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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



A Big Boost for Golf

I've mentioned it before but golf's image really does need a bit of a revamp. It does suffer from a stuffy image and the imposing nature of some golf clubs prevent some would-be players from taking the plunge.

There have been some cries in the wilderness as it were, with the likes of Ant and Dec, DJ Spooky and Chris Evans being so public in their love of the game; while, I suppose, I should pay tribute to Ian Poulter's one man assault on the country's fashion sense – seeing young kids wearing pink checked trousers shows that our Ian does make an impression on them.

However, two things have happened recently which might help to popularise the game to the masses.

One was the IOC committee's decision to recommend golf, along with Rugby Union Sevens, as an Olympic Sport from 2016. It means that, through becoming a part of the Olympic movement, it will open all sorts of doors to the sport. Funding, not previously available to golf, will open up and grass roots golf should receive a genuine boost.

The other thing comes in something I experienced recently in Harrogate when I visited Rudding Park's superb new six hole short course, in the company of Peter McEvoy.

Powerplay gets round one of the biggest handicaps to the game's success – the time it takes to play – and if Peter can finalise contracts with sponsors and television companies it could well become golf's very own version of Twenty20 cricket.

Players compete over nine holes to greens with two flags – one easy and the other tough, with point bonuses available to anyone who is successful in taking on the black-flagged holes. Three Powerplay holes must be taken in the first eight with the option of taking a bonus

Powerplay on the 9th. Obviously holes must be nominated in advance!

With Nett birdies bringing in six points and Nett eagles, eight, scoring can be spectacular and as a player who is behind is forced to go for broke on the final hole dramatic putts whether successful or not will be a regular occurrence.

As a two hour television spectacular, possibly under floodlights, with packed stands around the final green, you can see it catching on with the couch potato public, while, at places like Rudding Park, the six hole version can be completed in a lunch hour or breaking a journey home from work.

Golf does need some innovative thinking to break out of the staid image it presents to the outside world and Peter McEvoy, who recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association of Golf Writers, might have struck on something with Powerplay golf.

It won't ever replace the more traditional 18 hole games we all play and cherish at our clubs but it might become an attractive alternative and, like Twenty20 cricket, give the entire game a real shot in the arm.

Then once golf has become established as an Olympic Sport we might find that the Gold medallist in 2020 or 2024 learned the game by taking on those pesky black flags in Powerplay golf.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

September 2009

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The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.

Golf Course Dramas

Golf courses are generally seen as quiet relaxing places where the opportunity to stop and smell the flowers often arises, but last month two golf courses had their tranquillity rudely interrupted by dramatic incidents that just couldn't be predicted. Fortunately in both cases the victims survived thanks to the actions of golfers.

At Taunton, Oake Manor Golf Club greenkeeper, Graham Hake (shown inset), ended up submerged under water and trapped by the Ransomes Batwing machine he was operating and was saved by two Royal Navy Airmen, just back from service in Afghanistan, who were playing the course, while at Caird Park, in Dundee, a pilot escaped serious injury after his two seater plane crashed into a tree on the 14th hole.

In Somerset, Joey Poole and Alan Mullins, who are based at the Naval Air Squadron Commando Helicopter Force at Yeovilton, raced to the scene when they witnessed the accident to discover Graham trapped under the machine and his head submerged.

Between them, using their training, they managed to lift and move the machine just enough to raise Graham's head above the water level until some more airmen and some of Graham's fellow greenkeepers arrived and between 10 of them they were able lift the machine clear and pull Graham out of the water.

The 29 year-old was taken to hospital with minor injuries and was expected to be back at work a couple of weeks later. The Batwing was written off in the accident while the Health and Safety Executive cleared the golf club and the Ransomes' machine of blame.

In Dundee, the low flying plane which was believed to be low on fuel, and according to the local Courier newspaper, performed a U-turn over Caird Park Golf Course before stalling and careering into the tree on the 14th holes wedging between branches 40 feet in the air.

The pilot, Vince Hagedorn, from Chelmsford, Essex, told the first golfer on the scene that he was fine "but just needed a set of ladders".

Five crews from Dundee Airport fire service and a JCB attended the scene but he intrepid pilot was able to put the harness on himself, descend a ladder and walk away.

"We will comply with the wishes of the emergency services but there are not plans to shut the course at this stage. However, there may be some disruption," said a council spokesman



Photograph courtesy of the Dundee Courier & Advertiser

Annual Review of Remuneration for Greenkeepers

In light of the current economic climate and the impact that this has on golf clubs throughout the UK, the Committee for Golf Club Salaries (CGCS) does not feel that it is appropriate to recommend any form of review to the salary scales currently in place to be effective for 2010.

The CGCS recommends that rates of pay remain a matter for negotiation between the individual employer and employee. The CGCS further consider that employers should make an appropriate pay award to recognise any substantial change in responsibility, qualifications or

duties carried out by their employees as well as reflecting any changes to legislation governing rates of pay. Performance issues are also an important and relevant criteria in salary negotiation.

The Committee will meet early next year to review scales for 2011.



L-R Keith Lloyd, John Pemberton and Sandy Jones at The Open

Three Bodies Come Together

Three of golf's leading bodies have forged a unique partnership to help golf clubs meet the modern day challenges facing the sport.

The PGA, BIGGA and the GCMA have formed the Golf Club Management Partnership to assist UK clubs in operating more effectively and efficiently.

Representing a total of 16,000 members and with a collective experience of over 200 years in the industry, the agreement between the triumvirate, was signed at The Open at Turnberry. It is designed to encourage the fostering of closer ties between the key stakeholders at a golf club – the Professional, the Course Manager and the Club Manager – with the ultimate aim of providing a coordinated approach to the management of golf clubs. Benefits for clubs will include clarification of employment roles, job titles, skill sets and qualifications across the three organisations, helping employers find the right people.

In addition there will be exciting educational opportunities with mutual recognition of respective training programmes and the chance to open up opportunities across the industry. There is also cost-saving potential with joint conferences and exhibitions.

The first meeting of the partnership will take place in the autumn.

"This is a momentous decision which recognises the expertise of

each of the associations, the value of establishing closer ties for benefit of golf clubs across the UK and the desire of all three to work together," said PGA Chief Executive Sandy Jones.

"We are all aware golf clubs face many new challenges especially in the current economic climate and this partnership is fundamentally about combining skills and expertise to make them successful in meeting those challenges.

"The members of all three Associations play pivotal and important roles at clubs and this partnership is about assisting clubs to use them to their full potential for their ultimate benefit," added Sandy

"The development of an alliance between the three main bodies representing the management of golf clubs will be of significant benefit to the golf industry as well as the membership of the respective partners. The move is a major initiative that presents some exciting opportunities and clearly demonstrates BIGGA's commitment to the future of the game," said BIGGA Chief Executive John Pemberton.

The mission statement of the partnership is as follows: 'Members of the Partnership will work together to maximise the value and effectiveness of golf club management through shared learning, professional development and the promotion of best practice'.



Facilities Fit for a King

Kings College School has renovated some of its extensive sports facilities during a tight summer schedule, with Speedcut carrying out complete drainage and laser-levelling on three football pitches and moved and rebuilt a cricket square.

"The site is on a flood plain. Being on clay surfaces means they just became unplayable after heavy rain," said West Barnes Lane Manager, Deputy Head Groundsman, Miguel Pimenta, who has been at the school for eight years.

"Over the years we have done as much as we can with vertidrainning ourselves but the situation and the demands on the ground led us to call in Speedcut Contractors."

The King's College School job was completed by mid-July – a tough deadline, having been started on June 10 and finished on July 22.

In early August Miguel carried out the first cylinder cut of the grass (which took two weeks and three days from germination to first cut) and a high nitrogen fertiliser applied. Next month Miguel will carry out sand grooving of the pitches during half term.

Barry Pace, Speedcut Contracts Manager, said: "This was a challenging job because the timescale was very tight to get the surfaces well established by the first week of September.

"The new irrigation system and the water tank provided water to establish the seed. King's College School has excellent sporting facilities and we have been delighted to be part of the team giving pupils vastly improved surfaces to play on."

At the King's College School main site Head Groundsman Steve Wells also has two Assistant Groundsmen, James Waller and Benny Cholewa.

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, and Lee Penrose, STRI Ecologist

For more information please contact: **Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator, 01737 819343**
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk



Men in Pink

The Captain at Abbotsley Hotel Golf and Country Club nominated Breast Cancer research as the Club charity is breast cancer research, and the team, led by Course Manager Allan Walker, fourth from the right all entered into the spirit with new uniforms. "The lads were all in full agreement," explained Allan, who is Chairman of East of England Section

Golf Management Competitions

This year's Golf Management Competitions have recently taken place in the South West and South Wales Region.

Once again these competitions were well supported in the sections with a friendly competitive spirit between the clubs taking part.

BIGGA South West and South Wales Region would like to thank the clubs for their support in hosting these events, and Scott's for their support and continued sponsorship.

Along with individual prizes for the members of the first, second and third placed teams the winning teams in each section received an Accupro 2000 Spreader piece of machinery for their clubs from Scotts Turf Professional Ltd.

This year the South West Section event held at Filton Golf Club was won by The Defence Academy Golf Club team with 79 points, in second place was The Kendleshire Golf Club and third place was Saltford Golf Club.

The South Wales Section event was held at Llanwern Golf Club and was won by the home club team with 81 points, runners up were Morrision Golf Club and third was Llanishen Golf Club. The South Coast Section event was held at Barton-on-Sea Golf Club and was again won by the home club team with 88 points and in second place was Southwood Golf Club and third was Basingstoke Golf Club.

Jane Jones
*South West and South Wales
 Regional Administrator*



Bobcat Partners Kawasaki Bud World Supercross Team

Bobcat is the new partner of the Kawasaki Bud Racing Team Europe, which competes in the Supercross World Championship and in the Elite Motocross and Supercross Championships in France.

The Kawasaki Bud team includes two leading French motocross riders in their number: Gautier Paulin is currently European champion and David Vuillemin is the reigning Supercross World Champion.

As a Partner, Bobcat has provided a Bobcat T250 Compact Tracked Loader to Kawasaki Bud, which is used to prepare, grade and maintain the three tracks for pit bike, motocross and supercross at the Team's Tyrosse training centre in the southwest of France.



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The National Championship 2009

The BIGGA National Championship 2009 is back again this Autumn; taking place at Burnham & Berrow GC on the Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th of October. To play at the event, please contact Sandra at BIGGA on 01347 833800

at Burnham & Berrow GC

All Aboard!



The arrival of a 32hp Massey Ferguson compact tractor at Bedfordshire's Mead Open Farm has helped make "little red tractor and trailer" rides one of the most popular attractions at a thriving farm park which hosted more than 180,000 visitors in 2008.

Following a circular route of around 600 metres, the MF 1533 tractor pulls two trailers and their spellbound occupants around the perimeter of a series of paddocks, giving visitors a clear view of the farm's pigs, goats, sheep, alpacas and cattle feeding, resting and at play.

Located at Billington, near Leighton Buzzard, Mead Open Farm is celebrating its 15th year as one of the area's top destinations for local schools and for young children accompanied by parents, guardians and friends.

Supplied by local Massey Ferguson dealer, Lodgeway Tractors, the MF 1533 compact tractor ferrying visitors around the farm replaced a 135hp agricultural tractor that had been used previously for the job.



STRI scores highly in independent testing

The STRI has retained accreditation status to conduct independent testing of rootzone materials, and has demonstrated high levels of competency in testing, as specified by the USGA's Recommendations for Putting Green Construction.

This latest review included a full audit carried out by an assessor from the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA).

This involved assessing STRI's quality procedures and ASTM (American Society of Testing and Materials) compliance.

Dr Stephen Baker, Head of Soils and Sport Surface Science at STRI, said "This is a great achievement and demonstrates our goal continually to deliver world-class testing, analytical and evaluation services to golf courses and other sports turf facilities across UK and Europe."

The successful review upholds STRI's position as one of only ten USGA approved physical soil testing laboratories across the world.

Full details of all the testing services available from STRI can be found on the newly launched website at www.stri.co.uk/services <<http://www.stri.co.uk/services>> .



Lindum Support for Top Exhibit

Chris Beardshaw has used Lindum's Grassfelt for his 'Best in Show' Tatton Park show gardens for the last two consecutive years. Supplied by All Turf, Lindum's North West distributor, the consignment of 60 sq metres was used to cover the triple stepped sides of the amphitheatre forming the centre piece of 'Ness Botanische', Chris's design for Visit Chester and Cheshire.

All Turf Director, Hazel Frith, said that the Grassfelt stood up to the wear and tear of the five day RHS event brilliantly. "We had heavy downpours throughout the week and Chris's garden was packed with visitors," she said. "A lot of them climbed the walls of the amphitheatre to get a good overall view of the garden. If Chris had used conventional turf the damage would have been disastrous."



New PowerPlay Venue Impresses Creator

Two times Walker Cup captain and PowerPlay Golf creator, Peter McEvoy, visited Harrogate's Ridding Park Golf on recently to showcase the two flag 'risk and reward' game to a group of journalists and golfers.

The North Yorkshire golf resort has been chosen as an official PowerPlay Golf venue by Peter thanks to its first class golfing facilities, which included the superb new six hole Repton Short Course.

PowerPlay Golf is designed to be played over nine holes but Peter chose the six hole Repton Short Course as the location for his PowerPlay challenge.

"Risk and reward' is a key feature in PowerPlay so the Repton Short Course, with its six hole par three design and its interplay of water, woodland and parkland, provides the perfect setting for the game, as every shot counts," said Peter.

Billed as 'the new way to play golf', PowerPlay Golf has attracted global acclaim from many of the world's most famous golf-playing countries including Ireland, USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and most recently, New Zealand.

In PowerPlay Golf, players can choose to play to the 'easy' white flag or the more difficult 'Skull 'n' Crossbones' black flag which is placed in a difficult location.



Long Service Award

Fakenham GC Head Greenkeeper, Gary Sutton, has celebrated 20 years at the club. He was appointed initially as a trainee greenkeeper under the wing of then Head Greenkeeper, Alan Gascoigne.

His joining on the July 4, 1989 marked not only the 213th Year of American Independence but coincided with the Centenary Year of Fakenham Golf Club which is now in its 120th year.

Gary attended a block release course at Easton College at the end of which he successfully completed the City and Guilds General Horticultural examinations.

He took over the position of Head Greenkeeper and over the years has transformed the golf course into one of the most highly regarded in the county.

Chairman Graham Cocker presenting a surround sound cinema system thanked Gary and commented 'that he hoped he would get as much enjoyment out of this as the members did while playing the course'.

Picture shows L-R: David Palmer Secretary, Derek Bradford, Greens Chairman, Gary Sutton, Graham Cocker, Barry Futter, General Manager



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Chairman's Word

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

The end of July marks the start of the school holidays and a reduced number of rounds, giving us about a month before play levels pick up again in September.

It is at this time of year that we like to take full advantage of the quieter golfing period to carry out more disruptive work such as greens' renovation which fits in well with the pattern of play.

Our greens' renovation consists of hollow coring, followed by linear aeration (Graden), topdressing and browntop bent grass over-seeding. During the same week hollow coring of fairways and approaches is carried out keeping this disruption happening all at the same time as greens. One course is scheduled immediately the schools' break and the other three weeks later to allow time for the first to recover.

Temperatures in August are near the peak for the year and enable rapid recovery



Plan for your Greatest Chances of Success

of playing surfaces and fast germination of bentgrass seed. Over the past four years we have been carrying out a dwarf ryegrass over-seeding programme on fairways and roughs during August but have moved this to early October this year. Unlike 2007 and 2008 this summer has been much drier and warmer in the south east with temperatures regularly reaching the high 20s. With wanting to scarify fairways in advance of over-seeding these hot dry conditions just don't bode well for a great result, particularly with September's busier play just round the corner.

In an earlier column I mentioned throwing away my calendar when it comes to fixing work schedules, yes we have a plan, but it is not cast in stone. Timing needs to be based on when the greatest degree of success is likely considering all the factors of growing conditions, levels of play and resources available. As our reservoir levels continued to drop through June and July it was clear that scarifying fairways in summer was not an option if we were to stick to our preference for only using recycled irrigation water. Our location 500 feet above sea level in an exposed location on the North Downs is one of the driest in the country. While August usually brings about 75mm of rain the soil moisture levels have continued low throughout the summer and irrigation

quantities on fairways not high enough to replace the total level of ET. So it's a case of waiting until conditions change - hopefully by the time we get to late September.

Staff all need to take a well deserved break during the long season from April to October and with holding so many events this year, along with renovation weeks and projects, scheduling all this becomes an interesting juggling exercise. As well as The European Open in May, The Trilby Tour in July and The PGA National Assistants Championships in August our diary also includes a third televised event in October this season. August is also proving to be one of our busiest workloads with two weeks of renovation work and one of drainage installation. This doesn't leave much slack in the diary for the team to recharge their batteries so it's important to recognise all their efforts. I know we demand a lot out of the guys at these busy times. One of our key pieces is a catering sized barbeque and firing it up at these times is great way to say thank you to the team.

When deciding on priorities there are compromises to be made, often between short term presentation to satisfy today's golfers and work that is essential if you are to continue to do the same over the longer term. It is very easy to focus on today's needs and meet the short term needs of

the business, but it isn't too long before this catches up on you and a whole host of course problems build up. At some point golfers start to notice soft, thatchy playing surfaces, worn out areas with a lack of course definition and poorly conditioned bunkers etc. A regular programme of work that deals with these issues little and often can be far easier to fit into both the diary and budget, than large scale disruption.

In this highly competitive golf market a long slow deterioration in quality will only lead to a gradual decline in revenue, worst still, having to close holes or a course for extended periods of time in the future is far more costly to the business. It is our job to continue to get that message across to club secretaries, general managers, committees, members, visitors and owners. Communication in writing, by e-mail, displayed on club websites and notice boards, whatever is appropriate is key to making sure your recommendations and information are on record and understood. Working with your club's decision makers to reach that necessary compromise and agree a work programme that fits in with the business will help to improve the course and its long term health.

Peter Todd
National Chairman



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

George Brown, the “retiring” Golf Course & Estates Manager at Turnberry, having fronted his third Open Championship, must have been a proud man at the prize giving ceremony, especially receiving the well deserved recognition from the R&A.

George, as a past Chairman of BIGGA and a great ambassador for the profession, as well as Turnberry, has always supported education and training, and heaped praise on his staff, never seeking self glory.

The world felt for Tom Watson during what surely would have been his finest hour but for George and his staff the pride and satisfaction of setting the stage and everything coming together as it did, must have given them a great feeling and for George personally, mixed feelings.

It will be a lasting memory for George and as he hands over the reins to Euan Grant I know George will have so many happy memories of his experiences both as a top greenkeeper but also as a top golfer.

We heard so much of the Duel in the Sun between Watson and Nicklaus during the recent Open, but what about all the duels between Woods and Brown?

Great rivalry both on and off the course, great friendship, camaraderie and for those younger readers I had better explain!

Not Tiger Woods or the increasingly golf course friendly BBC commentator Ken Brown but our own George Brown and Walter Woods the former Links Superintendent at the worlds most famous golf course St. Andrews.

The friendship and golf rivalry between these two characters has become legendary within the older ranks of greenkeepers but above all, the support, understanding they have given each other when things have been tough is what the greenkeeping community is all about.

In showing how two of the most famous names in greenkeeping have helped each other as have many more, too many to mention

in this article, never has it been so important at a time when the sport in many countries is in recession that we look to continue their great example of how friendship and communication provides support and often a solution.

On a positive note the climax to the recent Open will help grow the game to more people world wide.

The career of greenkeeping will also have a higher profile in schools through a closer partnership with the Golf Foundation whose Chief Executive, Mike Round, I met during my recent brief visit to Turnberry.

Mike and his Golf Foundation team have promised to help explain to youngsters in schools the role of the greenkeeper using our career literature and this support will be very much appreciated.

The GTC has helped develop the 14-19 Environment Diploma and the very successful apprenticeship programme giving youngsters a clear career path should they choose to work outdoors and all the pleasures that greenkeeping can give as a career.

Hopefully the PGA, the PGA European Tour and the Home Unions will, through the various partnerships help to promote the career of greenkeeping, therefore securing youngsters as the future Course Managers and greenkeepers.

The team ethic that has held greenkeeping in such high esteem for many years, even when George and Walter, pictured, were training, is the foundation on why golf course conditions have improved so much in recent years.

The support given to George and his staff from BIGGA members travelling from all corners of the globe is also a great example of the fantastic community that is, greenkeeping!

We at the GTC have continually encouraged golf club employers and Course Managers to develop a team culture to assist their business aims and specialist trainers have assisted to support us with bespoke courses aimed at developing people skills to be better team leaders, supervisors and managers.

The GTC is funded by:



The training courses on communication, presentation skills, team building will be complimentary to the agronomic education available and we hope our Centres will offer short courses using not only their own staff but also those Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers who have really been at the sharp end of our industry.

The short courses can be fun but also so beneficial in many ways as lasting friendships have often started at a seminar or workshop, and long may they continue.

That reminds me I must ask George and Walter how they first met.

Happy retirement, George, and look out Walter, he has more time to practise his golf!

Keep talking folks, remember, a problem shared can be a problem solved.

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Learning & Development

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



The Toro Student of the Year Award is imminent and Harrogate Week is firmly on the horizon with the Continue to Learn Education Programme featuring high on the agenda of things to do.

These are just two of the projects that are ongoing, so it's all go in the Learning and Development Department this month.



Microsoft® Online Learning

In last month's issue of GI we featured a full page advert for Microsoft® Online Learning. This is a new membership benefit that has been researched and sourced by the Learning and Development Department.

This online learning product is the ideal solution for anyone wanting to learn or brush up on their IT skills.

The Microsoft® 2003 Learning Library offers access to core training in the following products: Word, Excel, PowerPoint®, Outlook® and Access as well as FrontPage®, One Note®, Project, Visio® and InfoPath®.

Advanced training is also available in Word, Excel and Outlook®. The entire 2003 library is available to members at a discounted price of £15.00 + VAT.

We can also offer the following Microsoft® Office 2007 Core and Advanced modules in: Word, Excel, PowerPoint®, Access, Project and Outlook®.

The 2007 modules are available on an individual basis at a cost of £15.00 + VAT each.

Once purchased, users have 12 months' access to the training course and there is no limit to how many times you can tackle each module.

As with any online training solution users are able to access the training at a time and place that suits them making it completely flexible.

Each course takes approximately 4-6 hours and a certificate is available for each completed module.

This useful and educational product is available to all Members at a discounted price thanks to support from the Learning and Development Fund.

The prices shown reflect a 25% discount to BIGGA members.

For further information or to place an order for Microsoft® Online Learning, contact the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 and select Option 3.



Continuing Professional Development

An article was featured in last month's magazine to help explain the Continuing Professional



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.

Development scheme that is run by BIGGA for its Members.

If your questions regarding the CPD scheme have not been addressed in this article, please do not hesitate to contact either Rachael or myself for further information.

To download an application form to join the CPD scheme go to www.bigga.org.uk/education/continuing-professional-development

Learning and Development Updates

Higher Education Scholarships



Supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarships have been awarded to:

Mathew Wormald - On Line Foundation Degree - Sports Turf
Ian Scott - On Line Foundation Degree - Sports Turf
Richard Clarke - On Line Foundation Degree - Sports Turf

BIGGA Library

One new book has been added to the BIGGA Library in the last month:

Sports Ground Management, A Complete Guide - Stuart Brown



Contact Details

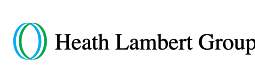
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Familiar Face, New Venture

After 17 years of managing multi-site golf courses for both American Golf and Crown Golf, Laurence Pithie has set up his own company Turf Master One Ltd.

He will now be focusing on both golf course consultancy and training within the industry, both in the UK and mainland Europe.

Laurence offers comprehensive workshops and seminars to Course Owners, Managers, Head Greenkeepers and colleges in 'effective golf course management' providing training in areas from aeration to water management. During the past year he has published a short book and a comprehensive maintenance manual on golf course management. A second book on 'Seasonal Requirements for Golf Course Management' was launched last month.

A full list of the services available can be found on his website:

www.turfmasterone.co.uk

Leaving a Mark in France

MJ Abbott Limited is moving quickly towards the completion of its first contract in France in a decade.

They began work in January at Les Aisses Golf, a part-woodland part-heathland development in the heart of the Sologne forest.

The three current 9-hole courses, which opened in 1992, have been redesigned by Architect, Martin Hawtree to create an 18-hole heathland course and separate 9-hole course.

Phase One comprises extensive tree clearance work prior to the development of the first nine holes, including the installation of primary drainage and a new irrigation system.

A new putting green will also be built in front of the clubhouse.

The project is due to be completed soon and work on the remaining nine holes is currently scheduled for Winter 2010.

Shared Standards

A new World PGA Alliance, including organisations representing 56,000 PGA Professionals and more than 22,000 PGA-member golf facilities worldwide, has been formed to establish and guide teaching, playing and educational standards for the golf profession in developing golf territories and shared best practices in player development for adults and youth.

The alliance is comprised of the Professional Golfers' Associations of

America, Australia, Canada, PGAs of Europe, Germany, Great Britain & Ireland, Japan, South Africa, and Sweden.

Born from the World PGA Conference which began in 2004 and was conducted for a third time in April, 2008, in Sydney, Australia, the alliance will be led by the chief executives of The PGA of America, The Professional Golfers' Association (of Great Britain & Ireland) and the PGA of Australia.



Royal Approval

A Syngenta formulation robot has been officially launched by HRH The Princess Royal. The Princess carried out the first experiments when she visited the company's Jealott's Hill R&D site in Berkshire.

The fully automated robot is a breakthrough in innovation and speed of delivery. It will formulate and test hundreds of potential turf, amenity and crop protection products every day, at speeds that scientists can only dream of with existing technology.

The culmination of a five year project bringing together scientists, engineers and software specialists, the robot can make almost any liquid agrochemical formation, in small amounts, and perform a basic series of tests to see if those formulations are of interest for further research.

The robot is the latest part of an additional £35 million investment in Jealott's Hill -

Europe's largest agrochemical research and development centre.

The Princess spoke enthusiastically about the role played by science in feeding the growing global population and protecting biodiversity.

"What you do here is to ensure that food is grown safely and well and understanding the biodiversity in which it grows. That needs a lot of skilled and talented people to ensure that what is done here is the best that science can provide," she said.

Jealott's Hill Site Head, Mike Bushell, added: "We were delighted that Her Royal Highness agreed to open the new facility. This is a major investment in technology which will greatly speed up our development programme to bring products to market."

Syngenta invests around \$1 billion on R&D globally each year, with £100 million in the UK.

Crown Golf Sells Two of its Properties

The Vale Golf Club, a proprietary members' club set in 304 acres near Worcester, and The Chase Golf Club, a proprietary members' club set in 160 acres near Cannock in Staffordshire, have both been sold to local entrepreneurs.

The clubs were placed on the market in February 2009, by Humberts Leisure acting on behalf of Crown Golf.

"We are continuously reviewing our estate focussing on the properties which the business wishes to retain for the long term" said Crown Golf Chief Executive, Stephen Lewis,

"Having a core business based largely around the south and the M25 has its operational benefits, and both The Chase and The Vale are geographically quite separated from the majority of our other facilities. But geography was not the critical factor in our decision to market these properties.

"Both are very profitable businesses, and we felt that they represented an attractive proposition to potential buyers. This proved to be the case. The Vale and The Chase are both staffed by excellent and loyal teams and, with almost 2,000 members in total at the two golf clubs, we are pleased that both individual buyers are committed to taking these properties forward.

"These sales will enable Crown Golf to continue its policy of reinvesting in its estate. Recently we completed a £20m refurbishment of our flagship property, St Mellion International Resort, for example, and with 22 Crown Golf Academies in development across our golf club network, and many other large projects currently underway, we look forward to continuing our strong performance of recent years," said Stephen.

A third Crown Golf property, Eccleston Park Golf Club, which is a proprietary members' club set in 125 acres near St Helens in Merseyside, is also on the market.

A Quarter Century of Service

Dawn Gough, Personal Assistant to David Withers, Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, has recently celebrated 25 years of employment at the company

Dawn joined Ransomes in July 1984 as a shorthand typist in the Buying Department and since then worked as Secretary in a number of departments until becoming PA to the Managing Director in 2004.

As well as her usual PA duties she is also responsible for arranging European customer visits to Ipswich and, since 2002, has regularly organised and attended the annual customer visit to the Golf Industry Show in the USA.

"I've always enjoyed working here; and have been given various opportunities to move between departments, which has given me a great insight into how the different sections of the company work together."

Dawn lives in Ipswich with her husband, Matt, RJ's Demonstration Fleet Manager







Close to Perfection

Close House, near Newcastle, has turned into a superb golf club, but as Scott MacCallum discovered, it is about to get much better.



It would be fair to say that anyone looking at Close House Golf Club, five years ago would have agreed that it had potential.

An idyllic estate, in stunning countryside 10 miles west of Newcastle, the tree-lined parkland golf course was a great place to play the game but, frustratingly, shared its space with several University of Newcastle football and rugby pitches.

Not an ideal scenario for any golf club, but one enterprising businessman spotted the opportunity to create something quite special at Close House and with the original golf course enjoying a new lease of life having been divorced from the playing fields and boasting superb new USGA greens, with a magnificent new 18 hole course under construction and due to open by spring 2011, as well as a state-of-the-art academy and driving range and

new £2 million clubhouse members can't quite believe their luck.

When Graham Wylie, the founder of Sage Computers, bought the estate one of the first things he did was to bring down some greenkeeping expertise from Slaley Hall in the shape of Course Manager, Steve Cram, who brought some of his old crew with him, including the Slaley number three, Brian Clark, to be his number two at Close House.

Brian was to take over as Course Manager from Steve, when Steve returned to Slaley a couple of years later.

"When we arrived the 18 hole course had push up greens cut out of the existing land and there were eight football pitches and four rugby pitches which shared the golf course land.

"When the pitches were in use on Wednesdays and Saturdays the holes directly involved with the football and rugby pitches couldn't

be used," explained Brian, as we sat in the orangery of the luxurious hotel which is also part of the site.

"Even when the golfers could play those holes they were playing out of grass that was three inches long and mud created by the footballers and rugby players."

The pitches were moved to land that Graham Wylie bought to the east of the course freeing up the greenkeeping team to make their mark on the golf course.

"Graham was a graduate of Newcastle University and wanted to put something back for them hence the new pitches, while the students got special rates for the golf course.

"There are university buildings on the site as well – greenhouses and labs etc where grain testing is carried out," explained Brian, of a site which has been transformed over the last half decade.

"Initially the plans were to build a new Championship-standard



FAR LEFT: The new site offer spectacular views of the countryside

ABOVE TOP: The course is being built to a high specification

ABOVE LEFT AND ABOVE INSET: MJ Abbotts can have as many as 40 people on site and a great deal of plant

course on the land including that of the original course but we finally decided to keep and upgrade the old course and have the new one built on land that Graham bought from a neighbouring farmer," explained Brian, who took over as Course Manager three years ago.

The in-house team rebuilt all 18 greens and surrounds adding bunkers and designing the new USGA guideline style greens.

"We had a free hand to build and design the greens and we made them very undulating. The course is short – under 6000 yards – and we felt that we had to add interest to the golfing challenge by doing something with the greens and surrounds."

The course – now known as The Filly – offers a real feel-good golfing experience for the mid handicapper with the short but interesting holes presenting some solid birdie opportunities to average golfers enjoying a good day.

The current clubhouse is a traditional old cricket pavilion which really looks the part situated in the middle of the course but it will soon be replaced by the brand new version to serve both courses.

Having agreed that The Filly could never be stretched to present a genuine challenge to the top players the decision to build just such a course was taken and New Zealand-born architect, Scott McPherson, who worked on the St Andrews Bay (now Fairmont) courses, was offered the challenge of creating a course that hopefully in time will become one of the best in the North East and perhaps beyond.

"Scott is a real disciple of Harry Colt and he came up with some drawings which carried the Colt influence – open trenches and old stone walls etc."

Another Colt trait was minimal earth moving but given a site which had been farmland until Graham

Wylie's purchase of the land, a certain amount of shape shifting had to be carried out to create an interesting layout.

Indeed, judging by the amount of MJ Abbott plant and manpower on the site in early August Harry Colt would have been truly amazed, and comparisons with what he had required to create the likes of Sunningdale and Wentworth and at Close House would be staggering.

"Scott is on the site on a regular basis and the speed at which Abbotts work means that there is always something to see when I come up to the site, something I do most days. It makes coming to work very exciting.

"There is anything up to 40 guys working on site and they are all extremely professional and helpful, especially Mike Heath, the on-site Project Manager. I must admit we were all delighted when Abbotts won the contract," revealed Brian.



Monthly meetings are held to keep everyone up to speed and make any decisions that are required to be made as the work progresses.

"It is a very free draining site. Like many in the area we have had some torrential rain in the past few weeks and it has drained very quickly which I'm very pleased to see and Mike or Scott will come to me if they feel there is something I need to have input into including the steepness of bunker faces or a areas that make have draining issues – something I do have experience of from my time at Slaley."

The new course which will be known as The Colt – in tribute to the man who influenced it and also to reflect Graham Wylie's strong interest in horse racing, hence The Filly and The Colt – offers some spectacular views of the Geordie countryside and some of the holes will become stars in their own rights. The 14th is a feature hole. At around 160 yards the green is surrounded by trees and from a playing and architectural perspective looks magnificent. Brian thinks so too, but is sure the hole will give him headaches.

"The green will struggle for light and air and I'm sure I'm going to be pulling my hair out. I'm going to have my hands full," he smiled, while fully appreciating the qualities that the hole will bring to the course.

As part of the preparation for taking over the running of what will be a high quality golfing venue Brian and some of his colleagues have been visiting courses in other parts of the country to get a feel for how they do the job.

"We've visited the likes of Celtic Manor, and The Grove and learned a great deal from seeing how they operate. Graham wanted us to see how five star facilities and high quality golf courses run and see the standards they achieve.

"He really wants to create something special in this area and is the type of guy who will be looking for an event, whether it be main Tour, Seniors or Ladies, to establish the new course."

Having the resources to build a golf course during a recession makes it far easier to achieve a top quality job at a competitive price and it would be perfectly positioned if it were to open around the time the world, and the country, emerge from the financial doldrums.

Brian has really enjoyed his time since becoming Course Manager and is relishing the steep learning curve he is on.

"I did apply for some head man jobs while I was at Slaley but now know that I wasn't really ready. Coming here, taking on more responsibility, learning from Steve, and having him as a mentor,

meant that I was ready to take on the job when he left. I'm happy to take on responsibility. I do worry about things – I don't think you'd be normal if you didn't, but I enjoy the challenges of the job."

Some of that enjoyment may be derived for the fact that there is no committee structure at Close House.

"Graham definitely wants things to be right and he puts the right people in position to make it happen and then lets professional people get on with the job."

They are hoping to start seeding this autumn but the onus is getting the job right rather than finished and if it spills over to next spring no-one would be overly concerned. It will be sown out with traditional bent fescue mix – the same as The Filly – and the team which stands at seven at the moment but which will increase substantially, will maintain the two courses to a similar standard

"The plan is to have a light opening next autumn then, hopefully, the Grand Opening in the spring of 2011."

When that happens Brian's professional life will move on to the next chapter, but you can be sure that whatever challenges he faces he will treat in the same manner that he has with those he has tackled so far.

"We had a free hand to build and design the greens, and added interest to the golfing challenge by doing something with the greens and surrounds."



Brian Clark,
Course Manager

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Czech This Out!

**Ex-Pat, Graham Shiel, gives you
a flavour of life working on a golf
course in the **Czech Republic****







Golf Park Plzen (Pilsen) is an 18 hole, par 71 5597 metre, course. It is five years old, work having started on it in 2003 and it opened in August, 2004.

The Architect was German, Christopher Stadler, and the construction work was carried out by the German-based company Sommerfeld A.G.

The course differs from others in the Czech Republic in that most of the 18 holes are laid out in a line - following the river Klabava up stream to the beautiful large Ejpvovice lake where we have our famous par 3 11th hole - an island green.

The course is set in a forest of birch and alder trees along the river, giving it a feel of a much more mature course than its four and half years imply. We have 40 golf carts for hire with tarmac cart paths around the course.

Golf Park Plzen was voted Golf Course of the Year 2008 in the Czech Republic, by the readers of Golf Digest, and also the Best Individual Hole of the Year in 2008, for our 11th, which also won this award in 2006 and 2007. In 2007 we were placed fourth as Course of the Year - with our 16th coming in 4th and 6th in 2008 in the individual hole category. There were only two golf clubs that had more than one hole in the top ten. In all other categories in 2008 we were in 2nd place: Best Service; Best Restaurant, Best Pro-Shop and Best Value for Money. So 2008 was a good year for us.

The problem now is trying to stay in the top group, as the team and I have set the standard, we must keep there or even improve in the years to come.

Without my greenkeeping team it would not have been possible to

achieve the results we have, so a big thank you must go to them all, with a special mention to my First Assistant, Jan Csizmar, who also acts as my interpreter until I learn Czech!

I have five full time staff and myself, plus one part time lad, but in the summer there can be anywhere up to 10 people working on the golf course .

I came to G.P. Plzen as Course Manager at the start of 2007 after working in Germany as a Head Greenkeeper and Course Manager for 15 years. The golf course was not in too bad a condition, mainly being in need of a tidy up; sorting out some staff problems and re-training the greenkeeping team in the ways that we should work and present the golf course - not so easy when you don't speak the lingo! (I really should speak some Czech as my wife is Czech, but we speak German to one another).

As golf is only just starting to take off here in the Czech Republic there is a problem getting workers with any knowledge of greenkeeping or golf. It has reached the point where I will have a new man, and ask him to go out and rake the bunkers, and he will reply, "What's a bunker?"

It sounds easy - just some tidying up to do, but there was a lot of work to do in the attention to detail and teaching the staff to look at the job in hand and not be, "That's ok. It will do". I have worked hard to give them an idea of the standards that are required, and then get to the stage where they take some pride in what they have done.

In the time I have been here we have built three new bunkers, two tees and several new fairway drains.



We are always looking at ways to improve the course and, with one eye on environment, the golf club is planning to re-open a old long unused hydro-electric site near the 7th, to supply the golf club/hotel and restaurant's power needs. How green is that?!

Also, this year, we will be implementing a more organic based fertiliser programme for the Greens and Tees. We have a more traditional greens grass mix using *Agrostis capillaries*, *Festuca rubra commutata* and *Festuca rubra trichophylla*, with a low feed and watering programme. Mowing heights for the Greens are normal: 5mm down 4.5mm and with this we get a good speed on the greens.

The golf club is privately owned by four men so we have no committees. Thankfully this means more stable and consistent decision making at the top.

Golf Park Plzen is also known for its four live crocodiles, which live in the clubhouse, but we will be getting an outside pen soon for summer use. I did suggest that they be named Miroslav, Petr, Jan and Ivan after the four owners...and I've still got my job!

INSET ABOVE: the greenkeeping team. Back row (from left to right): Ondrej Batik, Vasil Orsah, Graham Shiel and Jan Csizmar.

MAIN RIGHT: Aerial shot of the picturesque countryside surrounding the 3rd and 5th Greens



about the author

I started greenkeeping in 1980 at Bolton Old Links Golf Club, and worked at golf clubs in the north west until I moved to Germany in 1991 and then on to Czech Republic. I have been a member of BIGGA from the start, and before that a member of EIGGA.



Ragwort

an unusual and unwelcome weed of fine turf

Dr Terry Mabbett shares his intimate knowledge of Ragwort, in this month's L&D Feature

Ragwort (*Senecio* sp) is a lot of things but a weed of fine turf is generally not one, so it was surprising to see well-established rosette-stage ragwort plants in abundance on a tee of otherwise well-managed turf on a prestige golf course in Hertfordshire.

Greenkeepers are accustomed to seeing ragwort in the rough, on the margins of courses and even in the car park but not on the fairway let alone on tees.

After thinking about ragwort as a weed I am not totally surprised it can establish in fine turf just like its relative the dandelion, and especially since there was another unusual and related weed called bristly ox-tongue (*Picris echioides*) in equal abundance. Ragwort and bristly ox-tongue are not normally regarded as weeds of established fine turf because they should be eliminated by mowing. However like dandelion, which is an acknowledged weed of fine turf, they are members of the Asteraceae (Compositae) and therefore have many common traits. All produce huge numbers of seed, possess tap

root systems and develop prostrate rosette habits in early growth stages with broad, light-blocking leaves which lay flat on the turf, all key factors for weed success in turf.

Despite its injurious weed status which is governed by nominally strict legislation swathes of golden ragwort still appear on set-aside agricultural land and railway embankments, showing the weed is never far away. With seed production potentials up to 150,000 per plant per season, and efficient wind-assisted fruit and seed dispersal (by pappus/parachute), it would not be surprising if some ragwort seeds found their way into fine turf. Moreover germination rate is high at 70% with seeds staying dormant for several years at least.

Perhaps more surprising is ragwort establishing in 'tight' and well managed fine turf cut frequently and treated with selective herbicides to control mainstream turf weeds like common daisy, white clover and dandelion.

This tee was clearly cut frequently to optimum height and showed evidence of selective weed control. There were only minute amounts

of white clover and the occasional dandelion although the adjacent fairway supported large patches of white clover in flower.

Tees adjacent to high populations of ragwort (and bristly-ox-tongue) will be vulnerable to invasion with turf damage during teeing-off providing easily exploitable germination sites and niches. On the other hand the ultra tight and undamaged turf on golfing greens should avoid invasion. Indeed the green on the preceding hole, just 30 metres away and even closer to the railway, was completely free of ragwort and bristly ox-tongue and all other broad-leaved weeds.

You only have to look at ragwort's botanical relative the dandelion to see why, if given the opportunity, it can establish in fine turf. Dandelion displays a rosette of leaves flat against the ground positioned apical meristem (growing point) barely above soil level. Leaves are clipped during mowing but the growing point survives to produce more leaves. Leaves with a low-expand rapidly blocking light to the surrounding turf grass plants, allowing dandelions to establish at



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

Thank you to all our key sponsors



Well established ragwort on the tee, clipped though not killed off by mowing



Ragwort established just outside of the tee



Ragwort newly established on the tee and already surviving regular and appropriate height cutting



Bristly ox-tongue growing on the tee at the same frequency as ragwort to which it is closely related.



Ragwort is related to dandelion (shown here) with broadly similar characteristics to this acknowledged weed of fine turf.



A well established ragwort plant that has clearly exploited divot damage on the tee.

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their expense. Its sturdy tap root system provides anchorage and food for survival during drought, and moreover a means of vegetative propagation.

During its early growth stages ragwort displays a similar rosette of leaves surrounding a low-set growing point that escapes the blades. Like those of dandelion ragwort leaves were clearly clipped during mowing but growing points survived to carry on growth. As in dandelion the tap root system will generate new plants following failed attempts to dig out plants.

Ragwort is essentially a biennial plant which dies after setting seed in its second year. But if ragwort plants are prevented from flowering, in this case by frequent mowing, they adopt a perennial life cycle like dandelion and continue to produce leaves until killed by herbicide. Dandelion is rarely a problem because it is one of the easier weeds to control using selective herbicides approved for use in managed turf, but any ragwort establishing in managed fine turf will present real problems.

Ragwort is not the easiest of weeds to control with herbicide. Moreover where approved herbicide recommendations exist they only cover non-selective herbicides used for total vegetation control, or selective herbicides approved for use in amenity grassland but not managed turf. Herbicide products approved for use on managed turf and containing active ingredients with known activity against ragwort do exist but you will not generally find ragwort listed in the weed control spectrum.

Only remaining option is to dig out the plants but ragwort will respond in the same way as dandelion by producing a new plant for every piece of tap root left behind.

Finding ragwort and bristly ox-tongue in fine turf is clearly unusual but there is probably good reason for this particular occurrence. This golf course is bounded along its entire length by a main line railway out of London. Both ragwort and bristly ox-tongue grow and flower in abundance on the embankment.

Railways are reticent about ragwort and there is much argument as to whether the railway is the recipient of seed from adjacent farmland or whether the railway donates the weed to everyone else.

Railways are prime targets for ragwort but not especially the native common ragwort (*Senecio jacobea*). Their biggest problem is with the Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squilidoides*), an exotic species originating

in southern Europe which found the ballast used to support railway tracks an agreeable substrate close to the volcanic soils of its native Mediterranean home.

Only British botanists could call a 'foreign' weed the 'Oxford' ragwort but the name is not as perverse as it sounds. The species escaped from the Oxford Botanic Garden in the 18th Century and spread around the country along the railway tracks and is now classed as an alien invasive weed. a

This tee is just a few metres from the railway embankment, although it is not possible to distinguish between common ragwort and Oxford ragwort when plants are at the rosette stage of young vegetative growth. There is historically and geographically close connection and association between many older golf courses and railways which provided access to golf courses prior to widespread use of the motor car.

Ragwort is clearly not common as a weed in fine turf but its occurrence reinforces the adaptability of species which like ragwort grow to heights of one metre or more in unmanaged habitats but happily adapt to turf in spite of regular and frequent 'shaving and clipping' during mowing. Greenkeepers with golf courses in these vulnerable situations should certainly be on the lookout for unusual weeds of fine turf like ragwort and bristly ox-tongue.

Most greenkeepers will be confronted with ragwort elsewhere

on the course or be under threat of invasion from adjacent land. As such they should know why ragwort is classed as an injurious weed and therefore requires potentially draconian control measures supported if not entirely backed up by long-standing legislation.

Both common and Oxford ragwort contain high concentrations of poisonous alkaloids potentially lethal to livestock and especially equines (e.g. horses, ponies and donkeys). As such ragwort is scheduled as an 'injurious weed' under provisions of the 1959 Weeds Act. Landowners have a legal obligation to control ragwort and prevent its spread. The Ragwort Control Act which came into force in February 2004 is a Code of Practice to enforce adherence and prevent spread. Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) will enforce action where ragwort poses a high risk.

The new Code of Practice puts onus of responsibility on landowners and managers including local authorities, railways and the Highways Agency to have ragwort control policies in place. They should assess the risk on land they own and implement control policies on any land identified as being 'Medium Risk', and take immediate action on land identified as 'High Risk'. Failure to follow the code can be used as evidence in a prosecution under the Weeds Act. It all sounds scary but as yet there appears little if any measurable effect on the frequency and spread of ragwort.

Many older golf courses have close historical and geographical associations with the railway





A wide-angle photograph of a lush green golf course. In the background, a white goalpost stands on the left side. The field is filled with vibrant green grass, and a dense line of trees forms the horizon under a clear sky. The overall scene is bright and open.

The recession can throw up opportunities

Doom and gloom seems to be widespread in the golf sector at present. Reasons are not hard to find, says David Shelton



In the clubs significantly more members have not renewed their membership in comparison with earlier years.

Relatively few clubs now charge an entrance fee so golfers dissatisfied with the condition of their home course tend to move to a better maintained course in the vicinity. Waiting lists for club membership have virtually disappeared.

The EGU estimates there are two million golfers not members of a club. They propose communicating with this important market firstly to win visitors and society business, but also to promote the benefits of golf club membership.

After months of above average rainfall many golf courses on the heavier soils face a dilemma. They have had to resort to the use of temporary greens for long periods. Additionally they have had to close part or all of some fairways. Many of their members have either left already or plan to do so if matters are not speedily rectified.

But it all boils down to finance. Membership income is down, bar takings are down and the pro-shop income has fallen steeply. So where is the money coming from for capital expenditure? It is a vicious circle - without expenditure things will only get worse.

For heavier land courses top of the list for capital expenditure MUST be to improve the drainage of tees, greens and fairways. You can't afford it? Well read on, because the recession can throw-up opportunities.

Much new machinery is available at discount prices. Used and rebuilt machinery seems plentiful. Lower oil prices have led to keen prices for land drainage pipes, and aggregate suppliers have little demand from the building sector so demand a discount from them, also.

The Government's policy of freeing-up the money supply for smaller businesses seems to be feeding through to the sharp end. Attractive rates of interest should enable those clubs with a well thought out drainage scheme and business plan to get funding.

What do I mean by a well thought out drainage scheme?

It is essential to accurately identify the drainage problem.

Analyse when it occurs; can satellite imaging help? Refer to old maps; and undertake an on-site survey.



Consider all the options and cost them

Can expenditure on new or refurbished equipment be justified? Could specialist equipment be hired? Perhaps hiring with a skilled operator would be a better option? What would be the cost of engaging a specialist sportsturf drainage contractor? Is partnership working possible if we supply some of the labour, tractors and trailers? What rates of interest can be negotiated and over how many years? Are there any grants available?

The layout of the drains.

Would the herringbone or flag layout be preferable? Drain spacing - what can we afford at this juncture? Can we make provision for additional drainage at a later date? Is it necessary to have a secondary system superimposed over the primary system? Could we do this ourselves? Pipe sizes - why is bigger not necessarily better? And, at what depth

should they be installed on the heavy clay soil? Back-filling aggregates are relatively expensive - how can money be saved here? *Disruption costs can be significant; they need to be carefully costed.* What damage to the playing area can we expect? What will be the cost, in labour and materials, of this re-instatement. How long will the facility be out of play? Is it really possible to 'drain today and play tomorrow'? (the answer is yes!)

Established golf greens.

Remaking established golf greens to USGA standards may not be the best way forward in the light of ever-higher irrigation costs and restrictions on fertiliser usage. There are three techniques of drainage available - would they suit our circumstances? Shelton claims their Lightening-drain system rivals USGA specification when it comes to speed of drainage!

The golden rules

Do you know what they are?

If an expenditure of this amount is to be made what is going to be our marketing plan? How many lost members can be persuaded to return? How many new members can be wooed from neighbouring clubs? Can we significantly increase income from green fees and visiting societies?

There have been massive strides in the development of land drainage machinery and techniques in recent years. The Shelton company has the biggest research and development programme into sportsturf drainage of any business or organisation anywhere. This research and development expenditure aims to make these benefits affordable to the majority; why not be one of them?

The recession has created many problems in the world of golf. But look upon the problems as a challenge. In the words of Napoleon Hill, "when the going gets tough watch how the tough get going".

ABOVE: Shelton Lightening-drain™ installed on a golf green. It is the world's fastest land drainage system.

LEFT ABOVE: Special grassland tyres on this 4-wheels in line trailer spread the load on fine turf and virtually eliminate the need for re-instatement works.

LEFT BELOW: The latest specialist equipment minimises damage to fine turf; note the pipes fit snugly in the trench.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: A secondary system superimposed over the primary piped layout may be the most cost-effective, and most efficient drainage plan.

about the author

David Shelton heads Shelton Sportsturf Drainage Solutions LLP. See their website: www.sheltonsdrainage.com for further information or telephone 01507 578288 to talk with David Shelton or the technical staff about equipment sales, hire or contracting. Shelton Sportsturf Drainage Solutions LLP has a powerpoint presentation of approximately 45-50 minutes duration on this topic. A technical member of their staff is available to talk to BIGGA Section meetings or similar groups of a minimum of 20 persons.



What do you want from a utility vehicle?

James De Havilland with his regular contribution on current machinery

These days, few budgets can allow for mistakes when it comes to selecting new items of equipment. Make the wrong choice now and you could end up living with a poorly considered choice for several years. So how do you choose the right type of utility vehicle when there are so many models to choose from?

What are the key demands you will place on your utility vehicles? Does your budget allow for you to select more than one vehicle and, if so, does this allow you the freedom to choose different models that can be more closely matched to their intended use? Are you likely to change the attachments currently fitted to your existing vehicles? If yes, will their replacements be of the same type, capacity and weight? It is surprising how asking a few questions can help refine what you demand from a utility vehicle. In some cases, it may also influence how you tackle certain tasks. A good example can be the application of fertilisers; if an existing solid fertiliser application regime is to be replaced by a liquid based system, for example will a 600 litre capacity utility mounted sprayer be large enough or will you need a high capacity tractor trailed unit instead?

It is worth looking at how existing utilities are employed. These versatile vehicles are often used as a 'self-propelled' trailer, a low platform load height making them ideal for ferrying rolls of turf or loading up with some fresh sand for a bunker. As two people can travel on the machine, it can mean one remaining on the job while the second goes off to fetch fresh materials as required.

But do you have the budget to employ two people to do this sort of work? Would a higher capacity tractor and trailer be a more efficient method of getting materials on site? The key to making the right choice is to not just look at what is done now but to try and see if there is room for develop systems and improve upon them.

Think through capacities

General purpose utilities, typically those used to ferry personnel, kit and materials, need to have the right capacity. Take a look at what current utilities are loaded up with and work out if this is actually within the load capacity of the vehicle. Although a ball park 500kg platform capacity is typically enough for a general work it could well be too little for some jobs.

Move up to 'working' models that are designed to operated mounted sprayers and top dressing kit, and matters change. It follows that the vehicles capacity will have to carry both the attachments and its contents, a listed capacity of a typical 1,200kg or so arguably suggesting an attachment capacity of perhaps 600 litres or 600kg. Is this capacity high enough to deliver the daily output you require?

There is then the choice of petrol, diesel or electric power. Light petrol powered utility vehicles have the advantage of lower initial capital costs, some also preferring the smoother running and lower noise levels some of these machines may offer in a direct comparison to a diesel. The downsides are pretty obvious.

Electric power is more widely available these days, with many former sceptics warming to this form of power for a general run-about. Pricing can be competitive





Utility vehicles come in such a choice of designs that it can initially be confusing when trying to select a new one. The key is to work back from the unit's intended duties; top dressing and spraying work will demand certain features that may not be needed on a general purpose unit.

Operators are important, and should be engaged in trying out a range of makes and models if possible. A machine that appears to tick all the right boxes on paper may have issues that can only be picked up by putting the machine through its paces.

Weather protection can take the form of roof, screens and doors. The latter tend to be easily removed, with some suppliers offering a choice of glazed or simple roll-up designs. It is more cost effective to specify weather protection from new.

It is well worth taking a look beyond the more familiar utility vehicle choices. Certain makes and models will have differences that could well fit in with specific needs. Road homologation and high hydraulic power capacity are two examples.

When looking to fit equipment with a payload, factor in the weight of the unit when it is empty. A capacity of around 1,200kg will be fine for most 600 litre sprayers. Where possible, try a vehicle with the type of attachment you will be using fitted.

Good ground clearance and a choice of cleated tyre will typically indicate the utility in question can tackle more extreme terrain. Although this may not need to be exploited fully, the ability of a machine to reach awkward areas should be considered. A bench seat is often liked by operators.



too, although you do need to cost in a charging system. As to operating costs, electric vehicles have a pretty good track record. If you are a golf course that runs a fleet of electric buggies, an electric utility may well be worth looking into.

Diesel power remains the default choice for a 'working' utility. With these units, it is the type of transmission that needs to be thought through. For general work, a CVT transmission is a simple choice, full automatic drive making them easy to operate. If you need to do fixed speed work, manual transmissions tend to remain the default choice. Hydrostatic drive, as used by Kubota on its RTV900, is not as widespread at present, but it is well liked by operators.

A final point is auxiliary power. Hydraulic power may be needed to drive a sprayer pump or drive a top dresser's hydraulic motors. These days, a pump with a capacity of 20 litres/min plus will typically be needed, with extra capacity possibly coming as a cost option. The key point is to match the vehicle to the attachments before assuming a new make or model will be up to the job.

One final point is to consider if the vehicle can be used on the road. The ability to drive between sites using public roads is something that it is all too easy to overlook. Some vehicles, such as the JCB Groundhog 4x4, can be factory specified in road homologated form. In certain applications, this can make them a great alternative to a road going pick-up. Again, look at what is offered before assuming all models can be easily adapted to run on the road.

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Opportunities Beckon



Scott MacCallum previews the forthcoming Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

Seven highly talented and motivated greenkeepers will descend on BIGGA HOUSE later this month for the 19th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year final.

Each year the standard of the finalist rises and to reach the final attaches a beacon to the CV drawing its attention to potential employers. Winning the title opens the door to all sorts of possibilities – Euan Grant, who has just taken over from George Brown at this year’s Open Championship venue, at Turnberry, is a former Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner for example.

The finalists arrive at Aldwark Manor in Sunday, September 13, when they will meet up with the judges and get to know each other before they start what could be one of the most significant events in their careers.

Dinner and a couple of drinks should tee up Monday just nicely for

the candidates, where they will be interviewed by a panel comprising Peter Mansfield, of Lely; Jeff Mills, Chairman of the BIGGA Learning and Development Committee; Bruce Jamieson, of Toro, and Sami Collins, BIGGA’s Head of Learning and Development.

The finalists will also be charged with producing a course report on the Aldwark Manor course’s holes on the hotel side of the river.

Once all seven interviews have been completed the reports will be studied and the interview panel will decide on the 2009 winner and two runners-up.

The winner will win an eight week trip to the United States beginning next January, which includes a six week study course at the University of Massachusetts and a trip to the GCSAA’s Golf Industry Show, in San Diego, and Toro’s Californian Headquarters. The runners-up will receive an expenses paid trip to Harrogate Week.

The Seven Finalists are...

Martin Finegan

Martin Finegan is an Assistant at Waterville Golf Links in County Kerry. Martin, 44, holds a degree in Farm Management and worked in the family transport and agricultural contraction business. He moved to London in the late 80s and was soon running his own agency supplying labour to construction companies with up to 300 employees.

He later sold the company, moved back to Ireland and built his own house. Martin took a full time course in Greenkeeping and Turf Management at Colaiste Stiofain, in Cork, making a round trip of 150 miles every day. Married, his hobbies include golf, fishing, swimming and reading while he also helps out with his local Gaelic Athletic Association teams.



Richard Jenkinson

Richard Jenkinson was born and bred in St Andrews and is currently working on construction and grow-in of the new g-west course near Gleneagles.

Richard started as a seasonal worker on the Old Course and moved to Archerfield Links, in East Lothian, as First Assistant before moving to Perthshire. He holds an HNC in Golf Course Management from Elmwood.

He is married to Ferelith and they have a young daughter, Amy. Richard, 37, is a keen piper, played football at a senior level and also holds Gold, Silver and Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards.



Rhys Norville

Rhys Norville is an Assistant at Newport Golf Club, in South Wales, finding his vocation having initially started on the course to being a PGA Professional.

He is currently undertaking his NVQ Level 2 in Sports Turf at Coleg Gwent. Currently playing off a handicap of 3 he is a member of Tredegar Park GC and is a regular competition winner and serves on committee.

Rhys, 20, is a qualified sports coach and has sat on the Newport Youth Council helping improve opportunities to 16-25 year olds in the Newport Area.



Benjamin Burrill

Benjamin Burrill is an Assistant at Ilkley Golf Club in West Yorkshire. He joined Ilkley on a full time basis in 2007 having work on a seasonal basis for the previous seven years and holds an honours degree in Real Estate Management and Business from John Moores University, in Liverpool.

Benjamin, 24, is currently studying for his NVQ Level 3 at Askham Bryan. His interests include kite surfing, water skiing, tennis, golf and running – he completed this year's London Marathon.



Oliver Pennington

Oliver Pennington has been an Assistant at La Moye Golf Club, in Jersey, for five years and is currently studying NVQ Level 3 at Myerscough.

A keen golfer, playing off 10, 22 year-old Oliver has worked on the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at both Royal Birkdale and Turnberry and has attended Harrogate Week. He also enjoys kayaking and cooking.



Adam Wise

Adam Wise has been an Assistant at Richmond Golf Club, in Surrey, since 2007 having previously worked as a seasonal worker at the club.

He holds an honours degree in Sports Management Golf from Bournemouth University and particularly enjoyed the sports turf modules in that which sparked his desire to become greenkeeper.

Adam, 24, is currently undertaking an NVQ level 2 in Sportsturf at Myerscough.

A county golfer from B,B&O he also played for his university and currently plays to a handicap of 3.

His other interests include running, rowing and music.



Peter Leach

Peter Leach is Deputy Course Manager at Exeter Golf and Country Club. Peter, 29, holds an honours degree in Geography and Environmental Management from the University of the West of England in Bristol and is currently working towards a Foundation Degree in Sportsturf at Myerscough.

A mad keen golfer, he is a former Junior Captain of Exeter G&CC and his father is a ex- Devon County Player and uncle a professional. He is also a keen walker, and snooker and pool player.



LIMEGRAIN SEED MIX

For cricket pitch renovations, groundsmen can take advantage of the newly re-formulated MM50 seed mixture from Limagrain UK which now contains two new top-rated perennial ryegrass cultivars: Venice and Malibu.

The new perennial ryegrass cultivar Venice is now included in MM50, a 100% ryegrass blend. On the STRI's Turfgrass Seed 2009 new varieties table for close mown swards, Venice scores highly for shoot density, fineness of leaf, with exceptional resistance to red thread.

Malibu also has good disease resistance and fineness of leaf, and its high shoot density contributes to the development of a sward which is dense and hard wearing.

01522 861300.



JOHN DEERE'S NEW TURF SPRAYER

John Deere's new HD200 SelectSpray machine is an upgraded version of the 750-litre low profile sprayer first introduced in 2003.

The HD200 offers a choice of centrifugal or diaphragm pumps, manual or automatic rate controls and a range of boom options that now come with electro-hydraulic boom lift and lower as standard. A wiring harness allows the control system to be changed very easily, if required.

The optional CleanLoad chemical induction system makes it easy to load chemicals by ensuring that every last drop is used, and

a powerful jet agitator makes sure the tank solution is mixed thoroughly. An integral tank wash system is standard.

Designed as an attachment for John Deere's 24hp ProGator utility vehicle, the HD200 can be easily and quickly removed without tools, allowing customers to use the ProGator for other applications. An optional storage stand incorporates wheels so that the demounted sprayer can be moved around and reattached.

www.deere.co.uk



NEW DISTANCE MARKERS

The new range of BMS Distance Marker Products are guaranteed 10 years, UV Stable. Unbreakable! Anti-vandal signs and other products can also be made from same material. More designs coming soon!

All computer controlled CNC machine work and CAD drawings controlled by BMS staff.

Price each system Fairway Markers - 12" (300mm) diameter including mounting spikes, £300 including frame and set of three standard numbers.

www.bmsproducts.com



VERY SCARY

The new Vari Scary gas gun from Techneat Engineering will keep pigeons and other pests on the move from amenity turf sports areas. The Vari Scary features an innovative timing mechanism enabling operators to infinitely vary the both the number of salvos and the number of bangs per salvo. Changing the frequency of salvos throughout the day is a more effective deterrent to pigeons, rooks, rabbits etc.

The Vari Scary uses an electronic controller from Robydome to enable simple programming of the unit. The timer permits different combinations in any 30 minute time segments, to better match bird flock activity.

The timer-controlled Vari Scary overcomes serious limitations of conventional light sensitive units that can trigger firing too early in the morning, or cut off in dull weather to leave the turf exposed to attack. The reliability of the electronic timer gives confidence to set up and leave the Vari Scary, safe in the knowledge it will come on and go off at the designated times. A continuous spark ignition system assures ultimate reliability in firing.

The integrated leg stand gives excellent stability and ensures maximum coverage, including keeping bird and rabbit pests off reseeded turf and other areas subject to damage. The Vari Scary can be used in combination with the Techneat Eye-Scare to provide a range of audible and visual deterrents to pest activity.

www.techneatengineering.co.uk

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STERI-7 is proven to kill all known super bugs including the most life threatening pathogens such as Influenza H1N1 (Swine Flu), MRSA, C Difficile, TB, HIV, SARS, Hepatitis, Salmonella and E.Coli to name just a few.

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Its unique properties not only ensure a cleaner, safer environment for both user and customer alike, the regular use of STERI-7 will reduce the chances of cross-contamination in the workplace. Regular use will reduce sickness and time off work, thereby saving money.

STERI-7 Hand Sanitiser is a non-alcohol foaming hand cleaner and Sanitiser which provides protection and at the same time, creates a protective barrier which lasts for up to three hours.

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SPORTS GROUND MANAGEMENT

– A COMPLETE GUIDE BY STEWART BROWN

To undertaking a book entitled 'Sports Ground Management – A Complete Guide' is akin to Hercules setting out on his 12 Labours. It is not exactly setting the bar at a comfortable height, but Stewart Brown, Team Leader for Sportsturf at Myerscough College, has cleared it comfortably.

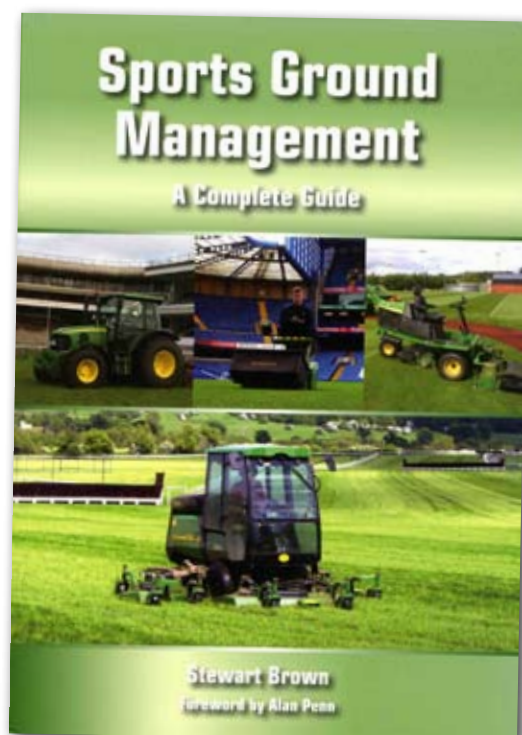
This book can indeed be described as a complete guide and does an excellent job in offering excellent practical information on a huge range of subjects within its 384 pages. It covers everything from management and administration, to procurement, contract management and planning to construction and maintenance of many different pitches including, bowling greens, cricket pitches, tennis courts, horse racing tracks and synthetic pitches and everything in between.

The book is packed with clear and informative diagrams and pictures of a higher quality than those that often appear in such tomes. The very nature of the book means that it is text heavy and it certainly isn't a publication that could, or is intended to be, read in one sitting, but as a reference book the type size is more than adequate and over the course of a career will be well thumbed!

Stewart, who is a Fellow of both the IOG and the Higher Education Academy and a member of the Institute of Learning, should be congratulated on his work and *Sports Ground Management – A Complete Guide* will join *Sports Turf & Amenity Grassland Management*, from 2005, as a fine body of work.

Costing £25, the book is published by The Crowood Press.
 S Mac

www.crowood.com



A QUICK GUIDE TO...

HEALTH & SAFETY

BIGGA and GCMA members have use off the on-line Safety Management System which can be accessed via the respective websites. However, there is some information that is useful to know...

1. Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) required the reporting of deaths or major injuries as quickly as possible and in the case of "over three day" injuries within 10 days.

In cases of death, major injury, or dangerous occurrences, you must notify the enforcing authority without delay, most easily by calling the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 99 23. (8.30am to 5pm);

You can also report the incident by:
Internet: [www.hse.gov./riddor\(1\)](http://www.hse.gov./riddor(1)); Fax: 0845 3009924 or Post to: Incident Contact Centre, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly, CF83 3GG.

2. Work Pressures

If employees have a job that is challenging, they should expect to feel some pressure at work.

However, when that pressure is excessive and they suffer an adverse reaction to it, then it has become stress.

Stress is not a disease, but it can be a threat to health and safety at work.

Legally, an employer must take care of health and safety when employees are at work.

Stress can also be triggered by events away from work, such as bereavement, money worries and illness.

2. Employers' Responsibilities

All employers, whatever the size of the business, must:

Make the workplace safe;

Prevent risks to health;

Ensure that plant and machinery is safe to use, and that safe working practices are set up and followed;

Make sure that all materials are handled, stored and used safely;

Provide adequate first aid facilities;

Tell employees about any potential hazards connected with the work, chemicals and other substances used by the firm, and give you information, instructions, training and supervision as needed;

Set up emergency plans make sure that ventilation, temperature, lighting, and toilet, washing and rest facilities all meet health, safety and welfare requirements;

Check that the right work equipment is provided and is properly used and regularly maintained;

Prevent or control exposure to substances that may damage your health;

Take precautions against the risks caused by flammable or explosive hazards, electrical equipment, noise and radiation;

Avoid potentially dangerous work involving manual handling and if it can't be avoided, take precautions to reduce the risk of injury;

Provide health supervision as needed;

Provide protective clothing or equipment free of charge if risks can't be removed or adequately controlled by any other means and ensure that the right warning signs are provided and looked after

3. Employees' Responsibilities

Responsibilities as employees are:

To take reasonable care of their own health and safety;

If possible avoid wearing jewellery or loose clothing if operating machinery;

If they have long hair, make sure it's tucked out of the way;

To take reasonable care not to put other people at risk by what they do or don't do in the course of their work;

To co-operate with their employer, making sure they get proper training and understand and follow the club's health and safety policies;

Not to interfere with, or misuse, anything that's been provided for their health, safety or welfare;

To report any injuries, strains or illnesses they suffer as a result of doing their job;

To tell their employer if something happens that might affect their ability to work - because their employer has a legal responsibility for their health and safety, they may need to suspend the employee while they find a solution to the problem, and if they drive or operate machinery, to tell their employer if they take medication that makes them drowsy - they should temporarily move them to another job if they have one for them to do.

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 ”

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

Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region



Ayrshire

Hello all, what a week at Turnberry! Tiger misses the cut after being 2 to 1 to win and Tom Watson comes inches away from golf immortality!

Working in the midst of such a massive operation was exciting and a challenge dodging all the ropes, vehicles and people about the place. We started at 4am to set the course in front of the golf, finishing about 7am for the majority. Luckily the weather was dry and we were free to eat, sleep or watch golf (nae drink!) till 6pm when we would meet to plan the evening's work, mainly cutting greens, divotting, tidying tee areas and blowing loose grass and sand from around greens and walkways. It was a real buzz, the days just became a blur and then it was all over!

We were all pleased that the course proved a challenge to the best in the world, even on the Thursday when conditions were ideal for low scores. The wind picked up a bit for the rest of the week and the Ailsa became a real test. With so much dependent on the weather for a good 'Open' I think we were lucky!

All at Turnberry were especially pleased to see George's last Open be such a success, with great comments from the R&A, Golf Writers, Greenkeepers, Golf fans and the players! As anyone who knows George knows that no-one deserved it more!

I'm sure we'll all still see George on a regular basis but on behalf of the Ayrshire Section, we wish you a long and happy retirement, maybe get that handicap down now you're not stuck in the office?

A couple of years ago I was

lucky enough to travel to Harrogate with George and on the way back we found we had to detour because of an accident. Anyway George got to saying how he was worried about this after dinner speech he was to make and what he would talk about (hard to believe, I know!). So George starts telling these stories from his earliest days in greenkeeping to the present and I was gutted to have to get out the car four hours later with a sore jaw from laughing! Ask him about the one about the General and the stuttering caddie when you see him! I think that speech went okay, by the way! All the best, George!

Our trip to County Down, the weekend of Sept 11, is looking good with all spaces filled and only a couple of deposits still to come in. I'm looking forward to the match as we had such a great time in Bangor the last time!

Remember we've the Autumn Outing at Powfoot GC on Thursday, October 1, so get it in the diary and see ya there!

Any news to denis.t@hotmail.co.uk or 07939 104701

Dennis Tweddle



Central

As you read this, the golf season will be drawing to a close but we still have the autumn outing to look forward to on September 17. Hopefully you will have returned your entry form well before now and we have a good turnout at Crieff. When you are trying to run events, things are much easier if you know in advance what support you have and the committee would urge everyone to plan ahead and commit at the earliest possible opportunity as it is vital for budgeting purposes and

making organisational arrangements.

This is particularly true with regards to the Ecology Course we are staging at Gleneagles on November 17 and 18. We have committed a substantial outlay to the STRI for putting this course on and with Gleneagles Hotel for the rooms and food for both days so we need your support. To attend the same course at Bingley would cost each attendee something in the region of £300 plus another £300 for travel and accommodation. We are staging almost the exact same course but tailored to our situation for less than a third of that price and including food. We have a few people confirmed already but ideally we are looking for between the 25 to 30 people attending to break even. Full details are on the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk or contact any committee member to book your place,

Gordon Moir



North

Stop press - Stuart Robertson of Craigie Hill Golf Club was 40 on August 12. I didn't really think he was that old but I played with him at Portlethen back in May and he was swinging it like a 40 year old. Well done Stuart and I'm sure it doesn't hurt too much...yet. Information supplied by Anon.

John Geddes and Dale Robertson were both fortunate enough to be a part of, The Open Support Team at Turnberry back in July and they have asked to thank BIGGA for the opportunity. They said it was very memorable and they would recommend it to people who are thinking of applying in the future.

This is the last month that you can put your name down for the Autumn outing at Alyth. We are hoping for a good turnout. If you haven't already got your name down then Dale Robertson, of Newmachar Golf Club, is the man you should be speaking to. He will answer any questions and queries that you have regarding the outing. It takes place on September 17 and I've already been receiving phone calls from people keen to go, so let's hope we can put the pressure on Brian Cocker by some healthy numbers.

Peterculter Golf Club have recently employed a new apprentice by the name of Andrew Scott. I'm sure Paul and Mark will look after you. I can't help thinking though that you have a hard act to follow after the last apprentice there. What was his name again? Good Luck and hope you enjoy it.

Finally this month the Norrie Wytock Trophy was being played on August 20. Hopefully we can do something this year. There will be a report to follow in next month's article. That's all the news I have for this month. I presume everyone is busy and keeping themselves out of trouble. That's the best way. Remember don't hesitate to give me a shout on 07813889374 if you have anything to put in future editions. Cheers

Ben Brookes
Murcar Links

Northern Region



North Wales

September must be most parents' favourite month because no matter how much you love your children you're really glad

to pack them back off to school after a summer under your feet! Likewise we pack the competitive season off this month with club finals days approaching, but do we actually get an off season? Summer competitions end, then we're into turkey trots, then the winter competitions kick in just to finish in time for the summer season to start again. Goodness, writing it down like this I'm starting to feel we're on a bit of a treadmill!

This month is normally the start of our autumn growth flush but with July containing more rain than the previous months combined we've been in flush for two months already (God help us).

The Autumn Tournament and Annual General Meeting takes place at Eaton Golf Club (CH3 7PH) on October 1. I hope we have as good a turnout as we have had in previous years.

In local news Dave Lewis, Course Manager, at Conwy Golf Club, celebrates 30 years working in greenkeeping this month, I'm sure all of us reading this send congratulations to you for your resilience and loyalty to our, what can be a hard but yet very rewarding, career choice and Jon Paul Wood, of Carden Park, is taking his experience to Australia this month by taking up a position at the Australian Golf Club, in Sydney, and I've been asked by the greens staff at Carden Park to send him their best wishes on his new venture.

That's about it for this month I hope to have a bit more for October's column so.

All the best until next month.
 Pete Maybury 07756001187
 Petemayb66@aol.com
 Johnny Evans
 Johnny.evans@tesco.net



North West

The Section is arranging a two day essential management skills course for two days in November the details of which will be in the next magazine. We will need a minimum of six students and a maximum of 12 so please get your names down as soon as possible. The more students that attend the less it will cost to run.

The Autumn Tournament will take place at Mere Golf and Country Club on Tuesday,

October 13. We have the tee from 12.09 to 1.30pm. There will be soup and sandwiches on arrival and a meal and presentation after. Numbers are limited so please send your application in quickly.

The cost will be £25 please send a cheque 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.

The 2009 BIGGA Whitelaw Bowl will take place at Penrith Golf club on Wednesday, September 9. This event is kindly sponsored by Rigby Taylor, if you wish to play please contact Phil Dewhurst. Phil can be contacted on mobile no. 07768180604.

Chris Sheehan



North East

On August 4 the North East Section played host to the Inter Section golf tournament sponsored by Alan Law, of Whitemoss Quarry, for the Whitemoss Trophy at Hexham Golf Club in Northumberland. This was contested also by the following Sections of the Northern Region; Cleveland, Northern, Sheffield and the North West. Unfortunately the North Wales Section were unable to produce a team.

Thanks must go to the sponsors of the competition and to Hexham Golf Club for giving courtesy of the course and to the Captain, Colin Pearson, for presenting the prizes to the winning team and runners-up and, not forgetting, the catering staff for the excellent evening meal and, of course, our own Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, for all their hard work. Also to Mal Lathan, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for providing us with a testing course in prime condition I'm sure all the competitors enjoyed themselves on the day.

The winning team was the North East Section which had a bit of an advantage with one member of staff and another who used to play there when he was a junior and they were as follows: Jimmy Richardson, Simon Harding and Jordan Gibson with a total nett score of 222; runners-up were the Northern 225; Sheffield 228

as you can see only six shots separated those three teams. I only have one more thing to say is thanks for making the effort to travel up here lads it was much appreciated not only by me but my Captain and Hexham Golf Club committee.

Autumn golf comp. at Wear-side on October 14. Best wishes to Jordan Gibson, of Northumberland GC, who is playing in the National Championship in October at Burnham and Berrow.

Jimmy Richardson



Cleveland

It is with sad regret that I have to report the sad passing away of John Hinton last month. John was the Head Greenkeeper at Barnard Castle Golf Club. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends and our thoughts are with them.

Some other news to report now.

Well done to Tim Pearson, at Richmond GC, on passing his NVQ level 2 in Sports Turf Maintenance. Tim attended Askham Bryan College at York. Well done

Congratulations also to Martin Corner on reaching the regional finals of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award for the second year running. The regional interview finals were held in York, and Martin was one of 43 regional finalists out of 3,500 across the UK and Ireland. Martin, who is Head Greenkeeper at Stressholme G.C, in Darlington, was nominated by Houghall College while doing his NVQ Level 3.

Martin Woods along with his Premier League standard bunker raking skills "because we Championship boys just don't have what it takes" donned his boots and grabbed his rake and headed up to Scotland with the BIGGA Support Team to help at The Open at Turnberry. Well done mate.

Some dates for your diary.

The autumn golf tournament will be Held at Durham City GC on Wednesday, October 7. Rigby Taylor is kindly sponsoring the day and there will be lots of good prizes. These days are very popular so book early to avoid disappointment. Tee off time is between 10 and 11am. The

price is £15 for golf and a meal. Try getting that anywhere else! Please send a cheque for £15 payable to Cleveland BIGGA. Mark the envelope for Ian Pemberton, 6 Rosewood Court, Marton, Middlesbrough, TS7 8QR.

Lloyd Ltd has invited the Cleveland section to their open day at Rockcliffe Hall on September 22.

Invites from Alistair will be sent out in September.

Finally, as I write this article a promotion leaflet has popped through the letter box from Lloyd Ltd.

It appears that Bishop Auckland Golf Club has hired a top male model to pose with their new purchases. I think it's a shame Phil couldn't have his picture taken. Never mind there will be time later on to have one with a moleskin smoking jacket on!

That's all for now.

Kevin Scarce



Sheffield

What a month August has been so far, I'm sure you will all have been very busy as the grass has just not stopped growing. As the golfers say, at least it keeps us quiet!

On the Section front we have played in two competitions over the last month. Unfortunately we lost in our Annual match against the Northern Section. May I thank Warwick and his staff at Abbeydale for the fantastic course they provided for both sides. Thanks also to Rigby Taylor for once again sponsoring the event.

In the Inter-Region event which was held in the North-east this year we came a very respectable third. If many of you don't know about this event, it is in its second year and all northern Sections enter three players to play in the competition. We send our three main competition winners. Well done lads.

Everything else in the Section is running well, later this month we will be starting to organise our winter lectures. Everyone will be informed when we have dates finalised. If anyone needs any advice or information about golf competitions or lectures please don't hesitate to contact me.

Around The Green

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Ian and his staff at Hillsborough for winning, as it seems every competition held at Hillsborough this year. Whenever I speak to Ian he tells me that they have won another golf competition!

Oh, and well done Barnsley for scraping a point at Hillsborough last week.

James Stevens



Midland Region

East of England

Sunshine and heat waves, the stuff summers are made of. Think we had all forgotten that after the past few years. You only need to look back at figures that show this year being a couple of degrees warmer on average than last year, and 200mm less rainfall than this time in 2008 to know it is a great deal better. You can't beat being outside in shorts and t-shirt mowing or hand watering with the sun on your back. I am sure that is the first thing which attracts the majority of greenkeepers to the job in the first place.

As I write this we have just had 6mm of rain in 10 minutes. Makes the last four hours of hand watering seem so worthwhile!

The onset of August heralds the peak of the playing season for all. Here at Immingham we have major club competitions and open events spaced out every other weekend from the beginning of July until the middle of September. This means we have to be in top condition all the time but does afford us every other week to ease off and not put too much pressure on ourselves. It does however make the summer fly by and before we know it the hollow cores will be out for autumn renovation again.

Not content with the quiet life, during July I both turned 30 and moved house! My whole life is currently being packed up into boxes all around the house, an amazing achievement when you consider the amount of junk you build up over time. I am sure I can bore you all over the coming few months with the trials of new carpets and tiled

floors, followed by bathroom and fireplace replacements. And that is before I borrow the hedge cutter and attack my new garden!

Our June golf day was held at Kenwick Park Golf Club, in Louth. A nice sunny morning tempted everyone into wearing shorts, however the weather soon changed to cloudy with quite a cold wind, those that hadn't brought their trousers regretted it. The golf course was set up in excellent condition for us by Geoff and his team and we were treated to an excellent meal of fish and chips in the clubhouse afterwards which always goes down well. The day was sponsored by Rigby Taylor who once again provided an excellent array of prizes for us.

The results were as follows

Division 1. 1. L. Hackett - another "home" winner!; 2. Graeme Macdonald - spelt your name right finally!; R. Bemment. Division 2. 1. C. Wilkinson; 2. R. Sandilands; 3. A. Kitchenson Trade Prize I. Collett, Nearest the Pin 2nd G. MacDonald

Nearest the Pin 17th A. Martin. Best score on par three's R. Portess

Once again thanks to all at Rigby Taylor and Kenwick Park Golf Club. Also personal thanks to Phil Wilkinson for letting me be his passenger in his buggy for the afternoon. Having not played there before I hadn't realised how undulating the course was so the ride around was greatly appreciated.

Our next golf event is on Friday, August 14, at Abbotsley Golf Club and is our annual Greenkeepers vs Trade match. Once again the two team Captains, Allan Walker and Gary Cooper, have been verbally sparring for months while trying to raise their best teams possible to do battle on the day. This year's match has a bit more needle to it after the trade victory in 2008 ended the greenkeepers stranglehold on the event. Tee off is about 1pm, but be there before to enjoy the banter. Allan and Gary will be contacting greenkeepers and trade respectively to organise their teams. I wish the greenkeepers all the best because unfortunately our invitation day is the day after and therefore, will not be able to attend.

Congratulations to Rob Bemment, Assistant Greenkeeper here at Immingham on becoming

Club Champion for 2009. A morning warm up consisting of a mixture of hand mowing, raking bunkers and changing holes obviously did no harm!

Our final individual golf day was held on July 23 at Boston West. This was the last chance to win the Order of Merit and grab a place at the National Championship later on in the year.

The winner on the day was Dan "Skippy" Milgate on his first outing with the Section, hopefully your first of many. Second place was Head Greenkeeper, Richard Owens, who kept up this year's tradition of a home greenkeeper in the prizes at every event; and third place was Chris Wilkinson. The trade Winner was Carl Chamberlain.

Many thanks to all at Boston West, for the excellently presented course and the meal and hospitality afterwards.

This year's Order of Merit winner is Rob Bemment, from Immingham Golf Club, to go alongside his recent victory in his Club Championship.

Trade Order of Merit was once again Gary Cooper.

Qualifiers for the National Championship are as follows,
0-9 Rob Bemment
10-18 John Hewson
19-28 Tim Harris

Should anyone not be able to make it to this event then the next person in the standings will be eligible.

The next golf event is our match vs the Secretaries on September 23 at Boston Golf Club. The Secretary will be contacting people as to their availability for this fixture.

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

steveimmingham@aol.com
www.eastofenglandbigga.com



East Midlands

Firstly apologies for no report in last month's magazine - a slight confusion on my part regarding deadlines for getting articles in!!

Anyway, the Spring Tournament was held on 22 April at Kirby Muxloe GC in glorious sunshine. The day was jointly

sponsored by Aitkens Sportsturf, Mansfield Sand and Specialist Groundcare Machinery, with Tacit sponsoring the Longest Drive and Nearest the Pin. Section 1 was won by Lee Wenlock, with Paul Frith and Nigel Colley in second and third places respectively. Section 2 was won by Chris Weir with Antony Bindley and Andrew de Wet in second and third. Our thanks go to Kirby Muxloe and especially Antony Bindley and his team for a great day.

The Summer Tournament and BBQ were held on July 2 at Greetham Valley with Banks Amenity, Countrywide and Vitax sponsoring the prizes table and Tacit the longest drive and nearest the pin once again. Section 1 was won by Russell Allen carding a fantastic nett 66 with Adi Porter and Nigel Colley in second and third. Section 2 saw Rob Welsh win with Dan Branson and Andy de Wet in second and third. Neil Harris - Club Captain at Greetham won the trade and associate prize with Simon (I've only played twice this year) Banks coming second - somehow managing to not get his handicap cut again! Once again, as always a great day was had - thanks go to Adi Porter and his guys for presenting us with a fantastic course.

The Headland Pairs competition is hotting up - neither group has any pair racing away with it and competition is tight to decide the semi final places.

The Section is in the process of organising an Autumn education day for November 19 at Forest Hill GC - speakers to be announced very shortly - this promises to be an excellent day and hopefully the first of many.

Our AGM tournament is to be held at Matlock GC on Thursday, October 15, starting at 10.30am with the AGM and meal to follow. Expect the letters to fall on your doormats soon.

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

Andy de Wet



Mid Anglia

Hello all, I write this article

after returning from Knebworth GC following our Summer competition. A great day was had by everyone and the course was superbly set up for us, so a massive thankyou to Andrew Kennett and his staff for an enjoyable day.

The results from the day were as follows:- 1. Neil (Poncho Gonzalez, Gringo) Whittaker 43pts; 2. Ed O'Hanlon, 39pts; 3. Trevor Booth 38pts on countback; 4. Frank Whittle, 38pts. Longest Drive. Simon Woolley. Nearest the Pin. Nigel Phelan. The Trade prize was won by S. Bush from Ernest Doe with 40pts.

Our thanks again for the sponsorship of the day goes to Tim Webb and Tacit for providing a fantastic prize table, and also to the loyal trade members who show up time after time. Thanks guys.

Our next event will be on October 7 at Mid-Herts GC. The start time is not yet known. The golf will be followed by the AGM, so if there are any concerns you might have about how our Section is run, then this would be an ideal time for you get up and have your say.

Anyway guys, that's all for this month, as we always say, if you have any news or views that you wish to be heard, get in touch with one of the committee and we will get it aired through this article.

Enjoy the rest of the Summer and we look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

Steve Mason



Midland

Well here we are again, third summer on the trot that has been for the most part wet and this year also windy like I cannot recall. Well, at least we have saved on water costs and have been able to seed/overseed during the summer! Which will have helped this month's calendar page sponsor Matt Gresty/MM Professional Amenity Grass Seed. For your seed needs you can contact Matt On: matthew.gresty@limagrains.co.uk.

I am always thanking our sponsors within these lines and quite rightly so, and our thanks to all of them for their kind and

continued support. However, it is now your opportunity to act as a sponsor to one of our members for a condition that will at sometime in our lives affect one in three of us - cancer. Adam Jones, Assistant Coarse (have you met A.J. after losing at poker) Manager at Penn GC is taking part in the BUPA Great North Run 2009 on September 20 to raise money for Bowel Cancer UK. He would really appreciate your support. For a former overweight smoker (his words not mine) it is a challenging prospect for him, although he is training hard and plans to complete the course in around two hours. It is easy to donate online with a credit or debit card, just go to his Just Giving page: <http://www.justgiving.com/adam-jones76> Just Giving sends your donations straight to Bowel Cancer UK and automatically reclaims Gift Aid if you're a UK tax payer, so your donation is worth even more to them. I hope you'll join him in supporting this important charity. Good luck, Adam.

Our Autumn Tournament is to be held at the lovely venue of Burton GC on October 16 at 12 noon at a cost of £20. What great value. I know it's nice as some years ago I was invited for interview for the CM's position. Following interview, after some time, I was wondering how I had got on. Then, on New Year's Eve, out of the blue I received a phone call at work (Penn Greenkeeper's Office) from Gavin Robson asking me whether I had applied for any jobs, I said "Burton, but have not heard anything yet" Gavin then informed me that I had not go it as he had! I congratulated him and wished him a Happy New Year. That is the only time I have ever spoken with him on the phone! One has to laugh, I'm sure the course will be great Gav. Don't forget that our AGM is to be held on the day at 6pm. If you wish to attend the AGM and are not playing golf and would like to join the evening meal party please contact our Treasurer Gary so as you don't starve. However, if you just wish to attend the AGM all are welcome.

The section's committee is proud to announce that our regional representative is now also on the Board of management up there at HQ, so a double reason for attending our AGM and putting forward your thoughts and considerations

about how the BIGGA organisation is run and how it could be improved. Well done our Treasurer, Gary Cunningham.

Well, I must now leave it there as I'm getting ready for a fly-fishing trip with my father and brother in Wales, then onto mother's for more of the same in Cumbria but with the added bonus of Yorkshire home cooking. Hard life ay.

Let us pray for at least an Indian summer to follow.

Sean McDade.

South West and South Wales



South Wales

Hope you are all well.

As I write this, it is absolutely tipping down outside, so I hope that by the time this magazine is printed, the weather will have improved and we may get some of that BBQ summer that we were promised!

The weather did hold off, however, for the summer golf competition which was held at Newport Golf Club. A good turn out of members played on a golf course that was in absolutely superb condition. So well done to Head Greenkeeper, Paul Handy, and his staff for all their efforts. The results were as follows: 1. Paul Handy, Newport GC, 40pts; 2. Huw Morgan, Ashburnham GC, 38pts; 3. Stuart Ross, Brecon GC, 37pts. Longest Drive: Mark (Shalke Burger is innocent) Wilshire. Nearest the Pin: Peter Lacey, of Tower Europe. Peter then went on to three putt! The trade prize was won by Peter Holstom, Countrywide.

Thanks to Steve Milton, of Tacit, for sponsoring the day and for presenting the prizes. Also a big thank you to Newport GC for hosting the event; to Russell Thomas, Secretary; Andrew Gould, Captain, and to the Steward and Stewardess Phil and Diane for the splendid meal.

Still at Newport GC. Congratulations to Rhys Norville of reaching the final of The Toro Student Greenkeeper Of The Year competition. Well done Rhys!

The recent BIGGA/Scotts Golf Management Trophy com-

petition was held at Llanwern GC. The course was in superb condition thanks to the efforts of Gareth and his shy and retiring staff. The day went well thanks to the organisation of your Regional Coordinator, Jane Jones. Thanks Jane! The results of the competition were as follows:

1. Llanwern GC 1st team; 2. Morriston GC; 3. Llanishen GC

Thanks again to Jane, also to Simon Keeble, of Scotts UK Professional, for the prizes; to Gareth and his staff including Rhys 'Clean Fingernails' McDonagh and to Llanwern GC for agreeing to host the event (and for agreeing to put the cricket on the TV while we waited for the players to come in! Next year the event will be held at The Rhondda Golf Club as it's only a few miles from my house! Sorry, Gary!

On the education front, Syngenta will be holding a seminar at Ashburnham GC on Wednesday, October 7, starting at 9.30am. The main topic for discussion will be Rescue, a new product for the control of Ryegrass in fine turf. Also attending will be Scotts and the STRI. I will be emailing invites soon, so if you would like to attend but haven't had an invite then give me a call. Should be an interesting day.

Finally, I would like to send a 'good luck' message on behalf of the Section to Kerry 'Joko' Jones who has left his position as Course Manager at Garrant Park GC to work for 'The Countryside Initiative' (I think) in his native Carmarthenshire. Kerry put a lot of hard work into the Section and has been both Deputy Chairman and Chairman of the South Wales Section. All the best in your new career, Kerry, though I'm sure we haven't seen the last of you!

Ceri Richards
07831 168645



South West

Turn my back for two minutes and it all goes pear-shaped. I left Stroud on July 4 in baking sunshine for my two weeks in Italy - and since returning it hasn't stopped raining. Bunkers back to

square one – trackways around the course near impassable – pitchmarks by the truck-load. Now we've got some fusarium on a couple of greens, even noticed some Anthracnose on the putting green this morning.

If it's any consolation however, Northern Italy is having its worst summer in 40 years, with some lake or other that was drained into a canal in the early 70s now having water again for the first time. There were thunderstorms, hail, winds, – even leaves in the pool one day – we suffered that badly! Hope the weather isn't causing you guys too much trouble, but chins up, it'll soon be Winter! – again.

I also represented the Association at Ascot racecourse when TurfTrax launched a new stand-alone weather-station and “going stick”. The weather station is either fixed, or portable (for situations such as soccer pitches where it may be necessary to know the difference between the centre of the pitch and the shadow of the stands). It has a solar panel to be self-powering, and a built in SIM card so all data can be downloaded to a mobile with just a single phone call from anywhere.

The “Going Stick” was also interesting – this is a GPS linked unit used on racecourses to “map” and record the going by measuring the firmness of the ground, and the breakback capacity of the turf all around the racecourse, so that a trainer may be able to work out a line around the course that suits his horse.

TurfTrax also undertake x-ray mapping of all types of sports-turf to determine soil types and underlying layers which may be contributing to poor drainage, compaction, or just poor ground. All very interesting and not much left to chance in sport these days.

A far cry from the day when King George VI was allegedly being shown around the parade ring prior to a race, and noticed a trainer surreptitiously slipping something into his horses' mouth. “What's that my man?” cried the monarch, suitably concerned. “Why nothing sir – a harmless treat,” replied the trainer shiftily, before breaking off a piece, offering it to his Highness, and eating some himself to make his point.

Later he was heard to remark to the jockey – “Get on that horse, lad, and ride, and don't

worry if anything goes past you – it'll either be me or the Prince of Wales”.

With the National Championship fast approaching, all eyes will be turning yet again to Burnham & Berrow. Richard is quite aware of the task in hand – rough well mown back, greens at 14 feet, clubhouse bar well stocked. Should be a great couple of days and I hope the South West will be well represented.

Back at Minch, we were recently judged by Richard Studdard, from the STRI, for the Environment Competition. I do admit to being a little disappointed when it was announced that BIGGA were handing the competition over to the STRI, but I have to say that Lee Penrose, Richard, and the team have made a splendid job of re-launching and re-branding this important initiative. As for our inspection – Matt (my son), Richard and I had just got out onto the course when the heavens opened.

As the three of us had to go round in one of the “environmentally friendly” electric Twisters (rather than the very unfriendly diesel cabstar that we'd left hidden out the back) only two could fit in the cab – Matt refused to come out and I could see Richard's pen hovering over the scoring column, so Muggins here was left out in the best part of an inch of rain. ‘Spect he marked us down for that, even though I got half-drowned!

At BIGGA, things are focusing very much on Harrogate Week 2010. Paul Woodham and I are organising a “2mm all summer debate” which promises to be one of the must-see attractions.

There will be some articles about the debate appearing very shortly in the magazine. We have some of the top men in the country today lined up – from Open Championship courses, top resort courses, high end members courses, and even the Gingerbreads to ensure fair play.

Do keep a sharp eye out for this session, because places will be limited and this promises to be the mother of all debates on the different management strategies practiced in the UK today, how to overcome any problems, and what your members really really want. Stand space for the exhibition has sold well, and with a full education programme

Harrogate Week 2010 promises to be one of the best ever. The Region will again be sponsoring places, and the South West Section will also sponsor a place for the best letter describing the reasons for visiting. Do start to build this week into your plans for the winter – the Association needs you to attend, and keep – well – keep the show on the road.

Any news from your area gratefully received.

Paul Worster.

paulw@mgcnew.co.uk



South Coast

First sorry for no report last month I missed the deadline.

I have two golf meetings to report. South Coast v The Secretaries which I am happy to report was won by our boys. A big thank you goes to Course-Care the annual sponsor and to the golf club, Barton, for allowing us to hold this event.

The summer tournament, sponsored by Tacit, was won by Tony Gadd. He reported to me that the course was in very good condition and of course the greens were magic. So well done the greenkeepers.

The next tournament is the autumn one being held on the Isle of Wight. So Kevin needs to be contacted ASAP remembering that our Section is the sponsor and you will only need to get yourself. The tournament is being held at Sandown & Shanklin Golf Club. Ferries from Southampton – Cowes and Lymington-Yarmouth.

Best value from Southampton. If you share a car it will cost approximate £11 sharing with five others, or £23 one way. Best to Google for the best price you can get.

I know I have asked before but I really need all of you help to put all the information you need so its up to you all especially organisers of event to relay results etc to me.

You can contact me on 07773138409 or via email: chrissturgess@yahoo.co.uk

So sorry that's all for now. Short but sweet.

Chris Sturgess

South East Region



Kent

Afraid the only news for you this month is the up-coming golf do on September 24 at Redlibbits hosted, ably I'm sure, by our Chairman, Kev Morris. I did play the course with him, incidentally, a couple of weeks ago and, despite a few trees getting in the way of some excellent shots by me, the course was looking great and will be perfect for our arrival in a couple of weeks. Please let me or Kev know as soon as possible whether you are attending in order for us to prepare accordingly.

As I say not much news this month so I'll just finish up by thanking our many regulars who turn up to our events making our little ensemble resemble something of an institution. Unfortunately, Broadmoor is also an institution and I'm starting to see some similarities!

Many thanks to our sponsors too, for their continued support. We couldn't do this without you.

Best of British

Rob Holland

07843 410755



Surrey

Friday August 7. For those who are worried about having forgotten my birthday on August 2, please don't for it is more than likely that by the time I see you next, I will have forgotten that you had forgotten.

Thursday August 6. My Tacit team comprising of Anthony Freeman, Mark Harvey and myself, played golf with Sussex Section at East Brighton GC and I must say that we had a marvellous day. Other Surrey Section invaders included a Gary Ogilvie team, Matthew Lawrence and Iain Morrison and a team from Tandridge GC, Iain Dye, Gary Bishop and David Pedleham. Two of the teams played well and won prizes and the third team, it would be ungentlemanly and

self-deprecating to name them, did not.

The semi-finalists in the Surrey Bowl are Gareth Roberts and Paul Bacon v Ron Christie and Roger Tydeman and Gary Ogilvie and Neil Gilham v David Worsfold and Jamie McEnroy.

I had thought that this last paragraph ought to contain a list of my birthday presents and friends and family who sent cards, but so much excitement in one edition could be too much for our more senior members to take, so I'll just say goodbye until next month.

Brian Willmott



Essex

It's 10 years since we last played at Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club and what a difference it was. Last time we experienced every weather condition that could be thrown at us and this time the Gods were kind. The sun shone and the winds stayed moderate, which was lucky as Burnham is on the banks of the River Crouch with open plains to the west and south so when it blows, it BLOWS.

The Course was in fantastic condition, the 36 plus starters enjoyed a great day's golf. No hold-ups and around in just over the four hours. Praise must go to Course Manager, Robert Coughlan, and his team for the condition, consistent pace on the greens and a well-manicured course, trouble if you were wild and forgiving if you weren't.

Scores were interesting but the best didn't disgrace themselves.

Overall winner of the Summer Trophy. Plus entrance to the BIGGA National Championship was Sam Cook, Colchester Golf Club; he joins Adam Millward and Mark Stopps on the Essex Team with one more to join them from the "Essex Trophy" this month.

Div 1. 1. Antony Kirwan, Lexden Wood GC, 37 pts. 2. Tom Smith, Colne Valley GC, 33 pts. Div 2. 1. Martin Forrester, The Essex G&CC, 41 pts; 2. Ian Wood, Romford GC 32, pts. Guest Prize, Paul Holloway, 39 pts. Trade Prize, Andy Turbin, 39 pts. Nearest the Pin. Simon

Cairns. Longest Drive: Antony Kirwan.

Thanks must go to the members of Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club for allowing us to play their course, to the catering staff for feeding us so well and to Andy Turbin (committee member at Burnham and trade sponsor of our section) for presenting the prizes. I would like to thank all those trade members who supplied the prizes for the raffle table and to all those members that joined us on the day, helping to make it one of the best events we've had for a long time.

The Essex Captains v Greenkeepers match at Romford Golf Club, July 7 was badly affected by rain and thunder, most managed nine holes but that was about it. Ian Wood, Course Manager at Romford, reports that the weather conditions only allowed a certain amount of play over the day. The results are as follows:-

Holes 1-9 Captains: Alan Levet & Phil Wilson, Bentley Golf Club, 25 pts. Holes 1-9 Greenkeepers: Andy Cracknell & Michael Bartlett, Orsett Golf Club, 21 pts. Holes 10-18 Captains: James Robinson & Sam Smith, Gosfield Lake GC, 24 pts. Holes 10-18 Greenkeepers: Richard Dunmow & Malcolm Smith, Channels GC, 20 pts. Nearest the Pin: 6th Hole, Richard Hare, GK, Abridge Golf Club. Nearest the Pin: 17th Hole, John Wheelhouse, Captain, Channels Golf Club.

John Smith, Essex Captain's Captain welcomed all the players and presented the prizes, he thanked the club and staff for their hard work and which regrettably was slightly spoilt by the weather. The Captains won 13-7 on the day.

I will not be able to give an account of the "Essex Trophy" which is to be held at Canons Brook Golf Club, Wednesday, August 19 until September's edition of this magazine. If you have not yet entered there is still just time to get in, I hope to see you there. As I stated last month we have re-named this event.

That's all for this time. Holidays and work are keeping us all busy and not much news is coming my way.

If you do have any news for the website or for GK International please contact me on 07764-862.337 or via e-mail essexbigga@talktalk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

It's hard to believe that we are into September already and planning for Harrogate Week is starting to dominate time in the office. The education programme goes to print this month and will be available both in hard copy and on-line in a couple of weeks time.

Keep an eye on www.harrogateweek.org.uk for full details or follow the link at the top of the BIGGA web site Home Page. While bookings from exhibitors are reasonably good for this time of the year there is no doubt that the downturn in the economy has taken its toll. It is noticeable that there are a number of regular exhibitors that have not rebooked due to cash flow problems and that have opted to wait and see how things go this summer before committing. This is, of course, of concern, however, traditionally we have always had a flurry of bookings after SALTEX and through into December. The sales team is working hard to try to ensure that this happens again this year as well as exploring new avenues.

There is no doubt that exhibitions generally are under threat and I have heard of several around the country that have been cancelled this year, I'm sure that members will be aware of some of these.

Harrogate Week is not only a vital source of revenue for the Association but also the best opportunity, arguably in Europe, for members and their peers to meet suppliers, access bespoke education and to network within the sports turf industry. More and more companies are having their budgets either cut or frozen and so are therefore looking closely at how they spend their money. There are a number of publications within the industry, all competing, and some often almost giving advertising away to fill pages. BIGGA's advertising revenue in Greenkeeper International and on the web has suffered in no small way and as I have reported previously we have reduced staffing levels at Headquarters by three as a direct consequence. All I ask is that you support your association that is there to support you.

With that in mind we are rapidly approaching the time of year when Sections hold their AGM's and often elect new committee members. I know that it is very difficult to balance work, home and outside interests but please try to give some of your time to your Section, even if it is not on a regular basis. A small amount of help will ease the burden that all too often in some Sections rests with one or two people. The age-old adage of 'a job shared is a job halved' has never been more appropriate. Headquarters staff are on hand to back up the Sections and this can be called upon direct or through the Regional Administrators.

I believe that BIGGA has achieved a great deal since 1987 and has a lot to look forward to, but its ongoing success rests in the hands of its members, who are its best ambassadors and its best recruitment officers. Please do your best to keep BIGGA at the forefront of the sports turf industry.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

BIGGA Policy on Courtesy Golf Open Support Team

Over the last few months the membership department have received telephone calls from members and golf clubs enquiring about the use of courtesy golf.

The guidelines below are to clear up any confusion among BIGGA members and golf clubs. We are aware the majority of members do behave sensibly when seeking courtesy golf.

Guidelines

- Only those with full membership should seek courtesy golf.
- Courtesy golf is only given at the discretion of the individual golf club and is not an automatic benefit of membership.
- Members wishing to seek courtesy golf at a club should contact the club at least 24 hours in advance of wishing to play.
- On arrival at the club, members should report to the Secretary/ Pro Shop and follow normal procedures for playing golf.
- Members should always produce a valid membership card as proof of status to the club.
- Members should make a point of thanking the club for their courtesy on completion of their round of golf.
- Members should not seek courtesy golf at any one golf club more than twice per year.

Golf Clubs wishing to verify membership or requiring further details should contact the Membership Department directly.

All suspected abuses of the card should be reported immediately to BIGGA headquarters where such complaints will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Well done to all those who were part of the Open Support Team at Turnberry in July. As always, the team assisted the home greenkeeping staff in their usual professional supportive way.

Being part of the Open Support Team is one of the great benefits of being a full member of BIGGA, as Richard Saunders, Course Manager at Mowsbury Golf Club, Huntingdon found out:

"To be a member of the Open Support Team is an honour and a privilege.....as a member of the team we get to see behind the scenes as it were - with the staff out on the course early in the morning and late at night - the side the public doesn't see.....I just hope I am lucky enough to be selected to be a member of the team in future years".

BIGGA Membership Benefit of the month - Telephone Debt Advice Helpline

Managing money well is sometimes overlooked in the pressures of our daily lives.

Full Members of BIGGA can now talk about any financial concerns or worries through the Arc Legal 24/7 Debt Advice Helpline.

Expert confidential help is at hand through their trained independent counsellors ready to assist with counselling, support, advice and help.

If your debt is complicated the counsellor can also direct your call to specialist debt experts who will talk through the stages of prioritising the debts and steps to resolution.

Importantly once you are managing your money concerns the support of the counsellors is available 24/7 to help you find better ways to control future spending and deal with money related issues.

Call the Debt Advice Helpline on 0800 174 319 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days of the year, have your membership number to hand.



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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline
02075 603013
Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891
Greenkeepers Support Services
0800 174 319
Debt Counselling Helpline
0800 174319



BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish Region

Craig MacEachen, Ayrshire

Northern Region

Matthew Eastwood, Northern
Brendan Hardman, North West
Stuart Murphy, North Wales
Neil Myatt, North West
Barry Parsons, North East
Alexander Vaughan, North West
Rob Wells, North West

Midland Region

Paul Allen, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Philip Bennett, Midland
Joe Drummond, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Dayl Foley, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Stuart Job, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Lee Knight, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Edward Lewis, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Ben Rees, Mid Anglia
James Royle, Mid Anglia
Christopher Slimm, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Maks Wyard, Midland

South East Region

Clifford Anderson, Kent
Craig Batts, Surrey
Adam Constable, Surrey
Paul Curtis, East Anglia
Stan Harrison, London
Paul Holloway, Essex
Nicholas Kikkides, Essex
Mark Logan, Surrey
Fabien Maisonnay, Surrey
Ryan Marangoni, Surrey
Philip Mayes, Surrey
James Morton, Essex
Neil Pareira, London
Mark Severn, Essex
Chris Smith, Surrey

South West / South Wales Region

Christopher Allen, South West
Gerald Clements, South West
Laurence Davis, South West
Matt Hubball, South West
Matthew James, South West
Ryan Marshall, South West

Northern Ireland

Jonathan Hutchinson, Northern Ireland

Overseas

Tom Stephen, Canada
Graham Johns, Sweden

Assistant Profile

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

Michael McLerie, follower of both AC Milan and Celtic football teams, is the subject of this month's interrogation...



Name: Michael McLerie
Age: 27
Golf Club: Haggs Castle
Position: First Assistant
Nickname: Mick

How long have you been greenkeeping?
10 years.

What was it about the career that attracted you?
My uncle was a greenkeeper and that gave me my first taste of greenkeeping. I play golf and enjoy the outdoors.

If you weren't a greenkeeper what would you be?
College lecturer in greenkeeping.

Which task do you enjoy and why?
Preparing the course for a tournament, because it gives you a lift to see the course at it's best.

Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?
Although necessary, I hate the mess of greasing machinery.

What one thing other than a pay rise would improve the greenkeepers lot?
That greenkeeping technology continues to improve, leading to better machinery for the greenstaff and playing conditions for the golfer.

Hobbies?
Golf, online gaming, reading, music.

Favourite Band?
The Beatles

Which team do you support?
Celtic and AC Milan

What is your claim to fame?
Meeting and shaking Billy McNeil's hand.

What's your number?

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

Duncan Bagshaw of Nomow Golf comes under the spotlight

What is your position within the company?
Nomow Golf - National Sales Manager

How long have you been in the industry?
I've been involved with golf for over 20 years, but Nomow has only just jumped into the market, we're Europe's largest installer of artificial grass.

How did you get into it?
I've been a specialist short game teacher for a few years, but wanted to get back into a business environment.

What other jobs have you done?
Golf Professional, Housemaster, Youth & Drugs worker for The Princes Trust, Business Development Manager.

What do you like about your current job?
Working with genuine people and so far the industry seems full of them.

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
In golf it has been the big headed drivers and development of the golf ball which "should" have made it easier for everybody

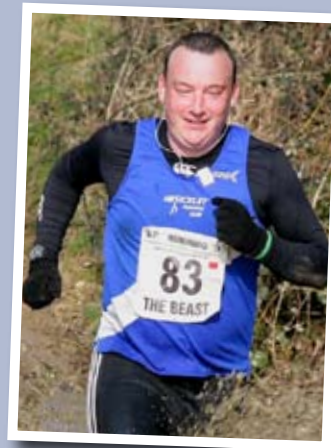
What do you like to do in your spare time?
All sports, but my main enjoyment now comes from raising money for cancer charities through running. I'm currently training to run three marathons in three days in three countries!

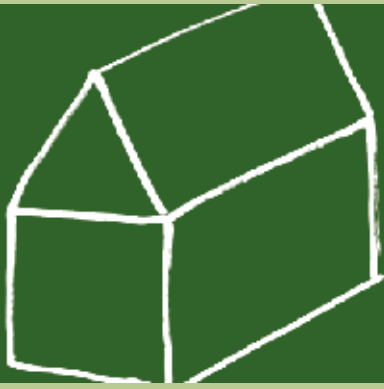
Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
Coaching Scotland to Rugby Union success or getting ready to caddie for my son when he turns pro at 15.

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?
Difficult to say because everybody so far has been extremely helpful, but obviously Scott and Kirstin of BIGGA.

What do you consider to be your lucky number?
3. It's a magic number

Duncan has chosen Richard Fry, of Greenlink.

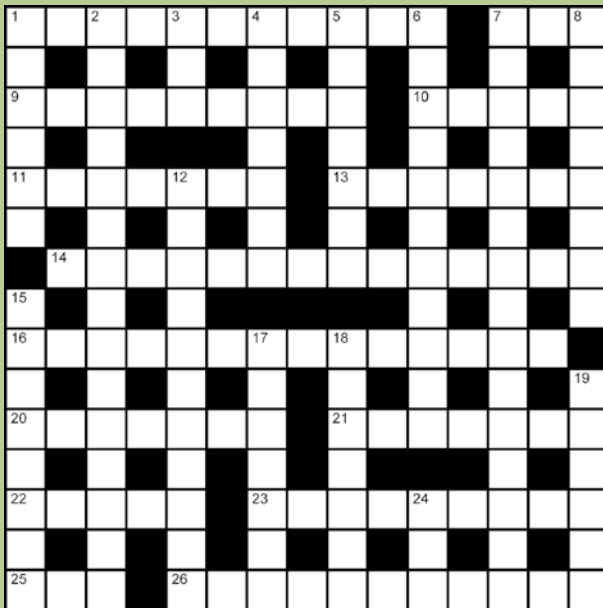




in the shed

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

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

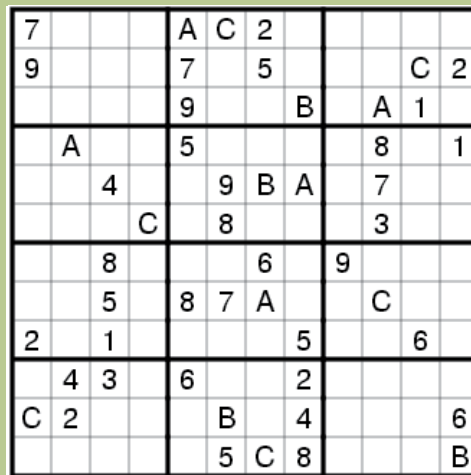
- 1 International yachting regatta last held in 2003 (8,3)
- 7 Prevent from speaking (3)
- 9 US comic actor who played Coach Calhoun in the Grease films (3,6)
- 10 From that time (5)
- 11 Snow sport transport (3-4)
- 13 Greek letter, equivalent of O (7)
- 14 Composition by George Gershwin - anagram of PRUDISH BALONEY (8,2,4)
- 16 Fictional detective whose brother is called Mycroft (8,6)
- 20 Put into practice (7)
- 21 Star Trek craft captained by Kathryn Janeway (7)
- 22 Diacritical mark used to indicate short vowel sound (5)
- 23 Strips of timber typically used in N American house construction (9)
- 25 The band famous for "There She Goes" (3)
- 26 US national park located primarily in Wyoming (11)

DOWN

- 1 Help, be of service (6)
- 2 1978 Alan Parker film whose title is prison slang for an attempted escape (8,7)
- 3 Traditional Scandinavian rug (3)
- 4 Kingdom surrounded entirely by the Republic of South Africa (7)
- 5 Hasty, perfunctory (7)
- 6 Traditional Lent performance (7,4)
- 7 Argentine battleship sunk during the Falklands conflict (7,8)
- 8 Channel Island whose capital is St Peter Port (8)
- 12 Without caution (11)
- 15 City whose soccer teams include Galatasaray and Fenerbahce (8)
- 17 Supplement to a will (7)
- 18 Willing to try (often, to prevent a crime as it is committed) (4-1-2)
- 19 Upper part of the nose (6)
- 24 Form of public transport (3)

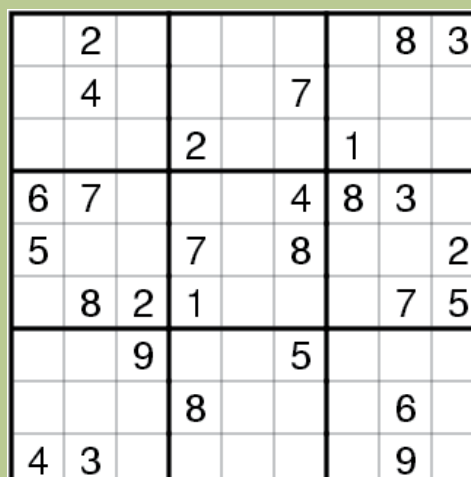
QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Tiger Wood's won the Bridgestone Invitational to bring up a significant number of wins on the PGA Tour. Was it 50, 60 or 70?
2. In the days of the old football stadia - who played at Roker Park, Highfield Road and Muirton Park?
3. Which World Heavyweight Champion had an unbeaten record of 49 wins?
4. Which was the last club Fabio Capello managed before joining England?
5. Who holds the record for the most successful consecutive kicks in international rugby union?
6. Which two sports have been recommended to become Olympic Sports in 2016?
7. Which of these courses has not hosted an Open Golf Championship - Musselburgh; Royal Portrush; Royal Dornoch or Prestwick?
8. Who are England's leading Test Cricket run scorer and wicket taker?
9. Name Britain's last five Formula 1 World Champions.



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.

Puzzle Answers on page 61

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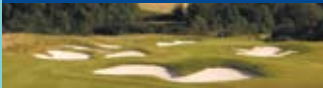
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Letters



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THE 2009 OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP, TURNBERRY

Through Greenkeeper International Magazine, may I post a few thanks in your letters column

I would like to express my thanks for all the help from the BIGGA support team during the tournament; it was satisfying to know that they were there in the background in case of any emergency.

I would also like to thank our volunteers and friends from local clubs as well as former colleagues from as far a field as Dubai, New Zealand and Australia, you were indeed a great help and made our job so much easier, 'but I do wonder about their sanity' who on earth would get out of their bed at 3 in the morning and go to work? And then come back in the evening and work until 10.30pm,... unpaid?

I cannot speak highly enough of my own staff, they have all put in a tremendous effort these past couple of years with added pressure of additional construction, not only on the Ailsa Course but also our other courses, and not forgetting the gardens and grounds. During this time we have had new owners that have invested heavily in the refurbishment of the Hotel and also upgraded our golf course equipment, so their expectations are high, (and the noose gets tighter).

As this preparation was for my last Tournament, I was so pleased for all concerned, the organisers, (R&A), all at Turnberry and of course the Players, it was a great success and the Golf Course was enjoyed by all, with some fabulous TV viewing worldwide.

A special thanks to my Head Greenkeepers, Martin, Jimmy, Tom, and assistants, Dennis, Johnny, and Morris. Not forgetting Jim & Elfie in the workshop and, of course, Jackie, admin.

Since my arrival at Turnberry I have been most fortunate to have accumulated a professional and dedicated crew over these past 24 years and thank you all for your support over the years.

Recruitment

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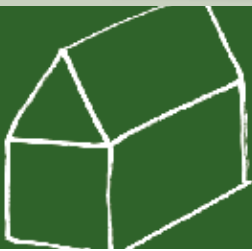
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A big thank you also to all my friends in the trade, some going back more than 40 years! Your support has been invaluable not only to me but the industry in general.

As I hand over the reins to Euan, a special thank you, as he has made these past six months so much more enjoyable by taking much of the strain, his commitment and enthusiasm will put him in good stead to keep Turnberry at the top and I wish him and his Family every happiness for the Future.

George Brown
Golf Courses & Estate Manager, Turnberry Hotel



intheshed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. 70; 2. Sunderland, Coventry City and St Johnstone; 3. Rocky Marciano; 4. Real Madrid; 5. Chris Paterson; 6. Golf and Rugby Union Sevens; 7. Royal Dornoch; 8. Graham Gooch and Ian Botham; 9. Lewis Hamilton, Damon Hill, Nigel Mansell, James Hunt and Jackie Stewart

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A	D	M	I	R	A	L	S	C	U	P	G	A	G
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MONSTER SUDOKO

7	1	B	5	A	C	2	6	8	9	3	4
9	8	A	4	7	1	5	3	B	6	C	2
3	6	C	2	9	4	8	B	5	A	1	7
B	A	2	7	5	6	3	C	4	8	9	1
8	3	4	1	2	9	B	A	6	7	5	C
6	5	9	C	4	8	1	7	2	3	B	A
A	C	8	3	B	2	6	1	9	4	7	5
4	B	5	6	8	7	A	9	1	C	2	3
2	7	1	9	C	3	4	5	A	B	6	8
5	4	3	B	6	A	7	2	C	1	8	9
C	2	7	8	1	B	9	4	3	5	A	6
1	9	6	A	3	5	C	8	7	2	4	B

Monster Daily SuDoku: Mon 17-Aug-2009 very hard

SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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

Daily SuDoku: Mon 17-Aug-2009 medium



On the Soapbox

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

Pity the poor Safety Advisor as he lives for the day when he visits a golf club client to find that the club Owners/Directors have actually read his last report, listened to the recommendations of the management team, taken some form of action, and then communicated their proposals for action all the way down the chain of command! Here follows a few grumbles from your dedicated safety advisor!

There is no doubt that there are clear trends in the way golf clubs fail to deal with what are in most cases very straightforward issues that are not going to cost a lot of money; Why is this? Health and Safety Inspectors could not make it more clear to employers that they are looking for evidence that the business is doing its reasonable best to develop and improve, in an ongoing way, a safety management system that is relevant to their level of business activity and the hazards that have been identified by their managers.

A fundamental problem is that I am still finding confusion among the Committee/Directors of some members clubs about exactly who is the employer. This leads to some strange signatures on the Statement of Safety Policy; there is no way round this little problem - this all important document is to be signed by a representative of the employer. So, to help these poor folk to decide I recommend that they ask themselves a simple series of questions.

Who is responsible for forming the policies of the club and setting the direction for its future development? Irrespective of titles, who sits at the 'top of the shop'? Well sir, it is you, and your colleagues, who are the employer.

Effective communication is a key element in ensuring that all employees know what is going on and this process starts at the top. The employer has a duty to inform his employees of those important decisions that will have an effect on the way they carry out their duties and about any changes to policies, procedures, not to mention physical changes to the site. This important aspect of the management of a business is much neglected and yet it is 'good to talk'.

A good test for us weary advisors is to ask about our last report. The story of the journey of a report is sometimes bizarre! Having paid a fee for the report it is sometimes lost 'in the system' with puzzled frowns on faces as Chairman of Green etc try and remember

where it went. "Let's see now, the report was sent in May so perhaps it is in the June/July minutes? No there doesn't seem to be a record of it being considered by any Committee or the Board!" "But it contained a summary of the key recommendations for action on page 4?" Ah yes, well perhaps you could summarise them again in this report?"

But let us not be too critical of the Owners/Directors of the club, what about the staff? Let us look at the worrying increase in accidents involving the use of work equipment on slopes; not just large ride-on machines but the issue of using hand held rotary mowers on slopes using ropes that have firmly tied off the 'dead man' handle! In one month alone I had three enquires from exasperated Health and Safety Inspectors asking for my opinion.

not understand? Do you really think that your reason 'Oh, but I am on and off the machine constantly' really stands up? So Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers how about setting an example and enforcing a safety rule?

Finally, a word about the golfer. What exactly is wrong with sleeper steps that have been in use on golf courses long before I started my greenkeeping career in 1962?

How come we are getting an increasing number of complaints and some claims for accidents where careless golfers are stumbling on these perfectly adequate features of a golf course? Soft spikes wear down at least twice as fast as proper spikes and they need to be changed perhaps several times a year! You will also find that if you actually look where you are going you might not fall down so often!

Trials and Tribulations of a Safety Advisor

Apparently one Course Manager was firmly of the view that it is 'custom and practice' among greenkeepers and should be allowed to continue. This despite a prosecution pending against one golf club following an accident with loss of toes, yes the wrong footwear was being worn as well!

I have a few questions for you all who are allowing this daft and dangerous practice - 'Are you mad?' Have you not heard of the principles of risk assessment, that you should actively seek alternatives that would reduce the risk without significantly interfering with the efficiency of the job? Do you have the evidence that you have looked at the problem and can find no alternative way of doing the job? Think hard before you allow this practice to continue as it will be you, yes you, who will be asked to explain why the operator was allowed to interfere with the safety controls.

While on the subject of safety and work equipment, let me explain something that you appear not to appreciate. Seat belts are fitted to ride on work equipment where Roll Over Protection Systems (ROPS) are in use and they will be worn in the circumstances identified in the risk assessment where a roll over accident is likely. That means the operator will get on the machine and BELT UP! So what bit of BELT UP do you



John Allbutt

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