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Inside...

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Powakaddy

THE NEW WHEEL AND HOW IT CAME INTO EXISTENCE

Featured

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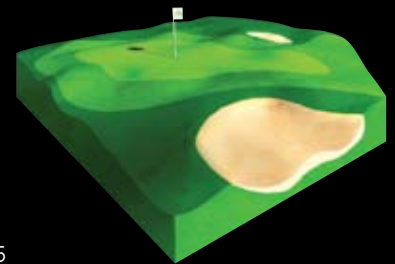
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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



Behind the Scenes

This month the magazine highlights a project that has been worked upon behind the scenes at BIGGA for most of this year.

Powakaddy approached the Association in the spring and asked if we could help them gather research data from greenkeepers to assist them with a new wheel the company was hoping to introduce. That led to a survey going onto our website and then further meetings at BIGGA HOUSE with ourselves and Terry Hale, the Powakaddy Chief Executive, and Lee Manvell, the Group Product Manager, where we offered more hands-on assistance to the project.

Several BIGGA members were then invited to take part in testing sessions for the new tyres on golf courses. The comment and advice that was offered was gratefully received by Powakaddy and the results, as discussed in the article, will be seen when the new winter tyre goes on sale in October.

What has come out of the whole process is how much the opinions of Course Managers were valued and respected by a company that operates in the wider golf industry. I can tell you that Powakaddy was very reluctant to move the whole development process forward without first taking on board the comments and criticisms of Course Managers.

To me, that was incredibly refreshing and is a superb example of how BIGGA can work to the betterment of the game as a whole. Powakaddy recognised the benefits of talking to the experts about how tyres can impact on ground under various, sometimes extreme, conditions, and BIGGA enabled these meetings to take place.

Hopefully what will emerge is an ability for golfers to use their powered caddie cars in conditions that would previously have been impossible and allow Course Managers to be comfortable in the knowledge that in doing

so the course is not being damaged. It might open winter golf up to those people who in the past had been unable to take part because the caddie cars were banned under certain conditions and if that means more golf and more green fees, etc golf clubs will benefit.

But the wider picture is also a positive one. A major golf company had greenkeepers, and BIGGA, at the top of its list for advice when it came to making decisions that carried huge financial ramifications.

Elsewhere in this issue the GTC's David Golding discusses the latest generation of greenkeeper education qualifications which have taken over from the NVQ system, everywhere outside Scotland - the National Occupational Qualifications.

In my time with BIGGA I have talked to hundreds of greenkeepers. The older ones talked about having got their City and Guilds while the younger ones talked about which level of NVQ they had or were going through.

The new qualifications are designed specifically for our industry which is a major step forward and are at three levels – Golf Greenkeeper – Golf Course Supervisor – Golf Course Manager. These will ensure that education – much of it to be delivered in bite size learning packages – will be appropriate for the level and needs of the student.

I wish David well as he assists with the complicated process of moving from one system to another and hope that this new era of education proves to be another significant step in the development of the industry.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

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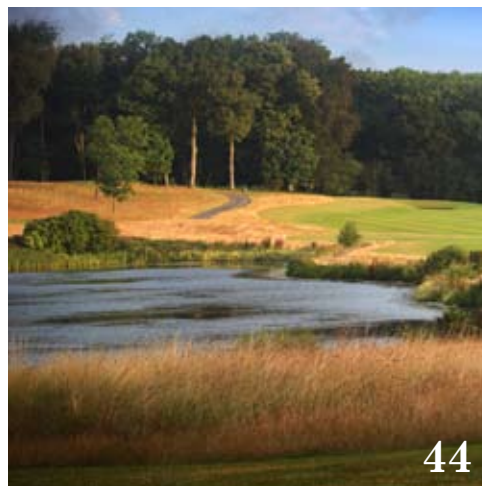
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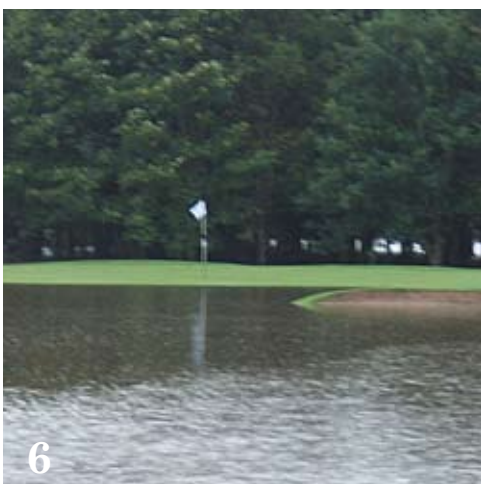




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McDonald Golf Club

The recent rain in the North of Scotland, especially in Aberdeenshire and Moray, created some spectacular sights. Over the course of a single day and a half there was a total of 96mm. Pictured is Scottish Chairman, John Geddes' McDonald Golf Club, in Ellon.

It is of the 7th hole which is a Par 3. In some areas it was five feet deep. One of his greens staff commented that it had become the perfect golf hole - a bit like the 17th at Sawgrass. Tee - Water - Green.

The water has now dried up and members can now play the front nine without getting their feet wet.

An iPhone App for Turf

iPhone users in the fine turf industry can now download an app to assist them with their work

An iPhone (and soon also Blackberry) can now be an interactive turfgrass textbook Turfgrass Management app. Containing the equivalent of four or five textbooks, information can be accessed at the touch of a button.

The app is called "Turfgrass Management," and it covers turfgrasses, weeds, diseases and insects, as well as information on controlling turfgrass pests. The numerous detailed photographs make plant, disease and insect identification much easier because, unlike a print publication, the electronic format allows a nearly unlimited number of photographs. The app will be updated continually as new products become available and new turfgrass diseases and pests are discovered.

The iPhone app is currently available at the iTunes store price £11.99, while the application for the Blackberry should be available shortly.

Oatridge Conference

Bad weather and slashed budgets have created difficulties and uncertainty. Now however the new Oatridge Conference aims to help all of Scotland's growers, greenkeepers, garden designers, landscape architects and local authorities to overcome current problems by providing practical strategies for weathering the storm.

Among the speakers at the event on Thursday, 26 November are Brian Wright, director of FBD Consultancy and Gillian Craig, senior associate with MacRoberts.

Other speakers include Dr David Reay, of Edinburgh University, and Paul Mathers and Iain Gulland, of WRAP.

For more on the Oatridge Conference, as well as information for delegates and exhibitors, please contact: 0131 333 0969.



An Interesting Demo

A group of 20 greenkeepers were invited to Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club by Course Manager, Paul Johnson, to view a Linear Aeration and sand injection operation on the club's 18th green.

In addition to the Linear Aeration Machine, which was hired from Graden, Paul was also supported by Turfmech, who provided a CAT 800 machine to work in conjunction with the Linear Aeration operation, to make light work of this otherwise often highly labour-intensive task.

Including those who attended were South Wales BIGGA Section Secretary, Steve Chappell; BIGGA Vice-Chairman,

Paul Worster, and Laurence Pithie MG, of Turfmaster1.

The 18th green was taken out of play at 12.29pm, the Linear Aeration set at 25mm spacings and to a depth of 20mm with the slots immediately filled with kiln dried sand, then took around 25 minutes utilising a chain of five greenstaff with buckets filling the sand hopper," explained Paul Worster.

"The clean-up job, so often the Achilles Heel of this operation, took just 10 minutes with one operator on the CAT 800. three tonnes of material was removed, which was tipped into a nearby trailer. With only the barest of hand-switching required,

the green was rolled with the Club's Toro fitted with Greentech rollers, the hole trimmed, and the green put back in play by 1.05pm," he said, adding that the acid test was passed when the Chairman of Green turned up unexpectedly and started putting on it – after an expectant hush, the green was pronounced as fit for play!

Turfmech also later used the smaller pedestrian version CAT 300 on the 17th green which proved to be just as effective..

Everyone present agreed the collection machinery took the hard work out of this task.

Paul Worster



Wembley Winner

Tom Peirce is the 2009 winner of the Wembley Stadium Turf Scholarship.

The 19-year-old from Dunstable in Bedfordshire has become the third winner of the scholarship scheme, which is sponsored by Toro and Lely UK and sees a promising young turf professional win a six-month stay at the world-famous stadium.

Tom is a student at Hertfordshire's Oaklands College in St Albans, chosen as Wembley's exclusive education partner in the scheme because of its close proximity to the stadium. He says the prospect of winning motivated him throughout his course.

"When I first heard about the chance to work at Wembley I was really encouraged to work hard to gain my qualifications in hope that I might win the scholarship," he said. "I'm ecstatic that my hard work paid off and can't wait to join the team and develop my skills."

Ayrshire clinches the Norrie Whytock Trophy



In August, members of BIGGA Scotland returned to Auchterarder Golf Club for the annual team event sponsored by Bayer.

Due to the unseasonable weather we were told on arrival that the course was closed and an inspection would be made at 12 noon. The weather had been horrendous over the previous three weeks, rain, high winds.

After the inspection, Donald Burns, Assistant Greenkeeper, announced that the course would open at 1pm. The staff at Auchterarder are to be congratulated on presenting a course in such excellent

condition considering the amount of rainfall they have had to endure.

The West Section won the event last year, but there was to be no repeat of their success. The high winds made things extremely difficult and low scoring was proving elusive. Two teams tied on 86 points- Central Section and the West Section but with the fourth score to count, Central emerged in second place. Team comprised, Gary Semple, Andy O'Hara, Alex Walker, and Brian Heggie.

The winners for 2009 were Ayrshire Section for their first ever win in 12 years of trying

with a total of 92 points, Team Captain was Denis Tweddell, ably supported by Duncan Gray, Derek Wilson and Martin Lothian.

Denis thanked Bayer and Kenney Liddell, Scottish representative of Bayer for their continued support. Thanks go to Captain and Committee for the courtesy and facilities. In Course Manager, Archie Dunn's, absence, Donald and his staff did a great job in preparing the course for play.

Peter J Boyd
Regional Administrator

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) – it's all change!

It is all change in the world of work based qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A change in Government policy on education has required a review of the National Vocational Qualification's (NVQ's) across the majority of industries and with it comes the demise of NVQ'S which are being replaced by work based Diplomas.

Scotland is retaining the Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ's) for the present time.

The GTC's Education Director,, David Golding,, has contacted all Approved Centres to help turf staff come to terms with the changes designed to encourage employers to engage in bite size learning for staff as well as continuing to use

the traditional apprenticeship and full qualifications.

"The GTC has championed the need for funding to follow Units rather than just full qualifications as not all learners are in positions within their employment to gain all the skills and knowledge required within the full qualifications," said David.

He firmly believes more employers will take advantage of the changes to the qualifications especially as Centres access the funding for short courses based on Units from the new Diplomas in Greenkeeping, Golf Course Supervision and Golf Course Management.

A copy of the Centre update can be viewed on the GTC website.

It is important that the GTC works

within the Government framework of qualifications as funding support is made available to employers through Approved Centres offering nationally accredited qualifications including the highly related sports turf apprenticeship," added David.

There is little change in the sports turf Units content but for a full explanation of how the changes will affect Centres, employers and learners within the greenkeeping sector contact the GTC or visit the website: www.the-gtc.co.uk

NOTE: Candidates registered on NVQ's prior to 31 August 2009 will be unaffected by the changes and will have until 31 August 2011 to complete and their Centre claim the certificate.

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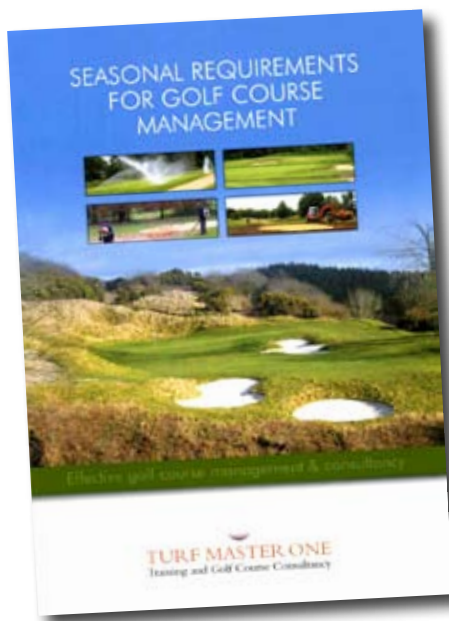
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SEASONAL REQUIREMENTS BOOK

Ever wondered what work is required on a golf course and when it should be carried out?

Well help is at hand in the form of an easy to read short book that is full of practical information with work focused on the four seasons of the year.

As well as acting as a reference book, it describes the key tasks required in each season and the reasons why they are an essential part of any planned maintenance program.

The book is packed full of the reasons and benefits of why such work is essential and it is aimed primarily at Golf Club Managers, Secretaries, Owners & so on.

However, it will no doubt find its place at colleges as well as with Course Managers; being useful as

a training tool for students of the game. Included with this book are numerous colour photos as well as a few useful data charts.

This book has been written and produced by Master Greenkeeper, Laurence Pithie and is the second in a planned series of short books aimed at giving both practical and technical information to golf clubs both in the UK and in Europe.

The book consists of 48 pages in colour and is available from Turf Master One Ltd at £22 plus P & P.

To purchase a copy, contact turfmasterone@aol.com or call Laurence on 01666 505233 or 07774 414207.

Details of this and other publications can be found on the website: www.turfmasterone.co.uk

On Top Down Under

Andy Hugill, formerly an assistant at Whitby Golf Club, in North Yorkshire, has been named Australia's top Superintendent.

He began his greenkeeping career as a self confessed "cocky" kid at Whitby Golf Club under the guidance of Course Manager, Ian Lavelle,

Having completed his apprenticeship, as a 19 year-old he left to work at the Colony Club Gutenhof in Vienna, Austria, where he stayed for five years before moving to Australia where he was lucky enough to get a job at the prestigious New South Wales Golf Club.

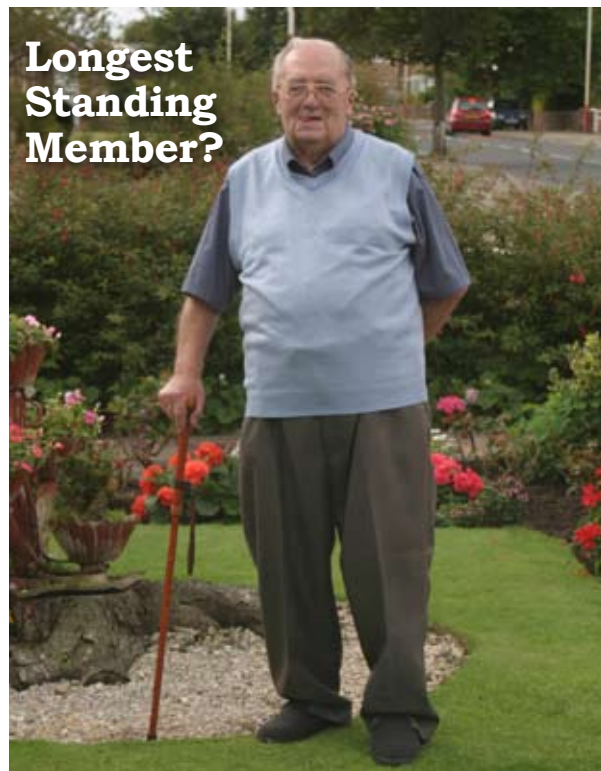
After just eight months he was appointed Assistant Superintendent and he remained there for five years before moving across to Eastlake to take up his first Superintendent position.

In 2003, he was appointed Superintendent at Mona Vale Golf Club and within five years bring the quality of the golf course to a level where it is generally recognised as the best conditioned on the northern beaches of Sydney.

Six years later he won the 2009 AGCSA Excellence in Golf Course Management Award



Longest Standing Member?



Mark Holmes may just hold the record for the longest serving member of a Greenkeeping Association with 70 years under his belt. Now 87 Mark, became a Greenkeepers in March 1937 at age 14 and a half as apprentice greenkeeper at Dore and Totley Club in Sheffield.

After war service he returned for two years before moving to Sherbourne in 1949. He became Head Greenkeeper at Sherbourne for a year then moved to Hesketh in 1950. During his four years there he was Secretary and then Chairman of NW Section of Greenkeepers Assoc.

In 1955 he moved to Hallamshire GC in Sheffield again he became Secretary and then Chairman of Greenkeepers Assoc. He held office for five years.

In 1963 he moved back to Hesketh in Southport where he remained until he retired in 1986. He held office again as Secretary and Chairman of NW section for a total of 13 years.

Can anyone beat Mark's record?

2009 Golf Course Environment Awards

The Golf Course Environment Awards have had a successful first year. Despite being a difficult period for many clubs, the response to the Awards Programme has shown that enthusiasm for the environmental side of golf course management has continued to grow.

The standard of application has been high, and while this has not come as a shock to the judges (STRI are aware that there is a vast amount of exceptional environmental management work going on throughout the Industry), it has made judging the Awards a challenge to say the least. In the end, however, we agreed that the following 10 clubs had stood out in this year's Programme:

Overall Achievement Award – St. Andrews Links Trust

Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year – Matt Worster – Minchinhampton Golf Club

Regional Winner (Scotland) – Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee

Regional Winner (Northern England) – Fairhaven Golf Club

Regional Winner (Southern England) – Burhill Golf Club

Regional Winner (Wales) – Aberdovey Golf Club

Conservation & Biodiversity Management Award – The Bedfordshire Golf Club

Integrated Turf Management Award – Lymm Golf Club

Waste Management Award – Loch Lomond Golf Club

Water Management Award – Penlanlas Golf Club

Case Study – St. Andrews Links Trust

The Overall Winner of this year's programme is St. Andrews Links Trust who are awarded a study trip to the United States, to visit several high profile clubs during excursions aimed at further enhancing knowledge and understanding of greenkeeping issues.

The diversity and scale of works undertaken at St. Andrews in recent times is truly impressive. Large scale gorse clearance has been carried out across the coastal dune system and a diverse and ecologically

rich grassland sward has been restored in its place. By opening up the dune landscape the team at St. Andrews has managed to revert much of the course landscape back to its original form.

In addition to this work, the club has actively encouraged nesting sand martin within an on-site quarry via the creation of clean sand faces, assisting in an increase in populations here in recent years. Skylark are also being encouraged via an ongoing grassland management programme in key areas.

A further high profile project undertaken in 2009 has been the construction of a comprehensive reedbed system to cleanse waste washdown water. This environmentally friendly method of complying with waste water legislation has been constructed 'in-house' to an extremely high standard and will, once fully established, no doubt become a feature of the course.

The amount of environmentally directed projects, coupled with a general enthusiasm and clear desire to be considerate to the surrounding environment, has made St. Andrews a worthy winner of the overall prize in what has genuinely been a closely fought contest.

Case Study - Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year – Matt Worster, Minchinhampton Golf Club

As with the Overall Winner, The Conservation Greenkeeper Award brings with it the highly desirable prize of a trip to the United States.

This year's winner of the Award is Matt Worster, from Minchinhampton Golf Club. Matt undertakes all standard greenkeeping duties in addition to developing and initiating ecological projects at the club which are both numerous and extensive. As a result, the club awarded Matt the title of Ecology Coordinator in recognition of his enthusiasm and drive towards improving wildlife interests on the course.

Matt's career at Minchinhampton began in 2002 as Assistant Greenkeeper.



Matt Worster of Minchinhampton

Since that time, he has completed a BSc (Hons) in Rural Environmental Sciences, producing a final year dissertation on the impact of golf course practices on Minchinhampton's Old Course.

On the course, Matt's influence has impacted greatly on the ecological management work undertaken. Large scale grassland management work has been carried out including the trialling of highly successful hay strewing experiments to increase grassland wildflower content. Hedgerow planting and maintenance work has been extensive and pond management, creation and restoration work has been undertaken to an extremely high standard.

Reflecting on the balance between golf and wildlife, Matt concludes, "Golf courses provide stable habitats and multiple opportunities for habitat creation and protection. Sound ecological management of these features and the wider golf course encourages flora and fauna to thrive, creating sanctuaries for wildlife and increasing the quality of the golf course for the players and public to enjoy".

Thank you

In addition to the two top accolades, four 'Best in Region' Awards have been presented, with each recipient receiving a free ecological advisory visit from an STRI consultant; and four further clubs have been recognised for a 'special initiative', each receiving free

admission for two delegates to STRI's Ecology Training Courses held in October.

All prize winners have undertaken a wide array of worthy ecological and environmental projects and while it is impossible to cover them all in this article, case studies of the winning clubs can be found on the Awards website at www.golfenvironmentawards.com – here, you will also find details on how your club can get involved in the 2010 Programme.

The Golf Course Environment Awards have shown that there is a considerable amount of positive environmental work going on in the golf industry and it is important to recognise that while this work is improving conditions for wildlife and reducing the impact of the golf club on the environment, it is also improving the golf club as a product.

Management work on the golf course is undertaken to maximise its playability by producing a course that is aesthetically pleasing and strategically interesting – two key elements to the enjoyment of the game. STRI and the Awards sponsors would like to thank all clubs involved in the 2009 Programme and look forward to what we hope to be successful 2010 for all concerned within the Industry.

Richard Stuttard, STRI Ecology and Environment



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Davy Cuthbertson,
Course Manager Rockliffe Hall



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Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Peter Todd, gives his thoughts for the month

As the season draws to a close and winter approaches there is more time to accommodate additional staff training and education into the diary. It's important to review the team each year and plan a programme of training and education that will expand their skills.

We all need to develop experienced, well motivated greenkeepers and this can't be achieved without investing time and money.

I think of staff as the club's biggest asset, not the buildings nor the machinery and so allocating time and funds each year to improve the team is always a priority and a good investment.

Learning and development is such a broad subject when related to our industry but for planning/budgeting purposes I tend to look at it in several distinct areas.



Peter listening intently during a Workshop at this year's Harrogate Week.

Make the Most of Learning and Development Opportunities

On operator training, what we must do - essential certificated training such as NPTC pesticide application that is required under regulations, what we would like to do - certificated training such as NPTC ride on mower operation that is desirable but not obligatory and in house training.

Greenkeeping education can be delivered from a wide range of sources including in house learning, college courses, seminars and BTME and Continue To Learn during Harrogate Week.

Spreading the opportunities across the whole staff and meeting all their different individual needs is the challenge, working within budgetary constraints.

Many forms of education are available at minimal cost other than the time commitment, ranging from in house learning to visiting fellow greenkeepers at other courses and attending seminars sponsored by the trade.

We are hosting one at the club this month with key speaker Karl Danneberger, Turfgrass Professor at Ohio State University.

BTME and Continue to Learn during Harrogate Week this year provided a whole range of workshops, seminars and opportunities to improve you and your staff's knowledge including many of which were available at no charge to BIGGA members

or at a reduced cost. Lots of you took advantage of these and more is planned for this January with an expanded programme to accommodate the increasing uptake.

Every year there are many opportunities to be a volunteer at a number of golf tournaments up and down the country which can provide staff with a valuable opportunity to experience course preparation for professional events and mix with greenkeepers from lots of courses at the same time.

Taking all your team on visits to other courses helps them gain an understanding of different conditions, resources available and expectations.

These visits are easier to fit in during winter and can also be reciprocal arrangements with other clubs.

Swapping staff with other courses both here and abroad can also broaden their horizons or allowing staff unpaid leave in winter to work for several months in the warmer parts of the world can all help with their development.

This sharing of ideas, experience and knowledge with each other is one of the key ways that we all learn and improve. Creating opportunities for all your staff to meet other greenkeepers can bring the same learning benefits that predominantly Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers gain from their contacts.

When dealing with an issue or problem on your own it can be a great relief to know that you can call another greenkeeper and talk it over.

Having regular contact with others gives you the chance to keep things in perspective, get someone else's opinion and keep you open minded to all the options available.

Particularly during times when everyone is under pressure to deliver more for less it is useful to benchmark with others and discuss solutions.

Don't isolate yourself - get along to seminars, BIGGA events etc and take all the opportunities you can to meet and learn from others.

Harrogate Week this January will be a great opportunity to meet with fellow professionals - the Continue to Learn programme is available to book and I looking forward to joining as many of you as possible in what is always a great week and time well spent.

Peter Todd
National Chairman



Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, Education Director,
with a monthly update from the GTC

The last few months have been hectic in trying to protect the greenkeeping sector as the Government are determined to introduce a new system for vocational - work based qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

I will try to explain the changes highlighting the key titles which will be worth remembering.

Firstly, every country within the European Union is been encouraged to review and align ALL qualifications into a EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF).

Each country will have a slight variation on titles to align to the EQF:

England has the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

Scotland has the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

Wales has the Credit and Qualifications for Wales (CQfW)

On behalf of the sector I attend meetings to ensure the National Occupational Standards (NOS) are consistent across all countries, in other words the skills sets and knowledge requirements are the same.

The National Occupational Standards for greenkeeping are set at three levels:

Golf Greenkeeper – Golf Course Supervisor – Golf Course Manager

It is from these standards that the various qualifications are developed which can either be work based (vocational) or academic, college based.

For many years the GTC has battled at the highest level of Government to ensure our specialist sector has relevant qualifications. We must never fall back into a “by- product” of horticulture or even worse agriculture in terms of education, training and qualifications.

GTC Approved Centres are currently adjusting their various programmes to the changes which are as follows:

SCOTLAND: This is the easy bit (for now), work to align the SVQ's,

NC, HNC-D is underway but there are no current changes to any of these qualifications.

ENGLAND & WALES: From September 2009 NVQ's are being replaced in the majority of industries by new work based Diplomas.

Learners currently registered on NVQ's will have time to complete their qualifications but all new learners will be registered on the new qualifications.

WHY do we have to change titles I hear you ask?

Any readers who have been involved in NVQ's may have experienced issues with some learners struggling to achieve the full qualification due to a variety of reasons.

Well one of the main reasons for the changes (as highlighted in the Leitch report to Government) is that many employers require short courses for their staff, therefore the Government has promised funding will be made available to Centres-colleges to offer short courses, using the Units from the new Diplomas as well as the full qualifications.

The NVQ Level 2 Sports Turf (Greenkeeping) will be known as the Diploma in Greenkeeping

There is no change to the content of the new qualification and the gtc training manual will still be the appropriate document to record learners evidence. A new index has been developed for centres in England and Wales.

Every Unit within the new Diplomas has been given a CREDIT VALUE, each Credit equates to 10 hours. This is the average number of hours it should take to train a new learner, support/mentor and assess them as competent e.g. Prepare and operate a tractor and attachments Unit has a CREDIT VALUE OF 5 (50 HOURS).

Depending on the Units CREDIT VALUES learners will gain an Award or Certificate for achieving Units from within the Diploma qualification.

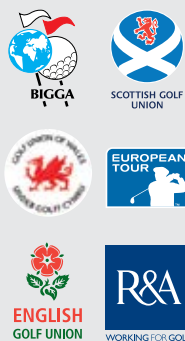
The NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf (Greenkeeping) will be known as the Diploma in Golf Course Supervision

There are changes at this level

In Brief

After nearly 20 years of industries trying their best to adopt and implement National & Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQ's) the Government has decided to change the title NVQ. David explains why it is an absolute minefield, especially now as devolution of power to the various countries and Parliaments within the UK, is starting to affect education.

The GTC is funded by:



designed to give better flexibility to employers and learners by the introduction of mandatory and optional Units to make up the full Diploma.

Rather than list all of the new Units and Credit Values here I will post them on the GTC website.

The N/SVQ Level 4 Sports Turf Management remains unchanged but will become the Diploma in Golf Course Management once the Units have been through the review of content and credit value process.

All of the more academic higher qualifications within Sports Turf, HNC-D in Scotland and the Foundation Degree & B.Sc remain unchanged.

I feel I should apologise for what for many might feel is an unnecessary change in qualifications and could easily lead to confusion for employers, learners and even Centre staff but the GTC will continue to try and maintain standards of education, training and qualifications and make the transition as painless as possible.

Finally, whilst there should be more flexibility with the forced changes there is even more reason for employers to seek the subsidised courses.

Please be reassured, the GTC will continue to maintain standards for our sector in partnership with its representative bodies, the British Home Unions and BIGGA and through its Approved Centres network.

I will close as I started by mentioning Europe, it is the new revised Units which have been adopted by the pan-European greenkeeping standards working group and this is true recognition for all of those involved in supporting the GTC with its ongoing work.

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Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,
with an update on education issues



Unbelievable, how can it be October already? Saltex and the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award are the key events that mark the beginning of the Autumn/Winter season and have both been and gone. All roads now lead to Harrogate Week!

TORO

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2009

The seven finalists attended the National Finals at BIGGA House on Sunday 13 and Monday 14 September. The finalists were grilled by the four judges during a 45-minute interview and had to produce a report on 9 holes of Aldwark Manor Golf Course.

Competition was fierce and all of the finalists performed to the highest standards making it a very difficult decision for the judges. After much deliberation the decision was made and the 2009 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year was awarded to:

Rhys Norville, from Newport Golf Club, and representing Coleg Gwent Usk Campus

Rhys will be attending the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts commencing in January 2010. Congratulations go to Rhys and a representative from Coleg Gwent, who wins a trip to the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, California.

The runners-up, who win a trip to Harrogate Week 2010, were: Benjamin Burrill, from Ilkley Golf

Club, representing Askham Bryan College. Adam Wise, from Richmond Golf Course, representing Myerscough College. Our congratulations go to all of the finalists.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2010

The Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2010 programme is now available. The printed brochure includes all Workshops and events that must be pre-booked. In an effort to increase our green credentials we have chosen to list all of the Seminars that are taking place during the BTME and ClubHouse Exhibition on the official Harrogate Week website: www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

The workshop programme will include:

Four two-day workshops:
Golf Course Design
Moving into Management
Practical Management of a Safety Management System
Preparing and Delivering Powerful Presentations

Nine one-day workshops:
Finance and Accounting for Golf Club Managers and Course Managers
Emergency First Aid
Irrigation: Planning, Installation and Water Management
Drainage: Theory, Practice and Realities
How to be an Outstanding Manager
Basic Golf Mechanic Workshop
ROLO Health and Safety Course



The funding provided by Golden 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 Golden and Silver Key Sponsors.



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The Rules of Golf and Course Set Up for PGA Events

Pre-book seminars:
The 2mm (or above) Debate - Greens Sward Composition and Management
Performance, Profile, Profit
Bunkers for the 21st Century

All of the workshops and pre-book seminars can be booked online via the Harrogate Week website or by contacting the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 and select option 3.

L&D Updates



Higher Education Scholarships
Supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarships have been awarded to Paul Handy - On Line Foundation Degree - Sports Turf

Thank you to our Golden and Silver Key Sponsors



Golden Key Individual Members: WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Frank Newberry; Christopher Lomas MG, Lee Strutt MG.
Silver Key Individual Members: Ade Archer; Steven Tierney; Paul Jenkins; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Steve Dixon; Hamish Campbell; Neil Whitaker; Robert Maibusch.



Wiedenmann UK's Sales Team Host Interactive Business Sessions in Germany

Wiedenmann UK's sales team has hosted around 50 dealer staff in two days of interactive business sessions at their worldwide HQ at Rammingen, near Stuttgart, Germany.

"We were able to cover so much; from a very informative factory tour to quite detailed sales sessions where we updated dealers with news of sales aids, literature, pricing and product specifications," said David Rae,

Wiedenmann UK's Managing Director.

The party got a first look at many new machines including Terra Spikes, seeders, sorer rollers, salt spreaders and snow blades.

Wiedenmann now has its widest ever range of aerators, maintenance systems, sweeper collectors, material collection systems, mowers, blowers, snow and dirt machines and artificial turf maintenance equipment.

"Such sessions are a great opportunity for everyone," continued David.

"They create strong bonds between the dealer network and the manufacturer.

"The dealers can see first hand how we're looking to the future and pushing technical boundaries," he said, "and we benefit from the dealers' enthusiasm and feedback."



In New Territory

SISIS has appointed Mark Mitchell as Territory Manager for Bedfordshire/Cambridgeshire/Essex/Hertfordshire/ Norfolk/ Suffolk

Mark started in the turf industry in 1978 so has a wealth of experience and will be well know to many customers.

Mark lives with his partner Elaine and 4 daughters. His hobbies include ice hockey, which, until recently he played, but now gives encouragement from the side lines.

Mark can be contacted on 07970 642549 or email on: mark.sisis@btinternet.com

Appointment

Campey has strengthened its links with Sports grounds, golf clubs and local authorities in Ireland following the appointment of new Product Specialist, Brian O'Shaughnessy.

Brian, 46, who is based in north County Dublin, joins the company from IAM Groundcare. Prior to that, his background is in grass cutting machinery maintenance in both the domestic and commercial markets. Brian O'Shaughnessy can be contacted by phone on 00 353 87 927 4521, or by email at: brian@campeyturfcare.com

JOHN DEERE EXTENDS PATRON AGREEMENT WITH LADIES EUROPEAN TOUR

John Deere and the Ladies European Tour (LET) have extended their original patron agreement for two more years, during which Deere will enjoy the designation as the Tour's 'Official Supplier of Golf Course Machinery.'

"John Deere is very pleased to announce that we have added two more years to what has already been a fruitful relationship with the Ladies European Tour," said Nicole Chase, Director of Sales and Marketing for golf products in Europe.

"John Deere is proud of its longstanding relationship with the US PGA Tour and is confident its relationship with the LET will continue to grow."

Through this agreement, LET tournaments will be supported by John Deere equipment and irrigation products.

Deere officials will also continue to work closely with the LET's agronomists, with the goal of helping to produce better quality playing surfaces.



Separatorsplus and Waste-Away

Highspeed Lubricants Ltd created the Course Care brand in 1989 as a division of the company and the name is now established in the turf maintenance field.

Since a management buyout in 2001, the company has expanded its product range and services under the leadership of joint Managing Directors, Andy Vincent and David Mears and is also now fully licensed as a Waste Transfer Station.

Recently two new divisions have been formed: Separatorsplus and Waste-Away. It was felt that as lubricants only now form part of the portfolio, the company name did not truly reflect all activities.

It was decided to emphasise the now diverse product and services range and so Highspeed Lubricants Ltd recently became Highspeed Group Ltd.



Ransomes Spider is the Answer

Royal Belfast has taken a pioneering approach to managing its steep banks and slopes with the introduction of a Ransomes Spider II remote controlled mower from local Ransomes Jacobsen dealer Broderick (Northern Ireland) Ltd.

With the introduction of more rigorous Health and Safety standards, Course Manager Jim Eager, had to find alternatives for mowing

the steep banks that frame the lawn in front of the clubhouse.

Previously these were maintained with hover mowers, but this practice is now forbidden under tighter HSE rules.

“From the clubhouse members have an unspoilt view across the lawn to the Lough and the distant Antrim hills beyond.

When we were unable to

maintain the banks to the normal high standards we were under pressure to find an immediate solution,” he said.

“I spoke to Broderick’s and they quickly provided a demonstration of the Spider for the Greens Committee and my greenkeeping team.

It was immediately obvious that this was the ideal solution and with the committee’s backing, we placed the order.”

Princes Golf Club

Troon Golf has added Princes Golf Club as the newest member to its portfolio of managed courses.

The newly lengthened Championship course will also host final Open Qualifying in 2011 when the Open returns to neighboring venue Royal St. Georges.

“Princes Golf Club is one of the most traditional and esteemed golf clubs in England whose impressive history is hard to surpass. We are thrilled to be working with such an established name in golf and look forward to forging strong partnerships with the team there,” commented Bruce Glasco, Troon Golf’s Managing Director, Europe, Middle East & Africa.

Troon Golf is the world’s largest golf management company, overseeing operations at properties located in 31 states and 26 countries.



Indian Summer

A glamorous Bollywood siren, a major premium whisky brand and an international golfing initiative came together in India last week, when details were revealed of India’s largest-ever golf event.

The announcement, which comes hard on the heels of recent PowerPlay GolfR launch events in New Zealand and Canada, signals another step in the global expansion of golf’s new ‘two flag’ format.

Indian model and actress Neha Dhupia joined PowerPlay co-creator Peter McEvoy OBE at the media launch of the Signature Club Golf Championship 2009 in Mumbai, India.

The event, which covered 20 cities in 2008, will expand in 2009 to cover 30 cities across India, and will be played to PowerPlay GolfR rules throughout.

Best of Both Worlds

Scott MacCallum experienced two countries at the same time when he travelled to meet Allen Lewis at Llanmynech Golf Club.





You often hear the comment regarding big hitters that they can, "Hit it into the next county". Well, at a golf club near Oswestry every member can justifiably say that they can, "Hit it into the next country".

Now that's not to say that Llanmynech Golf Club is awash with John Daly or Laura Davies clones – the mind boggles at the very prospect – but that it is the only golf club in the world to straddle two countries, boasting three holes in England and 15 in Wales.

The course sits on Llanmynech Hill and has stunning views deep

along with his elder brother and their mum and dad, who were both Captains of the Golf Club, while his younger brother, Gareth, is now Course Manager at Oswestry Golf Club. Allen actually was a guest at Ian's *This Is Your Life* programme.

Woosie also grew up, and played, with Allen Lewis, the Course Manager, who has been at the club, man and boy, since 1972, when the course had only just grown from nine to 18 holes, but was still shared with sheep who enjoyed grazing rights on the Hill.

As we sat in his excellent maintenance facility, which sits close to the clubhouse but set down



into north Wales in one direction and Shropshire in the other while the area is so renowned for its beauty that it was chosen as the location for the 1995 Hugh Grant film, "The Englishman Who Went Up A Hill but Came Down a Mountain".

But let's not get carried away with the thought that Llanmynech's main claim to fame is its looks and not its substance. The course is certainly testing, testimony of which has been the number of high quality golfers who have come out of the club.

The current pro, Andy Griffiths, came through the junior ranks while there are a number of Welsh Senior team members currently playing out of the club.

Oh yes, it was also where a certain Ian Woosnam learned his golf. That's Ian Woosnam, the former Masters Champion, World Number One and European Ryder Cup Captain - not many clubs in world golf can boast of setting someone on the road to that calibre of greatness!

Ian grew up on Llanmynech

out of sight, Allen displays enormous affection for the club as he describes the progress and pitfalls that he has witnessed over the last 37 years.

"I left school at 15 with thoughts of perhaps joining the police force or entering the construction industry, but they had just stopped taking on apprentices, and jobs were rare.

"A job came up here and I met the Greens Chairman, who was working on the 12th green at the time, and I was offered the job. There was only two of us and 200 sheep at the time," recalled Allen, an Englishman with a Welsh accent.

A significant moment came when the club purchased the grazing rights in 1978 and the sheep were evicted, leaving the club to continue to develop and improve.

In 1979 an automatic watering system was installed, thanks in part to a grant from the Welsh Develop-



ment Board – the club, although registered under the Shropshire Union, has always been very good at attracting money from both sides of the border!

"The club raised the majority of the money for the irrigation system by offering a five year fixed membership fee at £250, limited to the first 50 members who took advantage of it. It meant that with

INSET ABOVE: Allen, third from the right, with a young Ian Woosnam fourth from the right (Courtesy of Llanmynech Golf Club, 75th Anniversary 1933-2008 publication)

INSET LEFT: Allen Lewis, Course Manager, sits on the tee of a unique hole.



membership fees rising over the period that they got the equivalent of a year's free golf and the club got the money to install the system," explained Allen.

Water to a limited number of tees was introduced around four years ago.

Perhaps the biggest project the club has undertaken came around the turn of the millennium when all 18 greens were rebuilt over three winter programme years.

"We had thick heavy clay under the greens and they didn't drain very well at all while inevitably we got a build up of thatch. We decided to renew four of the worst greens to begin with and did the majority of the work ourselves.

"We hired a JCB and a driver while we cut the turf, we drove the dumpers, put in 220 tonnes of root zone and 200 tonnes of stone then relaid the turf.

"It has paid off because whereas before if it rained for a few hours I knew we'd be brushing water off the back of the 12th or 1st greens now

we can have a thunderstorm and it's drained in 15 minutes."

The work did coincide with the worst day of Allen's working life, the eighth anniversary of which fell the day after my visit.

"We discovered that five of our greens had been covered with weedkiller. We sought advice and tried to hose the greens off and while we initially thought we'd saved them a week later they turned brown, yellow black and muddy.

"Tests showed that the rootzone was infected down to eight inches and we had to dig up the greens and rebuild them – three of which had already been done under the rebuilding programme.

"We searched for any signs of empty weedkiller bags and whoever did it knew to walk backwards to prevent it getting on their shoes, but the police could never find who was responsible and we could never find any motive for the attack.

"We had to buy more turf and rootzone and it took about three



ABOVE: The Greenkeeping Team at Llanmynech Golf Club

years for the greens to return to where I would want them to be."

Llanmynech is a SSSI site and Allen has two work closely with CADW – Conservation and Development of Wales – on anything he wishes to carry out on the golf course.

"I can't put so much as a spade into the ground without getting permission from CADW first and it can take up to three months to get a decision from them," explained Allen.



The willow trees were planted in mounded earth to avoid digging any holes

“In fact, they have spot inspections and during one I was asked how the 150 markers were attached.”

He has built up a close working relationship with the Agency over the period and knows that any attempt to bypass the system would result in a breakdown of that relationship and no permission for any work in the future.

“It does mean we have to plan everything well in advance and can’t have a Green Committee one evening and go about actioning what has been decided the next morning.”

CADW does have an appreciation of the benefits golf has brought to an area which otherwise would be inaccessible to many, but the right side of the second fairway is an example of what sometimes needs to be done.

“We had problems with balls going into a garden and it was decided that we need to plant some willows to stop it from happening.

“Because we put holes into the ground we had to build a four foot high mound of soil and plant the trees into that,” he said, adding that he works closely with his Chairman of Green, Brian Suckley, who is also Chairman of Finance.

Another issue arose while they were erecting the JSRs for the new

Maintenance Facility.

“We need permissions for that and they had someone on site to watch the work being carried out. While we were digging the footings they found an ancient skull which stopped the work for three months. The skull was dated back to 780BC and was regarded as a significant find and is now in a museum in Cardiff but the club had to pay for the archaeological fees while the dig was carried out on the site and that cost us an additional £4000.”

The club brought recognition to the area when it won the Welsh Award in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in the year 2000.

Allen is no mean golfer himself having played on the same County Team as Woosie, Sandy Lyle, Peter Baker and others and against the likes of Paul Broadhurst and David Gilford- Ryder Cup players all, and he is particularly proud of breaking Woosie’s Llanmynech course record at the Captain’s Day of 2007 with a six under-par 64. He is quick to add that it came just 10 days after hollowcoring and top dressing the greens – “A great advert for doing the work in August,” he is quick to add.

“Gareth Woosnam texted his brother with the news and I got a very nice letter from Ian, on Ryder

Cup headed paper, congratulating me and saying he’d be back at some stage to claim it back from me.”

The green staff is currently four strong with Allen, Allen Evans, who has been at the club for six years; Matt Lewis (Allen’s son) who has been at the club for four and a half years; and James Hampson who has been at Llanmynech for 18 months. Allen and Matt have both achieved their Level IIIs and James is currently under training all through Reaseheath College.

The club is in the process of building a short Academy Course, cut out of a former forested area of the club, and aimed at local school children, but offering members the chance of honing their shots games.

“It has been funded through Visit Wales and their Ryder Cup initiative. The Academy is in the Welsh part of the course – otherwise we wouldn’t have got money for it – and we’ve put in several artificial greens as it is another area for us to maintain and we wanted to limit the amount of additional work it would give us.

The club is hoping that Woosie will open the new Academy next year.

Perhaps he might take that opportunity to reclaim the course record from his old friend.

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First Welshman Is Youngest Ever Toro Winner

Scott MacCallum meets Rhys Norville, the 2009 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

The 21st Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Competition was notable on two counts. Not only did it produce the youngest winner in the history of the event, it also saw the first ever Welsh winner.

If that hints at a remarkable young greenkeeper, then you'd be on the right lines as 21 year-old Rhys Norville is just that.

Rhys, an Assistant at Newport Golf Club, in South Wales, won his place in the seven strong final at the regional interview stage having been nominated by Coleg Gwent where he has just completed his NVQ Level II.

The final held at BIGGA HOUSE involved the completion of a course report on Aldwark Manor's golf course, and a further interview covering all aspects of greenkeeping and knowledge of BIGGA, conducted by Pete Mansfield, of Lely; Bruce Jamieson, of Toro; Jeff Mills, BIGGA's Learning and Development Sub-Committee Chairman, and Sami Collins, BIGGA's Head of Learning and Development.

After a full day for all concerned the announcement was made at 5.30pm and Rhys was congratulated by his fellow finalists – Martin Finegan, an Assistant at Waterville Golf Links and Colaiste Stiofain, in Ireland; Richard Jenkinson, who is currently working on the construction of the new G-West course, near Gleneagles and Elmwood College; Benjamin Burrill, Assistant at Ilkley

GC and Askham Bryan College; Oliver Pennington, an Assistant at La Moye GC, in Jersey, and Myerscough College; Adam Wise, an Assistant at Richmond GC, in London, and Myerscough College and Peter Leach, Deputy Course Manager at Exeter G&CC and Myerscough College.

Benjamin and Adam were the joint runners-up winning all expenses paid trips to Harrogate Week, next January.

"As we were waiting for the announcement to be made my heart was pounding. I certainly didn't expect my name to be read out as the standard of the finalists



"I was 16, had finished my GCSEs and was playing golf every day, and felt that golf was what I wanted to do with my life."

was so high. All the guys were great and everyone had such a lively personality. I must admit I was in a state of disbelief when it was my name that Sami read out," said Rhys, as we spoke the morning after a celebratory meal and visit to the bowling alley.

Born and bred in Newport, Gwent, Rhys caught the golfing bug from his father as a 10 year-old, joining him on visits to Tredegar Golf Club where he was a member.

"It was when I was 16 that my passion for the game really took off. I'd finished my GCSEs and was

playing golf every day and felt that golf was what I wanted to do with my life."

Strangely though, it wasn't Tiger Woods, or Ian Woosnam or Bradley Dredge who Rhys saw as his role models, but Lee Padgett, the pro at Tredegar at the time.

"As part of the Dragon Sport programme at school I'd been doing some coaching and I'd always had aspirations to teach. So I thought I could put the two together and become a teaching pro," he explained.

When Lee left to take up a post in the United States Rhys' desire to go down that particular path receded

a little, but with golf still coursing through his veins he joined the Newport Golf Club greenkeeping staff under then Course Manager, Angus MacLeod.

"Initially I viewed greenkeepers in much the same way as most golfers, as grass cutters, but I've always had an inquisitive nature and thirst to learn so I felt that joining Angus and the team, would stead me well as part of my overall plan to become a pro but I found that I really enjoyed the work."

However, he was tempted back down his original route, when Paul



Mayo, the 1987 Amateur Champion, and pro at Newport, offered him a job.

"I thought all my Christmases had come at once. I worked with Paul in the shop and did some teaching for about 10 months, but that time led me to the conclusion that I could have a better career by going down the greenkeeping route," explained Rhys, adding that BIGGA has to take a lot of credit for there being a more defined career path.

A vacancy on the Newport Greenkeeping team, now headed by Paul Handy who had been Deputy under Angus McLeod, came up and Rhys was able to relaunch a career that less than two years later saw him collecting the plaudits at BIGGA HOUSE.

"I cracked on with my NVQ Level II – I was lucky as I'd picked up quite a bit from my initial time in greenkeeping so I had some background.

Speaking with Rhys it is easy to see why the judges selected him as 2009 Toro winner. Although only recently turned 21 he talks with an intelligence and measured maturity of someone older and he possesses an extremely clear focus on his career.

"The Toro Award will give me something to concentrate on in the short term – particularly the eight week study trip to the States in January and February – but for the medium to longer term I do have some ideas.

"I'm on the Support Team for the Ryder Cup next year, which was made possible as I'm local to Celtic Manor, but I'm conscious that I only have experience of parkland golf courses and I'd really like to go and see how heathland, links and resort courses work.

"I'd also like to take a year out and experience warm weather courses somewhere like Portugal or the States then come back and get a job as a Deputy Head," he said.

"From an educational point of view I'd like to get my Level III and then start on a Foundation Degree at Myerscough. The great thing with Distance learning is that all I need is a laptop and I can travel and keep up to date with the work."

Another ambition he has is to get his current 3 handicap down to scratch. Over the last two years, with the bad weather, I'd gone up to 4 and did well to get it down to 2 at one point while he recently won the Strokeplay Championship at Tredegar Park, where he is still a member.

Outside of the golf club he was a member of the Newport Youth



Council, until recently, working with the local Council to create opportunities for young people in the town.

"We sat down as a group to discuss ideas and make proposals to Newport Council which we thought would be of benefit. I'm fortunate to come from a good background so it was good to be able to help those who perhaps didn't have the same chances as I had.

"We persuaded the Council to set up an office in the town centre so 16-25 year olds could drop in and use the internet and receive help writing CVs. There was also help for family problems and advice if people wanted to take up a sport."

Looking back, Rhys has a number of people who he credits as influences and mentors in his life.

"I have a few people who I've





LEFT PAGE
TOP: The three winners .
MIDDLE: Benjamin Burrell and
BOTTOM: Adam Wise with Pete
 Mansfield

looked up to and learned from. Initially there was Lee Padgett, at Tredegar Park, who taught me golf and who was always keen to do things the right way. There were no quick fixes and he built my swing in the proper manner – no short cuts.

“I really learned from the passion and drive that Angus MacLeod brought to greenkeeping. He wanted everything to be the best it could possibly be and I think that is a great attitude to have. He was fantastic. No short cuts and no second best. Angus is now at Belton Woods, in Lincolnshire, and I’m going to go and see him on my way home today.”

Another man Rhys who credits is Paul Worster, Course Manager at Minchinhampton GC, and BIGGA’s current Vice Chairman.

“I have attended a couple of seminars that he’s spoken at on promoting the environment and they were a big influence on me. He has been involved with ecology for years and it was brilliant to see some of the things he’d done.”

Rhys is very appreciative of BIGGA and the opportunities membership brings him.

“I really enjoy the Section events, playing golf and mixing with the other members. It is great to be able to chat with Course Managers and Golf Club Secretaries at events. He was also delighted to receive good luck messages from, among others, South Wales Section Secretary, Steve Chappell, and Regional Administrator, Jane Jones.

“I’d very much like to thank my Course Manager, Paul Handy, Rus-

sell Thomas, Secretary at Newport, and everyone at the golf club for all their help and support.”

Rhys spent much of his time following the announcement with last year’s winner Matthew Wormald, getting the low down on what to expect during his eight week trip to the States.

“Matthew was really helpful and I’m looking forward the trip and all the experiences that it will bring. My girlfriend, Becky, is very supportive and excited for me although it won’t be easy for either of us to be apart for such a long time.

“I’d like to thank BIGGA, Toro and Lely for all the work they did to organise the competition and I look forward to representing BIGGA as Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year over the next 12 months.”



Reinventing the Wheel

BIGGA members have been heavily involved in the development of a new winter wheel for Powakaddy trolleys. Lee Manvell explains how the whole processes evolved

Electric trolley use has been on the rapid increase since the turn of the millennium. However, a source of great frustration for golfers, greenkeepers and golf course owners alike is the fact that there hasn't been a universal solution for regular winter use.

Now through the work of Powakaddy, in collaboration with BIGGA, a new winter wheel solution seems set to give winter golf for electric trolley users the green light.

The new winter wheels have taken their 'open tread' design inspiration from lawn protection products and have been subjected to a rigorous and comprehensive testing process in conjunction with a BIGGA advisory panel of Course Managers. The result is a ground breaking product that should gain widescale approval from greenkeepers; increase winter revenue for Course Owners, Managers and on-course retailers and, perhaps most importantly, allow an ever growing category of golfers to play regularly throughout the winter months.

Terry Hale, Powakaddy's Chief Executive is delighted with the end product and the ongoing consultation with BIGGA.

"Our designers felt as though they were on to something with the new design but we were very keen to engage with the experts at BIGGA and draw upon the knowledge of their members to help us in the design and testing process. John Pemberton and his team have been extremely helpful throughout the process and I am confident that greenkeepers up and down the country will be pleased with the end product".

Soft turf and electric trolleys have never been happy bedfellows.





Above: Four stages of prototypes
Below left: David Wood supervises the saturation of some ground in preparation for the test
Below right: The test produced minimal denting
Bottom right: The concentrated use test





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Damaged grass roots, muddy trails, compacted turf and skid marks have meant that greenkeepers and Course Owners have been reluctant to allow trolley use in certain wet, wintery conditions.

For keen golfers and Course Owners the situation has been far from ideal. For older players or players with injuries, an electric trolley is the only way they can play and for many others it is a major part of their enjoyment of the game. For Owners the equation is simple. Less winter golf means less revenue and less membership retention when subs renewal time comes around.

With a basic design prototype developed Powakaddy's Group Product Manager, Lee Manvell, worked with BIGGA over an eight month process to test, refine and re-assess the winter wheel concept. Following meetings with BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton, Powakaddy assembled an advisory panel of Course Managers. BIGGA's Scott MacCallum was joined by Richard Whyman, Burnham & Berrow GC; Colin Webber, Portmore GC; Paul Worster, Minchinhampton GC, and David Wood, Hever Castle GC, at various times during the development process.

"We do have viable solutions for push carts but we have really been looking for a proven solution for electric trolleys to protect our courses and enable us to maximise winter golf revenues," explained Colin, after one of the testing sessions.

Prototype testing, demo days and meetings throughout the spring culminated in a third generation product being subjected to a full test at Hever Castle GC in July. To replicate soft wintery conditions the test area was saturated with water for three and a half hours.

David Wood was very impressed

with how the new design tested.

"The testing conditions were tough but the wheel lived up to the expectations and made limited impact on the turf."

The product review centred around eight key tests designed to simulate the usual movements of an electric trolley in wintery conditions, in some cases to extreme levels to test the new design to its limits. The wheel's key performance attributes, such as weight distribution, traction, turning ability and the subsequent affect on the grass blades, root damage and soil compaction were scrutinised. In all cases the new winter wheel passed the performance criteria established by the advisory panel and product design team. Full test results are summarised in the panel below including the final on-course field and general wear and tear tests in September.

The headline feature of the new winter wheel is the open tread, based on a principal seen in lawn protection mesh mat systems, which evenly distribute the load over a smaller surface area avoiding compacting and denting. The new wheel allows minimal ground contact, avoiding ground penetration and maintaining traction to avoid slipping. On soft ground the new wheel causes negligible damage. In addition the small crown on the front and rear tyre reduces dragging while turning without loss of traction.

The wheel is a composite that consists of a structural inner hub, over-moulded with a highly durable rubber. The design is registered and has a patent pending including its method of manufacture.

"We are delighted to have taken a proven design principle from another industry and successfully applied it to electric trolley wheel

technology" commented Powakaddy's Lee Manvell.

Richard Whyman praised Powakaddy's decision to involve BIGGA at a stage where a positive impact could be made on the finished product.

"It was great for a company to approach greenkeepers to ask our input during the design stages. During the trial the wheels gave better wheel to turf footprint helping to avoid that usual wheel spin which is an improvement to what I have seen available to date."

One practical but extremely significant point is that new winter wheel can be easily retro-fitted, with a quick release mechanism, to any Powakaddy electric trolley from the 2000 models onwards. Estimates vary of how many golfers this may cater for but given Powakaddy's dominant market share the number is likely to be well over quarter of a million. Importantly the new wheel is the same diameter as a standard Powakaddy wheel therefore the distance and speed functions do not need to be modified.

The new wheels will be available in limited numbers from December this year and the benefits are likely to be far reaching. Minimising turf damage and more regular winter golf are the most obvious advantages for greenkeepers and electric trolley users but they won't be the only beneficiaries. Golf course owners will not only see increased traffic but an ever increasing number of courses also boast sizeable Powakaddy rental fleets which can now generate much needed income all year round. Add to this the revenue opportunity that winter wheels present for on-course PGA retailers and one can see that this innovative new product is set to be one of the most significant golf developments for 2010.

The 8 Winter Condition Tests

1) Straight line:

Several single passes in a straight line produced no visible tracks with the new Winter Wheel = PASS

2) Turning:

On the spot turning resulted in the Winter wheels twisting grass without breaking the grass blades or roots = PASS

3) Concentrated use:

High footfall on the same ground traditionally leads to muddy trails forming. The low impact and weight distribution prevented the new Winter Wheel from sinking = PASS

4) Forced Slipping:

Trolley set to full speed and held back with reasonable force to simulate loss of traction and slipping. In this excessive test the Winter Wheel lost traction late enough to suggest that it would not slip in normal use and the tread does not scar the turf = PASS

5) Weight Distribution:

Demonstrated in a bunker to visually emphasise track formation and depth of indents. Winter wheels caused minimal indentation = PASS

6) Vibration:

On a rolling road to simulate very rough/uneven terrain. The Winter Wheel proved to be extremely durable with no mechanical weaknesses = PASS

7) Static impact:

The wheel was hit with a weight to replicate momentary impact such as transit or collision damage. The Winter Wheel proved extremely resilient = PASS

8) Environmental:

UV and salt water test to assess wheel condition if left outdoors for a long period. No adverse affects = PASS



Rockliffe Hall's Davy Cuthbertson talks with Charles de Haan about the role of the Course Manager in golf course signage.

“Get involved with your club’s choice of signage!”

Signage has become one of the most significant ways in which the presentation of a golf course can be improved, and with the ‘flight to quality’ now a major trend in the golf club market, signage is an investment decision well worth getting right.

Yet many clubs and courses assume that the decision as to what type or design of course signage belongs to the club’s owners or committees. While understandable from a purely financial perspective, the one person who knows the course and its environment best is the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper. Combine that knowledge with the responsibility for the signage’s maintenance and a Course Manager is ideally placed to decide, influence or advise on the signage design, type and choice of materials.

Rockliffe Hall

Davy Cuthbertson is the Course and Estate Manager at the recently completed Rockliffe Hall golf course, and has been overseeing the new championship course’s growing-in since January 2008. Familiar with

every aspect and detail of all the grasses and their colourings, the overall environment of the course, and the weather conditions the course and its furniture will have to face, Davy made it part of his job to get involved with – in fact, initiate – the choice of signage design for Rockliffe Hall.

His choice was influenced by his experience at Slaley Hall, his previous posting. Out on the course, bronze had been used on dry stone plinths which Davy felt blended well with the colourings and the course environment at Slaley Hall. While Rockliffe Hall is a parkland course, the fairway grasses are a mixture of bents, fescues and rye that tend to be typically grass green in colour throughout the season, whereas the mixture for the roughs is a wild fescue which goes a brownish yellow through the main part of the season.

With that in mind, Davy also wanted a material that was going to last for a very long time, and be very easy for his team to clean and maintain.

Davy’s other concern was to get his team of 12 greenkeepers on board.

“They are the ones who are going

to have to look after all the course signage, and I wanted their input and opinions as much as the chaps who’d be signing the cheques. I needed to make sure they took a pride in every aspect of the course we’d been given the responsibility for turning into one of the UK’s finest.”

Set the brief, involve the decision makers – and get the greenkeeping team’s buy-in

Davy started by taking some of Rockliffe Hall’s decision makers and greenkeepers to Harrogate Week last January to see what was on offer from the signage companies. This enabled Davy, and the chaps signing off the cheques, to get a good idea of each of the companies; having set a brief outlining what he wanted and the overall specifications for the designs, numbers of each item, and so on, Davy then got proposals from three selected companies.

Choosing the design

Having looked at all sorts of different signage possibilities, Davy eventually elected for bronze for the signage figures and plaques, and





sandstone on which to mount the dark colouring of the bronze items. But Davy didn't stop there.

"I also wanted a design that would stand out, quite literally, so rather than low level plinths or boulders, I persuaded the directors to go for taller (4' above ground, 1.5' below in a cement footing) sandstone monoliths to be used for the tee signage, with a bronze plaque mounted on the stone carrying a diagram of the hole and all the relevant hole information for each main tee position, ie. white, yellow, red, black and gold. It turned out to be a good decision, because their height is a very distinctive feature around the course, and they are both easy to see and yet blend really well with the environmental colourings."

Fixing the design

Through a process of presentations and further discussions, some bronze samples were provided by one of the companies, Eagle, to demonstrate the quality, durability and impermeability of the detailing that could be achieved using cast 'penny' bronze. With Eagle's help, the resulting design of the hole information for each of the bronze plaques was innovative, as it comprised:

- the hole number
- five sets of yardages and their respective tee colourings
- a painted, infilled black background
- par and stroke index
- the Rockliffe Hall logostyle and symbol in bronze out of the black background
- a diagram of each hole and its major hazards.

The next challenge was finding a source for the sandstone monoliths, and Davy had soon tracked down a quarry near Leeds that could provide and deliver just what he wanted. As each monolith was going to be stacked in a prominent position at the beginning of each hole, Davy also created a simple 3' circle of sandstone gravel as the base of each monolith. This would be simple to keep weed and grass free, while also being easy to mow around.

Maintenance: designed to easy, minimal

Based on Davy's experience of different types of signage materials, the maintenance is very simple, as Davy explained

"Bronze is more expensive than zinc or other bases, but it is a 'forever' product – it's virtually impossible to damage or scratch it, and it only needs a wipe with a damp cloth to remove dust or bird mess. It's also possible to refurbish the bronze in the future. The sandstone is the same: it lasts forever, it doesn't need any cleaning attention as such, and the gravel surrounds are designed for minimal maintenance as well. The mow-overs in the tees are the same, being bronze set in sandstone mounts.

"Now it's all been installed, with all the sandstone monoliths, the mow-overs on each tee, the point of play markers and so on, my original vision for all the finishing touches at Rockliffe Hall has become a reality, and I'm glad to say that there's been a lot of praise for the overall presentation of the course. Eagle's input throughout, from design to



delivery, has been very useful, and the signage really looks the part. In the opinion of all those involved, the extra cost of going for bronze on sandstone has really paid off. It's worth it for the image and impressions it creates, and as an upmarket golfing destination, for Rockliffe Hall that's essential."

Advice to other greenkeepers

Davy's advice is very straightforward.

"Get involved with your club's choice of signage! It's an essential part of the course and as a finishing touch, presentation is the greenkeeper's responsibility. With your knowledge of the course and its environment, you should be the one person the club can trust with design, material and maintenance issues, so don't wait for them to make the decision – get involved!"





1st

Lyme Regis GC by Stuart Broom

Sun shines on Stuart

The 2009 BIGGA Photographic Competition, sponsored by Syngenta, has been won by a stunning picture (shown above) of the sun coming up behind a tree with a green silhouetted in the foreground, at Lyme Regis Golf Club, taken by Stuart Broom, an Assistant at the club.

Runner-up (above right) was a superb winter scene taken by Brian Consitt, an assistant at Lindin Hall Golf Club.

Third place (below right) went to Peter McCalla, of Brodick Golf Club, on the Isle of Arran, with a shot down the 1st with the magnificent view in the background.

The competition which was judged by Golf Course Photographer, Eric Hepworth; Golf Photographer, Matthew Harris;

Alan Birch, whose inspiration the competition was, Karen Robert, of Syngenta, and Tom Campbell, BIGGA's magazine Designer. Scott MacCallum was Chair of the voting panel.

Stuart receives a print of his choice from Eric's extensive photographic library and Lyme Regis will be profiled in the magazine next year.

Brian and Peter also receive prints. The three pictures and nine others will comprise the 2010 BIGGA calendar.

"I thought the winning pictures were all excellent. Stuart's picture of Lyme Regis shot into the sun showed great technical skill and is extremely atmospheric," said Eric.

He did have some advice for all amateur photographers

and entrants to the competition in future.

"Another piece of advice to entrants. Many of the pictures were taken early in the morning but taking some in the late afternoon or evening would have given a different perspective.

"Taking pictures in the middle of the day is to be avoided as the shadows are directly overhead and offer no contrast in the picture.

"In general I felt too many of the entries didn't show enough of the golf course and it is a golf course competition."

All the photographs may also be used by Syngenta as part of their marketing programme

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Linden Hall GC by Brian Consitt



Isle of Arran by Peter McCalla



Bedfordshire GC by Niall Kerr



Linden Hall GC by Brian Consitt



Wells GC by James Elliot



Pummerend, Burreggolf GC, Netherlands by Niall Kerr



Sundridge Park GC by Kevin Spooner



Minchinhampton GC by Paul Worster



Teeside GC by David Moss



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Balcomie Links by Robert Meikle

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Aeration

Left field thinking can pay off

Aeration equipment discussions tend to focus upon types of machines; their working speeds, operating depths, tine sizes and potential hole spacing. But it is how a piece of kit can be used that can make a real difference, as James de Havilland discusses...



The Bigga Training & Development Manual, sponsored by John Deere, is an invaluable tool for everyone working within the greenkeeping industry.

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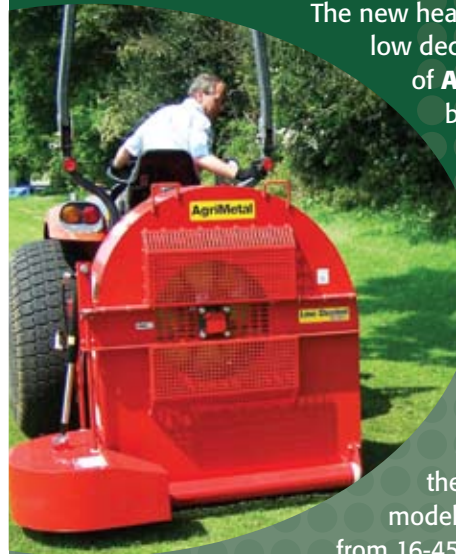
Designed around a theme of 18 holes users can gain access to training records, job specifications, job descriptions, sample contracts of employment, appraisal forms and details of continuing development.

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- 2 Click on the Members area, the Jobs page or the Education page and click on the BIGGA Training Manual link.
- 3 Enter your login details and select the BIGGA Training & Development Manual from the left hand menu.
- 4 The Training Manual will load and the user can click on Enter the Site to view a welcome video or can select 1-9 or 10-18 on the top menu bar.
You can progress through the manual hole by hole or go straight to the hole you wish to view. You can also skip to holes 10-18.
- 6 When you select a hole you will be presented with a window that explains what that hole is about. You can then select from the bottom tabs, video or sub-text (downloadable documents and links).
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Just take a look at the range of aeration kit that is on offer. In brief, you are absolutely spoilt for choice.

This does mean it is perhaps difficult initially to select machines to try on demonstration, but think of what you need to do or are seeking to achieve and matters can start to be less difficult.

It is also well worth asking around to see how neighbouring courses and aeration kit users are getting on with a certain make or model.

In most cases, modern machines tend to get on and do a job with very little bother. Details are what often sets certain models apart; the time it takes to swap tines or adjust working depths. Vibration or

a unit's ability to work when conditions may be on the cusp of ideal may also come into play.

Subtle design differences do impact upon performance. Operating costs, after sales support and speed are also key factors.

What is often overlooked, however, is how versatile a given machine is. Sometimes using an aerator for a set of task you have not considered can lead to surprising results.

Lateral thinking at Hankley Common

Hankley Common Golf Club's Course Manager, Gareth Roberts, is an example of someone who thinks

slightly differently, his Verti-Drain 7521 having proven its abilities to alleviated compaction problems all over the course. He describes it as 'the perfect machine for the job'.

Gareth has been at Hankley Common Golf Club for almost 18 years and Course Manager since 1999.

Hankley's first Verti Drain was purchased back in 1987 and was hired out to a number local Golf Clubs to help them improve their playing surfaces. Some four years ago Gareth took delivery of a new 7521, this unit remaining for his sole use.

Gareth suggests the Verti Drain is a versatile tool and has used it over the entire course. This includes all

A combination of high levels of play and routine trafficking by ride-on mowers can lead to a range of compaction issues. Aeration can help, but you do need to vary working depths and choose the right tools for the best results.



playing areas. Of equal note, he has used the machine for more unusual tasks. One example relates to a tee he had laid with new turf that was struggling to get a good connection with the soil.

The 'normal' policy could well have been to core down perhaps four or five inches. Gareth set to and hollow cored down to eight inches. This solved the problem, with good root development and a healthy playing surface.

Another problem area for Gareth was the 14th green. After heavy rain, this green would hold the water. Gareth used ½ inch tines working down to 10 inches to help resolve the problem, a top dressing, mixed with extra sand, being employed to fill the holes. A simple idea that proved a solution to an annoying problem.

Gareth suggests by using the Verti Drain continuously at the same depth can create a hard pan underneath the surface. To get round this potential problem he alternates between ¾ inch tines at 10 inches depth and one inch tines at eight inches deep.

The bunkers at Hankley Common Golf Club are of a fair size and a couple used to suffer from puddling after a heavy night's rainfall.

Again the solution was to run a pass through with the Verti Drain. Then there is the need to reinstate worn tracks on the heath; these tracks may be old footpaths maintenance paths, all of which have had considerable foot fall. Subject to compaction, the cure has again been to use the Verti Drain.

In these instances, the machine is fitted with one inch tines but only worked to down to three inches. A really slow pass, with close centres between the holes is the best approach, with heather seed brushed in afterwards.

"We may not see establishment of the seedlings for six to nine months," said Gareth.

"It's a slow process but good ground preparation helps. It is a worthwhile job that has delivered good results."



TOP: The bunkers at Hankley Common Golf Club are of a fair size and a couple used to suffer from puddling after a heavy night's rainfall. The solution was to run a pass through with the Verti Drain.

ABOVE: Gareth suggests by using the Verti Drain continuously at the same depth can create a hard pan underneath the surface. To get round this potential problem he alternates between ¾ inch tines at 10 inches depth and one inch tines at eight inches deep.

LEFT: Hankley Common GC's Course Manager, Gareth Roberts is an example of someone who thinks slightly differently, his Verti-Drain 7521 having proven its abilities to alleviate compaction problems all over the course. He describes it as 'the perfect machine for the job.'

Hankley Common: The inland links course

Hankley Common Golf Club in Farnham, Surrey was first opened for play over nine holes in 1897 seeing expansion to a full 18 hole course in 1922. Sometimes described as offering the closest resemblance to a seaside links course inland, the 7th hole is looked upon as being one of the finest par 3s in the country and the magnificent 18th a superb but challenging finishing hole.

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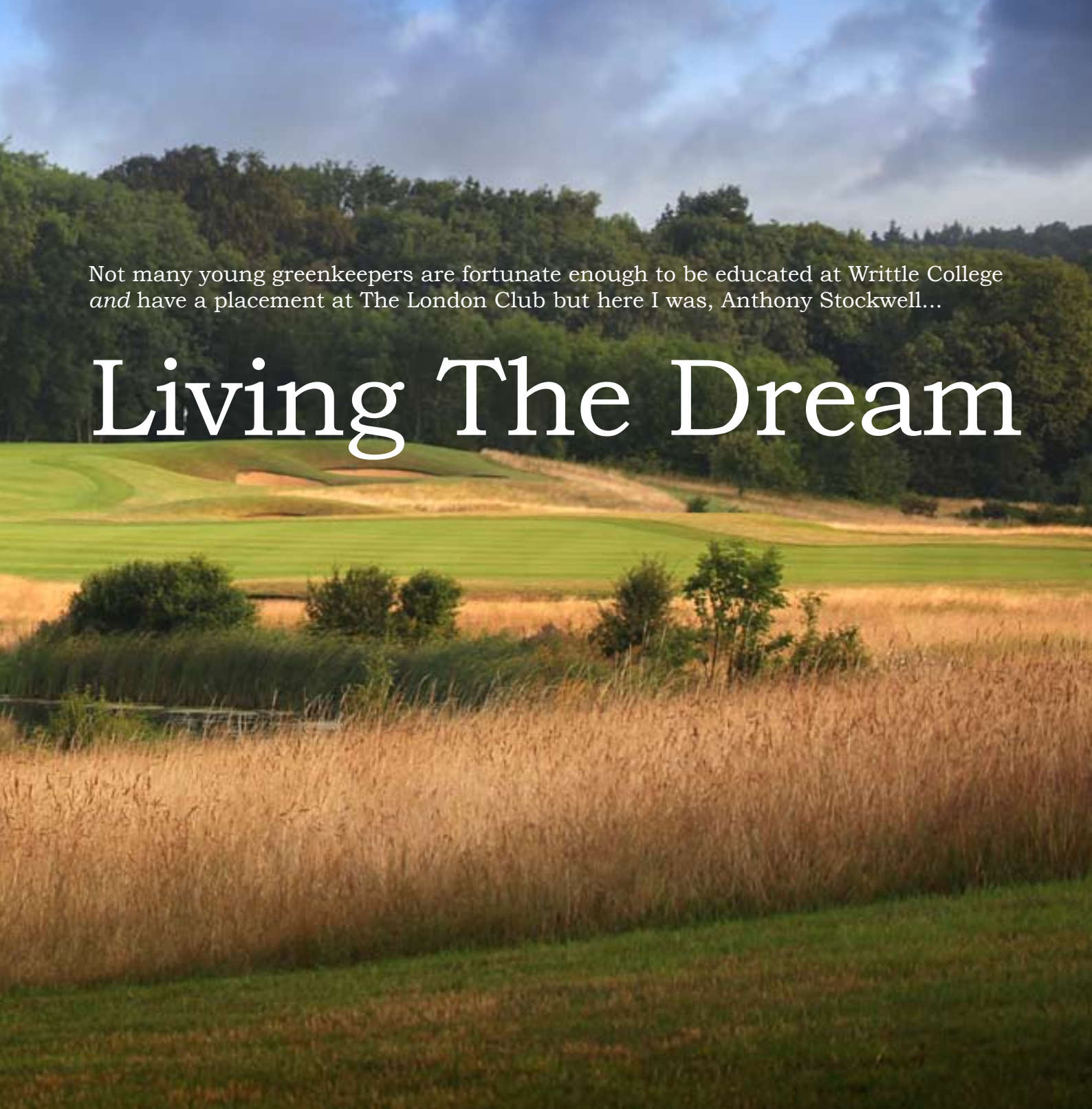
I became interested in golf at an early age and joined the junior section at Sutton Green Golf Club, just North of Guildford, in '96. I was reasonably successful as a player, eventually becoming Junior Captain, however it was clear that with a handicap of 12, I was never going to become a tournament professional!

Despite this I developed an interest in greenkeeping and course management after going to an open evening at nearby Merrist Wood College and spending a week's work experience at Wentworth. That

was it! After finishing my GCSEs and then A levels, I applied to go to Writtle College to study Sports Turf Science and Management for a BSc (Hons). I am now at the end of my third year having decided to take a fifteen month work placement at The London Club. This short article is about my time at The London Club before I return to Writtle for my final year.

I had previously worked at The New Zealand Golf Club during a summer season. New Zealand is a small but exclusive, Surrey heathland course just outside Woking and it provided me with invaluable experience of traditional greenkeeping.

When I turned up at The London for interview, it was clear to me that this was a club that was quite different to New Zealand. It was immediately apparent that here was a golf club that was looking very much to the future, while ensuring that the golfers of the present had the most perfect of locations to play. In terms of the approach to and management of greenkeeping it seemed to me to be at the cutting edge. In addition, the forward-thinking attitude and keen business ethos of The London Club suggested to me that here was a place where I just had to work. So, successful interview over, I found accommodation in nearby



Not many young greenkeepers are fortunate enough to be educated at Writtle College and have a placement at The London Club but here I was, Anthony Stockwell...

Living The Dream

Maidstone and started work in June 2008.

The timing of my placement couldn't have been better as the 2008 European Open Tournament was scheduled to take place only five weeks after my arrival and I would be launched immediately on a steep learning curve. During the build-up to the Tournament and throughout the event itself, there was a real buzz around the venue. We were live on Sky Sports in both years and in 2009 we had just under 90,000 spectators over the four days. The course not only had to satisfy the needs of a world class field contesting the tournament in

front of a knowledgeable crowd, it also had to satisfy the demands of the most discerning armchair viewers. Modern High Definition TV reveals every detail but here was a course presented at the peak of perfection.

For the 2009 European Open, I was given the responsibility of leading the greens mower team which consisted of five volunteers from other golf courses around the UK. The greens were cut at a bench height of 3.3mm and were usually cut three times a day, a double in the morning and a single cut in the evening, but consideration had to be given to the prevailing

conditions. The London Golf Club is situated at the highest elevation in Kent. It is in an exposed location and strong winds play a large factor in the cutting regime. If gusts were predicted, the greens didn't always have a second cut to avoid them playing too fast! Greens were stimped in between cuts so that a decision could be made, with 10'6" being the target speed. The weather prior to the event, in both years, was extremely dry so I was involved in a large amount of hand watering, targeting all dry spots, slopes and banks. In 2009, the weekend weather was glorious attracting record crowds. As expected, work-



ing hours for the tournaments were long so, in order to reduce travelling time, a few colleagues and I set up camp in the greenkeepers' compound for several days before and during the tournament! The golf course received overwhelming praise from the Tour, the players, and the all important media. I enjoyed myself tremendously and found the whole experience invaluable with hard work and the camaraderie of fellow workers making it a truly memorable occasion. Here I was living the dream where work seemed a pleasure!

My 15 months were divided up so that I was able to work on the International Course with Paul Kennedy and Mark Bell for eight months and also on the Heritage Course for seven months working

with Glenn Kirby and Ben Adams. I undertook a wide variety of tasks and worked on several projects including bunker renovations and tee construction. The heavy winter snow in February gave us the opportunity to thin out and rejuvenate much of the woodland and gorse plantations. One of the benefits of my experience was that I could put into practice the science and identification techniques that I had previously learnt in my first two years at college. I was often given the task of setting up the International Course and conducting disease inspection. One morning, I was asked to give a live commentary back to base over the radio on moss assessment on my way around the course. After returning to the yard, I discovered that I had been given, much to the

amusement of the other staff, the nickname Inspector Moss!

Working under the Courses Manager and current BIGGA Chairman, Peter Todd, staff are kept well informed on the latest news from the wider industry. Peter is keen on making sure the club is never stagnant and is always pressing forward and looking for sustainable improvement. His progressive statement, featured in a recent edition of GI, sums up his approach - "Chuck out your 2009 calendar now!"

Writtle College and The London Club have a firm relationship. I was able to work closely with several ex-Writtle students, including Mark Bell, who graduated from Writtle in 2004. Mark was given the responsibility of organising the

INSET: Course Manager, Peter Todd, surrounded by his European Open team.



morning set up of the Open. I found it encouraging working with Mark as he is progressing well with his career and was educated at the same institution.

As part of my course in my final year at Writtle, I need to complete a dissertation which is effectively a piece of research conducted during my placement. The subject I have chosen is a case study about the impact of our winter project work at The London according to different workers at the club. The winter projects included new tee placement and improvements to the approaches of certain greens.

The main question is to measure the effectiveness of these changes. So, in qualitative terms, I have conducted interviews with the club's greenkeeping staff and administrators, the results of which will hopefully help me determine whether the winter project work has been successful. I have found the research engaging and, from time to time, it is important to take

a step back to try to capture an overall view of how course evolution can be managed successfully. I also feel this type of basic research is vital to the continuing development of the industry.

The London Club has a strong emphasis on education and personal development. During the winter I was fortunate enough to be invited with Peter to attend a conference at The All England Lawn Tennis Club, where Eddie Seaward, MBE, gave a tour and a presentation on a year at Wimbledon. Seminars were led by Managers from Scotts and Syngenta.

I found the sessions very useful as it gave me a different perspective on how management plays a vital role in moving the industry forward.

Another source of valuable learning was the turf club which Glenn ran during the winter with the purpose of educating the green staff. Again I found the sessions interesting and everyone chipped in to ask questions.

The first of these sessions was based on the soil system. It was fascinating to observe the variety of profiles from different sections of the courses.

The constant learning on the job supplemented the theory gained in my college lectures.

Hopefully, this short article gives you a flavour of some of the things I have been doing during my 15 month placement at The London Club. As I return to the College lecture rooms and labs for my final year of study (which, given the fantastic practical experience I have had is not going to be easy), all that remains for me to do is to take this opportunity to thank Peter Todd and all the staff at The London for the very enjoyable time I have spent working with them.

It has been a pleasure to work there and I feel I have gained immeasurable experience and knowledge which will stand me in good stead for my final year at Writtle and for my future career.



ABOVE: Anthony Stockwell

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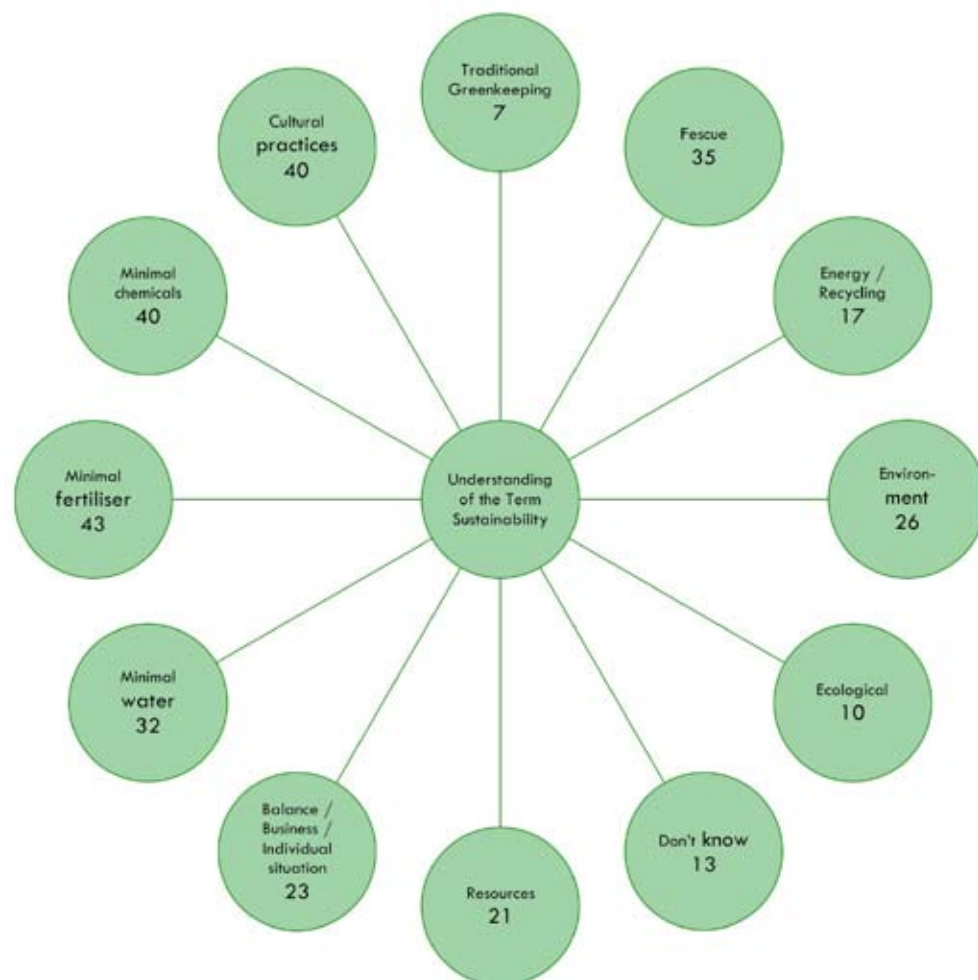
Understanding Sustainability...

Katie Walls and Dr Andy Owen, of Myerscough College, reveal the results of their recent survey examining what is meant by the “S” word

Sustainability is a frequently used ‘buzz word’ nowadays and is applied to a wide range of everyday processes and activities. Its definition will vary depending on the situation you wish to apply it to.

Broadly, sustainability covers three dimensions; economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. This is illustrated within the R&A’s definition of sustainable golf course management – “optimising the playing quality of the golf course in harmony with the conservation of its natural environment under economically sound and socially responsible management” (R&A, 2007). In the greenkeeping industry issues surrounding sustainability have been the focus of many seminars, articles and message board discussion but do we all really understand what it means when applied to our own individual situations?

Myerscough College, as part of a wider study examining sustainability, recently undertook a survey of Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers to ascertain their understanding of the term “sustainability” and interviewed key personnel from the greenkeeping and golf club industries. The responses that were received from the survey were analysed and it was felt that the easiest way to compare these written answers was to group common themes / words together. The results were then displayed indicating the percentage of responses relating to each theme. A total of 12 key issues were identified from the completed questionnaires (figure 1).



From these responses there were five that were mentioned more than any other. Over 30% of Course Managers / Head Greenkeepers stated that ‘minimal fertiliser’ (43%), ‘minimal chemicals’ (40%), ‘fescue grasses’ (35%), and ‘minimal water’ (32%) were important/relevant in their understanding of sustainability.

One of the key factors and initial steps in managing a golf course sustainably is the creation of a sustainable environment. This is achieved by improving drainage, air movement and light penetration, and reducing, and subsequently controlling, thatch levels by a suitable aeration programme. The importance of creating this environ-

Figure 1: Greenkeepers understanding of the term sustainability (numbers indicate the % of respondents using that term).

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ment and the correct use of cultural factors is clearly being recognised by Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers within the industry.

The level of inputs (water, fertiliser and chemicals) will play a major role in determining the success of a sustainable management programme. Once the ideal environment has been created through the use of necessary cultural practices then input levels can start to be monitored and reduced. Reduced water, chemical and fertiliser inputs could be an outcome of any sustainable management.

However, depend on your current situation i.e. soil type, local climate, health and condition of the turf.

A total of 35% of the respondents identified 'fescue grass' within their understanding of sustainability. There can, however, be confusion surrounding the desire to achieve fescue-dominated swards. The likelihood is that this will not be achievable in some areas, but what is achievable is movement towards

estly and realistically, determining the environmental conditions of that course and what it is possible to achieve there. Within this the importance of the business balance was also noted.

This is a crucial part of sustainable management. If you remember, sustainability encompasses three aspects; environmental, economic and social. Economic sustainability i.e. the business balance must be achieved for sustainability as a whole to be successful.

'Resources', including 'budget', was identified as a key response by 21% of course managers / head greenkeepers. Resources can be linked to minimal inputs; fertilisers and chemicals are becoming increasingly more expensive and quality water sources are a finite resource.

Judicious use of resources could have a positive impact on the budget, which might be beneficial in the current economic climate. Reducing the use of natural resources,

sustainable golf course management. So the question has to be asked; is the information available appropriate and in the right context? Perhaps it is not reaching as much of the targeted greenkeeper audience as intended? Or maybe there are those out there who don't buy into the philosophy and therefore don't want to understand?

The interviews with key personnel from the greenkeeping and golfing industries highlighted some interesting information.

The issue of improving education and informing greenkeepers what is involved in the process of sustainable management was a view echoed by a number of the interviewees.

From these interviews it also became very apparent that although the key organisations within the greenkeeping industry (R&A, BIGGA & STRI) had a very good understanding of sustainable golf course management those from the golfing industry (professional and secretary) had limited knowledge. To ensure more success and understanding of sustainability on the golf course all those involved need to be educated.

So in conclusion, these results show that a considerable proportion of Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers fully understand the concept of sustainable golf course management and are aspiring to incorporate aspects of sustainability into their management philosophy.

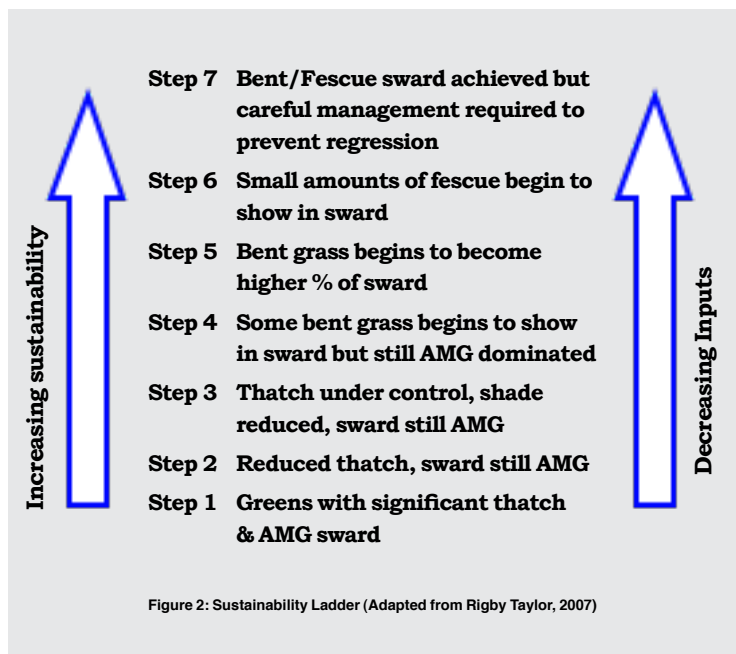
There is still a lack of education and understanding, however, and a refusal by some to accept the need and benefits of this type of management. Is more education the answer to this?

Golf courses are often perceived as polluters of the environment, which use and destroy valuable habitats. Many in the industry will know this isn't necessarily the case but an undesirable reputation that the industry has developed.

Careful use or management of the environment will therefore help to reduce this negative perception and create valuable habitats for wildlife whilst reducing environmental impact.

From the questionnaire there were also a small number of courses that provided generous detail of their successful progress towards sustainable management.

These 'real-life' examples illustrate that sustainable golf course management is possible, but that small steps need to be taken to allow maximum benefit with minimal disruption.



managing in a more sustainable way. This can be demonstrated by the following sustainability ladder.

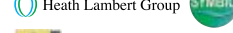
Progression up the ladder, even if only one or two steps, shows increasing sustainable management. Reaching step 7 is desirable but not always achievable and that's why the balance and business of the 'individual situation' must be taken into account. The importance of this was identified by 23% of the course managers / head greenkeepers.

The R&A prescribes that the first step in sustainable golf course management is to assess the course's current sustainability status, hon-

including energy is a major part of the sustainability concept, with energy / recycling being recognised by 17% of the respondents.

A final response to mention was that of the 13% who admitted to not really knowing what sustainability meant. Without a level of understanding of the principles and the process it is difficult for the course to be managed in a more sustainable manner. This particular response raises the issue of education and informing greenkeepers what is involved.

As mentioned in the introduction to the piece there have been numerous talks and articles relating to



This article comes to you courtesy of the BIGGA Learning and Development Fund.

Thank you to all our key sponsors

GI NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products from Saltex 2009 reviewed



Toro

Toro launched the ProCore Soil Reliever (SR) aeration range as well as the eco-friendly new Workman MDE electric utility vehicle.

Offering effective aeration up to depths of 40cm, the ProCore SR Series of deep-tine, tractor-mounted aerators alleviate subsurface soil compaction on applications spanning sports fields, parks, golf greens and fairways penetrating through the compaction layer sometimes caused by traditional aeration methods.

The SR Series' tines fracture the soil, creating channels through the rootzone that allow oxygen, water and valuable nutrients to penetrate deep into the soil profile, improving drainage and deep root growth. Turf is healthier and more vigorous as a result, in turn helping to guard against disease and making more efficient use of fertilisers while also reducing water usage.

The Workman MDE is an electric-powered utility vehicle launched as part of the new Workman MD Series line-up. Packing all the power and performance of Toro's mid-duty petrol-driven models in a quieter, cleaner and more eco-friendly package, the MDE is ideal for groundsmen and greenkeepers keen to reduce the environmental impact of their fleet.

Powered by a 48V, 500-amp motor, the MDE is equipped with extended-run batteries and regenerative braking for a longer-per-charge work capacity.

Toro has combined the MDE's enhanced suspension with an innovative Active In-Frame twister joint, which allows each axle to react independently to the terrain. This means that all four wheels can maintain constant contact with the ground for better traction and stability, plus less potential turf damage.

www.toro.com

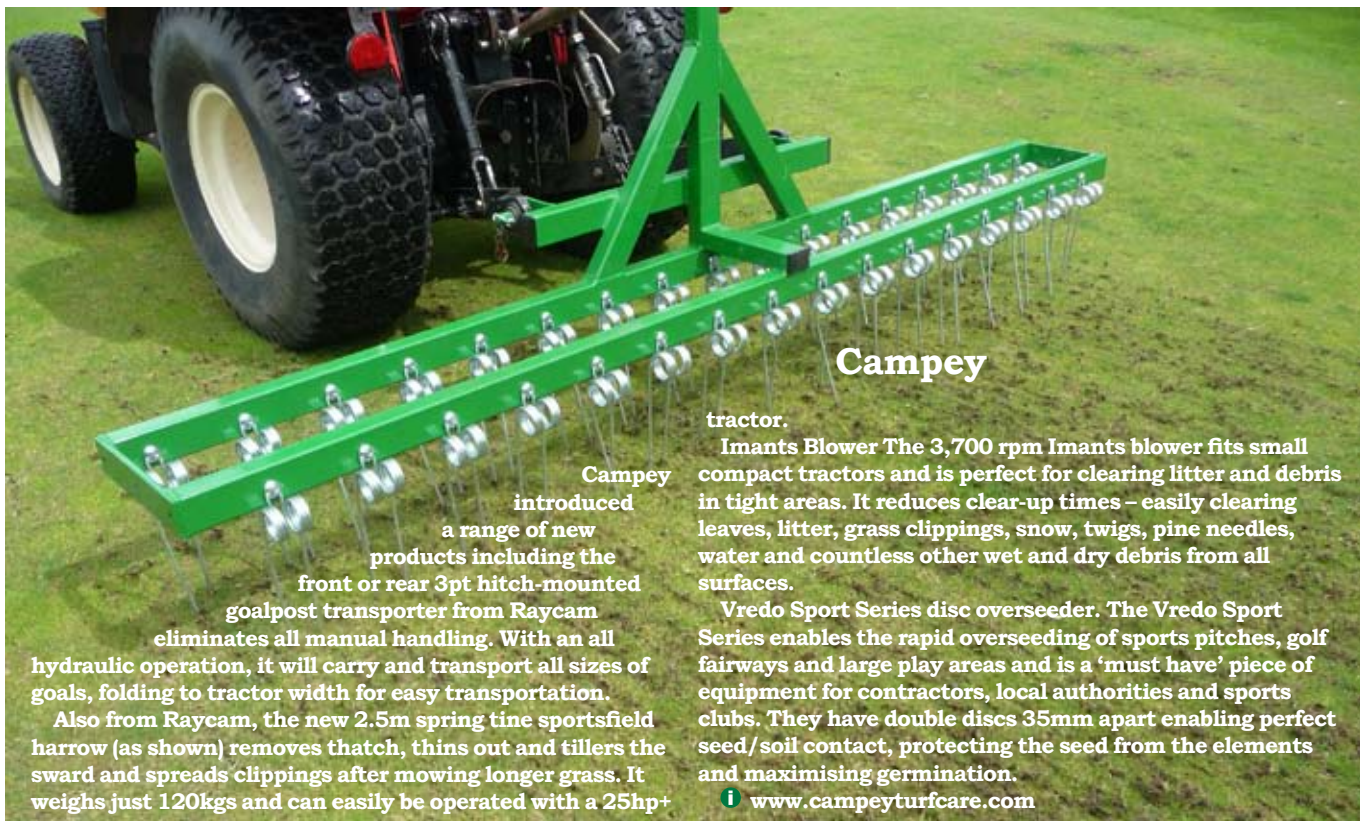
Etesia

Etesia launched a 4-wheel drive ride-on rotary mower – the Hydro 100DX BPHPX. Hydraulically operated with four individual wheel motors, the drive system is permanently engaged to ensure optimum grip when working in difficult mowing conditions. This enables the machine to take slopes, banks, uneven ground and potholes without wheel spin and scuffing.

It has easy-to-use forward and reverse hydrostatic drive with high-tip emptying of the grass box up to 1.80 metres. With its 100cm cutting deck, easy manoeuvrability, and tight 1.10m-radius turning circle, this ride-on is as at home mowing parks, open spaces, sports venues, verges and lawns as it is maintaining awkward smaller areas of grass. Operators can work at speeds of up to 12km/h in the assurance that there is no need to waste time stopping to unblock the chute. This is achieved through the unique design of Etesia's deck and specially profiled blade, plus its wide open ejection system.

Power is at the heart of any rotary mower, hence this high specification ride-on is fitted with a Perkins 403D-07 20.5hp 3-cylinder water-cooled diesel engine – a unit noted for its quieter, cleaner, smooth yet powerful delivery. Designed for durability and long life, this engine has a track record of proven reliability and performance and offers maximum fuel efficiency; low running costs plus longer intervals between servicing and oil changes.

www.etesia.com/uk



Campey

Campey introduced a range of new products including the front or rear 3pt hitch-mounted goalpost transporter from Raycam eliminates all manual handling. With an all hydraulic operation, it will carry and transport all sizes of goals, folding to tractor width for easy transportation.

Also from Raycam, the new 2.5m spring tine sportsfield harrow (as shown) removes thatch, thins out and tills the sward and spreads clippings after mowing longer grass. It weighs just 120kgs and can easily be operated with a 25hp+

tractor.

Imants Blower The 3,700 rpm Imants blower fits small compact tractors and is perfect for clearing litter and debris in tight areas. It reduces clear-up times – easily clearing leaves, litter, grass clippings, snow, twigs, pine needles, water and countless other wet and dry debris from all surfaces.

Vredo Sport Series disc overseeder. The Vredo Sport Series enables the rapid overseeding of sports pitches, golf fairways and large play areas and is a 'must have' piece of equipment for contractors, local authorities and sports clubs. They have double discs 35mm apart enabling perfect seed/soil contact, protecting the seed from the elements and maximising germination.

www.campeyturfcare.com



New Holland

New Holland introduced its very own touch of retro at Saltex to gauge reaction to its classic style.

The Boomer 8N was launched in the USA last winter with its distinctive styling mirroring the original iconic 8N, but combined with the very latest technology from New Holland.

The 50hp compact tractor is ideally suited to those who wish to mix the classic charm of yesteryear with the reliability and efficiency of a modern machine, whether on the polo field or golf course.

Sporting a red chassis, grey hood and fenders to give it the look and feel of the original 8N, the new model breaks away from New Holland's blue livery. Customers can have a choice of canopies, decals and chrome accessories.

Derived from the Boomer 3000, the 8N version retains the 2.2 litre, four cylinder naturally aspirated diesel engine which combines with the EasyDrive transmission for efficient, effortless driving.

Four-wheel drive is standard for improved traction and manoeuvrability, while the deluxe three-point hitch with telescoping stabilisers has 1600kg lift capacity to handle a range of implements. Attachment is eased by a two-position extendible swinging drawbar.

Modern creature comforts are provided for the driver, with a large platform, adjustable seat, and tilting/telescoping steering column, while traditional styling is continued in the instrumentation.

www.newholland.com



DJ Turfcare

DJ Turfcare launched Bio-Line from the Viano organic range.

It acts to reduce the acidity of the soil, particularly if the pH is below 5.5, but also assists with the uptake of nutrients and the decrease of moss development. The lime element helps to correct the pH while the magnesium gives the grass a healthy colour throughout the winter.

www.djturfcare.co.uk



Autoglide

Autoglide Equipment launched its UK built StarStrimme, a fast, accurate, safer alternative to hand-held trimmers working round posts and uprights.

It attaches to the back of a 30 and 50 horsepower tractor and connects to the power take off. Operated by the driver as the machine is driven down a line of posts or uprights, the StarStrimmer is simple to operate and highly effective. There is no vibration, no need for fuel thus reducing fumes and does not scalp the grass.

Effective on posts up to 15cm in diameter, the unit contains three trimmer heads which rotate around the post, as the tractor drives on, trimming the grass from all sides. It is ideal for racecourses but is equally impressive where the lowest rail is at least 30cm from the ground.

www.autoguide.co.uk

Ransomes Jacobsen

Ransomes Jacobsen launched the Highway 3™, a new triplex cylinder mower.

This new four-wheel drive machine is powered by a 33hp turbocharged Kubota diesel engine, which combined with a 6.7% weight reduction over the current Highway 2130.

It has several new features, never seen before in a commercial triple. A first for a mainstream municipal mower is the swing-out centre cutting unit, a principle adapted from the Jacobsen G-Plex III golf greens mower.

The four-wheel drive system operates on a cross-flow principle, which transfers oil from the front hydraulic wheel motor and delivers it to the opposite rear motor, preventing traction loss should the front wheels begin to lose grip.

Unique to any current mowing machine is the optional TST stability enhancement system. An inclinometer is fitted to the underside of the seat platform where it measures the working angle of the machine. At predetermined angles it activates some of the hydraulic components on the machine, increasing its stability on slopes. At 15 degrees the operator is warned by an icon on the large dashboard display that the machine has reached that angle. At 18 degrees, the hydraulic lift valves close, locking the lift arms creates an 'outrigger' effect, which increases stability. If the operator continues to a steeper slope at 22 degrees, the cutting units will shut down, to prevent mowing at this angle.

The Highway 3 features the most advanced control systems yet seen in a Ransomes mower, with many of the traditional gauges replaced with a single, multi-functional screen.

www.ransomesjacobsen.com

More
New Products
from Saltex
next month



Dennis

Dennis launched a new mower at Saltex developed with the help of its customers, who were invited to give their feedback when the design was previewed in Harrogate this year.

The Razor Ultra 560 is an exceptionally versatile cylinder mower for applications ranging from golf greens and tees to cricket pitches and bowling greens.

At the heart of the design of the 56cm cut mower is an 11-blade British-made cylinder, relief ground for a quality cut and long intervals between grinds, reducing downtime and boosting productivity.

The Razor Ultra 560 has heavy duty independent roller and cutter clutches for smooth operation and two-section cast aluminium rear roller with steel geared differential; it offers easy pull back for accurate alignment of the next run.

Manoeuvrability on tight, undulating greens is ensured by an ultra-short wheelbase. Adjustment is also made simple with a 'click adjust' to select the desired height of cut.

www.dennisuk.com

John Deere

Designed for maximum durability and operator comfort, John Deere's new 8400 Commercial triple reel mower features high capacity Jumbo cutting units and a unique Cross Cut function for increased productivity in a range of commercial mowing applications.

Key features include the 25cm six-blade cutting units, with an overall cutting width of 2.13m, and John Deere's established GRIP all-wheel drive traction system for effective mowing on slopes – both firsts on a John Deere commercial triple mower.

The Jumbo cutting units have been specially designed for cutting long grass on road verges, parks and sports fields, and other public and private green spaces. They feature robust lift arms, self-cleaning smooth rear rollers and easy reel to bedknife adjustment, with cutting height also easily adjustable from 20 to 100mm.

For more effective grass dispersion, the two front cutting units throw the grass out to each side of the machine, so that the middle unit does not have to handle the extra clippings.

The 8400 uses a turbocharged Tier 3 diesel engine with direct injection and a fuel capacity of 49 litres, to maintain high performance levels in the toughest conditions.

John Deere's Cross Cut feature is the only one of its type offered on a commercial triple mower, and makes turning and switching from mowing to transport very quick and easy. A rocker switch on the CommandARM allows all the reels to be lifted just off the ground when turning and then lowered back to the mowing position.

www.deere.co.uk



British Seed Houses

BHS's fertiliser division launched a nutrient solution which can be applied to the seedbed without compromising seedling numbers. It incorporates a soil inoculant designed to create the ideal conditions for seedlings to resist pathogens that lead to turf disease.

Two products were introduced; Fertilis Speed and Fertilis Swing are organo-mineral NPK fertilisers with magnesium, sulphur along with trace elements Boron, Iron and Zinc. The 'secret' ingredient is *Bacillus Subtilis*, a naturally-occurring, rod-shaped bacterium used as a soil inoculant.

In trials, *Bacillus Subtilis* spores were shown to grow out from a treated fertiliser granule, resting the pathogens responsible for diseases including Fusarium, Brown Patch and Dollar Spot.

Effects of *Bacillus subtilis* were shown to improve root growth nine-fold and promote more than twice the leaf growth compared to an untreated plant 21 days after application. For new sowings, Fertilis Swing at 35-50g/ m² combines NPK 14+6+17 with *Bacillus subtilis*

www.britishseedhouses.com

Kubota

Superseding the ZD Series, the new ZD326 zero turn mower is fitted with the 26hp Kubota E-TVCS D1005, 3 cylinder, liquid cooled diesel engine, the ZD326 has the power, torque and durability to take on the toughest mowing jobs. And it can work for longer, thanks to the 45 litre dual fuel tank and Kubota's outstanding fuel economy with low emissions, noise and vibration.

The ZD326 is fitted with Kubota's integral HST transmission and drive train system, which provides reliability and durability for the rigours of day in, day out commercial mowing. Each drive wheel is independently operated by two steering drive levers, which allow the machine literally to turn within its own radius.

To ensure cutting performance, even at faster speeds, Kubota's newly developed, 5.5" deep, heavy duty pro-mower deck is built to withstand long hours of mowing.

www.kubota.co.uk



A QUICK GUIDE TO...

Artificial Grass Pathways

Verde Sports Limited provide this month's Top Tips

As the winter weather is fast approaching, preparations to ensure that courses will be playable right through till Spring is getting underway.

It is important not to neglect pathways especially if money is tight. Artificial Grass is a cost effective solution despite common misconceptions.

Artificial grass could benefit your club, bring in extra revenue and increase your profits.

1. Muddy Paths Put Players off

A lot of work is carried out through the year to ensure that the course is in tiptop condition. However, the golfer still has to get both to the course and from one hole to another. Cheap, quick fixes for these paths are often used. In the long run these aren't cost effective and players are put off on many occasions. Would you want to walk across a mud bath?

2. Cost Effective Solution

Artificial grass doesn't cost as much as people presume. It's a bit like buying a cheap car. It may cost less initially, but it is expensive to maintain and has to be replaced much sooner. If a more expensive car had been purchased it would have cost less over 20 years and would have freed up time considerably, along with a lot less stress. Artificial Grass may appear expensive at the outset, but there is minimal maintenance required and it should last up to 20 years once installed. The green staff now have more time to concentrate on the course. All in all giving long term cost benefits.

3. Easy Installation

Artificial Grass is easy to install and can be carried out by the green staff themselves. As long as a free draining base is in place the artificial grass can simply be laid directly over the compacted soil or stone sub-base. Both sand-filled and non-sand filled options are



available to suit different areas of the course. If fixed securely this will remain in place for years to come. The installation is very similar to that of natural turf.

4. Low Maintenance

Once Artificial Grass has been installed there is very little maintenance required. Simply ensure that leaves are brushed off to prevent moss and keep the grass looking green. However, if left unattended and moss should appear, it is easily removed with various moss killers without damaging the surface. You now have a mud free pathway all year round.

5. Versatile & Hardwearing

A properly installed artificial grass pathway is substantial enough for the golf course machinery to drive over - the same path can be used for tractors, mowers, buggies, trolleys, golfers and the greenkeeper. Not only does it withstand this constant traffic but is also suitable for playing from if a ball should land on the path.

6. All-Weather Surface

Artificial Grass creates a surface, which is safe to use 12 months of the year. It isn't

muddy or slippery in wet weather or worn and dusty in the dry. Come rain, sun or shine it is a perfect solution all year round

7. Sound Resistant

One of the benefits of artificial grass is that it provides a surface, which is silent and comfortable to walk on, allowing the golfers to concentrate on their shot without the distraction of a noisy path.

8. Natural Appearance

The attractive green surface of the artificial grass blends well in to the course surroundings. This enhances a wide variety of areas that look and feel like natural grass without the associated wear or maintenance problems.

Taking all these points in to consideration your course would now remain open all year round, which in turn generates revenue and increases profitability.

For further advice on installation
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Fax: 01254 831066
Email: sales@verdesports.com
Web: www.verdesports.com




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Section Notes

Please email your notes to
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All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region



Central

The Section AGM will take place in the training rooms at Elmwood Golf Course on Monday, October 26. Full details are available on the website.

That morning the Section will be holding a seminar on disciplinary training at the same venue and at the time of going to press we still have a couple of spaces available.

This is an ideal course for Course Managers or Head Greenkeepers and their Deputies who have to deal with staffing issues. It will take people through the correct procedure in carrying out disciplinary investigations and hearings, thereby avoiding costly mistakes to both the employee and the employer. Subsidised by BIGGA HQ, the half day course costs £55.

To secure one of the remaining places contact me on gmoir@standrews.org.uk asap. More details are available on the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk along with details of the STRI ecology course in November for which we are starting to receive some names for.

The Section autumn outing will have been held by the time you read this and the results will be on the website and appear in the next edition of the magazine,

Gordon Moir



East

Sorry about the last two months of our news from the east Section. We have now

found out the problem. BIGGA headquarters were experiencing problems downloading data from different systems and lost our news for the last two issues. All is fixed now and you can read what is going on in our Section.

We played our "Willie Woods Invitational tournament" at Kingsknowe GC, the format for the golf was fourball better ball and with 10 teams entered for our tournament the chances of winning were good.

I brought along as a partner - he says the best thing that came out of Fife - no prizes for guessing, Derek Scott, who came in as a late sub for Mike Denis who is over golfed just now.

We were drawn with the formidable pairing of "Toro Jim" and Rab Wilson, from Henderson's - you could sell tickets for this challenge.....well.

I think the combination of the big occasion and the windy conditions got to both sides, and the game did not materialise into what might have been called the "Dual in the Wind". It was more like "Gone with the Wind". We came out the victors in this battle with more golf balls left than Jim and Rab. Sorry guys, I'm sure that you will get revenge somewhere.

And now for the Real Event! The weather was a bit windy to say the least so the guys who could keep the ball about a foot of the ground would win this one.

You would have to look at the Links players for a victory. Correct, Ian Watson and his partner, George Ford, from Gullane, were the winners posting a score of 65. Well done lads.

At last we managed to track down Robert the Bruce and invited him along to our tournament. We blew the dust of his retiral gift and this was presented to him by our Chairman, Stewart Crawford, on behalf of the East Section members.

Robert accepted the gift and thanked the East members for their kindness. (You don't look

old enough for this retiral thing Robert).

It was nice to see our Scottish Chairman, John Geddes, making the long journey down from Aberdeen to play in our event. Thank you John.

Our Chairman thanked the Captain of Kingsknowe for having the East Section outing at this venue and Stevie Dixon, and his staff, for the excellent condition of the course. Stevie thanked the East Section for the presentation of a plaque and welcomed everyone back in the near future.

Other notable thank yous went to Gary Smith, from Scott's, for sponsoring the day and to all the raffle prizes that were mostly donated by the trade.

Our Section committee would like to thank all the members and guest who came along and supported the event.

All the Scores of the "Willie Woods Invitational"

1. Ian Watson & George Ford, both Gullane, 65; 2. Shaun Cunningham, Royal Musselburgh, & Colin McArthur, Broomieknowe, 66 (BIH); Jim Smith & Gary McCandles, both Rigby Taylor, 66.

All other scores: S. Crawford & S. Dixon, 68 (BIH); J. Geddes & B. Moir, 68; R. Murdoch & S. Ferguson, 69; T. Murray & D. Scott, 70; G. Smith & R. Bruce, 72; A. Caldwell & J. Caldwell, 77; R. Wilson & J. Davidson, 84.

Longest Drive. Gary McCandles; Nearest the Pin. George Ford; Nearest the Hole in Two. Jim Smith.

Tom Murray
07709960163



North

As I am writing this month's article it is absolutely chucking it

down outside. I have never seen such a huge amount of rainfall in such a small space of time. In fact, after speaking to another member, who measures the amount of rain we have, he said that we had 96mm in just over a day and a half. That's quite a lot in my book.

I was speaking to John Geddes, at McDonald Golf Club, and that is a course that doesn't take too kindly to a lot of rain. He was saying that his whole front nine was under water and in some places up to four feet deep. I have sent a picture of his 7th hole with a wee article.

This is in the news pages of the magazine.

There hasn't really been a lot else happening in the North Section over the past month. If there has then I haven't heard about it.

The Norrie Whytock Trophy was played on August 20 at Archie Dunn's Auchterarder Golf Club. The weather prior to the event had been terrible and the course was luckily opened at 1pm.

The North Section sent a team down packed with experience and stamina. John Geddes, Hugh McLatchie, James McCormack and George Mitchell travelled with great expectation. The team came a creditable 5th with 81 points.

The overall winners on the day were Ayrshire with 92 points. A big congratulations and well done to them.

A report will follow in next month's article for the Autumn outing to Alyth. All the winners and losers, and stories will be written. I hope everyone enjoyed it.

There is news of the AGM. This will be held at Cruden Bay Golf Club on Thursday, October 15. Cost of the day per person will be £10 and the tee times will run from 11am. Anyone interested in coming along to the day should get in touch with the secretary Dale Robertson on

07711274525.

I think that's it for this month. If I have forgotten anything I apologise and will remember to include it next month. Cheers

Ben Brookes

Murcar Links 07813889374



Ayrshire

The date you've all been waiting for! Yes this year's AGM will take place on Thursday, October 29 at Bogside 7.30 pm.

Ayrshire finally got its name on the Norrie Whittock Trophy, sponsored by Bayer, at the fourteenth time of asking! Auchterarder GC hosted the event which looked liable to succumb to the weather.

The course held up well though and all players got 18 holes in! Archie and his team had the course in great shape considering the recent poor weather. Thanks also to the catering staff for the excellent food and service.

Our team consisted of myself, Derek Wilson, Martin Lothian and Duncan Gray.

With the Belfast trip and Powfoot taking place in the next few weeks I will get the reports in the next issue.

That's it for now then any news to me at denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or 07939 104701

Denis Tweddell

Northern Region



North Wales

This month's column like the daylight hours at this time of year is I'm afraid, a bit short.

The autumn tournament and AGM took place on October 1 at Eaton Golf Club and a full write up on tournament results and AGM in next months column, I think we would all like to thank Eaton Golf Club for the warm welcome and use of the course and the facilities.

Next month we will hopefully be holding our autumn seminar, venue and dates yet to be confirmed so watch this space! In our local news section, we seem completely lacking in local news so come on help me out a bit by

giving me some of your news so I can fill this column up, like I said only a short column this month so.

ALL THE BEST UNTIL NEXT MONTH.

Pete Maybury Petemayb66@aol.com 07756001187

Johnny Evans

Johnny.evans@tesco.net



North West

The next fixture coming up is the autumn tournament at Mere G&CC.

This is on Tuesday, October 13. The entry fee is £25 payable to BIGGA North West Section for £25 to Bill Merritt. The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Billy can be contacted on mobile number 07985175825.

As always in the Section there is no news of any kind as nobody phones me or

e-mails me so there is nothing to write about. I sometimes get asked why there are no Section notes, so I assume that members do read them but I cannot understand why nobody wants to contribute. Some members are quick to pass comments about the Association but do nothing to move it on.

A two day Essential Management course has been arranged for November 4 and 5 at Birchwood Golf Club in Warrington. This course will be partly subsidised and I expect it to cost somewhere in the region of £150 for the two days including meals. Please apply to myself, Chris Sheehan, on 01512894625 or mobile no 07840706738 or e-mail jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk places will be on a first come basis.

Chris Sheehan



North East

As you read your September magazine you would find that Close House was given a feature and, of course, since it was visited by Scott McCallum a lot of work has since been done. For example some of the greens have been seeded and also more recently new staff have been

recruited. These are Roy White and Graham Lauder, both from Slayley Hall. We wish them well.

Whickham Golf Club is about to do a major alteration on its course very shortly. For those who have played Whickham's 18th hole you know that you can get some difficult lies if you don't get your drive away. Well, apparently they are hoping to make the fairway stepped, then replace the stream with a small lake or pond.

On behalf of the Section we would like to wish Jordan Gibson, of Northumberland Golf Club, the best of luck in playing in the National Championship at Burnham and Burrow later this month.

James Richardson



East Midlands

Not much news on the golf front here, you should have all received letters for the Autumn Tournament and AGM on October 15 at Matlock Golf Club. There is still time to get your entries in so come along. Any volunteers for next year's committee will also be gratefully accepted!

The Autumn Education day is now confirmed with the speakers including Paul Lowe, Greg Evans, Frank Newberry and Andy Cole, of the STRI. The day promises to be fun filled and informative with plenty of lively debate! It will be good to see as many of you as possible at Forest Hill Golf Club on November 19.

By the time of publishing both the Section trip to Wimbledon and the Headland Pairs' final at The Grove should have been completed – full report in next month's magazine.

As always if anybody has any interesting news or gossip please let me know at biggaeast-midlands@hotmail.com.

Regards

Andy de Wet



East of England

October already, once again where did the summer go? A pretty mixed bag this side of the

country with warm dry spells in June and August coupled with a pretty miserable July that have contrived to keep us on our toes at all times. Hopefully the weather will settle down now and allow us to get to Christmas fairly dry, then see what the new year brings.

Our last golf event was the annual Greenkeepers vs Trade match held this year at Abbot-sley Golf Club, home of our Chairman, Allan Walker.

The event was well supported by greenkeepers, however, there was a disappointing turn out from the trade for varying reasons.

Thanks from Gary Cooper go especially to Tony Kvedaras, from Independent Turfkare Solutions, who came all the way from his native North West for the fixture, enjoy the overnight stay and our Chairman's hospitality!

Thanks also to the guys from Pottergate Golf Club who made up the numbers for the trade team to make all six matches two verses one! Sportingly our Chairman refused to give any trade teams a head start and therefore a one sided fixture gave a one sided result with the greenkeepers winning 5 – 1.

Gary Cooper would like it known that for the second year running and even with an extra player that Allan Walker has not been able to take a point from him!

Praise for the condition of the course goes to Allan Walker and all his staff, despite their new pink workshirts - yes I did say pink! Thanks also to all at Abbotsley for making us feel so welcome.

Hopefully next year's event can be organised to allow a more even match to be played.

Our next golf day is our annual AGM which this year is being held at RAF Cottesmore Golf Club on Thursday, October 15. After the success of our visit there last year it will be good to play the course again and enjoy the hospitality in the Officers Mess.

The AGM will this year take place before the golf so arrive early and get involved. AGM and full golf day details will be sent out soon and remember ID to be allowed on to the base.

Many thanks
steveimingham@aol.com
www.eastofenglandbigga.com
Steve Beverly



Midland

Well that's it I've had enough, kite flying is now for me. It will take one hell of a long tippet to get my flies in the river using such a method! While we are on angling let me tell you a little story, all true and bear with me it is of relevance to us all.

I, and my brother (Ceri), were fishing a huge hole on the upper Severn, I gave him the better, very deep middle section, to fish and I took the fast flowing upper part. As usual my flies became snagged and while retackling heard a faint "ah". Looking up all I saw of Ceri was his panicked face off to Bristol with his waders evermore dragging him further under. Like Tarzan in I go, manage to grab his legs and push him out of the current to safety, but now I'm in the same predicament. However, I've read the H&S while fishing books. I simply turn on my back with legs down stream and ungracefully float to the shallows and watch, out of reach, both my smokes and wallet pass by. Ceri is a trained lifeguard and worked for 10 years as such. So who was to blame? Me. I did not tell him that the water was too deep past a point, did not advise wearing polarised glasses so he could see the danger, but most importantly did not tell him what to do in such an event.

The point I make is that while it is not enthralling reading it is of importance that we all read and understand the "operator's manual" of a machine and/or receive on the job training BEFORE we undertake any works. I am as guilty as the next, but of course I know everything! But does the person you send? You can't read when in difficulties.

Now what's this I hear, the newly-wed Colin Wood, of Sandwell Park, has left to, one can only assume, peruse a career in his passion for darts. Or was the little wife fed up of you working seven and a half days a week - under the thumb or what, Colin. Good luck to you in your new venture "Ice Man". Still waiting for my tobacco chap, let's call it a wedding gift mate.

Well come on now "It wasn't me" worst the luck (respectfully). Ed and his lovely wife Julie are expecting another little one. So that makes 4 point 2 as opposed to the normal 2 point 4. Can you not do anything normally, oh the Point 2 being the new Collie, at least that can't climb trees. In less than a decade you have travelled a very long way my friend, well done and congratulations to you both. I've got a couple of bricks and a billhook here chap, black eyed peas is not the word. Ed, cc or si si.

This month's calendar sponsor is our old friends Scotts, please contact Nia Frost on: 07884 066 655 or go to: www.scottspromotional.co.uk for your fertiliser etc needs. Scotts have also been the sponsor of the very successful Doubles Tournament for many years now, and we are reaching its conclusion for this year's event. Who will be the final champions? However, all are winners in this wonderful event, thanks to Scotts for their continued historically kind support of the section.

Last month I dropped a booby, Burton golf venue is on the 23/10/09 and not on the 16th as reported, my apologies.

Sean McDade.



B,B&O

October! What a month in our calendar. The summer is becoming a distant memory, the nights are pulling in and my Triumph bike is ready for a much deserved rest, the mornings are getting darker and colder with the evenings drawing us to a seasons close.

A warm welcome awaited the section members for the BBO Autumn Pairs Invitational which took place at Donnington Valley GC, The course was in excellent condition and on the day, full of surprises as Alistair gave us a brief insight to what it must be like to play on Augusta greens, certainly not for the faint hearted.

Thanks to Donnington Valley GC for the courtesy of the course and all the catering and management staff who provided

hospitality ensuring our every need was met, Alistair Higgs and Peter Smith and all the Donnington crew who gave us a day to remember.

Thanks to Ian Richardson from Headland Amenity for sponsoring this event.

The results 1. Dominic Lewis, Graham Down, Oakland Park; 2. Sid Arrowsmith, Peter Smith, Frilford Heath; 3. Phil Ryder, Keith May, Berkshire.

Steve Coone, James Moore 36pts won the Trade prize

A trip to Ransome's factory is on offer to all members, TH White are sponsoring a trip on November 25 to the impressive Ransomes manufacturing plant in Ipswich, this will include transport from TH White and a guided tour of these state of the art facilities with lunch and even a game of golf on the new 3 hole course.

Limited spaces are available, so get your name in the frame. All this for £5 per head.

Interested parties please contact Simon Marsh for details and times, Simon can be contacted on 07850 450 505 or email greenkeeper@harleyford.co.uk

The next event for your diary will be held at The Oxfordshire GC on Thursday, December 9 and will run with a Texas Scramble Shotgun Start with the Annual General Meeting after play.

Adam King the Section Secretary is always interested in feedback and new ideas and ways of promoting the Section members to join in on our events throughout the calendar year, please do come forward and make suggestions to Adam on what you think we can do to further improve the BBO Section. ajk@radley.org.net

The Section website is alive and has been kicking for some time, so if you have any news or views, give it a blast! www.bbo-greenkeepers.co.uk

Have a great Autumn
Mark Day
mark.day@tacitgolf.com

South East Region

South East Region Seminar Reigate Hill Golf Club, November 12

This year's Seminar is arranged and hosted by the Surrey Section - The Decade Ahead!

As we move out of the naughties what does the next decade hold for golf management and Greenkeepers?

With climate change an ever deepening recession and greater demands on Golf Course quality this years Seminar will include five excellent speakers from within the industry, covering a wide range of subjects to help us with the day to day challenges and long term improvements.

Speakers: Mark Hunt, Headland; Martin Ward, Symbio; Laurence, Pithie MG, TurfMasterOne; Tim Lobb, Thomson Perritt & Lobb, Lee Penrose, STRI Ecologist and Tracey Madison, from BIGGA HQ. Cost to members is £15

For more information please contact Clive Osgood South East Regional Administrator 01737 819343

cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk



Surrey

Friday, September 5. Only another three weeks and I, and her indoors will be on holiday cruising the Baltic. Of course, when you read this, we will have just returned and that shows you just how difficult it is for me to write this one month ahead, when in effect, that month has already gone. Or has it? Where's Albert Einstein and his Theory of Relativity when you need him? And does it apply to travelling at only 25 knots, somewhat slower than the speed of light? I am now going to lie down quietly in a dark room and pretend that life is but a dream and that sanity will eventually be restored.

Monday, August 24. The annual competition for the much coveted McMillan Tankard, at Sunningdale. The weather was warm with sunny spells and playing from the white tees was a challenge that Paul Weston and myself accepted with much enthusiasm. Andy Gatland made up the threeball and struck his drives with great authority far beyond the heather. Paul and I, with less authority, went into the heather with agonising consistency. Members who played well were Ron Christie, with a magnificent longest drive, Phil (Angel) Rowlands got Near-

est the Pin - I know, I couldn't believe it either, and with 35 pts on countback, the winner of the aforementioned cup was Ryan Angear. Gary Holland, 35 pts, was runner-up, and the other Effingham GC bandito, who came third was Cameron Porter. That great Scottish golfer, Gareth Roberts, had the best gross score and will, if you are not careful, relive for you at our next event... every shot.

The next event is at Wimbledon Park GC, which confusingly has not taken place yet, but will have by the time you read this. Back to the dark room.

Daddies of the month are Jon Day and Daniel Pelling. On August 3 Daniel's partner Adrienne and I'm sure with much relief and great joy gave birth to Jonathan James, 9 lbs 15 oz. Jon's wife Abby, on August 11 had a second baby girl, Isla, 8 lbs 13 oz. Congratulations to both families.

As you may all be aware, Bob Wiles, RAC GC, officially retires in February 2010, after 33 years. Bob, a man to whom the years have been kind, and who still has a little twinkle, sorry that should read a little twinkle in his eye, is looking forward to relaxing in the Chichester area by the sea. He is intent on playing much golf in the Goodwood area and Bill Payne, Course Manager at Goodwood GC will be reducing the speed of their golf carts after Bob and his grandson overturned one on the course a few weeks ago. Bob assured me that he was not driving and that his grandson was not over the limit. Bob's successor, Eric Olsen, The Belfry GC, starts in October 2009 and we wish him every success in his new position.

Tony Worsfold, Workshop Manager at the RAC GC, also retires soon, but will continue to maintain the RAC's collection of veteran and older RAC rescue vehicles which are stored at Woodcote Park and occasionally displayed at the RAC's London office in Pall Mall. Good luck to you both and may you enjoy a long and exciting retirement.

Ted Holland, after 26 years at Gatton Manor GC, will retire on October 23. Again good luck, Ted and all donations should be sent c/o The Angel public house.

Les Coombes is not retiring yet, but is practising for when he does by taking up the noble

art of fly-fishing. After only one lesson Les has caught his first rainbow trout, 8 lbs 6 ozs at a river in Avington in Hampshire, but you should have seen the one that got away! I asked Les if he ties his own flies, but he said "no, he still prefers a zip".

That's all folks, until next month.

Brian Willmott



East Anglia

They didn't tell me that the tide came in! According to our geographic experts at BIGGA HQ we are now just south of Edinburgh. No wonder my notes keep getting lost (see August Magazine).

The tide must have gone out again because we played at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club in August and it was lovely. It was quite a day as they had had no rain for weeks until we turned up. I seem to recall that happening at Felixstowe on more than one occasion. So much for 'the sun shines on the righteous'.

I digress. 60 plus turned up to play on a lovely course, well presented by Glen Rayfield and his crew. Good to see Glen at the helm.

The trophy hunters were in action again; they were as follows:-

0 - 9 Handicap: 1st. Mike Varley 41 Points; 2nd Michael Buck 39 Points; 3rd Nick Brewster 37 Points

10 - 18 Handicap: 1st Glen Rayfield 42 Points; 2nd Acer Barber 40 Points; 3rd Paul Gould 39 Points

19 - 28 Handicap: 1st Roy Britton 34 Points; 2nd Adrian Goode 33 Points; 3rd Pat Swinn 33 Points

Guest: 1st Frank Grifins 41 Points; 2nd K Eldred 40 Points

Trade: 1st Nick Ashman 42 Points; 2nd Edward Clarkson Captain & Greenkeeper Shield; 1st Michael Buck & T Mills 77 Points. 2nd Alan Carter & K Eldred 74 Points

Longest drive - Joe Simpson on the 10th and Steve Dickinson on the 17th.

Nearest the pin - Asa Barber on the 5th and Roy Britton on the 12th.

The Loo Seat was presented

to a fourball, none of whom reached a ditch 40 yards in front of a tee. Unfortunately, I didn't get their names, so if the four, obviously scratch golfers, could let me know who they are, all will be revealed in the next bulletin (I think not).

All the prizes were presented by Doug Pipe, Felixstowe Captain. Thank you Felixstowe for a super day out.

The main sponsors for the day were Toro Lely UK. The equally important were as follows:- Bartram Mowers, Aitkens, Tacit, Ben Burgess (Newmarket & Norwich), Tomlinson Groundcare, Baileys of Norfolk, Spearhead Turf, Rigby Taylor, Sherriff, Symbio, Collier Turf Care, Hayter, Force Limogran and Bury Turf Care.

Mick Lathrope



Kent

Afternoon everyone and greetings from Leaf City!

Now that summer is well and truly behind us and the sun tan starts to fade we can, at least, console ourselves with the fact that our courses don't look like the proverbial cornflake any more! Here at Birchwood, shades of green slowly turned to a pale yellow colour and a granite like, dusty surface for much of the summer enabling the highest handicap golfers to achieve a somewhat flattering score or two.

Now the daylight hours have shifted and you've remembered that broken headlight on the greens mower you promised yourself you'd fix in the summer has resulted in extended putting surfaces and the cold mornings lowering some to raid their wives underwear drawer for additional warmth (you know who you are!).

The football season is in full flow again and my spare time is occupied totally by running my three kids to their matches all over the south east putting my ever-elusive low-teens golf handicap out of reach for yet another year. I wouldn't have it any other way though. You can't beat seeing the honest passion kids put into their football week in week out. It's so refreshing

after watching some of the over-paid prima donnas prancing around in the higher echelons of the football league.

I hope you enjoyed playing Redlibbets Golf Club at the end of September and I shall provide a full report next month. I did ask Kev what he thinks I would need to shoot to ensure victory there. He told me "All the other golfers". Thanks.

Saltex has been and gone now too ensuring our mess rooms are full of brochures and posters advertising equipment our staff would have us buy.

Yep, winter draws towards us with the annual thrill of seasonal shopping (can't bring myself to use the 'C' word) just around the corner. But on the upside, however, it does mean the return of our annual shindig/Turkey Trot at Birchwood on November 26. I know that's a few weeks off yet but please make a note in your diaries for what, in my opinion, is the highlight of the year.

Please call me if you have any news for this column, especially if you can relate any embarrassing tales about colleagues (see the bit about wearing women's tights above) or personal achievements.

Take care and remember, don't drink and drive. Don't even putt.

Best of British
Rob Holland
07843 410755



Sussex

August 6 was the date of the Sussex Section's Summer Meeting and Team Shield and what a wonderful day it was. East Brighton was the venue and it is difficult to find a Club more welcoming than they were on that day. Andy had the course in superb condition and the weather held to almost the end of the day.

The day was sponsored by Mitchell Ground Care Services and Darren Mitchell was there to dazzle us with his brilliant golf and more importantly to present the prizes.

On the day the local team of Andy Painter, Martin and Sam showed just how important local knowledge is when they carded

a tremendous score to win the main prizes.

Now, the Sussex Section has always prided itself in making teams and players from other Sections very welcome and so we were pleased to welcome three teams from Surrey to our Team Shield. Surrey Renegades II consisted of Gary Ogilvie, with Course Managers from West Hill and Guildford, and they took second place (on countback) with 87 points. In third, with 86 points, were Surrey Renegades III, all from Tandridge Golf Club.

What happened to Surrey Renegades I? You may well ask. For this was the team led by Brian (Tacit) Willmott who regularly enters Surrey team events. Mark Harvey (Epsom) struggling with illness having just returned from Mexico played brilliantly to card 50 points, almost enough to win it on his own. He was however inconsolable at not getting in the prizes feeling that his team mates performance could have been better. Anthony was no better than average (unusual for him) while Brian had great difficulty in getting off the tee. He found the 9th Green from the 10th Tee, nearly demolished the halfway house (the catering lady hopes to back to work soon) and the winner of the 3.50 on the nearby Brighton Racecourse only won because of where Brian's drive on the 15th finished. Surrey and Brian, you are great fun and are welcome to all Sussex events. On reflection that was a stupid thing to write as Brian pens the Surrey reports!

Carlton Allen Davis won the Longest Drive prize with a huge drive, with Nearest the Pin being won with a great shot from 'Sex-Bomb' Searles. This wonderful day was rounded off with a superb meal in the evening

There is a Sussex/Kent/Surrey triangular match on October 14 and anyone wishing to play please contact Secretary Dave Allen and for your information the Sussex Turkey Trot which is always a great day will be held at Worthing Golf Club on Friday, November 27.

Derek Farrington

South West and South Wales Region

BIGGA South West and South Wales Regional Seminar 2009

This year's annual Seminar is being presented in association with Farmura and Aquatrols and will be held once again at Cannington Centre for Land Based Studies on November 19. The theme for the seminar this year is "Modern Solutions For The Game".

The morning presentations include two speakers over from America. Dr Stan Kosta, Director of Technology for Aquatrols Corporation, who will give a presentation on Surfactants and Soil Management and John Kaminski, Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science at Pennsylvania State University, who will talk about Fairy Ring Control. These speakers will also be joined in the morning session by Dr Ruth Mann, Plant Pathologist for STRI, who will be speaking on Diseases On The Increase. The afternoon session commences with Peter McVicar, Course Manager at Hesketh Heath Golf Club, speaking on Sustainability followed by Tom Malehorn, from Aquatrols, who is a graduate from Pennsylvania State University and will give a presentation on Surface Moisture Management and Playing Control.

Entry for BIGGA members is £20 with non members £30. A reduced rate of £20 for a non member is offered if accompanied by a BIGGA member. Places for the day are limited and booking details and information will be sent to all Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in the region. Anyone requiring further information or a booking form please contact Jane Jones BIGGA Regional Administrator on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841148110.



South West

Early August, on one of the few dry days, saw the Section team travel "across the Bridge"

to take on the South Wales Section at Marriot St Pierre. I say crossed the Bridge – most of us sensibly crossed the bridge, but Robin Greaves in the "yellow peril" drove around the long way via Gloucester. "It costs fifteen lousy quid to cross in a pickup" Robin was heard to moan while tucking into his second Magners on the verandah (and doing his best to wind up our hosts!).

Never mind – it was a great day. Thanks to Marriot St. Pierre, and all the team there for such a terrific experience. The Old Course, which as most of us know has been hard enough over the years, has had a significant facelift over the course of the last year. Most of the bunkers have been rebuilt, four greens have been replaced, and several tees repositioned – notably the 7th tee, which has been moved back into woodlands down on the lower level, now making the former par-4 hole into a 540 yard par-5. Also the 16th hole, which goodness knows was difficult enough before, has been made into a much more severe dogleg by moving the tee to the right and a new green with a nasty sneaky drop-off at the back. Excellent improvements throughout, and fullest congratulations to all those involved. Money well spent without question. The South Wales team finally got revenge for the last couple of defeats with a narrow 3 1\2 – 2 1\2 win. Well played Wales – but watch out - We'll Be Back.

The Autumn Meeting and AGM at Saltford Golf Club is now very close. Please respond to the email applications which have gone out. If you haven't received one for any reason – please contact me on paulw@mgcnew.co.uk as soon as possible. Darren Moxham and his team are champing at the bit to welcome us, and the word is that Saltford is in really good condition with all the stops pulled out.

As for the AGM – this is your chance to make a difference. Come along and tell us what you'd like to see in the way of Education, Training, and Golf. Yes Golf. We shouldn't be embarrassed by playing golf. This is our trade. If we don't understand golf – if we don't understand the requirements of golf – if we don't understand the mindset of the golfing member – we don't stand the best chance of doing our

jobs properly. At a career level – getting involved with a BIGGA Committee is the best opportunity for developing yourself. Stand for the Committee. I did – at the age of 25 and a Deputy Head Greenkeeper in 1982. Best thing I ever did. I don't think I'd be where I am today if I hadn't. Yes, BIGGA has taken up a lot of my time. No I haven't been paid – no I don't want any payment. It doesn't work like that. Volunteering speaks volumes – don't underestimate it. You develop a network. You develop relationships and a reputation. When that job comes along that you really really want – you've got the best chance of securing it. You're not going to manage that if your name is not known or your commitment unproven – and someone else's is. Simple.

Nuff said. This is getting close to my last report. I'll probably squeeze one more in, which might well be a look back over five years of ramblings. So please send me any news from your area or club and you may be spared.

May I just close by thanking our Patronage Partners for their support. The names are on the Fixture Card. The links will soon be appearing on the website. These companies support us. Please help by supporting them.

Paul Worster.

paulw@mgcnew.co.uk
07768 394593.



South Wales

Hope you are all well and not suffering from Trench Foot after that 'glorious' summer that we just had!

Seriously, in September's Around The Green (which I wrote in August) I commented on the rain, then went to Tenerife for two weeks, came back and the weather was still exactly the same! What happened to the 'BBQ Summer'? And what happened to those 'experts' who advised us that, due to global warming, we were to paint our houses white to reflect the sun and to plant shrubs to provide shade? Are these the same people who during the 80s advised us that in the event of a

nuclear war we were to paint our houses white to reflect the blast? Do these people have shares with Dulux or something? Anyway, rant over, back to the Section!

The annual match against The South West was played at St Pierre recently. Players found the Mathen course in excellent condition, thanks to the efforts of Course Manager, Stuart Wood, and his staff. After a hard fought contest, the South Wales team finally came out on top, with the final score 3 1/2 to 2 1/2. Longest Drive was won by Jordan, from Taunton & Pickeridge, and Nearest The Pin was won by Stuart Ross, from Brecon GC. Thanks go out to South West team's captain Wayne 'The Special One' Vincent for organising his team; to Steve Chappell for organising the South Wales team and for looking after the cup; to T H White for sponsoring the South West team's shirts and James Rees, of Inscapes, for sponsoring the South Wales teams shirts. Also a big thanks to Simon Keeble and Nick Martin from The Scotts Company for providing the prizes. And finally thanks to Stuart Wood and everyone at St Pierre for the course, the great food and hospitality.

At the time of writing, the draw for the Semi Finals for The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Competition (The Road To Tenby) was as follows: Paul Handy & Rhys Norville v Gary Humphries & Rhys Norville; Mark Wilshire & Mark Anderton v Andy Roach & Gareth Knight or Darryl Bray & Leigh Davies.

The final will be played at Tenby GC and both teams will be giving Dave Carvey's RT company credit card a good hammering in Tenby town after the match. If I give you a good

write up than can I come along too Dave? Roy? Peter? Oh well! It was worth a try!

Don't forget the Autumn competition which this year is at Southerndown GC on Wednesday, October 14. The Section's AGM will also take place here so if you have any suggestions/issues regarding the Section then please feel free to come along to air your views. The golf will start at 1.30pm. Invites will be sent out in due course. The Autumn event will once again be sponsored by Keith Morgan Mowers. Thanks in advance to Jon and Ben Morgan for their continued support.

Good luck to our Greenkeeping team when they play The Secretaries in their annual match, which this year is to be held at Neath GC on Thursday, September 10. A report in next month's Around The Green.

Finally, If Adrain Panks (your friendly SISIS Rep) tells you that he will be on his inflatable this weekend, don't put your hands to your ears and shout 'too much information Ade!' He is merely stating that he has a new fangled inflatable kayak and can often be seen paddling on the river Taff on weekends. He has kindly given me his old kayak (The Pink Pig) and has suggested following the river Taff from its source in the Brecon Beacons right down to Cardiff. I dont know mate! I'm sure that when we paddle through Merthyr I'll be able to hear someone playing the theme tune from the film Deliverance on the banjo. I'll let you know!

Any information or announcements that you would like added to this column will be gratefully received.

Ceri Richards
07831 168645



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

By the time you read this we will have no doubt have tackled the challenges of the golf course at Burnham & Berrow for our annual National Championship. I wish Richard Whyman and his team every success and I look forward to seeing the course.

Finding sponsorship for this has been difficult but we have managed to secure two main sponsors who are Kubota and Charterhouse and I am grateful for their help which enables the cost to be kept down to the competitors.

As the days grow shorter Harrogate Week seems to be almost upon us even though it's still just over three months away. I think it is often overlooked or taken for granted that this event, arguably the largest indoor turf exhibition and education opportunity in Europe, is organised completely in-house by the 18 BIGGA staff. I say 18 however four of those are based in regional offices and of the remaining 14 only two are dedicated full time to Harrogate, Sue, who sells the stand space, and Pauline, who looks after the operational side.

This is BIGGA's single largest activity and certainly its largest source of income. How do we achieve success year upon year you might ask? We do it thanks to the dedication of all 18 staff who juggle planning and development meetings and physical input into the production of the event while balancing their own every-day key roles in the Association. Like every other business there have had to be cut backs and the loss of three posts earlier in the year has had an impact. As we all know the work does not go away, it just gets shared out between fewer people.

Where am I going with this? The exhibitors are backing Harrogate at the moment and sales are doing well, it could be better but the economic climate is not in our favour.

It's time to close ranks and members need to support the Association that supports them and to support the companies that support it not only at Harrogate but also during the year. Take time to have a look at www.harrogateweek.org.uk for the latest information on both the education and the exhibition, but most important of all start making your plans to attend. I am being quizzed by some key exhibitors about how I see attendance levels for 2010, my crystal ball is a bit cloudy but if Harrogate is not well attended then you can be sure that it will be more difficult to sell for January 2011. When the job market is quiet what better time to improve your career prospects? Take advantage of the enclosed 'Continue to Learn' brochure, this does not include the 'Fringe Seminar' programme that is being added to right up to Harrogate, details of which will be in the November magazine. Information can be found at any time on the Harrogate Week web site or by contacting the office.

Finally, congratulations to Rhys Norville for winning the Student of the Year competition that continues to be sponsored by Toro and thanks also to the team at Lely, a part of the equation that is sometimes overlooked.

Remember that this is your association and by pulling together we can influence the future.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive

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Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

Greenkeepers and Groundsmen...

...two words here at BIGGA we are now using more in unison with each other.

It was very encouraging to receive so much positive feedback at Saltex last month from both greenkeepers and groundsmen regarding the inclusion of groundsmen into full membership of BIGGA. It was quite apparent that many do believe that there is much to learn from each other.

We view both greenkeepers and groundsmen (working on sports turf) as our core membership business and both receive our utmost attention. We are not under any illusions and realise that we have to work hard at promoting the services, benefits and reasons why greenkeepers and groundsmen (working on sports turf) should be members of BIGGA.

Harrogate Week

As we are now into October some of you will be thinking as far ahead as January and Harrogate Week. The dates for your diary are –

Exhibition dates – Tuesday 19th January to Thursday 21st January 2010 and

Education dates – Sunday 17th January to Thursday 21st January 2010.

There is a full programme of exciting seminars and workshops to choose from, you will probably find some that are “interesting, but not for me”, while others will have triggered that “Ah ha” moment, whatever your reaction there is certainly something of interest for everybody. Don’t leave it too late, when you have made your mind up, book!

Fancy Improving your IT Skills?

Why not try online learning, you can learn at your own pace, in your own time with Microsoft® online learning.

As a membership benefit, BIGGA members can access an official Microsoft® Office 2003 training library that includes programs such as Excel, Word, Powerpoint and Outlook.

A BIGGA member can access these practical and effective online courses at a discounted rate of £15 (plus VAT at the prevailing rate) thanks to the support from the Learning and Development fund.

To take advantage of this membership benefit or for further information contact the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 option 3.

BIGGA Membership Benefit of the Month – Stress Advice Helpline

Stress, health and wellbeing are becoming more and more of a serious issue.

BIGGA recognises that stress is becoming a real concern, especially work-related stress. In order to help you address any issue that may be causing you to feel stressed BIGGA is pleased to offer a stress advice helpline as a new service to full members.

This membership benefit can help you proactively manage stress by providing immediate emotional support, advice and practical information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Stress Advice Helpline can work with a wide range of concerns from emotional issues such as anxiety, stress, depression and low self-esteem to family and relationship issues, marital and relationship problems, critical illness and bereavement, this list is not exhaustive.

One telephone call to the helpline could be all that someone needs to begin to manage their own work-related or personal problems and improve their situation.

Full Members of BIGGA can now call the helpline on 0800 174 318, this is a freephone telephone number 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and speak to a professionally qualified counsellor.



Contact Details

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Brad Anderson
brad@bigga.co.uk

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(option 1 for Membership)

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pj.boyd@btinternet.com

Northern & Midland

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Mobile: 07866 366966
petelarter972@aol.com

South East

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Mobile: 07841 948410
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk

South West & Wales

Jane Jones
Tel: 01454 270850
Mobile: 07841 948110
janejones1@btconnect.com



Peter Boyd Peter Larter
Clive Osgood Jane Jones

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

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Greenkeepers Support Services
0800 174 319
Debt Counselling Helpline
0800 174319

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish Region

Stewart Carbray, West
Ryan Copland, East
Tao Gao, Central
Ben Gourlay, East
Jamie McGrogan, West
Rongxue Xu, Central
Kun Zhang, Central

Northern Region

Keith Dodd, North East
Mark Dodd, North East
Charlie Emsley, Northern
Craig Kilgour, North East
Andrew Shaw, North East
David Thompson, Northern

Midland Region

Michael Bithell, East of England
Peter Dunkley, Mid Anglia
Richard Hawker, Midland
Jonathan Lewis, Midland
Mick Marvell, East Midland
Richard O'Hara, East Midland
Simon Oakes, East Midland

South East Region

Geoffrey Beauchamp, Kent
James Brazil, Surrey
Adrian Cox, Essex
Robert Dowling, Essex
Steven Gaines, Surrey
Matthew Jupp, Essex
Christopher Phillips, Surrey
Douglas Roofe, East Anglia
Matt Scobbie, Surrey
Mike Seaton, Surrey
Neil Ward, Sussex

South West/South Wales Region

Kyle Knight, South West
Stephen Milton, South West
Paul Neilson, South Coast

Northern Ireland

Ian Moore, Northern Ireland

Overseas

Giles McDonagh, Republic of Ireland
Benjamin Lovett, Turkey
Guizhou Peng, Far East

Assistant Profile

Each month we take a light hearted look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

If he hadn't become a greenkeeper, Richard Larkin might have been running his Dad's business by now ...either that or playing for Millwall FC! This month's Assistant once played for their junior team...



Name: Richard Larkin

Age: 20

Club: Tenterden Golf Club Kent

Position: Greenkeeper

Nickname: Granny!

1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

Two years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you?

Originally worked in the Pro Shop but soon wanted to get out on the course.

3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?

Not sure but would probably be helping with my Dad's business. Always wanted to be outdoors and active.

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?

Cutting the rough, gives me time to think, plus the odd golf ball.

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?

Bunker raking especially after a bad storm.

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?

There is always room for improvement. Perhaps one day in the distant future we could be able to control the weather!

7. Hobbies?

Playing golf (5 handicap), football and clubbing.

8. Favourite Band?

Various bands but particularly like Garage/Dance music.

9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?

Charlton Athletic FC and Millwall FC – I played for Millwall Juniors.

10. What is your claim to fame?

Played football with one or two Millwall up and coming stars and golf with European Tour Player Benn Barham. But watch this space!

What's your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...

Patrick Vivers, of Etesia comes under the spotlight



1. What is your position within the company?

President of Etesia SAS and MD of Etesia UK Ltd

2. How long have you been in the industry?

I joined Outils Wolf in Wissembourg, France in 1976; then started with Etesia in 1988, when the Wolf family decided to invest in a new factory/product/brand.

3. How did you get into it?

One of the Directors of Outils Wolf was introduced to me by a German Politician during a study-exchange with the University of Saarbrücken and my Business School in Chambéry.

4. What other jobs have you done?

Sales & marketing were always my main activity. Since I joined Etesia I have added export to my favourite activities, as I am fluent in French, German, English and Italian. Export nowadays represents 50% of Etesia's business, whilst Etesia UK is our second biggest export country.

5. What do you like about your current job?

What I like most is the diversity, with all management aspects including R&D, production, sales & marketing, after-sales, finance...Secondly the fact I work for a family-owned company where return on investment is seen as long term, with very little shareholder pressure.

6. What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

Modern distribution, Chinese imports and pressure on price, production de-localisations and new manufacturing technology.

7. What do you like to do in your spare time?

Motorcycling, walking

8. Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

Drawing my pension, and maybe set up a new own-business with my sons (25 year old twins)

9. Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?

I'm not sure we can talk about friends in business, but I do have many good work colleagues. Of course, over the years some excellent relationships have been built with dealers and suppliers.

10. What do you consider to be your lucky number?

Seven, my birth month

Patrick has picked Rod Feltham of Avoncrop

Unlock the potential of greenkeepers

Become a key sponsor

The funding provided by Golden and Silver Key supporters means that BIGGA can continue to produce training and career aids including DVDs, CD Roms, field-guides, as well as refunds for training fees, subsidised learning and development courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

To find out more, contact BIGGA HOUSE on 01347 833800



“ I really wanted to develop my education but had to fund my own training, so I contacted BIGGA to ask for financial support. A refund of my course fees has enabled me to complete my chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting, felling of small trees and my PA6 spraying certificates. I really do appreciate what BIGGA, with the support of the Golden and Silver Key Companies, has done for my career. ”

Murray Mannall, Greenkeeper



“ The support for this fund has enabled BIGGA to enhance the value of being a member, and it has previously given many greenkeepers the opportunity to further develop their careers. As an association we owe our Golden and Silver Key sponsors a huge vote of thanks. ”

John Pemberton, Chief Executive



Current members of the Fund are:



Gold Key Individual Members: Andy Campbell MG CGCS; Sam Langrick; Christopher Lomas MG; Iain A Macleod; Frank Newberry; W J Rogers; Tom Smith; Lee Strutt MG

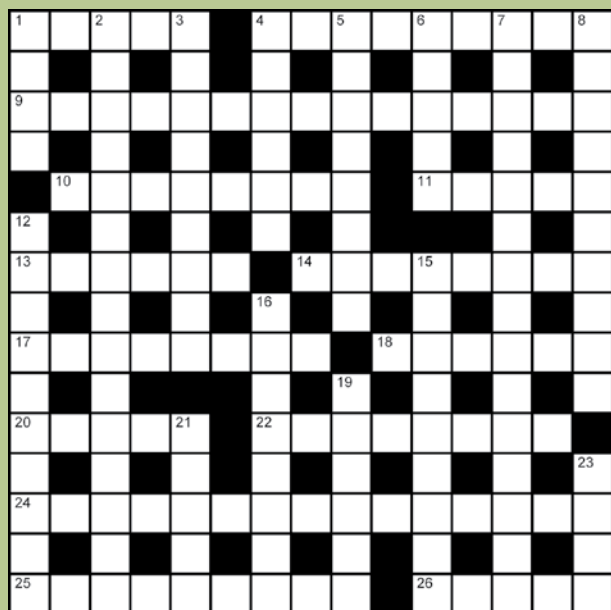
Silver Key Individual Members: Ade Archer; Iain Barr; Hamish Campbell; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Robert Maibusch MG; Richard McGlynn; Stephen Pope; Jason Sarna; Steven Tierney; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie



in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors..

CROSSWORD



Across

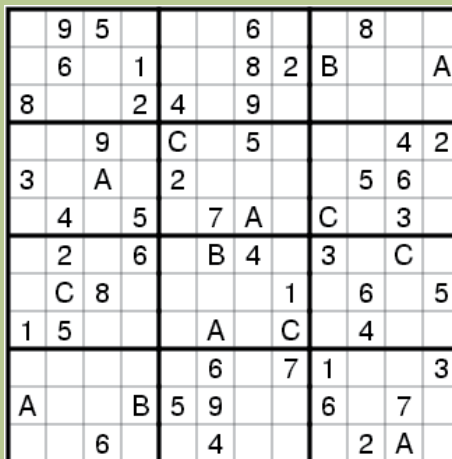
- 1 4th letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
- 4 Mountain range of Afghanistan, extending into Pakistan and India (5,4)
- 9 1990 film starring Arnold Schwarzenegger as detective John Kimble (12,3)
- 10 Marine creature also known as horsehead and opah (4-4)
- 11 Overshadow, make to look small (5)
- 13 Severe shortage (6)
- 14 More blasphemous (8)
- 17 In a coarse, contemptible manner (8)
- 18 Hindu/Muslim practice of secluding women from the sight of strangers (6)
- 20 Relating to birth (5)
- 22 Chrysanthemum relative used in traditional medicine (8)
- 24 British Prime Minister 1963-4 (4,7-4)
- 25 Comedian, 1931-93, famed for mother-in-law jokes (3,6)
- 26 North African country bordering Libya (5)

Down

- 1/12 Title currently held by HRH the Prince of Wales (4,2,8)
- 2 Welsh anthem - properly, Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau (4,2,2,7)
- 3 Mountain range forming the backbone of Italy (9)
- 4 Traditional Scottish delicacy (6)
- 5 --- soul, music genre made popular at venues such as Wigan Casino (8)
- 6 Overtune, tip over (5)
- 7 Hy Zaret / Alex North song, one of the most recorded of the 20th century (9,6)
- 8/23 Keep one's fingers crossed (4,3,3,4)
- 12 See 1
- 15 Glow, emit light (9)
- 16 Hands and knees (3,5)
- 19 Mythical island where the sword Excalibur was forged (6)
- 21 Iron Age kingdom of Asia Minor (5)
- 23 See 8

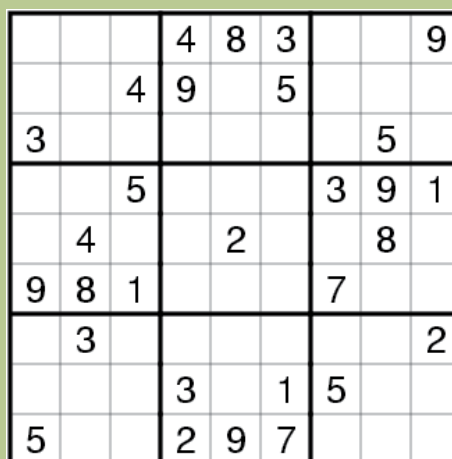
QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. David Beckham is clocking up the caps but whose record of most England caps does he have in his sights?
2. What is the name of the player at the centre of Rugby Union's Bloodgate scandal?
3. Talking of scandals. Which motor company owns the team that Flavio Briatore was in charge of before he resigned?
4. More scandal. What is the name of the South African 18 year old 800 metre runner caught up in the gendergate scandal.
5. Over which course was this year's Walker Cup played?
6. Name the 17 year-old tennis player from Guernsey who won the Girls' Open at the US Open at Flushing Meadows.
7. Which football team plays at Pittodrie Stadium?
8. Name the English athlete who won the Heptathlon at the recent World Athletics Championships.
9. Name all five managers of the UK and Ireland national football teams



MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SUDOKU

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

Daily SuDoku: Fri 25-Sep-2009

hard

Puzzle
Answers
on
page 73

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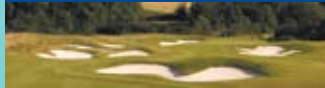
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Recruitment

GHYLL GOLF CLUB REQUIRES A HEAD GREEN KEEPER

Venue: Ghyll Golf Club, Barnoldswick, Lancashire BB18 6JH

Ghyll Golf Club, established 1907, a 9 hole private members' club, seeks a suitably qualified green keeper, hard-working, reliable, highly motivated and ready to step up to running his/her own course.

The ideal candidate will have NVQ levels 2 and 3 in sports turf management and chainsaw and spraying certificates, at least 5 years' green keeping experience, a good working knowledge of machinery and its maintenance, experience of drainage, irrigation and tree husbandry, an awareness of the latest health and safety regulations, the ability to manage and operate within a budget and to lead the greens staff.

Further details on www.bigga.org.uk website.

Applications with CV and covering letter including current salary, by email to: secretary@ghyllgolfclub.co.uk or by post to: The Secretary, Ghyll Golf Club, Ghyll Brow, Barnoldswick BB18 6JH

Closing date for applications: Monday, 9th November, 2009.

Start Date: Monday, 1st March, 2010.

Mid-Herts Golf Club

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In addition to providing excellent sporting conditions for the pupils and visitors, the College is often used as a venue for international sports teams. Its hirers include England and Wales Cricket Board, The Football Association, Reading Football Club and many other international sporting visitors throughout the year.

We are looking to recruit a suitably qualified and inspirational team leader with a proven track record in Estate Management. You will need to have extensive experience in sports turf management, horticulture and arboriculture to lead Grounds, Gardens and Greens departments.

Core responsibilities will be the management of the College's outdoor sports facilities (primarily Cricket, Football, Hockey and Golf), environmental initiatives, arboriculture, waterways and gardens.

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Full details of the position and an application form are available on www.bradfieldcollege.org.uk/jobs, or from Human Resources, Bradfield College, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 6AU Tel. 0118 964 4546. e-mail: hr@bradfieldcollege.org.uk

Closing date: Friday 23rd October 2009

Bradfield College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Criminal Records Bureau

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Head Greenkeeper Schmallenberg Golf Club (Germany)



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Schmallenberg Golf Club had undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. Following the retirement of the present post holder, we are seeking a new Head Greenkeeper who will relish the opportunity of taking the golf course to the next level of improvement and supporting an ambitious Management Committee, in ensuring that Schmallenberg Golf Club achieves the highest reputation for golf course excellence.

Schmallenberg Golf Club has a membership of 700, and an 18-hole golf course, lying in the picturesque rural heartland of Sauerland – "the land of a thousand hills". Situated between Cologne and Kassel, in the Lenne valley, the area has a thriving tourist industry, with the club attracting a high number of visitors each year.

You will have proven experience in maintaining golf courses and greens in peak condition possess the necessary technical qualifications and have the ability to manage, motivate and train a team of greenkeeping staff.

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First Aid at Work

October 1st 2009 sees the introduction of changes in the First Aid at Work Regulations.

The HSE has concluded that whilst many workplaces had people trained to provide first aid there were deficiencies in how skills were kept up to date and also that the right number of people with the right skills were present in the workplace.

The new Regulations seek to address these issues. In essence the new Regulations are

1. The four day First Aid at Work (FAW) course will be shortened to three days.
2. There will be a new qualification of Emergency First Aider (EFAW) which will be a one day course.
3. The FAW requalification course will remain unchanged at two days
4. The FAW qualification is still valid for three years
5. It is strongly recommended that annual three hour refresher training

is carried out to retain skills for both First aiders and Emergency First Aiders

6. Trainers for both qualifications must be from HSE approved providers
7. The Appointed Person for low risk environments still exists.

Existing First Aid qualifications will remain valid until the certificate expires at which time the new Regulations will apply. If you are an existing or newly qualified first aider you can continue to give the relevant degree of first aid under the new regulations. You should, however, consider annual refresher training.

The numbers and type of First Aiders required in the workplace is decided by a risk assessment which should consider,

1. The hazards and risks within the workplace and the activities carried out
2. The number of people employed
3. The travel time from emergency service help

4. The needs of those who work alone or remote from the main workplace
5. The need to cover holidays and absences of existing first aiders and Appointed Persons.

Fully trained First Aiders are appropriate for places with high perceived levels of risk or larger numbers of employees or where the site is remote from emergency help. Emergency First Aiders are for lower risk sites with few employees and where the Emergency Services can be summoned quickly. The lowest category of Appointed Person is for very low risk environments and where emergency help is easily obtained

The HSE is to issue renewed guidelines for the number of first aiders in low and high risk workplaces in October. Following the issue of these guidelines a review of your existing risk assessment should be carried out to ensure you have the right number and type of First Aiders



in the shed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

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On the Soapbox

A new vehicle for people within the industry to express their viewpoint

In helping to compile Golf Monthly's biennial list of the Top 100 courses in the UK and Ireland, I am fortunate enough to play many of our finest tracks.

As a travel writer and course reviewer for the magazine, I am also lucky enough to play many wonderful courses further afield.

And as a keen but extremely wayward club golfer who enjoys visiting new places with his mates, I occasionally get to play some genuinely below-par farmers' fields as well as some criminally unheralded gems.

Happily, no matter which golfing cap I am wearing, I still get nothing but enjoyment from just about every hole on every course.

However, it strikes me that virtually every whinge and whine that I hear from a golfer is aimed at the poor, beleaguered greenkeeper.

Having said that, I would also hazard a guess that in most places, the feeling is mutual!

The cliché that the course is the club's greatest asset has become so for one simple reason; it is true. Most golfers will agree that what distinguishes a great course from a good one is the condition in which it is presented.

However, I would add three very important provisos. One is that the condition of the course should only really be judged against the resources and capabilities of its club; we cannot expect those with more modest means to be constantly in pristine nick.

The second is that the vast majority of wailing and gnashing of teeth is carried out by golfers who would not really recognise good condition if it hit them in the face with a 4-iron, and who would certainly not know where to begin to achieve it.

Finally, and most importantly, it is the playing conditions that should count, far more than the appearance of the course.

The Augusta Syndrome is a dangerous thing and accounts for ridiculous amounts of wasted effort, time and money.

The late, great, cantankerous Jim Arthur, spiritual Godfather of traditional greenkeeping, had it right when he said that it should be how the green putts rather than how it looks - that it should be how the ball rolls and how the club impacts with the turf rather than how creatively stripy and manicured the fairway looks from the tee.

That's not to say that the weeds around the steps up to the tees should be neglected, but work should be prioritised.

The key to this is communication. Those clubs that regularly broadcast what they are doing and why, are those which will create an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding. A regular dialogue between members and greenkeepers will give each an insight into the needs and demands of the other. This should not be confined to an annual talk by the Course Manager which so often attracts the older (and more reactionary) member, or those who come with a particular axe to grind. In many cases, the greenkeeping expert will not be a specialist in communication and will need help. Members need to be educated on budgets, the disproportionate cost of different kinds of maintenance work, the need to do certain things at certain times, and on why a long-term gain so often requires a short-term loss. Each club is different, but whether it is via newsletters, email, notice board, presentation or just informal dialogue, the staff and members need to communicate as openly and fully as possible.

your golfers and committee, but also bear in mind that this is still a service industry and your customers will usually think they are right... even when they are not.

Committees/Secretaries - trust the professionals - by all means give guidance as to the kind of course you are after, but please don't over-interfere or keep such a close and watchful eye that it stifles or undermines your greenkeeping staff who are the trained experts.

Golfers - judge the courses you play primarily by how they play, not so much by the more superficial details.

And everyone - please talk... and listen.

In these credit-crunchy times of ever-increasing competition for business, most clubs need to do everything possible to give them an edge.

While it is the playing characteristics of the course and not its appearance that are paramount, communication of this as well as getting the simple things right are more important than ever.

The relationship between golfer and greenkeeper needs to be one of give and take, or better still, give and give

Besides this, there is another simple way in which green staff can help their cause. I was playing at a course in Surrey in August where the approach to one short par-4 demands an accurate shot across water. A greenkeeper was working alone on the drainage at the front of the green but kept my group waiting several minutes before even acknowledging that we existed. He then gave us a single wave of his arm but didn't bother moving out of the way, thus making an intimidating shot even more imposing. You will not have to work hard to guess what happened to my ball!

Earlier in the round, we had been followed by the same grass-cutter for several holes. He didn't seem to realise that cutting the holes in the opposite sequence to play would mean that golfers would receive minimum interruption from both noise and the need to wait!

The relationship between golfer and greenkeeper needs to be one of give and take, or better still, give and give. Strangely enough, we all want the same thing which is for the course to be enjoyable as possible.

The point I am trying to make is this...

Greenkeepers - stick to your guns, educate



Rob Smith is the Course Rankings Moderator for Golf Monthly and also writes reviews and travel articles for the magazine.

He can be contacted at r.smith896@btinternet.com.

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The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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