

GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Showing the Green Way

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LEADING THE WAY
IN SUSTAINABILITY

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CECIL GEORGE

The Recipient of
the BIGGA Lifetime
Achievement Award

Golf
Course
Feature

A gamble pays off

Donaghadee Golf Club which has
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to some brave decisions



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John Pemberton
john@bigga.co.uk

Head of Learning & Development

Sami Collins
sami@bigga.co.uk

Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us

BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Aine, York, YO61 1UF
info@bigga.co.uk
www.bigga.org.uk
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

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Editorial

Communications Manager / Editor

Scott MacCallum
Tel – 01347 833800 Fax – 01347 833801
scott@bigga.co.uk



Design

**Design and
Production Editor**
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
tom@bigga.co.uk



Advertising

Sales Executive
Kirstin Black

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
kirstin@bigga.co.uk



Sales Executive
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800
Fax – 01347 833802
jill@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor
Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



A gifted and talented bunch

It is so refreshing to have just returned from St Andrews and been in the company of so many committed and talented BIGGA members. It goes some way to offsetting the consequences of a succession of late nights and early mornings that I only ever face during Open week.

The entire team, and it was drawn from members from all over the world, and a wide age range, but they gelled tremendously well. My abiding memory of the week will be of gallons and gallons of laughter, especially on some of the late evening mini bus rides back to Elmwood College where we were billeted for the week.

But what struck me was how, in the space of five days, people who had previously just been a face on a database became interesting human beings in their own right.

Having the chance to sit down and chat with so many of them led to discoveries about how gifted so many of them were, not just on the golf course but in other areas of their lives as well.

I uncovered someone who had recently rowed at Henley; someone who had been three time British Line Dance Champion, a top flight football referee, not to mention a host of high class category one golfers.

By the end we all knew an awful lot more about each other and it just highlighted the greatest asset that the Association has – its people. The only way you find that out is by meeting and chatting and that is where the BIGGA networking opportunities come into their own. Whether it be Section, Region or National events there are some wonderful opportunities to meet new people and, if The Open is anything to go by, make friends who will last a lifetime.

Not everyone is a genuine social animal and it does come easier to some people than others but I do know that BIGGA is a very inclusive organisation and the act of making people feel comfortable in what otherwise might be uncomfortable circumstances is almost an unwritten paragraph in the constitution.

A member of the Open Support Team, or a rookie to Harrogate, or qualifier to the National Championship, supported by Kubota and Charterhouse will never feel an outsider for long and the next time they will be among those making other people feel comfortable and welcomed.

Can I also take a few moments to pay tribute to Cecil George, who has won the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award. I had the great pleasure of travelling to Lenzie, just outside Glasgow, to meet up with my old friend, Cecil, and his wife, Margaret, to interview him for the article which appears in this issue.

Cecil is another example of one of those people who is more than the sum of his parts. From his early life as a para, dropping behind enemy lines, to being responsible for developing a greenkeeping syllabus which was taken around the world, he has more than earned a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Having been so impressed by so many of the Open Support Team members there may well be some future candidates for Lifetime Achievement Awards among them.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

AUGUST 2010

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WILD FLOWERS STRIKE GOLD AT HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW



Over 2,000 native coastal plants such as Thrift, Sheep Fescue, Kidney Vetch, Yellow Horned Poppies and Scabious have helped the Conceptual Garden 'A Fable for Tomorrow' take a gold, RHS medal at Hampton Court Flower Show.

Designed by Sue Radmore, Electra Sanders and Scarlet Wheaton for University College Falmouth the Garden depicts an old, Cornish seed bank.

Some seeds have spilled out to germinate around pools while others have colonised the hill itself as they might in the wild.

Linda Laxton, MD of British Wild Flower Plants, the specialist Norfolk Nursery that has custom grown the plants says that many seeds will lie underground for years until they are disturbed and the conditions are right for them to germinate.

"Poppies for example shed their seeds in August and because of the dry conditions fall through cracks in the soil where they remain about one foot down at a constant temperature until the field is ploughed.

"When this happens they enjoy light and rain, germinate and consequently flower."

British Wild Flower Plants have also supplied 'Fields of Gold' part of the 'Home Grown' RHS central exhibit at Hampton Court.

For further information, contact British Wild Flower Plants on: Tel: 01603 716615 or visit www.wildflowers.co.uk



Success for Marriott Group

All 10 of Marriott's UK golf resorts have been awarded "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" status in recognition of the hard work they have undertaken implementing a variety of projects in environmental areas around the golf course.

The Award is an international recognition of environmental excellence bestowed on organisations that are taking a leadership role in conservation.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses helps to enhance wildlife habitats and protect natural resources for the benefit of people, wildlife and the game of golf. The programme is designed to give Course Managers the information

and guidance they need to implement stewardship projects and receive recognition for their efforts.

The Golf Programme is part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. It is administered by Audubon International, a non-profit environmental organisation that spearheads education and conservation assistance programs that promote environmental stewardship and sustainability.

The Program addresses five key environmental quality areas: Wildlife and Habitat Management, Chemical Use, Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, Water Quality Management and Outreach and Education.



NEW MODEL

Despite lengthy talks with various modelling agencies Sheffield Section resisted temptation and used a model from among their own number! Thanks to Ian Whitehead for attempting to model the new Sheffield Section polo shirts.

The shirts are available in many sizes and are at the very reasonable price of £10. The Section has already had a lot of enquiries so far so if you would like to order one please contact James Stevens on 07738719614

Golf Management Trophy Day comes to Erewash Valley

A Midland Region Golf Management Trophy Day sponsored for the 12th successive year by Scotts UK Professional was held at Erewash Valley Golf Club.

Teams from 15 golf clubs enjoyed a great day on a superbly presented course prepared by Course Manager Graham Arnold and his staff. We were blessed with an unusually warm day, and all players were relieved to make it to the clubhouse for a well earned refreshment, where everyone was made to feel very welcome by all the staff and members; our thanks are extended to all at the Club.

The competition is based on the established format of four man teams playing stableford with the best two points scores on each hole to count. The team from Kirby Muxloe Golf Club, with Course Manager Antony Bindley won the event for the second time with a great score of 93 points; Birstall Golf Club 2nd with 89 points, and 3rd on 88 points Wollaton Park Golf Club.

The Midland Region of BIGGA thanks Erewash Valley Golf Club for hosting the event and Scotts for their sponsorship.



ABOVE: The winning team from Kirby Muxloe Golf Club receiving the trophy, with Antony Bindley centre; LEFT: Mark Rayner presenting the main prize, an Accupro Spreader, to Antony Bindley;

Sports Ground Contractor Ups The Power



Tractors designed and built originally for use in agriculture are proving an increasingly important asset for non-farming applications as evidenced by the 125hp MF 7465 tractor added recently to the machinery fleet of Hampshire-based sports ground construction and turf drainage specialist, Kestrel Contracting.

Supplied by local Massey Ferguson dealer, Lister Wilder, the new tractor

replaced a seven-year old 115hp MF 6265 in spearheading the company's contract drainage operations on sports pitches and playing fields throughout the UK.

Powering an AFT Wizz Wheel 75 wheel-type trencher, the additional muscle and advanced Dyna-VT transmission of the MF 7465 is proving invaluable in sustaining high workrates while promoting

consistently good results in a wide range of surface conditions and soil types, points out Kestrel founder and managing director, Richard Veitch.

"The extra horsepower comes in very useful when laying mains drainage pipes measuring up to 150mm diameter at depths anywhere between 500mm and 700mm below ground level," said Richard.

SPORTS TURF UNITED

The GTC and IOG have secured an agreement with City & Guilds NPTC, to have their logos included on certificates for work-based diplomas for Greenkeepers and Groundsmanship, with effect from September 1 this year.

Jack Ward, City & Guilds NPTC's Chief Executive confirmed he was delighted that an agreement had been reached with both the greenkeeper and groundsmanship bodies and hoped that it would be an exemplar for other land-based organisations to follow.

The new Diplomas have replaced the NVQ's in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and given industries the opportunity to have a stronger influence in the content of the Diplomas as well as a Quality Assurance in the delivery of the qualifications.

In another development the GTC, in association with the IOG, has created a Groundsman version of its acclaimed Greenkeepers Training Manual.

Approved City & Guilds NPTC Centres will all have access to the manuals for use with sports

turf students and the knowledge which underpins the skills required within the Diplomas is also available through learning materials in hard copy or CD ROM format.

David Golding, GTC's Education Director, believes the agreement between the GTC, IOG and City & Guilds NPTC will benefit the sports turf sector employers and learners as the Work Based Diplomas have been designed to give greenkeepers and groundsmen and women the skills and knowledge to maintain surfaces to the highest standards using sustainable best practices.

"In 2006, the IOG launched its six-year strategic Challenging Perceptions plan where a key theme was to identify and establish partnerships. The IOG is committed to promoting the skills agenda to National Governing Bodies of Sport through the new Diplomas."

David added: "The GTC is dedicated to ensuring a range of qualifications are available through a network of Approved Centres."

The Trueness Meter



The STRI's groundbreaking Trueness Meter was in use at St Andrews during The Open.

The revolutionary new technology played a pivotal role in ensuring all 18 greens were consistent and of an optimal trueness.

Developed in conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University following funding from the R&A, The Trueness Meter is used as an integral part of the STRI Programme. The technology is being hailed as one of the biggest steps forward in the agronomy industry in 30 years and the only accurate, effective and efficient method of measuring smoothness and trueness of a green.

The perfect putting surface tests the player but also gives reward for skilful play. STRI's Trueness Meter™ allows greenkeepers for the first time to forensically analyse the greens during an event and refine operations to help them implement 18 greens of the highest order.

JCB FLIES THE FLAG FOR BRITAIN



JCB has taken the wraps off its latest digger in patriotic style after a multi-million pound investment to develop a machine which should cut customers' fuel costs by up to 16 per cent.

The backhoe loader was pioneered by JCB's founder Joseph Cyril Bamford in 1953.

The first of the new range of the British-built diggers rolled off the company's production line at Rocester, Staffordshire, in Union Jack colours and embarked on a tour of famous London landmarks to celebrate its launch and the company's approaching 65th anniversary in October.

The fuel savings are derived largely though a new hydraulic system which utilises three hydraulic pumps instead of two, providing the same hydraulic output but at lower engine speeds.



Major Steps for Dennis

Dennis Mowers marked a significant moment in the company's history with the opening of its superb new assembly and administrative facility at its HQ near Derby.

Managing Director, Ian Howard, cut the ribbon to open the new larger building..

It comes on the back of the company's most significant order – 27 mowers for the World Cup which the 22 strong Dennis team had to build and ship out to South Africa within a tight four week time frame. They also provided training for the Groundsmen at the World Cup stadia.



War Graves Commission receive their New Bushranger

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has bought 86 new Bushranger Edgers from DJ Turfcare, based in Surrey.

DJ Turfcare is the sole distributors for Europe and Scandinavia for Powerup Lawn-care Products of Australia, manufacturers of the Bushranger Edger.

Derek Parker, CWGC Director of Horticulture, said: "We have been looking for a machine like this for a long time, since another manufacturer stopped producing theirs.

"The Bushranger has the features we need because it is well-designed for operator use.

"We have war graves under our care throughout the world and staff need the most

efficient machinery for maintaining the very high standards we insist on."

DJ Turfcare Managing Director David Jenkins said: "We are very proud of our long association with the War Graves Commission.

"Bushranger Edgers have proved ideal for them because immaculate edges are essential and staff use the machines for long periods of time, so stability, strength and lack of noise and vibration is crucial."

DJ Turfcare, who are also sole UK suppliers of Viano organic fertilisers, provide the CWGC with BTME award-winning fertiliser MO Bacter, which eliminates moss without leaving debris and does not mark stonework or paths.



MURCAR LINKS GOLF CLUB HOSTS BIGGA SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

This year's Scottish National Tournament was held in the North East of Scotland at Murcar Links Golf Club, Aberdeen on Thursday, 17 June, 2010.

During its 100 years Murcar has hosted many tournaments and frequently features in the top 100 courses in the U.K. - In 2007, voted the Golf Tourism Scotland "Course of the Year - 2007".

Overhead conditions were perfect, with a breeze just to make things interesting typical links conditions. Entry was slightly down on last year but the players in attendance were looking forward to playing this fine links course. After the most severe winter in almost 30 years Brian Anderson and his staff are to be congratulated on producing a course in excellent condition for the tournament.

Despite the windy conditions several fine scores were returned with the BIGGA National Champion of 2007 and 2008 David Simpson, Crieff Golf Club, returning a fine scratch 72 to win the SGGA Challenge Cup. The Handicap Champion was Ben Brookes, First Assistant at Murcar, who took full advantage of local knowledge and returned a fine 79-9-70, despite completing a hard day's work in preparing the course for the competitors. Once again we had a very competitive field, handicap's ranging from plus 2 to 24.

Congratulations to all who took part and we hope to see everyone at the Duke's Course, St. Andrews, in 2011.

Our Chairman John Geddes thanked,

Captain Hugh Stuart and his committee for the facilities and courtesy offered to the players and the support given by the staff and secretary at the club.

Results: SGGA Challenge Cup (Scratch Champion), David Simpson, Crieff GC, 71; Friendship Trophy (Handicap Champion) Ben Brookes, Murcar GC, 79-9-70; Ransomes Trophy (First Class) 1. Derek Green, Royal Aberdeen, 76-5-71; 2. Charlie MacDonald, Crieff GC, 75-3-72; 3. George Mitchell, Newmachar GC, 75-2-73; Pattison Trophy (Second Class) 1. Richard Pirie, Newmachar GC, 83-10-73; 2. Billy Craig, Kirriemuir GC, 85-10-75; 3. Gary Semple, St. Andrews Links, 87-11-76. STRI Trophy (Third Class) 1. Lewis Birch, St. Andrews Links, 91-20-71; 2. Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead GC, 110-21-89; 3. Brian Hunter, McDonald GC, 112-21-91 Dick Aitken Trophy (Best Head Greenkeeper) Archie Dunn, Auchterarder GC, 77-5-72; M&M Trophy (Best Assistant) Mike Carson, Caird Park GC, 81-7-74; Souter Trophy (Best Apprentice) Greig Patterson, Royal Aberdeen, 86-12-74; SIGGA Trophy (Best Veteran).

Elliott Small, Life Member, 85-11-74; St. Mungo Trophy (Team Event).

Best 4 net scores. Central Section. Lewis Birch, 71; Archie Dunn, 72; David Simpson, 72; Charlie McDonald, 72. Total=287; Patrons/Trade Jim Smith, Rigby Taylor, 88-15-73; Qualifiers National Championship; Scratch. David Simpson; Handicap Ben Brookes.

Peter J. Boyd, Regional Administrator



20 Years of Unbroken Service Recognised by Campeys

Congratulations are in order for Tony Cundall, General Manager for Campey Turf Care Systems, as this year marks the 20th anniversary of him joining the Macclesfield-based company.


A celebration was held on in June when Directors Richard and Jean Campey presented him with a weekend away for him and his wife and a bottle of Malt Whisky to mark the occasion.

Tony, a well known figure within the trade and with Campey customers, originally joined as a sales representative covering North Wales, Cheshire and the North Staffordshire area and went on to become General Manager

"In an age when strength of character, loyalty and conscientiousness are not always given the recognition and appreciation they deserve, we are delighted to acknowledge the sheer hard work and reliability Tony has displayed over the past 20 years," acknowledged Richard.

"He has never had a day off sick in all that time and has proved himself a loyal and dedicated member of our team."

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Chairman's Word

Halfway through his term, BIGGA Chairman, Paul Worster, looks back at performance and forward to success

So far, so good?

Six months of my term as Chairman have now elapsed and the messages people kindly send to talktopaul@hotmail.co.uk have prompted me to consider where we are now and where we need to be going.

By way of brief explanation BIGGA has an elected (volunteer) Board who are responsible for policy making and implementation. The Board determines the duties of the Chief Executive (CE) who then administers the Association's affairs under the general instruction of the Board, i.e. the CE produces a Business Plan and supervises the professional HQ team to achieve the Business Plan.

It is an honour for me to serve this Association and to work with the Board and the HQ team. At the AGM in January the members attending indicated that they wanted me to take an active role in the business and gave me their mandate to work with the HQ team and our hard working volunteers to make BIGGA the best membership organisation anywhere (See my March column).

I freely admit - this is a rather 'all-encompassing' vision and one that will need continuous effort and attention. However, six months ago I expressed the belief that we already have the leadership, the professional HQ team and the infrastructure (populated by really great volunteers) to achieve this goal and I still feel the same.

My confidence that we can achieve this aim was reinforced recently by Tracey Maddison at HQ who kindly gave me an excellent brief on how we can all contribute to recruiting more members. Her great ideas, and more, will feature in a later column and I hope will become a major drive for the Association. For now let's look at some success measures and consider what might still need to be done by your Chairman and Board.

At a FEGGA Seminar in February, I gained insights into how successful membership organisations are measured. These measures assess the way an association operates as

a business, and make no mistake – BIGGA is a business – and like any other it needs to be managed well.

1: A Customer Service Culture

I am grateful to the Chief Executive for his efforts; particularly the personal example he sets with his customer focus. Our trade partners are also our customers as are our volunteers at all levels.

Let me be clear now – your Board and staff members are deeply committed to ensuring that we continue to improve the ways we offer our services and interact with our members. *Please also see my April column.*

2: The Alignment of Products and Services with the organisation's mission

Our mission statement reads – 'BIGGA is dedicated to the continuing professional development of its members and in serving their needs will strive through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession'.

Your Board are keen to advance the profession through CPD and, with the expert guidance of Sami Collins, the Learning and Development Sub-Committee are working energetically to expand the take-up of CPD. See my June column.

I will continue to strive to meet this 'take-up' challenge through key activities like: the (soon to be updated) BIGGA CPD Accreditation scheme; and a specific event for Assistant Greenkeepers at Harrogate Week 2011. *See my May column.*

3: Data Driven Strategies

I am also grateful to Board members for their often heroic efforts to formulate clear strategies and make wise decisions. I will continue to encourage Board members and HQ staff to gather the key data that our three-tiered structure makes accessible to us.

It is so important that the Board makes informed decisions based on up-to-date information from a wide range of sources.

4: Dialogue and Engagement

I am grateful to the Board for all that they do to represent the aspirations of their members at all levels.

I will encourage Board members and HQ staff to ensure that we respond to this key challenge by supporting local volunteers with events like BIGGA Regional Open Days; BIGGA Volunteers Workshop at Harrogate Week 2011.

Please also see my March, April and June columns.

5: CEO is a broker of good ideas for the Board

I am grateful to the Chief Executive who has not only brokered good ideas but seen their wider potential e.g. expanding the 'Careers Clinic' at Harrogate Week into a 'Careers Fair' complete with Job Wall.

6: Organisational Adaptability

Although a small outfit like BIGGA HQ may be vulnerable to sudden skills shortages requiring an up-to-date Succession Plan and cover for key roles - its size means it can move swiftly: - adapt to unforeseen market conditions; - optimise the way it delivers its services.

I will actively encourage your Board to ensure that the Association's organisation and resources, as well as its products and services, are aligned to its mission.

7: Alliance Building

I am grateful to the Chief Executive for his hard work over many years to build meaningful partnerships with key trade and sporting bodies.

I will actively encourage your Board to ensure that we continue to form advantageous alliances with organisations in the golf sector.

So far, so good.

In closing let me mention that your Board recently honoured Cecil George with the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award.

The vision of Cecil and people like him (who helped develop formal training for Greenkeepers) continues to help BIGGA to be where it should be i.e. in the forefront of the advancement of the greenkeeping profession.



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

Early indications are that Apprenticeships will remain although the new Government has yet to confirm where funding support, if any, will be focused to benefit employers and learners.

The GTC has ensured the Apprenticeships at both Levels 2 and 3 include the skills and knowledge required by employers and whilst these frameworks are available for all ages, when it comes to funding support, it is the young 16-19 age group, where priority funding is guaranteed.

I am sure we all agree that funding should be made available to ensure youngsters either receive support through their employers registering them as an apprentice with a Centre, or on a full-time college based course/qualification such as a National Certificate when they are unable to gain employment.

However, what about the over 19's and the mature career changes who would love to follow the apprenticeship pathway? If funding support is not available to employers they might unfairly be discriminated against!

The GTC will continue to raise this matter and Centre staff have to be prepared to react as and when new initiatives are announced.

Ideally we would see funding made available to support apprentices of all ages and funding for short courses using the Units from within the various qualifications.

Regular readers of this page will know the GTC, through consultation, maintains the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the greenkeeping sector from which vocational, apprenticeships and centre based qualifications are developed.

We sincerely hope that the Government continues to support employer led organisations like the GTC who, despite the bureaucracy and numerous hours of meetings, work within the "system" therefore the employers we represent should be supported accordingly.

There are far too many apprentice success stories to list in this article but it is still as important today as it was when I first became an apprentice in the mid-sixties. Not that I am claiming to be one of the success stories!

Let us hope that within all the promised funding cuts, training doesn't receive any and our employers continue to invest in their staff of all ages.

Not only has the GTC continually lobbied for support funding for all formal qualifications but has also encouraged the take up of Continual Professional Development (CPD) by greenkeepers and employers for short courses which must be the next target.

These short courses could easily be funded if the government instructed its funding bodies to allow Centres, including colleges to offer courses using Units grouped together, which can give the learner a certificate of achievement.

In my opinion there has been far too much emphasis on full qualifications and this has been to the detriment of many greenkeepers looking to progress their skills and knowledge in association with their employers.

The GTC, in partnership with the new Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers must be prepared to deliver short courses, as these underpin all of the formal qualifications and National Occupational Standards.

If we could just get the Government to recognise the demand and popularity for short courses and at least put some funding towards this area of training, I am sure we will see the Centres move fairly quickly.

Whether we call it CPD or progression, learners will soon get used to this and the GTC will put its weight behind this matter at every opportunity.

At a very recent meeting I heard that "progression" would become a government buzzword for learners. If it does I have to assume this is just what the GTC has been lobbying for since N/SVQ's were

In Brief

This month, as the new coalition Government sorts out its priority for funding, one thing is clear as David explains how we all need to work together to ensure golf clubs continue to benefit from the structure opportunities already in place for greenkeeper training.

The GTC is funded by:



introduced in the early nineties.

Employers for their part, through their Course Managers should keep up to speed with the various courses and qualifications, as there is no substitute for having a well trained workforce.

Finally, as from the 31st August there will be a new look to the GTC Approved Training Provider section on the website.

As part of its ongoing commitment to quality the GTC has written to all of its current approved providers with a revised criteria and an invitation to join the GTC's Quality Assured Scheme.

Colleges and Private Companies meeting the criteria and offering the formal qualifications will, in future, be promoted to employers and learners as GTC APPROVED CENTRES.

A new criteria and category for individuals and organisations will be GTC APPROVED TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Watch out for the GTC Quality Assured Scheme logo from September, as it will be the kite mark by which education and training will be measured in the future.



Contact Details

David Golding
GTC Education Director

01347 838640
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC
Aldwark Manor
Near York
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk



Learning & Development

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



This last month the L&D Department has been heavily involved with The Open, the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year regional interviews, the introduction of the new membership benefit, the "How To..." guides. There is no let up in August as the Continue to Learn education programme hits the top of the 'To Do' list!



"How To..." Guides

Do you ever ask yourself these questions?

- How do I conduct a one-to-one meeting?
- How do I conduct a team briefing?
- How do I prepare for an appraisal?
- How do I recruit the right staff?
- How do I write a job description?

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10. Evaluate Training and Development Against Goals and Targets
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16. Promote Equal Opportunities
17. Recruit the Right Staff
18. Write a Job Description
19. Conduct a One-to-One Meeting

The "How To..." guides are short, handy guides providing practical, step by step guidance on the listed subjects. The guides can be downloaded and used to help you develop your knowledge and implement new processes within your workplace.

Introduced exclusively for BIGGA Members, you'll find the guides by accessing Member Resources in the members area of the website.

The 'How To...' guides are brought to you thanks to the continuing support of the contributors to the Learning and Development Fund.



Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

The regional interviews for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year have been completed and the eight finalists have been selected, they are:

- Craig Boath, from Carnoustie Golf Links, representing Elmwood College
- Sean Borrett, from Ellesborough Golf Club, representing Myerscough College



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.



Contact Details

Sami Collins
Head of L&D
sami@bigga.co.uk

Rachael Duffy
L&D Administrator
rachael@bigga.co.uk

01347 833800 (option 3)

www.bigga.org.uk

• Sebastian Cavilla from The Manor House Golf Club, representing Bridgwater College, Cannington Centre

• Tom Hayward from Frome Golf Club, representing Bridgwater College, Cannington Centre

• Robert Mills from Sunningdale Golf Club, representing Guildford College

• Gavin Moore from Launceston Golf Club, representing Duchy College

• Andrew Stanger from Horsforth Golf Club, representing Askham Bryan College

• Stephen Thompson from Bearsted Golf Club, representing Hadlow College

My thanks go to our RAs Peter Boyd, Jane Jones and Clive Osgood and to our greenkeeping representatives Euan Grant, Gary Cunningham, Chris Sealey, Tony Smith, Gerald Bruce and Cameron McMillan who, along with the Toro representatives selected our eight National Finalists.

The National Finals will take place at BIGGA House on 12 and 13 September. I'm sure you will join me in wishing all of the finalists the very best of luck.



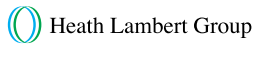
Higher Education Scholarships Supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarship has been awarded to: Andrew Reason – HNC Golf Course Management

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ROYAL CINQUE PORTS STAYS WITH RANSOMES JACOBSEN



The Royal Cinque Ports GC, situated on the narrow stretch of coastline between Deal and Sandwich Bay in Kent, has added further Ransomes Jacobsen turf maintenance equipment to maintain the championship links course.

The club has added four G-Plex III ride-on triplex mowers, two with greens cutting units and two for tees, two Fairway 305s with cabs and an AR250 rotary mower for maintaining the rough, all supplied by local dealer Ernest Doe and Sons Ltd.

Ian Barnard is the Course Manager and a former professional golfer who turned to greenkeeping following a serious injury that curtailed his career.

Commenting on the new equipment he said, "As you would expect from a links course we have a very undulating playing surfaces, both severe and subtle, so we need equipment that delivers a high quality finish, while having the ability to work under these exacting conditions here at Royal Cinque Ports.

The club have opted for a five year operating lease with full maintenance contract, which provides them with a fixed monthly cost and dovetails with their operating strategy.

"This latest package, with its combination of equipment, high service levels from local dealer Ernest Doe & Sons and a finance plan that suits our business plan, is definitely the best package us," Ian Barnard concluded.



Etesia UK on the Move

Etesia UK is celebrating its 15th year of trading with a move to modern, custom built premises at Shennington near Banbury, Oxfordshire. The company required a larger warehouse and in-house training areas.

Etesia UK began in 1995 with only one walk- behind and one ride-on machine but have grown rapidly and now offer a wide range of products, that include a variety of walk-behind & ride-on mowers, and a range of brush cutters. The company is also the exclusive UK dealer for the range of Pellenc lithium-ion battery powered chainsaws, polesaws, pruning shears and hedge cutters.

The move has been brought about by a steady rise in business and an increase in customers and machinery sales since the company was formed.

The contact details for Etesia UK are: Greenway House Sugarswell Business Park Shennington Oxon OX15 6HW. Tel: 01295 680120 Fax: 01295 680852



EURO GRASS JOINS TURFGRASS GROWERS ASSOCIATION

The Turfgrass Growers Association has welcomed grass seed breeder, producer and supplier Euro Grass BV as a new affiliate member.

Euro Grass is an international company which is active in turfgrass breeding and production in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. New to the British amenity market, its aim, through the recent appointment of Simon Taylor as UK Sales & Marketing Manager, is to offer a portfolio of amenity grasses that provides high level seed cleanliness and unrivalled cultivar performance for turf production. The company

already has a number of cultivars established on the STRI/BSPB seed listings.

Simon Taylor explained: "Our membership is very important as it enables interaction with grower members and to present Euro Grass and its products on a professional level. We are looking forward to working with the Association and turf growers to tackle some of the challenges which face the industry in current times."

Simon can be contacted on 01522 868946 or by email on simon.taylor@eurograss.com. www.turfgrass.co.uk

Sherriff to be Sole Suppliers

Sherriff Amenity has signed a new extended agreement with De Vere Hotel & Leisure to remain the sole suppliers of chemical, fertiliser and grass seed to their golf courses nationwide.

Mark Pyrah, Sherriff Amenity Director said:

"We are delighted that De Vere have chosen Sherriff Amenity to remain their exclusive suppliers.

"The agreement that has been reached will ensure that De Vere continue to benefit from volume group purchases, a high level of sales support and the latest in new product technology within the amenity arena.

"Sherriff Amenity's industry leading research and development programme allows us to provide our customers with the latest in new technical innovation backed by our unrivalled range of products, selected from regional, national and international manufacturers."

What's your Number?

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

Mike Beardall, of Oakfield Media, answers some searching questions



1. What is your position within the company?

Owner and chief coffee-maker.

2. How long have you been in the industry?

As a journalist for 42 years. In the sports surface management sector 15 years.

3. How did you get into it?

From school as a trainee reporter on a local paper. After various newspaper jobs, joined the Daily Mail for 10 years. Entered horticulture in the 80s while running a six-acre smallholding in West Sussex, and later freelanced on *The Water Gardener* and *Turf Management* magazines, followed by editing *The Groundsman* for 11 years.

4. What other jobs have you done?

It's all been journalism and public relations, plus photography – but my family were all farmers so I really feel comfortable when working outdoors. I've done my fair share of cultivating, growing and harvesting over the years.

5. What do you like about your current job?

The opportunity to meet so many people who enjoy their work. Greenkeepers, groundsmen and gardeners all share a common passion for perfection and are all very friendly.

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

More science, better machinery and an increase in the recognition for people who produce top-notch sports surfaces and excellent parks and gardens.

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

Pottering around auctions, adding to the clutter in my garage, gardening and golf – but not often enough.

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

Still working! Unless my lottery ticket comes up and then I'll be on my yacht in the Bahamas.

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

Cannot name them all – but they know who they are.

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

18 – the date of my son and grandson's birthday.

11. Pick a number ...31

Mike has picked Lee Penrose of the STRI



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A gamble pays off

Scott MacCallum visits Donaghadee
Golf Club which has turned around its
fortunes thanks to some brave decisions



Three years ago Donaghadee Golf Club, near Bangor, in Northern Ireland, took a gamble.

Losing members, with the course not maximising its potential, the club recognised that a change was needed and advertised for a top Course Manager to turn around its fortunes as well as setting aside a significant amount of money to invest in the course.

Local man, Aaron Small, who had been number two at Clandeboyne Golf Club for the previous 10 years, was attracted by the prospect of making his mark on the course and took on the challenge. If it was indeed a gamble for both sides, fortune has certainly favoured the brave.

The course is now in superb condition with an extensive bunker programme nearing completion which has transformed the golfing challenge and a new practice facility which will surely become the envy of many others. All in three short years.

"The course was lacking definition to be honest while the bunkers were in serious need of attention – they were old, in the wrong places with inconsistent sand," said Aaron, who had played the course a number of times both as a junior and a senior team player.

"Basically the course was behind

the times but credit to the club, they appreciated that something needed to be done – the nettle was grasped and money spent.

"I knew, coming here, that it was going to be a challenge but I certainly wasn't daunted by it."

Aaron had been honest at his interview, highlighting where he thought the problems were, and that was music to the ears of the interview panel, who knew then that they'd got their man.

"I personally believe that the Head Greenkeeper needs to play golf otherwise it's like a chef who doesn't taste his own food. If I'd been a member of Donaghadee I wouldn't have been happy and I could understand why people were leaving," said Aaron, a 4 handicapper who hits the ball a country mile.

The first thing he did when he started was, as with most new men, turn the greens around, and the club was quick to honour its commitment with around £80,000 worth of new machinery, which has since been added to by another £70,000 worth of kit.

"Before I started they had one guy stuck on a three unit rough mower and it took him a full week to cut the rough. We now have a seven unit Toro and we get the work done in a day and a half. We were immediately saving three and a half days' worth

of wages each week which meant that the machine basically paid itself and we got a better quality finish," said Aaron, who couldn't believe how busy the course was when he arrived.

"I thought it must have been Open week as we regularly have 600 people out between Friday and Sunday and I'd been used to Clandeboyne, which had two courses to swallow up the golfers."

"The greens are our bread and butter. I took out about 210 boxes of thatch and sanded them straight away to get them running true. It was the best thing for them."

Having made an impact on the greens and added definition to the fairways Aaron then turned his attention to the bunkers.

"I was grubbing a greenside bunker on the 4th when the Captain came over. I pulled the hand grubber through the first time and it was HS Masters sand. I pulled it through again and it was Wexford White. The third time it was Silica. So basically there had been a problem with the Silica sand so instead of digging it out the Wexford had been put on top and when there was a problem with that the HS was put on top of that. It was good for the Captain to see what we were up against."

Aaron had worked with architect, Howard Swan, at Clandeboyne on



ABOVE: Aaron Small

70 bunkers which had been well received by the members and felt that Howard could make an impact at Donaghadee.

"I'd been in the club around six months before I approached them and suggested that we bring Howard in to take a look and they agreed."

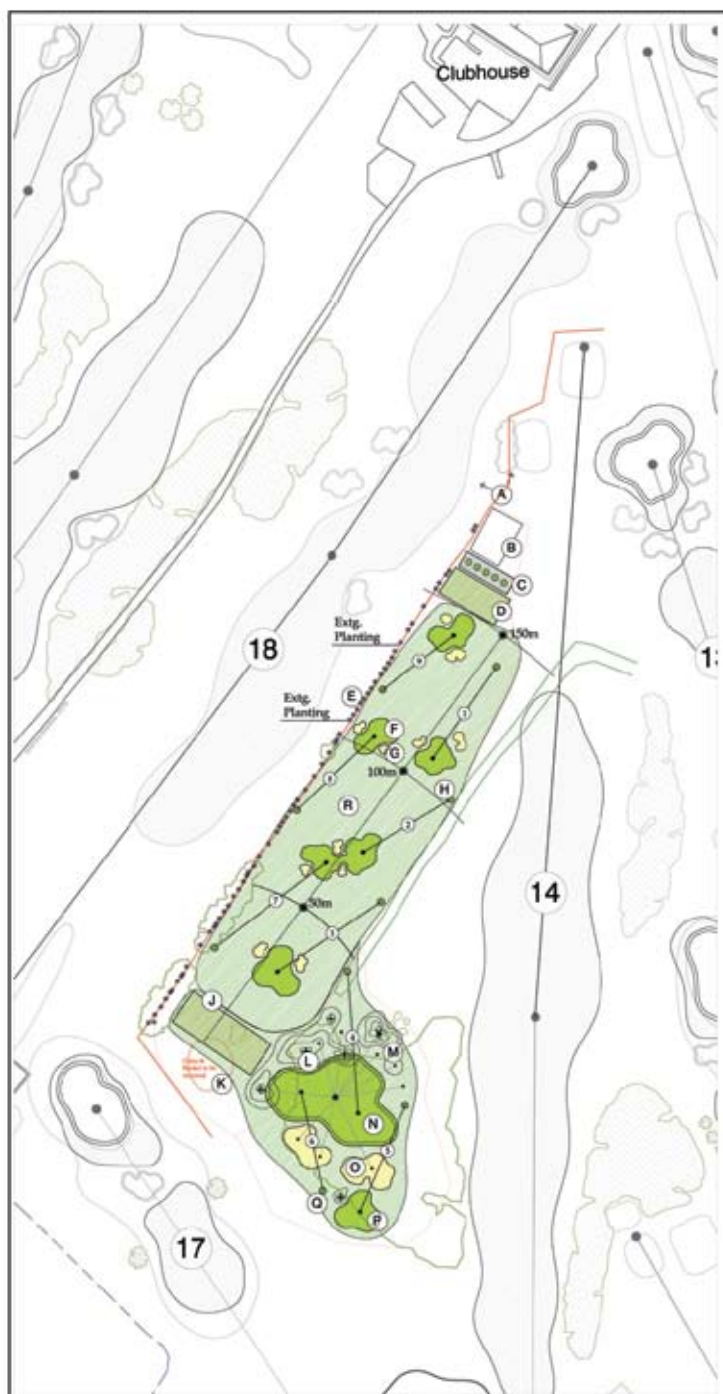
Howard visited and the club agreed that he would look at two holes, the visually appealing par-3 13th and the 18th, the two holes that would make the biggest impact.

"The downhill 13th was a bit unbalanced with one bunker on the front, one on the right and another at the back. Now it looks like a real signature hole with bunkers surrounding the green. With the 18th it meant people left the course thinking what a good golf course it was. The club was over the moon

Howard Swan's Short-course Plan

KEY

- A Access to/from Clubhouse to Practice Ground
- B Existing Practice Tee
- C Artificial Teeing Area
- D Grass Tee Area - North
- E Tree Planting/Screening
- F x5 Target Greens, Main Outfield, as part of x6 Hole Course
- G x11 Bunker Hazards to 6 Hole Course
- H Artificial Teeing Mats x9
- J Grass Tee Area - South
- K Existing Chipping Green & Bunker to be removed
- L Practice Mounds Area
- M Practice Hollows Area
- N x1 Main Academy Green doubling up as 3 additional holes
- O Bunker Academy
- P x1 Target Green
- Q Area of Woodland to be removed
- R Range Outfield



"The club knew that the course was behind the times so the nettle was grasped and money was spent."
Aaron Small

and the decision to extend it to the rest of the bunkering was easy," said Aaron, or "Bunker Boy" as some of the members call him.

After that a programme which involved Howard visiting twice in the year, in February and October for three days with two holes being done each time.

"The course is a little below average length wise and there is no way we can make it longer so really the only way we can improve the challenge is to tighten the course up with the bunkering and make sure they are in the correct places.

"We put £20,000 in the budget each year which worked out at £5,000 per hole covering all architect fees; digger man fees, drainage, sand etc. I really enjoy working with Howard because he is on site the whole time and can make amends as we go rather than him leaving plans for us to interpret."

Asked to describe a Swan bunker Aaron explains that they fit in well to the landscape and that they are built in proportion to the scale of the golf course.

"Visually they look excellent but they do require a bit of maintainance as they need to be hand raked."

Aaron firmly believes that bunkers are the toughest element of a golf course to get right and that it is certainly harder to get bunker



ABOVE AND BELOW: The new practice grounds



consistency right than it is green consistency.

"Category One golfers like them to be firm but higher handicappers like a bit softer and fluffier. But we've also got to contend with wind blow as well as the fact that some bunkers drain better than others. Then you've got to look at the fact that sun facing bunker dry out more quickly, while those that are more in play will react differently to those that are not found so often. It is an impossible task to achieve total consistency."

With the bunkers on track and due to be completed in another four visits, there is a steady improvement much to the delight of the members, despite the fact that it has made the course at least a shot tougher.

While this has been going on, other areas of the course haven't been neglected and have seen an upgrade.

"We've improved the signage and made money," explained Aaron.

"We bought some excellent signs from Eagle Promotions which have been cemented in. They are wooden and have a map of the hole painted on them and look great. We got them sponsored for an average of around £500 each for two years – more for par-3s as they are studied for yardages more than others and the 1st is more as well. For the sponsorship they also get 20 rounds at Donaghadee. This brings more people into the club to spend money at the club or in the shop so we benefit



there as well. Some people may also decide to become members having played the course. They were really easy to sell and it means when we come to renew the sponsorships it's all profit having paid for the signage out of the initial deal."

But the really exciting development at the club is the superb, unique, new short game facility, opened last month, which will be a great addition for the Donaghadee membership as well as being a new community facility for school children who will be given the chance to develop a taste for the game.

"It was a very poor area, about the size of a football pitch and you very rarely saw more than a couple of people on it at any one time."

Coupled with a 40 x 40 area of trees which was cleared, on which an Academy green complete with bunkering were built, it amounted to an area of around 1600 square metres.

"Howard designed it for us – to ensure we were eligible for the funding we needed to employ a professional architect – and we have two big natural turf tees at each end – the North and the South – which you can use to play to six of the holes, which have signs telling you the yardage to each hole, while there are also artificial tees for each of the holes. You can play it as a six hole or a nine

hole course," said Aaron, who added that the project was given funding by Sports Northern Ireland.

"There were strict tight deadlines for every stage of the project which, if missed, would have caused the funding to be withdrawn but we met every one."

The new area will be administered by the Pro Shop, with a booking system ensuring that there are not too many people on it at any one time, and schools will be invited to bringing enthusiastic children to the area to receive lessons from the professionals and hopefully ultimately become members.

"It will also be a great warm up for those with a later tee time and we will have matches for the various groups within the club – juniors, ladies, seniors etc. It will help to bring the club closer together while sharpening up our short games, said Aaron.

Howard is extremely impressed by the vision of Donaghadee Golf Club and the commitment that has been required to get it done.

"The achievement at Donaghadee is immense and has been fully supported by the public purse very gratefully and it is excellent news for the provinces golf and golf development that the Government feel it is important enough to support us in this way," said Howard.

"It was a very poor area, the size of a football pitch, and on a slope - you rarely saw more than two people on it at any one time" Aaron Small

"It seems to me that many, many golf clubs do not make good use of their practice facilities, however comprehensive they might be, and much comes down to the fundamental philosophy of the club to see new blood coming into the game. Donaghadee has been very enterprising in looking at this innovative approach to swell their membership, both adult and junior, and they have been very successful indeed in doing this on both counts," he explained.

With the new short game facility to manage, which requires hand mowing of the greens, Aaron operates with a team of six including himself with summer help bringing that number to seven.

"I'm over the moon at the way things have worked out and delighted at the way the club has supported me. They gave me the job and let me get on with it which is exactly the way to a successful club. Pay the professionals to get on with the job," said Aaron.

Perhaps it wasn't such a gamble after all for Donaghadee Golf Club.



IMAGES ON THIS PAGE:
Donaghadee Golf Club as
photographed by Niall Kerr

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Blown away by St Andrews

The BIGGA Open Support Team proved its worth at St Andrews this year when poor weather hit. Scott MacCallum reports from St Andrews



Brian Hunter, left, with Scottish Chairman, John Geddes



Three Nigerian BIGGA members visited the Marquee

The 150th anniversary Open at St Andrews saw the BIGGA Open Support Team returning to the venue where the very first team started work back in 1984. Much has changed in those 26 years but one thing has remained constant – just how important the team is to the smooth running of an event where you never know what will happen next.

This year, for example, a suspension of play on the second afternoon because of high winds meant matches couldn't be completed until Saturday morning.

The knock on effect meant that those 30 players left out on the course had to play the same course as the players who had already completed their rounds. That, in turn, meant that Gordon McKie and his team couldn't complete their third round prep until much

later than intended which put pressure on everyone involved.

The BIGGA team was there to help and a phone call from the R&A's Grant Moir at 9.15pm on Friday evening asking for 20 Support Team members to divot fairways ahead of the fairway mowers at 4.30am the next morning was met by a sea of hands volunteering to take on the task. Such desire to get in and help, whatever the hour, is what the BIGGA Open Support Team is all about.

Drawn from a list of BIGGA members who applied for the team at the turn of the year greenkeepers came from all points of the UK and Ireland as well as the USA, Sweden, Germany and Slovenia.

A St Andrews Open benefits from the collective greenkeeping might of the St Andrews Links Trust Greenkeeping resources,

managed by Gordon Moir, so, outside of emergencies, the BIGGA team members were able to concentrate on supporting their matches.

And what a fine job they did. The Association should be proud of them all. The hard work and effort was matched only by the fun and laughter that was had by all.

One of the many highlights was the presentation of a Lifetime Achievement Award to Cecil George (see page 34). National Chairman, Paul Worster, was Master of Ceremonies and introduced Past Chairman, Elliott Small, who outlined Cecil's career. The actual presentation was made by BIGGA's first Chairman, Walter Woods, the former Links Superintendent at St Andrews.

Thanks must go to all team members but, in particular, the Pod Leaders, Billy Merritt, Richard Saunders, Douglas McIntosh,



“The hard work and effort was matched only by the fun and laughter that was had by all”
Scott MacCallum

John Keenaghan and Jeremy Hughes and all those who drove mini buses. Their work was supplemented by the Cabin staff, of Peter Boyd and Clive Osgood; and 1st Tee team of Richard Whyman and Paul Jenkins. The responsibility for administration and the Marquee was carried out by Rachael Duffy, who was ably assisted by the Board of Directors Chris Sealey and Gary Cunningham.

The thoughts of everyone on the team went out to one of their number, Anthony Gillis, of Cork Golf Club, who had to cut short his time in St Andrews, almost before it had begun, and return home because of a family illness.

Next year the team will reform and be there to help at Royal St George's Golf Club. Look out for the application form in the December and January issues of Greenkeeper International.



ABOVE LEFT: Cecil Receives his award from Walter Woods
ABOVE CENTRE: Tools of the trade
ABOVE: Back packs kindly donated by Ransomes Jacobsen
LEFT: John Pemberton with Mark Pyrah of Sherriff, who kindly sponsored the TVs
NEAR LEFT: Walter and Jack, doyens of the industry

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BIGGA Titbits (by BIGGA Open Support Team Members)

• An early start does have its benefits. In the second match out Loren Roberts' caddie spotted a lady watching the golf from the window of a room on the third floor of the Old Course Hotel covered only by her bra.

Bob Maibusch MG, of Hinsdale Golf Club, Illinois, USA.

• Jean Van de Velde is still serving his apprenticeship as an on-course reporter. In trying to get a better view of Tiger Wood's putt on the 15th he wandered onto the line of the group teeing off on the 16th. He was met with shouts of "Jean! Jean!" from the crowd, and the golfers, including Tiger, but as he was wearing headphones it took him a while to realise that he was an obstruction. He turned red and moved out of the way cheers from the crowd and the other players.

Matt Wormald, of Luffenham Heath Golf Club.

• In an eventful day for Tiger he formed part of an illustrious queue for a portaloos on the 7th. Justin Rose went first, Tiger was next in line with Camilo Villegas bringing up the rear.

Matt Wormald, of Luffenham Heath Golf Club.

• DA Points pulled a bag of beef jerky from his bag during the delay. Once he'd finished he then pulled a roll of dental floss from his bag and announced to the gallery, "The big problem once you've eaten beef jerky is that you gotta floss!"

John Mair, of Dumfriesshire Golf Centre.

• Just as Steve Stricker sent his putt on the way to the hole on the 8th green a hare raced across the green missing the rolling ball by inches. **Billy McMillan, of Tyrell's Wood Golf Club.**

• Ignacio Garrido's caddie had a bad day on Saturday. Caught short he disappeared into the bushes to do what he needed to do and as he raced to catch up he tripped, fell over and all the clubs fell out of the bag. **Jeremy Hughes, of Vale of Llangollen GC.**

• **BIGGA Support Team member John Mitchell, of Pernporth GC,** had an unusual working day on Saturday. With 10 matches still to be completed early in the morning John was part of a small BIGGA team which arrived at the golf course at 5.30am to finish the matches. John was allocated the match closest to home and joined his group on the 18th tee. With no bunkers on the 18th Henrik Stenson asked him why he was there and John told him that it was to make sure the team of referee, scorer, scoreboard carrier and BIGGA Support Team member was intact. John completed the walk up the 18th returned his rake and, not having been allocated a match on Saturday, had completed his day's work by 6.40am.



The Open - Complete Bunker Stats (1995 to 2010)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	St. A's	Lythm	Troon	B'dale	C'stie	St. A's	Lythm	M'field	St.G's
Bnkrs	112	185	84	117	115	112	197	148	106
Rd 1	214	501	344	355	539	148	557	359	388
Rd 2	201	577	272	406	468	164	547	372	405
Rd 3	130	269	107	226	202	65	224	175	149
Rd 4	156	271	136	153	265	71	257	169	181
Total	701	1618	859	1140	1474	448	1585	1078	1123

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	Troon	St. A's	Hlake	C'stie	B'dale	T'berry	St A's
Bnkrs	93	112	96	113	123	85	112
Rd 1	393	252	352	442	472	272	149
Rd 2	371	203	353	482	379	332	200
Rd 3	148	100	183	189	219	172	77
Rd 4	185	121	204	198	198	185	85
Total	1097	676	1092	1311	1268	961	511

• *Two players completed the four rounds without going into any bunkers at all – Rickie Fowler and Edoardo Molinari.*



Showing the green way

Golf courses, far from being the habitat destroying, carbon churning beasts they are sometimes perceived, are often the exact opposite. New eco-friendly technologies that not only boost a club's environmental credentials, but also help reduce running costs, are widespread.

Sustainability is becoming a key factor and alternative energy sources may now be viable to clubs that could potentially act as a business selling energy to the national grid, as well as providing electricity or heating for their own use.

From deer to grass snakes, a whole host of wildlife species seek golf courses as a haven to inhabit and as a place to rear their young. Jim Cook visited four golf clubs to find out more...



Thorpeness Golf Club, on the east coast of Suffolk, sits within a 300 acre site. Sprawling areas of rough, deep rough between holes, heathland, wetland, copse trees, regenerating gorse and heather create a number of habitats for a multitude of wildlife species and rare plant types.

A man-made mere with several islands tends to attract birds you would expect to see, and some you certainly would not. Course Manager, Ian Willett, explained.

"What course can you go to at five o'clock in the morning, drive out onto the course in early spring, just as the sun is rising and hear the boom of the bittern? We get that from the north warren which is at the back of the fifth. You've got the northern diver out there and we've even had a white egret pair nest and rear two young. They got blown off course during the spring ended up here and lived it up. We were running around with cameras thinking it was white herons, but when we got a decent shot in and got the book out we realised they were white egrets nesting on the mere."

"The team and I know that everything we do on the course has an environmental impact - large or small" Ian Willett

Ian is backed up at the club by a team that has the same attitude toward the environment as he does.

"The team and I know that everything we do on the course has an environmental impact - large or small. We are lucky because a member, called Dr Ray Harding, has been keeping records over 25 years and his journals about the golf course have been published. He has carried out studies and he keeps us on track, so we discuss everything we do with him."

Dr Ray Harding spoke of changing attitudes towards golf clubs.

"The Wildlife Trust and other organisations always tended to look at golf courses as a problem, but now they see it the other way round; that they are a reservoir or a last resort for wildlife, who can then re-colonise. That's working quite well so at least we have achieved that."



Ian spoke of how a disastrous situation was turned into a positive at the club.

"Last year we've had arsonists in and set fire to various parts of the golf course. So we went in this year and cleared the site. Literally we scrubbed it down to the seed bed took all the timber out and piled it to one side which will give us an adder hibernacula, and we are trying to encourage a few grass heaps around the course. The snake population isn't that great. Adders we are fine on and we have hundreds. Grass snakes, we've got them but they are not that active, so we decided to leave the odd grass heap to try and encourage the females to lay their eggs there."

Although all wildlife was welcome on the course, some had become a bit too cosy.

"Last year we had about six to eight stoats going on the course, lowering the rabbit population, but

this year I think I have seen just one stoat. The rabbit population has gone absolutely through the roof - there are thousands of them. We use a pellet chicken manure mix though, because the rabbits don't like the smell of it."

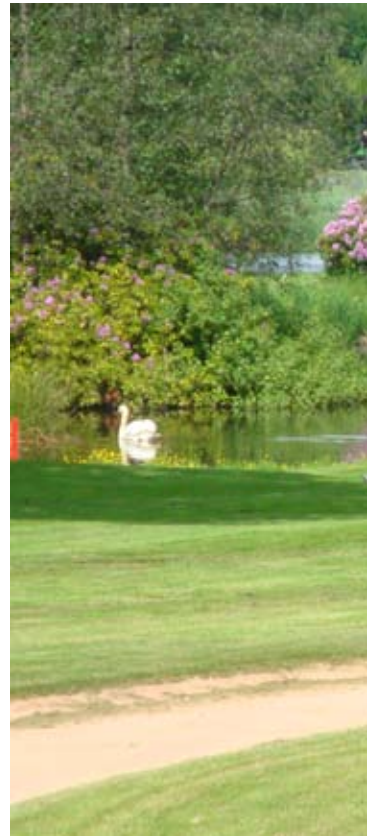
Ian said that one year of carelessness could effectively undo 30 years of hard work.

"You need staff coming in after you who think the same way as you and carry on the work."

It was not only on the course where environmentalism was considered.

"We use air jets for the showers, where it takes a certain amount of air into the head so you are cutting down the amount of water you use, but still getting a good shower."

We use low energy bulbs and have a recycling area, which is also used by locals. We also use a water recycling system at the sheds."





Meldrum House Country Hotel and Golf Club, in Scotland, completed a new greenkeeping centre in January which contains a number of eco-friendly technologies.

The £750,000 development stores all the maintenance machinery and contains a wood pellet or log burner to provide heat and hot water for the complex. Insulating materials in the walls help reduce heat loss.

Rainwater collected is used to wash machines, and then filtered to be used again.

Kenny Harper, Golf Course and Estate Grounds Manager, said the club was working towards self sufficiency.

“At the moment we’re using pellets for the burners, but we hope to use wood only from the estate by this time next year. We think it is extremely important to adopt a responsible approach to energy and water usage and as a result, eco-planning has become an important part of our business.”

Aside from the new centre, Kenny saw sustainability as the way of the future.

“It’s the way everything is going now. I’m interested in land and management. We are only here for a short time so I think we should try and leave it in the best state we can.

The guys use electric buggies instead of petrol and diesel, and

it’s just little things like that to help keep the carbon footprint down. Things are going to change. We are going to have less and less pesticides to cure problems so we need to start managing how we run our businesses. It’s long term and it is not going to happen overnight, I mean fungicides will be here for a while yet, but there are less and less available every year. We use a fair bit of organics instead of synthetics. As far as

from fertiliser and pesticides. This spring, carp were introduced to the ponds and instead of using chemicals, it was hoped would be a more natural way of clearing pond weed. Kenny was looking forward to seeing the results.

“It is early days at the moment and the fish are only four to six inches so it will be a little while before we see any results, but if you don’t try how are you going to know if it’s going to work?”

“We think it is extremely important to adopt a responsible approach to energy and water usage and as a result, eco-planning has become an important part of our business” Kenny Harper

fertiliser is concerned, we don’t spray pesticides as a preventative, only as a cure. We wait until there is a problem and if there is no other answer we’ll use them.”

The golf course at Meldrum House is a thriving eco system. Retired graphic designer and starter at the club, Morgan Fisher, has recorded over 60 different types of animals and birds that inhabit the course, from Roe Deer to buzzards.

The many lakes and ponds at the club have buffer zones around them to prevent run off





“Everything we do at the club is looking at reducing carbon” said Colin Webber, Managing Director of Portmore Golf Club, in North Devon.

They are currently undertaking the year-long process of testing wind speeds to check whether or not wind turbines will be viable at the club.

He admitted that although he used to hate the appearance of turbines, they have now grown on him, due partially to a trip to Scandinavia.

“I went on a trip to Denmark and I saw just how far behind the rest of Europe we were. It woke me up. At first you see them all over the place and then after a while you don’t even notice them.”

Colin mentioned that the block of concrete used to secure the turbine was the biggest problem for him.

“There is so much carbon tied up in making that block of concrete that you’re looking at almost 17 years worth of carbon. That’s if you use new concrete. The past few small projects I’ve done, I’ve used recycled concrete and so far so good it seems to work really well.”

Colin said the wind turbine would provide electricity for the clubhouse, charge the buggies and also put electricity back into the national grid. This could then

be sold back to the grid at a rate of 36 pence for every unit of energy produced.

Photovoltaic cells, which operate like solar panels but only need light, not sunlight, to work, for the clubhouse roof were also being looked at.

“In the interim, we’ve fitted sensors to every room, use low energy bulbs, put time switches on things like fridges, the big drinks dispenser, because people don’t need an ice cold drink at seven in the morning. It’s not until you actually stop and look at these things that you realise; no you don’t need that. It’s the same with hot water. It needs to get to 64 degrees once a day, not all day, so we heat it for three or so hours overnight at the cheap rate then we turn it off with a time switch. The shoe cleaning compressor is on from 10am to 6pm instead of being on all day and night.”

Solar panels have been fitted to buggies in some countries and this was an idea Colin had tested and was making preparations to adopt.

He was also looking into an all-electric Jacobsen mower, the Eclipse, and eventually it was hoped diesel usage could be eliminated completely for all maintenance machinery.

After working with the oil

“The wind turbine would provide electricity for the clubhouse, charge the buggies and also put electricity back into the national grid” Colin Webber

association Colin now uses organic nitrogen sources as fertiliser, such as fish oils and seaweed, as a trial, on Portmore’s par-three course.

“You’ve got to do it gently, as I learnt with bio-diesel; you can jump in too deep and get yourself in trouble, but so far so good. We will not do away with the modern products, but just reduce reliance on them.”

They have built their own environmental wash pad as well as their own high volume, low pressure sprayer so compost can be drenched onto the course.

Last year Portmore recycled close to eight tonnes of cardboard and glass.

Colin mentioned that electricity usage constituted 50% of their carbon production, so introducing bio fuels to do this job was at the top of the to do list.

“As well as having an aesthetic effect a wood burner would heat the clubhouse, and also provide hot water.”





Images show The 'Tree O'clock' world record attempt in action

In 2007, Maesteg Golf Club, in Wales, formed a course development group to enhance all areas of the club cost effectively, but with particular attention toward sustainable, environmentally friendly solutions, since the course proved to be home to a wide range of ecological habitats.

The course is positioned in 150 acres of land, and tracts of deeper ecology rough grassland have been allowed to develop, which offer a habitat for ground nesting birds as well as a safe passage for small mammals and insects. Heathland and wetland areas provide a home for many various types of animals, birds and creatures including the carnivorous plant sundew and the rare marsh fritillary butterfly.

A showpiece project was a tree planting programme funded by Better Woodlands for Wales.

Rhydian Lewis, Chairman of Greens at the club, explained.

"We put together an environmental plan and part of that was to come up with a tree planting programme across the course with the idea of planting about 9,000-10,000 trees. We worked together with Carbon Earth and secured funding from



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

Thank you to all our key sponsors

"Maesteg Golf Club may well be pioneers in helping to solve a problem that has been a headache for greenkeepers all around the world" Rhydian Lewis

the Welsh Assembly Government then invited seven local primary schools to a tree-planting ceremony last year. So we have had the first phase of the tree planting and we have a second phase coming up this autumn and that should take us up to about 9,000 trees."

Maesteg also participated in the world record attempt 'Tree O'clock', whereby it was attempted to plant the most trees in a one hour time limit. An additional 600 trees were planted on the course for this.

Rhydian explained how recycled materials were now being used for standard drainage.

"We trialled the Aquadyne drain, made from recycled materials, on one of our greens and it had a big impact on a pretty bad area. Since then we have put some fairway drainage in with it as well. So we are trying to promote the use of recycled materials throughout our course."

The trials proved so successful

that the club has now invested in a specialist trenching machine, the AFT 45, which is being used to cut trenches to fit the Aquadyne precisely.

A drainage programme for the coming years will see these drains fitted around the entire course.

With regards recycling and sustainability, energy efficient bulbs are used throughout the club with as Rhydian said, "A significant reduction in costs."

He also mentioned the club's use of recycled artificial grass on the course.

"We have used the material on pathways and slip areas such as wooden bridges. Further plans are in place to use this material extensively for new and unique purpose.

"Maesteg Golf Club, in partnership with Enviroports Ltd, may well be the pioneers in helping to solve a problem that has been a headache for greenkeepers all around the world."



Thanks for the education, Cecil!

Scott MacCallum enjoys a few hours in the company of the latest recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award

I'd only been with BIGGA about a month when I travelled to Dornoch for the Scottish National Championship, ably run by Elliott and Edna Small, and found myself sharing a hotel with Cecil George and Jimmy Neilson.

They regaled me with stories long into the night – I had been warned what to expect – and breakfast was taken with a delicate head the following morning.

But it had been an experience and spending those few hours in the company of Cecil and Jimmy was instrumental in bringing me up to speed on BIGGA and the greenkeeping profession as a whole. In short, it was an education.

Indeed, I was only the latest member of a huge band of people who owe Cecil for providing us with an education.

While mine was face-to-face as we sat at a bar, thousands of others have every reason to thank Cecil for their own education, even although they may never have had the pleasure of meeting him in person.

Cecil is the latest recipient of BIGGA's Lifetime Achievement Award and while he spent 37 years as Head Greenkeeper at Lenzie Golf Club, just outside Glasgow, he was nominated for the Award for the pioneering work that led to the development of formal greenkeeping education – a programme which was subsequently followed throughout the rest of the UK and then worldwide.

"I'm so proud to have been given the Award, it's a great honour and thank the Association and Board of Directors for nominating me."

Cecil, who turned 83 in January, fell into greenkeeping as a 15 year old.

"I started out as a gardener, working for my uncle, but at the end of my first summer he told me that I'd be finishing at the end of the week as there wasn't enough work for me.

To lessen the blow he gave me tu'pence and told me to go to the big white house and ask for a lemonade.

I knew that the building was Whitecraigs Golf Club and as I drank the lemonade – they wanted

Had he not done so he would have been fighting in Germany with the infantry.

"It took nine months to train a para and I was about to be sent out east when the atomic bomb was dropped in Japan, so instead I was sent to Palestine and saw action when we had to hunt down some guys in Iraq," said Cecil, who undertook 109 jumps, many of them from as low as 500 feet.

On his return to civilian life he didn't think he'd go back to greenkeeping but instead follow a career in engineering.

"I started out as a gardener, working for my uncle, but at the end of my first summer he told me that I'd be finishing at the end of the week as there wasn't enough work for me" Cecil George

the bottle back – I chatted to the man who asked me what I was doing.

When I told him that my uncle had just sacked me he told me that there was a job going at the club for a greenkeeper," recalled Cecil, as we chatted in his magnificently manicured garden on a sunny day last month.

For the next two years Cecil worked as a greenkeeper before the Second World War intervened and saw him join the Army in 1944.

He spent four months with the Cameron Highlanders before volunteering for the Parachute Regiment.

After an interview with a Pollock-shaws-based engineering company Cecil was told that if he returned the next morning there would be a job waiting for him.

"But I didn't go back. I was in the pub that night and met the Head Greenkeeper of Whitecraigs who said I should go back to the golf course as I'd enjoy it. I went up, had a go on one of the machines and was hooked. If I hadn't met him that night I'd have become an engineer and wouldn't have been here talking to you."

It was during the next phase of his career that Cecil began to become frustrated.



ABOVE: Cecil with his wife, Margaret

"I thought to myself that it was stupid. I had a job but I didn't know half of what I was supposed to be doing! So I decided to go to agricultural college at night school.

"It was in Blythswood Square, in Glasgow, and I went there for two years. I learned an awful lot – not necessarily about the grasses that I wanted to grow – I learned about the feed grasses rather than bents and fescues – but the basics were the same.

"I did learn about soil analysis, fertilisers, what they did and what they were. We didn't have weed

killers or selectives then but we did have preventatives and the greatest of them all was Lead Arsenic which was absolutely marvellous for worms and leatherjackets."

Cecil was Secretary of the West of Scotland branch of SIGGA by this time and, having experienced what studying had done for him, felt that the College could offer something for young greenkeepers who wanted to be educated.

The first person to go through the system at Glasgow Horticultural College one day release was Davie Gall, who went on to become Head

Greenkeeper at Cardross Golf Club – taking over from Jack McMillan – who became the world's first apprentice greenkeeper.

"Davie got papers for what he did and you could say was the world's first Apprentice Greenkeeper."

Cecil went on to become Chairman of SIGGA, while Bob Moffat took over as Secretary and together they approached Charles Crossan, Principal of Woodburn House, the Glasgow Horticultural College, to see if it would be possible to develop a City and Guilds qualification for greenkeepers.

"Charlie asked what greenkeepers were required to do and we outlined that we cut greens, fertilised knew about soil, drainage, overseeding etc. This information was sent to the City and Guilds Headquarters in London to be assessed but we were told that there wasn't enough in it for a City and Guilds. Charlie then suggested that we add something about tree management and pruning roses. We sent it back and this time we were successful and we were awarded the first City and Guilds for greenkeepers."

Cecil and Bob both taught at the College and put together some of the syllabus.

"Bob did the machinery while I did the practical greenkeeping side. I'd do weed and chemical identification while I'd get them to dig a six by six bed, lift the off the turf, delve it, rake it, fertilise it and put the turf back down again. All in an hour and a half. You want to see some of the messes we got," he chuckled, thinking back over his time at the College.

With other colleges in Scotland taking up the mantle too, offering education for greenkeeping Cecil wrote to the five main colleges in an attempt to have the education programmes co-ordinated.

"We had greenkeepers moving from Glasgow to Dundee and discover that the college was in the middle of the curriculum that they'd just finished and they were going over old ground.

"Initially the colleges said they couldn't possibly change, as their main client was the local council, but I asked them to write out what they did and then we reordered it for them to about 90% uniformity. It worked out very well."

The next stage was to develop an HNC, and both Woodburn House and especially Elmwood College, worked hard on this with Cecil on this although it took six years of toing and froing, particularly on the language required to frame questions, it was achieved. With it eventually in place the HND was much easier and was in place around 18 months later.

"Everyone latched on to this and I was quite surprised at that. It went around the world apparently and it all started with our work at Woodburn House and two guys saying 'I think I could get a guy to go to agricultural college and learn how to be a greenkeeper.'"

Cecil's own career had taken him from Whitecraigs, to Fereneze and Cathcart Castle before he saw the job at Lenzie advertised in 1954.

Within a few years the Lenzie pro



ABOVE: One of the Lenzie Golf Club signs which decorates Cecil's garden

RIGHT: Cecil receives his award at The Open, from Walter Woods, flanked by Paul Worster and Andy Mellon



"It went around the world apparently and it all started with our work at Woodburn House and two guys saying, 'I think I could get a guy to go to agricultural college and learn how to be a greenkeeper' "
Cecil George

had moved on and Cecil offered to take on the pro duties as well – running the shop, repairing clubs and giving golf lessons.

"I was never much of a pro but as a greenkeeper I did an honest day's work on the golf course. I had two guys with me and it was all hand machines, motorised but we walked behind them. We didn't have ride on machines," said Cecil, who has been married to Margaret for 56 years.

"In those days golf didn't generally start until around 4pm and weekend medals didn't start until noon. Everyone worked."

Cecil worked hard to improve the golf course both on the quality of the playing surfaces and the general layout.

"The greens were around 80% moss when I arrived so I borrowed Cathcart Castle's scarifier and tore the greens to pieces and reseeded and they came away beautifully. When I left in 1991 the greens were 90% Bents.

"I also changed the layout and planted 10,000 trees of which 5,000 are still growing," said Cecil, who said that in those days he was getting £8.10 a week and the annual subscription to be a Lenzie member was £5.

"I was very happy at Lenzie. They very much left me to get on with things and although I was down to the last three when Walter (Woods) got the job at St Andrews I have never regretted staying."

As Cecil enjoys his retirement and a garden that provides much of the family veg, as well as a wonderfully tranquil retreat, he can look back at a life that has done so much to improve the lot of the greenkeeper.

"What I always strived for was better wages. If we got better wages we'd get better men and better students. With better greenkeepers we'd get better golf courses."

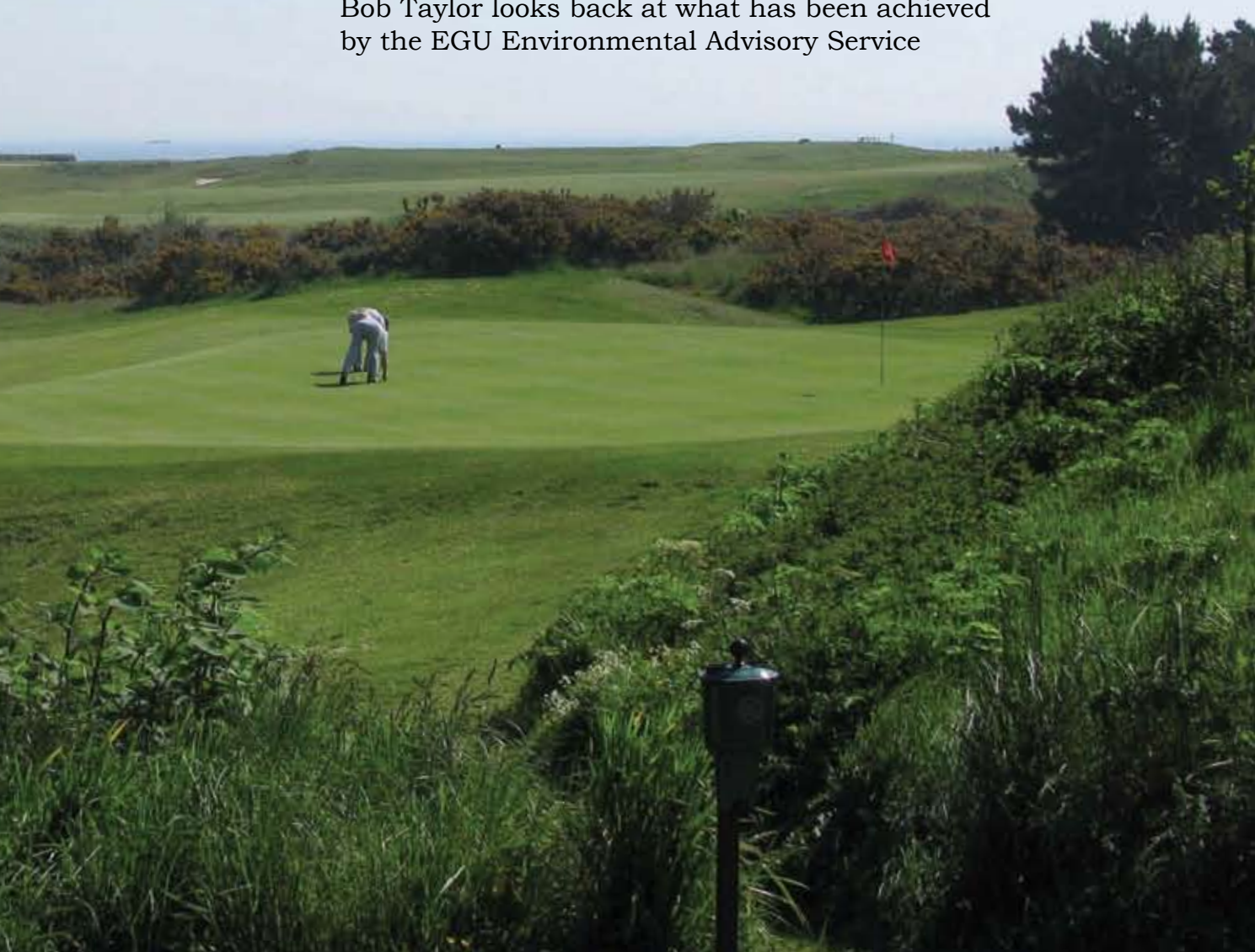
Thanks for the education, Cecil!





Eight Years On...

Bob Taylor looks back at what has been achieved
by the EGU Environmental Advisory Service





Golf courses can, with appropriate management, be valuable landscapes for wildlife with a number supporting some of our most rare and vulnerable wildlife species.

The English Golf Environmental Advisory Scheme (EGEAS) was set up by the EGU in 2002 to raise awareness of the benefits of good environmental and ecological practices to their affiliate clubs and to golfers playing at these golf clubs. A second ambition was to demonstrate and communicate to central and local government, and the local communities around each golf course, that golf is a responsible land user, providing wildlife opportunities and real conservation benefit.

Eight years on, 220 golf clubs have benefited from heavily subsidised ecological and environmental advice and received certification for achieving the targets set. Through media promotion of these achievements Natural England, the Government Department for Food and Rural Affairs, wildlife and conservation groups are all now more aware of the valuable ecological corridor that a golf course provides across England.

So how did the scheme operate and just what has been achieved?

The process

The scheme was initially designed to run for three years, but was later extended due to high demand, to raise awareness of environmental and ecological issues, by providing free consultancy to those who applied. Within the scheme, it was decided that clubs would receive an independent consultancy visit, during which ecological highlights of the site were identified, together with recommendations on how they could be improved and managed more effectively. Following the visit, clubs received a report detailing the discussions held on site and outlining a series of targets set for the club, the progress of which would be reviewed 18 months later during the second follow-up visit. The targets were prescribed giving consideration to what was deemed realistically achievable by the club (based on its available resources) within an 18 month time period. If, upon the second visit to the club, a significant amount of the target

work had been completed, the club would receive a certification under the scheme in recognition of their achievement and dedication to ecological management.

Facts and Figures

Following the second visit to the club, during which target progress was assessed, a total of 143 clubs ($\pm 70\%$) had done a sufficient level of work to be certificated under the EGEAS. Given that the targets were set to be achievable yet challenging, this is an impressive rate of success.

Consider trees under the scheme.

A total of 19500 native trees were planted either as replacements to inappropriate trees or to create new woodland ecosystems.

Over 1000 linear meters of hedgerow was planted, helping to reduce some of the losses that have been rife throughout the countryside over the past 30 years. Hedgerows are important for plants, nesting birds, invertebrates and for bats which use hedgerows to navigate between areas.

A significant amount of deadwood in the form of log piles has been created for the life that they can sup-

ABOVE: Dead wood and boundary rough provides important corridor habitat

port. Deadwood is a fast diminishing resource in the countryside and one that we should not overlook. Random dead wood lain on the surface will provide connecting habitat for a range of specialist invertebrate species. Standing dead wood too is in extremely short supply and can be better accommodated than it currently is on our golf courses.

Over 450 bird boxes were erected, providing nesting habitat in the absence of standing dead wood and other habitats such as hedgerows.

Grasslands are a main part of any golf course and it was possible under the scheme to create over 1,516,300 m² of new deep rough grassland habitat on a range of different soil types.

Over 30 new areas of wild flower meadow were created.

Our heathland too has benefited from the scheme, this fast diminishing resource is vital for sand lizard and other reptiles and is the chosen habitat of butterflies such as the silver studded blue and birds like the Dartford warbler and nightjar. Over 22 additional hectares of heathland were created.

Ponds and other associated water features are important for a range of wildlife, which can vary massively depending upon how they are looked after.

The EGEAS has improved the quality of more than 100 ponds and has resulted in the creation of 20 new water bodies, thereby increasing the country's habitat resource for a broad spectrum of organisms including great crested newt and natterjack toad.



Testimonials

Many clubs following advice from the STRI Ecologists wrote to outline the positives that came out of the service and the visits and a few are illustrated below

Weymouth Golf Club

...Thank you for nominating Weymouth Golf Club for the certificate which has given our conservation objectives some useful publicity in the local newspaper and The Golfer magazine. Informing both the club members and the local community will I am sure prove to be beneficial to our aims of conserving the local environment. Wild flora mixes have been introduced between the 5th and 9th tees. The vegetation is being managed in accordance with the recommendations provided. The information you provided about yellow rattle seed proved to be extremely useful and we were able to purchase enough seed to conduct a trial in several areas of rough.

Davenport Golf Club

....Since STRI last visited Davenport Golf Club in October 2002 the number of long grass areas has increased from one to seven. Many larger areas under and around young trees/copses are being marked out at present. The grass will be cut less frequently and at a higher height of cut which will provide an intermediate rough. An area for a composting facility has been ear-marked and cleared. Both ponds have been cleared of Canadian and other pondweed and the material is left to drain

for a day or two beside the pond before removal. The beech hedge to the right of the 16th hole has been extended along the 15th to provide a hedgerow corridor. Other work undertaken has included planting marsh marigolds within two wet areas and several significant new tree and scrub plantings.

Eaton Golf Club

...Since your visit in July 2003 we have set up an Environmental Working Group that produced an Environmental Management Plan, a comprehensive Waste Management Plan and held numerous course walks for members. On the practical side, woodland thinning commenced through nine areas; around 300 shrubs, 142 5 ft trees and 90 whips were introduced at different areas around the course; two areas of long rough (each of around 70 m x 30 m) were allowed to develop as ecological corridors for wildlife; three barn owl boxes were erected by the local Barn Owl Group; considerable work has been carried out with regard to the development of the water features including marginal and semi-aquatic planting. We have also benefitted from an article published in the Liverpool Daily Post (Tuesday 6 December 2005) entitled Eaton are chasing birdies with a difference. We have strived to strike a balance between the needs of nature and the needs of the golfer working to get the balance right.

The club found the work rewarding, putting something down for future generations whilst giving so much pleasure to those using the course.

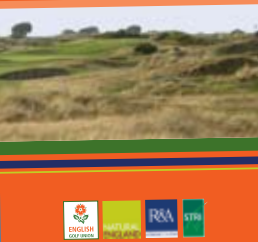


IN CONCLUSION

A full account of the service, the results obtained, and the comments received from participating golf clubs is contained within a new publication produced by STRI on behalf of the English Golf Union and the sponsors.

STRI and the EGU would like to thank Natural England and The R&A for their continued support throughout.

The English Golf Environmental Advisory Service



Copies of the booklet are available free from The English Golf Union, Tel: 0044 1526 334500 or write to Paul Keeling at The National Golf Centre.



Championship
conditions,
come rain
or shine



How irrigation is helping keep Celtic Manor Resort and St Andrews links in perfect playing condition for this year's top tournaments, writes Jenny Hughes



No sooner has Louis Oosthuizen lifted the Open Championship Claret Jug 2010 at the Old Course than the golfing world switches its gaze to Celtic Manor Resort and the Ryder Cup...

But, weather-wise, preparations at the Usk Valley resort in south Wales couldn't be in starker contrast to the recent hard work carried out at The Home of Golf. While St Andrews Links Director of Greenkeeping, Gordon Moir, and crew were battling heavy downpours in the run-up to the tournament, Celtic Manor Director of Golf Courses and Estate Management, Jim McKenzie, is currently dealing with the effects of a three-month drought.

Come rain or shine, however, both courses rely on Toro Irrigation products to keep their surfaces in championship condition. And, boy, is it shining at Celtic Manor at the moment, making irrigation a crucial part of Jim's preparations!

"We've recently experienced an unprecedented period of drought," he revealed.

"April, May and June have been very dry, so irrigation has been

really important. The Twenty Ten course that will host the Ryder Cup uses a hybrid irrigation system, but basically everything above ground is Toro in terms of sprinklers and solenoids. The sprinklers on the fairways have served us particularly well as they're coping with some strong winds at present, plus we've been impressed with the minimal maintenance that has been required."

The Twenty Ten and the Montgomerie course feature a mixture of 835S, 810G and 725 Series sprinklers as part of the hybrid systems.

Moreover, Celtic Manor Resort's original course, the Roman Road, uses a system controlled by its SitePro central control system – one of the most widely used systems in the golf course industry.

"The full system on The Roman Road course works really well and has seen us through some major events too, like the Celtic Manor Wales Open 2005, 2006 and 2007 and the 2005 and 2006 All Star Cup celebrity tournament," Jim adds.

And, while the St Andrews Links greenkeeping team enjoyed a brief moment's respite and a well-earned beer after the 150th anniversary

Open Championship on The Old Course, the hard work never stops at this most prestigious of courses – least of all for the Irrigation system now the weather is on the up.

At St Andrews Links, the five Course Managers responsible for the seven courses – including the Old Course – have been working

"The full system on The Roman Road course works really well and has seen us through some major events too, like the Celtic Manor Wales Open 2005, 2006"
Jim McKenzie

with the Toro SitePro system for 10 years.

Says Gordon of the system: "Our Course Managers find the SitePro controller very straightforward to use, plus it offers huge flexibility with regards quantities of water being applied to different areas within various time windows."

On six of the seven courses, the pipework is actually linked together

as one unit, yet through SitePro each of the four Course Managers has complete control of his system – something Gordon says is particularly useful.

“Each Course Manager can determine their exact requirement irrespective of what the other three are planning. We can even access it and make alterations to a programme through our home computers, so if weather conditions should change after we have left for the day, we can make adjustments accordingly.”

Features like the remote control operations using the handheld radios are also popular with the team.

“This is great for washing-in products after application to a specific area or checking out a sprinkler that you suspect may not be getting an electronic signal. Other great features are station testing, the weather station and T.Map, which is a handy tool to use in other situations such as producing a plan of a specific area for staff or committees.”

Opened in June 2008, The Castle Course also benefits from a recently introduced 855S Series sprinklers with TruJectory adjustable trajectory.

“These have proved very efficient in the wind, which is a constant presence on the courses and so, since 2008, we have replaced a number of sprinklers on our other courses with the 855S Series ones to help overcome the challenges the wind presents us with.”

In conclusion, Gordon states: “The versatility and control the Toro system gives you, together with the ease with which you can customise your programmes to suit every situation, is ideal for us.

“It can also have a positive effect in conserving water – something we feel is important from an environmental point-of-view as well as helping us maintain the courses with the correct grass species and fast, firm surfaces we aim for.”


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Wild about heather

Mike Beardall visits an East Sussex golf club where bio-diversity is taken seriously on the heathland course



Heather regeneration and bio-diversity have been passions for Head Greenkeeper John Shepherd since he first encountered Piltdown GC's heathland golf course in 1981.

That was his first job and, after several years at the RAC Golf Club, Epsom (becoming Head Greenkeeper on one of the two courses), and a brief spell at the Sussex National while it was under construction in 1988, he returned to Piltdown, in East Sussex.

He began serious heather regeneration about 12 years ago, and it has been a long hard struggle for his team and the supportive club officials. "Biodiversity was hardly talked about in the early days," says John, 45.

"But I knew that we had to reintroduce heather if we were to attract

birds, butterflies and insects.

"The heather had been wiped out, but the seed lies just under the soil waiting to flourish, which it cannot do without help.

"We had to remove a good number of silver birches, which we regard as the enemy, before taking off the topsoil and laying down heather bracken, obtained from Ashdown Forest, with their permission.

"This encourages the seed to germinate and gives the young plants protection. It takes from four to five years for heather to get established so this is not a short-term project."

This magnificent course has brought back vast swathes of heather, through much effort from his team of five and, in recent years, the work of Speedcut Contractors, who have also been carrying out work on new tees and greens.

There are no bunkers at the 18-hole Piltdown club, but the tree layouts and newly-established wild areas of heather, gorse and flowers make this a challenging course for players.

Being on silty clay the course suffers from extremes, either very wet or very dry – as it has been during the summer months.

A Watermation TW2 system of pop-ups keeps greens in pristine condition.

"It's hard work finding the balance between managing heathland and traditional greenkeeping practices," says John. "We don't aim for the sharp, neat and tidy look and the dramatic green stripes – we are used to areas looking dry, and the members appreciate what we are trying to achieve.

"It's very much a team effort



ABOVE: John Shepherd, Course Manager





“When heather reaches about 150mm we tend to cut it back to encourage fresh growth. The results are well worth it and bio-diversity is no longer just a phrase, but a reality” John Scott

working on his level 2 sports turf management qualification at Plumpton College.

Tony Woolley, who has been at the club since the late 90s and is first assistant, and went to America with the Bernhard-sponsored BIGGA delegation to the States about six years ago.

Assistant Head Greenkeeper David Welfare and greenkeeper Peter Millin have been at the club since the early 2000s and longest-serving member is greenkeeper and mechanic John Scott who has been at Piltdown since 1970.

“We have a very happy team,” says John. “We all work hard to maintain standards and the development of the course is constantly under review, with plans for several new tees and greens in the future.”

Speedcut Contractors, under contracts manager Barry Pace, have carried out a lot of work in the last two years, including building a new ladies tee at the 18th and a new green, plus recontouring around the men’s tee and a new winter tee at the 9th, plus building five other new tees.

Mowing at Piltdown is carried out by Toro ride-ons and other equipment includes Cushman utility vehicles, a Hardi 400-litre sprayer for the Cushmans, a Greensward Multi-slicer, a Cushman top-

dresser and two compact tractors – a Kubota and Kioti.

Spraying is kept to a minimum, to fit in with John’s naturalistic plan and to reduce any threat to wildlife.

The number of trees on the course mean that John and his team are constantly keeping growth monitored and during the long winter snow they carried out a good deal of thinning with chainsaws.

Trees are not just a feature, but also seen as a threat if they get out of control.

“Management of a heathland course is rewarding, even though the results are sometimes only seen long-term,” says John. “We have signs on patches that look dead but they are actually young heather plants developing.

“When heather reaches about 150mm we tend to cut it back to encourage fresh growth. The results are well worth it and bio-diversity is no longer just a phrase, but a reality.”

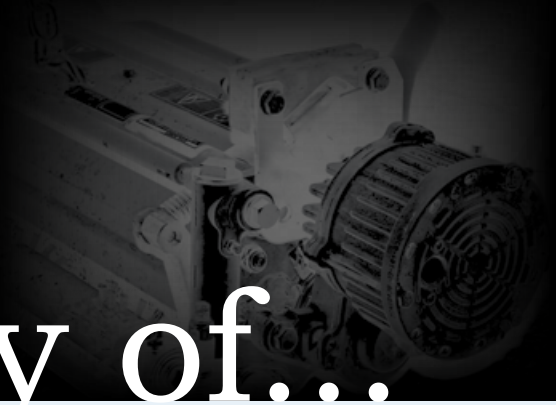
Nearby courses using similar practices include the Royal Ashdown, Surrey Heath and the West Sussex Golf Club at Pulborough.

“We get a lot of positive feedback from club members and the committee and the greenkeeping staff are really encouraged by the praise we get,” said John.

all round because the director of greens, Philip Russell-Vick, is very supportive being a landscape architect himself. He, myself, a former greens chairman and the club secretary all meet regularly and agree tactics as a team, so we all know what we want to achieve.”

The golf course was the subject of a thorough survey by European Golf Design about six years ago and their final report included the comments: “Piltdown is not a modern corporate golf machine. There are no plans to host major regional, national or international tournaments. It’s members’ golf, it’s companionship, it’s comfortable, it’s familiar and it’s really rather good.”

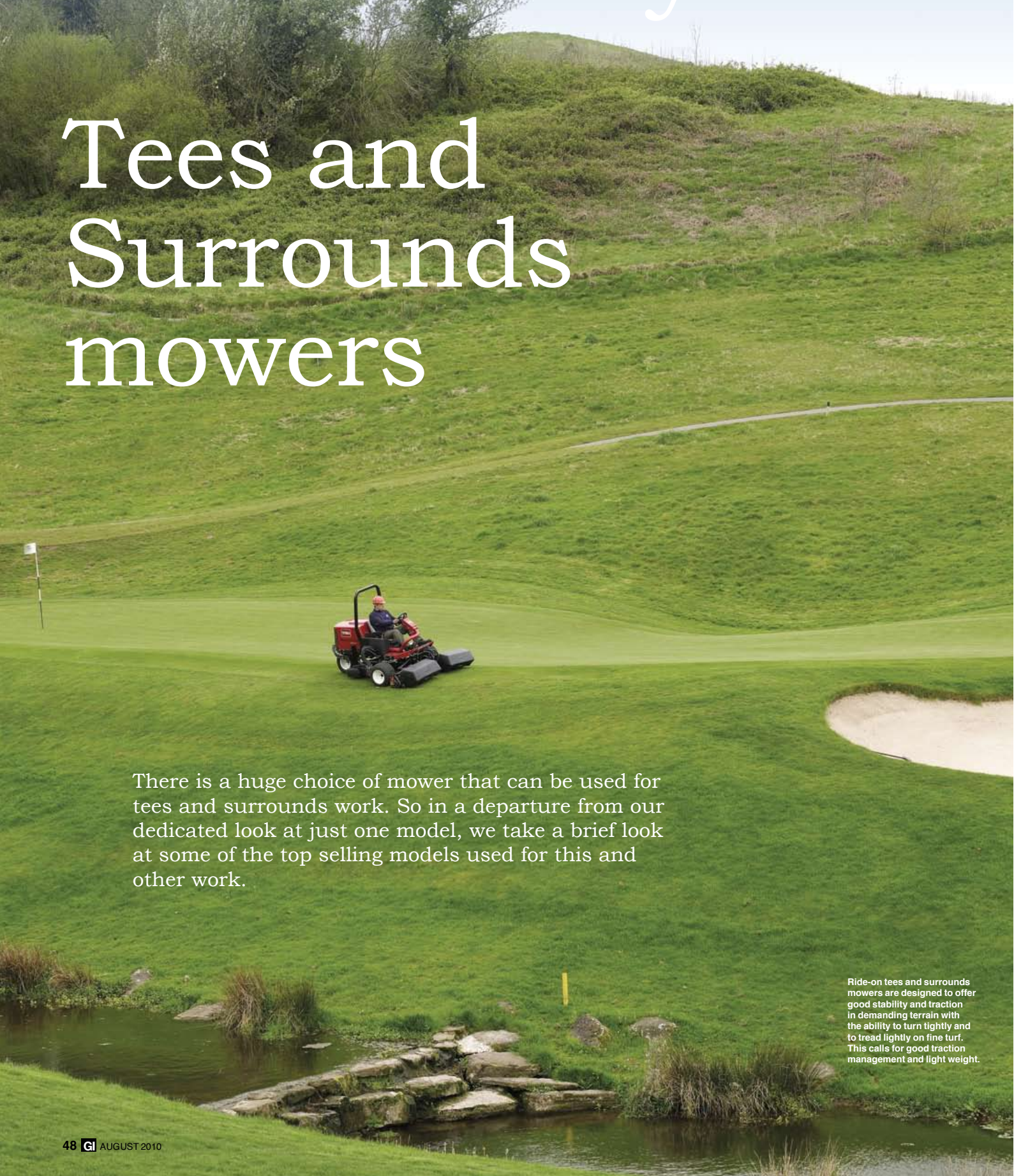
The greenkeeping team, BIGGA members, agree completely. John heads a very loyal group – youngest being Josh Bevan, 19, who is



James de Havilland turns his attention to the
tees and surrounds mower...

The anatomy of...

Tees and Surrounds mowers



There is a huge choice of mower that can be used for
tees and surrounds work. So in a departure from our
dedicated look at just one model, we take a brief look
at some of the top selling models used for this and
other work.

Ride-on tees and surrounds
mowers are designed to offer
good stability and traction
in demanding terrain with
the ability to turn tightly and
to tread lightly on fine turf.
This calls for good traction
management and light weight.

Step-by-step Analysis...

Tees and Surrounds Mowers



The Jacobsen rotary deck AR3 and cylinder TR3 utilise the same three-wheel hydrostatic three-wheel tractor unit.



An interesting point is that the cylinder cutting units of these mowers are increasingly designed to not just offer an improved finish but to also be easier to set up and maintain. Where the clippings are not being boxed off, the ability to reduce clumping has also been improved as the cutting units evolve.

To suggest these models are the only ride-on models to consider for tees and surrounds work is of course not the point. There are a whole host of mowers that can, and do, offer the required combination of abilities to do a great job. These models, however, are among the most popular when it comes to new sales. The biggest surprise is that despite their similarities they all have their own points of difference.

Jacobsen AR3 / TR3 – choice of rotary or cylinder units

The Jacobsen AR3 and TR3 family of tees and surrounds mowers provide greenkeepers with a choice of either rotary decks or cutting cylinders for maintaining tees, approaches and bunker surrounds.

The 1.83m working width AR3 has three articulated rotary decks with Jacobsen's TrimTek system which is claimed to keep the clippings suspended for longer to help provide a finer mulched finish, particularly when using a high lift blade. The latter blade type suits heavier swards. The rotary decks can convert to rear discharge for longer grass mowing, increasing the versatility of the mower.

The front units of the AR3 are offset to the left by 175 mm. This is to make it easier to work close to an edge such as presented by a bunker. Power comes from a 32 hp turbo-charged Kubota diesel engine, the

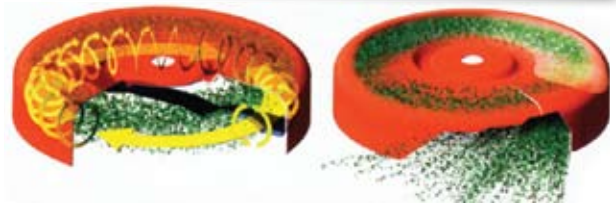
hydrostatic transmission delivering power to all three wheels. A design feature is electro-hydraulic weight transfer that is aimed at improving traction is difficult terrain.

The Jacobsen TR3 utilises the same tractor unit as the AR3 and is offered with a choice of with a choice of 5, 7 or 11 blade cutting cylinders. Offering the same 1.83 cut width as the AR3, the TR3 also features the same offset to provide an overhang for trimming bunker edges. The units can be switched between front or rear discharge by adjusting the concaves that direct the flow of the clippings. A popular feature is the unit's rear roller brushes. These help improve the finish, particularly in damp conditions.

"Our approaches and semi-rough need to be presented in pristine condition", says Avon Bridges, head greenkeeper at Luton Hoo Golf & Spa. "We use an AR3. Although a rotary mower, the fully floating decks have a rear roller so they can add a striped definition to the finely shaped contours of these areas. The seating position on the AR3 is excellent as it allows good visibility of the front decks and the traction control is very good. For the tees and surrounds we wanted a cylinder mower that was capable of tight turns without marking. The TR3 is superb and we have purchased two. The added bonus is that they use the same tractor unit as the AR3, so that helps keep spares to a minimum."

John Deere 2653B – durable performer with quality cut

The John Deere 2653B three-wheel drive triplex mower is designed to cope with more difficult areas of grass on golf courses and other amenity turf areas, including slopes and rough terrain. It can be used equally well on golf courses for tees,



The Jacobsen TrimTek decks suspend the clippings to produce a finer mulch which is claimed to give an improved finish. The decks can also be opened up, the opening allowing a three-tiered discharge that is designed to promote an even dispersal of clippings.



Although John Deere offer a wide range of alternatives to its 2653B, it is this model that is its biggest seller for tees and surrounds work

surrounds and fairways leading up to the greens, or for cricket outfields and other sports turf areas.

The hydraulically driven QA7 quick adjust 7 inch cutting units can operate in fixed or float settings as necessary, the front rollers coming with a choice of a smooth or grooved finish. Optional equipment includes a smooth or grooved roller scraper and grass boxes.

A choice of five- or eight-blade cylinders, each with a choice of 66 or 76cm (26 or 30in) wide cut are available with micro-lap backlapping is standard. Mowing height can be adjusted in 3mm steps, from 9.5 to 76mm, and overall cutting width is 1.8m (72in).

Power comes from a 20hp, three-cylinder diesel with a traction system that is designed to offer good stability on wet or hilly terrain provided by a hydrostatic system that sends oil flow away from any tyre that slips and directs it to the tyres with more grip. This allows the

mower to maintain good traction in demanding conditions.

Fairway tender conditioner, or 'recycler', and rear brushes can now also be fitted to 26 in width cutting units. The key advantage is that this offers a much reduced need to box of grass when mowing tees. This can save time and costs.

Toro Reelmaster 3100-D SERIES – now with DPA units

Toro Reelmaster 3100-D trim and surround mowers are designed to be versatile and manoeuvrable, the 3100-D Sidewinder version offering the ability to offset the triple cutting units 610mm to the left or right. The Sidewinder option is well worth looking into for mowing close to vulnerable bunker edges or when mowing under overhanging shrubbery.

More recently, Toro has fitted Dual Precision Adjustment, DPA, cutting units to the 3100 series.

This makes setting the cylinder to bottom blade clearance easier, with the claim it makes it more straightforward maintain a consistent quality of cut. DPA units are designed to hold a sharp edge for longer too.

Part of the DPA system is the use of a honeycomb die-cast aluminium frame. According to Toro the cast frame is less liable to distort in service, with strength up by 30% with much improved



Where the Sidewinder option is specified, all three cutting units can be offset to work 610mm to the left or right. This allows mowing close to vulnerable bunker edges or to be used to alter wheelings around surrounds.

rigidity when compared to fabricated designs. The bottom blade can be quickly removed, replaced and reset with the claim that this speeds.

Apart from its more obvious advantages, the Sidewinder gives operators the ability to shift all three units left or right on-the-move. This can be used to vary the position of the tyre tracks, a useful feature when working in a fixed mowing pattern across a tee. Toro suggest its Sidewinder system should not be compared to competitive designs that only shift the two outer units, the central unit remaining.

Power comes from a three-cylinder 21.5hp Kubota diesel with operating width choices of 1.8m to 2.16m. Height of cut can be set from 63mm to 510mm in the standard float position or 380mm to 640mm in the fixed position. Verti-cut units and rear roller brushes are further options that are now available since the introduction of DPA units.



The Toro 3100 operator platform is simple and clutter free. Note the simple inclinometer.



The cast alloy Toro DPA units are now well established, their fitting to the 3100 series extending the range of cutting units options available.



The operator platform is simple and service access straightforward.



Although the engine sits ahead of the operator, the view to the front units is good, a feature that is often mentioned by operators. On slopes, the layout of the mower is claimed to aid both stability and traction, reduced wheelslip helping to reduce marking when mowing damp turf.

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INNOVATIVE SNOW CLEARANCE MACHINERY TO BE UNVEILED AT SALTEX

Two developments in snow clearance technology will be unveiled by Wiedenmann UK at Saltex.

Ice Master™ is a clever dual-spreader which is sufficiently compact to negotiate pathways and pedestrian routes.

The innovative box unit can spread metered quantities of salt, sand or grit either via a drop spread or spinner system. With a flick of a switch the operator can change settings without leaving the seat.

Wiedenmann will also launch three styles of super smooth complementary snow blades.

The blades are part of Wiedenmann's growing Snow Master™ range. Each features a built-in shock absorption system.

With the Snow Master blades fitted up front and the Ice Master on the back, together they offer an exceptionally versatile "one-pass" snow clearance regime for schools, colleges, hospitals and estates.



See Wiedenmann UK at stand V26A at SALTEX, Sept 7 – 9, 2010

NEW MACHINE FROM SEPPI PROVES TO BE A STAR



The drive to do more with less and to do it better has never been as keen as it is today. For many years Seppi have made a large range of mulching heads for excavators and in more recent years they have diversified into stump grinders and stone crushers.

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GATOR GETS NEW OLIVE LIVRY

John Deere has introduced a new version of its popular XUV 850D high performance 4x4 utility vehicle, in olive and black livery.

This model is aimed at customers who prefer an alternative to the usual bright green and yellow colour scheme.

This olive and black Gator is fitted as standard with aggressive tread, off-road style tyres, but otherwise is the same specification as the existing XUV model, with a steel tipping cargo box.

The XUV Gator is specifically designed for off-road and rough-terrain performance, and is based

on a hydroformed steel frame for increased durability. It also offers a true four-wheel drive traction system to maintain excellent traction in the toughest ground conditions.

The XUV Gator's 24hp (850cc) liquid-cooled, three-cylinder Yanmar diesel engine is the most powerful and quickest accelerating in its class, with the fastest top speed at 30mph in high range.

Advanced clutching ensures smooth power delivery and engine braking assistance from the dual range, continuously variable transmission.

All round independent

suspension offers improved handling, operator comfort and ride quality, which enables the XUV Gator to follow rough and bumpy terrain with ease.

Additional operator friendly features include a glove box and storage compartment, cup holder, 12V power outlet and integrated 50mm (2in) rear hitch.

Base UK list price of the new John Deere olive and black XUV 850D utility vehicle, which is available in limited numbers this summer, for £11,033 plus VAT.

024 7630 8912
www.johndeere.co.uk

MORE POWER TO YOUR ELMOW!

A battery-electric pedestrian fine-turf mower will be launched by Allett, this month, at SALTEX.

Designed, built and tested at Allett's development and engineering centre in Hixon, Staffordshire, the Allett ELMOW is to be offered in 510mm and 610mm cutting widths to suit the mowing requirements of bowls and golf clubs, turf maintenance contractors and those looking after quality ornamental lawns.

Shown left, handles on top of the slide-in battery pack enable fast, convenient removal and replacement.



0 SALTEX 2010 – Stand A18
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NEW SUPATURF BROCHURE

Vitax Supaturf's brand new brochure is now available with details of their full range of line marking machines, marking paints and accessories.

Fronted by the top selling TXE, recognised as the industry standard, exported worldwide and now with a new, 2.5 litre flush tank that can be either factory fitted or purchased in kit form for simple self-assembly, the brochure also carries details of the no-compromise, high quality TLS marking machine and the latest, top-of-the-range XCEL built as the perfect partner to the highly concentrated Supa Stadia Eco line marking paint.

Other line marking liquids – the full Supa Stadia range, Briteline, developed for use with transfer wheel or box type marking machines such as the Supaturf Briteliner, and the full range of Stadia Colours are joined by Supamark Aerosols.

The new Supaturf brochure is available from Vitax Supaturf representatives or direct from the company

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

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

How to access the BIGGA Training & Development Manual

- 1 Go to the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk
- 2 Click on the Members area, the Jobs page or the Education page and click on the BIGGA Training Manual link.
- 3 Enter your login details and select the BIGGA Training & Development Manual from the left hand menu.
- 4 The Training Manual will load and the user can click on Enter the Site to view a welcome video or can select 1-9 or 10-18 on the top menu bar.
You can progress through the manual hole by hole or go straight to the hole you wish to view. You can also skip to holes 10-18.
- 6 When you select a hole you will be presented with a window that explains what that hole is about. You can then select from the bottom tabs, video or sub-text (downloadable documents and links).
- 7 When clicking on a downloadable document it will automatically open in your default word processor. This can then be amended, updated and saved to your computer's hard disk or printed and filed in your personnel files.



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Section Notes

Please email your notes to
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of the month

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region



Central

The seminar with Stan Zontek and John Kaminski, which had to be cancelled in April due to the volcanic ash, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, September 1 at the training room at Elmwood Golf Course, 7pm.

There will be more details on the website www.biggacentral-section.co.uk. It may seem bizarre to have this in September but the thrust of the presentation will be about winter damage to golf greens and I am sure it will be entertaining as well as informative. All welcome, no charge.

Congratulations to the Section members who did well in the Scottish Championships at Murcar, David Simpson won the Scratch prize with Archie Dunn, Charlie MacDonald, Lewis Birch, Gary Semple, Mike Carson and Elliot Small all picking up prizes of some description, while some of the aforementioned helped the Section win the St Mungo Team Trophy.

Well done to all those Course Managers and staff who hosted Final Qualifying which is an important part of the tournament and the same to Willie Swann, and his team at Lundin Golf Club, who had the World Junior Open on the Tuesday and Wednesday of Open week.

Congratulations also to John Philp and Sandy Reid and the Carnoustie guys for a successful British Seniors Open the week after us and to the Course Managers and their teams at the qualifying venues for that tournament.

Finally good luck to Scott Fenwick and his team at Gleaeagles for the Johnnie Walker Championship at the end of August which should see a thrilling finale to the

race for Ryder Cup places.

We're all dead on our feet here from a very busy Open Championship and we still have the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship and a host of local club tournaments to look forward to. Roll on winter!

Gordon Moir



West

A few problems with the submission dates of my article and holidays have caused an absence with the last two monthly issues and for that I apologise, but here we are at last. The weather has been great to us over the last couple of months and golf seasons are in full swing.

Recently I was informed of some special occasions which are worth a mention as they don't happen too often, Sandy Brawley, Kenny Henderson, both of East Kilbride Golf Club, and Gary Burns, of Lenzie Golf Club, celebrated 25 years of service to their respective clubs, something which should be commended in this present climate. Well done to all and I hope you are around for another 25 years, I might joke but the way pensions are going I don't think I will be too far off the mark.

Another item worth a mention is the recent retirement of Bob Stevenson, of Alex McDougal Mowers, who has decided it's time to put the slippers at the fireside. Bob, who believe it or not is 68 and doesn't look a day over 60, has worked for a few different companies over the years but my fondest memory was when he worked with Toro (Russell's) and asked if he could practice using the new GM machine operation on one of our greens to make sure he didn't make a full of himself when on Demon-

strations. The next thing we new was Bob walking up the fairway to the sheds and no machine in sight. Guess what, he'd toppled it in the bunker and we had to haul him out with no damage to the machine or operator thank goodness. Sorry for mentioning that Bob, but I couldn't resist the temptation. The Section would like to wish you all the best in your retirement and hopefully you can enjoy more time with the family.

Next item, which was a long time ago, being the John Deere demonstration day held on April 20 at Play Golf in East Kilbride. It appears to have been a very good day with a large turn out from all areas of the West of Scotland even if the weather was slightly brisk. A good range of equipment and irrigation products were on show for all to see and then nine holes of golf. Thanks go to Nairn Bown for there usual excellent organisation and the well received coffee with filled rolls.

Unfortunately I cannot report on the Loch Lomond day regarding wetting agents as the main speaker could not travel due to the volcanic ash. Maybe next time.

The outing held at Lanark on April 29 once again had a good attendance -37 people came to sample a beautiful course in excellent condition for the time of year considering the severe weather we've experienced. Jim Lyon and his staff are to be congratulated for all their superb work in preparing the course, may I also thank the Secretary, Captain and members for allowing us the courtesy of the course for the day.

The eventual winners were: 1st Class. 1. A. Peace; 2. A. Reid; 3. I. Young; 2nd Class. 1. C. Carvel; B. Logue; 3. G. Jarvis; 3rd Class. 1. B. Ramsey; 2. C. Keirney; 3. M. Maxton. Scratch winner was D. MacIntosh with 71. Trade prize. D. Duthie; Visitor. R. Brennan. Apprentice. B. Summerville.

Could I thank all who attended

the day for their valued support to the Section.

Sadly, I report the death of Jim McCormack, of Cawder Golf Club, who attended many an outing over the years but who passed away last month after a long fight against cancer. Jim served under Alistair Connell for numerous years and then laterally, Neil McLennan, and was seen picking up a few prizes occasionally. Our thoughts are with his family at this time.

Last thing to mention was the match against the Secretaries held on May 3 over Montrose Golf Club, which is a fine example of a links course and was a joy to play. Peter Boyd had to call upon two of the staff at the last minute to make up the numbers, but it proved a good move as the overall team result was a victory for the good guys. In the history of the event which has been running now for 34 years the secretaries have only won on three occasions with one draw, so I'm glad the good record was upheld.

Thanks to all concerned, especially the members of Montrose for allowing us to play your beautiful layout.

Please remember the Autumn outing at Helensburgh on September 2, which should be in good condition but I hope the greens won't be too fast this time as the last time I played I putted off the 1st green, I look forward to seeing how things have matured.

Once again gentlemen I ask if there is any information people wish to pass on to get in touch by e-mail, stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com or mobile 07790823914, or land line 0141-942-5554, so far only a couple of items have come forward.

Stuart Taylor
Glasgow Golf Club
Northern Region

Around The Green



North

Hello everyone hope you are all well and coping with the heatwave. The Section would like to thank all the staff and committee at Scarborough North Cliff Golf Club for hosting our Presidents Golf Day, which was kindly sponsored by Bob Wilde Grass Machinery. We had a good turnout and it was nice to see some new faces. The results are as follows, Div 1. 1. Nigel Coultish (with an impressive 42 pts); 2. Dave Collins; 3. Stuart Mason. Div 2. 1 Duncan Campbell 2 Rob Walker 3 Steve Trowsdale. Div 3 1 Joe Baxter 2 Pete Colley 3 Dave Featherstone. Nearest the pin on the 7th Dave Featherstone (with a good 9in) on the 15th Yours Truly. The trade prize went to Mel Guy. The President's Prize went to Gorden Street.

The Section would like to congratulate Scott Baxter, of Bingley St Ives GC, who got married on July 10, Hope you have many happy years of married life. Our Invitation Day takes place on Aug 25. at Harrogate GC. Anyone wishing to take part, please get in touch to book a place. First tee time is 9:30.

Any news or gossip please get in touch as usual, Frank Stewart 72 West Park Grove, Roundhay, LS8 2DY, tel. 07947401278, E mail frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk. Frank Stewart



North East

Here we go again its that time of the month for writing Section news, i always find that the next couple of months are the hardest times to find news as if its not been hard enough up to now.

Recently when I was travelling to work as I passed Prudhoe Golf Course I noticed a sign and thought - Haven't seen that up before must be warning people of something. Then I started thinking have you noticed how many notices golf courses have on them. "Buggies this way", "Buggies to the right"... or the left. "Steep slope" "Look left",

"Look right", whose got the right of way. I'm just wondering what's coming next. Anyway that's enough moaning on.

My next piece of news is something I find quite disturbing. I never thought I would ever hear of redundancies in our Section let alone in our profession, which was always regarded as a safe zone of employment in the past. Not now, with the current recession going on, we have had two members who have lost their jobs and I'm sure they won't be the last before we see some light at the end of the tunnel.

As you all know Slaley Hall has recently had the PGA Seniors Championship. Having watched it on Sky Sports 3 I reckon Steve Cram, Course Manager, can be congratulated on his presentation of the course. As you could see it was immaculate, even the pros were paying compliments. Well done Steve and your staff, all those extra hours must have been worthwhile.

Finally, more news about Close House. They should be in their new sheds by the time you read this as there must have been a bit of delay as I thought it was the end of May when that was happening and it's good to see that they are continuing to follow the same policy of tarmac-ing all the buggie paths on the new course. That must be great, pity other courses don't follow there idea, just think how much time could be saved. Yes, tarmac is expensive but its got to pay for itself in the long run, well that's all I can think of for this month.

Jimmy Richardson



North Wales

First of all, I must apologise for not putting a column in for last month but I sat in front of the computer and realised I had no really relevant news to pass on, so I thought "stuff it" and switched the thing back off again. But this month, Halleluia, I do have some news and views.

It only seems to be a few months ago I was writing in this column that the UK from Land's End to John O'Groats was white with snow and freezing conditions, now I'm writing that the whole country is baked to arid conditions with the driest first six

months of the year since 1929! What a year we're having so far! I wonder what's next. Surprise? Hurricanes, perhaps?

On June 9 the annual North Wales verses North West Match took at Carden Park on the Cheshire course and in a nail biting contest, North Wales took the honour beating the North West 3 1/2 to 2 1/2. Well done lads on retaining the trophy also a thank you has to go to the staff at Carden Park, the course was as exemplary as ever.

Upcoming events are, on September 22, North Wales hosts the Northern Region Golf Day this year it is being held at my home course at The Vale of Llangollen. I just hope we can carry on the excellent example that all the other courses in our Region show when holding BIGGA events also on September 30, the autumn tournament and AGM will take place at Mold Golf Club, so I hope you know where your entry forms are.

A quick reminder that our Facebook group is still happily ticking along if you haven't joined yet just search "North Wales BIGGA" and you will find us.

I think that's about it for this month so...

All the best until next month

Pete Maybury petemayb66@aol.com 07756001187



Sheffield

Hope everyone is doing well and are looking after themselves. Hopefully everyone has finally got over the disappointment of another English flop. I'm the first to admit that i did get a little carried away with the hype that surrounds our national team as you all probably noticed in my last notes.

Our Annual golf match was held at Hillsborough GC, firstly I must thank everyone at Hillsborough for once again allowing us to use their course. A special thanks must go to Ian and his staff for presenting a course that was a credit to all of them. A thank you must also go to Russ, and Mansfield Sand, for sponsoring the day once again and as said before it would be impossible to organise these days without their support.

The results on the day are as

follows: 1. M. Holden Net 75 Gross 69 Matt won both the Net and Gross Trophies. Well done Matt; 2. I. Whitehead; 3. D. Brownlow; Trade T. Dobson; Nearest the Pin D. Brownlow.

Congratulations to all our winners and thanks to everyone who played and I'm sure you all had a fantastic day once again. It was also very nice to see some new faces may it long continue.

Sales of our new polo shirts are going well and if anyone is interested please contact me to order a shirt. Shirts are available in many sizes and are available for £10. Thanks once again to Golf and Turf Machinery for helping us produce these shirts.

That's all for this month

J. Stevens

07738719614

jammy_jams20@hotmail.com

Midland Region



Midland

Well here we are again, another month's edition of the Section's news and events. This month - I know the month is wrong, - but Nigel Tyler will be competing in the Isle of Man TT on his new Honda Gold Wing, which has heated seats and handle bars, air bags for his lady's safety. Strikes me that Nigel has moved from the speed demon to the ever cautious man with sensible shoes. Age does that old bean.

Well as I'm sure you can tell there is very little to report this month. I would really appreciate any information that you would like to see in our notes. Without your input folks, it is almost impossible to write such. PLEASE, I EMPLOY YOU, AND INDEED PLEAD that you advise me of the general achievements and wonderful happenings of you and yours. Contact me on: sean.mcdade@homecall.co.uk or on: 07908 421 015.

Now we must thank this month's very kind sponsors of this month's calendar page: our very kind supporter's of the Section T.H. White Grasscare. Please consider them for your machinery requirements of Jacobsen and Ransomes.

Please visit their website:

www.thwhitegrasscare.co.uk

I would like to remind all Midland Section members that contributions for photographs for the 2011 calendar are gratefully received. Please send to Richard Beacham at rich71@btconnect.com or preferably send a CD to me at Wrekin GC, Golf Links Lane, Wellington, Telford, TF6 5BX. A bottle of champagne will be awarded to the member who sends in the best picture that is published on the calendar 2011.

And just to finish, Phil Nixon you could have told me that you and the Mrs had had a little one. Details please chap, but congratulations old pal to you three and welcome to the little one. Beats a four wood of the 13th in work boots, ay mate.

Sean McDade



East Midlands

Hello all, firstly I would like to make two apologies, the first is for the Section not getting its usual airing in the last two issues, we have addressed this and it looks like I shall be trying to entertain you all from now on! The second apology is to anyone that has been trying to contact our Secretary, Andy de Wet. He has now moved and is living in the twilight zone! Seriously though he is now settled in to his new mansion in Coalville, and he can be contacted in the usual manner.

With us not posting any news for two months we ought to catch up on the results from our Spring Tournament and first part of the national championship qualifier, this was held at Erewash Valley GC with an excellent 37 people turning out in honour of the 43 years of service and impending retirement of course manager, Graham Arnold, the course was in excellent condition and the weather held fair.

In Division 1, the victory went too; D. Spencer, 38pts, closely followed by N. Colley and reigning National Champ Derek McJanet. In Division 2 D. Bull rolled out winner, followed by Adrian Henshaw and Yours Truly, the trade prize went to Kevin Kinser. Finally a big thank you to our main sponsors, Aitkens, Mansfield Sand, Tacit and Richard

Japes at Sports Metals UK.

Continuing the golf theme, the Headland Pairs competition is progressing well, the first deadline for bonus points has now passed, and many groups have only a few games to play. So well done to all of you for sorting out fixtures etc, it has been requested that next year we introduce a mid season transfer window so that those that want to, can sack or draft in new partners! As table whipping boys myself and Greg Skinner, at Forest Hill, may well be sacking each other!

By time of reading this we would have held our summer tournament and BBQ at Rothley, where our representatives for the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse, will be decided, I will update you with the results in the next issue.

As always your committee works very hard to run the golf events, days out and education, we are hoping to soon be in a position to offer Excavator training, and the Autumn Educational is to be held at Forest Hill GC on November 18 so watch this space and the Section pages on the website for details on both.

Until next time I will leave you with this thought, During our last section meeting, one of the committee (not mentioning any names) admitted to relaxing in a very FREE AND EASY way when his house was empty! What could this involve doing? Answers on a postcard please, to the Section committee, care of Carl Chamberlain.

Regards to all.

Pete Smith



East of England

Hello all.

So another day goes by without any sign of rain here on the east coast! That's about 5mm in five weeks now as I write at the beginning of July. I guess finally we can say we are having our first "proper" summer for a while which is good to keep the golfers coming in but leaves us with a different set of headaches! However by the time you read this the "sting in the tail" will probably have come as always and we will be sat under none stop rainfall and the brown

fairways, dormant grass and dry patch concerns will be a thing of the past.

Also by the time you read this, Gary Salisbury and Steve Hopkins will be recovering from representing our Section on the BIGGASupportTeamattheOpen at St Andrews. Congratulations to the pair for being selected, it is an incredible honour to be able to serve professionals at the highest level and made even more special by being at the Home of Golf. The Support team can only help raise the profile of greenkeepers throughout the game with recognition from professionals, fans at the course and TV exposure at a premium. As a veteran of the last Support team at St Andrews I can say that it is incredibly hard work and long hours, however, it is also very enjoyable and rewarding at the same time. You will probably be like me, willing every player to hit the bunker on 17 so you can say you raked the "Road Hole" bunker!

Our first golf day of the season was on May 27 at Newark Golf Club. The day was sponsored by Toro and Chris Sellars Groundcare. Many thanks to Nigel and Chris for their continued support. The golf course course was again excellently presented by Graeme Macdonald and his team and once again the hospitality of the golf club was top class.

The results from the day were as follows: 1. N. Ashman (who I am sure wore his Toro jacket with pride when he went back to work for John Deere the next day!) 2. G. Macdonald; 3. I. Collett, Rigby Taylor. Longest Drive. C. Chamberlain (Rigby Taylor). Nearest the Pin. C. Shelton, Burghley Park,

Roll on the Autumn!

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

South East Region



London

Hello to all,

Firstly I would like to apologise for not getting anything in the last month's addition of Around the Green. Things have been fairly quiet on the London front and I missed the deadline for the

article. Remember if you have any news please let me know.

The season is here at last and finally it's starting to grow! The course is taking shape nicely. After speaking to a lot of greenkeepers lately, everyone has been saying the same thing 'What a tough winter followed by a hard spring'.

I do believe good communication is required during these times of trouble. Keeping the golfers informed of the problems we are facing and how we plan to get over it. Sometimes this just isn't enough. We at Muswell Hill have built a new chipping green this winter and it's been a real hard slog getting that into shape from seed. One member asked me the other day 'When will it be open and like the other greens'. So I explained to him he must have missed my noticeboard, E-mails, greens forum, posters in the clubhouse and web page, that we were having a tough year with the weather etc. 'It will be open soon and will take time to be like the greens' (115 years old). His answer to me was 'my lawn is growing, I cut it last week'. I answered him with one word-BRILLIANT.

I also got the chance to pop in and have a look at Wentworth for the BMW this year I must say the course looked superb and the green staff of Wentworth did not get the credit they deserved because of all the talk about the design. The staff did not have a say in the design but they had a say in the course presentation and that was excellent. I know some will say they have the money but you still have to produce. They had less than a year from turf to tournament and they delivered a top course.

I then went from Wentworth to Walton Heath Golf Club for the US Open qualifying. Again the course was in great condition. The greens looked great and were a bit quick as I watched group after group thunder putts by the hole. Both the courses were cut and blown, wall to wall by 7.30am that is impressive.

The London Section National qualifiers sponsored by A.T. Olivers was held at Ealing Golf Club on May 20. We had a great day with over 50 attending. The weather was good but the course was great. You knew Greg Evans, was going to make an effort especially after all the debates and magazine articles. The greens putted quickly, they were firm, true and

Around The Green

the course presentation was very impressive. Oliver's had 'Hole in One' prizes including Workman's and holidays. Unfortunately no one managed to hole a shot this time!

The prize winners on the day were: 1. Dave Jones, the Deputy Head from Finchley GC, who shot an impressive 37 pts off one! David won many prizes including the Oliver's Trophy. 2. Dylan Rennick, from Northwood G.C, with 35 pts, who just beat 3. Ian Cresswick, from Stanmore GC, on countback. Great golf played by all of them and now the three of them will go onto play at The Berkshire in the National final. The winner of Best Trade went to Simon Banks who shot 35 points, which explains why he never answers his phone because he must be playing golf! The Longest Drive was won by David Badham and the two Nearest the Pins, one sponsored by Greg Evans, were won by Jon Selwood and Mick Fance, I would like to thank Greg and his team for a great day and everyone at Ealing Golf Club. Everyone really enjoyed the day.

Here is a reminder of fixtures coming up in the Section. 2010 Fixtures. The Summer Tournament will be held on July 21 at Muswell Hill Golf Club. We will have a BBQ after the golf with golf dress welcome all day, so no need for your shirt and tie. Also the club's Brewery is going to be supplying a bar on the course, plus Sherriff Amenity will also be there with another halfway hut. Form should be in the post when you read this!

The Turkey Trot will be held at Wyke Green Golf Club on December 2. This will be another great day in the calendar.

Please if you have any questions or suggestions on the Section please contact us.

You can call or use the web site www.biggalondonsection.co.uk.

Matt Plested
07818410333



Surrey

The sun is up, the sky is blue
There's not a cloud to spoil the view

Some words from the Buddy Holly hit song of the 60s and it cleverly contained the long-range forecast for June and the start of

July in the south-east of England in 2010. But do not concern yourselves, oh noble Surrey greenkeepers, for as soon as the schools break up at the end of the month the torrents of rain will fall and England will once again be a green and pleasant land.

Tuesday June 15, the date of the Cresta Cup at Terry Edwards' Hoebridge GC. A beautiful day with beautiful people....and Jim Russell. Terry deserves all credit for the excellent condition of the course which has to cope with some 60,000 rounds per year. Andy Gatland, Betchworth Park GC, coped well and won the aforementioned cup with 39 pts. Gary Rowe, Banstead Downs GC, with 36 pts pushed Ron Christie, our very own highly efficient Secretary, 34 pts, into third place. Jason Hunt, fresh from his honeymoon, was Nearest the Pin and Mark Harvey, fresh from the sleeping habits of his new baby, drove the longest. The 'Toro' footballs found new homes with Andy Foulds and Terry Edwards.

My partnership in the Surrey Bowl this year was eagerly accepted by John Ross and as our first round opponents were Terry Edwards and Jim Russell, we played both 'Cresta Cup' and 'Surrey Bowl' in one match. John and I lost but only after having an enjoyable round of golf and watching John pursue his unusual and absorbing interest in sand, by visiting most of the bunkers on the way.

Congratulations to Ian Morrison who has been appointed Course Manager at the Berkshire GC and the best of luck to his successor, whoever that may be at West Hill GC. Congratulations also to Roger Tydeman who will be leaving Croham Hurst GC to fill his new post as Course Manager, at Dulwich and Sydenham Hill GC, later this year.

Amusing stories and observations will always be welcome but not necessarily printed.

Brian Willmott



Essex

Channels Golf Club was the venue for our Summer Trophy. At the end of June around 63 lined up to tee off. We were greeted to a cloudless sky, hot temperatures

and hardly any wind to speak of. This year the committee wanted to do something special for our summer event, so we asked Channels if they would be prepared to put on a Bar-B-Q for us, the answer was simple a straight. Yes. What a day it was. We had a fine course set out to test the best and an halfway house courtesy of Collier Turf Care, one of our main sponsors (for which we were most grateful due to the high temperatures).

The format for the day was a Blind Stableford with cards drawn after play had finished, plus an overall winner and nearest the pins on two holes. Winners on the day are as follows:-

Overall and a place in the National Tournament.

Ben Scrivener 40pts

Winners of the Blind Pairs and places in the National Tournament.

Dougie Fernie & Keith Chinnery, 77pts; 2. Steve Crosdale & Mark Keysell, 76 pts; 3. Richard Stubbings & Jamie Hughes, 75pts. Sponsors & Trade. 1. Mark Keysell, 37pts; 2. Simon Banks, 36 pts; 3. Neil Peachey 32pts. Guests. 1. Paul Cooper 44pts, 2. Richard Stubbings 41pts; 3. Oliver Stubbings, 40 pts. Nearest the Pin on the 8th. Mick Bartlett. Nearest the Pin on the 17th. Benji Stubbings

After the golf we all gathered on the terrace by the clubhouse to enjoy a real feast. A Bar-B-Q to die for. More than enough food to go round, and that was followed by a desert of Lemon Meringue and cream or Apple and Blackberry pie with custard. Wow, polished with a few beers and every one went home happy. Our thanks go to Richard Stubbings and his family (the owners of Channels). To Ray Clark and his team for the course presentation and to the club captain Paul Cooper for presenting the prizes. A full appraisal of the results are on our website, along with a few photos of the day. Our thanks also goes to all those members that turned up to support this event it was the best supported one for many a year, long may it last.

Next stop is Boyce Hill Golf Club on August 14, so if you're quick you might just make the closing date.

The first Wednesday of July saw 15 or so of our members make an educational trip down to Ealing Golf Club. There they meet up with Greg Evans their

Course Manager and heard all about how he manages to maintain his greens at the height of 2mm. A twenty-minute rundown of how he manages his turf was followed by a look around the course. Spoon-feeding seems to be the method Greg has adopted to maintain those low heights of cut, plus lots of top dressing. I understand he also maintains his Tee's at a height of cut of 6mm, treating them in a very similar way to his greens. Great interest was taken in his maintenance facilities; I understand they were very impressive. Our thanks to Greg for his time and the presentation he gave us.

I will have a full update of the results of the Captain's and Greenkeepers match at Romford Golf Club and the Tuckwell Golf Team Challenge at Bentley Golf Club next month, both of this matches were in the middle of July.

If you have any news for insertion in this section of the GI magazine or on our website www.essexbigga.co.uk then please contact me at essexbigga@talk-talk.net or on 07764-862.337.

Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer

South West and South Wales



South Coast

Hopefully by the time you read this we will have had substantial amounts of rain. Here at Barton the course looks like toast with green islands, water totals have already exceeded last year with a couple of months to go yet!

The annual match against the Wessex Secretaries took place at Highcliffe Golf Club in late June. The event sponsored by Course Care is in its 13th year and has become a coveted trophy.

I can proudly say that the greenkeepers were worthy winners 3 & 1/2 to 1 & 1/2 making us 7 wins to 6 since the challenge began. Your's truly being the only one to lose his match, no wonder Kev stripped me of the captaincy! Many thanks to Course Care as always a fantastic day, long may it continue.

As I write this Germany have just put 4 past Argentina, does

that make it feel slightly better about our result? Being patriotic and all that I didn't dare admit it before but I had 20 quid on the Germans at very favourable odds well before the first ball was kicked.

Enough about football, so far this year we are having a true summer here on the coast, of course that brings its own problems with water or lack of it. The wind (not personally) has been my problem and never getting the water on the areas that require it most. Hose pipes, wetter pellets never mind the applications of wetting agent all seem normal this year, still, it won't last forever! I am not sure why but the club have just told me to order a verti-drain big enough for fairways, hopefully its made my local rep happy.

The results of the invitation at Stoneham will be in next months report. The autumn tournament is at Broadstone G.C. in October, remember this is our AGM and you can have your say. More details will follow nearer the time.

That is it for this month, I might just sneak down the beach and watch - the boats of course!

Tony Gadd



South West

Firstly, I have to give a huge thanks to Jamie Acton for filling me in last month. I hope you enjoyed his article, as Jamie mentioned that was purely a guest slot and I promise you I won't leave you all so easily next time....But honestly, cheers Jamie. Top stuff!

So let's talk about the important item first...My holiday. Last month saw me and a few friends heading to Las Vegas, and I have to say it was BRILLIANT. We spent nearly 20 hours travelling to get there, but I wouldn't take a minute of them back, it just all adds to the adventure we took ourselves on.

If you've been before, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about, If you've never been to Vegas, close your eyes and picture the bright lights, oversized spectacular hotels, casinos with endless slot machines and enough blackjack tables to keep entertained for a week (if you last

that long). During the day the temperature hit three figures, I wish I could have experienced this, but let me tell you, Vegas gets just as hot during the night.....that's enough though, people, What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas!

June 23 the Section took a trip day to the stunning part of the country, that being Dorset. During our visit to Dorset we stopped off and visited Dave Everett and his team at Lyme Regis. Lyme Regis was the hosts for our summer event this year, and the day went fantastically well! I actually have to say that this could have been one of my most enjoyable Section events I've attended. The sun was shining on a fabulous looking golf course. It was clear to see that Dave and his team do a brilliant job maintaining the golf course and spend they must spend a great amount of time to detail. The greens were a real pleasure to play on, extremely well paced and smoothest ball roll you could imagine. I have to mention the 16th hole at Lyme Regis, what a hole." *Talk about living life on the edge.*" This really was stunning, the views from this hole were second to none. With it running alongside the cliff's edge, I remember standing on the tee thinking to myself, don't go left, just don't go left. You can see where the cliff has been eating its way into the golf course, having moved its original tee already and a new green waiting for the old to disappear into the sea. Pure breathtaking!

The winners from Lyme Regis were as follows, Nearest the Pin - 8th Stuart Broom & 13th Adam Matthews. Overall winners - 3. Nigel Gridley, Nett 73; 2. Tim Morgan, Nett 73 (count back); 1. John Keenaghan, Nett 69. John will now go on to The Berkshire to represent the South West Section in BIGGA's National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse. Good luck, John!

The day was also extra special as we watched our England win its only game of this year's World Cup, I said we would win it four years ago, I also said we would win this year, however in four years' time, in Brazil, it will be coming home....you heard it here first! (I really do doubt your sanity, Ed)

For those of you that are a fan of Facebook, we now have a South West Section page. Like this article, it's yours. We hope to

Assistant Profile

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

Basketball loving, Steve, likes to search for the hero inside himself, but in doing so nearly collided with the invisible man.



Name: Steve Hopkins

Age: 50

Club: RAF Cottesmore

Position: First Assistant

1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

Five years

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

Working outdoors

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

What I was doing originally - in the Royal Air Force

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

Fairway mowing. Looking back at your fine work is satisfying.

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

Raking Bunkers - Tedious!

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

For our club? New machinery

7. Hobbies?

Basketball and picture framing

8. Favourite Band?

M People

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

Newcastle Eagles Basketball Club

10. What is your claim to fame?

Almost knocked over David MacCallum (Man from Uncle and the Invisible Man) in Macy's in New York

To feature as an Assistant Profile, simply email Scott: scott@bigga.co.uk and he will send you a questionnaire!

Around The Green

use the Facebook page to reach a few more of our members and some of the older ones also. The page will be packed with information regarding upcoming events and photos from past events. We will also include our patronage partners within this page also (a huge thank you to each of them for their support though out the year). Enjoy this luxury that is available for you. I hope that you received my e-mail with the Facebook link attached, if not, that's because I haven't got your e-mail address, apologies for that! If I could ask you to e-mail me, and I will forward the link back to you, and save your e-mail address for the future!

Guys, as always, feel free to contact me regarding any stories or thoughts you want to see in here, I'm sure some of you lead a more interesting life than I do. Take care people and I look forward to seeing you all very soon.

Adam Matthews

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk



South Wales

Hello Everyone! Sut Mae?

Firstly, let me say that it gave me no pleasure at all to be proved right about England's performance during the World Cup.

Wow! It's hard trying to type with my fingers crossed!

At least it meant that not many people outside of this side of the Severn bridge noticed that that Wales were mulled twice by the All Blacks and were quite pleased to have only lost by 19 points in the second game. Never mind. Now both the English football and the Welsh rugby teams can are home and resume being big fish in little ponds. Anyway, back to the section!

A belated congratulations go out to Richard Patterson of Cradoc Golf Club, who made an honest woman out of his partner, Mo Gibbons on 26th June. The ceremony was held at Hay on Wye and for their honeymoon the couple fancied seeing some wildlife close up (no, they didn't go to Merthyr Tydfil town centre on a Saturday night!) and so they spent two weeks in Kenya. Good luck to you both for the future.

The annual South West V South Wales Golf match will again be held at Ashburnham

GC on Friday 27th of August. To be fair, Ashburnham is many things, but it's closeness to the Severn Bridge is not one of them! I think a night out has been planned! Look out Burry Port! This event, which may or may not include the night out, has been sponsored by Inscapes, so thanks in advance to them.

The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Qualifier will be held at Neath GC on Friday, 20th of August. The format will be Greensomes, with the best four pairs qualifying for the final which will be held at Trefloyne GC in October. Good luck also to Peter Griffiths, head of car testing at Rigby Taylor, who is getting married on Friday 13th. This is assuming that he survives his stag night in Llandovery the week before! All the best Peter!

Well done to Ian Kinley and his team of Royal Porthcawl GC for great success that was the Ryder Cup Wales Seniors Open, and also to Huw Morgan and his staff at Ashburnham for the great condition of their course for the Welsh PGA Open. The home internationals now Huw! Good luck to you and your team for that.

That's it for now. The present Mrs Richards and myself have now moved and can no longer be described as Rhondda people as we have moved to the tiny Welsh hamlet of Cwmbach in the Cynon valley. Our new home has gas central heating, so no more sending the wife up to the coal shed in the snow. I shall really miss that!

Have a great August!
Ceri Richards
07732503855



Devon and Cornwall

Stuart Ashworth BSc, Indigrow's Technical Director, agronomist and South West sales rep sadly passed away on June 8 this year. Pete Gross, Head Greenkeeper at Ashbury Golf Hotel, and very close friend of Stuart, has kindly put together the following tribute.

"I think it would be fair to say that Stueie wholeheartedly agreed with Mark Twain when he said "Golf is a good walk spoiled" yet he would go on to be a wonderful support for so many greenkeepers, not just in the south west but across Europe. He showed

a huge empathy for turf from a young age and in particular soil - gaining a degree in soil science in 1986. During the next 10 years Stueie gained experience working as an Estates Manager in Northumberland, before moving on to Sunderland County Council and Rickerby Horticulture.

In 1993, he showed his stubborn and persistent nature in pursuit of his sweetheart, badgering a girl from a holiday romance in Exmouth to continue their relationship. Audrey was to become his wife in August 1996.

At this time Stueie would join Indigrow as Technical Sales Manager and move south to Exmouth. He proceeded to become the 'greenkeepers' friend' with his own unique style that was always based on sound scientific values. He understood the importance of quick and accurate support, including identification of a wide range of greenkeeping problems and was always willing to put himself out to aid an anxious greenkeeper!

Stueie lived life to the full and indulged in a diverse array of pastimes from snowboarding to fishing, the cello and various other musical instruments to scuba-diving and boating to cricket. And he was never adverse to a glass or two of wine or real ale!

In truth, Stueie Ashworth was truly one of life's good guys who will be sorely missed by all in the industry and indeed anyone that was fortunate enough to have crossed his path.

Stuart was born July 14, 1967 in Rochdale and passed away peacefully in Exeter after a 7 ½ year battle with cancer that he fought with strength, courage and dignity on the June 8 2010 aged 42.

As Jack Nicklaus once said "Resolve never to quit, never to give up, no matter what the situation" - this was one golfer Stuart obviously listened to! He is survived by his wife Audrey and two beautiful daughters, Chlo-Jo (13) and Weebles (9). Gone but never forgotten!!"

This years Devon v Cornwall Golf match and Summer meeting was held at St Mellion International Resort on Tuesday, June 15. 70 members and guests enjoyed what was a truly memorable day. Those who played golf in the match were treated to 18 holes on the "Nicklaus Signature Course", off the white tees! This proved to be

a challenge for all standards and handicaps, but a tremendous experience nonetheless. The Nicklaus design course will be staging the "English Open" next year, which will be reintroduced to the European Tour. St Mellion has recently undertaken a massive redevelopment including, a new hotel, bars and restaurants overlooking the 18th hole. The Nicklaus Signature Course has had all bunkers redeveloped, new irrigation system and new cart paths laid as well as extensive landscaping work. The "Kernow" Course has had many holes redesigned and constructed to change the layout and make room for holiday housing. Mike Bush, Course Manager, and his team have had a very busy couple of years, but the outcome is fantastic. Those who didn't play golf were treated to a course walk. Mike gave a very interesting and enthusiastic tour of holes on both courses, including a stop at their very impressive maintenance facilities. The golf and course walk was then followed by a BBQ on the players terrace overlooking the 18th green. The prize giving and raffle then followed this. Prizes were kindly donated by the two sponsors for the day, Symbio and Sports Metals. Many thanks to Neil Carter of Symbio and Richard Japes of Sports Metals for their attendance and support of the section. Congratulations to Cornwall for winning the match 9-3. The trophy was presented by the Devon captain, Jason Brooks to the winning Cornish captains, Scott Gibson and Keith Kemp. A huge thank you to Mike Bush and the greenkeeping team as well as all the staff at St Mellion for what was a fantastic day.

George Pitts
07929 754401
gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com

South East Region



Kent

By the time you read this, my fellow countrymen may have just recovered from the pitiful display our national team managed to muster in South Africa and the rest of the UK may just, but only just, have stopped laughing about it.

Expectations in life bear heavily on us all and if you or I failed so miserably to meet required standards we could expect to be in a lot of trouble. Messrs. Rooney, Gerrard et al will, however, no doubt return to their cosy lives oblivious of the despair they left behind in their wake.

It is proving to be another difficult year to meet expectations on golf courses too. The long suffering economy and extreme weather conditions (whatever happened to springtime?) are putting many of us to the test and, being the resourceful bunch that we are, most of us have been able to adapt and overcome many of the resulting issues imposed. Obviously, one of the major concerns is the most valuable resource of all, water. Strains on supplies of this sustainer of all life are being stretched to the limit and golf and leisure facilities are sure to be first in the firing line once restrictions start being imposed. I fear for those who do not have some water holding capacity on site. I'm sure that as many of you jet off to even sunnier and warmer climates over this holiday period, the scarcity of water will become even more apparent. Maybe we should be learning how to cope better from our Mediterranean friends.

I hope that as many of you as possible were able to join us at Herne Bay GC for our summer event on July 27. I know that one notable absentee would have been our Chairman, Kev Morris, who was busy in his duties of grandfather taking the little ones to Disneyland. Knowing Kev, he probably had more fun than anyone else there! Results and reports from Herne Bay will now be online at our webpage below. If Kev lets me have some pictures of him with Mickey Mouse, they'll be there too!

I shall let you get back to tending your brown and pleasant lands and wish you the best of luck in all your summertime activities. Make the most of your visits to the beach, barbeques and outdoor pursuits because, remember, this is still Britain so the sun won't last forever!

Best of British one and all.

Rob Holland

www.kentgreenkeepers.com



East Anglia

Diss Golf Club – 17 June 2010

Diss must be the place – well, Diss Golf Club to be more precise. Lovely course in pristine condition thanks to Robert Ransome and his crew. Nice to hear some skylarks.

About 55-60 lost souls turned up and it was well worth while. One or two trophy hunters scored 40 points, but I think the course won the day.

Scores were as follows: 0 – 9 Handicap: 1st Ben Wallis 36 pts; 2nd Danny Pearson 36 pts; 3rd Graham Hurren 35 pts; 10 – 18 Handicap: 1st Ali Barber 40 pts; 2nd Tony Thacker 38 pts; 3rd Mark Clements 37 pts; 19 – 28 Handicap – Real Golfers; 1st David Driver 42 pts; 2nd Steve Crab 39 pts; 3rd Pat Swinn 35 pts; G & T's: 1st Ian Weller 39 points; 2nd Andy Culdron 38 points; 3rd Basil Warren 37 points; Longest drive - 17th, Danny Pearson; 6th, Ali Barber; Nearest the pin, 4th, Graham Hurren; 15th, Ben Pearson.

Guess who won the loo seat? You guessed, Ian Willett. Hit the telegraph poles from 6 ft, twice!

Earnest Doe was the main sponsor of the day and the first prize was two Spurs tickets won by David Driver. I'll bet he's an Arsenal supporter!

Prizes were presented by the Club captain, Chis Castle.

The other trade supporters were Scotts, Headland, Aitkens, Sherriff, Rigby Taylor, Bartram Mowers, Ben Burgess, Collier Turf Care, Baileys of Norfolk, Tacit, Tomlinsons, Ransomes.

Our thanks once again Diss Golf Club for a first class day.

Picture this – you're in your Mess Hut, nice cup of tea, you've come through a dry summer, the coldest winter since '63, spring didn't turn up and you're in another dry spell. All in all, your course ain't too bad. You think!

In comes the Secretary: "Thompson" he says, "the Greens Committee would like to know why there are some bare patches around some of the greens. Why were they not seeded earlier?" You try to explain the conditions that have prevailed to no avail and then you remember that the cuckoo was also about six weeks late this year. The Secretary asks "What's that got to do with anything?" The reply comes as quick as a flash – "Well it seems the cuckoo has more sense than the Committee!"



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

Another Open comes and goes and congratulations are due to Gordon Moir, Gordon Mckie and the remainder of the greenkeeping staff at St Andrews for their superb presentation of the course. The television did not do it justice especially when seen in the early morning or late evening sunlight (when we had it!). The longer shadows accentuated the contours of the fairways and added something special to the approaches and greens, at such times I defy any golfer not to wish that this could be their home course to play as often as they like.

Thanks are due to the many volunteers drawn from the membership that formed the BIGGA Open Support Team and who represented the Association in such an excellent way. Personally it was nice to meet some new faces as well as catch up with members that I had met on some previous occasions. The Team had an unexpected extra duty to perform when called out at short notice to divot fairways at 4.30am on Saturday morning as a consequence of the delay in play the day before. Undeterred by the prospect of such an early start they took it in their stride, reinforcing to the R&A the value of the Team to the event.

Friday was memorable not just for the chaos that it caused in the pace of play but also for the presentation to Cecil George of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award. This took place, quite fittingly, in the BIGGA marquee and was witnessed by many of his lifelong peers and supporters. Cecil has done so much for greenkeeping and greenkeepers as you will read elsewhere in this magazine and when I started with BIGGA in 1993, subsequently taking over the arrangements for the 'Bunker Rakers' as the team was known as in those days, Cecil and Jimmy Neilson were in charge of BIGGA's presence on the 1st tee, a role they were to continue for several more years.

By the time you read this column I will have had a further meeting with Dave Saltman (Pitchcare) and his fellow representatives from 'the trade' who are seeking to develop a one show strategy for the industry. As I write it has yet to be revealed to me just exactly which companies make up this group referred to as 'the trade' but I am sure I will be enlightened in due course. BIGGA and the IOG are in discussions about a closer working relationship on certain projects but I can assure our members and our supporters that this does not currently include abandoning Harrogate Week and Saltex in favour of a unified show. BIGGA is working hard to make its event at Harrogate meet the expectations of both exhibitors and visitors and the Board and Staff are determined to shake off and counter the criticisms of 'same old show, same old visitors'. We're up to something but you will have to wait to see what! Watch this space as they say.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

Congratulations to the BIGGA Open Support Team

Well done to members of the Open Support Team in successfully supporting Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping and Gordon McKie, Head Greenkeeper and their team in managing the Old Course at St Andrews during last month's Open Championship.

To be part of the Open Support Team is a fantastic opportunity to see golf at the very highest level from a privileged position – inside the ropes. It's hard work but worth the effort. To apply to be part of the team for the Open 2011 at Royal St George's look out for the invitation to apply in the December and January editions of GI or talk to Scott MacCallum or Rachael Duffy at BIGGA HQ.

NEW Membership Benefit

Check out the members area of the BIGGA website for the new "How To..." guides available exclusively to BIGGA Members on a range of Human Resource topics. These short, handy guides provide practical, step-by-step guidance on a range of subjects. The guides can be downloaded and used to help you develop your knowledge and implement new processes within your workplace.

Section and Region Events

Visit the 'Event's Section on BIGGA's website to have a look at what's on around the UK, www.bigga.org.uk select 'EVENTS' from across the top row.

Somebody asked me the other day if it was possible to be a member of two sections, unfortunately, not, but that's not to say that if you would like to attend an event in a different section just contact the Section Secretary and ask, I'm sure you would be made most welcome.

After all, each section is about the same thing, meeting new people, establishing new friendships and maintaining old ones, at the same

time as discussing all things greenkeeping and turf.

Temperatures set to soar this summer...

At the time of writing this months article most places have experienced very little, if any, rainfall to speak of and a fair bit of sunshine.

It's the sunshine I want to touch on, following on from John Mair's (Ayrshire Section) mention in his Around the Green column last month, "Remember to put sun block on and wear a cap if possible...especially those short on top!"

If we are going abroad on holiday we pack sun tan lotion, it's always high on our list of things to take; yet in this country we hardly give it a second thought.

Skin Cancer and the sun

Most skin cancers are caused by long-term exposure to the sun and research has shown that those who work outdoors are more at risk of skin cancer due to this fact. It is thought that there could be as many as 100,000 cases of skin cancer each year in the UK, but many aren't reported.

Some Sun Smart advice

- Make sure you never burn
- Aim to cover up with T shirt, hat and sunglasses
- Use factor 15+ sunscreen (sun cream)

Cheap sunblocks are usually just as good as expensive ones. They are all tested the same way and it is the level of protection they give you against the sun that matters most. This is the 'sun protection factor' or SPF.

The SPF tells you the amount of protection the sun cream gives against UVB radiation.

Cancer Research UK recommend at least factor 15. This is because it gives the best balance between protection and cost.



The Open Support Team 2010

Contact Details

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Brad Anderson
brad@bigga.co.uk

Tel: 01347 833800
(option 1 for Membership)

Regional Offices

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Peter Boyd
Tel: 0141 616 3440
Mobile: 07776 242120
pj.boyd@btinternet.com

Northern & Midland

Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115
Mobile: 07866 366966
petelarter972@aol.com

South East

Clive Osgood
Tel: 01737 819343
Mobile: 07841 948410
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk

South West & Wales

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

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

Scotland

Ryan Brennan, West
Dean Cormack, West
Steven MacLeod, North
Mark McManus, West
Greg Ronald, East
Callum Wark, West

Northern Region

Nathan Connor, Northern
Stephen Dale, Northern
Daniel McGuckin, Cleveland
Rick Sagar, Northern
Miles Skehan, Northern

Midland Region

Andrew Clark, Mid Anglia
Jonathan Farrell, Mid Anglia
Vincent Gilroy, Midland
Michael Kemmett, Mid Anglia
Alex Kinnaird, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Richard Lloyd, Midland
Naomi Wallace, Berks/Bucks & Oxon

South East Region

John Bartlett, Surrey
Jay Clark, Essex
Daniel Crow, Essex
Garth Ellis, Sussex
Jeff Foulger, London
Adam Frampton, Essex
Ian Gosling, Sussex
Dan Harrison, Surrey
Chris Holdham, Sussex
Oliver Homewood, Essex
Andrew Rogers, Essex

South West Region

David Chammings, Devon & Cornwall
Tim Harmer, South Coast

Northern Ireland

Adrian McCullough, Northern Ireland

Overseas

Ulrich Kayser, Germany
Maurizio Russo, Italy
Brian Anderson, USA



Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2010 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
AUGUST			
Thursday August 5th	Sussex Section Event	Haywards Heath Golf Club	Dave Allen at d38a@msn.com or mobile: 07515 428573
Wednesday August 11th	East Anglia Section Event	Eaton Golf Club, Norwich	Ian Willett at info@thorpeness.co.uk or mobile: 07929 205398
Thursday August 12th	Essex Section Event	Benton Hall Golf Club	Dominic Rodgers at domrogers@talktalk.net or mobile: 07929 205398
Tuesday August 17th	East Scotland Section – Willie Woods Tournament	Gullane Golf Links (No 2 Course)	Stuart Ferguson at stuferg@btinternet.com or mobile: 07961 630553
Thursday August 19th (To be confirmed, subject to change)	Central Section Event	Auchterarder Golf Club. Norrie Whytock Trophy	Andrew Mellon at AMellon@Elmwood.ac.uk or mobile: 07780 995602
Saturday August 21st	South West Section Race Night	Lansdown Racecourse	Adam Matthews at adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk or mobile: 07732 503855
Thursday August 26th	BB&O Section Event	The East Berkshire Golf Club	Adam King at ajk@radley.org.uk or 01235 543119 or mobile: 07778 569158
Friday August 27th	South West Section Match v's Welsh Section	To be advised	Section Captain Wayne Vincent at wayne.vincent@googlemail.com
SEPTEMBER			
Monday September 13th	Sheffield Section Event	Silkstone Golf Club	James Stevens at jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com or 07738 719614
Wednesday September 22nd	East of England Section Event	Lincoln Golf Club	Bruce Hicks at brucehicks1@gmail.com or 07931 714922
Tuesday September 28th	Sussex Section Event	Copthorne Golf Club	Dave Allen at d38a@msn.com or mobile: 07515 428573
OCTOBER			
Monday October 11th	North West Section Autumn Tournament	Bolton Old Links Golf Club	Phil Dewhurst on mobile: 07768 180604
NOVEMBER			
Wednesday November 3rd	BB&O Autumn Section Event	Deanwood Park Golf Club	Adam King at ajk@radley.org.uk or 01235 543119 or mobile: 07778 569158
Monday November 29th	Sheffield Section Event	Lindrick Golf Club	James Stevens at jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com or 07738 719614
DECEMBER			
Thursday December 2nd	North West Section AGM & Bert Cross Trophy	Wilmslow Golf Club	Phil Dewhurst on mobile: 07768 180604

GI

NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

GI New Products has made a comeback! Please email your press releases and photography to: tom@bigga.co.uk

See
page
52

DEALER OF THE MONTH

A new series aimed at celebrating the great work done by dealerships up and down the country

GOLF AND TURF MACHINERY

Location and Size

Wakefield, Derby. £3 million yearly turn over

Employees and Size of premises

18 staff. 14000sqft of covered area spread over the two locations

Number of service vans: Six

Brief history of company

The GTM business was formed in summer 2006 by Glen Sawyer and John Passfield. They put together a small team of experienced grounds care industry professionals with a wealth of experience in the ground-care industry. Each team member is respected in their own field of sales and after care service with many years experience working for large dealers across Yorkshire and the Midlands. Soon after forming, GTM was quickly appointed the Ransomes Jacobsen dealer for South Yorkshire and then in October of 2009 had the selling area extended to South, West and North Yorkshire. Steven Nixon joined in November 2009 as the Sales Director to help develop sales in the Golf sector. In June 2010 the company moved into a new depot in Wakefield so it can service the new larger area better.

Key services offered

New and used equipment sales, spare parts, service department, Hire of equipment. Training.

Specialist services offered

Operated Hire of equipment. Training and advisory service offered



How has the dealership changed over the years?

We are a young company of only four years, so the company is growing and changing almost daily. Our recent investment in new IT software programs will improve our overall operation.

What would you like to see changed?

Greenkeepers and Groundsman to be given the professional respect by their members and committees allowing them to do their jobs better. Also for more customer and dealership association, forming stronger partnerships between the customer and dealership which would help them achieve their goals of keeping their golf courses and grounds in pristine condition.

Do you support customers who have in-house service facilities (ie OEM parts supply)?

Yes, we have no problem with customers who have in house service facilities, in fact we have supplied several Golf clubs with Grinding systems and with technical training to help them service their own equipment. More clubs will go down this route in the future and we support progression.

Major customers

No real famous Golf clubs in our selling area, we consider that all our customers are major!

Franchises

Ransomes Jacobsen, (inc Iseki, EZGO, Smithco, Turfco, Ryan) Wiedenmann, IPU products, Greentek, Boxer skid steer and Major.

and many more too numerous to mention

To nominate a GI Dealer of the Month contact Scott MacCallum with your reasons why the dealer of your choice should be featured... Email scott@bigga.co.uk

The new Eclipse 322

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Fancy improving your IT skills?

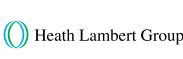
BIGGA members can access an official Microsoft® Office 2003 Training Library that includes programs such as Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Outlook.

BIGGA are able to offer these practical and effective online courses at a discounted cost of £15 (+ VAT) (usually £20 + VAT) to BIGGA Members, and £30 (+ VAT) to non-members, thanks to support from the Learning and Development Fund. For further information contact the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 option 3.

Microsoft Office 2007 training is also available on request.



JOHN DEERE

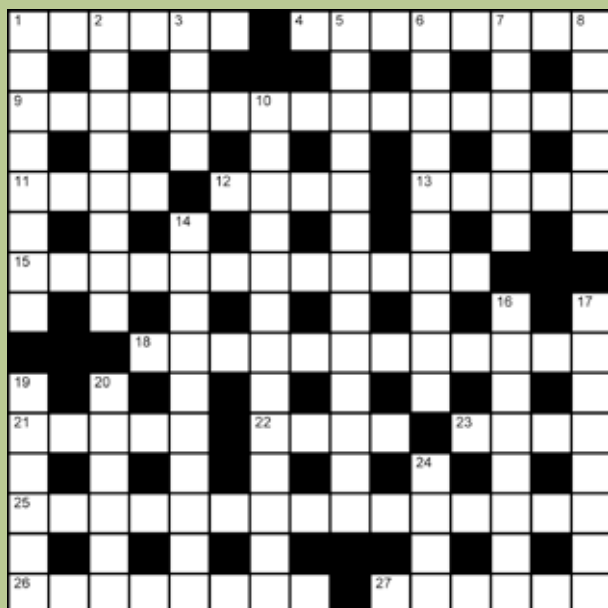




in the shed

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

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Ben ____, comedy partner of Alexander Armstrong (6)
- 4 Ancient mathematical devices (8)
- 9 Comic actor, inventor of Ali G and Borat (5,5,5)
- 11 Jet black (4)
- 12 A dull, yet persistent pain (4)
- 13 Make legally void (5)
- 15 Those living during the reign of Henry VIII's daughter (12)
- 18 Compulsorily or mandatorily (12)
- 21 The area closer to the centre (5)
- 22 1998 animated film featuring Woody Allen and Sylvester Stallone (4)
- 23 A Devon village; alcoholic drink (4)
- 25 1944 film directed by Billy Wilder (6,9)
- 26 Severe headache (8)
- 27 Foamy substance used in hair-styling (6)

Down

- 1 An incorrect or inappropriate designation (8)
- 2 Type of National Lottery line involving no personal selection (5,3)
- 3 Stylish elegance (4)
- 5 Distraught, especially in matters of love (6-7)
- 6 Place one's thumb on one's nose, and waggle one's fingers derisively (4,1,5)
- 7 Mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head (6)
- 8 Unattached (6)
- 10 A grant of formal recognition (13)
- 14 Duran Duran named themselves after a character in this 1968 film (10)
- 16 Often said to be nervous in cricket (8)
- 17 A spelling similarity in differently pronounced words, e.g., rough and through (3,5)
- 19 Common term for a centrist party politician (3-3)
- 20 Not heralded or celebrated (6)
- 24 Ballistic projectiles (4)

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

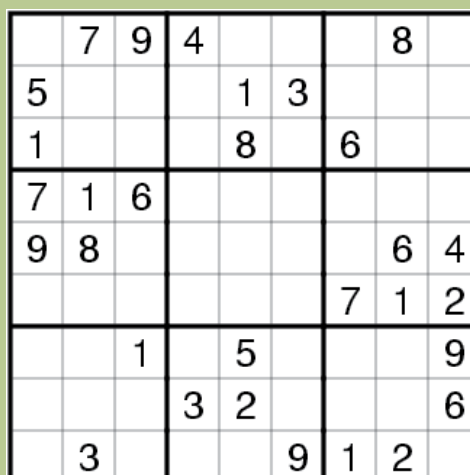
Can you unscramble the following letters and reveal some famous golf clubs?

1. CHEAP BELBBE
2. DRAMA LEVAR
3. WONT THREW
4. RAIL BREAK YOL
5. MOON DOLLCH
6. LATINO SAGA TUNAU
7. BLETHY REF
8. MANIC CLOTER
9. PURSEN HIT



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 73

BUYERS' GUIDE

T&G Irrigation

For the past two years or so the Gods have conspired to make the life of all specialist irrigation companies extremely challenging. Wet summers have caused many golf clubs to review irrigation budgets and to postpone numerous major projects. The effect on some companies has been severe.



T & G irrigation took the changing market conditions as a sign that it was time to diversify and set about finding alternative ways to maintain work levels for the staff. It has been rewarding to see that with a relatively small effort new doors opened and work has been sourced from a wide variety of places.

Several local councils have installed literally dozens of new bowling green irrigation systems having seen the whole life costings, producing savings in labour and improvements to the actual greens. Surprisingly, there has been great interest in private garden systems, especially for the upper end of the market. We recently installed a football pitch system for one Client at the bottom of his extensive garden. Landscape schemes for diverse private companies has also risen in popularity.

Now that the sun is back we find ourselves with a broader Client base and a greater range of schemes to offer our Clients. All of which proves that in the face of adversity if you are prepared to tackle the challenges you come out the stronger for it and as far as T & G Irrigation is concerned we are looking forward to a brighter future.

So, if there are any Clients who wish to have a bespoke scheme designed for any particular application they should contact Paul Curtis on either 07860 542616 or at the office on 01427 874200 and our staff will be pleased to help



BUYERS GUIDE CATEGORIES

- AERATION
- AGRONOMY
- ALL WEATHER SURFACES
- BRIDGES
- BUNKER CONSTRUCTION
- CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR
- CONSTRUCTION
- DE SILTING
- DRAINAGE
- GRINDERS
- IRRIGATION
- IRRIGATION CONSULTANTS
- LAKE CONSTRUCTION
- LINERS
- MACHINERY FOR SALE
- PLANT
- PUMPS
- RUBBER CRUMB
- SLEEPERS
- SOIL FOOD WEB
- TOP DRESSING
- TREE MOVING
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- VERTIDRAINING HIRE
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**Harrogate
week**

EDUCATION

16 - 20 January 2011

EXHIBITION

18 - 20 January 2011

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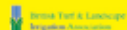
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I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to assist at the Open. I had an absolutely brilliant time, and have memories for life! I will definitely be applying for 2011 at St Georges.

Thank you again.
Ashley Lock

I'd just like to thank BIGGA for a great week at The Open. It was very well organised and coordinated. It was great to meet up with old friends and make new ones, and as usual the camaraderie and atmosphere was great. The whole team looked great and conducted themselves in a professional manner and were a credit to BIGGA and greenkeeping.

Thanks for the chance to be there.

Tony Gooch
Great Torrington Golf Club

I would just like to say how super The Open week was. As it was my first time at an Open event I was unsure what to expect, though this did make everything that little bit more special. Everyone involved made everyone so so welcome and it was great to see!

The way everything was so well organised was FANTASTIC, even more so when plans needed to adjusted at such short notice on the Friday night.

I'm really pleased that we were with such a great group. I sure we would all agree, greenkeepers are pretty great guys.

Again thank you for a fabulous week that not even the weather could ruin!

Adam Matthews
Minchinhampton Golf Club

Many Thanks!

On behalf of everyone at St Andrews Links, could I use Greenkeeper International to say a massive thank you to so many people who helped make the recent Open Championship the success it was. Faced with the extremes of weather during the week, we constantly had to review our plans and it was very reassuring that BIGGA were able to provide 20 people at short notice to come and help us divot fill the fairways at the ungodly hour of 4.30am on the Saturday morning. They were there prompt and smiling even though they hadn't had any breakfast and did a tremendous job working alongside some of our own crew. Indeed, all the BIGGA volunteers did a great job of looking after the bunkers through the golf.

I would also like to thank once again, all of our own staff and especially the seven who travelled and stayed for the week to work as volunteers. Also, the STRI team who delivered great support to us with their measuring and data collection, not only during the week but right from the 6th of July. Ably led by Richard Windows and Christian Spring, their help was invaluable and my thanks go to all of the STRI people who visited through the week.

I'd also like to thank Toro for providing the staff uniforms for the tournament and Aquatrols, Farmura, Richard Aitkens, Syngenta, and Barenbrug for providing the food to keep us all going.

Finally, I would like to thank all those people who called, emailed or sent text messages to both myself and Gordon Moir. We had literally 100's of messages of support, congratulations or just saying how great the course looked. We have tried/will try to respond to all of you but please accept our apologies if you are missed out. Your messages reflected the hard work everyone here put in to holding such a successful event, not just the two of us,

Gordon McKie
Course Manager
Old Course

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1	C	2	0	9	D	6	4	5	7	A	8	B	F	3	E
A	8	3	D	7	5	B	C	F	6	9	E	4	0	2	1
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Daily SuDoku: Thu 22-Jul-2010 hard



On the Soapbox

Bob Taylor, Head of Ecology & Environment at STRI, takes to the Soapbox and looks back over this evolving industry

When Scott MacCallum asked me to contribute to the Soapbox a slight apprehensive feeling came over me.

Well it would.

I am not, as everyone knows, a person who is given to ranting on different issues that affect our industry but then, given the cold light of day I probably am.

In fact, isn't that all that I have been doing for the last 20 years, remaining defiant when speaking out for the plight of the environment within golf.

Over the years I have pushed golf clubs to take stock of the environment in which they play and manage it for both golf and for wildlife.

I have also used legislation as a driver to generate awareness and encourage motivation, to ensure that best practices are adopted and adhered to. This is not a bad thing, far from it.

Collectively as an industry we have taken on a level of responsibility towards the environment that is unsurpassed.

Which other industries can boast the reclamation of 23 hectares of heathland, the reinstatement of over 1127 linear metres of hedgerow, the expansion of our grassland resource and all this arising from projects like the EGU Ecological Advisory Service.

STRI along with organisations like The Golf Environment Organisation, BIGGA, The R&A and Home Unions have created a wealth of literature geared towards managing the environment, but yet it seems strange to me that there are still many golf clubs out there that give little attention to their environmental responsibilities and are still dragging their feet and this can have ramifications for others.

Twenty years ago ecology was a buzzword, rather like sustainability is today, the main difference is perhaps that ecology is a term specifically related to species and the places in which they live, sustainability brings social and economic factors into the equation, changing our approach to golf course management in managing as a commercial modern business.

Even 20 years on I still regularly hear the old chestnut that this is a golf course and not a nature reserve, the reality is, that while a nature reserve can be specifically set up for wildlife, golf clubs have another overriding function ie. that of golf.

This is in fact the reason why so many areas throughout the country are being given special protected status by way of the

Site of Special Scientific Interest designation (SSSI). There is clearly no way that all golf courses could be given elevated scientific status but that does not mean that they do not contribute positively to wildlife and wildlife conservation. Many are indeed important staging posts for wildlife passing through.

They provide linkage with other important sites and they do protect some of our rarest and most vulnerable wildlife.

Individual golf clubs are functioning as individual business units, their main focus is income generation through visitor and member retention.

It always strikes me as odd that golf clubs pour all their resources into their greens, giving them ultimate priority and while this is clearly necessary very little resource is given to the environment in which they sit.

How many players would return again and again to play the course if it were not for the contribution of the environment and the pleasure gained from it.

this would never be the case unless some underlying factor such as poor performance in the past, pollution etc lies at the heart of the matter.

We must stop thinking that ecological management is for richer golf clubs, which probably make up less than 10% of the 3,300 golf clubs now established throughout the UK.

Just think of the contribution that the remaining 90% can have on protecting and conserving our nations wildlife.

It was Steve Oultram from Wilmslow Golf Club who once said:

"I like to think that I am managing this golf course so that my children and grandchildren can still benefit from the wildlife that I at Wilmslow have come to enjoy."

That perhaps in a nutshell sums it up, the wildlife that we all take for granted will not be there in the future unless we as custodians of a very special and unique landscape manage in a way that will conserve it for present and future generations.

Protect our wildlife

Environment gives beauty to the game, it adds interest, challenge, history, nature and above all a real feeling of wellbeing.

The more time I spend in Europe, particularly within the Scandinavia, the more I realise that potential visitors are seeking golf clubs with good social, environmental and ethical performance.

Golf Clubs providing this are thus better placed to attract and retain visitor numbers who share these values.

The more we do for the environment, the easier it will be when it comes to seeking planning permission for developmental change.

A golf club with a good track record, compared with direct competitors may gain advantage through public approval and acceptance.

Bear in mind however that good performance needs to be balanced with disclosure of performance, good and bad, hence the need for auditing, record keeping and periodic review.

I still visit golf clubs that remain worried that if they highlight their ecological interests they may be stopped from implementing traditional management practices,



Bob Taylor, Head of Ecology & Environment at STRI

Bob Taylor

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