



## 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.

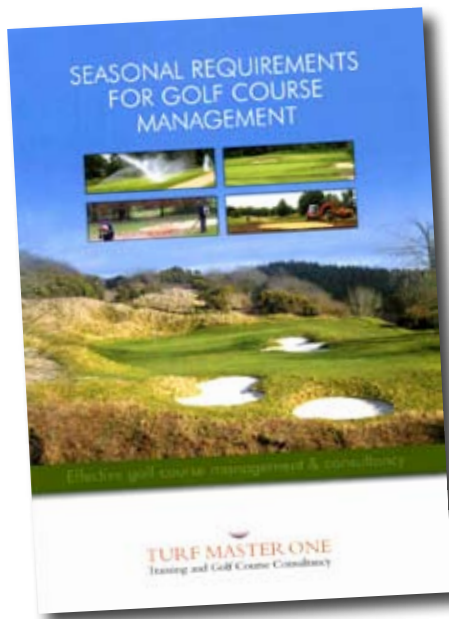
A copy of the Centre update can be viewed on the GTC website.

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](http://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.



## 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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*