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GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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after the Ryder Cup

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Golf
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Feature

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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



Ten reasons to be cheerful

With the weather beginning to show signs of leaving winter behind and us entering spring we all can begin to feel a bit brighter and more optimistic.

But do we have anything to be optimistic about? On the face of it, perhaps not but if we delve a little deeper there are signs that could conceivably put a smile on our faces.

1. At least now we know what is facing us. VAT has gone up and have we noticed? Well, a lot of shops are still selling on the old rate, or paying the VAT for us. So I'd suggest that extra 2.5% hasn't made a huge impact...yet.

2. Inflation has gone up but it is still only at 4% when in the bad old days of the 70s and 80s it was well into double figures. The same goes for interest rates. They will no doubt start to rise shortly, but they are unlikely to hit the heady heights of 15%, which they did in the early 90s.

3. There is no way that we will endure the horrendous weather conditions we had last year so golf should be due an extended spell of great weather which will do wonders for the game and player numbers. The more rounds that clubs can clock up the better the finances will be.

4. The Olympics next year will mean that sport is at the forefront of most things in this country for the next 18 months and, although golf isn't yet an Olympic sport, that must still be a good thing.

5. Europe's golfers are at the top of the world game and the likes of Lee Westwood, Martin Kaymer, Luke Donald, Rory McIlroy and Graeme McDowell are proving to be great role models for the sport.

6. Fuel. This is a real bugbear, but there is talk of a Fuel Duty Stabiliser to stop the runaway price rises. As the oil price rises the tax drops to compensate and Voila! – we pay about the same – horrendously high though it is.

7. There is no General Election this year, so we won't be bombarded by politicians on TV and on our door steps promising us the earth and slagging off their opposite numbers.

8. On the same theme. There is no World Cup this year so we won't have to put up with the unrealistically high expectations on the one Home Nation which usually qualifies for the final. The inevitable failure, and recriminations of the said team which follow, almost makes up for the fact that the rest of us didn't qualify in the first place.

9. The Royal Wedding. Well, not so much the joining of the lovely Kate to William in Westminster Abby, joyful though that undoubtedly is, but the fact that we are all getting a Bank Holiday because of it!

10. The very fact that I've been able to come up with as many as 10 Reasons to Be Cheerful at all!

I may have missed out some but it does show that if you try hard enough, there are some silver linings to be had.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

MARCH 2011

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A for anthracnose

Dr Terry Mabbett continues his examination of the country's most common turf diseases by looking at anthracnose.

UK was for anthracnose in appearing in late autumn as a distinctive dark-coloured basal (green) rot of *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass) as long shadows and leaves begin fall across the green.

They are (conspicuous) autumn-tinted areas, redoubled by rain and chilled with an average further reduced growth in autumn.

During October that we did the anthracnose fungus having been dormant in the beds during the dry autumn months.

Anthracnose was a collection of disease of turfgrass through to spring with one month's dormant from plants in dry and compacted summer months but has more become a real condition. A form of anthracnose distinguished by different symptoms, and called blue light, now previously appears to be more or less a much wider range of turfgrass species.

The fungus responsible (*Cylindrocapsa graminicola*) has suffered a recent digital genetic name change. More than two dozen different species occur with one name (the code) on everything from emergence to biomass but half are associated with anthracnose in the North American species and cereals.

The last species are distinguished by small but distinct seasonal differences and subtle physiological differences which determine how they emerge.

C. graminicola was associated with anthracnose in a broad range of grasses and cereals but more recent findings indicate *C. graminicola* exclusively attacks cereals and ryegrasses now say the species affecting turf grass is *Cylindrocapsa cerealis*. It is now a long-term and understanding *C. graminicola* and *C. cerealis* are for all intents and purposes interchangeable.

Anthracnose is no longer confined to winter months, cool nights and morning mists of late autumn but already up and running as blue light during the warm and The Day of August and often October. Based on cover not biomass (not associated with late autumn and is still extremely confined to the annual meadow grass) but has been seen on ryegrass. The blue light form of anthracnose is much less damaging and does not root season turf grass species.

Anthracnose in turf grass established as the second most important disease of UK turf after Fusarium patch (*Fusarium* spp.) in 2009. Contemporary assessment indicates its impact and after over a longer part of the season on a much wider range of turf grasses. Its recent rise up UK

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

A Viking Invasion



Danish greenkeeper, Jacob Aakjaer, recently contacted Malcolm Peake, of Temple GC, with a request to visit the course and meet Martin Gunn, Course Manager.

Jacob wanted to bring a group to exchange ideas and experiences, and it was decided to broaden the aspirations of the trip.

Malcolm met the group, and briefed them on the different characteristics of the courses and clubs they would be visiting.

The first port of call was Swinley Forest GC, a stunning Colt heathland course, which Colt himself called his "least bad course."

Course Manager, Lawson Bingham, gave a fascinating guided tour of the course, describing the management

and the architecture. He also described the heather restoration programme and the principles behind the felling of birch, firs and rhododendrons, which allows more circulation of air and light.

The next day the Vikings arrived at Temple, where Martin and Malcolm, a Past Chairman of Green, gave a short description of the ethos of the course management, before Martin invited the visitors to give a short talk on their own courses.

The group visited the greenkeeping compound, and discussed the extensive collection of machinery required on a modern course, before discussing composting and compost brewing, which Temple has

been working on for nearly a year.

After lunch, there was a tour of the course before being joined by Keith Adderley Secretary, and Michael Barratt, an advisor to The R&A Golf Course Committee, during which a lively debate and exchange of ideas ensued.

The following day saw the group visiting Tandridge GC where they were entertained by Course Manager, Neil Baker and in the afternoon they visited Woking GC, designed by Tom Dunn, where they met course architect, Tom Mackenzie.

Everyone who took part viewed the trip as a worthwhile educational experience, and showed the passion of the greenkeeping profession at its very best.



Top Award for David

Loch Lomond Course Superintendent, David Cole, has won the international category in the prestigious GCSAA Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards for 2010.

David received his award at a special ceremony held in Orlando, Florida during the annual Golf Industry Show.

Altogether 20 Superintendents were recognised at the ceremony and David, who has been a member of the GCSAA for 12 years, was the only recipient from outside the USA.

"It's a huge honour to receive this prestigious international award from the GCSAA," said David.

"I am immensely proud to be the recipient of the award but want to share it with members of staff at Loch Lomond who have worked tirelessly to develop and implement the club's Environmental Plan.

"Loch Lomond's plan includes strategies to minimise water usage, waste and energy consumption, to reduce carbon emissions and protect and enhance biodiversity and the quality of the landscape."

The club is a certified Audubon Co-operative Sanctuary and is GEO registered.

Loch Lomond Golf Club was recently acquired by its Members.

POLARIS LAUNCH NEW MODEL

Polaris has launched new models and features in the Sportsman and Ranger ATV ranges.

Styling on the classic Sportsman chassis has been updated and new transmission introduced.

All the upgrades are seen on the Sportsman 500 HO and Sportsman 800. The Polaris Sportsman 400 HO, a value-for-money machine is crammed with new features, and

includes 19% more suspension travel, 25% more ground clearance and a massive increase in towing and rack capacity.

There is full instrumentation and the 400 returns to a full size chassis.

The Sportsman Premium line-up, from the 550 to the 850 EPS, all feature weight reduction, new STX seat vinyl, improved EBS and splash protection.

Counterfeit Product Warning

Advanced Turf Technology has recently become aware of an inferior imitation chassis purporting to be for use with their TMSystem™.

The cassette-based turf maintenance system is for use with most mainstream triple greens mowers and the imitation chassis attempts to replicate an old ATT chassis and is not made with the precision engineering and attention to detail, as the original.

Purchasers have inadvertently bought these imitations believing them

to be genuine ATT chassis and have experienced problems.

The imitations are easy to spot as the top bar is not black and does not bear the TMSystem™ logo.

Also the adjuster top cap doesn't have the ATT logo and standard of engineering, materials and manufacture are inferior.

The imitation products do not carry a guarantee or after sales service and may be dangerous in use.

If anyone has concern or suspicion

that they may have been sold an imitation, they should contact ATT who would also suggest that they return the product to the supplier and seek a full refund.

ATT is taking steps to stop any more imitations being manufactured and to protect the intellectual property rights, the company's reputation and, most importantly, its customers.

ATT products are exclusively marketed in the UK and the rest of Europe by The Grass Group.



Fine Turf's First PhD

The UK's first PhD looking specifically at environment-related stress in fine turf, has been announced by Syngenta and Harper Adams University College, in association with STRI. Harry Mbah, who has recently completed his MSc at the University of Nottingham, will begin his three-year study this spring.

Dr Ruth Mann, Head of Turf Protection at STRI, believes the underlying impacts of environmental induced stress may be having a profound effect on turf plant health, along with its ability to utilise water and nutrients resources to maintain quality.

"An in-depth study into environment-related stress symptoms, and the associated physiological and biochemical changes within turf plants, will provide us with the real opportunity to evaluate options to mitigate the effects.

"The creation and funding of a turf-specific PhD study is an exciting and important development to focus turf plant physiology knowledge on the commercially important fescue, bent and ryegrass species used in sports turf management," said Ruth.

Dr Simon Watson, of Syngenta, said: "Harry's scientific research will enable us to understand exactly what is happening, to quantify the benefit and to help provide the advice and practical solutions for turf managers to get the best possible results, particularly with Heritage Maxx and Primo Maxx applications."

Harry's research will be based at Harper Adams University College, along with work at the STRI and within the industry through Syngenta links.





SAPCA Event

Each year SAPCA holds a series of Sports Facility Construction Exhibition and Seminar events.

In 2011 there will be three events at the following venues:

- Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell, Tuesday 12 April
 - Aston Villa FC, Birmingham: Tuesday 7 June
 - Twickenham Stadium, London: Tuesday 29 November
- Each is a special one-day event that provides delegates with three main sources of information and Exhibition, Seminar programme and Advice Centre.

Attendance at the events, including any of the seminars, is free. For the convenience of delegates, food and refreshments are available to purchase on a cash basis.

Delegate registration can be completed on-line at www.sapca.org.uk or by telephone on 024 7641 6316.

JCB Recruitment Drive for 80 Engineers

JCB has launched a recruitment drive for up to 80 engineers in the UK.

The vacancies are across all the company's sites in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Wales and arise as JCB takes advantage of a return to growth in global markets.

JCB Chief Executive Alan Blake said: "JCB's success over the past 65 years has been built on having the very best engineering talent.

This year has started very

strongly and all the signs at this stage are that growth will continue throughout 2011.

"We need to respond to that growth and strengthen our excellent team of engineers with new talent as demand for our machines increases and as we develop a range of exciting new products for the future."

The vacancies include mechanical, electronic and electrical design engineers, development engineers, research

and development engineers, engine design and development engineers, technicians, apprentice engineers, undergraduate engineers and graduate engineers.

Pictured left-to-right are JCB CEO Alan Blake, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Rt. Hon. George Osborne MP and HE Services Chairman Hugh Edeleanu, whose company has placed a £14 million order for JCB machines.

WEATHER FORECASTS STRAIGHT TO YOUR RADAR

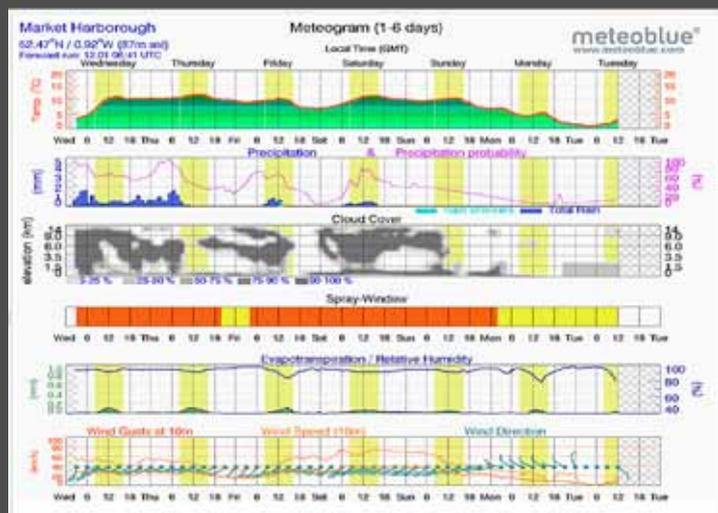
Headland Amenity has developed Weathercheck, a weather forecasting tool to pinpoint a specific location such as a golf club or racecourse.

Turf Managers will be able to access vital, personalised information on temperature, wind speed and direction and predicted rainfall. Forecast, which breaks down into three hour segments (and graphically illustrates rainfall intensity and timing), provides an accurate overview.

The RainNow option produces a 25km radius 'rain radar map' with the chosen facility at the centre. RainNow gives past rainfall over the last two hours and projected rainfall looking ahead for 90 minutes.

Spraying conditions over a seven day period can be accurately ascertained giving anticipated rainfall, wind strength, precipitation, air temperature and evapotranspiration.

For further info contact the company on 01233 597834 or weathercheck@headlandamenity.com





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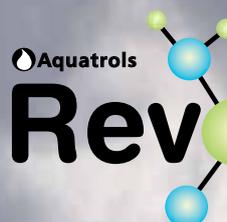
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Bluebell Forest

Center Parcs is adhering to its biodiversity policy by choosing nearly 40,000 native Bluebells over an invasive Spanish rival species.

Supplied and grown by specialist Norfolk nursery British Wild Flower Plants, the Bluebells have been propagated from seed collected from existing plants at Sherwood Forest Center Parcs where the Bluebells will be planted and other areas throughout the UK.

Linda Laxton, BWFPs owner and MD says that the seeds were sown 18 months ago into 13,000 pots and have taken two winters to grow.

"The Spanish Bluebell is a completely different species compared with our native plant. It's very vigorous and very aggressive," she explained.

"Because the flowers are larger than British Bluebells the Spanish species were sold by garden centres and are now in danger of taking over. If they are grown in a private garden near woodland there's a strong possibility that they will interbreed."

Darren Bowsher, Ground Services Manager at Sherwood Forest Center Parcs, said that there was never any question about which species would be chosen.

The native bluebell plants (approx 40,000) will be planted as plug plants, at Center Parcs Sherwood Forest this spring.

For further information visit www.wildflowers.co.uk or Tel: 01603 715792



RJ Territory Expands to Include Asia Pacific Region

Ransomes Jacobsen, has expanded its management territory within the Jacobsen group with the inclusion of the Asia Pacific region and too accommodate David Withers, Managing Director, left, has announced several management changes at senior level.

Alan Prickett, far right, the former Sales Director, has been appointed Managing Director, Asia Pacific, and will be relocating to Singapore in the near future.

The role of Sales Director will be taken by Rupert Price, second left, who is promoted from his former role of UK and Ireland Sales Manager while Jason King, second right, has been promoted to Customer Care Director.

Commenting on the appointments, David said:

"I'm absolutely delighted to announce these latest appointments, which refresh the senior leadership team here in Ipswich and provide the opportunity for dynamic and enthusiastic talent to blossom within the business. For example, Jason joined Ransomes as a 16-year old apprentice, gaining excellent technical skills and a wide range of experience across all levels of the business.

"Similarly, Rupert, who joined us on our graduate intake programme back in the late 1990s, has shown great aptitude in many differing sales roles and last year was mainly responsible for our significant increase in market share as a result of the innovative new strategies he introduced in the UK.

"Alan Prickett will do a great job for us out in the APAC territory from his base in Singapore, where he will build on the successes of the team out there, as we aggressively pursue and exploit the burgeoning opportunities across that region," said David.

JCB ACADEMY OFFICIALLY OPENED BY ROYAL COUPLE

The £22 million JCB Academy has been opened by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.

The Royal couple visited the facility in Rocester where they met staff, students and supporters who have contributed to the success of The Academy.

The Prince of Wales, accompanied by JCB Chairman Sir Anthony Bamford and JCB Academy Principal Jim Wade was given an insight into the hi-tech resources available to the 170 Year 10 and Sixth Form students. During the visit he was presented with a memory stick which students had designed and manufactured and engraved with the initials 'HRH'.





NEW ENHANCE R 'PRIME' JOINS RANGE

Vitax Amenity launched Enhance R Prime, a zero phosphate formulation which swells the ranks of their Enhance R range of fertilisers, winner of the IOG's "Best New and Innovative Product" award in the Fertiliser and Pesticides category.

Specifically developed for Turf Managers who require a zero phosphate product Enhance R Prime 5+0+10+4Fe+2MgO+TE shares all the benefits of its fellow formulations, 'Enhance R Spring and Summer' and 'Enhance R Autumn and Winter', being a 4-in-one combo of conventional fertiliser, slow release organic fertiliser, Amino-Sorb R and a natural bacterium.

Commercial Director for Vitax, Daniel Wilkinson says that the expansion of the Enhance R range is indicative of company policy and future goals: "The last year has seen us expanding all divisions of the business. We developed the Briteliner Arrow transfer wheel linemarkers for Vitax Supaturf, embarked on a new joint venture with Vitax Grower and Unitrade International to develop trade in Turkey and the Middle East, and have expanded our Retail division with new home and garden products and new additions to our famous Nippon range."

For further info visit:
www.vitax.co.uk

New Fleet for Rochford Hundred Golf Club



The machinery fleet at Rochford Hundred Golf Club in Essex is now almost all John Deere, with new arrivals for 2011 including a 4520 compact tractor, a 400CX front loader and an Aercore 800 pedestrian aerator.

These have joined 11 other John Deere machines supplied by dealer P. Tuckwell Ltd of Arleigh, near Colchester, including greens, tees and surrounds and fairway mowers, several Gator utility vehicles and another compact tractor.

"We particularly like the quality of cut we get with John Deere mowers," said Course Manager, Dave Rand.

"I first saw the 7400 TerrainCut rotary mower on a greenkeepers feedback trip to Germany, and just loved the look of it, so I ordered one as soon as it became available and I believe we had the first unit delivered in the UK.

"The oldest triplex is now used with a Greentech cassette system and another is mainly used on the tees, but we can change heads between the two newer mowers as required for use on both the greens and tees.

"Reliable dealer back-up and parts service is crucial, too," added Dave.

"John Deere is an established company that has

proved over time that it can deliver on its promises, and the dealer is always prepared to help us out with extra loan machines when necessary.

"We're fortunate in that there has been a big investment by the club over the last 6 to 12 months to improve our greenkeeping facilities and equipment, including general refurbishment of the shed area and the installation of a new waste water system, as well as improvements to the listed clubhouse, including new changing rooms. We're also looking at a new John Deere irrigation system for commission in 2012."

Ground Penetrating Radar Survey at Stonehenge

The Geophysics Team at English Heritage has just completed a state-of-the-art survey of the ground surrounding Stonehenge.

This is the first large scale Ground Penetrating Radar survey at Stonehenge and has resulted in highly accurate 3D mapping of the fine detail of objects down to a depth of two metres.

To ensure there could be no possible damage to this world heritage site Multi Channel Radar equipment with the GPS unit on top was towed by a 4x4 JCB Utility Terrain

Vehicle hired by English Heritage from specialist UTV vehicle dealers SMH Quads.

Dr Neil Linford, English Heritage's GPR specialist, said:

"The GPR data set greatly enhances our knowledge of the site, previously gained through a combination of excavation, aerial photography and other geophysical surveys.

"Effectively we've been able to create 3D images, 'time slices', if you like, through the ground that allow us to be able to see what is hidden beneath the surface."



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Chairman's Word

Andrew Mellon, in his second month as National Chairman, shares his views

A productive first month

My sense of relief after Harrogate Week, in respect to believing I might get a short rest, was very quickly replaced with a sense of foreboding as I considered my schedule for my first month as Chairman.

Finding time to sit and reflect on the month and share that with you in this column has been one of the many challenges, as well as ensuring I spend enough time with the team at Elmwood, and the team at BIGGA HQ.

I know find myself with the Editor on my back chasing me for copy, and I'm writing this in the early hours of the morning in my hotel room at the Golf Course Superintendent Association of Ireland's Conference, in Trim, Dublin.

My first visit was to the Golf Course Superintendent Association of America Conference in Orlando. As well as the obvious benefits of the networking opportunities and education available, Sami and I met with GCSAA Education directors to share experiences and explore opportunities to enhance our Continual Professional Development programme.

We also met with the GCSAA Board to continue negotiating a Strategic Agreement which could advance both our missions and promote cooperation and goodwill between our Associations. This has triggered further discussions with other national Associations who all recognise the benefit of such cooperation.

I met with Michigan State University, who have agreed to digitalise fully all BIGGA publications, past and present, into searchable online content within their "Turf Grass Information File".

This provides an extensive resource for research and education. We are negotiating access rights for our members and this will bring a significant additional member benefit to you.

I took the opportunity to visit the renowned Sawgrass TPC. Unfortunately the Scottish weather had followed me, much to the disgust of my playing partners. I can claim however to have had a 3 at the famous 17th, unfortunately with my fourth ball!

Back home for a few days and I enjoyed a good night's entertainment at the Scottish Golf Awards, hosted by the SGU. BIGGA

plays its part in the Scottish Golf Education Group, alongside SGU and other golf bodies to ensure we make our educational opportunities accessible to all relevant stakeholders, and avoid duplication. A similar group is now formed in England. More to follow!

Back at work I had an interesting meeting with Steve Isaac and Stig Backen, from the R&A, and further discussions with Jonathan Smith, from GEO.

Both organisations are committed to working with BIGGA in order to ensure that resources are made available to help Golf Courses and Facilities manage more sustainably.

The controversial "sustainable" word rears its head again, but please do not jump to conclusions, ie "fescue", and consider the true meaning of the word. Evidence of this cooperation should soon be available through the website, and in future editions of Greenkeeper International, and at future seminars.

I attended an excellent evening seminar from Headland Amenity at the Central Section combined with a committee meeting and spent some valuable time with my family, and then it was off to Iceland for the FEGGA conference and International Summit.

I did not know what to expect, but I was impressed by the commitment shown by the Icelandic Association and the evidence of the cooperation between them and all their Golf Bodies to ensuring the success of golf in their country.

Their enthusiasm and commitment to education was infectious and I returned far more optimistic about the future of the Golf Industry providing we can embrace some of that philosophy.

In Iceland 10% of the population play golf, and this is a huge achievement for such a young golfing nation. The fact that the Country's President saw fit to talk at the evening reception shows the respect afforded to them as part of that collaborative group.

Dean Cleaver and FEGGA are working hard to ensure that across Europe we have a closer understanding and sharing of good practices.

An example of this is the consistent standards for education developed through the European Greenkeeping Education Unit, which should ensure that developments in education match the agreed needs of the sector.

The Scottish Conference, organised by Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, was a resounding success, not only in attendance, but the excellent technical talks combined with presentations from Chris Kennedy, Jim McKenzie and Chris Haspell.

I was proud, as BIGGA Chairman, to see such professional and engaging presentations, on outstanding achievements from our members.

Collaboration within the golf bodies will ensure that the important input the Greenkeeper can bring to the sustainability of each golf operation is recognised and valued

Straight off to Edinburgh Airport, and I'm now at the Irish Conference, which from what I've seen today reinforces a common theme from above.

They face the same difficulties we all do in golf, they have a sense of urgency, and they recognise that collaboration within the golf bodies will ensure that the important input the Greenkeeper can bring to the sustainability of each golf operation is recognised and valued.

A shortlist has been provided from over 40 applicants for the CEO position and the Board will shortly commence the interview process.

Well it's been a very busy month, which I hope will be productive going forward for the Association. I'm partial to a small Guinness and I think I'll now indulge in a small nightcap with the others downstairs.



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

For many years the role of Chairman of Green and Green Convener has been seen as the poisoned chalice at private members clubs and with few exceptions a short-term appointment or a "must do" position prior to moving on to be Club Captain.

Many readers will remember Jim Arthur, the wily Agronomist's thoughts on the Green Committee, when he constantly reminded clubs that "the best committees consist of an uneven number, and three is too many!"

He added:

a committee of one, gets things done

a committee of three, will wait and see

a committee of nine, wastes endless time

a committee of more, is an endless bore!

While there are nearly as many proprietary golf clubs in Britain as private members clubs, where often, it is a General Manager or the owner who will have direct contact with the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, there are still hundreds of clubs where Chairman of Green and Green Conveners are elected as the direct link between the Directors, members and the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper.

The GTC is looking to work closer with the Golf Club Managers Association (GCMA) who we know have an element of "greenkeeping" in their training courses for Secretaries and Club Managers, however, the GTC believes it has a responsibility to support Chairmen of Green and Green Conveners to carry out their crucial role, hence the development of training courses.

I fully understand greenkeepers reading this will be thinking "what is the GTC is planning with Chairman of Green training courses" and I trust I can allay any fears by immediately stating the GTC does not intend to host courses to train our Course Managers.

Greenkeepers who, as volunteers, join committees to improve the busi-

ness, surely have to receive a level of training to ensure they are competent in the role they have been elected to carry out?

Donald Steel, the GTC Chairman, has just written an article and in the opening paragraph states:

"It has always been a strange anomaly that Golf Clubs appoint a highly qualified Head Greenkeeper to a specialist role and then tolerate highly unqualified members telling him where he is going wrong. Whereas, they are quite happy to accept a doctor's, solicitor's or stockbroker's view of things, golfers are quick to express themselves knowledgeably (so they think) on subjects as far ranging as fescues and fungi".

Clearly, the GTC through the Home Unions in association with BIGGA, are in a position to improved communications between employers and the Course Manager and the starting point has to be better guidance and courses designed and delivered by the GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

In previous GTC columns within GI, the GTC has promoted the SGU's 'Practical Guide for Green Conveners' and this booklet will form the basis for structured workshops to assist delegates to fully understand their role to liaise and work closely with the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper to maintain and develop the golf course to the satisfaction of the club membership.

The booklet can be viewed on the SGU's website www.scottishgolf.org/files/Green_Convener_2008.pdf or hard copies are available from the GTC or SGU.

The GTC is also aware that there have been courses available from various bodies in the past but clearly there is still much work to be done in this area and local provision appears to be the starting point.

The structure of the Home Unions lends itself to engaging the support of the County Unions to promote these types of workshops.

Another thorny subject is Health & Safety, which requires both

In Brief

David explains the GTC's thinking behind the development of training courses to help the much maligned individuals who truly want to understand more about what their Course Manager and Head Greenkeeper is proposing for the golf course based on their knowledge, experience and professional judgement.



The GTC is funded by:



employer and employee to take a level of responsibility to ensure the facility is a safe environment for members, visitors and staff. The GTC produced the H&S Guidance Booklet which, like the Green Convener booklet, sets out the guidelines, but workshops to compliment the guidance have proved so successful we are looking to promote workshops in this important area of golf course management.

An excellent example of this was a Health & Safety awareness workshop hosted in Durham by the Local Authority, attended by representatives from all but two clubs in the County. The feedback from the H&S workshop was excellent and again this needs to be rolled out throughout Britain.

There is a climate of golfing organisations working together more to share resources and experience which has to be a sensible approach and whilst the GTC's priority will always be to maintain the standards of greenkeeper education, training including qualifications and the apprenticeship scheme, the important roles and responsibilities of the employer must also be addressed.

Quality training provision for employers will also, as it is with greenkeeper training, be paramount on selecting trainers for these workshops and a current list of GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers can be found on the GTC's website. www.the-gtc.co.uk

Dates and venues for Chairman of Green – Green Convener workshops and Health and Safety awareness days will be circulated through the Unions and BIGGA as they are confirmed.

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Learning & Development

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

Last month saw me packing my bags and making the trip to Orlando, for the Golf Industry Show, in the company of our Chairman, Andrew Mellon. With a packed schedule of events and meetings, as well as the trade show, it proved to be a busy week leaving both Andrew and myself wanting some new feet!

Golf Industry Show

Relationships were cemented with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) and the Australian Golf Course Superintendents Association (AGCSA).

It was most interesting to discover, that no matter the size of each of our Associations, we are all facing the same challenges.

The strength of our relationships with these Associations can only help to make us all stronger by using each other's knowledge and expertise.

We were able to spend a few hours in the company of the GCSAA education team, bringing them up to date on our Continuing Professional Development and Master Greenkeeper reviews, showing them how their certification portfolio would be integrated into our systems.

Discussions surrounding the submission and recording of information were also on the agenda.

We also had a very productive meeting with representatives of the GCSAA's Board of Directors, their

new CEO, Rhett Evans, and Senior Director of Member Programs, Carrie Riordan.

We also got the opportunity to sit down with the Ken Cousineau, CEO of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA), to discuss similar issues about their education and membership database that proved very interesting.

Many suggestions and ideas were given to us by some of the companies with which we were able to meet.

These have been brought back to the Board of Directors and the staff to develop for the future.

The BIGGA delegation, sponsored by Bernhard & Co, saw 10 BIGGA members making the trip.

They had a packed schedule of events and each time we saw them we got a trip update.

I'm sure I speak on behalf of all of them in saying that they had a great time.

It never fails to amaze me how many people I know after 18 years working for BIGGA.

I met up with many friends, old and new, on the trip allowing me to have a good mix of business and pleasure.

This truly is an 'Awesome' industry to work in, I am very fortunate.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week

Feedback on this year's Continue to Learn education programme has been phenomenal.

We have received a record number of phone calls and emails



The funding provided by Gold 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 Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

congratulating us on our efforts to deliver a high standard of education for our members.

The challenge is now in place to produce an equally good programme for 2012.

I have many ideas, but I am, as ever, open to suggestions on how to improve the programme, topics you would like to see covered and names of speakers who have impressed you.

If you have any suggestions, please email me: sami@bigga.co.uk

Planning for Continue to Learn 2012 is one of a number of projects that are on the agenda for the rest of the year.

However, my main focus will be on the development of the improved CPD scheme, the introduction of Accreditation and the Master Greenkeeper review.

Watch this space for more information on these projects.



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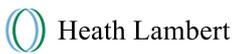
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Kubota Makes the Difference

“Our award-winning pitch is all thanks to our Kubota ride-on mower” – that’s the message from Glenn Bellis, Manager of Harefield United.

The Middlesex-based club purchased a Kubota G21 ride-on mower and quickly scooped the title of Best Pitch in the Spartan Premier Division before going on to win the Steps 5 and 6 National Award category in the FA’s 2010 Groundsman of the Year Awards.

The accolades came after the club’s committee took the decision of cancelling the existing groundcare contract in order to maintain the two pitches for themselves. With this in mind, each committee member personally contributed to the cost of buying the ride-on mower.

It was chosen because of its 21 hp Kubota engine and tight turning circle, which when combined with its light weight, means it can mow both pitches quickly and efficiently without marking the turf.

Glenn said that everyone at the club is absolutely delighted to have won the two awards:

“To be honest, we weren’t happy with our pitch, so we decided to buy the Kubota and maintain it ourselves. Our aim was to improve pitch quality so our teams could enjoy better facilities and game play – we never dreamed that we’d go on to win two awards within two years of deciding to maintain it for ourselves.

“It is a reliable machine, extremely easy to use and helps us to get the job done quickly.

“What’s more, it’s diesel, so it’s economical to run too.”

CARBON CAPTURING TURF

A new breed of slow growing carbon capturing turf has been launched in joint venture by Inturf, Paynes Turf and Rigby Taylor

In addition to its ability to lock up carbon dioxide, Carbon Capture Turf grows at a slower rate than other grass varieties, thus reducing maintenance costs and producing fewer clippings. Supplies of the new turf are available from this spring.

“Turfgrass already plays an important part in the designed landscape by providing the green open spaces which many people – especially city dwellers – long for,” says Brian Robinson, Director of Seed Research for Rigby Taylor.



Sanli Building Business Across The Irish Sea

Outdoor power equipment specialist Sanli is continuing to spread its wings with the appointment of new sales and service dealers in Ireland.

Now responsible for looking after domestic and professional customers in southern Ireland is Dublin Grass Machinery, based at Castleknock, Dublin. The company, which has a number of sub-dealers located primarily in the Irish Republic’s Leinster province showed off a selection of Sanli products recently to existing and prospective dealers’ staff at a special, horticultural machinery show staged at Punchestown Racecourse.

Organised by Irish garden machinery distributors, the indoor event represented the first public showing of Sanli outdoor power equipment in the Dublin area.

Moving northwards, newly-appointed Sanli dealer for Northern Ireland, Ground Control, attended a series of open evenings held to give domestic and professional machinery users a preview of some of the new products heading their way for the 2011 season.

A division of Johnston Gilpin of Lisburn, Co. Down, Ground Control has an excellent reputation for pre- and after-sales customer support, attributes that will help Sanli establish a strong and loyal customer base in the north of Ireland.

www.sanli.co.uk



New Man for Etesia

Etesia UK has appointed Phillip Gibson as Southern Area Sales Manager covering South Wales, the South East and the South West areas.

Phillip's new responsibilities include liaising with the company's marketing department, providing product advice, demonstrations and assistance to customers and dealers, as well as attending shows and exhibitions. He is also responsible for the sales, advice and demonstrations for the complete range of Pellenc lithium-ion battery powered products.

The last 12 months has seen an increasing number of operators now using Pellenc products. Pellenc is the only manufacturer in the world to be able to produce machines that can be used in the landscape and local authority industry for up to a full day's work on a single charge and at the same time guarantees use with no odour, no pollution and virtually no noise making them a truly environmentally friendly product.



ROLAWN APPOINTS NEW MANAGER

Rolawn, has appointed Steve Mullarkey as York Depot & Lawn Care Products Manager.

In addition to managing the York Depot, Mullarkey will also be responsible for the national distribution of the company's lawn seed and fertiliser range.

Phil Cuthbert, Commercial Director said:

"We are extremely pleased to welcome back Steve after several years in Australia.

"His extensive experience within the industry and knowledge of our customers and product range will enable him to build on the success achieved and further improve service levels to our customers."

What's your number?

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

Name: Tim Merrell

Company: The Grass Group

Position: Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?
21 years

How did you get into it?

By accident of course! I am an agronomist by qualification and farming was going to be my life.

What other jobs have you done?

I worked for Velcourt Farm Management, then in France and onto Alberta, in Canada, before coming back to be a Farm Manager in the Loire Valley in France for four years before setting up the business.

What do you like about your current job?

The variety, both in the people I meet, the places I get to visit and being outdoors. I always knew I didn't want to be stuck in an office!

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

I believe the whole industry has grown and become much more professional. Competition on both sides of the industry has meant suppliers have to innovate and the professional users have had stay on their toes. At a time where all budgets are restricted those involved have to know what they are doing and why they are doing it. If you don't you will be found out and you won't survive very long

What do you like to do in your spare time?

It seems to be a rare commodity! The expanding business and a family keep me pretty tied up. If I get a chance I sneak off and depending on the season I'll go coarse fishing or shooting.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

Still working to keep my wife and three daughters in the manner to which they have become accustomed!

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

The Dutch guys from Trilo and Paul Trowman

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

10

Pick a number

3

Tim has picked Adrian Handbury of Intelligent Watering



Suzuki GB Appoints New ATV Dealers

In a busy year promoting their All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) range, Suzuki GB PLC has appointed three new official dealerships in the UK.

The new dealers are Brian Keys Tractors of Dromore, Omagh, Goodrowes of Chichester, West Sussex and Martin Pears Engineering of Totnes, Devon.

All of which are qualified to offer a full sales and after-sales service to customers in their area.

For more information on the Suzuki ATV range or to arrange a test ride, find your local dealer at www.suzukiatv.co.uk

Or call 0500 011 959.

Yorkshire's true links

Scott MacCallum visits Cleveland Golf Club and meets a man who leaves no stone unturned in making his home-town course as good as it can be





It is an interesting fact, well it certainly was to me, that Cleveland Golf Club, in Redcar, is the only true links course in Yorkshire.

That piece of information was one of many which emerged from a meeting with Course Manager, Ian Pemberton, whose enthusiasm for the job is quite infectious.

Ian moved to his home-town club four years ago, from the inland Bedale Golf Club, and since then he has barely taken a backward step in ensuring that the course develops.

"The club has a great history. It was founded in 1887 and really is a sleeping giant," said Ian,

"I would say that I have managed to get a lot further forward than I could ever have hoped in the four years I've been here, I told them that it would be a five year plan but I think we zapped that in about two and a half."

Looking around the course you would find no reason to suggest that Ian was exaggerating.

His first task on arrival was to make improvements to the rough,

an area which had been causing problems for some time.

"The rough had become unmanageable over a number of years. It was overgrown and unkempt, too many balls were being lost and as a result play had slowed and green fee revenue had fallen off.

"Aesthetically, it looked unsightly and, from a wildlife point of view, it was stifling the fresh growth because it couldn't get through," he explained.

Ian and the team brought in an Amazone flail mower and got to work.

"It was a laborious task and it took two years to get it where we wanted, but it was very worthwhile. We now have improved the native flora and fauna and turned it back into proper links rough," explained Ian.

While this work was being carried they had worked hard on improving the club's practice ground and also looked at the 18th and 10th fairways, which were, by his own admission, "wall to wall chickweed".

"It was a laborious task and it took two years to get it where we wanted, but was very worthwhile. We now have improved the native flora and fauna and turned it back into proper links rough"
Ian Pemberton, Course Manager



Ian Pemberton, Course Manager

"We had some samples taken and the potash levels were non-existent – there just wasn't any potash in them at all – and the balance was never going to allow anything to grow."

"We corrected that with a potash feed, very low in nitrogen, and then over-seeded with pure fescue and up to now we've been very pleased with the results."

But the biggest project Ian and the team have undertaken over the last three years has seen a significant change to the look of Cleveland Golf Club, while also seeing the development of an innovative project which has



brought additional revenue into the club.

It originated in 2002 when Persimmon Homes purchased land from the local authority, on which three of the holes were laid out, with a view to building luxury houses with spectacular views of the North Sea.

In anticipation of the work going ahead three new holes were built out on the dunes, the 14th, 15th and 16th, which certainly haven't taken anything away from the quality of the course and in the case of the 15th, a par-3 over water, provided a hole which would grace many courses.

"The planning process for the houses took a long time during which time I arrived. I felt that would could take advantage of the building process and acquire some of the sandy soil that would be removed for foundations and move it on to the golf course.

"I contacted Lee Penrose, at the STRI, who together with Henry Bechelet, were extremely helpful in advising me how best to go about it – I would have needed a minimum

of two feet of sand to be able to grow the desired grasses."

It seemed the perfect plan with the golf course being able to develop using rootzone which couldn't be any more perfect for the job.

However, local objections saw the Persimmon housing development fail to win planning approval and Ian was forced to abandon his plans for the course or find an alternative solution.

Not a man to be beaten down and showing a resourcefulness that is common among many greenkeepers he tracked down a local recycling contractor.

"Keith Rutherford was looking for an area in which to dispose of soil and brick and we were looking for the material to create character and definition to an area of the course around the 3rd and 4th holes which was fairly featureless and full of small peaks and hollows, making it very difficult to maintain."

Ian's aim was to create an inland dune and build new tees with the material with the added bonus that



MAIN ABOVE: A view from the top of the new dune

INSET ABOVE: The new dune adds definition to the right side of the 3rd hole

the club would generate income from the material brought in.

"It's a win-win situation for us," said Ian, who admits to being the driving force behind the project.

"The Chairman of Green, Dave Atfield, has been extremely supportive during this process, but he sometimes hides when he sees me coming at him with another idea," joked Ian.

That 20,000 tonnes has enable Ian to build a huge inland dune, five to eight metres high, to add definition to the right side of the 3rd hole and a backdrop to the

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The stunning par 3 on the 15th

7th green to ensure that there is no distraction to people putting of those playing off the nearby 12th tee.

“The great thing is that the digger operator, the digger and its diesel is paid for by the contractor so we don’t have any outgoing at all,” said Ian, who admits he has been very lucky that the operator has shown a real flare for the work and a desire to do it as well as he can.

“He is outstanding – a craftsman!” is Ian’s assessment.

It is an on-going programme and the current Club Captain, Keith Cooper, has also identified an area behind the 4th green which he feels would benefit from a mound.

“That would be purely for aesthetics, to shield the hole from the Steel Works, which borders the course, but we are aware that too much would be as damaging as nothing at all as it could alter the character of the place beyond all recognition.”

However, the work so far has received great acclaim from the membership and improved that particular area of the golf course no end.

“The one small downside is having lorries driving over the course to deliver their loads.

“We can have as many as 20

wagons a day while other days we may only have three and others none at all but we looked at the situation and got in touch with the council to identify the shortest possible route over the course for access.

“All the drivers are informed that the golfers’ safety takes priority and we don’t have any problems.”

Ian is very much an advocate of good traditional sustainable golf.

“We’ve just applied Rescue to a couple of greens and achieved a successful outcome, but it’s minimal feed – we just do a 3-0-8 to start them off and then go on to liquids while we will put on a half rate 4-0-24 application at the back end of the year just to ensure they are healthy going into the winter.”

He was particularly pleased a couple of years ago when the club hosted an R&A Sustainable Golf Seminar when Nick Park, a member of the Golf Course Committee and a great advocate of Sustainable Golf, complimented him on the quality and quantity of fescue in the greens.

In his four years at the club, Ian and the team have continued to build tees and now the vast majority of the project, designed to add length to the course, has been done.

“We can have as many as 20 wagons a day, so we got in touch with the council to identify the shortest possible route over the course for access”

**Ian Pemberton,
Course Manager**



The huge artificial dune continues to grow

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The mini Swilken Bridge built by a member

“We totally amended the 1st; done the 2nd, built two on the 3rd; 4th not yet; 5th – we’ve plans for that incorporating the ing; 6th, we’ve extended and recontoured; extended the 7th, added extra length to the 8th; done the 9th; extended the 10th at the back and levelled it off and built a path by the side; 11th nothing yet; 12th nothing yet; 13, 14, 15 and 16 yes; 17 not yet, and 18 yes,” he reeled off, showing that he is as adept when it comes to memory as he is with course construction.

“We do it all in-house and I’ve got a great team here – Deputy Les Hunt, who has been here 20 years; Jamie Chester, who has been here 18 years; Kevin Bartram, who has been here 12 years and Aiden Coates, who has been here three,” said Ian, who added that Kevin and Aiden have proven themselves to be particularly skilled when it comes to building steps and paths.

The club has a very strong membership, and green fees have seen a marked increase over the last couple of years.

“We had a member, Bill Franks, come in and build us a mini Swilken Bridge while he also helped us construct the litter bins, with bricks given to us by Keith

Rutherford, that we have on the course. People take a pride in the club and it’s great to see.”

As I was leaving Ian pointed out another member who was repairing one of the outside lights on the clubhouse wall.

Ian was always aware of the fact that he had arrived at a links from an inland course and that he was particularly careful to steer clear of anything which might have been perceived of bringing parkland to the seaside.

“That said, I’m not a big advocate of the great divide between links greenkeepers and parkland greenkeepers. I class myself as a greenkeeper as simple as that. I love my job passionately and it is about grass be it on links or parkland.”

“The only difference is that we can be a lot drier at times, reaction times to implement any required maintenance has to be immediate. Always be proactive not reactive.”

Having achieved so much in his first four years Ian now has his sights set on becoming an Open Qualifying venue and has already been in touch with the R&A to set up a visit of the course in 2011.

It would be a fitting reward for the only true links in the largest county in the country.

“We do it all in-house and I’ve got a great team here – Deputy Les Hunt, who has been here 20 years; Jamie Chester, who has been here 18 years; Kevin Bartram, who has been here 12 years and Aiden Coates, who has been here three”

Ian Pemberton, Course Manager





Going that *extra* mile

In the aftermath of the Ryder Cup, Celtic Manor bore the scars from thousands of rain-soaked people conveying around roped-off sections during those tense final days. Jim Cook spoke with Director of Golf Courses and Estates Management, Jim McKenzie, about the tremendous efforts which have gone into restoring the damaged areas in time for the forthcoming Wales Open in June.



When the Ryder Cup circus moved into Celtic Manor in September last year a 'golf town' was effectively constructed.

It had its own traffic system, its own shops and places to eat and with 50,000 people on site each day, more inhabitants than most towns and villages in the surrounding area.



Inevitably this, combined with heavy rainfall, took its toll on the site. Back in the November issue of *Greenkeeper International*, Jim McKenzie said from an aerial shot taken after the tournament, it resembled a desert course, with islands of green surrounded by mud.

Whereas there was no damage to the actual course itself, on the other side of the ropes where the crowds were, was a different story.

Jim said: "A third of a million people walked through within the space of six days and it acted like a huge rotovator. Off the course, along the rope lines, we had significant grass cover that was lost. Alongside this, it took months for all of the infrastructure to be removed so by the time it was gone, a lot of it had been up for four or five months, so the areas beneath the tents and temporary facilities

were pretty much dead as well. So the damage was to spectator areas, hospitality areas, merchandising areas and places like that and was very significant.”

The last piece of physical structure related to the Ryder Cup, a skip used for the final clear up, was only removed on January 6. Jim mentioned this would have been sooner, though, had it not been for the inclement weather and snow towards the end of last year.

Celtic Manor is due to host the Wales Open at the beginning of June and with this prospect at the forefront of his mind, Jim implemented an expeditious recovery programme to bring the damaged areas of the course back up to pre-Ryder Cup conditions.

“The week after the Ryder Cup we split the course into three areas and started turfing the areas that we felt either needed to get back into shape very quickly or were fundamental for the Wales Open. Then there were other areas where we seeded that weren’t close to play



“A lot of the turf has been laid in huge, wide rolls that rely on specialist equipment to roll it so we’ve brought in local, Bridgend-based contractor, Inscapes”
Jim McKenzie

and that were going to take a while to recover, bearing in mind we were almost in October by then though. Then there were parts that we felt would recover naturally.”

The extensive renovation work required since the tournament would have been a full-time venture for his team of staff at the best of times, but with the unreliable weather and the Wales Open looming, not to mention regular daily maintenance of the course, contractors were brought in to assist.

“We brought contractors in order to get the job done as quickly as we can. A lot of the turf has been laid in huge, wide rolls that rely on specialist equipment to roll it so we’ve brought in local, Bridgend-based contractor, Inscapes, to do that work. Plus our guys have got other things to do.

“We have our winter maintenance schedule to take of so if we had laid all of the turf, and been responsible



for all of the restorations, we just wouldn’t have got it all done.”

One of the worst affected areas was the driving range, where the tented village had stood.

“We are still turfing the driving range at present. There’s something like £35,000 worth of turf going on it, because that was the site of the tented village during the Ryder Cup and it got absolutely hammered. With the Wales Open going on here at the start of June there is not a lot of recovery time, so that area has to be turfed. Basically we went in, scraped the mud and dead grass off and set new turf down. We used the local contractors for a lot of the turf-

ing, and our own staff have done a significant amount as well.”

To give an idea of scale Jim said how, overall, enough turf has been put down to turf the Millennium Stadium pitch four times over.

With the best part of three-and-a-half to four weeks of snow split into three different periods of time at the end of last year, the weather has not helped the recovery programme.

Jim admitted that in preparing a course for two high-profile tournaments in relatively quick succession comes a certain degree of pressure.

He said: “The expectation from the members and guests is very high because the course has held

the Ryder Cup and multiple other tournaments. Also the fact that the Wales Open is in June adds a huge amount of pressure to us, since we'll only have a matter of weeks of good weather between the end of spring and the start of the Wales Open week.

"So we have pressure both from a tournament point of view and from a customer and business point of view. We have it from all angles really."

Last year, the Wales Open was broadcast live to over 300 million households worldwide and with this year sure to be no different means the world will be watching Wales once again.

"A lot of the players who played in the Ryder Cup will be at the Wales Open, so the television pictures and the feedback from the players needs to be good. We can't get it wrong," Jim said.

With this in mind and spring just around the corner, efforts to get the damaged areas back to their best were well on their way.

"The site is getting back into shape. We've had no complaints from any of the visitors because the course itself is fine. The damage was restricted to the areas behind the ropes, because the players who played in the Ryder Cup didn't do any damage at all."

"The actual playing of the golf course is fine and always has been, but it's the extremities to the left and right of holes, the hospitality and catering areas. In some instances on the same hole multiple tasks have been carried out. Some bits have been seeded, some turfed, and some will come back on their own so every hole is different."

Reflecting on the Ryder Cup, Jim stressed the efforts of everybody involved in going that extra mile during the week.

"It was not just us, but everybody involved who put in that extra bit. The marshals, referees, people who drove the buses, manned the car parks, right across the board. There were a lot of people who went that extra mile in order to make sure the event took place. Colin Montgomerie said in his closing speech that the world was watching and Wales delivered. It wasn't just us but the whole combined efforts."

It was the greenkeeping team, however, which has since been singled out for an award.

"We have subsequently learned that since the Ryder Cup that the greenkeepers who worked on the tournament have been given an award from the City of Newport to recognise the efforts. It's for my staff



and also the volunteers from other courses.

"It's an award called the Extra Mile Award which is presented to people that go the extra mile to put the city on the map, so we've won that for our efforts."

The Extra Mile Awards was introduced last year and is an initiative run by Newport City Council and the South Wales Argus newspaper, where individuals or organisations are nominated for going that extra distance.

Jim explained part of the motivation for the achievement.

"It wasn't the most enjoyable week I have ever had but it has certainly turned out to be the most satisfying. Irrespective of how many days it took to play the Ryder Cup, the most important thing was that we got it finished and we succeeded in playing for the 28 points. The main thing was that the integrity of the Ryder Cup remained uncompromised."

For this accomplishment then, and for being the first greenkeeping team in history to help win the Ryder Cup, the Extra Mile Award must be the icing on the cake.

Recognition from outside the industry is always a positive because, after all, without greenkeepers there would be no golf courses.

For the job done last year and little respite before the Wales Open, all praise toward Jim and his crew is thoroughly deserved for the way in which they continue to do our profession proud.



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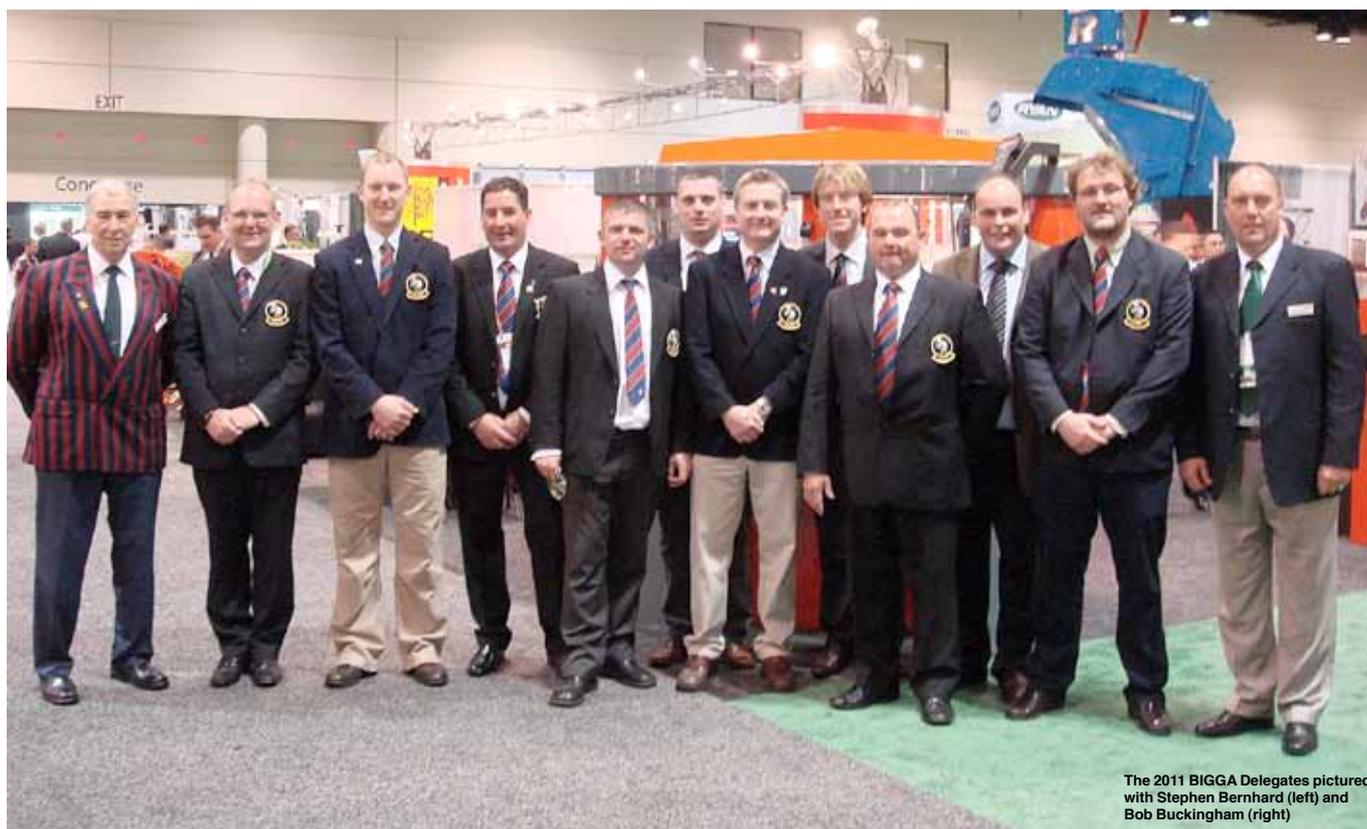
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The 2011 BIGGA Delegates pictured with Stephen Bernhard (left) and Bob Buckingham (right)

A trip worth the wait



The BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show (GIS) & GCSAA in the USA, is an annual trip sponsored by Bernhard and Company Ltd, as part of an exchange programme to forge and maintain professional and friendship links between British and American golf greenkeepers. Delegation member, Jim Brown, reports on an enjoyable week

The 2011 delegation was originally selected to travel to the GIS, in New Orleans, in 2009, however due to a general 'tightening of belts' throughout the UK, the trip to the USA flagship greenkeeping show was postponed for two years.

The announcement to recommence the trip to the USA, starting with a visit in February 2011 to Orlando, Florida, was met with delight by the delegation originally selected.

**Tuesday, January 18
– Harrogate BTME**

Beyond the interviews, the whole experience started properly at the Bernhard Reception which this year was held at the Old Bell Tavern in Harrogate. Delegates

were introduced to each other and were given the opportunity to meet with past delegates, and of course selected members of the GCSAA and our hosts in Florida. It was a great occasion, in an excellent atmosphere and an opportunity to put faces to names. Information packs were distributed and introductions made, anticipation was high.

**Saturday, February 5
– Marriott Cypress Harbour,
Orlando, Florida**

With the flight from London Gatwick behind us, we arrived at the Marriott Cypress Harbour, south of downtown Orlando. A fantastic hotel including self-catering lodges which we shared. Once settled we used the remainder of the evening to get to

know each other and, of course, sample the local brews – A typical American Sports Bar - Orena, was highly recommended by one of the hotel staff and was an excellent choice, soon to become our second home for social downtime.

Sunday February 6

Sunday morning was free time; enabling the more familiar with Orlando to introduce the new visitors among us, to the sights and sounds on what was a quite cool morning. Wandering around with cameras photographing upturned buildings and American menus among other things. It really is an assault on the senses.

In the afternoon we were joined by Andrew Mellon, BIGGA Chairman, and transferred by our hosts, Bernhards, to the parent's

The 2011 BIGGA Delegates:

John Kenaghan – Chipping Sodbury Golf Club; Richard Cutler – La Moye Golf Club; Andrew Boyce – Bath Golf Club; Derek Robson – The Dukes, St Andrews;
Stephen Chappell – Neath Golf Club;
Graham Pickin – Thornhurst Park;
Robert Sandilands – Elsham Golf Club;
Nick Miles – Market Harborough Golf Club
Chris Haspell – Castle Stuart Golf Links;
Jim Brown – De Vere Oulton Hall



house of one of our chaperones. Gina Putnam's parents live in a stunning home within a golf course estate and it was clear as soon as we were all invited in and through the patio doors, overlooking the immaculate golf course, we were in for an excellent evening of Super Bowl and spirited conversation. A fantastic night was had by all and a big thank you to our hosts Mr and Mrs Putnam.

Monday February 7

With the jetlag dealt with and friendships confirmed, we set off early to visit two golf courses. First on the agenda was the Orange County National – Panther Lake, followed by Marriott Grande Pines.

Chris Brocious, the Equipment Manager at Orange County National – Panther Lake, was our guide around this extensive 45 hole golf course and golf facility. With over 1000 acres of land and what appeared to be the largest practice area we have ever seen, Chris took us through the maintenance schedule for the three golf courses, which included the responsibilities he and his fellow 43 staff have to meet to maintain this extremely busy golf facility. With over 90,000 rounds of golf throughout the year, they are kept busy delivering a very well presented golf course 365 days of the year.

Onto Marriott Grande Pines in the afternoon and more significantly, the golf

course situated around our accommodation, where we were introduced to Superintendent, Chris Flynn CGCS. Chris led us through his immaculate maintenance facility and with a refreshing honesty, answered all our many questions including nutrient programmes, irrigation techniques and his environmental aspirations. Grande Pines dating back to the 1960s, was re-constructed in 2002 and is currently maintained by a modest team of 18 staff – with over 42,000 rounds per year, the 7012 yard golf course is maintained within a \$1.2m budget.

While out on the golf course Chris explained the processes of over seeding during cool temperatures and the transition between Bermuda and Perennial Rye and including some of the many challenges Superintendents face every year in a changing climate.

With the tour of Grande Pines complete we took the short journey to the Faldo Golf Institute, which is also managed by Chris. A staggering 'practice facility' with a 'family fun' 9 hole golf course – all managed with 10 staff and with a budget of \$750,000.

On our return to Cypress Harbour, we readied for the evening and joined the John Deere Golf VIP Event. All ten delegates joined well over 1,000 international guests at The Cuba Libre, at Pointe Orlando, for drinks and an excellent opportunity to meet with



MAIN ABOVE and BELOW: Orange County Panther Lake
INSET ABOVE: On the 17th hole at Grande Pines with Chris Flynn





Field trip seminar at Shingle Creek



The quite magnificent Ritz-Carlton

friends and colleagues from across the world – a thoroughly enjoyable evening which was completed with a few games of pool, table tennis and an opportunity to show the locals how to play their own game of Cornhole – (You'll have to Google it).

Tuesday 8 February – Field Trip

Tuesday we were off on our first field trip seminar. We joined a group of over 200 Superintendents, Golf Course Managers and Greenkeepers from across the globe.

The trip took in four golf courses among which were: Shingle Creek, Bay Hill Golf Club & Lodge (Hosts of the Arnold Palmer Invitational), Marriott Grande Pines and The Faldo Institute for a closer look and the quite magnificent Ritz-Carlton Golf Club.

It was widely agreed that the Greg Norman designed Ritz-Carlton was by far the most impressive golf course we have seen to date. Staggering attention to detail and perfectly presented, the quite modest team of 26 deliver an unrivalled level of quality. All the four golf courses we visited operated on well over \$1 million budgets, with recently constructed (2003) Ritz-Carlton an enviable \$1.4 operational spend.

Deputy Superintendent, Josh Kelly, led us through the entire operation, again answering all questions with patience and clarity. All three

Superintendents and, of course, Deputy Superintendent, Josh, were excellent ambassadors for American golf greenkeeping, speaking with confidence and with a very high knowledge of their respective golf resorts and profession.

Early evening we made our way to the Convention Centre to attend the opening ceremony of the GCSAA Show. During the proceedings, we were introduced to the many different officers which make up the management of the GCSAA including, the new President, Jim Fitzroy CGCS. Jim talked about his aspirations for the GCSAA for 2011 and beyond and along with new CEO, Rhett Evans, delivered various awards to golf course Superintendents from across the US and to our delight, a very proud David Cole, of Loch Lomond Golf Club, for and in recognition of his commitment to environmental stewardship – congratulations to all but more especially to David.

Wednesday – Thursday 9 & 10 February – Showtime

9am, the Golf Industry Show, Orlando, Florida, officially opened its doors.

Dressed in full BIGGA regalia, the 2011 BIGGA delegates walked into the Orange County Convention Centre.

It is a huge building, which was now home to everything golf greenkeeping.

All the four golf courses we visited operated on well over \$1 million budgets, with recently constructed (2003) Ritz-Carlton an enviable \$1.4 operational spend



All the main players were represented and of course many we had never heard of.

Without a BIGGA stand at this year's show, we used the time wisely to talk to the many companies and vendors, collecting information, product brochures, exchanging business cards and of course, discussing the business of golf course management.

ABOVE: Getting a closer look at the Faldo Institute with Chris Flynn





There are obvious basic fundamentals between both countries and how we deal with the everyday challenges on the golf courses, however, the demand for perfection on the US resort golf courses and almost at any cost, can often create problems of its own – from this has developed an industry of fixers and problem solvers. It cannot, however, be argued that the Superintendents on high end resort golf courses, deliver anything other than exceptional standards and under incredible pressure.

What came as a very pleasant surprise was the amount of people

who travel from the UK to visit the show. As we wandered around the various hallways and booths, it was great to meet up with familiar faces, have a coffee and share experiences.

With 3.30pm approaching, all the delegates made their way back from the various conversations and meetings, to meet at the Bernhard & Co stand for the customary photo call and then on to meet Golf Course Superintendent of The Old Collier Golf Club, Tim Hiers.

Tim led the effort to achieve the designation of the first Audubon International Gold Signature Cooperative Sanctuary and more recently became recipient of the 2009 GCSAA Excellence in Government Relations Award. Joined by Stephen Bernhard, we joined Tim in a conference room within the convention centre whereupon we listened carefully as Tim spoke.

Throughout the hour we heard about Tim's experiences and opinions on everything from member communication, maintenance facilities and budgetary control including resource management. Unfortunately the opportunities

for questions were limited however, the few considered questions put to Tim he took the time to answer based on his considerable experience.

At 5.30pm on Wednesday afternoon we all made our way to Tommy Bahama's, for the Bernhard reception. This event was very well attended by many of Bernhard & Co's past US delegates, friends and associates. Once again, this was an excellent opportunity to meet with many experienced colleagues from around the world and very well organised by our friends from Bernhard & Company. With a Who's Who of British and American greenkeeping in attendance, opportunities were plenty to discuss the differences between the two countries and the way we manage our golf courses and resources.

While many Superintendents were familiar with our efficient golf greenkeeping operations, there were those who weren't – many staggered by the available resources, available manpower and results we, the British greenkeepers, achieve year in year out. With Bernhard & Co

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facilitating the introductions, again many friendships were made which will be maintained for longer than the week spent in Orlando.

Friday 11 February – All day seminar

Transferred by Kim and Gina, from Bernhards, we once again attended the Orange County Convention Centre, this time to attend a seminar titled: The Science of Physical Properties in the Real World – Beyond the Textbooks.

It was clear from the prior early night, that all delegates were well prepared for this opportunity to gain a further understanding into the management and the philosophy of our American cousins and how they meet the needs of the golf courses they manage. Our lecturer, Mr. David L. Doherty, of The International Sports Turf Research Centre, introduced himself as an individual who concentrated on rootzones and growing mediums, the aeration practices employed to maintain healthy turf & drainage challenges. David delivered a very comprehensive talk which

identified many best practices based on his experiences and his significant career in managing the physical properties of growing mediums. Using anecdotal evidence, slides and video, he offered sound practical advice on how to deliver consistent surfaces on any golf course. All delegates were given a comprehensive pack with all the information within the seminar and with that, returned to the hotel to prepare for our last night in Orlando.

Friday evening we all attended the Jacobsen International Reception at the Universal theme park. Again in attendance were many British greenkeepers and associates of our industry. A fantastic evening was had by all and with us all meeting later for one last night at 'our' local bar, we enjoyed a couple of beers and chatted about the whole experience in Orlando at the Golf Industry Show. With Saturday being a free day before flying home, the discussions, laughter and drinks carried on well into the night.

The 2011 BIGGA Delegation brought the number of British delegates who have travelled to

The Golf Industry Show to 90 delegates, and with 20 delegates travelling from the US to BTME, Bernhard & Co need to be thanked for their unwavering support and service to greenkeeping and golf course management.

With the backing of Stephen Bernhard, the incredible hard work displayed by Kim Furnell & Gina Putnam, all delegates who have been fortunate enough to attend the trips to the industry shows, have benefited hugely.

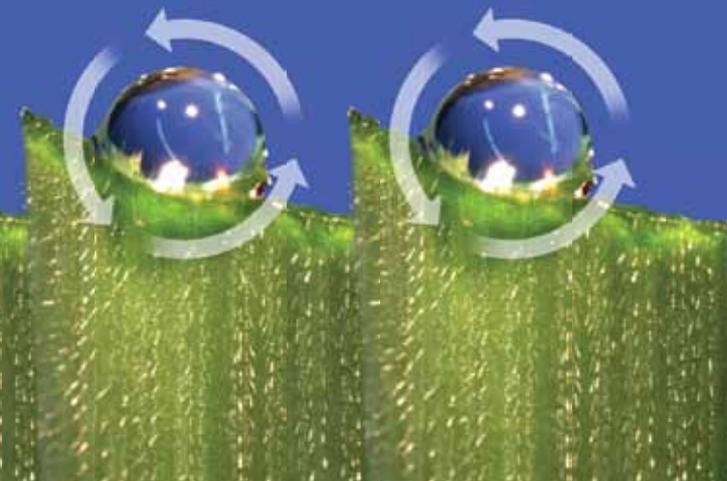
The whole process for the 2011 BIGGA Delegation has been educational, warm felt and appreciated and brought together ten like-minded individuals who are better people and golf greenkeepers for the whole experience.

On our return and since we attended The Golf Industry Show, emails have been exchanged between delegates themselves, with our US contemporaries and some of the many people we met along the way – all which proves, the BIGGA British Delegation really works and for which, Bernhard & Co should be suitably thanked and rewarded for their self-less efforts.



ABOVE: At the show with Kim and Gina from Bernhards, and some of the delegates

stays cut...
after cut... after cut...



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A QUICK GUIDE TO...

MAKING THE MOST OF MACHINERY

Stuart Hall, of John O'Gaunt GC and the IGCEMA, offers advice on making the most of your machinery

We all understand the importance of looking after machinery and the reasons why, but sometimes with all the pressures from all around us we sometimes forget the basics

1. Operator Training

Probably the most important part of the workplace safety, ensuring all operators young and old, experienced or not, have regular reviews in machinery operation and safe practices.

2. Pre and post operation checks

With the constant pressure of an ever increasing workload sometimes pre start check get overlooked, not only does this risk operator safety it also reduces machine performance and increases the possibility of expensive machinery damage.

Washing down machinery after use not only helps retain the value of the machine but can show up oil leaks or damaged parts before they lead to untimely breakdowns or turf damage.

3. Storage

Safe and secure storage is a must, not only for safely getting on and of machinery but with the global economic downturn expensive machinery becomes even more susceptible to thieves, simply marking

machinery with some sort of identification to your club is enough to deter the opportunist thief, while chaining together the smaller, easy picking items like chainsaws and strimmers can put them off too.

4. Scheduled maintenance

Routine maintenance through the cutting season can be neglected due to busy periods, staff shortages and cost, but cutting corners on routine maintenance can lead to serious and expensive issues with machinery, in the short term it may save money but in the long term can lead to catastrophic failures and large repair costs.

5. Equipment replacement plan

A rolling replacement plan is easy to set up, not only does it help forecast replacement costs over a five or ten year period, run side by side with machinery maintenance costs can be a useful tool in managing your golf clubs machinery purchases.

6. A good work place attitude

Everyone wants to work in a positive and happy environment. No one wants to work at a place where everyone is bickering and just putting in their time just to get paid. If you work in a company that is



happy and has the necessary equipment and materials to make a job easier to do, then staff can do their job more proficiently and correctly.

A company that is constantly having down time because of outdated equipment or shabby materials will see a decrease in performance and staff morale.

Stuart Hall
Workshop Manager
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Hedging your bets

Steve Moul makes the case for considering a traditional hedge as opposed to a fence or a wall when looking at boundaries

Fence, wall or something else? Choosing the right solution for a boundary has long caused headaches and on occasion heartache. Sometimes people, including the 'expert' landscape architects, planners and designers overlook what could easily be the best solution of all – a hedge.

Hedging offers many benefits, among them:

- **Practicality and privacy**

A wall or a fence can normally only provide cover up to six feet. Planning laws and at times, those of Physics may prevent any fence or wall from being over six feet tall in order to avoid a potential eyesore.

The right kind of hedge can start at six feet or more and will gradually increase your cover until it reaches the desired height. It goes without saying that a well maintained hedge should last a lifetime, whereas many fences will need replacing every few years and walls will need re-pointing and repair.

- **Natural beauty**

Hedges offer a softer, more natural boundary than walling or fencing. Where a boundary

extends along the entire frontage of a large estate or golf course, perhaps several hundred metres in length the contrast between hedging and a hard landscaped boundary can be huge. Who wants a prison wall look?

- **Security**

Choosing a prickly hedge such as Holly, Hawthorn or Pyracantha can be an amazingly effective deterrent to someone who wants to enter your property unlawfully.

- **Nature and wildlife**

Hedges can be an excellent habitat for many creatures and can give shelter and food throughout the seasons. Birds especially love to pick on the berries of holly and hawthorn and the invertebrates that thrive in hedges.

- **Noise and wind shelter**

Solid walls and fences simply deflect the wind upwards and over, hedges absorb the wind and calm it.

The extra height and thickness of a hedge is an extremely effective way of filtering out high noise levels and providing increased shelter from cold winds.



• **Planning**

It may be your only option as many planners are now insisting on hedges instead of walls or fences in order to soften the effect of any new development on the environment. Planners will also stipulate a minimum initial height and may even specify the type of plants to use.

Once you have decided to install a hedge, there are many other things to consider before planting. The choice of plants is critical and making the right decision depends upon a number of factors.

Key factors that should be considered are:

- 1. Function of the hedge**
Is this a formal hedge, what is its primary purpose and at what height will it ultimately need to be maintained at?
- 2. Evergreen or deciduous**
Consider the desired appearance and function of the hedge throughout the year.
- 3. Budget**
This could easily be the number one factor to consider for many people as we all have

to work to a budget. However, beware the false economy of buying cheap, poor quality plants.

Ask the supplier to show you evidence of the quality of plants you can expect to receive.

- 4. Soil type and location**
Most common hedging plants are very hardy and tolerant of a wide range of conditions, but some will do better than others in certain soils and aspects.

Light levels and any overhanging foliage will have the biggest effect on the plants.

Ask for advice on how to improve the soil from your supplier.

- 5. Nearby trees, foundations and waterways**
Any of these things can affect levels of moisture that make it to the roots of newly planted hedges.

Concrete footings and tree root systems can reduce water levels, but nearby streams and rivers can raise water tables in a way that may not be visible on the soil surface.

Good knowledge of local conditions is advised in order to ascertain whether a hedge is the correct option.

The extra height and thickness of a hedge is an extremely effective way of filtering out high noise levels and providing increased shelter from cold winds



6. Are you planting the hedge?

Planting a large hedge is labour intensive. Large root-balled trees can weigh up to and above 100kg each. Do you have the right equipment to unload the plants, dig a trench, move the plants around and lift them in?

Plants can easily be damaged by mishandling. This could require at least two pieces of specialist equipment such as a Manitou forklift and a large excavator. Some hedge suppliers will offer a planting service which includes all of the appropriate machinery and knowledge involved in giving the hedge the best start possible.

Once the decisions have all been made, it will be time to start looking for the right plants. Where to start looking? Local nurseries are probably not your best option. It could take days or weeks to trawl through them to find anything remotely like what you're looking for, assuming they can even offer the right quantity, size and quality. That could become a never-ending task.

Turning to the internet would seem like the obvious thing to do, but Google 'Mature hedging' and

you are faced with the opposite problem. You will find dozens and dozens of websites all apparently offering the product you want, but the prices vary enormously. Also, how do you know what to expect in terms of quality and how do you go about sending back a lorry load of plants if they turn out to be the wrong size or type?

Current Distance Selling Regulations (2000) provide the buyer with a seven day cooling off period, which puts the onus on the supplier to get it right first time.

It would seem that this old fashioned industry is moving fast into the 21st Century and suppliers are embracing this to great effect.

The biggest bonus of internet competition is that quality is improving in order for suppliers to win more business. Discerning customers will always be after better quality plants and service. The competition is only ever a couple of clicks away.

There is no reason to accept anything other than top quality plants now and they are available at competitive prices. A mature box or yew hedge would have seemed like a major investment some years

ago, but they have become much more affordable and commonplace in recent years thanks to internet competition.

The internet is not the only way that this business is moving forward. The product itself is changing fast, in order to respond to the growing demand for 'instant results'. While one has always been

Many growers are now offering very high quality, instant hedging plants or 'elements' which would fool most people that the hedge has been growing in that spot for a number of years

able to buy box, yew and beech hedging etc in a range of sizes, it is now also available in a range of shapes too.

Growers are now innovating in order to satisfy demand for instant hedges, and they are using sophisticated technology to do this. Some even go as far as to plant their crops using unmanned robotic tractors, guided by GPS

Contact

Steve Moul and Mark Jones
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and cultivating plants in rows hundreds of metres long. Ongoing maintenance is carried out in the same fashion, by tractors crawling alongside the crop trimming and undercutting the plants automatically.

The person walking behind is there only to monitor the progress of the machine as it moves along. The results are spectacular too – hedges can now be supplied that are arrow straight, two metres tall and are literally the finished article.

Many growers are now offering very high quality, instant hedging plants or ‘elements’ which would fool most people that the hedge has been growing in that spot for a number of years.

The days of lining out and spiralling thousands of bare root whips may be numbered as the customer increasingly wants a solution that won’t take years to achieve.

The best compromise would be to use the internet to find a supplier that will engage with you in a professional manner to find the best solution to suit your needs and will guarantee to deliver a fantastic end product whatever your budget.



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Moss is believed to be one of the earliest plant forms to have evolved on dry land. Approximately 20,000 species of moss have been identified and they exist on every continent.

Mosses are classified in the phylum Bryophytes; a group that contains the liverworts (Marchantiophyta), the hornworts (Anthocerotophyta) and the mosses (Bryophyta). Evolutionists believe that the first life on earth began in the oceans and developed from primitive single-celled organisms. Around 1.5 billion years ago the first plants to evolve in these oceans were the algae – organisms that developed the chloroplast; giving them the ability to trap energy from sunlight in a process we call photosynthesis. All plants that exist today have evolved from types of algae that began to emerge from the seas some 450 million years ago!

In botanical terminology we refer to 'lower' and 'higher' plant forms, a reference to the degree of evolution

and sophistication rather than the physical height! Bryophytes are considered to be lower plants and differ from higher plants in that they have no vascular transport system to distribute water and nutrients throughout the plant. They do not produce flowers or seeds but reproduce through spores. Bryophytes have no defined root structure for obtaining moisture and nutrients.

The life cycle of moss is complex, involving a sexual stage where the male gamete (sperm) fertilises the female gamete (eggs), to produce an embryo that gives rise to a spore-bearing structure known as a sporangium. During the sexual stage the motile male 'sperm' is transported on water droplets (rainfall or dew drops) to the female 'egg', therefore moss cannot survive in a totally arid environment. Moss spores are simple single-celled structures that serve to colonise new ground. They germinate in the presence of moisture to form new male or female plants. Asexual



reproduction of mosses occurs by the development of new shoots from the previous year's growth or by fragmentation of the plant.

Mosses acquire nutrients through a variety of means; some get nourishment from direct contact with water droplets, others can extract nutrients from the soil or materials on which they are growing.

Dealing with moss in turf

Well managed actively growing turf will rarely suffer from the invasion of moss. Mosses are opportunists; they will only thrive where grass lacks vigour, so treatment with chemicals alone will not provide a long-term solution. We need to look for the cause of weak grass growth and take remedial action to provide sustainable moss control.

Just as moisture is an essential requirement for the growth of moss, it will also have an impact on turf health. Excessive moisture reduces the air supply to the

roots putting the grass under stress. We often see the worst moss infestations in the winter and early spring when the water table is high and surface moisture is in abundance. Waterlogged turf can be caused by inefficient or inadequate drainage and by water retention in the thatch layer. Examination of the drainage system and the soil profile should reveal the cause of poor water management in these situations so that remedial action may be implemented.

Too little moisture has obvious effects on plant vigour since drought conditions will thin out the sward making room for moss to take hold when the moisture levels are reinstated. It is therefore important to maintain adequate moisture in the sward by irrigation, where this is possible, during prolonged dry periods. The application of a suitable wetting agent in dry weather can help to move the irrigation water away from the surface, getting it quickly down to the roots where it is most needed.

Light is essential for healthy plant growth and where it is restricted by the season or by buildings, trees, shrubs and other objects, grass growth will be affected in the immediate vicinity. We cannot influence the seasonal patterns of solar radiation but we can in some cases address the problems caused by shading. Pruning or the complete removal/relocation of offending trees and shrubs may provide a dramatic improvement in turf health. While it may not be possible to achieve similar improvements near permanent

structures such as buildings, it may be possible to increase light levels by making surfaces reflective with special coatings, cladding or reflecting paints.

Providing the correct balance of nutrients is important in encouraging strong growth, especially on intensively managed sandy soils. In most cases this requires a seasonal programme of feeding based on soil analysis that can identify deficiencies and supplement these when the conditions dictate. In striving for optimum grass growth one must also consider the need to avoid triggering other problems such as turf disease that can occur when the appropriate timing of fertiliser applications is not observed.

Soil analysis will provide essential data on the acidity, which can also have a detrimental effect on turf growth. Moss is quite often found in the thinned swards growing on acid soil. A pH value around 5.5 will provide the optimum pH for growing fine turf.

Scalping or mowing the grass too low can be a further cause of summer stress. Clearly the height of cut depends on the type of sward. Putting surfaces and bowling greens use grass cultivars that can adapt to a low cutting height and are more intensively managed to counter the effects of close mowing but even these areas have limits beyond which scalping will thin the turf. Therefore, where moss is a problem in turf, increasing the mowing height may be worthwhile.

The final consideration in the search for the cause of poor grass growth is compaction, resulting

from heavy traffic (machinery and foot) – particularly during the wet seasons. Compaction restricts air movement through the soil and physically slows root penetration. The resultant loss of turf vigour will often give an opening for moss invasion. Dealing with compaction may require an increase in mechanical aeration, traffic management to steer users away from bottlenecks and problem areas or soil amelioration with aggregates designed to permit air and water movement such as 'Axis' based on diatomaceous earths.

We cannot influence the seasonal patterns of solar radiation but we can in some cases address the problems caused by shading. Pruning or the complete removal/relocation of offending trees and shrubs may provide a dramatic improvement in turf health

Treating moss on turf with chemicals

Fewer chemicals are available to deal with moss problems today, as legislation from the EEC has caused manufacturers to withdraw some of the more useful products. Prior to the early 1980's mercury-based moss killers, which contained calomel (mercurous chloride) were used for moss control. These were withdrawn, along with the mercury-based fungicides, because of their inherent broad spectrum toxicity and long soil persistence. They were quickly replaced with products containing dichlorophen e.g. 'Super Mosstox'. Dichlorophen had recommendations for use on both turf and hard surfaces and was known to have an effect on the spores as well as on the moss itself. However, dichlorophen was withdrawn after it failed to make it into 'Annex 1' – Directive 91/414/EEC. This directive was issued under the Plant Protection Products Regulations 1995.

Today, only two alternatives are available for controlling moss in turf – these are:-

- 'Jewel' a selective herbicide spray from Scotts containing carfentrazone-ethyl and mecoprop-P that will control moss and a range of broad-leaved weeds.





• Products containing ferrous sulphate – available in a multitude of formulations; a ready-to-use liquid sold under the brand name 'Feromex', fertilisers containing high levels of ferrous sulphate e.g. Scotts 'Greenmaster Mosskiller', and various brands of lawnsand.

The use of wetting agents and adjuvants to counteract the hydrophobic conditions associated with moss will improve the effectiveness of liquid moss control products.

Controlling moss on hard surfaces

Moss will survive on a wide variety of hard surfaces such as roads, paths, playgrounds, athletic tracks, hard tennis courts, other solid sports areas, artificial turf, building surrounds, walls and roofs. It just needs moisture, some nutrients from dust and atmospheric fall-out and a small crack or crevice for anchorage.

Cultural control of moss on hard surfaces is not as effective as it can be on turf. However, drying out regularly affected surfaces may be possible by improving drainage to prevent flooding and by increasing the natural airflow that might be restricted by overgrown trees and shrubs. Brushing can be effective on certain surfaces.

There are no longer any approved pesticides for hard surface moss control. Products containing ferrous sulphate will

leave rust stains on bricks, paving and other artificial surfaces so these should be avoided. However, there are a number of specialist hard surface cleansers that have proved effective in dealing with the problem.

Some surface cleaners require a very high water volume and are not easy to apply on large areas with conventional spray equipment. A promising new product 'Safor' works by denaturing chloroplasts with biocides and can provide a rapid, long-lasting solution for cleaning deposits containing algae, moss and lichen. The required water volume is well within the capability of knapsack and machine mounted sprayers.

Note that the use of surface cleaners will require an application of the material followed by a secondary cleaning operation after a few days to remove the loosened deposits. Also, when treating hard surfaces (especially artificial turf) it is important to test a small area for material safety before treating the whole area.



SELF ASSESSMENT

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim two BASIS points if the questions are answered correctly, by filling in the form at:

www.sherriff-amenity.com/technical.asp?newsid=21

Circle the correct answer(s)

1) Mosses and all other plants we know today evolved from algae. At what approximate time in earth's evolution did these algae first appear in the oceans?

- a) 450 million years ago
- b) 300 million years ago
- c) 1.5 billion years ago
- d) 5 billion years ago

2) Which of the following characteristics distinguishes the Bryophytes from higher plants? (More than one may apply)

- a) They produce green flowers only
- b) They do not have leaves
- c) They reproduce through spores
- d) They do not have a vascular system to transport water and nutrients.

3) Which of the following can contribute to lack of vigour in grass? (More than one may apply)

- a) Poorly drained turf
- b) Aeration with solid tines
- c) Shading by trees
- d) Soil with pH below 4.0

4) In which year were the Plant Protection Products Regulations issued?

- a) 1986
- b) 1994
- c) 1995
- d) 1991

5) What is the chemical constituent of the active ingredient calomel (now withdrawn from use)?

- a) Calcium chloride
- b) Phenyl mercury acetate
- c) Aluminium chloride
- d) Mercurous chloride

6) How many pesticides are currently approved for moss control on hard surfaces?

- a) 5 b) 2 c) 4 d) None

A for anthracnose

Dr Terry Mabbett continues his examination of the country's most common turf diseases by looking at anthracnose.

'A' was for anthracnose in appearing in late autumn as a distinctive dark-coloured basal (crown) rot of *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass) as long shadows and brown leaves fell across the greens.

Dry and compacted summer-stressed swards refreshed by rain and flushed with nitrogen fertiliser resumed growth in earnest during October but so did the anthracnose fungus having lain 'dormant' in the thatch during the dry summer months.

Anthracnose was a definitive disease of autumn through to spring with root causes in stressed grass plants in dry and compacted summer swards but has since become a real conundrum. A form of anthracnose distinguished by different symptoms, and called foliar blight, now perversely appears in summer to affect a much wider range of turf grass species.

The fungus responsible (*Colletotrichum graminicola*) has suffered a recent illogical scientific name change. More than two dozen different species cause anthracnose (means 'like coal') on everything from mangoes to bananas but just four are associated with anthracnose in the family Graminae (grasses and cereals).

The four species are distinguished by small but distinct structural differences and discrete physiological differences which determine exact host range.

C. graminicola was associated with anthracnose across a broad range of grasses and cereals but more recent findings indicate *C. graminicola* exclusively attacks cereals and mycologists now say the species infecting turf grass is *Colletotrichum cereale*. In layman's language and understanding *C. graminicola* and

C. cereale are for all intents and purposes interchangeable.

Anthracnose is no longer exclusive to shortening days, cool nights and morning mists of late autumn but already up and running as foliar blight during the warm still 'Dog Days' of August and often earlier. Basal or crown rot remains closely associated with late autumn and is still essentially confined to *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass) but has been seen on *Agrostis*. The foliar blight form of anthracnose is much less discerning and affects most cool season turf grass species.

Anthracnose is now firmly established as the second most important disease of UK turf after *Fusarium* patch (*Microdochium nivale*). Contemporary anthracnose infection is heavier and active over a longer part of the season on a much wider range of turf grasses. Its recent rise up UK



A¹ was for anthracnose in autumn as a distinctive dark-coloured basal (crown) rot of *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass), as long shadows and brown leaves fell across the greens.



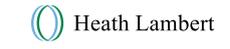
Greens are now at risk of anthracnose for most of the year, not just in late autumn and through to spring

turf disease rankings has resulted in a re-assessment of measures required to avoid, manage and control anthracnose including use of fungicides.

Gone are the days when anthracnose was purely a problem for autumn greens with a high percentage of *Poa* and only acted upon when disease symptoms appeared in October though present year-round in the thatch. Year-round vigilance and action to avoid and alleviate turf conditions and management practices which may aggravate anthracnose into action from its 'saprophytic' existence in thatch is required.

Basal rot and foliar blight

Basal rot anthracnose is generally a disease of cool wet autumns on close cut annual meadow grass swards, but also creeping bent grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*) in North America where it is called 'winter anthracnose'. Leaves turn yellow then orange/red due to the accumulation of specific pigments in the tissue and unmasked by destruction of normally



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overpowering green chlorophyll.

Closer inspection shows older leaves are affected first because the crowns suffer infection and necrosis from the outside inwards. The water-soaked bases of infected grass plant tillers are easy to pluck from the soil. At an advanced stage of infection erumpent conidia-containing structures called acervuli (singular is acervulus) appear as black stained areas at the base of the plant. This rotting and necrosis of the crown where new roots and buds are formed is the more serious of the two phases of anthracnose, which are basal rot and foliar blight.

Foliar blight was prevalent in North America long before it appeared and took off in the UK. Infection occurs, symptoms show and disease spreads during spells of high humidity with temperatures above 22°C, especially on turf struggling to grow over a dry root zone.

Water from summer showers or irrigation is repelled by the dry compacted surface of the root zone. Instead of percolating into the soil, moisture hangs around on the surface moistening and

raising humidity within the thatch to create ideal conditions for spore germination, leaf infection and the onset of foliar blight.

Patches of turf affected by foliar blight are yellow at first and then bronze with affected grass assuming a dull and darkened appearance. Annual meadow grass and creeping bent grass are the prime targets but smooth-stalked meadow grass (*Poa pratensis*) and creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) are also affected.

Once liberated from the acervulus conidia are spread across the turf by rain splashes, air currents, machinery and footwear to infect previously healthy areas of turf. Dead tillers and plants killed by basal rot and leaves with foliar blight die back to become thatch, where *C. cereale* survives as a saprophyte until conditions are right for re-infection.

Arrival of typical autumn conditions with morning mists, rainfall and increasing cloud cover sets the scene for the resurrection of anthracnose. Free water on leaf surfaces and high humidity in the sward re-activates the fungal mycelium on the thatch and



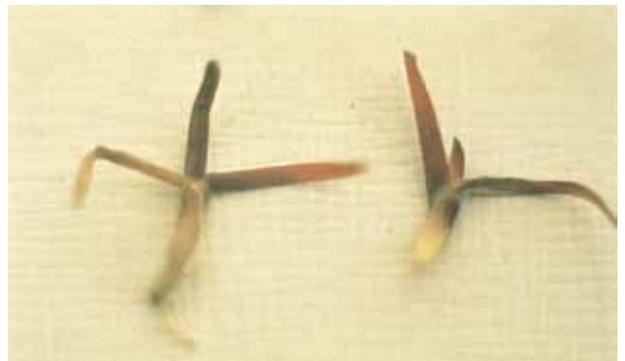
Anthracnose damage on a green high in Poa (*Poa annua* var *annua*) (Photo courtesy Headland Amenity)



Close up on basal rot anthracnose of *Poa annua* (Photograph courtesy Headland Amenity)



The aftermath of anthracnose infection (Photograph courtesy Headland Amenity)



Detached tillers of *Poa annua* showing dark coloured basal rot due to anthracnose (Picture courtesy Bayer Environmental Science)

initiates a new cycle of infection.

Grass trying to grow out of stressful conditions including soil compaction, deep thatch and dry root zones is an easy target for anthracnose. Soft growth responding to rain and poorly balanced (high nitrogen) autumn fertiliser over deep wet and humid thatch can be very susceptible to anthracnose. And especially if the ground is compacted, poorly drained and turf cut inappropriately low for this time of the year.

Thatch, stress and anthracnose

Twin key factors underpinning anthracnose are the pathogen's propensity to invade stressed and damaged turf grass and year-round presence of the fungus on the thatch.

Even when turf is green and clean *Colletotrichum cereale*, like *Microdochium nivale*, is ticking over in a saprophytic or weakly parasitic mode on the dead and dying grass material comprising the thatch. Thatch in itself adds to turf sward stress if allowed to

become inappropriately deep, thick and matted.

Single most important biological factor aggravating anthracnose is the presence of *Poa annua* (annual meadow grass) in turf grass swards. Annual meadow grass is a fast-growing, high-thatch forming species that exploits and monopolises turf suffering from high compaction and physiological stress, the very conditions that make turf grass generally more susceptible to anthracnose infection. Turf carrying a high proportion of *Poa annua* with its high-thatch and high humidity baggage offers a broader and bigger base for anthracnose residence and persistence and a more attractive substrate for infection and spread.

Poa annua is present to some degree in many fine turf swards even if unwanted. The species is variously regarded as a useful turf grass species or a rough grass weed, depending on original status of the turf and the ultimate goal of the greenkeeper. *Poa annua* has always stirred mixed emotions amongst the green keeping fraternity with much time and

effort invested in reducing *Poa* and its accompanying high risk of anthracnose infection.

High humidity is a trigger for anthracnose infection so good aeration above and below the ground by scarification, compaction relief, aeration and swishing dew should all help to keep the disease at bay. But

Twin key factors underpinning anthracnose are the pathogen's propensity to invade stressed and damaged turf grass and year-round presence of the fungus on the thatch.

anthracnose is a weak wound parasite and too much of the very techniques used to improve aeration and root zone drainage and reduce humidity may make matters worse. Added stress weakens the turf and abrasions to grass stems and leaves offer easy points of access and entry for anthracnose.

Unlock the potential of greenkeepers

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

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

Murray Mannall, Greenkeeper

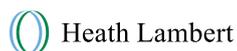


“ The support for this fund has enabled BIGGA to enhance the value of being a member, and it has previously given many greenkeepers the opportunity to further develop their careers. As an association we owe our Gold and Silver Key sponsors a huge vote of thanks. ”

John Pemberton, Chief Executive



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James de Havilland takes a closer look at the intricacies of current machinery

The anatomy of...

Heavy duty utility vehicles



Choose wisely to make most of your investment

Utility vehicles come in a wide range of shapes and sizes, with a choice of petrol, diesel and electric power. The key to choosing the right tool is establishing what it will be used for

With their low centre of gravity, a utility such as the John Deere Pro Gator and HD SelectSpray make a stable spraying combination. Are you buying a self-propelled sprayer that can do something more or a utility on its own?



Utility vehicle choice, in its broadest sense, is arguably wider now than it has ever been. It is only when you start to put together a few basic requirements, however, that the choice on offer starts to be easier to work through.

As an example, the Cushman Turf-Truckster, from Ransomes Jacobsen; the Pro Gator, from John Deere, and the Workman HDX models, from Toro, typically offer the capacity to carry attachments that can include core collectors, top dressers and sprayers. It is no surprise that these are the default heavy-duty models chosen by many golf clubs.

The key models are pretty close on their rated capacities too. Take the diesel-powered line-up that comprises the 24hp Pro Gator 2030A rated at 1,182kg, the 26.5hp Workman HDX-D-4WD offering a 1,289kg payload and the 23hp Cushman Turf Truckster offering a 1,293kg capacity. In the real world their overall specifications are broadly similar, with mechani-

cal transmissions and a choice of hydraulic packages to suit specific attachments.

Where the Gator-Truckster-Workman models come into their own is when they are fitted with purpose-designed attachments. This essentially enables end users to specify an 'off-the-peg' vehicle to cover spraying and top dressing, core collecting and other requirements, these attachments typically selling for less than trailed alternatives.

So although the 'on paper' price of these heavy-duty utilities can be high, their ability to work with purpose built attachments can actually make them a more 'complete' package. Example? Take a sprayer. All the listed models will take a sprayer of around 750 litres, with boom widths of around 6 to 7m dependant upon model.

The sprayer will sit low on the machine, to improve stability, with the weight more evenly spread between the wheels than perhaps would be the case with a trailed unit. The same will apply to a top



ABOVE LEFT: If your requirements will include the need to move personnel and materials over demanding terrain, a UTV with more serious off-road abilities comes into play. The entry level Polaris Ranger 400 has a battery-powered sibling, the Ranger E.

ABOVE RIGHT: Kubota RTV900 vehicles feature hydrostatic drive and power steering. This type of tool makes an ideal general workhorse, particularly when equipped with a hydraulic tipping body.

dresser. When these attachments are not in use, they demount easily and free the vehicle for other work.

As to alternatives to these established players, there are not really any diesel powered machines that are a match; petrol powered heavy-duty alternatives are offered by the 'big three' but a lower retail price has to be offset against the high cost and inconvenience of petrol power in most European markets.

If you are prepared to go a bit 'left field' you can find machines that perhaps could do a similar job. As an example, the Caron range from BSG Supplies includes the two-seat 847. This has a 38hp diesel engine and a 16Fx8R transmission and a payload of 3,000kg. It can be fitted with a top dresser or sprayer and comes with a three-way tipping body and cab.

BSG Caron machines do not fit into the expected utility vehicle niche, so it is all too easy to neglect them. But they are well worth a considering if you need a tool with greater capacity.

Similarly, if you are looking for a more general-purpose utility vehicle that will largely be used to move people and light kit around, consider entry-level petrol models to include the Kawasaki Mule 610



Top dressing is one of those tasks where the spreading equipment can benefit from a low load height. This allows the unit to be filled by hand from a trailer if necessary. A utility vehicle, such as a Turf Truckster, provides the right platform for this type of duty.



BSG Supplies offer the Caron range of utility vehicles in both single and dual seat variants. If you want a vehicle with a three-way tipping body, adaptable load platform and capacities of 3 tonnes plus, a Caron is worth a look.

and Polaris Ranger 400. Although petrol power is falling out of fashion due to fuelling costs, the relatively low initial purchase price of these machines can make them a cost effective buy.

There are also diesel powered models to consider to include the evergreen Kawasaki Diesel Mule, together with alternatives from companies to include Club Car, Bobcat, Kubota, JCB and well, the list is actually pretty long. The key is to establish the key difference between basic utility units designed to have a light footprint and modest load capacity and machines that have a bigger payload and the ability to power attachments.

Often overlooked are battery powered electric vehicles. These tend to go in and out of fashion, but there is no denying these tools do have a future. Polaris, for example, is selling increasingly large numbers of its Ranger E, this model essentially sharing same chassis as its Ranger 400 sibling with the result of it delivering good performance in more extreme going.

But there are other electric models to consider. These include vehicles that can be specified in road legal form. As an example, ePower Trucks has a range of electric utilities that have a 1,000kg payload. If your needs are for a runabout that may need to travel on the on road, then these machines could be of interest. In terms of cost, a road ready electric truck will cost similar money to a heavy-duty 'turf truck'.

A key to selecting a utility vehicle is to work out what it has to do. Existing heavy-duty models actually fit the bill perfectly when used as 'self-propelled' sprayers and top dressers.

But if you want a general carrier then you could do well to consider something else. The key to making the right choice is to have an open mind.



Light and relatively inexpensive to buy and run, small utilities like the petrol powered Kawasaki Mule 610 are also extremely quiet. This can be a useful feature when working around a busy course.

Existing heavy-duty models actually fit the bill perfectly when used as 'self-propelled' sprayers and top dressers



Current Toro Workman vehicles include the HDX. Looked at in isolation, these and other models from competitors do have a premium price tag. It is when you cost in attachments, however, that they start to make sense.

DEALER OF THE MONTH

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

TURNEY GROUND-FORCE

Location and size

- Weston on the Green, Oxon
- Site area: 4.5 acres (1.86 hectares)

Employees and size of premises

- 25 employees
- Covered area 1,650m²

Number of service vans

Nine

Brief history of company

PA Turney Ltd was founded in 1948 in Middleton Stony, Oxfordshire, by the late Peter Turney. Mr Turney was the son of a farmer and agricultural contractor. The business was established to repair and service agricultural machinery and quickly began to grow with a number of relationships being formed with key suppliers.

The company has since grown into a multi-million pound business, serving groundcare and agricultural customers throughout southern England. Today, it employs more than 100 people across the group continuing to provide the high level of service which was established in its early years.

Turney-Groundforce is the part of the PA Turney business dedicated to Groundcare. The site at Weston on the Green has been selling groundcare machinery and providing spare parts from here for over 40 years.

Key services offered

Sales, service, repairs and parts.

Specialist services offered

On-site repairs and full after-sales service.

How has the dealership changed over the years?

As the groundcare business has developed and grown, we've taken on more staff in all areas of the business. We've expanded the area which we cover with more salesmen on the ground and more technicians and parts representatives at our branches. Over the years, we have seen an increase in customers in the golfing sector. We also work more closely with a greater number of councils, local colleges and schools - especially within a close proximity to Oxford.

Much of this growth is thanks to developments in the machinery that we can offer. Modern technology has really changed and this has enabled us to appeal to a much wider customer base.

We now have a wide range of products suited to many different individuals. We can supply anything from a domestic mower to the sophisticated Boomer 3000 tractor complete with the award-winning EasyDrive CVT (Continuously Variable Transmission).

What would you like to see changed?

We are always keen to grow our business so we would welcome additional products from our manufacturers, which would enable us to appeal to a new type of customer or fulfil



ABOVE: Bernard Guildford, Service Manager
Robert Millar, Sales Manager
Mike Leach, Area Sales Manager
Trevor Joy, Parts Manager

other needs of our existing customers.

In the future, our customers will be doing much more of their business using the internet so we will need to change the way we work. We have to ensure that we will be able to offer the most up-to-date information and necessary interfaces to meet the requirements of the next generation.

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

We are happy to work with our customers who have in-house service facilities supplying OEM parts and also offer them advice and support.

Franchises

- New Holland and Ransomes Jacobsen

Major customers

- Local authorities
- Golf courses
- Construction
- Hospitals
- Large estates
- Utilities
- Bowls clubs
- Universities
- Colleges
- Schools and colleges
- Polo clubs

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 WORKMAN HDX-D FROM TORO. FOR EVERY JOB, HOWEVER TOUGH.

TORO



Built to handle even the toughest of jobs, the Workman HD Series is sturdier than ever. The Workman HDX-D, for example, comes in both 2- or 4-wheel drive options, boasts unequalled load-carrying capacity and can tow up to a colossal 1588kg. The Workman MD Series, meanwhile, is a range of mid-duty workhorses, featuring 'Superior Ride Quality' (SRQ) and is the perfect utility vehicle for smaller tasks like moving equipment and materials around the course. A wide range of attachments such as the ProPass 200 top dresser, sprayers and blowers complements the Workman Series to provide an unbeatable combination for any job, however tough. Contact us today for a free demonstration.

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WORKMAN HDX



PROPASS (TOWED)



MULTI PRO 5800-D SPRAYER



WORKMAN MDX



PRO FORCE DEBRIS BLOWER



partners in turfcare

Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scottish Region



Central

Belated news is that the 2010 Christmas games day resulted in a drubbing handed out to Lundin Golf Club by the mighty Leven Links who outplayed and out drunk them with ease and who look forward to trouncing them at golf this year.

The Section intends to hold a Pairs' competition along the lines of last year's Inter Club one. However, to attract as many players as possible and not rule out people who may be the only 'golfer' at their course we propose they can form teams from different clubs. The matches are ideally home and away on a match-play basis (four ball better ball). For more details and how to enter check out the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Last year's Inter Club Tournament final was contested between Leven and Crieff. It has still to be completed with the score standing at 3 Holes up to Crieff and the second leg to be played at Leven. We will have hopefully held two education events (maybe three by the time you read this). Lynn Joping, of SGEG, talk was rescheduled to February 9 because of December's snow and Headland Amenity has planned a seminar on February 23. Also in the pipeline is a seminar on March 9 by Grant Moir, of the R&A Rules Office, on the Rules of Golf and how they affect greenkeeping. All events are in the Elmwood training room and our thanks go to Elmwood for providing this facility for us. We are still trying to set up a workshop/seminar on irrigation for late March and letters will be out shortly for the

Spring golf meeting which will be at Ladybank Golf Club on April 28.

Gordon Moir



West

The snow has gone and as usual is replaced with rain, what a surprise, I just hope things improve over the coming weeks. We can look on the bright side in that courses are looking good due to the lack of traffic.

As stated last month I had a fair bit of damage from snow mould so this month I will be concentrating on plugging from our putting green, the rest of the course looks great.

What's happened in the last few weeks, well nothing much, I attended Harrogate and that's about it.

During my time at Harrogate I completed a two-day workshop on management which I found has given me a new excitement for the weeks ahead, trying to implement some of the ideas passed on through the trainer, Shona Garner, who runs the two days. She exuded an enthusiasm for dealing with people and her subject which I found quite infectious, so for that I would like to thank the Duracell bunny as she is known. The two-day course was demanding and very informative and I would recommend all to have a bash.

The Exhibition and Conference I found to be excellent with a wide variety of machines, irrigation companies, construction, fertilisers, waste management and advisory services available for all to see. The seminars I attended were of an extremely high standard and gave me a few things to consider for the season. Socially, I'm sure I didn't get to see everybody, but it just amazes me how many

people you bump into and then once you start talking time just evaporates. I do apologise to Gerry for not taking photos but I didn't want to have any litigation proceedings raised against me for some of the uncompromising situations I witnessed. Only kidding folks.

I hope to report on a successful conference in the next issue of the magazine and by then I will confirm the dates of the various outings and venues.

Could members please remember that Gerry Bruen is now operating a blog for the West Section and contributions would be appreciated.

Please remember my email stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com and my numbers 0141-942-5554, or 07790 823914 for any news.

While we're on the subject, congratulations to Christian Carvel and his wife on the birth of their twins and I hope all is well as one of them required an operation recently.

Stuart Taylor



Ayshire

Hello everyone. Hope you've managed to get some or all of your winter projects completed around the snow, ice, the big thaw, and, of course, the rain! I so hope this indicates a long hot summer for us all, or am I just being optimistic?

The spring outing this year is to be held over Prestwick St Cuthberts golf course with the date to be confirmed. Keep your eyes peeled for the postie!

By the time you receive this issue of Greenkeeper International the Scottish conference at Dunfermline will have passed. A report on this will follow in next month's issue. The conference is well supported throughout the

industry and I hope the Ayrshire Section will put in a good attendance!

Not much else to report this month other than I wish everyone the very best for a successful golfing season ahead.

Until next time, keep smiling!
Cheers.

John Mair.

Johnmair982@hotmail.co.uk
07500874449



Northern

Well, the weather seems to have passed and we can all get on with those all important jobs. Getting out on the course and doing some aeration, whether it be tees, greens or fairways, it has been a novelty with some courses so let's hope it continues.

First of all I would like to offer the Section's congratulations to a certain course up near Inverness, namely Castle Stuart Golf Club, on being awarded the Barclays Scottish Open. I'm sure Stuart McColm and Chris Haspell and all the staff at Castle Stuart will have the place looking awesome! With the likes of Phil Mickelson and Pádraig Harrington playing your course you won't need to give much of a team talk to the squad. So we look forward to the first week in July and seeing the course on the TV. Good Luck Castle Stuart and well done!

Next, we have a case of better the devil you know. My old mate, Ross, is moving back to Newmachar GC. He started there on February 7. So good luck Ross and I hope everything works out for you. I know someone who couldn't wait for you to start back. Mentioning no names, eh George Mitchell. He has really missed you Ross and let's just say he's had a wee spring in his

step since it was confirmed you were coming back. You'd better get used to those five minute jobs again. Ah bless him!

Last but not least, Hughie, Louis, Duey and Donald would like to express their thanks to Wilson Morrison of Fairways for inviting them across to Florida for the recent GCSAA Turfgrass show. If you're wondering who the aforementioned characters were then they were Dale Robertson, of Newmachar; Kenny Harper, of Meldrum House; Muir Ross, of Ballindalloch, and Robert O'Donnell, of Oldmeldrum. I'm sure you all had a terrible time over there and that you never want to go back again!

Well that's it for this month guys and girls, hope you all have a good month and I'll say it again, any information you'd like to share with the Section drop me a line on 07813 889374 or on the internet at benbrookes@yahoo.co.uk

Happy greenkeeping
Ben Brookes
Murcar Links

Northern



North Wales

I have promised that I will try my best to find a positive to start each month's column in times that can only be described as difficult, looking at a positive (no matter how small) might just help. The positives I can find this month are; the days are lengthening, more opportunity for some much needed overtime, we've nearly caught up on the winter work that got held back by all that horrible weather before Christmas and finally, for those golfers who were so bitterly disappointed by our loss of the Christmas tournament, we only have to wait another month until the spring tournament at Denbigh Golf Club and on that note the tournament will be held on April 13, entry sheets and fixture lists hopefully will have already dropped through your letter boxes, if not, don't worry they are on their way.

On February 24 John Deere dealer, Charlie's Groundcare, held a demonstration day at

Henlle Golf Club, pictures now available on Facebook group "North Wales Bigga" a big thank you goes to Henlle and especially Huw Roberts and co for their time and for giving us the venue to view the products.

On March 2 the Section will hold a seminar at Abergele Golf Club, the headline subject of the seminar is "Drug Abuse in the Soil" and with the seminar being given by Ian MacMillan we know it can only be extremely interesting. The seminar is only a half-day, being held between 11am and 3pm and I believe it counts towards CPD points. A full write up in next month's column and pictures will also be available on Facebook.

That's about it, I've lost the will to find anything else to write about so all the best until next month!

Pete Maybury mobile 07756 001187 e-mail petemayb66@aol.com

I look forward to hearing from you!



Northern

Hello everyone, hope you are all well and looking forward to the challenges of the new season. When you look at all the bad weather round the world at the moment we seem to be getting off quite lightly. It was nice to see a few familiar faces at Harrogate Week and I hope you all found something of interest, and of course, the customary bargain.

The golf events for the new season will again be £20 to enter, payable one week in advance of the event. Our first event will be held at the K.P. Club Pocklington on April 20, 1st tee 10am. I look forward to seeing many of you on the day. If you require any information on forthcoming events or have any news or gossip, please contact me F Stewart 72, West Park Grove, Roundhay, LS8 2DY. Mob:07947 401278.

Email: frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk

Frank Stewart



North West

That's it, all the wet and white weather is now just a distant memory and the sun is shining and temperatures are steadily rising. I really hope all the previous is true, but right now during the beginning of February, here in Southport, it's very cold and worryingly wet.

The first part of our Region's activities have been arranged, and they are as follows:

Wednesday, April 13 Spring Tournament, Hesketh GC, tee 10am to 11.30am.

Thursday, June 16 North West v North Wales, Heaton Moor GC.

Wednesday, June 29 Summer Tournament, Grange Park GC, tee 2.15pm.

Wednesday July 6 North West v North Wales 20-20 cricket Ashley Cricket Club, near Altrincham 4.30pm start.

Thursday, September 29 Autumn Tournament Dunham

Forest GC tee 1.10pm.

Monday and Tuesday, October 3&4 BIGGA National Championship, West Lancashire GC.

Thursday, November 17 Bert Cross Trophy and AGM, Wilmslow GC.

For anyone not wishing to play golf on the 13th there will be a course/maintenance facility walk, please come along and support your Region. Oh well, that's it for now, as always any information is greatly appreciated.

Cheers

Peter McVicar

07885 347818 pdmv@hotmail.co.uk



Cleveland

Hi all, hope you are all fit and well, and by the time you read this your thoughts I'm sure will be on the up and coming season and back to constant grass cutting!

I hope you all enjoyed your trip to Harrogate for the BTME show,

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Around The Green

and once again Terry Charlton put on a bus for the north east lads down to the show. Although I didn't travel down on the bus I'm sure it was a good laugh and so I will thank you Terry on behalf of all those that did.

On a rather sad note, but also echoed with well wishes, we had a leaving do for Tony Mears in January at Northallerton. For those who don't know Tony, he has been the Course Manager at Dinsdale Spa Golf Club at Darlington for many years. Tony is moving from his North East roots a long, long way away to the tropical island of the Isle of Wight where he will be Course Manager at Sandown Golf Club. Tony has been a great servant to the Cleveland Section serving as Chairman, as well as being very heavily involved with the GTC. Tony is a great guy and a good friend and role model to many, and on that note I would like, on behalf of the Cleveland Section, to wish Tony and his partner all the best for the future.

Congratulations to James Taylor, who has been promoted to Course Manager at Dinsdale Spa. Good luck with your new role.

Tuesday, March 15 we have a talk taking place at Teeside GC. The Great Turf Company will be talking about "Restoring Natural Turf using Natures Methods". The talk is from Ian MacMillan and Andrew Turnbull. Ian has a wealth of greenkeeping experience and it should be a very interesting talk, so come along, as they say "every day is a school day" you never know what you may learn and pick up.

The Spring Tournament will be held at Middlesbrough (Brass Castle) GC on April 6. It's been a long time since we last had an event at Brass and there has been a lot of change to the course by John and his team over the past few years so I am looking forward to playing. I predict this one will be very popular so get in early to avoid disappointment. It will be a 9.30am tee off onwards and I am told a carvery meal afterwards. The day will be £16.50 for golf and a meal, you can't go wrong for that, and you never know, you might walk away with one of Pembo's plush prizes. Payment must be in advance of the day, please note that no money will be taken on the day and BIGGA cards MUST be produced. Cheques can be made payable to CLEVELAND

BIGGA and can be sent to Ian Pemberton, 6 Rosewood Court, Marton, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS7 8QR. You can also contact Ian on 07791695768 or Kevin on 07921817857 regarding the event.

Finally, Ian Pemberton has managed to organise a trip down the potash mine at Boulby. This has been on and off for some years now but Ian has finally got us a date. Unfortunately numbers have been limited to eight and if it is over subscribed names will be pulled out of a hat. If your name is not pulled out, guess what? You won't be going....but fear not, Pembo will try to sort another visit asap. The visit will be June 14. More info will follow

Kevin Scarce



North East

Well, as usual, no phone calls received this month but at least I do have some news for you. Recently I received a email from Tony Milan and Wayne Reid, both from Newcastle College, asking if any Head Greenkeepers or Course Managers would be interested in joining their Sports Turf Committee. Don't worry they are only likely to have one or two meetings a year and if it's like the last one it won't be during work time, so there's really no excuses if you're interested in helping them, just give them a ring.

The Section's first competition is on April 15 at Newcastle Utd GC, tee off time is 10am to 10.30am, as said last year we decided to stay central to see if we could get more people turning up so please try and attend, we seem to have lost quite a few regulars in the last couple years.

In the Autumn we are playing Longhirst Hall on September 21 as mentioned previously in the magazine this will be as a tribute to Stuart Wilson, Head Greenkeeper, who tragically lost his life last year. More news will follow about this competition a little later, again we are looking for a good turn out.

Just received some late news from my sports' reporter which is centered around the Toon-Mackem derby return

game. After the 5-1 demolition of Sunderland last time revenge threats were all around but in reality they never came close to materialising. Mackem nemesis, Nolan, opened the scoring and it was only a flukey 96th minute equaliser that saved the red and white blushes. Against an under-strength Toon side that late, late leveller avoided the dreaded derby day double over the Mackems but their fans were again big enough to admit they were second best by a long chalk. Still following on from that was more transfer window asset stripping by the Toon owner showing a total lack of ambition except for his pockets, it's no wonder the Black and Whites have to be a hardy lot with decisions like that, hopefully some golf news will be filtering through soon with the season's start drawing closer.

Jimmy Richardson



Sheffield

Hello everyone,

So, we reach that time of year again when the hard work starts preparing the course for the season ahead. We will all be coming to the end of our winter programmes and will be desperately hoping the weather is on our side for the Spring.

On February 1st we held our winter lecture at Rotherham GC. Firstly I must thank Rebecca Turner, from Sherriff Amenity, for her help organising the day. We had two fantastic speakers. Dr Ruth Mann, of STRI, gave a very insightful talk on integrated fungicide programmes and Clive Heginbotham, of Sherriff Amenity, spoke on application technology. I'm sure those who attended (which wasn't many again - out of the 54 letters I sent out we had 17 greenkeepers turn up) would agree that both lectures were very interesting and left members with something to think about going away.

I am busy at the moment trying to organise a Spring lecture for the Section. I will inform people further when final details have been organised.

This seasons golf competitions are almost finalised and you will be receiving a fixture

card shortly.

I'm sure many of you out there face the constant battle against the dreaded mole on the course and have the nightmare of trying to catch the little buggers. It seems that our Competition Secretary, Andy Unwin, is having a real battle of his own with the moles at the moment. So much so that one of his colleagues decided to write this short poem about Andy's struggles.

A MOLE IN ONE, OR PERHAPS NOT A MOLE IN THE HOLE

BY ED

Andy Unwin, it's sad to say
Thought he could drive the moles away

He tried to use a metal trap
But unfortunately found he was c..p

Not to be outdone
He then tried gas
The moles were having
A damn good laugh

Molehills here,
Molehills there
The bloody things
Were everywhere

"Enough, Enough"
Dave did say,
"A Professional
Is on his way"

He came in, the job was done
And as for Andy
What a shame
He will never hunt moles again.

I hope March is a good one for you all and I will speak to you all soon.

Regards
James Stevens
jimthegreenkeeper@hotmail.com

Midland



East Midland

Hello all,

I was planning on starting this month's write up with some funny stories from around the Section but unfortunately the news flow seems to have slowed over the winter months so I am not left with much other than a

story about poor timing.

A few weeks ago me and the lads were carrying out some tree work and were burning the top branches in our yard, (sorry all you greens, but it was cold) when I was caught by the owner of a home on the other side of the lane, he angrily informed me that the area was a smoke controlled zone. I apologised profusely as I was never aware of this, but I pointed out that there was hardly any smoke, when at that precise time the lads put on the branches from an evergreen! "You call that hardly any smoke?" said the neighbour, angrily making me turn to face the huge plumes of smoke billowing towards us and his home. Oops you can't beat that for bad timing!

Back to Section news now, and if you haven't already you should soon have your fixture cards for the Section's golfing events this year. This year we have five events along with the Annual Pairs' comp. Our events are to be held at: Cotgrave, Cavendish, Forest Hill and Lingdale with a special par 3 competition and BBQ at Nailcote Hall. All the events are to be at a cost of £17 and the Pairs' competition priced at £10 per pair, these events are great opportunities to meet people within our profession and make new friends. The courses we are playing at are some of the best in the area, and certainly the summer competition is worth the journey up to Cavendish (if we have lost the snow by then) for the views alone.

On an educational side of things Greg Skinner has organised a Talunex training course at Forest Hill GC in March. Places may still be available so please contact Greg or AndyDeWet if you are interested. We are also hoping to run the popular pesticide update course over the coming months, this is a vital course that should not be missed, watch the bulletin boards and the section notes for further details.

Finally, we would like to hear from anyone interested in helping out on the committee, or if you don't fancy that then we are always looking for ideas on things we can do and how we may be able to improve the event we put on for you all within the East Midlands Section. Anyone with any news or stories or that is interested in helping out or

that has any ideas for your Section should contact myself at pds1@btinternet.co or Andy de Wet at biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com

Pete Smith



East of England

To begin with, congratulations to all at BIGGA for another successful Harrogate Show. Suddenly the summer seems a whole lot closer! Also all the best to John Pemberton on his retirement.

Our next golf day is the revised Christmas fixture at Sleaford Golf Club on Thursday, March 10, tee off at 11am. The "bring and win" Christmas present part has been shelved though! Please contact Bruce Hicks to book your place.

Our annual seminar this year is being held in conjunction with the Midland Region. It is on Wednesday, March 30, at Newark Golf Club beginning at 9am. The day involves talks from Mark Hunt, of Headland Amenity, Dr Keith Duff, Golf Environment Consultant, and Ben Taylor of Bernhard & Co. The day will cost £14 and includes lunch. Full details will be sent to everyone, however anyone interested in attending should contact Peter Larter our Regional Administrator.

Our first two golf days for this year have been booked. They are: Immingham Golf Club on Wednesday, May 2, and Stoke Rochford Golf Club on Thursday, July 28. Tee off for both is 1pm. Everyone is welcome for what is always an enjoyable day of golf and banter. Again Bruce Hicks should be contacted by anyone interested in playing.

Many thanks.

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.



Midland

I would like to start this month's notes by thanking our Chair, Ed, for composing Feb's words of wisdom. Such was due

to the fact that my old steam powered computer finally ran out of coal. I suppose that after 12 years of service one cannot complain. I have indeed experienced, and heard of irrigation systems that have not given unproblematic service for so long! On that note the Section thanks Osprey Irrigation for sponsoring this month's fine calendar page. Please consider them for your water management and distribution needs: www.ospreywmg.com <<http://www.ospreywmg.com>> .

The Section also would like to thank our old friends Headland Amenity for sponsoring this year's fixture list/programme card for 2011. Please support your Section by attending as many of the year's events as possible.

I'm afraid that's all I have for this month.

Sean McDade

South East



Sussex

Well, what wonderful weather we had for our Turkey Trot at Worthing Golf Club. Wind and rain almost non-stop! But that didn't stop some 50 competitors braving the elements and thanks to George and his staff, the course was in great condition. The results are: 1. Derek Farrington, Peter Day, Jane Northeast and John Robson; 2. Dave Allen, Simon Wells, Richard Evans and Josh Kelly; 3. Eric Green, Glynn Pollard, Brian Vitler and Jim Russell; 4. George Barr, Bob Watters, Ian Potter and Chris Watters. Of course, we had the Christmas raffle where everyone wins a prize. We thank Worthing Golf Club for once again hosting the event.

Dave Allen presented the Sussex Bowl to Eric Green and Glynn Pollard. We would certainly like to see more entries this year for this wonderful trophy. Thanks must go to Darren Mitchell, of Mitchell's Ground Care for sponsoring the event, providing the beautiful cut glass trophy and for losing to me and Glynn in the final.

Anyone with any news for

the Section please contact me on TheGreens837@aol.com or 01424-214600.

Cheers!
Eric Green



Surrey

This month's report will be factual and have no mention of irrelevant information as in the past. I have decided that details of my holidays and brief trips to a certain island just to the south of Portsmouth may not be of particular interest to a small number of readers of this excellent monthly publication and therefore in future I shall write only about your news and hobbies. This may prove less humorous but after reading our Chairman's report at the AGM I feel obliged to refrain from being frivolous and selfish as in my usual jottings and become a more professional reporter of the Surrey greenkeeping world.

Ron Christie has text me this year's golf programme and it is as follows. Team competition, at Epsom GC, March 31; Spring Tournament, at Mitcham GC, May 10. Cresta Cup, at Surrey Downs GC, June 8; McMillan Tankard, at Sunningdale GC, August 15; Turkey Trot, at Han-kley Common December 6.

News of other events, seminars etc will appear when known. Ronnie also told me about his local painter and decorator. Although 84, he is still working full time at the golf club. He can paint walls and ceilings and frequently stains floors, but at 84 this is understandable. This is the sort of news and local interest I require to fulfill my new style 'Around the Green' so come on chaps and gals keep me informed.

Gareth Roberts is 50 this year, I know he doesn't look it but the years have not been kind. Although he will reach his half-century he still moves with the grace of a Celtic sword dancer and to prove he can still do it he and two friends, also at this grand old age, will attempt to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in two weeks time in aid of autistic children. If you would like to help, contact the charity at www.helpautistic-children.co.uk <<http://www.helpautistic-children.co.uk>> or

send a donation direct to Gareth at: The Bungalow, Hankley Common GC, Tilford Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2DD made payable to Autistic Children.

I look forward to receiving your comments on this my first endeavour into the more serious realms of journalism and hope that you all will help by letting me know of your own or your workmates' unusual hobbies and pastimes. Only the unusual please. Train, plane and bird watching, running, swimming, football, cricket, rugby etc will not be used unless attached to a £20 note and photography, ice skating and Morris dancing require rather more.

Sorry that's all for this month otherwise I will be late for my class at the local night school on 'Nudism Uncovered'

Brian Willmott



Essex

At long last we managed to get our 2010 AGM and Christmas Team Event on the road. Held on January 27 at The Essex Golf & Country Club. 60+ competitors faced the starter for a shotgun start in teams of four. The format was progressive Stableford.

The day started cold but dry, until a few small flurries of snow started to fall, not enough to settle and cover the ground though. Visions of the heavy snow conditions, when our event was originally scheduled to be held back at the beginning of December, shot through my mind but all was well in the end.

The course was in superb condition after the atrocious weather we have had of late and the greens and fairways were the best I've seen at this time of the year. Dry and firm, though on the odd occasion the rough was a bit on the damp side. Still I shouldn't have been that wide in the first place. We were back in the warm after just over four hours.

The day's proceedings kicked off with our AGM at 8.30am. Over 28 members attended and Chairman Mark Stopps ran us through last year's accounts and the season's report. The election to the post of Education Officer was taken by Ian Wood

from Romford Golf Club. Thanks were given to Paul O'Kane for his time in the position. The election to the committee of a new position was that of Neil Peachey (P. Tuckwell Ltd) as sponsor's representative. (This position was on nomination and vote from the sponsors of our Section and had no member involvement). We welcome Neil to the committee and hope he enjoys his time with us. The position of Chairman was also up for election. Mark Stopps was willing to stand again for a further year and being unopposed he was duly elected. Well done Mark and keep up the good work. Mark thanked all the 2010 sponsors for their support and hoped that they would continue to support the section during the coming year.

A full transcript of the AGM report can be viewed on our website.

Now to the golf;

Before we got the day's awards for the Team Event underway, The Essex Club Captain, Glen Swift presented the trophies to the 2010 season winners.

Spring Trophy, Antony Kirwan; Summer Trophy, Ben Scrivener; Essex Trophy, Steve Cousins; Autumn Trophy, Steve Cousins; Golfer of the Year, Mark Stopps; Trade Golfer of the Year, Neil Peachey and Essex Pairs Knockout Trophy, Dougie Fernie & Bill Maynard.

Captain, Glen Swift then presented the awards for the day.

Christmas (January) Team Event. 1. Stoke by Nayland, Liam Springett, Laurence Gibson, Liam Close, Simon Bartram. 120 pts; 2. Abridge Golf Club - Ben Scrivener, Geoff Smith, Richard Hare, Steve Crossdale. 116 pts C/B; 3. Channels Golf Club - Malcolm Smith, Richard Dunmow, Neil Tuton, Michael Bartlett. 116 pts.

Nearest the Pin 5th Hole: Andy Turbin. Nearest the Pin 11th Hole: Michael Bartlett.

Mark Stopps thanked The Essex Golf & Country Club for supporting Essex BIGGA and allowing us to use the course for the day. A special thanks to Course Manager, Martin Forrester and his staff for the condition of the course and all their hard work in presenting it in such a fine state. Finally to Jeremy and the catering staff for their hospitality, and the excellent meal we enjoyed.

We wish to thank the spon-

sors and trade representatives who supported our raffle table.

Education: On the education front; we are running a series of One day First Aid courses, the first of which is being held at The Burstead Golf Club, Tuesday, March 15. These courses are covering basic First Aid, this is a good opener for staff who need the basic principals of First Aid, plus you will receive three CPD points on completion of the day. We are keeping the cost to a minimum by subsidising the day. A buffet lunch will be included. If you are interested please contact Ian Wood by email: ian.wood@romfordgolfclub.co.uk

Golf: The new season is nearly upon us and our first venue is at Forrester Park, May 5 for our Spring Trophy.

The new fixture book will be out mid March and entry forms will be available in this book, they are also available for download from the website.

Football: Do you fancy a game of football against the Sussex Section on the Monday, May 23? It will be a 2pm kick off, 45 minutes each way with a buffet lunch after the game. We are looking for around 15 players to make up the team. If you are interested please contact Mark Stopps; mark@bentleygolfclub.co.uk

If you have anything for inclusion in Greenkeeper International or on the Section's Website www.essexbigga.co.uk please contact me on 07764-862.337 or at essexbigga@talktalk.net

Arnold Phipps-Jones

South West and South Wales



South Coast

Hello and welcome to all our South Coast members, at the time of writing this report the snows of December seem a distant memory thank goodness. Here at the Army GC we were only open for nine days in December and I believe other clubs were worse off than us. The current weather has now allowed us to get on with the usual aeration

work to the course as well as completing some outstanding construction work on Tees and Bunkers. We are hosting the County Championships in June so that is something I'm looking forward to this year.

News from around the Section is scarce but I have been informed that Bill Garner, from Parkstone GC, has left his post at the end of January. Bill has been with us a long time and we lose another good greenkeeper so I wish him well with whatever path he chooses to take.

Also heard that Rob, at Remedy Oak GC, is looking for seasonal staff this year. So give him a call.

Congratulations must go to the organisers within BIGGA of Harrogate Week which considering the current climate I felt was a success. The educational programme was varied and I have only heard positive feedback from the large contingent of our Section members who attended.

The Section seminar which is usually held in March has been put back to the end of October, the date of which is yet to be confirmed. There were a number of reasons for the postponement but we believe by moving it we will be able to offer an attractive venue at Milton Abbey private school and some quality speakers for you to enjoy a good day out. Also as part of the day Joe Cooper has offered to take you on a tour of his estate where you will be able to see the diverse range of work that he undertakes, from sports pitches to the farm where the pigs are kept and eventually end up on the menu.

Jon Worrall, from Barton on Sea GC, is running our Facebook page so please send him any photos, news etc. that you may have to biggasouthcoast@hotmail.co.uk where he will publish them. We currently have 40 members signed up on there so please support his efforts.

Our first golfing event kicks off at Liphook GC on May 19, details of which will appear in this section next month along with all the other venues and dates.

Finally, good luck with the season ahead, it's going to be tough but expectations will still be the same.

Phil Wentworth



Devon and Cornwall

Hello all! Our January meeting was held at Newquay Golf Club on Wednesday, January 12. A wild, wet and windy day, braved by 50 strong attendees enjoying either a course walk or golf in these trying conditions. Newquay GC is a great links course with a fantastic vista of the world famous Fistral beach from all 18 holes.

Even with, at times heavy rain, the course held up very well and it was a great testament to Andrew Dunstan, Course Manager, and his team. Andrew led the brave course walkers around the course, explaining the trials and tribulations of managing a course situated adjacent to one of the busiest resort town centres in the country. Andrew adopts a sustainable approach, encouraging fescue back into the swards with good success. The course walk ended with the shelter of the Maintenance facilities and then a quick sprint to the clubhouse. For the very brave (I could think of other words!) golfers, who managed 18 holes playing a medal off the blue tees, the reward was a place at this year's national tournament at West Lancashire GC in October funded by the section. On the day, the winners were, 1. Gordon Tamblin, Mullion GC, nett 75; 2. Gavin Moore, Launceston GC, nett 77; 3. Mark Tucker, Saunton GC, nett 80. Nearest the Pin went to Gordon Tamblin and Longest Drive went to Greg O'Reilly, St Mellion.

The qualifiers for the National Championship were Gordon Tamblin (Handicap category 0-5), Gavin Moore (6-12) and David Daw, Porthpean GC (13-24). Congratulations to all those who won prizes and to all attendees who made the effort to make the journey and brave the conditions.

Sponsors for the day were Barenbrug and Reel grinding South West. David Singleton presented prizes on behalf of Barenbrug and Gary Tucker, of Reel Grinding SW, presented prizes for Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive. Many thanks to our two sponsors for the day for

your continued support of the Section.

The afternoon educational presentation was given by Josh Webber BSc Hons, Portmore Park. His topic was "A Practical Approach to Biological Management". Josh stepped in at the last moment to deliver the presentation and showed a great deal of passion, enthusiasm and knowledge towards this particular subject. Josh has only just finished his degree at Myerscough and has been instrumental in adopting policies and sound ecological principles at Portmore Park, winner of this year's STRI Environment Award! Many thanks to Josh for having the courage to step in and deliver a very professional presentation in front of an experienced audience. Many thanks to Newquay Golf Club for the kind hospitality on the day.

Speaking of accolades, I would like to congratulate all Devon and Cornwall members who were recognised at this year's awards at Harrogate. The Section would like to extend our congratulations to our very own Chairman Colin Webber and the team at Portmore Park for the huge and very much deserved achievement of winning this year's STRI Environment Award. The work that has been carried out over the year's at Portmore is an inspiration to us all and just shows what can be achieved. Colin should be very proud of his achievements, following in the footsteps of St Andrews who won the same award in 2010! Well done, Colin! Also, congratulations to Gordon Child who received the BIGGA "Life Time Achievement Award". Gordon has had an illustrious career in greenkeeping. Working at Royal Birkdale and managing top courses such as St George's Hill and Moor Park where he prepared for many European Tour Events. We know Gordon best in this Region for his involvement with Churston GC and his involvement with BIGGA as National Chairman. Gordon is a very keen golfer having played in two Open Championships in 1960 and 1965. Gordon is still a regular supporter of our Section, competing in and winning recent events. I know that Gordon is highly regarded by the Section and I would like to pass on our congratulations to Gordon and his family for receiving this prestigious award! Leading the way

too is Richard Whyman, Burnham and Berrow, by receiving his "Continuous Professional Development 2nd Diploma", 10 years of achieving 10 CPD points or more, well done.

Congratulations to both Billy and John Mitchell of Perranporth GC on being awarded Hon Life Memberships of Bigga for services to the Section and the Industry. John is due to retire this year and Billy plans to follow in 2012 after 50 years service. Billy has been at the forefront of BIGGA in the South West and is often first in leading with new ideas and approaches available to the industry. Both members are still actively involved with the Section and are held in very high regard amongst all the members both regionally and nationally. This is a very much-deserved tribute to services to the section and the industry, well done Billy and John!

To all those who attended Harrogate this year, thanks for making the journey and supporting what was a very successful and positive show. The Continue to learn programme experienced records numbers and was a huge success. The general vibewas very positive. Thanks to Scott Gibson and Keith Kemp for arranging and driving the Minibus, also to Famura for sponsoring the bus and the "refreshments" and to Sports Metals for sponsoring the diesel.

Finally, this is a time to support and drive the Association and the industry forward, the easy thing to do is to sit back and pinpoint the negatives. The more positive approach for us all is to roll up our sleeves and get stuck into supporting the Section, coming up with new ideas for training and education and create an invaluable network of associates we can all benefit from.

Please contact me with any news you would like to be included in these notes.

George Pitts
Section Secretary
Bigga Devon & Cornwall
07929 754401
gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com



South Wales

Not too much to report this month as news coming to me

regarding the section is a bit thin on the ground. As I write, the weather during February is fairly mild, giving Greenkeepers a chance to stimulate a little growth on the greens which is invaluable as club competitions seem to start earlier every year and winter leagues finishing later!

As far as the evening lectures are concerned I would like to thank the speaker for February's talk, which I believe was probably Simon Barnaby from the mighty Scotts Company. Thank you Simon!

I say 'probably', as I have had no correspondence with the sponsors on this subject, but I'm sure I would have a 'phone call if I fail to mention them. Phones can be used for so much more than taking pictures of Tiger Woods so consider yourselves told off.

The Speaker for March is Mr Jim McKenzie who will give a talk on events at last year's Ryder Cup. Obviously a talk not to be missed so please try to make it. This talk will be at Pencoed College on Wednesday 16th of March at 7pm. Thank you Jim for giving me this information!

There was concern that there was a lack of refreshments at some of these events so Steve Chappell was charged with the task of finding another venue. The good news is that he has found a place that gives free tea and biscuits! The downside is that we will all have to give blood! I think we'll stick to Pencoed mate!

On the social front, the South Wales IOG Dinner and Dance will be held at The Swalec Stadium on Friday April 22nd always a great event. If you would like to go then give Steve Chappell or myself a call. The Australian Prime Minister, Mrs Julia Gillard sends her apologies but I am assured that Peter Gillard will be there!

Finally, in the news it is reported that both West Ham Utd and Tottenham Hotspur would like to have the Olympic stadium as their home ground after the Olympics. West Ham want to keep the stadium as it is, but Tottenham want to tear it down and build another! They are not even going to use a demolition company, they will just organise a friendly against Scotland instead! Or is that just a vicious rumour, Scott?

See You Soon, Ceri Richards



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How to recruit the right staff

How to write a job description

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1. 'How to Cascade Goals to Teams and Individuals'

Introduction
The formation of goals that set out what a business is aiming to achieve is a key part of business planning. Teams and individuals throughout the organisation need to be briefed about what the goals are and what they should do to help achieve them. This requires a management process to be in place that cascades top-level goals down through the organisation.

Definition
A goal describes a measurable outcome or result that needs to be achieved.

1. Cascading goals
Cascading goals means breaking down the organisational goals into a series of smaller goals that describe what each unit or department needs to achieve. These goals are then broken down further until each individual in the unit has their own performance goals. In this way progress throughout the organisation is measurable.

Profit goal - to reduce Waste by 10% across the whole site, by December 20XX

- Manufacturing Team**
To reduce scrap/reject components off CNC machines by 2%, by June 20XX
- Warehouse Team**
To reduce part order deliveries from 22 per month to less than 5, by September 20XX
- Finance Team**
To agree 12 key supplier agreements which result in a 2% stock reduction by October 20XX

In some areas of the organisation, it may be enough to cascade goals down to the team level (e.g. in administration or production teams where they work together more as a team than as individuals). For some it is more appropriate to agree individual goals (see 'How to Develop An Appraisal System', and 'How to Prepare for an Appraisal'). What is important is that you get it right for your organisation.

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“How To...” guides are now available exclusively to BIGGA Members, on a range of Human Resource topics.

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To access the “How To...” guides, log on to the **BIGGA Members Area** at www.bigga.org and **click on Member Resources**.



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





Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2011 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
MARCH 2011			
March 9th	East Midlands Section Talunex/ Phostoxin Training Course	Forest Hill Golf Club	Andrew de Wet at biggaeastmidlands@hotmail.com Cost of course is £80.00
March 15th	Cleveland Section - Great Turf Company Lecture	Teeside Golf Club	Ian Pemberton at ispemberton@ntlworld.com or telephone 07791 695768
March 16th	Devon and Cornwall Section	Merlin Golf Club	George Pitts at gpitts.yelverton@googlemail.com or telephone 07929 754401
March 17th	Joint BIGGA/GCMA Educational Seminar	Chipping Sodbury Golf Club, Bristol	Karen Drake at wsmgolfclub@eurotelbroadband.com or telephone 01934 626968
March 30th	Midland Regional Conference	Newark Golf Club	Peter Larter at petelarter972@aol.com or telephone 01476 550115
APRIL 2011			
April 6th	Cleveland Section Spring Tournament	Middlesborough Golf Club	Ian Pemberton at ispemberton@ntlworld.com or telephone 07791 695768
April 13th	North West Section Event	Hesketh Golf Club	Chris Sheehan at jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 07840 706738
April 13th	North Wales Section Event	Denbigh Golf Club	Jeremy Hughes on jezpro69@aol.com or telephone 07876 776265
April 15th	North East Section Event	Newcastle United Golf Club	Jimmy Richardson at jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com or telephone 07500 528542
April 19th	East Scotland Section Spring Meeting	Craigielaw Golf Links	Stuart Ferguson at stuferg@btinternet.com or telephone 07961 630553
April 21st	South West Section	Chipping Sodbury Golf Club	Adam Matthews at adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 07732 503855

Assistant Profile

Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

Name: Jamie Pack
Age: 22
Club: The Luffenham Heath Golf Club



Position: Assistant GreenKeeper
Nickname: Jimmy

1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

Five years at the end of January 2011

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

The beauties of nature which provides us with our finest British golf courses

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

I have no idea, couldn't imagine myself not being a greenkeeper. Would have to be something in the industry but have no idea what.

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

All aspects of irrigation because, irrigation systems are one of the most power full tools of agronomic change. Also the correct usage to maintain full effectiveness to help balance

good moisture management practices to favour the grasses we desire

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

Would have to be cleaning out the drainage ditches around the course. The reason for this is because we only really do this through the winter months and this time of the year it's to bloody cold to be standing in a ditch with a shovel removing sloppy mud and any other debris that find its way in.

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

Clean and hygienic facilities for staff to enjoy their break etc. Providing good facilities will

help motivate staff. Who wants to eat a dust filled sandwich whilst listening to the sound of the triplex mower at break time? If you have horrible sheds and useless machines why would staff want to go out and carry out their duties?.

7. Hobbies?

Golf, fishing

8. Favourite Band?

Bon Jovi

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

I support my legs because they support me!!! MUFC!!!

10. What is your claim to fame?

I don't have a fame to claim as of yet. Maybe one day though.



Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

Preferential rates on Toyota HILUX vehicles to BIGGA Members

BIGGA has teamed up with Jemca Business Centre, London (suppliers of Toyota and Lexus) to offer BIGGA Members preferential rates on out-right purchase or contract hire of Toyota HILUX vehicles.

Jemca is an established car dealership group based in the South East, in and around London which has years of experience and is proud to be part of London's prime Toyota and Lexus car retailer group.

Jemca's growth has been based on its key strengths; outstanding commitment to customer service, which is reflected in their continually high customer satisfaction ratings across their services.

Although based in London this offer is open to all BIGGA Members in the UK.

NB: prices are frequent to change due to manufacturer campaigns, but examples of contract hire and purchase can be obtained from emailing membership@bigga.co.uk

Redundancy

If you are finding yourself a possible casualty of the current economic crises then make sure you brush up on your rights. If your employer is thinking about making you redundant, they should consult with you before making a decision. If you think you are at risk from redundancy, here's a suggestion of what to do to prepare yourself: -

Know your rights

Employers are legally obliged to follow strict procedures when making redundancies, make sure you know what the procedure is. Contact the legal helpline, a benefit provided to all FULL BIGGA Members.

Contesting your employer's decision

You have the right to appeal against your redundancy. If you have grounds to dispute your employer's redundancy decision you can take your case to an employment tribunal.

Check for any state help after redundancy

Once unemployed you may be entitled to state benefits such as Jobseekers's Allowance or Income Support. To find out what you can claim you will need to sign on at your local Jobcentre.

Planning your finances

Contact the Debt Helpline (free to members of BIGGA). If you are likely to be out of work for an extended period, check to see if any of your loans have payment protection insurance attached that may cover your mortgage interest repayments or other loans.

Finding your next job

Contact BIGGA to ensure your membership is kept valid so that you can take advantage of contacts and networking as much as possible.

Visit the Members' Area of the BIGGA Website where you can find more information and useful websites to visit - another membership benefit of being a member of BIGGA.

Section Events

Don't forget to keep checking the EVENTS Section of the BIGGA Website (www.bigga.org.uk/events/) where you will find information on all the section events throughout the UK.

If you would like to attend an event outside of the section you are in, just contact the Section Secretary for information. The details of all the Section Secretaries can be located in the 'Contact Us' and 'Contacts List' and select 'Section Secretaries'.

Membership Subscriptions 2011

In April 2009 BIGGA streamlined the membership categories from over twenty to eight categories to simplify administration and reduce confusion. In 2010 BIGGA were able to freeze the membership subscription rates, however, from April 1 2011 membership subscriptions will have a slight increase. Details will be in next month's column and on the BIGGA Website shortly.



Contact Details

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petelarter972@aol.com

South East

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

South West & Wales

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



Peter Boyd Peter Larter



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish

William Nicholson, North Section

Northern Region

Neil Hamlett, North West Section
Phil Longstaff, Northern Section
Geoff Ward, Cleveland Section

Midland Region

Alistair Botwood, Midland Section
Kyle Cleaver, Midland Section
Mike Cox, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section
Tom Ditchburn, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section
Harry Larkins, East Midlands Section
Simon Torr, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section

South East Region

Ronald Keith Penny, London Section
Gerald Scott, East Anglia Section
Michael Willingale, East Anglia Section

South West/South Wales

Steven Blackmore, South West Section
Tony Hughes, Devon & Cornwall Section
Neil Ivamy, Devon & Cornwall Section

Overseas

Johannes Bester, Sahara Kuwait, Kuwait
Aleksander Kravanja, Golf Bovec d.o.o., Slovenia
Temitope Odihili, Ikeja Golf Club, Nigeria

For more information on new members log in to the Members' Area of the BIGGA Website.

For more information on new members log in to the Members' Area of the BIGGA Website.

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

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or **Graham Carver** for more information

BIGGA Regional Conferences

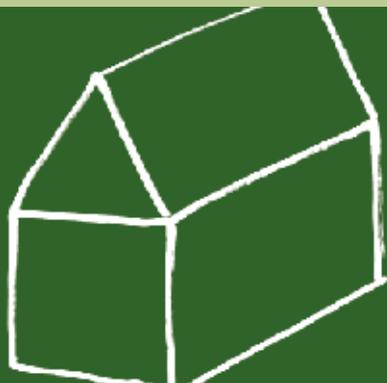
All forthcoming conferences are as follows...

REGION	DATE	LOCATION
North Midlands	To be announced 30 March 2011	To be announced Newark Golf Club

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, CONTACT...

Peter Larter, Regional Administrator, 01476 550115
Peter Larter, Regional Administrator, 01476 550115

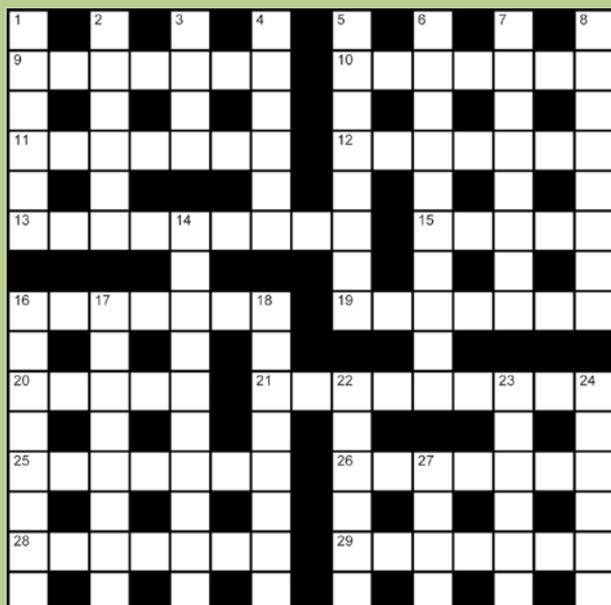




in the shed

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

CROSSWORD



Across

- 9 National anthem of the world's second largest country (1,6)
- 10 Superhero alter ego of Tony Stark (4,3)
- 11 1990s indie music movement (7)
- 12 The Beatles' final studio album (3,2,2)
- 13 Capital city of Iceland (9)
- 15 Tomb (5)
- 16 2000 film by Christopher Nolan that is told backwards (7)
- 19 Of the same family (7)
- 20 Suckle (5)
- 21 Robert, Twilight's Edward Cullen (9)
- 25 The largest city in Sri Lanka (7)
- 26 Doctor Who companion played by Karen Gillan (3,4)
- 28 Most wee (7)
- 29 Passage selected from a larger work (7)

Down

- 1 Device fitted to cars in Australia to protect against animal strikes (3,3)
- 2 Flesh and blood (6)
- 3 A plucked musical instrument (4)
- 4 Garry Kasparov's main rival throughout the 1980s (6)
- 5 Taker of the only 19 wicket haul in a Test match (3,5)
- 6 Italian painter of The Birth of Venus (10)
- 7 Variety of quartz, violet in colour (8)
- 8 Spent, but not endowed (8)
- 14 Dutch painter of Girl with a Pearl Earring (3,7)
- 16 Tailless felines (4,4)
- 17 US State with Baltimore its largest city (8)
- 18 Opposite of 'Darn Sarf' (3,5)
- 22 Location of the annual University Boat Race (6)
- 23 Language used in Bratislava (6)
- 24 Undress (6)
- 27 The abominable snowman (4)

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Which is further north, Turnberry or Royal Troon?
2. Is Sunningdale Golf Club more or fewer than 10 miles from Wentworth?
3. Which is further east, Muirfield or Carnoustie?
4. Is Royal Birkdale closer to Royal Lytham or Hoylake?
5. Is Royal St George's closer to London or Calais?
6. Which is the shorter journey – Turnberry to Royal Lytham or Turnberry to Carnoustie?
7. Which is the longer journey – Carnoustie to St Andrews or Royal Lytham to Royal Birkdale?
8. Is it more or less than 600 miles between Carnoustie, the northerly most Open venue, and Royal St George's, the southern most?
9. To the nearest 30 miles, how far is it from Royal John O'Groats to Land's End GC?

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

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.

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

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



It's a colourful world

Flag poles; flag sticks; flag pins; flag accessories; hole cups; putting cups; hole cutters; hole trimmers; tee markers; flags; logoed flags; wavy flags; air flow flags; printed flags; embroidered flags with your name on; triangular flags; flags that are not flags but wicker baskets; flags with your Captain's face on maybe? Maybe not?

Welcome to a day in the life of the golf course products supplier. It's a colourful world says

Andrew Acorn, as he sets off with his stock of flags & products visiting golf courses up and down the country.

Every day is a new challenge with changing climates changing golf committees with new ideas that are put in front of the greenkeepers saying.... "This year I want new flags with our special logo on."; "All new ball washers out on the course in my year of office!"

"I talk with everyone from the Secretary, to Pro, to the assistant greenkeeper, to the bar staff, and the club member. They all have their own personal view of what looks good what doesn't," says Andrew.

"I'm awaiting for the launch of the Hydraulic hole cutter that is on a mechanical arm of a greens machine which does the job without a fuss and which may or may not arrive. But for now we will continue cutting perfect holes with the twin bladed holmaster or one of our HIO Impact cutters for that professional tournament finish."

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Photo courtesy of Ridding Park
Repton Short Course 'Signature Island Green'.



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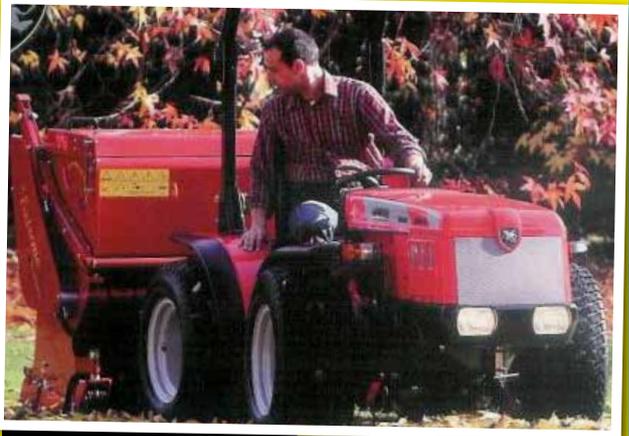
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Recruitment



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Candidates will have demonstrable extensive experience of working at the highest levels within the golf course construction and golf course maintenance sector. Candidates should only apply if they presently speak conversational French and have the ability to speak fluently upon commencement.

Remuneration and benefits are to be negotiated for this senior management position.

Please apply via email to Jonathan Pendry at jonathanpendry@braemargolf.co.uk

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The course measures 6,300 yards, founded in 1903 and was designed by 1904 Open champion Jack White.

We are committed to upgrade the standard of the course and to help us achieve this welcome applications from suitably qualified, enthusiastic, hard working and reliable individuals to join our greenkeeping team.

The successful applicants will be involved with all routine golf course maintenance tasks along with ongoing course development projects.

You can find further information about Laleham Golf Club at www.laleham-golf.co.uk

Salary relative to experience and qualifications.

Please apply in writing enclosing your C.V to:

Stephen Jack, Golf Links, Laleham Reach, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 8RP

Email: sjack@laleham-golf.co.uk

Closing Date: Friday 16th March 2011



Course Manager

**Hinckley Golf Club opened in 1983
and has grown in reputation around the region.**

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- NVQ level 3 or equivalent.
- A thorough understanding of golf course management techniques & principles.
- PA 1,2 & 6a Spraying certificates.
- Knowledge of irrigation & drainage systems.
- Are fully conversant with relevant H&S requirements.
- Excellent communication skills & teamworking.
- Ability to manage staff and assigned budgets.
- Excellent leadership, training & motivational skills.
- A good understanding of the game.
- High personal standards.

An attractive, competitive salary is offered to the successful applicant. Please apply with a CV & a covering letter to:
Richard Jones, Director of Golf, Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leics
LE10 3DR

Or by e mail to rtjones@btconnect.com

The closing date for applications is March 31st 2011



Safety Management System

The BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, has been developed to:

- Make golf clubs safer
- Introduce best practice
- Standardise Health & Safety throughout golf
- Reduce costs for golf clubs

Why do you need a Safety Management System?

Because:

- It incorporates all your legal requirements to comply with Health & Safety Legislation
- Clubs have responsibilities
- There are penalties for not complying – up to £20,000 fine and/or course closure
- Golf clubs are hazardous places to work

The Safety Management System contains help and guidance to enable golf clubs to:

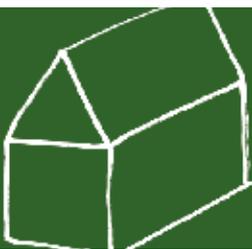
- Set a Health & Safety Policy
- List hazards and assess risks
- Plan for the future
- Introduce audit and review procedures

The Safety Management System is accessed through the Members area of the BIGGA website (www.bigga.org.uk) and the GCMA website (www.gcma.org.uk)

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intheshed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Royal Troon
2. Fewer than 10 miles.
3. Carnoustie
4. Royal Lytham
5. Calais
6. Turnberry to Carnoustie – 143 miles
7. Royal Lytham to Royal Birkdale – 33.1 miles
8. Less – 547 miles
9. 837 miles

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M	E	M	E	N	T	O	
A	A	V	O		L		
N	U	R	S	E	P	A	T
X	Y	R	N	H		L	U
C	O	L	O	M	B	O	
A	A	E	R	M	E	V	I
T	I	N	I	E	S	T	
S	D	R	H	S	I	K	Y

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

Monster Daily SuDoku: Thu 3-Mar-2011 medium

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

Daily SuDoku: Thu 3-Mar-2011 hard



On the Soapbox

Stephen Fell, MD and owner of Lindum Turf, discusses the advantages of natural grass

Let's start by looking at the sheer aesthetic value of grass. People like seeing it, they like the feel of it and the smell of freshly cut grass whether you're mowing your own lawn, playing golf while the course is being cut, or as a greenkeeper cutting the grass as part of your job, it is one of the finest smells on earth.

Real grass makes people happy, it increases their sense of well being and reduces stress levels.

Research studies have shown that walking barefoot on grass will lower your heart rate.

I cannot imagine anybody feeling the same sense of relaxation sitting in a deck chair on synthetic grass as they do when it's the real thing.

When it comes to the environment grass wins over synthetics every time. Real plants absorb Carbon Dioxide and release Oxygen.

At a time when we're all concerned about our carbon footprint it's worth remembering that statistics show that 58sq metres of grass – golf course, lawn, parkland, playing field or farmer's pasture- provides enough oxygen for one person for one whole day.

Real grass is an essential part of the eco-system, whereas the synthetic variety, made from oil based compounds is hugely energy demanding in manufacture.

Real grass is cooling during a heat wave, whereas artificial grass generates heat and natural grass surfaces absorb water allowing it to percolate into the aquifer, filtering dust and pollutants at the same time.

In cities where run-off is a problem real grass has an important part to play in sustainable urban drainage systems.

As a living eco-system, supporting a varied microbial population, real grass absorbs body fluids – spit, blood and sweat for example in sporting situations and dog urine on lawns and parks.

The offending substances will be broken down in the soil during a natural self-cleaning process that helps keep grassed areas safe for public use. Synthetics require a specific programme of cleaning and disinfection.

It's no coincidence that all Premier League football matches have to be played on real grass. Athletes find natural surfaces much kinder than synthetics with less risk of burn when skidding or tackling.

The National debate on sustainability leaves no doubt about the need for natu-

ral surfaces with their growing, living eco systems, and comes down strongly in favour of using real grass. The onus is on our industry to produce grass that will put up with the demands made of it in terms of wear, drought, shade and water-logging tolerance.

As an industry we are constantly looking at breeding new grasses and the management of these grasses. People have to adapt. The industry is reacting and the breeders are producing new grasses all the time. It's what they do, and we must embrace their breeding initiatives.

Just because we've had two exceptionally harsh winters it doesn't mean that we have to roll over and use synthetics instead of the real thing. If that happens all our sporting venues, including golf courses will look the same.

Golfers hate playing off artificial tees in the winter as it is. They can't wait to get back onto real grass again.

RTF (rhizomatous tall fescue) is incredibly deep rooting, wear resistant and drought tolerant. Our North West distributor, Hazel Frith of AllTurf is having great success supplying RTF turf to golf courses for the heavy wear areas at the end of pathways, where golfers step off the path with their trolleys and studded boots.

Previously golf clubs had had to re-turf these areas annually but the RTF turf is proving resilient enough to weather three or four years in succession.

Our LT2 Low Maintenance turf containing Crested Hairgrass was developed for drought situations and at the moment we're developing a more shade tolerant turf – a mixture of Tufted Hairgrass with ryegrass and fescues- which is being trialled in one of London's squares subject to shade from trees and buildings.

Depending on the results, this new turf should be very useful on shaded golf courses and make a good tees turf.

Looking at football stadiums, where the low light density problem has now been overcome with the introduction of special lighting rigs, a new breed of ryegrass has been developed that will germinate at 3.5

degrees, allowing turf managers to successfully oversee during cold periods and maintain grass cover.

Bred by Barenbrug, this new ryegrass is now being used in the majority of football stadiums.

The UK has the best climate for growing grass in the world and we need to adapt the type of grasses we have so that they can withstand the demands made of them.

We also need to adapt maintenance practices to suit these grasses (some might need longer mowing heights) and understand the importance of good soil structure.

We've got improved genetics and improved breeding.

Who knows where new biotechnology will lead us.

Let's embrace all this new technology to advance further, and leave artificial grass to the hockey pitches and indoor venues where there's really no alternative.

The case for natural grass over synthetics



Lindum has been producing specialist turf for the sports, amenity and landscape markets for over 25 years.

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Stephen Fell

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