Robinson article especially that one needs to spin grind units every four weeks, I personally grind my greens units once a year in the spring and maintain 'no contact'. However, I do occasionally use a bottom blade facer to ensure that my bottom blades are kept in tip top condition. Also I should add that I apply in excess of 130 tons of top dressing onto 0.75 hectares of greens so there are many occasions that the units could lose their sharpness.

I do appreciate the many benefits that were mentioned in the article. However, it has been my experience that by maintaining bottom blades and running no contact between my cylinders and bottom blades I have actually enhanced the benefits to my turf and cutting equipment and given additional ones.

It was good timing that the STRI have published an article reviewing the principles of 'no contact' and 'back lapping' which can be seen on their website, or the January magazine. They concluded "that running mowers using the 'no contact' method of setting up the cutting units and using grinding to maintain sharpness was an improvement on the 'back lapping' method."

Thanks
Graeme Gallimore
Devon & Cornwall

CROSSWORD

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Fairway
2. Cricket
3. Carl Lewis
4. Surfing
5. Gymnastics
6. Bjorn Borg
7. McClaren
8. Dressage
9. Volleyball

MONSTER SUDOKO

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7	F	B	9	A	2	0	6	4	C	8	E	1	5	D	3
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SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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Chairman's Column

The Work Never Ends

The arrival of March marks the end of winter in our calendar and brings a surge in play as visitors take advantage of the last month of reduced winter green fees. Tee times start earlier with the lengthening daylight and our work hours follow suit.

Each winter we always seem to take on more project work in-house and aim to complete all of these before play levels pick up again in the spring. Over the past month the weather has thrown us snow and heavy rain to slow our progress leaving few dry spells to allow ground conditions to firm up and crack on with the work.

Three new championship tees, re-shaping two approaches and remodeling a par-3 greenside bunker complex were all on the in-house project list this winter.

Renovating some of the bunkers each year is also essential with having almost 200 in total, it is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge, just getting finished and then having to start all over again.

In addition, installation of a new electrical control system to the pumphouse and a drainage project to prevent flooding from a nearby road onto the course were joint projects, with us working in conjunction with contractors.

Just as we were planning to wrap up all our project work, tidy up and prepare for the season a last minute requirement has been thrown in our direction, another project! Let's just hope for some dry weather.

Along with many others it's that time of year for us when budgets are being drafted, for both operating costs and capital expenditure. The whole budgeting process from calculation through to submission, discussions, negotiations etc can often be viewed by many with some apprehension, particularly at this stage in the economic cycle. Over recent months this subject has become a hot topic of conversation and is likely to remain so.

After the staff, the golf course is the biggest asset for any club to manage and is the primary reason to attract customers. Golfers can buy a meal and drink at many other places but it is the course itself that counts most. Having a drink in a newly refurbished bar will not cut the mustard with golfers if they have just walked off a poorly presented course which has clearly had no similar investment. When it comes down to priorities the course condition is paramount to retain existing customers and attract new business. We need to get that message across loud and clear to those responsible for making budgetary decisions in our clubs.

In order to put ourselves in the strongest position to discuss, recommend and negotiate the budget, a good starting point is to draw up a work plan for the year. Whether it is how many bunkers we expect to renovate, or how many topdressings on greens, the quantities of sand to be applied are estimated. Once these numbers are to hand and the costs calculated attached to them, it makes for a much more transparent set of figures.

Then when it comes down to discussing the budget it is much easier to substantiate the figures with the quantities of material quantities and work plan to hand and directly related. If you are asked to reduce costs it is quite straightforward to show your workings and then ask which work operation are you not required to do? Deciding which items are the priorities becomes much easier when asked to find savings and armed with the facts and figures ensures you are more in control.

In order to budget accurately it is essential to have up to date survey information of the sizes of all the golf course features maintained. Over



the winter period our course has been re-surveyed to bring old plans up to date. It had last been done in 1998 and over the ten years since, many alterations to grass lines, fairway widths etc had changed. The plans show the dimensions of all areas including lakes, cartpaths, bunkers etc and take all the guesswork out of making budget calculations. When it comes to contracting out work, accurate measurements also make it much easier to discuss rates per hectare of areas with some certainty of the likely cost. Most courses are already surveyed to enable a course guide to be produced so the additional work of surveying and presenting the information that the greenkeeping department require can be obtained at a nominal cost.

During Harrogate Week I sat in on the benchmarking seminar presented by the R&A and could see the benefit of having accurate survey information to this project. Steve Isaac talked about the need to record more facts and figures about your course maintenance such as quantities of irrigation, fertiliser and pesticide applied. Increasingly bodies such as The Environment Agency and the European Union look ever more closely at our industry and we need to be ready with accurate information to provide specifics and not allow generalities to shape legislation and restrictions on us doing our job. A few years ago I came across a document that set down irrigation quantity requirements for a typical 18 hole course with no variance for courses with different soil types, grass species, situations etc. The organization concerned were using the document as their reference point and it bore little relevance to individual courses up and down the country. It is only by us having accurate records that we can challenge incorrect assumptions and protect our industry from ill thought out legislation in the future.

Peter Todd
Chairman

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