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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



The finest greenkeeping performance of all time

When I wrote about a successful Ryder Cup in my Editorial last month I did so in advance of the match itself and based my views on what I knew and had seen of Jim McKenzie's preparations.

I did have the foresight to suggest that the weather might be the obstacle to a successful week, but certainly didn't appreciate just to what extent it would play its part.

I also didn't predict that it would be those appalling weather conditions that have given the greenkeeping profession its biggest boost for many a decade, if not ever.

Generally speaking, the lot of the greenkeeper is to toil away in the background, and work on the premise that no news is good news. An occasional bit of praise is nice - from those enlightened people who suspect that a golf course doesn't look after itself - but, as you well know, golf course comment generally carries a health warning and comes with optional hard hat!

At Celtic Manor, however, that "behind the scenes" work was carried out in front of huge soggy galleries and a worldwide television audience of many tens of millions. Had it not been executed in such an expert fashion by the 130 plus Celtic Manor and volunteer staff the Ryder Cup would almost certainly have had a different conclusion, and may have even been abandoned early.

And for a change people noticed.

To read a thread entitled "Three Cheers for the Greens Staff" on the BBC 606 Forum is a welcome first, and shows what a bit of exposure can do for greenkeeping. Admittedly it only got eight replies, but it's a start, isn't it?

In all seriousness, while there must have been times, and Jim McKenzie admitted to as

much in the Ryder Cup Special elsewhere in this magazine, when everyone involved was in the depths of despair and wondering if it was ever going to finish, it will probably go down as one of, if not *The* finest greenkeeping performance of all time.

And, let's face it, if the 2010 Ryder Cup had enjoyed perfect weather and perfect playing conditions it would have been back to the usual state of affairs of no-one noticing.

We, in the business, would have taken pride in what had been achieved and marvelled at the presentational touches and the smooth putting surfaces, but we would have retained a similar public profile to that of The Borrowers or the fairies who frequent the bottom of our gardens.

It is a cliché, but bears repeating nonetheless - Without greenkeepers there would be no golf.

With cut backs threatened, or being implemented, at golf clubs throughout the country, those in charge of the sharp pencil should remember as much. A poorly maintained golf course will lead to the fortunes of the golf club heading in only one direction.

On behalf of everyone involved in the sports turf industry may I say thank you to Jim and his magnificent Ryder Cup crew.

Jim, you may have done this industry one great turn.

Scott MacCallum
Editor