

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

- Course Feature: Dubai – The Challenge So Far
- Chafer Grub: The Pre-Eminent Insect Pest Of UK Turf
- Why Overseeding Dramatically Improves Course Conditions
- Sustainability, It's Nothing New

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Greenkeeper

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Welcome



Do you ever stop and think just how much your life has changed through the years? As I sit in front of my computer I've written a few emails and checked our website for any new postings, I've also put on a new post myself asking for volunteers for an Assistant Profile which will be starting next month. A few seconds of typing and a message can be seen by anyone, anywhere in the world. I've also taken a few minutes out to text my wife – an unobtrusive way of keeping in touch when we're both busy.

Last week I headed off to Devon and Cornwall for a Section event. All I had

with me was the postcode of the hotel where I was staying and Tom Tom would do the rest. As it happened Tom Tom had a technical problem and failed to start. What was I to do? I was lost... literally! An SOS phone call, followed by a fiddle with the re-set button and I was on my way again. How had I ever managed before!

Back at the turn of the 80s, when I started my journalist career I sat behind a huge manual typewriter, so thankful that Tippex had been invented, and cursing every time I discovered my carbon paper the wrong way round – with photocopiers thin on the ground, having a mirror image of my words of wisdom on the back of my story, and no copy, was no use whatsoever and meant a quick retyping job.

When we'd finished our day's work, one of us had to head off to the railway station to send a package containing all our work to head office. Miss the train and someone had to drive to Dundee and deliver it personally. Evening work had to be dictated over the phone to copytakers, who were invariably in a bad mood, and who tutted at every hesitation or bit of bad grammar.

When we eventually got a computer it was a little Tandy, with a three inch deep screen. We got one per office, so we had to queue up to write our stuff. The next big step was the pager, which meant the News Desk could get hold of us anytime, although it was sometimes a struggle to get to a phone box if you were out and about.

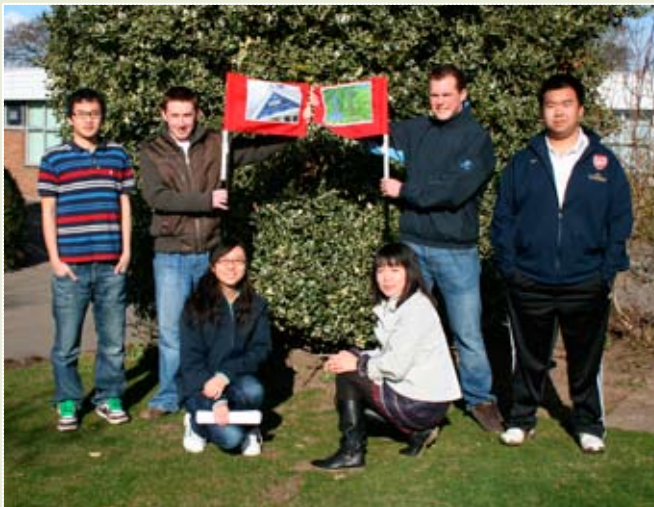
I also recall, having just started work at Golf Monthly in 1986, when we got our first fax machine. We all gathered round it every time it whirred into action and gasped at whatever was coming through. It really was magic.

No doubt greenkeeping has been exactly the same. Whenever a new piece of technology or a revolutionary new product has come out the excitement is intense. Those over a certain age can remember the key moments in machinery development in much the same way as I can in journalism. The move from gang mowers to triples must have been quite awe inspiring, as would the move from horses to engines, but I'm sure not many of you can recall that.

Despite all of this though we are basically still doing the same job. It's just that new technology has changed the way we go about it.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

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20-22 Chafer Grub



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Cover photography shows Dubai Golf City, this month's Course Feature



MEMORIAL GOLF DAY TO BECOME ANNUAL EVENT

Richard Campey, of Campey Turfcare Systems, was delighted to present the recently re-named Bert Cross Memorial Trophy to Peter Hogan, winner of the Bert Cross Memorial Golf Competition hosted by the North West Section of BIGGA.

A total of 41 players took part in the competition at Wilmslow Golf Club, and Peter won with a score of 39.

A keen and able golfer, Bert Cross had a long association with BIGGA, serving as Northern Regional Chairman and on the National Board of Management. He died in the same year as he was elected President of the North West Section after being its Secretary for 30 years, and it is in his honour that the President's Cup has been re-named the Bert Cross Memorial Trophy, sponsored by Campey Turfcare Systems.

"We welcome this opportunity to be able to celebrate Bert's life in this small way," said Richard.

"In memory of a valued and respected colleague and a much loved individual who devoted a huge effort to his charitable interests as well as contributing significantly to the golfing industry."

Bert and wife, Marie, were dedicated to helping over 270 orphans, all living with either AIDS or HIV, at the Kasisi Orphanage in Zambia, making regular trips to deliver clothes and much needed medical supplies. Marie has since completed a

particularly poignant trip, where she spread some of Bert's ashes at the orphanage.

Chris Sheehan, current North West Section Secretary said: "We'd like to thank both Richard Campey and Wilmslow Golf Club. It's our intention to hold this event every year and a suggestion has been put forward that we can use it to continue fundraising for the Kasisi Orphanage in the future. The competition will be open to all greenkeepers, anyone who knew Bert and who enjoys playing golf."

Sometimes fact can be stranger than fiction - the day before the competition was played, Chris Sheehan received an email out of the blue from golf photographer Alan Birch. He had been sorting archive pics and had stumbled across one which he thought might interest him. It was a picture taken at Carnoustie in 1999, of Chris Sheehan, Billy Merritt (NW Section Treasurer), Steve Oultram (Course Manager of Wilmslow GC) and Bert Cross. They were all at Carnoustie for the Open offering tournament support.

The timing was uncanny but very apt. Chris took the picture to Wilmslow the next day to show the others who were all going to be playing on the day.

"I'm not usually superstitious, but it did make the hairs on the back of my neck stand up and we all agreed that Bert was at the event in spirit if not in body," said Chris.



Richard Campey, of Campey Turfcare Systems, presents The Bert Cross Memorial Trophy to Peter Hogan, winner of the inaugural Bert Cross Memorial Golf Competition, sponsored by Campey Turfcare Systems.

MIDLAND SECTION EDUCATION

The Midland Section education event held at Sandwell Park last month was well supported with over 50 delegates attending.

The event entitled 'Sustainable Future - The Need for Change' was sponsored by Rigby Taylor and was a follow on event from last years STRI Sustainable Management seminar.

Delegates were treated to expert presentations from Kate Entwistle, Turf Disease Centre, talking about disease identification and the importance of setting economic thresholds for disease, Andy Cole, STRI, focusing on sustainable management and benchmarking assessments and finally Ben Taylor, Bernhard and Company, on the importance of unit maintenance and the role it plays in reducing disease risk and nutrient loss.

A special thank you goes to Ben for donating a turf macroscope which was drawn as a prize for one of the Warwickshire College students. A thank you also goes out to Gary Armstrong, Warwickshire College, for bringing the students and supporting the event.

NEW APPOINTMENT

Sherriff Amenity has announced the appointment of Ronnie Frame as an Amenity Specialist.

Ronnie, who joins Sherriff Amenity with over 31 years experience of working within the amenity industry, will be responsible for developing the company's business in east and central Scotland.



Ronnie Frame

NEW CHAIRMAN

The FEGGA AGM saw a new Chairman elected following a two year term with Gorazd Nastran at the helm.

Stig Persson, from Sweden, was elected during the FEGGA annual Conference held in Copenhagen, and will initially serve for a two year period.

Stig, who many will know, brings a wealth of experience and will serve as a great ambassador of FEGGA.

Stig paid tribute to the leadership of Gorazd during the last two years and acknowledged the work that Gorazd had done in representing the European greenkeeping industry, not just during the last two years as Chairman, but also for his six years on the board.

The AGM also saw Goncalo Carneiro, from Portugal, take on the role of Vice Chairman, a role that Goncalo will embrace.

FEGGA also elected three new board members, Kamil Pecenka, from the Czech Republic; Michael McFeely, from the Rep. of Ireland, and Olafur Thor Agustsson, from Iceland.

The conference brought together some 44 organisations from Europe and beyond with an agenda filled with many of the pertinent subjects challenging the golf industry today.

Held at two venues this year; this first day was held at the wonderful and unique setting of Copenhagen Golf Club, where the delegates were treated to a tour of the golf course following a busy seminar schedule.

The second day was held at the Radisson SAS Scandinavia Hotel, which provided excellent facilities for the formalities of the seminar day, along with other meetings coming under the umbrella of the FEGGA Conference.

The main theme was centred around Sustainability, and where better to discuss the big theme, than in Denmark and more so at the Copenhagen Golf Club, which is a wonderful site, but at the same time very challenging in terms of the overall maintenance of the golf course

The delegates also enjoyed the FEGGA Scholarship Students presentations, sharing their valuable experiences and proving that we have some very good people coming into our industry today.

The final part of the Conference was a selection of group sessions, based on subjects that organisations felt were important to them and would help either in dealing with the current climate or focusing on their future needs to progress as organisations.

TOP RANKING IN 'BEST COMPANY' LIST

IPU Group has been placed 48th in the Sunday Times 'Best Small Companies to Work For' list released recently, and awarded a two star rating as part of the 'Best Companies' Accreditation scheme in the UK - which measures the company's engagement with employees.

The Sunday Times national listing is the sixth annual review of companies with no fewer than 565 small companies seeking a place on the 'elite' 100 list. This year 34,295 employees were surveyed, making it one of the most comprehensive studies of workplace opinion and employee engagement measuring key factors such as

leadership, my manager, personal growth, well-being, my team, giving something back, my company and fair deal.

The award is particularly special as it coincides with the company celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2009. Roy Beebee originally started the family business in 1959 (father of the current Managing Director Robert Beebee) when it began importing JLO engines for the Go-Kart market.

The 'Best Company' award was presented to Andrew Whitehouse and David Caddick at a prestigious ceremony in London on Wednesday 28 January 2009.



L to R: Andrew Whitehouse, BSC Divisional Director and David Caddick, Engine Starting Divisional Director collect the 'Best Company' award.

MEMBERSHIP SCHEME

Since launching an innovative credit crunching golf membership scheme this Spring Rudding Park, in Harrogate, has sold over 80 memberships. The scheme, developed to offer members real value for money, ensures there are no wasted membership fees or costly hidden charges - you only pay for as much golf as you play.

The membership is the first of its kind in the North of England and costs from just £250 per year. New members pay an annual subscription

of £150 and then purchase credits which are redeemed against rounds of golf on Rudding Park's 18-hole Hawtree Course or six-hole Repton Short Course - the number of credits spent depends upon the time of day and the course selected. For example, a Peak round on the Hawtree Course costs 10 credits whereas an Off Peak round on Repton Short Course is just one credit. The price of credits starts from £100 for 60, but the more you buy, the greater the saving.

ELMWOOD STUDENTS ON COURSE AT THE BELFRY

Students studying Greenkeeping and Golf Course Management at Elmwood College have been successful in securing summer placements at the Belfry Golf Club, West Midlands.

The students had to complete a selection process with students from Ireland, Germany and China being selected to spend six weeks at this prestigious venue.

The students will work with the Club's Greenkeeping team – led by BIGGA Past Chairman, Kenny Mackay - throughout the placement period, which will help them build on the knowledge and

skills they developed at Elmwood.

Stuart Mackie, Course Tutor for HNC Golf Course Management, said, "I'm very excited that the students have been given these placements. The students show the multicultural mix of students who chose to study golf related subjects at Elmwood."

Gavin Jones, from Ireland, who has secured one of the placement places added, "This is a great opportunity for me, when I started my NC course I could never believe for one moment that I would be carrying out my placement at the Belfry."



Left to Right are students: Duoshan Wa, Gavin Jones, Rui Wang, Wang Hui, Lukas Boettcher & Jun Zhi Cao.



A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH

Andrew Simm, Deputy Course Manager at Sandiway Golf Club in Cheshire, celebrated 20 years at the club at the end of March.

The remarkable element is that in all those 20 years he had not had one day off though sickness. To mark the achievement Club Captain, Simon La Frenais, presented Andrew with a limited edition print of the club's 11th hole.

"I'm sure there have been times when he would have liked to have turned over and pulled the duvet over his head but he has always come in. He shows real professionalism and a desire not to let anyone down," said Course Manager, Brian Turner.

PARTS TRAINING ON COURSE FOR SUCCESS

John Deere's Parts Tech training programme is now well into its second year, with applications being invited for enrolment on the next course starting in September 2009.

Launched by John Deere in partnership with Brooksby Melton College in 2007, Parts Tech is a specialist-training programme for aspiring parts apprentices. It is run on similar lines to the Ag Tech and Turf Tech apprentice engineering technician programmes.

The 12-month Parts Tech training programme combines distance learning, work-based assessments and four one-week training blocks at Brooksby Melton College and at John Deere's Training Centre at Langar.

NEW GUIDELINES ON ROLLING CRICKET PITCHES

New guidelines launched recently by Cranfield University and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) could save over 700,000 hours of cricket pitch preparation time across the UK through more effective use of rollers.

The findings are a result of four years of research by Cranfield's Centre for Sports Surface Technology commissioned by the ECB, which aims to develop a scientific understanding of the rolling of cricket pitches in order to optimise pitch preparation. The research marks a significant shift from current practice and understanding in cricket.

Chris Wood, Pitches Consultant, England and Wales Cricket Board, said: "This is research that I'm pleased to say will go a long way to dispel

the myths and legends and instill sound and economical rolling practices for the production of quality pitches across all levels of cricket."

Working with ECB and the IOG over 100 ground staff across England and Wales were consulted throughout the research process to identify the scope for improvement. Results demonstrated that in first class cricket, the number of roller passes over the pitch ranged from 5 to 280, allowing plenty of scope for optimisation.

The guidelines, aimed at both professional and volunteer ground staff, are available to download from the Cranfield website at www.cranfield.ac.uk/sas/sst/rolling or from the ECB website at www.ecb.co.uk/rolling

SCOTTISH EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2009

The annual education conference took place on Tuesday, March 3 at Carnegie College, Dunfermline.

This year the conference was well attended with 161 delegates attending from every corner of the region. In the absence of our Regional Administrator it was Central Section Committee who took on the role of registering all delegates on arrival.

When the educational seminars got underway it was Mark Hunt from Headland Amenity who started proceedings with a very informative talk on sustainability looking at management practices on the golf course.

Stuart Staples from Scott's followed on with a talk on the subject of integrated management to improve turf quality, which again was very informative.

Before lunch Steve Isaac from the R&A continued the sustainability theme with an interesting overview on sustainability at home and abroad and the importance of being more sustainable in the uncertain future.

After a very good lunch, which we must thank all at Carnegie College for we were treated to three afternoon talks from three greenkeepers from both home and abroad. Laurence Pithie from Crown Golf spoke on managing more effectively the golf course operations, which is something I am sure we will all be more aware of as we move into more uncertain times globally.

David MacIndoe from Killarney followed on with his presentation on a challenging form of greenkeeping with some interesting challenges that David has had to deal with in the past as well as what lies ahead in the future.

The day was rounded off by David Cole from Loch Lomond who briefed us on the development and implementation of a management plan on the Wee Bonnie Banks!

Big thanks to all speakers for taking the time out to present to the region, very much appreciated. We must thank Peter Boyd for putting together a fantastic array of speakers and also his daughter Karen for finalising arrangements in his absence.

Report by Gordon McKie, Chairman Central Section

SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The 2009 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Cathkin Braes Golf Club, Glasgow on Thursday, June 11 by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. The cost of the event will be £22, which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, evening meal and prizes. (Apprentice fee £12.). Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring Golf outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance to the Regional Administrator, Peter J. Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA by Tuesday 2nd June, 2009.

Please make cheques payable to BIGGA Scottish Region. The draw will be posted on the BIGGA website: www.bigga.org.uk

*Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator*

YOUNG TALENT ON SOME OF THE OLDEST LINKS

The creams of world's best young golfers will be heading to Scotland in May to take part in the prestigious US Kids Golf European Championships.

More than 400 players from some 30 nations will be competing in the event which has emerged as Europe's premier junior tournament to showcase the next generation of golfing stars.

The event – to be held across five of Scotland's historic golf courses in East Lothian in May - sees boys and girls split into different gender and age categories in order to compete for the title of US Kids Golf European champion.

The top finishers in each category will then compete in the Van Horn Cup – a showpiece event, modelled on the Ryder Cup, where the best European players are pitted against the top non-Europe golfers. The top five finishers in each age and gender group also automatically receive an invitation to the US Kids Golf World Championships at Pinehurst Golf Club, North Carolina, in August.

The tournament is jointly organised by Wee Wonders Limited and US Kids Golf Foundation who are committed to growing the game among children and families across the globe.

The 2009 European Championships will be played between May 26-28, 2009 on five courses in East Lothian - Gullane No. 2, Gullane No. 3, Craigielaw Golf Club, Kilspindie Golf Club and Luffness New Golf Club. The Van Horn Cup is played on May 29 at Gullane No. 1.

SUPPLY AGREEMENT

Sherriff Amenity is delighted to announce that an agreement has been signed with De Vere Hotel & Leisure to become the sole supplier of chemical, fertiliser and grass seed to their golf courses nationwide.

De Vere Hotel & Leisure is committed to giving their customers a unique experience on some of the most stunning championship courses across the UK.

BIGGA GOLF DAY 2009

BIGGA's annual golf day will take place on Monday, June 15 at Aldwark Manor Golf Club, near York. A great opportunity to have some fun and network in a relaxed environment, the day will kick off at 10.30am with coffee and a bacon roll. At midday there will be a shotgun start with stableford play. A reception drink and two-course meal will be served at 5.30pm and presentations and a raffle shall take place at 6.30pm.

Companies currently sponsoring the event are: The GTC, Q Hotels, Hunters Grinders, Heath Lambert, New Holland, Rigby Taylor, John Deere, Dyofix, Barenbrug, Scotts and Destination Harrogate.

For more information and to book your teams place contact Sandra Raper at BIGGA HQ on: 01347 833800.

FOOTBALL CRAZY

A bit of Saturday morning fun between Ayrshire greenkeepers and West of Scotland greenkeepers ended three each after a hard fought come back by the West. There were obviously a few gents still playing a decent level of football as well as a few, including the referee, who were

not. A good turn out, however, ensured a fair competition at Ayr hockey and cricket club and the refreshments went down deservedly well afterwards.

Thanks to the organisers and bring on the return.



ELMWOOD STUDENT HAS DESIGNS ON CANADA

Germany to Canada via an NC Greenkeeping course at Elmwood College in Scotland is a long way to travel, but this is exactly the route that Anke Perplies, a National Certificate in Greenkeeping student has taken in her pursuit to take up a position in the greenkeeping industry.

Anke, a talented landscape designer in Germany, decided to retrain into the growing golf industry and secured a place on the NC Greenkeeping programme at Elmwood College. "In Germany, Elmwood College is a very well known and respected institution for greenkeeping education, so the opportunity to study here was very exciting," said Anke

She has secured a work placement at Deer Ridge Golf Club, in Canada, as part of her work placement commitments. Here she will join other applicants from across the USA on their internship programme, developing her skills and knowledge that she developed at Elmwood.

Geoff Brereton, her Course Tutor, said: "This is a great opportunity for Anke to not only develop her skills but also her career at a high profile course in Canada. This is an excellent placement for Anke and supports the other placements around the world that are annually taken up by Elmwood's NC students."



OPEN ALL HOURS



Within this month's article, David Golding, informs readers that the GTC website shop is now open 24/7

One of the GTC's main aims is to make learning available to all and tremendous progress has been made in recent years in partnership with our colleagues in the colleges and private provider Centres.

Whether you are looking at the apprenticeship or formal vocational or academic qualifications, these are all available through a variety of delivery options.

The Centres offer the traditional option of attendance at their college or training establishment or more recently learning on the job has become increasingly popular for some employers and students.

We at the GTC know that through our Approved Centre and Provider network we can ensure there will be a course and if required a qualification for you!

How confident does that sound?

Flexibility is the key and having attended numerous meetings to develop qualifications and apprenticeships, never before have our Centres and Providers responded so positively to our drive to make the delivery of the various programmes more accessible to meet both the employers and students needs.

The GTC appreciates that not every employer or student wants or needs full qualifications and this is where FINALLY the Government has accepted that if they want more people in training they need to put funding into small, or bite size, learning as well as just full qualifications.

You will see this starting to happen with such schemes as Train to Gain www.traintogain.gov.uk and initiatives in Scotland such as the ILA where £250 per individual can be accessed towards training costs, see www.ilascotland.org.uk - Note: Conditions will apply.

Apprenticeships and all nationally accredited qualifications receive Government financial support to encourage employers and students to "invest" in training and this is so important especially during these difficult economic times.

The GTC is currently involved in the review of the apprenticeship framework and NVQ's as well as accreditation panels for the National

Certificate in Greenkeeping in Scotland and a new top-up B.Sc in Golf Course Management, all work aimed at ensuring our sector has something for everybody!

So what about the 24/7 GTC Shop?

The traditional method of acquiring the knowledge associated with maintaining and managing golf courses has been, until recently, attending college. Well as previously mentioned our Centres have developed so many different learning opportunities from day-release courses to distance learning and now courses and qualifications on-line which incidentally is proving an incredible success in terms of student numbers.

The knowledge, based on best practices has been captured in two sets of learning materials to be used with students registered on N/SVQ Levels 2 and 3 but they have become more widely used by greenkeepers, lecturers and Guidance Officers as they cover such a wide range of subject areas.

These learning materials are available to everybody in various formats from the GTC website www.the-gtc.co.uk

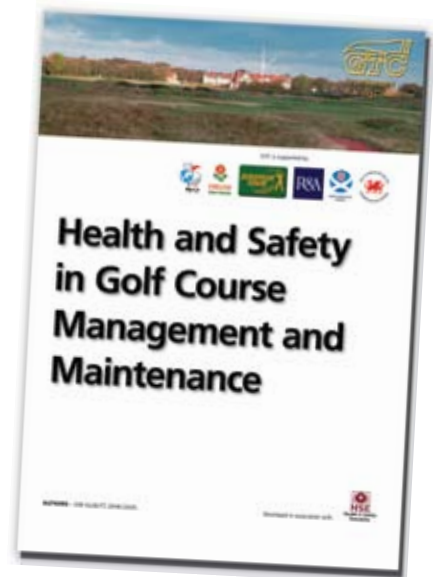
Also available in the GTC shop are the revised Health & Safety Guidance notes together with the essential H&S wall chart which every maintenance facility should have on the wall.

The wall chart is the quick reference on machinery and staff competencies which the enforcement officers look for as an early indicator on record keeping.

A link is also available via the website to the BIGGA-GCMA Safety Management System which is the "tool" to record the more detailed information on staff, equipment and risk assessments required to be kept by employers plus staff responsibilities.

Finally, the highly acclaimed Training Manual which includes the standards of N/SVQ Level 2

GTC is supported by:



Sports Turf and the Awarding Body approved document is to increase in price from May 1.

Previously the Training Manual was available for £25. The new price will be £50 and will include a copy of the Level 2 CD Rom learning materials, which are sold separately for £30. Overall a saving of £5 on the two items.

The GTC Approved Centres using the Training Manual suggested combining the two items and the cost will be incorporated into registration costs (if applicable) for students.

Please have a look at the GTC website and as we take in-house the Content Management of our own website, you will finally see the facility of an e-alerts service aimed at keeping those registered updated with all the information relating to greenkeeper education and training as we receive and develop it.

Finally: Thank you to all those qualified assessors who returned our questionnaire. A summary and recommendations report will follow next month.

You can contact the GTC at:
Aldwark Manor,
Near York
YO61 1UF

...or by telephone on 01347 838640 or
Email golf@the-gtc.co.uk



Industry Update

COURSE RECORD BROKEN

Emmett Curran, Head Greenkeeper at Downpatrick Golf Club, in Northern Ireland, is the first person to break par at the RJL golf course, the company's recently opened three-hole course at the head office in Ipswich.

He was a member of a party of greenkeepers on a visit to the RJ European HQ, hosted by the company's dealer for Northern Ireland, Brodericks (NI) Ltd. Emmett, who was a five handicap player before giving up the game years ago due to arthritis, was amazed at his sub-par round.

"This is a great little course, very tricky due to the pin placements and the final hole, which is almost an island, so I was delighted to get round in just eight shots. This course is a credit to Ransomes Jacobsen and is in excellent condition. We had a superb visit and I must admit that I didn't realise the extent of the manufacturing capability at Ipswich. It was a great experience and the round of golf was the perfect end to a really enjoyable day."



20 YEAR TURF VETERAN JOINS STAFF

Tee-2-Green has appointed former Superintendent, Lewis Sharp, to serve as golf course consultant with primary focus on U.S., Canada and Europe.

"We realise the need for a person like Lew to assist architects, golf course builders and superintendents to serve Tee-2-Green customers," explained Bill Rose, President of Tee-2-Green.

"Lew is a guy who has real-world experience growing in and maintaining the Penn bentgrasses, so he can relate to agronomic and cultural challenges faced by our end-users."

With 20 years of professional turf experience, Lewis most recently worked as Superintendent at Dye's Walk Country Club, in Greenwood, Indiana. Throughout the span of his extensive career, he worked in course maintenance at several Midwest golf courses, and also served as Director of Golf Operations at Valle Vista Golf, also in Greenwood. After obtaining an associate's degree in architecture from Vincennes University in Indiana, Lewis went on to earn a bachelor's degree in engineering and turf management from Purdue University.

NEW COMPANY

Duncan McNab, of McNab Sport Ltd, Kinross, has launched a new company All Sport Consultants to run in conjunction with the existing Sportsturf Maintenance & Supply Company.

All Sport Consultants will offer Health & Safety Advice and Sports Turf Consultancy to amenity outlets throughout the UK.

Duncan holds I.O.S.H & NEBOSH qualifications in Occupational Health & Safety and Fire Safety & Risk Management.

For more information contact All Sport Consultants on: 01577 864206.



CUTTING EDGE TRAINING

Turfmech Machinery has reported strong and positive feedback from dealers' sales staff who attended one of a series of intensive Allett mower training courses held during the first three months of 2009.

Staged at Turfmech's headquarters in Hixon, Staffordshire - the manufacturing and support centre for Allett mowers - the one-day courses attracted more than 50 sales staff representing 15 different Allett dealers from across the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Each day was split into two sessions, the morning being devoted to the classroom where attendees were instructed in the adjustment, operation, maintenance and application of the 14-model range of Allett cylinder mowers and turf-care equipment.

The afternoon was spent outside on a variety of turf surfaces where theory could be put into practice, giving dealers' sales staff the opportunity to set-up and use the machines under actual working conditions.



AWARD WINNING ANGUS

Etesia's Managing Director, Patrick Vives, recently made a special trip from the company's headquarters in France to visit Scotland – his mission was to present Arbroath-based dealer, Angus Chainsaws with an Award.

This accolade came as a result of a 2008 international sales incentive scheme set up by Etesia in which Angus Chainsaws was placed among the top five world-wide retail outlets for 'Sales of Bahia ride-on mowers'.

Ken Wallace, a Partner in Angus Chainsaws, received the accolade on behalf of the company.

At the presentation, Patrick Vives said, "While this is a great achievement, in some ways it is no surprise – over the past 15 years this dealership has consistently excelled at selling Bahia ride-ons and has, during that time, won a number of UK Awards for high turnover.

In addition, in 2003 they were commended for their 'Commitment and Loyalty' and in 2005 Ken Wallace personally came top in Scotland in our 'Best Salesman' category."

Under the sales incentive scheme, winning dealers from all participating countries received the prize of a luxury holiday for two in Cancun organised by Etesia in January. Ken Wallace had been unable to attend – hence his award was presented to him in Scotland.



Ken Wallace (right) receives his award from Etesia UK MD Patrick Vives (L)

FELL BECOMES NEW TGA CHAIRMAN

Tim Fell is the new Chairman of the Turfgrass Growers Association (TGA).

Tim, whose company Tillers Turf has been growing turf in Lincolnshire for 25 years, took over from Robert Adcock when members gathered at the STRI for their spring meeting recently.

He is an active ambassador for turf and is determined to raise further the profile of the association as a body of highly knowledgeable professionals, passionate about their product.

"Members of the TGA are already leaders in the industry when it comes to innovation, quality and service. We want to continue to set the standard for turf production in this country," he said.

"I would like to see the TGA Standards for Cultivated Turf being used universally in any specification for turf."

His two year stint as Chairman comes at a time

of unprecedented challenges for the turf industry. The recession is having a major impact on the income of turf growers, some of whose businesses are underpinned in large measure by the property market. The highly specialist sportsturf market is less affected. Other pressing issues facing turf growers today include the reduction in the numbers of pesticides, and water restrictions.

Tim praised the work of the TGA Council, Chief Executive, Tim Mudge, and the Association's former Chairmen for the substantial progress made in promoting the benefits of turf and addressing matters affecting turf production.

"The TGA has worked hard to raise the awareness of the benefits of turf to the Water Industry and Local Authorities. The message is getting through that turf is the unsung hero of the landscape."



New TGA Chairman Tim Fell (right) presents outgoing Chairman Robert Adcock with a gift marking the end of his two year term.

Membership



TRACEY MADDISON, HEAD OF MEMBERSHIP SERVICES GIVES A DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE...

It's May already...how did that happen so quickly?! It's been a year since I returned to BIGGA and I have thoroughly enjoyed the past 12 months.

I was able to get out and about towards the end of last year and attended many section AGM's and golf events and I would like to thank all those people I met for making me feel very welcome. I hope to do the same again this year and look forward to meeting as many members as possible.

While I am out and about please feel free to chat to me about any issues you may have regarding your BIGGA Membership or BIGGA in general, let me know how we (BIGGA HQ) are doing, whether it's positive or negative your feedback is invaluable to us, it lets us know what we are getting right and wrong!

Valuing Your Section

As you are aware, the 26 sections within our five regions are run by volunteers, a vital part of the Association.

Our Section Teams are involved in many local run activities both social and educational.

Information can be found by reading 'Around the Green' in Greenkeeper International, logging into the members area of the BIGGA Website and selecting 'Region and Section Pages' from the list in the left hand side panel.

Also, many local sections now have their own website pages.

I know we are coming into a busy time for all greenkeepers but please support your local section when you can, local events are a great way of making new contacts, new friends and sharing ideas or common problems!

The Integration of Sports Turf Groundscare Staff into BIGGA Membership

You may have seen the highlighted box in March's issue of Greenkeeper International (Page 9) giving some facts about this topic, which hopefully cleared up any concerns any member had.

If you haven't seen the article have a look back through your copies of Greenkeeper International and have a read.

This article answers many questions which members had about integration of groundscare staff working on sports turf into membership of BIGGA.

This month BIGGA welcomes the following new members...

Scottish Region

Andrew McCrystal, West
Liam McWilliams, West
Calum Morris, North
Ritchie Morrison, North
James Paterson, East
Scott Ribbeck, East
Scott Robertson, North
Stephen Sharkey, Ayrshire
John Stuart, North
Scott Turnbull, West
David Wason, Ayrshire

Northern Region

Alan Chappelow, Northern
Edward Chappelow, Northern
Darrell Crowley, Northern
Simon Dennis, North Wales
Gregory Howsam, North Wales
Stuart Hudson, Sheffield
Mark Hurst, North West
Neil Jackson, North West
Richard Maude, Northern
David Rooney, North West
Richard Spensley, Cleveland

Sam Wardhill, Northern
Simon Witham, Cleveland

Midland Region

Wayne Banner, Midland
Jonathon Deavin, Mid Anglia
Lewis Hackett, East of England
Mark Killingbeck, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Shannon Myring, East Midland
Miles Norton, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Stewart Pearman, Midland
Daniel Perry, Midland
Chris Rossington, Mid Anglia
Neil Smith, Midland
John Sweeney, East Midland
Tim Wood, Mid Anglia

South East Region

Phillip Benn, Surrey
Graham Booth, Kent
Paul Curtis, Kent
James Goold, Kent
Steve Gunner, Kent
Simon Hembling, East Anglia
Ian Hockley, Surrey
Andrew Kinsella, Surrey
John McPherson, Surrey
Michael Newman, Surrey
Danny Perring, East Anglia

Karen Roberts, East Anglia
Stephen Street, Sussex
Neil Waddell, Surrey
Robert Warner-Smith, East Anglia
Adam White, Kent

S West/S Wales Region

Thomas Boxall, South Coast
Robert Chandler, South West
Ceri Davies, South Wales
Gary Denton, South Coast
Ceri Fearnley, South West
Joshua Gibbs, South Coast
Christopher Higgins, South West
David Lacey, South West
Jordan Mein, South West
Ashley Millar, Devon & Cornwall
Gary Rose, South Wales
James Solloway, South Coast
Josh Wall, South West
James Webber, South West

International

Michael Anderson, Slovakia
David Haskell-Craig, MG, Australia
Curtis Tyrrell, USA
Matthew Wharton, USA

Your Vote Counts

Next month every member of BIGGA, who is eligible, will be asked to vote on the integration of sports turf groundscare staff into full membership of BIGGA.

Due to the recent changes in the Constitution this can now be done either in person or by Proxy at the EGM.

A Proxy is someone you choose to attend the meeting to vote on your behalf.

You can appoint the Chairman of the meeting or someone else.

If you appoint a Proxy to vote on your behalf and your Proxy does not attend the meeting your vote will not be counted.

A Proxy Voting Form will be sent to eligible members, during the course of the month, asking them to vote.

Please take the time to complete the form and use your vote.

To adapt Lord Kitchener's well known saying "Your Association Needs You".

CONTACT US



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Brad Anderson
Email: brad@bigga.co.uk

Tel: 01347 833800
(option 1 for Membership.)

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...

The weather man has assured me that we're going to experience a beautiful summer, he didn't say which summer it would be, but keep your fingers crossed that it is this year's. I think we all agree that it's about time!

BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System



The Safety Management System (SMS), sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, is a proactive tool that is used to identify and control hazards and to reduce risks to prevent injury to golf club members, visitors and employees. Such a system consists of the arrangements used by the Club actively to manage health and safety. Its objective is to provide an easily understood framework for those who manage golf clubs and their employees of how a health and safety policy is formulated and executed.

One of the benefits of being a member of BIGGA is that you can access the Safety Management System via the Members Area of the BIGGA website. Using one, of six on screen Risk Profile matrix, you can easily identify hazards that may be found at your golf club and download sample risk assessment forms.

The six Risk Profile matrix are for Greenkeeping Activities, the Maintenance Facility and the Golf Course (all accessed via Golf Course Management), Clubhouse Management, Kitchen Management and Pro Shop Management.

The system also has an integrated Hazard file that enables you to find out what the hazard may be and in many instances offers hyperlinks to other useful websites.

If you have any questions on using the SMS, or if you have forgotten your username and password, please give me a call.

BIGGA Library



The BIGGA library currently holds over 1200 books, videos, DVD's and even some cassette tapes!

You can help us to keep the Library up to date by letting us know of any books or DVD's that you think would be a good addition. We can then check if we already have them and if not we can try to source them. We also accept donations of books, magazines and any other printed materials to the Library.

The Library service is a benefit of being a member and as such you can borrow up to two items, except those marked 'Reference', for a period of up to six weeks. The only cost to members is return postage to BIGGA HQ. For a full library list contact Rachael.

Continuing Professional Development

CPD

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The current CPD year ends on 30 June 2009. To receive your 2009 Certificate of Continuing Professional Development you need to have gained a minimum of 10 CPD credits since 1 July 2008. Send your completed CPD credit claim forms as soon as possible. If you have any queries about the CPD scheme please contact Rachael.

Both Rachael and myself can be contacted on 01347 833800 and select Option 3 or by email to rachael@bigga.co.uk or sami@bigga.co.uk.

Apology - on last month's page I mentioned that Paul Carella worked at Bellshill Golf Club, this is incorrect. Paul actually works at Bothwell Castle Golf Club, our apologies for this.

THE CHALLENGE SO FAR

FEATURE

Jordan Fairweather describes the challenges he has faced since he left work in one of the wettest golfing environments for one of the driest.



Jordan Fairweather

I have been fortunate to work and volunteer at some of the most prestigious golf clubs in the world, including Loch Lomond Golf Club, where I spent seven years as Irrigation Technician and Special Projects Supervisor.

During my time there, I was given every opportunity to learn (Rutgers University Graduate) and take on new challenges from upgrading the irrigation system, installing two sub-surface aeration systems, re-building fairways and leading a crew of 30, literally anything one could ask for and more. During that time I had often wondered what it would be like to move from a big name club like Loch Lomond and take up a new challenge elsewhere and would it be worth it?

So when the offer of a move to the sun came along, could I really say no? A lot of investigation

was carried out to determine whether this new opportunity had what I was looking for. Would the job fulfil me intellectually? Would I learn new skills to become a better manager? Could I meet the needs of the company who were offering me the job? Well I did take on the challenge and accepted the role of Construction Superintendent for Tanto International Golf.

My role is to manage the day-to-day construction programme for the first 18 hole course at Dubai Golf City. Dubai Golf City will be a five course complex surrounded by a very high end residential complex scheduled for completion by 2012. The first 18 hole course we are constructing is a Tim Lobb design as will be the next three. We have also started construction of the new Kyle Phillips-designed course at Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, which is next to the Formula 1 circuit and scheduled for completion in 2009.



The first challenge I faced when reaching Dubai was the heat, in July and August temperatures reach 55 degrees Celsius with fluctuating humidity. I was amazed how quickly I acclimatised. Having gone from the wettest area of Britain to a place where they accumulated 7mm of rain last year, and all in one day, you would think nothing would ever stop construction, but the weather does! Working regulations state for July and August no staff are allowed outside of an air conditioned cab to work between 12 and 3pm. This just means our day became three hours longer to compensate. Work can also be stopped due to sand storms which can come through daily. During this you can only see as far as 50 yards.

One thing I face daily is the language barrier. English is the first language in Dubai, followed by Arabic. All road signs are in English and in the city there is not a problem. If in a bar or restaurant it

will be mainly Europeans and Americans. There are over 200 nationalities living in the United Arab Emirates. The language barrier that can be a problem is on the job site. Currently we have an American, a Canadian, three Scots and, for my sins, two Englishmen along with our labour force of 128! This is made up of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi nationalities. They all speak Urdu, which is our main language on site. They have been teaching me a few words daily but they seem to be picking up English quicker than we can pick up Urdu.

Along with my Deputy, Richard Crocombe, it can take us up to 45 minutes to ensure all staff are at their locations and fully understand what is entailed. It can be frustrating at times when all you need is someone to go and do a quick five minute job but end up having to drive them there yourself. One point I should point out is that out of

the 128 staff only my two irrigation foremen had ever worked on or been on a golf course before! The task could not have been greater. It helps greatly that Eric and Robert Samells, of Edinburgh Landscaping, lead our finish teams. Every person has to be trained on every job by myself, Richard, Eric or Robert. We had to get them to visualise and understand what we are all there to achieve. We have taken some to visit nearby golf courses, have shown them many pictures on computer and also given layout plans to certain groups.

At times I was unsure what to expect and of what level of understanding I was getting across to them. When we had explained exactly that the holes in the ground were bunkers and we had prepared approx 20 I thought, yes, we have cracked it - green, tee, bunker - only to be preparing a lake for lining to hear from your Group Leader, "Big bunker boss". You do not know whether to



View of the 15th

laugh or cry. At times I had a JCB drive across a newly cut out green cavity and a skid steer loader drive and turn on a tee, but, all in all, 128 people have grasped the fact better than could be expected.

One task I find myself putting a lot of time into is planning. Day to day tasks, material deliveries and trying to achieve the end result in the time frame set to me. This has been tricky in many ways. One is man hours and religious holidays. After losing three hours in the middle of every day in July and August, September is the holy month of Ramadan for Muslims. During Ramadan all staff do not work more than six hours a day. There are also a lot of other religious holidays which are controlled by the moon, so short notice on holidays is not unusual. The weekend in Dubai is a Thursday afternoon and Friday for some companies while Friday/Saturday for others. Along with planning orders which need to come from Europe or USA this cannot be done on Saturday/Sunday means I can have a three day week to get ordering through.

Materials and availability can be a problem

in the UAE. It is always tough to source products when you move to new job but out here there is a difference. Due to the rapid growth of construction the UAE cannot produce and import materials fast enough to keep up, so a payment of 50% on the day you order is required to get your material which may take months. Golf machinery is also non-existent. All the main franchises are here but due to the market not being big enough as at present there are only 11 golf courses, none of them hold stock, not even demonstration machinery so an order of many months can be expected. Many companies tell me this is about to change due to the rapid increase in golf construction in the area.

Day-to-day on the golf course we encounter many new projects and learning experiences, from warm season grasses to managing an eight metre dig with five metres of rock. This was to install three, 32inch pipes to feed the irrigation and circulation system. This was the first major task we undertook and the first thing I learnt was to never assume the desert is all sand! This is as much an irrigation project as construction, as

even well before grass is on site we require water to hold the shaped sand in place. Due to sand storms and the lack of water in the beginning we had constructed some bunkers three times before completion. You could come in the next day to find the bunker gone and the grades completely changed. Along with reading plans, I have learnt a lot about shaping, moving material and being able to visualise what we have to create.

Being the contractor and not the client can also be tough to deal with. You have to build to specification and not preference which means we have to do things that maybe you would do differently on your own course. Sometimes you have what you think is a great golf hole and the architect and client can come along and change the plan, it can be tough to see weeks of hard work put under a Dozer again. I hope to write a second article next year on completion of the first 18 holes explaining more about the construction process in Dubai and how we overcame a lot of difficulties.

At the moment there are 11 golf courses in Dubai with the same under construction. I was



Most of the crew at Dubai Golf City



Green, lake and wall construction on the 12th

told there is planning for approx 90 golf courses between Egypt and Abu Dhabi lodged at the moment. Dubai has started construction of four major theme parks including Universal Studios. They are constructing the world's tallest building and already have plans to beat that by creating one a kilometre high!

I was looking for a new challenge and I have definitely found it, or it found me, as is the case maybe. I am enjoying what every day throws at me and yes it can be frustrating at times but also very rewarding. I am learning more than I could have imagined and already feel no task is too big. I can only imagine that wherever I end up the challenges can be no greater than what I, and the team here, achieve on a daily basis.

There are some drawbacks to Dubai and working abroad, mainly missing family and friends. The time difference trying to keep in contact back home is difficult. There is no VAT on anything including petrol, the traffics is chaos. The town is full of Europeans and Americans, the sun shines every day and if you do not drink your beer quickly it goes very warm.





Damage to a south of England down land course by rooks looking for chafer grubs
Picture courtesy Chris Humphrey, Collier Turf Care

CHAFER GRUB

THE PRE-EMINENT INSECT PEST OF UK TURF



By Dr Terry Mabbett

Turf provides an ideal feeding and breeding ground for invertebrate animals including insects, arachnids, crustaceans and nematodes. As a perennial ecosystem turf grass generally offers well-fed and managed foliage and a dynamic thatch layer overlaying a relatively deep and dense fibrous root system.

Pests have access to year round food and harbourage, essentially undisturbed for decades if not centuries. That said turf in the United Kingdom gets off relatively lightly from invertebrate animal pest infestation and damage compared with North America.

Turf grass root zones offer ideal long term habitats for invertebrate animals and much more so than the annual 'grasses' (cereals) cultivated for grain. Many different invertebrate animals inhabit turf root zones and thatch without causing damage.

Around half a dozen are recorded as pests in the UK and just two insects (chafer grubs and leatherjackets) assume major pest status.

Chafer grubs and leatherjackets (larva stage of the crane fly) damage grass roots and attract wild mammal and avian predators that cause even more damage by tearing at the turf to get at the larvae.

Invertebrate pests are without backbones but chafer grubs (and leatherjackets) have the capacity to 'break the back' of fine professional turf by rendering green and tee surfaces unplayable.

Chafer grubs are sporadic and less widespread than leatherjackets but generally result in more economic damage both directly and as collateral turf damage from wild mammalian and avian predators.

Life cycle

Juvenile stages of insect pests generally cause most damage even though the adult is invariably more mobile. Chafer grub which is the larva stage of chafer beetles (Coleoptera) is no exception. Adult chafer beetles feed on a wide variety of plants causing little damage but the larvae cause economic damage to turf grass roots. Species most frequently found in turf are the garden chafer (*Phyllopertha horticola*) and Welsh chafer (*Hoplia philanthus*), the latter especially in sandy soils.

Adult garden chafer beetles have a metallic green head and thorax with light brown wing cases. Welsh chafer beetles are similar in size (9mm length) with a black head and thorax and reddish brown wing cases. The larva (chafer grub) has a white fleshy segmented body in a curved 'letter C' shape with three pairs of legs on anterior (front) segments. The head is distinctively light brown. A full grown chafer grub is about the same length as the adult beetle but if straightened out would be twice as long.

There is little chance of confusing chafer grubs with legless leatherjackets but they can be mistaken for vine weevil larvae 'curse' of the container plant industry. Vine weevil larvae are smaller than chafer grubs and like leatherjackets are without legs.

Adult chafer beetles emerge from the pupa stage in late May and June and dig their way up to the soil surface. Numbers increase rapidly as dusk descends on warm early summer evenings when newly-emerged adults mate before burrowing back into the soil to lay eggs.

Chafer grubs hatch within two to three weeks and start to feed straightaway. Continuous and increasingly intense root feeding will now proceed into October on unprotected turf. Grass roots cut and damaged by chafer grub feeding cannot

maintain water and nutrient supplies leading to undernourished turf that yellows and eventually dries dry out. Accumulating damage destroys grass root anchorage allowing turf to be raised and rolled back easily to expose the chafer grubs. Damage is slight at first but builds up quickly during late summer and early autumn (late August/September), when grubs are almost full-grown with voracious appetites. Chafer grubs are full grown and mature by mid October when they burrow deeper into the soil to over-winter as hibernating larvae before pupating in spring (April).

Direct and collateral damage

Chafer grub infestations develop underground and unnoticed until turf starts to show symptoms of damage in early autumn after summer-long root feeding. Turf damage is now severe and the large succulent and protein rich grubs will have attracted the attention of predators. First on the scene will be 'grubbing' birds especially corvids (rooks, crows, magpies and jays) foraging during the day, and later wild mammals such as badgers and foxes ripping up already loosened turf at night.

This is one instance when biological control of insect pests is undesirable and unwelcome. Collateral damage caused by birds and mammals is considerable, running into thousands of pounds for green and tee repair and as lost fees when large parts of the course are put out of action. Chafer grub infestation is heaviest on greens and tees because established sandy-soil bases offer ideal sites for chafer oviposition by adult chafer beetles. Similarly soft professional turf on greens and tees is easy for birds and animals to tear up.

Rural and urban golf courses are equally affected. Fox population inside the M25 is estimated at 15,000 and the London Evening Standard reported how some 60 foxes dug up greens on a North London golf course causing £30,000 of



Chafer grub displaying the classic curved C-shape



Chafer grubs cut grass roots allowing dried out turf to be rolled back to reveal the pests



Extensive damage to turf by badgers and foxes foraging for chafer grubs

Pictures on this page courtesy Bayer Environmental Science

Raising the Game for Disease Control



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damage in the process. Chafer grubs feed on a variety of plants and turf infestations are usually more prevalent near to woodland.

The offenders are highly mobile mammals and birds invariably arriving from neighbouring land and property. Arrival of predatory birds can actually prove useful by alerting greenkeepers to the developing problem. When birds begin to show undue and unhealthy interest in turf it is generally a sure sign that chafer grubs (and/or leatherjackets) are under the grass and insecticide treatment is urgently required.

Chemical control

Only recently has an entirely suitable insecticide treatment become available for control of chafer grubs in turf. Some of the very earliest chemicals used against chafer grubs (and leatherjackets) were acutely toxic and until relatively recently greenkeepers had been forced to use insecticides now seen as damaging to the environment, although they did by and large kill these pests.

Withdrawal of products containing gamma HCH (lindane) in 1999 left a complete void for chafer grub control because contrary to popular belief chlorpyrifos was not recommended for chafer grub control, although it did a perfectly good job against leatherjackets. Reason was simple -

chlorpyrifos resists leaching and stays in the top layer of soil. Under normal circumstances this would be a bonus but the active insecticide is unable to reach the deeper-seated chafer grubs.

Chlorpyrifos is a broad spectrum insecticide used worldwide in agriculture, amenity and public health. It would almost certainly kill chafer grubs if able to reach chafer grubs and make contact after standard spray application.

The void left by withdrawal of gamma HCH in 1999 was soon matched by equally big holes in professional turf.

Greenkeepers were left to face chafer grub infestations and their consequences with no approved recommended insecticides. The situation remained unresolved until 2006 when Bayer Environmental Science introduced Merit Turf a granular formulation containing the insecticide imadocloprid with approval for chafer grub control in turf.

Biological and cultural control

Chafer grubs in turf can be managed by biological control using the entomopathogenic nematode *Heterorhabditis megidis*.

These microscopic roundworms invade chafer grubs infecting the larvae with a fatal bacterial disease. They are watered into the turf when the

soil is already moist and temperature is within the 12-20°C range.

By definition, biological control agents are density dependent factors that 'track' and 'follow' their pest hosts or prey. As such numbers and activity increase with higher pest populations then falling away as the pest population decreases.

As biological systems they require more exacting environmental conditions (e.g. temperature, moisture, pH, soil structure) to grow, move and reproduce for effective pest control.

Biocontrol agents therefore tend to operate within a narrower profile of conditions than do chemical pesticides. They generally need more time to work which greenkeepers may not have. With greens and tees out of action from chafer grubs, and fees and reputations being lost, course managers and club captains will be stalking the course looking for 'trophies' and not the shiny metal kind.

Good golf course management practice will assist turf tolerance and recuperation following chafer grub attack.

Selection of deeper rooting turf grass species and appropriate management practices that encourage rapid and healthy root growth and development (e.g. well-timed and balanced applications of phosphate fertiliser) are recommended.



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The HEADWAY combination of two powerful actives gives:

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WHY OVERSEEDING DRAMATICALLY IMPROVES COURSE CONDITIONS

Managing turf areas will always be challenging and overseeding plays a key role in improving turfgrass conditions. Stephen Denton reports...

Overseeding is a subject which is often discussed but not always understood. So why do we need to overseed? The main reasons are to maintain the balance of cultivars, to introduce new cultivars, to ensure grass can cope with heavy wear and to maintain consistency throughout the course.

Conditions can deteriorate if you do not overseed, which seriously affects playing conditions and the presentation of the course.

So how does grass grow? Following a natural cycle, during June, July and August the growth pattern of the grass plants slows as the grasses attempt to produce flowers and seed.

In an amenity situation these botanical changes restrict both the crown and root establishment of the individual grass plants. This can cause stress leading to a reduction in plant cells, which then significantly impacts on establishment of the turf surface the following spring. Higher stress levels within the grass plants seriously affect the important autumn growth.

During a wet summer it is likely a high percentage of the leaf density will consist of weak lush leaves and shoots susceptible to stress, winter wear and weed invasion.

Weather patterns during any year – whether

wet as during 2007 and 2008 or hot and dry as in 2006 - amplify the problems that are likely to occur going into this vital autumn and winter period.

Seed sowing

In theory, grass seed can be sown at anytime of year, even during the winter. However, the potential for failure is higher during this period as conditions are often less favourable.

As a guide as long as light, air, water and appropriate temperatures are available, turfgrass seed will germinate.

One of the benefits of autumn overseeding is it increases the percentage of healthy desirable species within the sward. For best results seed should be sown on two or three occasions at half rates.

Considerable benefits in adopting this programme include improved wear, density, disease resistance and a more rapid establishment during the following spring when the next growth pattern commences.

New cultivars have been bred and varieties are continually being improved to meet the increasing pressures placed on the sward by climatic changes and increased usage of the golf course.

Management regimes

Different grass species have varying demands in terms of maintenance inputs. Those demanding intensive management, notably annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), fail in terms of producing a truly sustainable sward.

Annual meadow grass can be categorised as a ruderal plant, one that will inhabit environments where low stress, high disturbance and reduced competition exists. It has adapted through time to be able to germinate, grow and produce seed very quickly thus colonising weaker areas. This rapid production continually adds new material to the seed bank within the soil. Copying this successful method of establishment by regular light over sowing of other desirable grasses will create competition by increasing density and uniformity. This then limits the availability of resources for the undesirable species.

Trials carried out on one-metre plots over a two-year period which received six separate overseeding operations exhibited a 12% increase in density but more importantly a reduction by 10 to 15% was noted in annual meadow grass ingress. By adding new material to the sward system on a regular basis, a balance of developing vigorous and mature plants can be achieved helping to



Striking seed on West Cornish golf course

At the picturesque West Cornwall Golf Club where Keith Kemp is Head Greenkeeper the sea forms a dramatic backdrop to this testing 18-hole links course. Developed out of 100 acres of dune land and established in 1889 this is thought to be one of the oldest clubs in Cornwall.

On taking over his current role Keith's principal aims were to bring back fescues to dominate the greens and address green speeds.

David Rhodes was taken on as consultant agronomist to help provide advice on the best way forward and Keith says: "He certainly got the ball rolling to improve the management of the greens. This looked at a more sustainable approach and encouraged a return to the links-style course in line with the original design.

"Regular overseeding was recommended as part of this programme and this has already paid significant dividends. Currently we are getting through one of the coldest winters I can remember and the greens have been holding out well."

Initially overseeding took place using Mascot R101 from Rigby Taylor and now R117 is applied as it contains 25 per cent chewings fescues Calliope and Greensleeves together with slender creeping red fescues Helena and Cezanne.

Aeration has also increased dramatically together with top dressing. The club has

purchased an Aircore 800 pedestrian aerator and Keith and his team Sorrel roll at least once a week to keep the surface open.

Overseeding programme

Overseeding takes place three times a year, firstly in spring and summer at a rate of 12gms/sqmetre with further overseeding in the autumn at a rate of 20gms/sqmetre.

"We need to treat each green differently to get them up to the same level," says Keith. "Some greens are very high in fescue content others low due to different micro-climates."

Overlooking St Ives Bay one part of the course is 6.59metres above sea level with the 16th green the highest point at 64metres

Top dressing has increased to fortnightly throughout the growing season using a 90/10 Roffeys mix. In the first year 130 tonnes of top dressing was used and applied by a Dakota spinner dresser which allows fine applications.

Keith says: "As a result we have been able to raise the height of cut and still produce a good putting surface. This has helped to encourage the fescues."

Brushing takes place on a regular basis as this stands the grass up before cutting it to reduce any lateral growth.

Seaweed products such as Maxicrop have also been showing good results.

Keith says: "Now there is greater uniformity across the whole course and vital improvements have been made to playing conditions."

create the desired surface.

Management practices undertaken also directly influence the grass species composition, especially on putting surfaces.

In northern Europe, the fescue grasses (*Festuca* species) and browntop bents (*Agrostis tenuis* and *A. capillaris*) indigenous to links and heathland produce the best turf for golf from playing, economic and environmental viewpoints. These species benefit from minimal intervention.

Browntop bent has a wider range in terms of habitat than the fine-leaved fescues. It tolerates wetter and more fertile environments and is equally at home on dry and infertile terrain. The fact that it is naturally found in the former explains why it is often seen in greens along with annual meadow grass. Its ability to thrive in dry and infertile soils provides the key to its competitive edge over this relatively unsustainable species.

Successful management of fescues and browntop bents is only achievable if certain conditions that favour these grasses in their natural environment are replicated on the golf course. Notably they require low fertiliser and water inputs, but maintenance needs to compensate for the wear caused by golf and greenkeeping traffic.

August and September provide the most suitable conditions for overseeding browntop bent.

However experience has shown that halving the seeding rate and making regular overseeding operations dramatically increases the percentage of seed that establishes.

Spring fescue overseeding should take place when a temperature of six to eight degrees centigrade or above is achieved and air temperatures reach similar values. Seed should be sown with a disc or dimple-type machine to a depth of no more than 7mm. Alternatively micro tine aeration or scarification to create a seedbed followed by light top dressing is another method of application.

Height of cut should be maintained at no less than 5mm to aid establishment of the new seedling plants. Initially this will affect the pace of the surface but this can be improved by regular very light applications of a suitable top dressing material. Once the new plants reach the two true leaf stage (approximately three to four weeks in ideal conditions) mowing heights can then be reduced.

It is important to be aware however, that reducing mowing heights is not the best way to create pace, as increased stress is placed upon the sward. Regular light V-mowing to stimulate vertical growth and regular top dressing is by far the most beneficial approach. The use of potassium based amino acid products has been shown to

increase the turgidity of the plant cell structure creating a more upright leaf. This creates lower resistance to the golf ball running across the leaf tip, whereas a flat leaf blade will impart greater resistance on the ball, slowing it's progress.

There are various methods of overseeding with browntop bent. The most effective is to aerate using 7mm micro solid or hollow tines in a very close-set pattern, applying a light top dressing and matting to partially fill the holes. The seed should then be applied either through a drop spreader or dimple seeder followed by top dressing again and drag matting into the surface. Light firming of the surface helps to achieve good seed to soil contact. This method ensures that the bent seed is in contact with the soil rather than any organic thatchy material. The application of seaweed type products will also have beneficial effects.

Investing in your seed bank is probably the best investment a golf club can make to improve course conditions, certainly paying a better dividend than any other "bank" currently available.

About the Author

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SUSTAINABILITY, IT'S NOTHING NEW!

Peter McVicar, Course Manager of Hesketh Golf Club, takes a step back into golfing history to look at sustainable golf.

As in every walk of life, or chosen profession, we as greenkeepers are told about “new” operations or techniques to help attain the “sacred turf” we desire.

Currently the buzzword flying around is sustainable, I'm sure we've all heard it and have our own interpretation on what it means. What does a sustainable golf course really mean? Well the R&A say:

“A sustainable golf course optimises the playing quality of the golf course in harmony with the conservation of its natural environment under economically sound and socially responsible management”.

Sustainable development and management is fundamental to the future success of golf and to achieving The R&A's goal of having more people playing more golf on more facilities in more countries. Sustainability can only be achieved through the implementation of best practice and is only as flexible as the single limiting factor in its definition which applies to any specific site which, more often than not, will be environmental or economic considerations.

So, in my words, a course that is environmentally and economically friendly.

But surely we as greenkeepers should have been doing this since greenkeeping times began. The first course manager I can find reference to is

Alexander Munroe who tended the Links at Royal Aberdeen in 1820, surely he was thinking about these issues as he was looking after the course, incidentally he was paid £4 for his duties and two years later, this was reduced to £2.

But let's look more in depth at these best practice guidelines...

1. Mowing.

Select the right machine for the job and ensure that all cutting units are sharp to reduce potential tearing and bruising of the grass leaf, which can result in discoloration, stress and disease.

Avoid over-close mowing of the grass species being managed as this will result in stress and thinning of the sward.

Mow frequently enough to retain desirable surface characteristics, though avoid unnecessarily frequent mowing which may lead to mechanical wear of the grass.

Box off clippings to areas where minimising thatch accumulation is essential to the production of playing quality.

Vary the direction of mowing to reduce wear patterns and the development of grain.

Avoid over-close mowing of the grass species being managed as this will result in stress and thinning of the sward. This is often one of the main reasons why greens established with specially

selected species revert to annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*).

So basically sharp blades, change direction and collect clippings.

2. Aeration.

Select the most appropriate tool for the job, e.g. thatch removal is best achieved with hollow cores; irrigation management can be achieved with narrow solid tines or water injection equipment.

Vary the type of aeration and the depth of penetration through the annual programme to work on all potential problems.

There is documented evidence that the course managers as far back as the late 1800's were using graips (large fork type implements) to carry out aeration practices on the course, is this not similar to verti-draining?

3. Top-dressing.

Usually a high sand content, bulk material. Select material compatible with, but not of a finer texture to, the growing medium.

Apply at a frequency and rate aimed to match the rate of growth and thatch accumulation.

Avoid applications which exceed the rate of growth and thatch accumulation as this will result in stressed and thin turf.

Avoid top dressing outside the growing season



Triple gang circa 1923: Slow work for man and beast (Courtesy Practical Greenkeeping by Jim Arthur)



Old Tom Morris, Peter McVicar's hero (Courtesy Practical Greenkeeping by Jim Arthur)

as this may smother turf or promote unseasonal lushness, both of which may result in disease.

Avoid top dressing when turf is under any form of stress as the abrasive nature of the dressing means working it into the turf will cause damage.

These are just three examples of the best practice guidelines, but don't you think they are very similar to what traditional greenkeepers have always been doing, others guidelines look at grasses we desire and water and fertiliser application, fescue being the best grass, apply very little fertiliser and hardly ever water, but if you have to, hand water - the best courses around (in my opinion) are the ones that water to keep the grass alive, not to keep it green.

One of my favourite old stories, is the one about the greenkeeper (back in the day) who has a rabbit problem, he goes out one morning and sees a urine burn on the green, he studies this and soon sees a lush growth around the outside, then the poa starts to get hold, this gives him the great lesson of grass and fertiliser and what it can do.

The best tool a greenkeeper has is not the computer in the office or even the verti-drain in the shed, but the eyes he has in his head, all too often people will buy something or carryout tasks without consulting the turf, just by looking and talking to the turf all the answers are there waiting.

My humble opinion on the sustainable golf course is that it's nothing more than, as another of my heroes would say "practical greenkeeping", everything being said is a repeat of what the great Jim Arthur told us years ago, and nothing more.



At Augusta, a platoon of greenkeepers cut fairways with triplex mowers, traveling in echelon

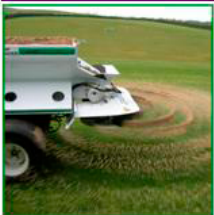
Don't get me wrong, I think the R&A are doing a great job in promoting "common sense greenkeeping", but I feel sometimes it has to be remembered that quality greenkeepers have always done this and will continue doing so.

So when somebody else asks me if I'm trying this new sustainable approach, I will smile and think of Auld Tom wandering around Prestwick before the first British Open in 1860, and reply,

"No, I'm still doing things the old way..."

"Old Tom Morris had two rules for greenkeeping, the first was Sand top-dressing, he was often heard shouting "Mair saund, Honeyman" - this was a call to his assistant to top-dress everything. He believed it was required to "maintain the character of the grass". The other was "Nae golf on Sunday". He believed the courses needed a rest even if the golfers didn't."

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A QUICK GUIDE TO...

Landscaping

As the growing season approaches, Iain Mulady, Gardener at The London Golf Club, offers ten tips to bring your clubhouse gardens up to par.



1. Into the nights

It's easy to forget the evenings when you're working greenkeeping hours, but it's a time of day when visitors will see the gardens in more detail as they relax with a drink on the terrace. Maximum advantage should be taken of the long, warm summer evenings – lighting, especially uplighters on decorative stemmed trees, look fantastic year round and scented plants, both can extend the hours of interest and encourage customers to linger.

2. Don't forget sculpture

The use of sculpture, be it formal and precise or stylised and naturalistic, can provide extra interest and an effective contrast and foil to planting, lifting it beyond just corporate landscaping. With some artists it can be varied year on year and be displayed on a sale or return basis and it's virtually maintenance free!

3. Low maintenance gardening is a false idol

No such thing exists and any attempt can lead to massive future problems as tough, invasive plants like ivy grow into one another and the persistent weeds force their way through. Careful, knowledgeable plant selection and design can allow for easy maintenance of manageable species in a sustainable manner.

4. Detail

The grander strokes of planting can provide form, colour and structure but it's the little things that jump out at visitors. The garden doesn't have to be painstakingly intricate, but a few carefully positioned focal points and surprises can provide visual interest and impress even casual passers by.

5. Don't get muddled

Lots of different plants jumbled together can often seem too busy to the eye. It must be remembered that it's still a golf club primarily and bold swathes of colour and consistency provide a better experience to passers-by than an overly detailed and fussy cottage-garden. The trick is getting the mix right – bright highlights shine at their best against consistent and strongly formed backdrops.

6. Done once, done properly

In a high profile situation like golf club surroundings it can be very challenging getting the work done without causing upset to the non-stop flow of golfers. It can be tempting to try and do a quick revamp of large areas without any disruption, but taking shortcuts will only result in more disruption later – the hard and messy bit will still have to be done eventually to put things right and until then substandard work is out on show for months or potentially years. Get it over with – the results will last for years so it's always worth it.

7. Winter interest

While the playing of golf slows over the winter months the gardens provide an extra opportunity to keep business flowing, even if the course is closed. Form, scent and colour can ensure the clubhouse remains an attractive place to relax, eat, drink and socialise by focusing on garden areas visible from windows and conservatories.

8. Don't spare the rod

Pesticides have a bad reputation in the increasingly organic world of the home gardener, but they have an incredibly useful role to play. Residual herbicides can save uncountable man-hours of weeding and correct application can allow for drastic weed control without disturbing the surrounding gardens.

Many modern insecticides can be very safe to humans and the environment when properly used. Be more than prompt with fungicides – by the time the problem looks serious it is probably too late.

9. Encourage interest to realise potential

A vast proportion of members will have gardens of their own and plenty of enthusiasm about gardening. Attracting and holding their interest is a potential marketing coup with a knowledgeable gardener on hand to answer questions and botanical labelling of plants to provide added information.

10. Planning

Timing disruptive tasks before golfers arrive, to planning schemes of new planting and design, it is critical that you work in an organised fashion and with an eye to the future.

The course will still be there in 10 years time, and with good planning the gardens should only have matured and improved along the way.



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STRIKE A POSE!

BIGGA's Photographic Competition, supported by Syngenta, is back

Calling all budding photographers!

Are you proud of your course? Do you catch yourself admiring it in a certain light?

The BIGGA Photographic Competition, supported by Syngenta and back for its fourth year, creates an opportunity for greenkeepers to display their artistic flair, while also earning some publicity for their club.

The winner will receive a full course profile in Greenkeeper International and a special prize, while the 12 best pictures will be selected for the 2010 BIGGA Calendar.

Photographs will be accepted in three forms. Prints, transparencies, or digitally. Digital pictures must be at 300 dpi (dots per inch) on the camera's highest quality setting, and capable of being scaled up to A3 print size (42cm wide x 29.7cm high). Please note, cropping may occur if photos are to appear in the magazine or calendar. Also please ensure digital photos do not show the time/date display!

Anyone wishing to enter should email them to: tom@bigga.co.uk, entering 'BIGGA PHOTO COMP' as the email subject header. Alternatively post to: Tom Campbell, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark Manor, Alne, York, YO61 1UF by July 31, 2009.

Only BIGGA members are eligible to enter. Please note Syngenta will have access to the winning pictures and will credit them when and if used.

Winning photographs from last year's competition are shown. At the top of the page is the winner, Marriott Meon Valley GC – Looking West by Dean McMenemy.

Above right is Hankley Common GC – Dewying Green by Gareth Roberts, which came second. Below right is Papillion, Montgomerie (Turkey), by Liam Bergin, which came third.

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TRANSMISSION CHOICE A KEY TO THE RIGHT TRACTOR BUY

It is all too easy to divide the transmissions offered in compact tractors into two broad camps, mechanical and hydrostatic. It is equally easy to assume mechanical transmissions are best for fixed speed tasks and hydrostatic for variable speed jobs. But does this approach still hold true? James de Havilland reports...

Most operators understand the fundamental reasons why certain transmissions are favoured over another. So skip the next few paragraphs if what follows is obvious.

With a mechanical transmission, a task such as aeration can be carried out by a number of different operators. All things being equal the job should be carried out to much the same standard, with holes punched in the ground at the same spacing regardless of who has driven the tractor.

A key to this is the mechanical transmission. If an operator sets the tractor's engine speed to deliver 540rpm at the PTO and then selects a given range and gear, the aerator that is being powered by the tractor will go on to work as it did when previously operated at these speeds.

With a traditional hydrostatic drive, aeration can be tricky. Instead of delivering a fixed forward speed at a given engine rpm, a hydrostatic transmission can vary the speed according to load on the engine. Reach a slight incline, either up or down, and the tractor can slow or speed up accordingly.

All basic stuff, but it does help clarify why a mechanical transmission tractor remains the favoured choice for fixed speed work like aeration. Conversely, hydrostatic drive is the ideal choice for pretty much all other types of work. Powering a mower, hydrostatic drive options can include a 'cruise' setting that essentially enables the tractor's speed to be governed by the load on the engine. Hit a patch of longer grass, which in turn puts more load on the engine, and the transmission will slow the tractor to help take the load off the engine and vice versa.

Tractor manufacturers have long recognised this, and over the past few years they have come up with alternative transmissions that are designed to mix the ease of operation associated with a hydrostatic drive with the fixed speed ability of a manual.

Among the most recent developments is the continuously variable, CVT, transmission developed by New Holland. Known as EasyDrive,

the transmission can be operated so it will deliver a fixed forward speed at set engine revs, just like a standard mechanical transmission. It is also claimed by New Holland to be extremely efficient, allowing more engine power to reach the wheels than it would with a conventional hydrostatic drive.

At present the New Holland EasyDrive system has been shown on its 45hp four-cylinder Boomer 3045. There is no 'electronic' link between the engine and the transmission, the latter combining an epicyclic system with a variator. The latter is essentially a pair of hydraulically adjusted pulleys linked by a steel drive chain; opening and closing the pulleys adjusts their respective ratios, this providing the key CVT element of the transmission.

In rough outline, the transmission can be operated so the variator operates pretty much like a hydrostatic drive. Set the engine speed on the throttle, press the travel pedal and off you go, the tractor building up speed just as it would with a 'hydro' drive. It is the combination of variator and epicyclic speeds that enables EasyDrive to run at full engine power from speeds as low as 300m/hr to 30 km/hr in a single range.

Where it gets 'clever' is with the two EasyDrive 'cruise' control modes. Again in broad outline, mode one delivers a fixed variator ratio to fix the engine and gear speed exactly like a conventional mechanical transmission. This is used for fixed speed applications to include spraying and aeration.

In mode two, the operator can select a target travel speed that will work to maintain a fixed engine speed. If the load on the engine increases to the point where it will compromise the PTO speed, the transmission slows the forward speed to reduce the load on the engine. When the peak load is reduced, the forward speed will then recover back to the target speed. This is pretty much how cruise speeds work with hydrostatic drive.

A key difference with EasyDrive is that releasing the travel pedal does not abruptly slow the tractor. As momentum is lost, the tractor will slow to a point where the transmission can reconnect drive

in relation to the engine speed. Offering the drive flexibility of a hydrostatic with the simplicity and fixed speed of a mechanical drive, EasyDrive looks like it has a lot to offer.

The John Deere eHydro transmission offered on the 3720 tractor matches well proven hydrostatic drive with electronic control. It is a clever system, with the added attraction of being really easy to set up. As an example, the transmission can be set to deliver a forward speed of say 3.01 km/hr at 2,400 engine rpm. At these speeds, the rear PTO will be operating at 540rpm.

With a conventional hydro drive, this forward speed to engine speed ratio is not fixed. An increased load on the tractor will see the transmission essentially slow the tractor while the engine and PTO speeds are maintained. With eHydro, the operator can set the transmission so as the load increases, the engine, PTO and forward speed will all be linked.

So if the tractor slows, so does the engine and PTO. This is just what happens with a mechanical drive and a key reason why a conventional hydrostatic tractor is not the best tool for aeration work; the hole spacing will be directly influenced by the load on the tractor. With eHydro, the hole spacing remains constant even if the tractors working speed varies in accordance with load.

Of equal importance, the eHydro system does not take a long time to understand and set up. An eHydro novice can be up and running quickly, the system making it easy to replicated fixed settings to suit a specific job.

There are those who will counter this by saying a mechanical transmission tractor makes life even easier. Just select the gear you need to achieve the desired forward speed and throttle up to get 540rpm at the PTO. For most sports and amenity work, this works fine and it is easy for the operator to remember what gear speed, range and engine rpm suit specific tasks.

With eHydro or EasyDrive, it is possible to adjust the tractor's engine speed and forward speed to achieve what you want. This is really useful when aerating as it allows the hole spacing

continued on page 34



In applications, such as mowing, the New Holland EasyDrive can be operated just like a hydrostatic transmission tractor, the operator either using the floor mounted travel pedal to 'manually' vary the driving speed or fixing a 'cruise' speed that can automatically take into account varied load on the PTO.



EasyDrive is set up using a set of buttons mounted to the left of the operator. The main buttons are pretty easy to understand, with only Speed Set needing a bit of understanding. This control is essentially used to cap the tractors speed to 30%, 60% or 100% of maximum, in effect changing the sensitivity of the travel pedal to suit different applications.



The eHydro transmission option on John Deere 3720 tractors offers all the features of a conventional hydrostatic drive with added control. It is easy to set up the tractor to run at a fixed forward speed, even after changing the throttle setting.

to be right for the job as opposed to what the tractor will let you deliver.

Kubota's 'intelligent' HST Plus transmission is offered on its GL40 series tractors and again it is pretty easy to understand and use. In broad outline, think of a standard hydrostatic transmission with three ranges to suit low, medium and transport speeds. Kubota then supplements this with various advanced features.

These include its Hydro Dual Speed system. This allows the operator to shift between ranges without having to stop and is great when you want to have a low speed to work with a loader and then shift to a higher ratio to take that load to a trailer. Stall Guard can be selected to allow a loader combination to push hard into a heap without the risk of the engine 'bogging down'.

Another feature is Auto Throttle Advance. With a conventional hydrostatic drive, the drive pedal controls the speed, the engine speed being controlled by the throttle. With the Auto Throttle system, the engine speed will drop to idle when the tractor is stopped by the travel pedal. Sounds a small detail, but it really is a great feature not to have the engine revving hard when the tractor is not moving.

For those who prefer to stick with a mechanical transmission, there are choices that enable the operator to 'change on the move'. There is



Kubota offer its HST Plus hydrostatic transmission on its GL40 series, advanced features enabling the operator to select fixed cruise and automatic engine idling features. The key is to look more deeply into what transmissions are on offer and not assume they are all the same.



With the John Deere eHydro transmission, setting a fixed working speed is simple; use the travel pedals to attain the desired speed and press set. The speed can then be fine tuned, on the move, using the same switch.

nothing new in this, powershift on higher powered tractors having long been established. But smaller tractors have tended to have perhaps a splitter and that is it.

Massey Ferguson offers its Dyna QPS™ transmission as an option on its 38hp MF1540 and 46hp MF1547. Incorporating both a Power Shuttle and Power Shift, the 12 forward/12 reverse mechanical gearbox combines the positive drive of a three-range clutched gearbox with a clutchless change-on-the-move transmission.

Power Shift allows the driver to change up or down between the four speeds in each of the gearbox's three ranges without affecting power delivery or momentum. Up and down gear changes are activated by pressing a pair of switches mounted on the side of the range-change lever. This is ideal for tasks such as spraying, fertiliser spreading, top dressing, mowing and turf aeration.



The Massey Ferguson Dyna QPS™ 12 forward/12 reverse transmission incorporates both a Power Shuttle and Power Shift which combines the positive drive of a three-range clutched gearbox with a clutchless change-on-the-move transmission.

All MF1540 and MF1547 tractors specified with Dyna QPS transmission are fitted with an enhanced instrument panel that incorporates an LCD screen displaying the shuttle lever position, the selected Power Shift ratio, the selected range ratio, PTO speed and other tractor information such as fuel level, coolant temperature and fixed and resettable hourmeters.

A key point to remember is that modern tractors can offer features that simply were not available barely a decade ago. It is possible to buy a 30 to 50hp model that offers a considerably more versatile transmission. With a growing emphasis upon precision working, choosing a tractor that makes it easier to work at the speed the application demands is now easier.



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What's your Number?



Name: Dave Steward
Company: Scotts Professional
Position: Marketing Manager for the UK & Ireland

How long have you been in the industry?
"12 years."

How did you get into it?
"I transferred from the Levington Consumer business when they were acquired by Scotts."

What other jobs have you done?
"Apart from working in marketing I worked in sales and have sold new cars for a garage in Basingstoke; Bovril, Marmite and Ambrosia for the Beecham Group and then garden products for Fisons who I joined in 1986."

What do you like about your current job?
"The sheer variety. I can be launching new products at a trade show one minute and writing a new advert the next. I am responsible for all of Scotts professional products, not just those related to turf and so I have contact with a range of people within the horticultural industry as well."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
"The whole industry has become more professional and has a more responsible attitude. I think that this is because everyone in this business can see that the work they do is appreciated and benefits everyone."

What do you like to do in your spare time?
"I enjoy cooking, watching sport, gardening and listening to music."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
"The boring answer is still enjoying myself at work but the real answer is being able to spend at least some time on the golf course."

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?
"I have met a large number of people in this industry and always enjoy their company; I couldn't possibly name anyone in particular."

What do you consider to be your lucky number?
"25."

Pick a number, you've picked...?
"7."

Dave has picked Dave Roberts from Kubota

POSTERS AND SIGNS

BIGGA's Health & Safety series produced by Xact
www.xact.uk.com



All employers have a legal duty to either display a Health and Safety Law poster which gives details of who is responsible for health and safety on site, the address of the enforcing authority for premises, who, if present, is the employee's representative for health and safety and also the address of the relevant Employment Medical Advisory Service. Or alternatively, issue leaflets to their employees with the same details.

The current health and safety law poster is A2 size and coloured beige and pink.

April 6 saw the introduction of a new Health and Safety Law poster. The new poster is easier to read and does not require any additional information to be added to it thus cannot go out of date. Pocket cards for individual employees are also available. Each poster and leaflet will have a unique serially numbered hologram to ensure authenticity.

The old poster, provided it is still legible and the additional details are correct, can be continued to be used until April 5, 2014. This last point should be noted as the last time the poster was changed many companies tried to sell businesses new posters before they were required.

If you require a new poster for a new premise or you cannot amend the existing one with new information then it can be bought from HSE Books, booksellers and office supply shops.

Signs should inform or warn employees and others about hazards and risks in the premises. Other posters and signs that should be displayed in the workplace are:

- A copy of the current Employers Liability Insurance certificate. This needs to be displayed in an area where the employees can read it or alternatively stored as an electronic copy in a shared file or intranet area

which employees have open access to.

- A sign of who is responsible for first aid should be displayed. This can be a trained first aider or the 'Appointed Person' who will ensure the first aid box is stocked and summon help if required.
- 'No Smoking' sign to comply with current legislation
- Various 'Fire' signs:
 - Fire exit signs above the emergency exits
 - Fire directional arrows indicating the route to the nearest emergency exit
 - "Fire Exit- Keep Clear" signs on the outside of each emergency exit
 - Fire extinguisher signs indicating the type of extinguisher and the type of fire it should be used on
 - "Fire Door- Keep Closed" on internal fire doors
 - A fire Action notice with what the alarm sounds like and where the Assembly Point is
 - A sign indicating the Assembly Point
- Hazards particular to the workplace signs, e.g:
 - Noise
 - Hazardous chemicals
 - Hazardous areas
 - Danger of injury from particular physical plant and equipment



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New Products



NEW RANGE-TOPPING LOADERS

Avant Tecno (UK) has introduced its 700 Series loaders which are ideal for a wide range of materials handling applications.

The 745 and 750 models are both powered by 4-cylinder Kubota diesel engines developing 36 kW (49 hp) and both can handle loads of up to 1.4 tonne. The 750 is distinguished by its 2-speed hydrostatic transmission which provides a maximum speed of 25 kph, compared with the 745's 15 kph.

With the controls positioned on the front portion of the articulated chassis, the driver has an unrestricted view of the front end equipment to ensure accurate and safe operation.

☎ 01953 714896

www.avanttecno.co.uk



VOLUME TURF LAYING RANGE EXPANDED

Rolawn has introduced an 18m² 29" wide roll to its Turfmaster range for volume turf laying projects.

The 18m² 29" wide Turfmaster 1800 roll has been developed in response to customer feedback to compliment the existing range and is available in both Medallion and Minster Pro turf specifications.

The Turfmaster range also includes 13m²-21" wide 1300 rolls, 26m²-2x21" wide Double 1300 rolls, which fit onto a single common tube and 26m²-42" wide 2600 rolls.

☎ www.rolawn.co.uk
0845 604 6085.



ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE SHIRT LAUNCHED

ProQuip has launched a unique, wool-rich base layer system, distinctively styled for on and off-course wear.

Sportwool is made with 51% Australian Extrafine Merino Wool and because it has more natural fibres than most base layers, it has thermal regulation and odour control properties. It also rapidly draws (wicks) vapour and sweat away from the skin to the outer part of the fabric leaving the inside dry and the golfer perfectly comfortable to play their best game.

☎ 01620 892219

www.proquipgolf.com

PERFECT MOWING? THAT'S THE IDEA

Nottingham based Henton & Chattell Ltd is the sole UK distributor for the Italian range of IBEA outdoor power equipment and market the line-up of machines through a nationwide network of specialist dealers.

Just launched in time for the new season is the 'Idea' stable of rotary mowers. All four models are powered by Briggs & Stratton four-stroke engines and available in both push and self-propelled specification.

The Idea range consists of two 42cm and two 47cm cut mowers, all supplied with large 55-litre, easy-empty grass catchers and aerodynamically designed mulch-plug, simply inserted into the discharge tunnel to provide superior mulching action.

☎ 0115 986 2161

www.hentonandchattell.co.uk



THE ONE TREATMENT WONDER

A product such as Greenor, which contains three active ingredients; fluroxypyr, clopyralid and MCPA, is ideal in any weed control programme. Applied at the rate of four litres per hectare, it gives excellent season long control of all the main problem turf weeds including daisies and clover, and on yarrow and plantain, which have waxy leaves and are often more difficult to control.

With spring around the corner the inevitable weeds will soon be starting to appear on the golf courses. Now is the time to get your weed control programme underway when leaves are soft, making it easier for chemicals to penetrate and provide more effective control.

☎ Rigby Taylor 0800 4240919.





TOPDRESSER MAKES LIGHT WORK

Topdressing is becoming an increasingly demanding operation, with groundsmen and greenkeepers wishing to apply materials ranging from sand and soil to compost to the sward at different times of year and in various densities.

The Rink topdresser range, from Charterhouse Turf Machinery, is ideal for discerning turf managers, and the DS800 towed model offers generous capacity and outstanding versatility.

Dual spinners offer a variable spread pattern, and along with the belt are operated from the tractor seat via the hydraulics, giving spread widths up to 12m.

01428 661222

www.charterhouseturfmachinery.co.uk



RIDE-ON MOWERS PROVIDE COMFORT & PERFORMANCE

The new Kubota G23 and G26 professional ride-on mowers incorporate the very latest technology to maximise fully their performance, power and manoeuvrability, making them ideal for both domestic and commercial use.

Boasting 20.5 litre fuel tanks, both the G23, with a 23.3hp Kubota 3 cylinder ETVCs water-cooled diesel engine and the G26, with a 25.5hp engine, offer exceptional power and efficiency for the most demanding mowing applications.

Both models incorporate a highly durable gear driven twin cut mower deck that ensures maximum efficiency and collection performance.

0800 023

www.kubota.co.uk



LELY RELAUNCHES 'COST-SAVING' GTI TURF IRRIGATION

The latest launch from Lely UK is Gemini-Trident Irrigation (GTI), a system designed to improve dramatically efficiency for a reduction in running costs.

Suitable for both new and refurbishment projects across an array of sports and amenity turf applications, the two systems – Gemini and Trident – couple a computerised central control system with decoder field hardware for simple, effective and economic irrigation management.

With water an increasingly costly resource, GTI's management and maintenance system ensures greenkeepers and groundsmen can make optimum use of every last drop of this precious commodity. As well as accurately monitoring where water is going, how much is being applied and to which sprinklers, the software incorporates a host of features and reporting functions, such as radio remote control, water-flow management and detailed system diagnostics.

01480 226858

email: irrigation.uk@lely.com www.bailoy.com



LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN BREAKERS

Bobcat has announced that the company's HB880, 980 and 1180 80 Series breakers are now approved for use on the new E55W wheeled and E60 crawler excavators. All the breakers can be mounted using the pin-on, Klac or Lehnhoff systems, three of the four mounting systems currently available from Bobcat.

At the other end of the Bobcat excavator and breaker ranges, the smallest HB280 breaker, previously only approved for use with its integrated fixing cap on the company's 316 micro-excavator, now has the modular fixing cap system used in the rest of the 80 series and, as a result, can be used not just on the 316, but also on the new E08 and E10 micro-excavators that have superseded the 316 model.

www.bobcat.com

SOIL WETTING AGENTS

By Dr Ruth Mann



Soil water repellency (SWR) occurs on many golf courses in the UK and Ireland. There are numerous causes of SWR, such as preferential flow of water, fungal activity, application of top dressing, presence of thatch and compaction, which may contribute to varying degrees.

Further to this, as soil dries, a critical moisture content may be reached below which soils become difficult to rewet. Where soil water repellency occurs, the turfgrass may wilt and eventually die in the most severe case. Playability and the aesthetic appearance of the golf course can be affected. Further to this, the use of water on golf courses is being discouraged throughout Europe as water shortages have occurred in recent years. Wetting agents have been used for many years to improve the wettability of soils on golf courses and so improve the efficacy of any water absorption. In the UK, numerous wetting agents are available. Each product may perform slightly differently depending on its mode of action, dose rate and suggested programme of use.

Soil wetting agents are based on three chemistries – non-ionic surfactants, block copolymers and organosilicones. A natural product – Yucca extract – is also available. Hydrophobic soils are often coated with organic substances, which repel water making them difficult to rewet. Non-ionic surfactants work by binding to the organic coating allowing water to become attracted to the soil again. Block copolymers attach to the soil particles differently and may allow water to disperse or to be held in the rootzone. Organosilicones are very effective at achieving fast spreading of water.

To achieve the best from wetting agents any factors contributing to the dry patch should be addressed. Such as alleviation of compaction, removal of thatch and preventing the rootzone from reaching the critical moisture content by ensuring even and timely irrigation. Best results are achieved by applying wetting agents in a programmed approach starting early in the season before symptoms are observed. Blanket applications are also more effective than spot treatments. The efficacy and longevity of each product depends on the dose rate.

Therefore, subsequent applications should occur after the suggested period of effective control has elapsed for each product. Attention should also be paid to the activity of each product. For example, Breaker Curative does not help water penetration but helps to remove the organic coatings on sand grains and flush them through the rootzone. Therefore, it should be used in a programme with another soil wetting agent that helps water distribution, such as Breaker.



A selection of products with their modes of action and possible distributors is provided on the table below. This is by no means an exhaustive product list but gives the main soil wetting agents available in the UK.

Product	Distributor	Straight / Blend	Chemistry	Advertised Uses
Advantage	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	b, e
Aqua - zorb	Turftech	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	a, b, d, g
Award Osprey	Avoncrop	Blend	Block copolymer	a, e, f
Breaker Advance	Rigby Taylor	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	a, b, e, f
Breaker Curative	Rigby Taylor	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	b, d
Clearing	Vitax	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	c, e
Correct OARS	Tower Chemicals	Blend	Non-ionic soil surfactant and organic solvent	d, e, f
Dispatch	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	e, f, g
Fifty 90	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	a, b
H ₂ Pro	Scotts	Blend	Non-ionic surfactant	a, b, e, f, g
Inflo XL	Headland	Straight	Organosilicone	b, e
Noburn	Novozymes	-	Yucca plant extract	a, e, f
Organiflo	Aitkens	-	Yucca plant extract	a, e
Primer Choice	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Straight	Non-ionic surfactant	b, e
Primer 604	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Straight	Non-ionic surfactant	a, b, e
Quench	Sherriff Amenity	Blend	Block Copolymer	a, b
Revolution	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Straight	Block Copolymer	e, f, g
Tricure	Headland/Sherriff Amenity	Blend	Block Copolymer	a, b, e, f, g
Ultraflo	Aitkens/Avoncrop/Vitax	Straight	Non-ionic surfactant	a, c, e
XL Fairway	Headland	Straight	Organosilicone	c, e

Table 1: Example soil wetting products, modes of action and distributor. Neither the list of products nor the distributors is exhaustive. Other products are available and each product may be available from other distributors.

Please note the information contained in the above table has been taken from the respective product labels. STRI does not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of these claims.

- a – To treat localised dry patch preventatively
- b – To treat localised dry patch curatively
- c – To manage fairy ring
- d – To strip away organic coatings on sand grains
- e – Aid water penetration/dew removal
- f – Help ensure even water distribution in the rootzone
- g – Reduce irrigation requirements

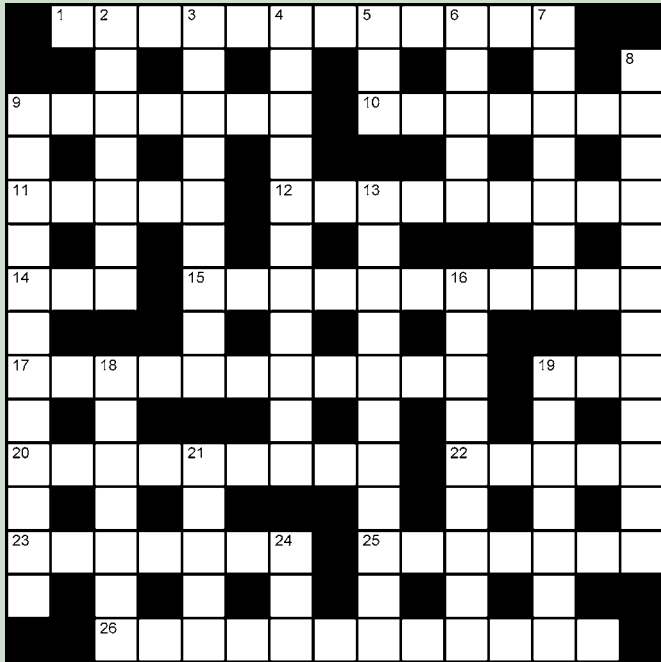
If you require any further information, please contact:
 Dr Ruth Mann, the Senior Plant Pathologist at STRI
 TEL: 01274 565131
 email: ruth.mann@stri.co.uk



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 Peckish? Not us! (anagram) (4,8)
- 9 Young lad's early life (7)
- 10 Japanese art popularised in the UK by Robert Harbin (7)
- 11 George —, stalwart of The Comedians who died in 2003 (5)
- 12 Physical training establishment, name derived from Greek word meaning "naked" (9)
- 14 7th letter of the Greek alphabet (3)
- 15 Adorned with a particular facial growth (11)
- 17 Measurer of distance (5,6)
- 19 Prominent, usually rocky hill (3)
- 20 Cartoon character used as corporate mascot by Warner Brothers (4,5)
- 22 Reject, turn down (5)
- 23 Side sheltered from wind (7)
- 25 To copy (7)
- 26 Central European region whose name means "beyond the forest" (12)

Down

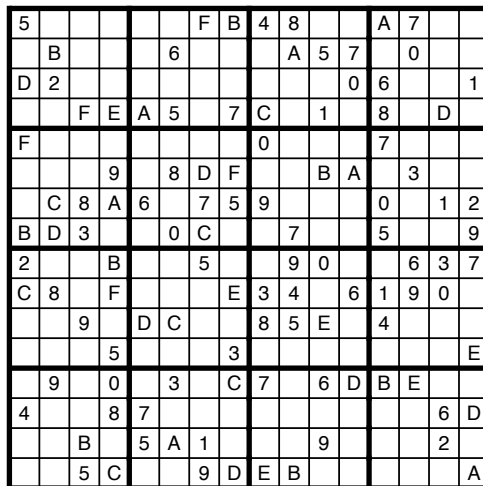
- 2 Exhibition centre in West Kensington, London (7)
- 3 Radio or television show (9)
- 4 Stomach pain (11)
- 5 Sound made by pigeon (3)
- 6 Genus of heath plants (5)
- 7 Surname of singer who sang "Walkin' Back to Happiness" (7)
- 8 US comic actor, 1893-1980, who appeared briefly in "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World" (5,7)
- 9 Best friend of Fred Flintstone (6,6)
- 13 1930s musical filmed in 1940 as The Lambeth Walk (2,3,2,4)
- 16 Japanese city, home of Mazda car company (9)
- 18 To leave unattended (7)
- 19 Destructive wave, typically caused by earthquake (7)
- 21 Form of address in parts of Africa (5)
- 24 Computer operating system (3)

QUICK NINE-HOLE QUIZ

1. Who played Jane opposite Johnny Weissmuller's Tarzan in 1932?
2. Who created Wikipedia on the World Wide Web?
3. Which three letters did SOS replace as a Morse mayday signal?
4. What was the breed of US detective Columbo's dog?
5. Thomas Hardy's heart is buried in his native Dorset, but where in London is his body buried?
6. What numeric term describes perfect eyesight and a form of cricket?
7. What does the word 'pop' refer to in Pop Goes The Weasel?
8. In heraldry, what colour is gules?
9. How many lions are depicted on the royal standard?

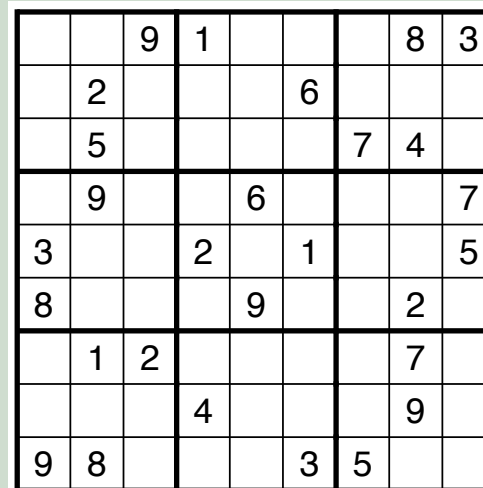
MONSTER SUDOKU

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 51



IN THE SHED



News from the Chief Executive

Augusta and St Andrews, two names that when mentioned will immediately bring images of golf to a great many people. Both great sporting arenas at completely different ends of the golf spectrum. One a highly manicured, magnificent but exclusive showcase the other a sensitively managed area of coastline, largely as nature made it, for the pleasure of the public as well as the golfer. I wonder what pops up in your mind? For me it is the view from the 12th tee at Augusta looking down over Rae's Creek to a tight, slightly sloping, green that is framed by pine trees and a mass of colourful azaleas. At St Andrews it is standing on the 1st tee looking down on the links in the early morning sunshine, trying to imagine golfers of a bygone age 'knocking one down the middle'. Not that I have personally played either!

I have this year had the pleasure of visiting the Masters as a guest of the PGA, to whom I am eternally grateful. I have often watched this tournament on TV, never thinking that one day I would be witnessing it in person. I have until now been somewhat cynical of the lush green fairways, the carefully prepared, lightening fast greens and the splashes of colour more fitting of a botanical garden. I am a convert. There is a place for Augusta as long as we realise that it is maintained somewhat regardless of cost, it is in an area with the climate needed to grow the grass species, it is exclusive and it is largely prepared over 51 weeks for this one tournament. How we get this message over to the average UK golfer who watches his or her TV and then expects greens staff over here to replicate such conditions I do not know. My visit to Augusta was special and I brought back memories of a unique golf course as well as having had some very productive talks for the Association.

Back in the real world I am working on the voting papers for the forthcoming Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM) that has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 16. The meeting is being convened for the express purpose of voting on changes to the Constitution that will allow access to fuller membership by groundsmen involved with the maintenance of sports turf. This matter has been debated over many, many months and the changes, if adopted, will aid advancement of the Association. This motion has the full support of the Board and I hope that after due consideration members will support it also. There is a fear that BIGGA will be taken over by groundsmen and that the greenkeeping profession will lose its identity. I, and the Board, do not share those fears. The greenkeeping aspect of the Association is highly regarded and respected and while we hope to recruit groundsmen I do not see a massive influx of new members happening overnight. We will merely be offering everyone in the sports turf industry a wider choice and a great number will continue to support the IoG or perhaps no single organisation.

Finally as we move out of spring into summer let's hope that we enjoy better weather than in previous years and that the golfers come out to play wearing sensible heads, with realistic expectations. We can but hope!

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



SCOTTISH REGION AYRSHIRE

Hope you're all keeping well and your courses are taking shape. Just a few things to let you know about. Firstly, the Autumn Outing has been confirmed for Thursday, October 1, at Powfoot GC. Although I've never played the course, I have heard good things and will be looking forward to our visit!

Another confirmed date is September 11th for our trip to Northern Ireland, and Royal Belfast GC, where we will be defending the Shield we managed to wrest from the County Down boys last year! We are looking for some courageous souls to join some old stalwarts as we endeavour to hold on to the spoils taken in Dumfries! Get in touch if you're up for a wee adventure and the opportunity to play some excellent golf courses! I will be looking to take a deposit of £40 to help with bookings.

Our football match against the West was played on Saturday, March 21. The Alloway ground saw a competitive but fair game played to a 3 - 3 draw. Both sides seemed happy with the result although we had been leading 3 - 1 at half-time. I believe match referee, Euan Grant, has compiled a small report on the day so I won't go into too much detail except to say I think Specsavers have a deal on the noo boss! Seriously though, thanks to all the guys that turned out for the match, it was good fun and hopefully we'll have a return match towards the end of the year.

That's all folks! Any news or queries contact me at: denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or: 07939 104701

Cheers!

Denis Tweddell



CENTRAL

The season is now well underway and at the time of writing, the weather through early spring has been with us for once so far in this part of the country. Although dry, it has probably been warmer than average with soil temperatures slightly ahead of normal. For the third year in succession we have had to apply water earlier than we would have ideally liked, purely to prevent the surfaces drying out too much.

However, all indications are that it looks like it is going to be a tough year financially, with advance bookings of visitors down at many Clubs. Many Course Managers have reported their budgets at best have been frozen, if not cut, and I know a few courses where greens staff have left for various reasons and have not been replaced.

The Section held an interesting seminar in March where Geoffrey Davison explained the principals of drainage, this was fairly well attended and I am sure everyone went away having learned something of value. I found his advice on the critical tension of sands particularly interesting.



In April, we were also fortunate to be entertained and educated by Stan Zontek, of the USGA Greens section; John Kaminski, of Penn State, and Lane Tredway, of North Carolina State. Stan is a regular visitor to this area and we are fortunate to have someone of his experience and knowledge willing to come and present to us.

Finally, our best wishes go to Roddy Barron, Course Manager of the Straththrum Course, at St Andrews Links, who accepted voluntary redundancy in April after 35 years working for the Links Trust. Roddy is now hoping to spend more time with his other love, (no not Lorna) piping. An excellent piper, he plans to increase his teaching but I'm sure he will also manage to fit in a little bit more fishing, gardening, as well as seeing more of Lorna!

The results of the spring outing will be in next month's edition as well as appearing on the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Gordon Moir



EAST

The start of the golfing season is well under way now and the grass is growing again Hurrah!

I did say in last month's report that the scores from the spring meeting at Eyemouth would be posted, but you will all have to wait for the June edition to find out who won what at the golf.

During the winter months we, as a Section, organised site visits and seminars which were well attended, our Chairman, Stewart Crawford, would like to say thank you to all the members who supported these events and hopes this is the sign of the future in getting members back supporting the BIGGA events.

BIGGA members who attend short course and seminars site visits etc in their Section events can now obtain CPD points when registering in person to the awards programme with BIGGA. If you go onto the BIGGA website or phone BIGGA headquarters you can find out more on how to gain CPD credits.

We are looking to organise other events for next winter possible a visit to Barenbrug seeds factory, Falkirk district - kindly sponsored by Greentech Ltd. And possibly one other visit to WBB Minerals plant, at Levenseat Quarry, West Lothian.

All members will be notified of these visits nearer the time by our Section Secretary, Stuart Ferguson.

Handicaps and Trophies are all now in order thanks to the hard work by Robbie Murdoch, our handicap convenor.

One of our BIGGA East Section's life members, James Neilson, would like to donate a Golf Trophy to play for at our AGM day, which will be held at Gogarburn GC this year.

We thank Jimmy for his kind donation and make sure that we will play for every year.

That's all for this month's report.

If you have any news please pick up the phone and call me with anything you might think is worth a mention in our section news.

Tom Murray
07709960163



NORTH

By the time you read this the spring Section outing at Portlethen will probably have been and gone. If this is the case I hope that you all enjoyed your day and you managed to set a personal best or win a raffle. I know a few people get disappointed when they don't win. It's the highlight of their day. The results will follow in next month's issue where you can find out who won the sombrero and who didn't!

Again Robert Hardie, who runs the 200 Club, has asked me has asked me to mention the importance if you are not intending on keeping your number(s) to get them back to him so that he can re-sell them to other people. He also said that if any of you out there could manage to sell any more tickets to either give him a shout at the outing or to phone him on: 07590775957. Thank you, this is much appreciated.

This week over at Royal Aberdeen, the Scottish Boys Championships is being played. The North has been pretty fortunate with high profile tournaments over the past few and coming years. Royal Aberdeen also has the British Ladies Amateur and Murcar Links has the Scottish Amateur Strokeplay. Long may it continue!

Changing the subject now. One guy who is on the move is Ross Middleton from Royal Aberdeen. He is taking the big step of immigrating to Australia to hopefully work at Barnbugle Links. He has been at Balgownie for 11 years. On behalf of the Section we wish you all the best and enjoy the ride.

That's all for this month folks and remember if you have any news that that you think worthy of a mention in the magazine then please feel free to drop me a line on 07813889374.

Ben Brookes



WEST

Welcome to this month's report. It's been a long winter with some cold weather for a change, spring has now arrived with the usual rain and cold east winds. Not to worry the shorts and tee shirts will soon be on.

On the job front congratulations to Andy Peace, who has moved to a new post at Gleddoch Golf Club, in Langbank, Andy was formerly at Port Glasgow.

During March the STRI held a seminar at Loch Lomond Golf Club - subject on the art of objective Greenkeeping and the Green objective.

It was a first class day with talks from Henry Bechelet, Richard Windows, Andy Cole, Alistair Beggs, Lee Penrose, all from the STRI.

David Cole, Course Manager at Loch Lomond Golf Course, did a first class presentation on the day-to-day running at Loch Lomond.

Many thanks to Loch Lomond for allowing us use of their facility and to



Around the Green

David Carson, from Rigby Taylor, for sponsoring the day.

The Section held a football match against Ayrshire during March. After a hard fought match it ended in a 3-3 draw, we plan to play a rematch towards the end of the season. Many thanks to Brian Hillan for organising the team, the next match will be played in the west as Ayrshire were the home team this time. So contact myself or Brian if you're interested in playing.

On the education front we returned to Marr Hall to see how the course is coming on. The party on the day were the third year students from GOSTA training.

Gordon Kerr, the Course Manager, took us on a course walk and talked on how the course is developing. It was a first class day and great to see the course growing in so well.

Many thanks to Gordon for giving up his valuable time and I'm sure we wish him all the best when the course opens in the near future.

I will be arranging a trip to one of the quarries in autumn so if anyone is interested please give me a bell.

Well that's all for now see you next month.

Fraser Ross
079703660355
karen.ross@tesco.net



NORTHERN REGION

NORTH EAST

Well last month's report said it was snowing while writing the report - how things have changed in four weeks, at the minute it's pretty warm and sunny - roll on the summer.

Recently two open events have taken place, first the celebration of Terry Charlton's company T.S.L. It has been going for 25 years, it doesn't seem that long ago when I remembered Terry calling in to see me when I worked at Whickham Golf Club.

Apparently there were 170 delegates at St. James Park in attendance and a good day had by all - pity about Steve Pope missing out on the draw they had. Seemly his name came out for the prize, but unfortunately he had to leave early to collect his grandson from school so it was decided to have a re-draw. Never mind, Steve, you might win something in the spring competition raffle prizes.

Secondly, Heworth Golf Club played hosts to a demo by Full Circle Irrigation through John Deere and Greenlay, of Cramlington, which was attended by approx 40 greenkeepers, not only from the north east, but several greenkeepers in the Cleveland Section. A good few hours was had by all, complete with an indoor talk and a demo outside on the 18th green and, in between, an excellent buffet provided.

Other news around is that, at last, Hexham GC extension to the sheds has finally been finished giving them a extra 50% space - seems a lot but we needed it.

Also a golf course from our Section will be featured in the greenkeeper magazine in the next few months.

Again if anyone has any news for me please let me know even if it's future work on your course.

Jimmy Richardson



NORTH WEST

The next function is the Spring Tournament and National Tournament qualifier. This is to be held at West Lancashire Golf Club on Monday, May 10. If you wish to play at one of the top golf courses in the North West then please send a cheque for £20 to Billy Merritt, he can be found at The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU.

Billy can be contacted on mobile no: 07985175825.

I can be contacted on: 0151-289-4625

My email is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk

Chris Sheehan



NORTH WALES

Only a short column this month, there's not a lot of news to pass on to you at the moment.

To start with we have to thank the North West Section for holding the spring seminar at Birchwood Golf Club in Warrington on April 24, the subject was that of "disturbance theory" and was prepared and presented by the boffins at the STRI, unfortunately I was unable to go due to work commitments, but I understand it was extremely interesting especially to anyone using or thinking of taking up the "gingerbread" greenkeeping system.

The spring tournament will take place at Rhyl Golf Club on May 20 - tee times will be limited so get your entry forms to Jeremy Hughes as soon as possible.

The annual North Wales/North West match will take place at Bolton Golf Club on June 10, to paraphrase an historic war hero "North Wales expects every golfer to do his or her duty."

If your interest lies in further education the Welsh College of Horticulture at Northop are starting sports surface courses in NVQ Levels 2 and 3, and also a Foundation Degree in Sports surface Management, anyone interested in taking up any of these courses should contact the college for a prospectus.

Once again I seem more than a little foiled for local news; perhaps you can send me your good news so I can spread onto this page for the rest of us to be jealous of you! Contact details below. All the best until next month.

Peter Maybury
petemayb66@aol.com
07756001187

Johnny Evans
Johnnyevans@tesco.net



MIDLAND REGION
EAST MIDLAND

Hi All. I suspect as you read this we will have just played our Spring Tournament at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club on April 22. Here's hoping it was a warm, sunny spring day with good golf and good company being had by all. The results will be published in next month's magazine.

For those that are interested the dates for the rest of the tournaments this year are: July 2 – Greetham Valley, 18 hole medal (National Champs Qualifier) & BBQ; October 15 – Matlock GC, Meal and AGM; December 8 – Wollaton Park. We will hopefully also be running the annual Toro sponsored trip – this year will hopefully be to Wimbledon Tennis Club and we are also in the process of organising an Educational day during the autumn. Further dates and venues of these events are to be announced when known.

If anyone wants to get in contact regarding any news, ideas for golf days, venues, education or anything else to do with the Section then please contact me by email: biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com or on: 07730 713895.

Andy de Wet



MIDLAND

Well I was hoping that we all would be rushed off our feet by the time that you read these notes. However, it seems that our varied weather has given us a slight rest-bite - although I dare say that crazy-ville is now upon us.

With such in mind, I feel that many do not appreciate the work that goes into producing our Section calendar. Also the difficulties of finding sponsorship for such can be very problematic, particularly in the lack of submitted photos from us members. Could I please urge you to respond to the below request from our organiser of photographs R. Beacham.

It is again our intention, for 2010, to produce our Midland Section calendar for all of you members out there. However, we can only do this with your assistance so any budding photographers out there please get snapping, whether it be your course or something funny at your club – just make sure it's greenkeeping related. Who knows, you may well have your club featured on our fine calendar, your members would be rightly proud of such. If at all possible put the photograph on a disc and mail it to Richard as this ends up being a better quality photograph for the calendar, if this is not possible then send it via email. Get snapping folks, we need these in by the middle of September at the latest. Send to: Course Manager, Richard Beacham, Wrekin Golf Club, Golf Links Lane, Wellington, Telford, TF6 5BX. Email: rich71@btconnect.com

On the note of the calendar, this month's page is sponsored by our old friends Rigby Taylor, for your fertilisers and chemicals etc contact Tony Cheese email: t.cheese@rigbytaylor.com

The Section recently held another successful education event at Sandwell

Park Golf Club, which was sponsored by Rigby Taylor. Thanks to Tony Cheese, Kate Entwistle, Andy Cole and Ben Taylor for their participation. The Section is actively looking to increase the networking opportunities for greenkeepers by organising social afternoon meetings at various courses throughout the Section. Whether your bag is sustainability or 2mm and verticutting, we would like to encourage networking groups which can operate via email and a friend to lean on. Please contact Paul Woodham if you would like to know more or maybe offer to show off your management plans, successes or indeed failures. Don't be shy, we have all dropped the odd clanger and learnt from it.

My thanks to both Richard and Paul for the above content. Well that's all folks, I'm off fluff flicking for a week.

Sean McDade



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello all. Not a lot to report this month, I guess everyone is out busy cutting grass now the season is upon us. Hopefully the start of May dawns as dry as the end of March has been. It has helped our place dry out fantastically and everything is starting to look good for the summer.

Our May golf day is at Elsham Golf Club on Wednesday, May 20. Tee off is 1:30 but arrive early for coffee and bacon rolls. Full details will be sent to you soon.

Many thanks.

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



BERKS/BUCKS & OXON

Washed out Augusta: Heavy rain at Augusta washed out the first days play as the usually pristine course was turned into a quagmire with more atrocious weather forecast, as I sit here watching the drama and writing my monthly report.

Surface water increased as the dedicated greenstaff watched in frustration as a plugged ball illustrated just how waterlogged the course had become after a week of heavy rain. It was then that I realised I was watching repeats of five years ago and the weather was actually pretty good in Augusta, sunshine, sunshine and more sunshine.

The fact will always remain that more and more people dream of playing this little slice of heaven on earth than any other course in the world. Rain or no rain, nowhere in the sporting world is there a better example of an aesthetic backdrop with the fascination of exotic bulbs and horticultural splendour to bring a competitive arena alive like that at Augusta.

Welcome to May, and it just might bring you flowers. "Anyway, what's been going on?" I hear you ask. The end of March saw the start of an education



Around the Green

seminar at Frilford Heath Golf Club where varied speakers gave valuable information to the sixty or so members who attended the day.

Chris Lomas gave an enlightening talk about the experiences he had and the pros and cons of installing a new irrigation system at The Berkshire Golf Club. Tim Lobb gave a fascinating and entertaining talk on Golf Course Architecture which included internal hole changes, design and construction. Jonathan Harmer from Farmura gave an interesting talk on Surfactants and soil water relationships from top to bottom and Murray Long from Sunningdale Golf Club introduced us to the world of Tournament preparation that had us entertained and riveted to our seats. More to come on this - keep hitting bbogreenkeepers.co.uk for all the latest Section seminars and information.

Thank you to Sid Arrowsmith and Frilford Heath Golf Club for hosting the seminar and Alec MacEndoe for his hard work who spent his time organising and bringing together these varied speakers.

Tournaments for the rest of the year are now confirmed as follows: Summer - June 18 at Oakland Park Golf Club, Autumn Pairs - August 13 at Donnington Valley Golf Club and The Turkey Trot to end the year at The Oxfordshire GC on December 9.

Also this year - weather permitting - a Golf and Cricket Match on July 8 at Radley College as the Berks, Bucks & Oxon's finest take on the loG. All interested players and makers of cucumber sandwiches, please give me a buzz.

Lastly, Adam King hopes to issue another newsletter later this year. In the meantime, if you have any news of views please let us know, and if there is any club out there wishing to host Golf days for the Section next year and beyond please contact Adam on: 07778569158 or email: ajk@radley.org.uk

Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.co.uk



MID-ANGLIA

Fixtures for 2009: The summer competition has yet to be confirmed but it is very likely to be held at Bedford & County Golf Club some time in July or August. The autumn fixture is at Mid-Herts GC on October 7 and John O'Gaunt GC will host the Turkey Trot on December 7.

Craig Spooner



SOUTH EAST REGION

SURREY

Saturday, April 4. B.O has been and gone. Many would hope that G.B would take the hint and do the same. For B.O read Barack Obama and for G.B read Going Bust. Sorry that should be Gordon Brown...no I was right the

first time. Enough of trying to be satirical, time to move to paragraph two.

Thursday, April 2. The spring meeting at Laleham GC was a great success and with 64 members playing in the Texas Scramble it was one of the best supported golf days for many years. Thanks to J.R and his team for getting rid of D.S and providing us with an excellent course in wonderful weather. For J.R read John Ross and not Jehovah's Return and for D.S read whatever you will but, with the exception of Dave Searles, whom it is impossible to be rid of.

The winning team included their Captain R.C that's Ron Christie and not the way he walks. Another J.R who should have been the most popular member of the group, Jane Russell, turned out to be Jim although we understand he was still allowed to play off the red tees. J.H, that's not James Hunt as he was unable to play due to feeling unwell, was substituted with Jason Hunt.

Last, but not least, was R.T, not E.T's brother although the same handicap and colouring, was our very own Surrey Bowl organizer, Roger Tydeman. The runners-up were Shaun Sturret, Andy Gatland, Mark Raisbeck and Pancho Rowlands. The Easter egg raffle promoted by B.W on behalf of Tacit was well received and if I can purchase any cheap left over eggs this year as I did last year and store them as safely, hopefully, once again, nobody will notice the sell by date had been removed.

Cuddington greenkeepers are still sending out the begging letters even though they won a large undisclosed amount on football results a few weeks ago. I saw the bulging wallet of...I have been asked not to name names...one of the lads just before he departed for Gatwick Airport for an unknown destination. His co winners would like to know his neck size and the date of his return so that the party they are planning for him will really go with a swing.

The annual charity day at Hankley Common GC on behalf of autistic children was well attended and Gareth Roberts, one of the organisers, would like to thank all who supported the day and helped to raise around £10,000.

Graeme Roberts, Gareth's son, who has been working on a number of golf courses in America had a lucky escape from a serious injury when a branch he had cut with a chainsaw rebounded from a lower branch and caused the saw to cut his wrist. Although a very ugly gash resulted he was fortunate that he had missed an artery by millimetres. A lesson to all chainsaw users is not to continue cutting when alone.

Ami Kate is the beautiful daughter of Sam Surgey and husband, Rob. Ami arrived weighing 8lbs, on March 2, 2009 and is already looking forward to having a bedroom of her own as grown ups do make all sorts of strange noises that could disturb a girl's beauty sleep.

Brian Willmott



KENT

Hi guys. Firstly a few words on what had to be one of best events ever at the beautifully quaint setting of Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club. Surely the remote setting of this gem of a course would render it unknown to anyone barring regulars, sales reps and those with working sat navs. Yet, once



discovered, the course and hospitality presented to us on the cliff tops of Eastern Kent made for an unforgettable experience. We are indebted to all at Walmer for the welcome, the fine course and a great meal to boot.

Results were as follows: 1. Richard Larkin, Tenterden GC; 2. Lee Campany, North Foreland GC; 3. Steve Gunner, Wildernesse GC.

Many thanks to our sponsors for providing a few prizes and hats, and to Vic Maynard of Ernest Doe's for his omnipresent refreshment wagon for dispensing mirth and cheer to all of us fortunate enough to play on the day.

On the 21st of this month the Kent Greenkeepers roll into town at Lullingstone Park Golf Club (best dust off those sat nav's again!). Please let us know as soon as possible whether you shall be attending or not by calling me (number below) or Kev.

It is only fair that we give our host clubs as much notice as we can regarding numbers attending so they can arrange their tee sheets and catering around us. It would be great to see as many of you as possible on the day. Walmer was a fantastic day out and there's no reason why Lullingstone shouldn't be as well, after all isn't it the company that makes our days so enjoyable?

Don't forget our budget-busting price-plan for the year where we are only asking for £25 for Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers and Trade and £20 from everyone else.

Hope to see you there.

Don't forget to call me anytime with any news that you would like included in this column.

Best of British

Rob Holland
kentgreenkeepers.co.uk
07843 410755



LONDON

Hello to the London Section. Many thanks to Clive Osgood for writing for the London Section in April's Magazine.

My name is Lee Cox, and I am the Head Greenkeeper at Mill Hill Golf Club. I will be writing for the London Section from now on.

I would really appreciate any ideas or news for Around The Green, London Section from the members.

Thank you to Matt Plested at Muswell Hill Golf Club for an interesting afternoon on the 'Punctus' Management System hosted by Dr Andrea Talkenberg. This is a very interesting and intelligent Management System and I look forward to trying their demo disc. Any member who would like to receive a demonstration disc should contact Dr Talkenberg on: 020 8133 9592 or: mail@punctus.com.

Spring Meeting - Venue: Brookman's Park Golf Club. Date: Wednesday 29 April 2009. Tee: 11am onwards. To enter please contact Matt Plested on: 07818 410333.

Once again, any news or ideas please contact me on: 07931 927346 or: l.cox15@btinternet.com

Lee Cox
Head Greenkeeper Mill Hill Golf Club



EAST ANGLIA

By this time I hope that spring has sprung and the grasses on your golf course are growing with their usual vigour. You should have received your fixture list for this year by now, but just in case you have not, here they are.

Rookery Park Golf Club, on Wednesday, April 29; Thetford Golf Club, on Thursday, June 11; Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club, on Wednesday, August 12, The Links Golf Club Newmarket, on Thursday, October 22, and last but not least Thorpeness for the Turkey Trot and AGM, on Wednesday, December 9.

Aitkens Sportsturf sponsored a seminar on Disturbance Theory & Performance Measurement presented by the STRI and hosted at Stowmarket Golf Club on Thursday, March 12. 44 attended the event which included several committee members from said club. Henry Bechelet, Andy Cole and Philip Armitage provide some eye-opening theories and kept every one on their toes with a lively presentation. It was great to see some of the members taking part; I think it gave them some idea of just how difficult managing a golf course really is. Our thanks go out to Colin Rushbrook for organising the event, the guys from the STRI and Stowmarket Golf Club, especially for the excellent lunch.

If you wish to contact me, my new number at Thorpeness is: 01728 454494 or email me at; iwilletteastanglia@gmail.com

Ian Willett
Section Secretary



SOUTH WEST & WALES

SOUTH WEST

I start this month with news of a new initiative from Cannington College which was the Inaugural Ransomes Jacobsen Trophy staged at Cannington Centre (Bridgwater College).

The event was marketed by the College as an opportunity for young aspiring golfers to get involved in an educational experience as well as compete for a trophy and prizes sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen and Titleist.

The day comprised of a morning of educational demonstrations and 'have a go' practical's that engaged the young participants and explained to them all the effort that goes in to producing a golf course for their enjoyment.

With the expert knowledge of Canningtons, Head Greenkeeper, Hugh Murray and support from PGA Professional Ron Macrow and Programme Manager, Will Bowden, the day was a success both educationally and competitively. The College is running a Programme Lead NVQ 2, alongside the traditional Apprenticeship route for the first time this year and the day was centred on encouraging potential students to see first hand the great facilities and opportunities that are available to them when they study at Cannington.

Programme Manager for Sportsturf; Will Bowden commented: 'The day has been a great success. The sponsorship of Jacobsen and their support has



been fantastic. Also the positive attitude of our staff and first class resources has meant these kids have had a rare and much appreciated insight in to how a golf course looks and plays the way it does.' Cannington will aim to grow this event and encourage the theme of linking a career in sports turf with playing and enjoying the game.

Back in the Section itself, I am hearing, almost on a daily basis, of greenkeepers under pressure, and job cut-backs. Please remember – "It's good to talk" and "a problem shared is a problem halved". Your Committee, myself, or the staff at HQ may be able to help, and there is a dedicated stress help-line available if needed. I think that some good summer weather is critical this year to get people back on the golf courses enjoying playing golf again.

Places for the Ryder Cup support team are limited – the forms have been distributed – if you are interested, you need to respond quickly.

Back at Minch, our spring renovation of greens consisted of verti-drain aeration, followed immediately by a pass with the Graden with 1mm blades at 50mm depth and 50mm spacings, followed by a pass with a Groundsman Aerator fitted with 8mm hollow tines, and a scraper. Sounds rather drastic, but with some overseeding and top-dressing, play was not badly disrupted, and we hosted a successful county match just three weeks later. Hope your work is progressing smoothly.

I recently attended my first National Board Meeting at Aldwark. If anyone is under the impression that serving on the National Board is some kind of a "jolly", or a "day-off" – allow me to dispel that right now. I left home at 6.30am on the Monday morning and was up in York by about 11.15. I had an hour to have a coffee and a look round, before arriving at Aldwark, and starting meetings almost straight away. There are a number of Sub-Committees which meet before the full Board. These Monday meetings didn't finish until around 6.45pm, when there was just time for a shower etc, before an evening meal and bed! The Board meeting on Tuesday morning started at 8.30am prompt and didn't finish until 2pm. There was just time for a sandwich and coffee before jumping back into the car and driving home. Spare a thought therefore for your representatives, and give them the support they need. The Sub Committees, which review issues such as communication & magazine, finance, education & development, and new for this year the environment, are being re-organised via a telephone conferencing system to include input from BIGGA members. There will be a full announcement from Head Office in due course.

The first Section Team match of the year is at Cirencester Golf Club on June 4. Give Wayne Vincent a call on: 07958 630590 if you're interested in playing. There is a £10 charge per player. The Summer Tournament is at Kingsdown on June 24. Please check your email boxes for an invite – if you haven't received one well in advance – please contact me direct. We are looking for a really good turnout – Kingsdown actually invited us this year wishing to show off the course at its very best, and I know that Mark Ford and the team will be there to give us a warm welcome. I must mention our Patronage Partners for this year who will be supporting this event – Avoncrop Amenity, Countrywide Farmers, Headland, Vitax, Rigby Taylor, Tower Sport Europe, Ecosol, Irritech, B.S. Mowers, and Symbio. We hope to stage a Seminar in the early autumn at which all these companies will be represented. Also, please keep an eye on Section Pages on the website – there will be some of these company profiles appearing shortly.

In the meantime, may I wish you all the very best for the coming spring and summer seasons, and look forward to talking to as many of you as possible. In particular, please let me know education or training requirements. We can't arrange anything if we don't know what you want!

Paul Worster
paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



SOUTH COAST

I have just come home from a committee meeting at Stoneham Golf club and at last I have some information for our Section. Celtic Manor is asking for BIGGA members for help during the Welsh Open & Ryder Cup, contact Jannnie Jones for details.

Kevin Glass has now been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Brockenhurst Manor - good luck to you but you won't need luck as we all know Kevin is a great greenkeeper.

We have 262 members in our Section. Fixtures for next season - now we need your input are there any golf courses that you would like to play if so contact Kevin Glass.

The Isle of Wight meeting on October 1 will be sponsored by our Section. Therefore the Golf & Food will be free. All you have to do is get there - by ferry or fly!

Next year's seminar topic will be 'disturbance theory'. At the regional board meeting it was reported that redundancies were taking place and at least one Head Greenkeeper had lost his job this way - worrying for all of us in this trade.

The results from the spring meeting will be in next month's report. That's all for now, until next month.

Chris Sturgess



DEVON & CORNWALL

Our March meeting was held at Ashbury & Manor House Hotels & Golf Courses on Wednesday 15th, a very pleasant day but a chilly wind. The event was sponsored by Bayer represented by Paul Clifton and Vitax who had Joe Crawley in attendance. Our thanks to both of them and their respective companies.

The competition was won by Andy Parker with an excellent 38pts, 2nd was Tony Hursey, from Stover, with 34pts winning on the back nine and 3rd was Lee Kirk, from MST, also with 34pts well done to them.

This time we had two prizes for Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin thanks to Simon Essex, the owner who provided the additional prize! These were won by Tony Hursey (8th) and Gordon Tamlyn (16th) for the Longest Drives and Kevin Pitts (3rd) and Keith Kemp (9th) for Nearest the Pin.

Thanks to Steve Harris Courses Manager for the course walk and his First Assistant Pete Gross and the rest of the team for the use of the 'Kigbeare' course, a very good test for the golfers in such lovely condition.

Our thanks also to the catering staff for a very enjoyable meal. Afterwards we had the pleasure of a talk by our special guest, Scott MacCallum, the Editor of G.I. on the history of our magazine and how all the stories and articles are

put together - very enjoyable! Thanks to Scott for his time.

Just to clear up any possible misunderstanding from last month's column, Andy Parker was made redundant by Crediton Golf Club.

Don't forget our summer meeting coming up on Thursday, June 18, at Woodbury Park Golf & Country Club, our second annual match between Devon and Cornwall, should be another great day!

Jerry Cole



SOUTH WALES

Hope you are all well and oiling up your Ransomes Hahn ready for the new cutting season (yes, I like to keep abreast of new technology.)

Firstly, you should have received a letter from Steve Chappell regarding The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Tournament - 'The Road To Tenby'. The draw was made at the Spring Seminar (details to follow) Could you please make sure that you all complete your matches within the allotted time so that the competition runs smoothly. Thanks to Dave Carvey, Peter Griffiths and Roy Barker for agreeing to sponsor the event again. I would love to get to the final myself so that I could have a night out on RT, but the only way I'll get to Tenby is if I book a week at Kiln Park!

Also in the letter is an invitation to all greenkeepers to the start of a networking group similar to 'The Gingerbread Men'. It is to be an informal meeting of greenkeepers to discuss all aspects of greenkeeping - especially if you are a non-golf playing member, who does not attend the Section's golf events. Steve Chappell will start the ball rolling with a meeting at Neath GC on Wednesday, May 13, starting at 4.30pm. It will include a tour of the Maintenance sheds, followed by a course walk and then a pint in the bar. All welcome. Give me a ring if you are not too far out of the way and require a lift.

The Spring Tournament for the 'Tower Sports Europe Shield' will take place at Langland Bay Golf Club on Wednesday, May 27, tee off at 1.30pm. Thanks in advance to Peter Lacey and David Goldstone, of Tower, for their continued support of the event. Good luck to Jim Jenkins in his preparation of the course for the event, I still remember how nerve-wracking that can be!

Also thank to Martin Townsend and Peter Holmstrom, from Countrywide, for their hard work, support and sponsorship of this year's evening lecture series. Thanks also to the speakers for this year who were Mike Garner, Maxicrop; Derek Smith, DLF; Mark Hunt, Headland; Nick Gray, Bathgates, as well as Dean Gillisbey, Parc y Scarlets, and Wayne Nash, Cardiff City FC, who entertained us with their presentations through the four lectures. Thanks to all those who attended the series, it was great to see the numbers increasing from last year.

How much rainfall did you have on your golf course last year? Speaking to David Roberts up at Morlais Castle the other day, he said that he measured 2,228 mm of rainfall between Jan '08 and the end of Dec '08, which, according to my phone's converter equals 7ft 2 inches! Can anybody beat that?

See you soon

Ceri Richards
07831 168645
celticceri@aol.com

BIGGA's Regional Administrators



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Section Notes

Please email your notes to melissa@bigga.co.uk, or scott@bigga.co.uk by the 5th of the month.

Suggested word guide: 500

BIGGA Golf Day 2009

Monday 15th June 2009
at Aldwark Manor

For further details, please contact
Kirstin Smith on 01347 833832

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Letters



LIFE MEMBER

Dear **BIGGA**,

It is with great sadness that I write to inform **BIGGA** staff and members of the passing of Richard 'Dick' Dugan at the beginning of April.

Following a long term illness Dick passed away on Saturday, April 4. A well respected and fully committed greenkeeper and member of **BIGGA** he will be particularly missed by all at Glencorse Golf Club. Dick remained active at Glencorse for many years after his retirement, combining his Course Ranger duties with helping myself and the greenkeeping staff on the course. He will be remembered most for his larger than life personality and his enthusiasm for all that he did. I'm sure I speak for all that knew him in saying that he will be greatly missed and our thoughts are with his wife Helen and his family.

Kind regards
 Ian Bell
 Head Greenkeeper
 Glencorse Golf Club

Please email your letters to Scott MacCallum, scott@bigga.co.uk or Melissa Jones, melissa@bigga.co.uk

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Cleveland Sitesafe Ltd. Riverside Works, Dockside Road, Middlesbrough,
 TS3 8AT. Tel: 01642 244663 / Fax: 01642 244664
 Email: sales@cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk Website: www.cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk



In the Shed

ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

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QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Maureen O'Sullivan in Tarzan The Ape Man</p> <p>2. Jimmy Wales</p> <p>3. CQD - CQ was a general call to all ships and D signalled Distress</p> | <p>4. Basset hound</p> <p>5. Poet's Corner</p> <p>6. 20/20</p> <p>7. To pawn (weasel was a shoemakers tool)</p> <p>8. Red</p> <p>9. Seven (one represents Scotland)</p> |
|--|---|

MONSTER SUDOKO

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

SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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

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Dealing with grass wear problems

Improvements in seed and fertiliser have reduced grass wear on golf courses and other active grassed play areas, but there are still problem areas that require assistance, particularly pathways, standing areas, goal mouths and tees.

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Where there are wet areas that take time to dry out leading to muddy conditions, or a high degree of erosion due to a stony substrate or excessive foot traffic a more robust system is required. Other methods of mesh, grids and cells made from plastic all have failings for one reason or another.

The most satisfactory system for a golf course or other heavy foot traffic areas, that fall into this category, is the Rubber Grass Mat. These large rubber Mats 1m x 1.5m and 1 inch thick are full of hole through which the grass can grow. They are inset into the surface and the grass grows through the hole. The crown of the plant is protected by the collar of rubber. Hence after a few weeks they disappear from view.

Artificial turf is often the last resort, but is useful for pathways, steps and Tees. The Pathturf is a 24mm fibre in a rubber backing that is filled with a mix of sand and rubber crumb. For sleepers and other wooden areas Top Turf No 4 can be used, straight onto the steps with an adhesive

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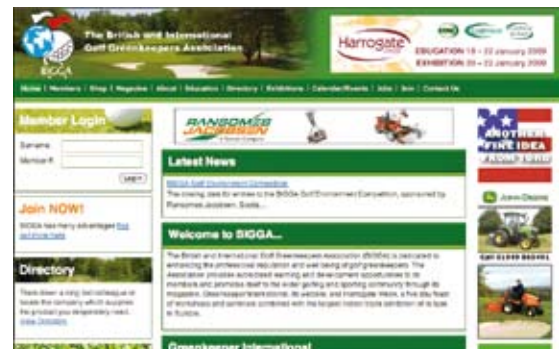
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Chairman's Column

DRIP DRIP DROP LITTLE APRIL SHOWER?

It is not often I look forward to April showers but this year they followed a dry end to March and the rain arrived just when it was needed to kick off some consistent grass growth. Spring renovation of greens and tees on The International Course in early April benefited from the improved conditions with core holes growing over completely in two weeks. Golfers are out playing on the firmer surfaces unaware of the disruptive work that has recently been done and the turf is in better condition to withstand this season's play.



There are just five weeks left to prepare The Heritage Course before The European Open at the end of May and making the most of the growing conditions as early as possible now becomes really important. Verti-cutting too early can easily set the greens back but with limited time available to apply light topdressings every opportunity to get this done in the dry has to be utilised.

Lowering winter heights of cut on fairways and approaches is timed well in advance of the event with a further drop nearer the tournament. Bottom blades on the fairway mowers will need to be changed to allow greater flexibility on cutting height in varying conditions. Tournament

time highlights the work done by the workshop technicians when they are flat out re-grinding cylinders and preparing every piece of cutting equipment.

The work involved in maintaining golf course equipment properly, demands the skills and experience of trained staff together with an adequately equipped workshop. Many clubs rely on dealers and outside help whilst some see in house facilities as essential to the smooth running of their operation. Whatever is appropriate, workshop facilities need to be clean, well organized working environments to attract the right staff and allow them to do a good job. Unlike the car industry

where the service bays these days look more like the showrooms with not a drop of oil to be seen, golf course workshops remain a less clinical environment but that doesn't stop us making the best of what we have to offer.

There is a need to continue to interest young people in this side of the business, as well as greenkeeping, to ensure we have the skills and experience to maintain all the equipment that we all rely on so much. Salary levels reflect the demand for those with good skills and experience to fill these positions and when compared against the values of the equipment fleets being maintained represent a very worthwhile investment.

Turning to Association matters, the board has discussed improving the way the sub committees operate and to include non board members in the Membership, Learning & Development, Communications and Environment meetings. This change will allow more BIGGA members up and down the country the opportunity to contribute their suggestions and ideas to the running of the Association.

The current financial climate is causing most of us, both at work and at home, to review finances and see where economies can be made. The same belt tightening process has been well underway at BIGGA and wherever efficiency savings can be made they will be.

The previous recession in the 1990's affected many clubs and caused them to take a long hard look at their operations and strip out the 'nice to haves' and pare down to just the essentials. As course managers we only directly control the expenditure side of the balance sheet however clubs also had to refocus on what they needed to do to create more income. It was an experience and exercise that left those involved in a much better position this time around to make the right decisions at their clubs.

Strong competition has been the result of the rapid expansion in the number of courses built during the 1980's and 1990's. This coupled now with a downturn in the economy and the disappearance of most membership waiting lists means the market for golfers is likely to remain highly competitive. Unlike the last recession when the new proprietary clubs bore the brunt of its effects, members clubs are now feeling the pinch to a much greater extent.

What does this mean for all of us in the industry?

It provides a challenge for us to produce courses that attract golfers to play at a price they are willing to pay for. It also means that more will be asked of us at a time when there will not necessarily be any more resources. Deciding on priorities and making choices is a skill we all have to learn and put into practice and those that can grasp this and help steer their clubs through the downturn successfully will emerge better for it.



Peter Todd
National Chairman

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The whisper-quiet 3.7hp OHV Kawasaki petrol engine has easy access to service points and the sealed gearbox and drive belts require no lubricants that can damage your greens. Even the grass box is designed to eliminate spillage.



The revolutionary Flex 21

For when you require a really close cut! Cutting down to 1.6mm without scalping, the Flex 21 features dual-axis suspension, flexible cutting units and a flexible drive shaft for a full range of movement that follows even the most undulating greens.



Greensmaster 3250-D

With a mono-valve block design, no camshaft or detents and 17% less hydraulic connections, the mechanic-friendly Greensmaster 3250-D makes leak prevention a priority on and around your greens.



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