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GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA

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MASTER OF THE GREENS

Sid Arrowsmith MG talks to Laurence Pithie MG about managing greens performance

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BIGGA support in attendance at The Royal St Georges, The Open 2011

Golf's turn in the spotlight

I want to begin this month by congratulating BIGGA's chairman Andrew Mellon on his new position in the Middle East. Having worked closely with him now for more than a year I know he has the business acumen and deep knowledge of the industry that will enable him to succeed in his new challenge. I must also thank him most sincerely both personally and on behalf of all the staff for the enormous commitment to the Association he has given during and before his time as chairman.

The first time I came in to contact with him it was clear that he was passionate about the Association and its members and he has worked tirelessly with his colleagues on the Board of Management to drive BIGGA forward whilst keeping the interests of the membership firmly at the forefront. I am sure you will join with me in wishing Andrew all the very best for the future.

Andrew's successor Tony Smith is a true BIGGA man with huge experience at all levels of the Association and I am very much looking forward to working closely with him to implement the Board's vision.

At the time of writing Spain has just retained the European Championship title and Andrew Murray has made it through to the second week of Wimbledon.

Our thoughts now turn to golf's turn in the British sporting spotlight – The Open Championship. Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club's head greenkeeper, Paul Smith provides a fascinating insight in to the preparations for this year's Championship in this magazine, meanwhile the BIGGA Open Support Team are steeled and ready to play their part in the world's greatest golf

tournament. So far this year Mother Nature has proved to be entirely unpredictable and with a grand total of 205 bunkers for the competitors to contend with I'm sure the Team will have a challenging but satisfying week. I'm delighted that Paul and the Championship organisers continue to embrace the experience and skill contained within the Support Team and will utilise it to the full.

Finally it would be remiss of me not to mention three of our most illustrious members who within the last month have begun very well earned retirement.

Congratulations to Iain Carson (Nairn), Chris Kennedy (Wentworth) and John Philp (Carnoustie) who between them boast of over a century of greenkeeping experience. That experience has been hard earned but generously passed on to many, many colleagues and associates over the years. All three leave a legacy far beyond the great courses they have managed.

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

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An Open return



The Open Championship returns to Royal Lytham and St. Annes Golf Club this year and Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith, provided GI with an insight into the preparations for the Championship and some fascinating background information on the historic links course

A good ten years have passed since my first Open and much has and also has not changed. We are probably all more

scoutily aware and recognise how important our roles are in maintaining golf's green future. The Greenkeeper's role is pivotal, the policies we implement affect the original design characteristics of the course, the playing challenge it presents and the playing strategy adopted by the golfer. Our activities affect the ball and turf interaction, a soft course is a dead course. What

is particularly significant is how our practices enhance and protect the ecology of our green spaces.

The Open Championship is something very special indeed and to be a part of this is a great privilege. It is a challenge that I relish, but one that is not without a headache as two or perhaps the odd badger might stray along the way. However, our greatest thrill-kings of all still remains keeping the membership happy. These are the challenges and pressures that we all share in working near perfection for that special day on the golfing



calendar, which are not all that different to many other courses you are custodian of. It is not until the final putt is made and the champion golfer is crowned that we can put our feet up momentarily before returning normal business. There we use our equipment ourselves and spend some quality time with our family and friends. It is not always easy to maintain a work-life balance being a greenkeeper and custodian of our precious green spaces. I was once given some sound advice by a wise old greenkeeper as he approached retirement after delivering many

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years of loyal service. "Make sure you have a life outside work/life". And that is what we must all strive to do. Fewer jobs can be quite as demanding but in the same light as retraining.

The Open Preparation

The preparation and conditioning of the course for an Open Championship is never far from the mind. This work is always ongoing. There is a sustainable ethos to course management and maintenance policies, which are set out with the intent to deliver consistently good standards of play 365 days of the year.

Managing a course in a holistic, sustainable way as close to nature as possible, has always been a challenge for the greenkeeper. Of course it does entail the use of water, fertilizer and chemicals but the art is to utilize these as sparingly as possible to give nature just a little helping hand in presenting a natural course.

Maintaining a consistently good quality course is achievable but delivering perfection is not. With just a little help from Mother Nature and a small amount of man's intervention we can have something worthy.

Royal Lytham and St. Annes presents a management and maintenance challenge. The 205 bunkers that we have on the Championship course provide not only a major challenge to the golfer, but also for our team.

Eighty bunkers have been rebuilt during our last phase of the bunker programme, in tandem with general turf reinstatement work. A great effort was made to ensure that this work was completed by Christmas. However, this winter has been a blowing compared to the winters of 2009 and 2010. The conditions have been conducive to completing our winter programme schedule, whilst ensuring that we have maintained a good winter playing conditions.

The Build Up

January to February: The course gets a very early and thorough spring clean. Specific activities will include aeration, topdressing and grooming. This is the period where our manpower resources also focus on the careful process of bunker preparation. During a careful bunker-by-bunker review, we will specifically ensure that the depth and angle of sand is appropriate to ensure playability for the

Championship. The angle of the greenside bunkers is set at 65-70°. Fairway bunkers are set at an angle of 35-40°. We aim to maintain the angle of the sand at approximately 15-20°. The sand is sourced locally from the beach at St. Annes and is screened to always be free from shell and pebble content. Sand selection and suitability is always a hot topic and is rarely every club, but in its 126-year history Lytham has kept to using the indigenous fine beach sand.

Our aim is to maintain a relatively firm bunker playing conditions that remain consistent, especially near to the fair to reduce the likelihood of balls resting close to the bunker faces.

March to April: Activities will focus on ensuring that all our turfing works establish successfully, eliminating the development of erosion, and planning against drought damage. A dedicated team assigned to bank watering achieves this. This is paramount and ensures that our water usage is specifically directed to those areas of play that need it. Even with modern day automatic irrigation systems, this is not always achievable. We try to keep returning to a minimum during the winter before an Open.

However with 205 bunkers, which require the face to be replaced on a regular basis, naturally an element of turfing work adjacent to the bunker perimeter is required.

The playing surfaces are consistently being refined, in tandem with regular sand topdressing, light fertilizer applications and grooming.

May to June: Early May presents another real challenge in presenting the course for the Lytham and St. Annes tournament. This year, the course proved a formidable challenge even playing from forward tees, with little rough. Royal Lytham's number one last year, the current world ranked number seven number one, Dean Hasting, was the outright winner at seven under par, with his nearest rival seven 11 shots behind.

By the time we eventually reach June and July, most of the specific maintenance schedule will have been implemented and our efforts are then geared towards normalizing our cutting activities, to ensure that the playing surfaces are refined down to tournament standards. It all sounds a simple and straightforward exercise, but it can be anything but if the weather turns against us. We have to be well versed in strategies in coping

THE OPEN PREVIEW



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Greenkeeper Training

A guide to the range of training provided throughout the UK

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the standard of Greenkeeper Training. The Association is a member of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including Section, Regional and National workshops, seminars and conferences.

The range and quality of training now available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry.

Each Course Manager should recognize that their staff are trained to the highest standards. This begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria set down by the GTC. There is a cost, but benefits education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff.

There are now a number of GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers across the UK. Quality Assured logo.




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SCOTLAND

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Carnoustie Legend Bows Out in Style

As John Philp retires from Carnoustie he leaves a great legacy, writes Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews Links Trust

John began his career at his home town club of Pitreavie in Dunfermline and after a spell there learning his trade, he moved to Newmarket GC as Head Greenkeeper/Professional, for a number of years before coming back to Scotland as Deputy Links Supervisor at St Andrews in 1979.

Many people perhaps don't realise that John was quite a proficient golfer in his day.

In 1985 he moved to Carnoustie Golf Links, which was in extremely poor condition at the time, as Links Supervisor. It had hosted the Open in 1975 but because of the condition and other factors it had dropped off the rota. John, with the support of Jock Calder,

Chairman of Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee, turned the Championship course around into the condition it is today, where arguably it is recognised to have set the benchmark for Open Championship venues in 1999 and 2007.

Under his tenure, Carnoustie has also staged the 1991 and 2001 Scottish Ladies' Close Amateur Championships, the 1992 Amateur Championships, the 1995 and 1996 Scottish Opens, the 1997 and 2008 Scottish Amateur, the 2002 British Boys Championship, no less than eleven Dunhill Links tournaments and this year, in his final week, the British Ladies Amateur Championship.

His outstanding work on restoring the Championship course is well documented but what must also be remembered is that he played a similar role in improving both the Burnside and Buddon courses. While not involved in the construction of the Buddon Course, which was built in 1979, he has since rebuilt 16 of the 18 greens.

He has been a regular speaker at various greenkeeper seminars and conferences over the years both in the UK and abroad and has also assisted Elmwood College where he has given presentations and field studies on grass species and identification.

In his time at Carnoustie he has also trained and inspired a number of staff who have gone

onto become Course Managers at some of the most prestigious courses in the UK and Ireland. Alan Strachan at Walton Heath and Gary Johnstone at Portmarnock are two that come to mind.

His training has also been recognised by Carnoustie as they have promoted the Championship Links head greenkeeper Sandy Reid to succeed him and Craig Boath has also ascended to Sandy's previous role.

He has also always been willing to discuss many matters with Course Managers and greenkeepers at all nearby clubs. Many a time I have turned up at Carnoustie on a Sunday morning in winter to drop my sons off at their football and wandered down to the course where I would find John busy on the course. I would always end up missing the first goal after getting into some technical discussion or other!

In 2000, his services to greenkeeping were recognised when he was awarded the MBE, an honour he received from the Queen.

Hole in honour

Earlier this year when it was announced John Philp was retiring, Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee agreed to name the 11th hole on the Championship course after him, this is an extraordinary honour to bestow on an extraordinary greenkeeper and will be the subject of a full report in the next issue.

PLAYER SALUTES LA MANGA ON 40TH ANNIVERSARY



South African legend Gary Player has delivered his own personal message of congratulations to La Manga Club as part of the Spanish resort's 40th anniversary celebrations.

The 76-year-old was La Manga Club's first director of golf when it opened in 1972 and played a key role in helping the resort establish itself during its early years.

La Manga Club hosted the Spanish Open five years in a row from 1973-77 and has gone on to become one of Europe's leading sports and leisure destinations.

Player said: "This is a very happy moment for me having been the director of golf at La Manga Club, a very beautiful place, a great resort with some wonderful courses and people.



Fond Farewell to BIGGA Chairman 2012



BIGGA's chairman, Andrew Mellon is leaving his position as Golf Operations Manager at Elmwood College having been appointed as General Manager for Hydroturf International in Qatar. Hydroturf are the Middle East's leading golf course and landscaping supply company.

Andrew who will take up his new post on September 1st has been with Elmwood for nearly 12 years, having been a student greenkeeper initially and then working through from Greenkeeper Instructor to his present position.

At the latest BIGGA Board of Management meeting Andrew informed the Board of his circumstances and it was agreed that he will step down from his role of BIGGA chairman during the Open

Championship at which time Tony Smith of Teesside Golf Club, the current vice chairman, will take over for the remainder of the year before beginning his intended full year of office at the AGM in January.

In the two and a half years Andrew has been involved on the Board of Management he has served the membership with great drive, passion and commitment. The entire board and staff of the association wish to recognise his huge contribution to BIGGA and wish him all the very best with his new challenge.

Andrew said, "BIGGA has always been a great support to me, from the very first day I became a Greenkeeper, and still is in my current role. It has been an honour and a privilege

to serve on the Board. I wish Tony Smith all the best during his term as Chairman.

The professionalism, the passion, and the friendship I've witnessed during my time at BIGGA from the members, the staff, and the Board has helped me understand why BIGGA is so important within this industry. I'm confident it will go from strength to strength under the current leadership and continue to further develop its support to the membership.

I've made many good friends, and I hope to keep in contact. I am sad to be leaving, but excited at the new opportunity I have. I'd like to thank everyone for their support to me, and wish everyone the very best going forward."



Derek Gould & Duncan Herd

BIGGA is sorry to have recently learnt of the sad news of the passing of two Life Members Mr Derek Gould and Mr Duncan Herd.

Derek, who lived in Sheringham, Norfolk was a long standing member of BGGGA and BIGGA. Duncan who resided in Longniddry, East Lothian, was a long standing member of the SIGGA and BIGGA.

BIGGA would like to express their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Derek and Duncan.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Ian Morrison Captain Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society, Lesley Lowrie GOSTA Training, Markus Klausmann, Steve Miller GOSTA Training, Andrew Connor Head Greenkeeper Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society

Markus Klausmann: Student of the Year for GOSTA

GOSTA has been training golf course greenkeepers and landscape employees in the West of Scotland since 1982. Managing Director, Lesley Lowrie took the decision to commence delivery of greenkeeper qualifications in Edinburgh and Lothian in the summer of 2011.

Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society were one of the first golf clubs to send one of their employees for training. The employee was Markus Klausmann who originally came from Wildtal, a small village right at the edge of the Black Forest, an area of Southern Germany.

As a trained chef Markus relocated to Scotland to change

both his life and career. He worked as a car cleaner and hospital porter for nearly three years in order to finance his flight to Edinburgh until he was successful in finding employment on a golf course. During that time he also attended English Language School in Edinburgh. Markus commented "to say my English was bad would be an understatement."

He went on "by sticking to my plan to only befriend Scotsmen and not mix with other German students at the language school I quickly began to grasp English!"

Markus started work at Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society in 2008 and attended Oatridge

College prior to moving over to GOSTA to do his SVQ Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship in Sports Turf.

"Markus was an outstanding student who strives to achieve the highest possible standards at all times and is a worthy candidate to achieve this award" said his lecturer Steve Miller.

Lesley presented Markus with the GOSTA Training Student of the Year Award which was an inscribed Quaich.

If you are interested in SVQ's, Modern Apprenticeships or short courses (Certificates of Competence) in your area please contact GOSTA Training on 0141-556-3999.

SCOTLAND NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

CHAIRMAN TRIUMPHS AT RATHO PARK GC

John Young, BIGGA's recently appointed RA for Scotland, reports from the Scottish National Tournament 2012



The 2012 Scottish National Tournament took place at Ratho Park Golf Club on Wednesday, 20th June.

Ratho Park, situated 30 minutes from Edinburgh city centre, provided an excellent setting for the competition. The parkland golf course, designed by James Braid was first established in 1928, although the history of the club can be traced back to the turn of the 19th Century through a merger with Corstorphine Golf Club on land that is now part of Edinburgh Zoo.

In 1955, the club purchased the estate of Ratho Park with the mansion house transformed into a magnificent clubhouse.

Playing conditions were excellent for competitors considering June's inclement weather.

The course was actually unplayable over the previous weekend, and Billy Hudson and his team are to be congratulated for producing a course in superb condition for the tournament.

As with all golf tournaments, the weather plays a significant role in competition scoring and the enjoyment for players. With the exception of a couple of light showers in the afternoon, the weather was excellent and very much welcomed by all.

Although playing numbers were down on the previous year, a very competitive field assembled for the tournament. This was highlighted by an extremely close and hard-fought duel between 3 times winner David Simpson of Crieff Golf Club and Scottish Regional Chairman, Stuart Taylor of Glasgow Golf Club for the Scottish Championship. Both returned an excellent one under par score of 68 with the Chairman prevailing on count back over the last nine holes. Kenneth Mitchell from St Andrews Links Trust won the Friendship Trophy for the best nett score of 67 using his handicap of 5 to good effect.

After receiving the Scottish Challenge Cup, Stuart Taylor thanked Vice Captain John Dea, the committee and members of Ratho Park for their hospitality and for the courtesy offered to players.

A Quaich was presented to the Vice Captain, who then paid tribute to the hard work of all greenkeeping staff and remarked that the club was delighted to host the tournament.

Congratulations to all who took part and we hope to see everyone next year at Largs Golf Course for the 2013 tournament.

THE 2012 SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT PRIZE LIST

SGGA CHALLENGE CUP (SCRATCH CHAMPION)
Stuart Taylor, Glasgow GC 68

FRIENDSHIP TROPHY (NET CHAMPION)
Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews Links Trust 72 5 67

RANSOMES TROPHY - 1st CLASS
1. David Simpson, Crieff GC 68 +1 69
2. Paul Murphy, Fife Golf Trust 78 5 73
3. Gavin Neill, St Andrews Links Trust 81 6 75

PATTISON TROPHY - 2nd CLASS
1. Graeme Bolton, G West 78 9 69
2. Ian MacLeod, Tain 78 7 71
3. Thomas Adams, Crieff GC 83 12 71

STRI TROPHY (St. IVES JUBILEE) - 3rd CLASS
1. Dale Robertson, Newmacher GC 83 15 68
2. Gerard Broadley, Glasgow GC 94 17 77
3. Bryan Ramsey, Glasgow GC 94 16 78

DICK AITKEN TROPHY - BEST HEAD GREENKEEPER
Euan Grant, Turnberry Golf Courses 83 14 69

M & M TROPHY - BEST ASSISTANT
Craig Berry, Leven 77 7 70

SIGGA TROPHY - BEST VETERAN
Charles MacDonald, Crieff GC 73 3 70

ST MUNGO TROPHY - SECTION TEAM WINNERS - Central Section
Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews 67
David Simpson, Crieff 69
Graeme Bolton, G-West 69
Charles MacDonald, Crieff 70
TOTAL 275

QUAICH - TRADE PRIZE
Kevin Brunton, Greentech 74 0 74

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS
Scratch, Stuart Taylor, Glasgow GC
Nett, Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews Links Trust

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Southwood and Brockenhurst Taste Victory

The first of the South West and South Wales Region's Golf Management Competitions, sponsored by Tacit, have taken place and two clubs have secured their places in the finals of the event.

The South Coast Section event was recently held at Liphook GC where the winning team from Southwood GC came in with 82 points. In second place was the team from Brockenhurst GC with 81 points. Both teams have won a place through to the final which is taking place later in the year at Frilford Heath GC. Just missing out on a place in the finals were Wareham GC in third place on 80 points and Test Valley GC in fourth place on 79 points. The nearest the pin competition was won by Paul Cooper from Wareham GC and the longest drive competition was won by Chris Hudson from Southwood GC.

BIGGA South West and South Wales Region would like to thank Tim Webb and Tacit for their support of the region in sponsoring these events.

A First for Two Clubs with Green Credentials

Forsgårdens Golf Club, Sweden

Widespread recognition of golf's positive social and environmental impacts is gathering pace – and is being led by a group of clubs who have shown the way toward ever-stronger achievements and credible communications through the GEO Certified™ ecolabel.

Sweden's Forsgårdens Golf Club is a leader among leaders, stepping up in 2009 as one of the very first golf clubs to become GEO Certified™. Three years later, they are the first club in the world to be re-certified by the Golf Environment Organization.

Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all ecolabelling, demonstrating how sustainability can extend deeper into decision-making and communications over time, and affirming the important 'continual improvement' principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey rather than a static destination.

The announcement represents a milestone in golf's sustainability movement; the first time that any golf club, anywhere in the world, has been re-certified via a dedicated, third-party verified and transparently reported programme for golf.

Gordon Shepherd, GEO Board Member and former Head of Global Policy for WWF

International recognized the significance:

"Having worked on the development of many industry certification programmes and ecolabels, from forestry to fisheries, I have seen landmark points in time, when something significant demonstrates a clear path to a more sustainable future. This is one of those moments.

"GEO was founded to support clubs in their sustainability actions and bring forward real, transparently reported results; steering away from one-time awards that

risk bringing complacency, in favour of driving continual improvement."

It is to Forsgårdens' considerable credit that through this re-certification, they demonstrate clear and quantifiable improvements across a comprehensive range of issues. Amongst all the processes and protocols, we are reminded that it's positive individual, personal engagement and action that environment and society needs."

Ole Riger-Kusk, an independent verifier accredited

by GEO, conducted the initial certification and the recertification and found that Forsgårdens upheld and strengthened a solid environmental performance.

Making more improvements in the three years since becoming GEO Certified™, especially around landscape and ecosystems, energy and resource conservation, waste management, and also more communications with authorities and the surrounding community.

Coventry GC First in England to be GEO Certified™

Coventry Golf Club is the first golf club in England to be awarded the international ecolabel GEO Certified™ in recognition of outstanding sustainability efforts.

Established in 1887, the club celebrated its 125th anniversary this year and also the centenary of the re-location of the course to Finham.

Many of England's nearly 2000 golf courses are community based clubs like Coventry, making this an important example of how sustainability can be embraced with positive results for the environment and the economic performance of the golf business.

Phil Weaver, Coventry's Head PGA Professional & Course Manager and Chairman of the PGA of Great Britain and Ireland, was part of the driving force behind the journey through the programme that led to the GEO Certified™ ecolabel, and remarks:

"We recognise the pressures on the

environment at large and understand that golf clubs have an important responsibility to take their stewardship of the land seriously. In the last few years we have become much more aware and active, making sustainability a consideration in every decision we make."

"The GEO OnCourse™ programme was easy to follow and made sure we thought about a wide range of practical areas and there were suggestions for improvements as we went along. The on-site verification with Matt Johns was extremely constructive and left us with new ideas and motivation for the future. We will fly the GEO Certified™ flag with a great deal of pride."

Weaver worked in close conjunction with colleagues Club Captain Keith Lindsay, Club member Professor Ian Foster, and past Captain and President Robin Bussell to drive the project forward and become the first Golf Club in England to achieve this prestigious award.



Changing of The Guard

Following a dramatic conclusion to the 37th Curtis Cup, a ceremonial changing of the guard has taken place at The Nairn Golf Club. The handover, which marked the conclusion of an exceptional 31-year tenure, saw golf course manager Iain Carson pass on the reigns of the club's proud greenkeeping tradition to Ritchie Ewan, his deputy of 25 years.

In a career spanning more than three decades at the Highland course, Iain Carson masterminded a Walker Cup, Scottish Amateur Championship, a Seniors Amateur Open and one of the most keenly contested Curtis Cups in recent times.

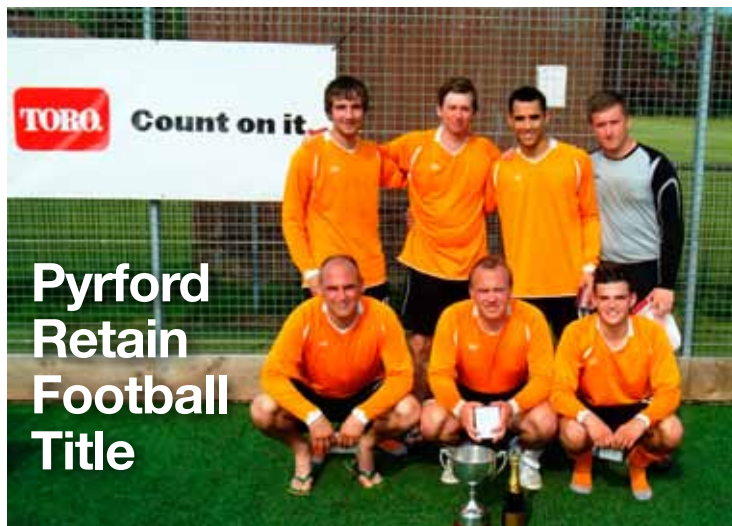
"One of the biggest changes has been the development of Nairn from a relatively small club in the north of Scotland to one that is recognised throughout the world," he said. "We are all part of a team here, committee and management, and we have all been involved in bringing the club forward."

The staging of the Curtis Cup coupled with the club's highest entry (23) in Golf World's recently published Top 100 Golf Courses in Britain & Ireland has ensured Mr Carson leaves on a high. "For me, having the Walker Cup here in 1999 and getting the Curtis Cup in 2012 has been a great honour. No other club in the north of Scotland has had both of these events and it means Nairn is one of only ten clubs to host both," he said. "It has been a fantastic adventure which I have enjoyed from the start."

In what many see as a continuation of what came before, the new keeper of the green will be tasked with ensuring the famed Highland links preserves its reputation for its exceptional greens. Discussing his new position, Ritchie praised his former boss and looked forward to the future.

"It has been a privilege to work alongside Iain for the last 25 years," said the club's new golf course manager. "He has worked hard to achieve the playing surfaces that we have at Nairn which are admired by so many. This shows through in how the course is presented and the feedback we get from the members. My job will be to continue this tradition so that Nairn can be enjoyed long into the future."

It's not just the members who enjoy the club's smooth-running greens. Former Ryder Cup captain Colin Montgomerie is also a fan, describing Nairn as "one of the best links courses in our great country", while World Number One Luke Donald said he "considered it a great test of links golf and one of Scotland's best courses".



Pyrford Retain Football Title

With the only goal of a cagey final which looked destined for penalties, Pyrford Golf Club saw off the challenge of West Hill Golf Club to retain the JSM Cup.

The preceding rounds of very competitive 5-a-side football were played out during one of the warmest days of the year. The commitment of all the teams led to penalties having to decide 2 of the quarter final matches as well as the semi-final in which Pyrford sneaked past Cuddington Golf Club. West Hill defeated Queenwood 2-0 in the other semi-final.

Before the presentations could take place a penalty shoot-out also had to decide the winner of the 'golden boot' for tournament top scorer. Zane Percival (Pyrford) narrowly defeated Ben Edwards (West Hill) during sudden-death penalties, both having finished level on 6 goals at the end of the final.

JSM's Managing Director David Cole remarked, 'The commitment and standard of play has been great to see, particularly on such a warm day. Our football tournament is turning into a great social event and we must thank Toro/ Lely UK for their support in making it such an enjoyable success'.

Entry to the JSM Cup was open to teams of greenkeeper's, groundsman and other turf and landscape professionals from around the south-east. First played for in 2008, the competition is held biannually.

GTC ANNOUNCE NEW DATES FOR CHAIRMAN OF GREEN WORKSHOPS

The Greenkeepers Training Committee has announced three new dates and venues for their very popular Chairman of Green Workshops. Presented by Laurence Pithie MG the Workshops provide a first class introduction to the role and responsibilities of the Chairman of Green and are a must attend for all golf club officials who have responsibility for liaising with the course management team.

Events will take place as follows:

Thursday 13th September 2012

at Priory Barn, Bridgwater College, Cannington Centre, Rodway Hill, Cannington, Bridgwater TA5 2LS.

Thursday 20th September 2012

at Conwy (Caernarvonshire) Golf Club, Morfa, Conwy LL32 8ER

Tuesday 25th September 2012

at Llanishen Golf Club, Heol Hir, Cardiff CF14 9UD.



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partners in turfcare

On Course Foundation Charity Golf Day Success

The On Course Foundation which seeks to find work opportunities for injured servicemen in the golf industry held a Charity Golf Day at Royal Birkdale. Alex Harrison, who is employed full time as a greenkeeper at Gainsborough Golf Club after being placed there by the Foundation, took part in the Chandley Properties Ltd team. Alex was joined by Royal Birkdale

Captain, Sid Ludlow, Formby Captain, Niall Roy and Peter Unsworth of Chandley Properties.

Pictured, from left to right, are Niall Roy, Sid Ludlow, Bert Beddow, Peter Unsworth and Alex Harrison.

For further information about the On Course Foundation email info@oncoursefoundation.com or telephone **0208 334 2010**.



25 YEARS FOR STUART AT JOHN O'GAUNT



IGCEMA Board Member Stuart Hall recently celebrated 25 years service as Workshop Manager at John O'Gaunt Golf Club in Bedfordshire and was presented with a commemorative gift by the Club Captain, Martin Pettit.

2012 is turning in to a landmark year for Stuart, following his selection to be part of the BIGGA Delegation to attend the Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas (courtesy of Bernhard and Company). In 2010 he was also part of the workshop team at Celtic Manor for the dramatic Ryder Cup Matches.

On receiving the presentation he remarked, "It doesn't seem like 25 years since I first arrived at John O Gaunt for my first day's work, hand cutting greens of all things.

Since then I have done many different jobs in an ever changing environment, it's been an enjoyable journey to where I am now and along the way I have met and worked with many different people from all areas of the industry, each and every one of those people have helped, encouraged or influenced me in some way during my time here.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of those people for their help and support over the years and thank the staff and committee of John O Gaunt for their continued help and support."

Wood Boring Beetle Flies into the UK



Asian Longhorn Beetle.
All images on this page courtesy of the Forestry Commission

UK plant health authorities are battling to eradicate the most dangerous alien insect pest of trees and shrubs the United Kingdom has ever had to face. Asian longhorn beetle/ALB (*Anoplophora glabripennis* arrived), which arrived in wood packaging from China, has been breeding in trees at Paddock Wood in Kent (eight miles from Maidstone) for at least two years.

Failure to eradicate this wood boring beetle could transform large areas of the country into a lunar landscape as the authorities will be forced to fell and burn all potential host trees in its path. Most insect pests have a restricted host range but

this beetle attacks a huge range of broad-leaved trees which are already being felled and burned by contractors working with the Forestry Commission (FC) and Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) in Kent.

Potential tree hosts include poplars, willows, maples, sycamore, London planes, beech, alders, mountain ash and all *Prunus* species. Such is the breadth of ALB's host range that conifers, Eucalyptus and English oaks are virtually the only trees escaping the 'blade' and 'burner'.

Houlbec Forestry, an approved Arboriculture Association contractor from Hastings, is felling and clearing trees and an 'air-burner' belonging to Kingwell Holdings of Braintree, Essex is incinerating 1 tonne of wood per hour on site, 12 hours a day for 7 days a week.

Infested trees plus all healthy potential host trees within a 100 m radius around each beetle infested tree are felled and incinerated.

By mid-June 65 trees with a combined total of 100 beetle larvae had been identified, felled and incinerated together with over 1300 healthy susceptible trees.

The operation began in late April 2012 and is likely to continue through summer as newly infested trees are found

further out from the original infestation. Each time another infested tree is found the infestation zone is extended by another 100 m (radius around the tree) and likewise the 'exclusion (buffer) zone' for another 200 m beyond the edge of the infestation zone. By mid-June the infestation zone covered more than 8 hectares.

Adult female beetles lay eggs in slits cut into the bark on the upper branches of trees starting in May. Larvae hatch within 7-17 days and feed under the bark through two larval moults before boring into the wood.

Once inside they excavate galleries up to 10 mm in diameter to attain a body length of 50 mm by maturity. Pupation occurs in spring and hatching adults emerge

from May through to August leaving masses of tell-tale wood shavings around the face of the exit hole.

Length of ALB life cycle varies depending on temperature. Entomologists expect ALB life cycle under south of England conditions to be around 2 years. The boring activity of beetle larvae weakens trees which collapse and die. So serious is this quarantine pest that tree felling and incineration is overriding all other normally sacrosanct priorities including Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and nesting birds.

Thankfully none of the three golf courses in this area of Kent are affected. Spread of ALB onto golf courses would completely change their topography and lay-out due to a mass loss of trees of all stages of growth and development.

In addition, it would undoubtedly mean significant collateral damage to sports turf from the heavy machinery and equipment needed to fell, load, transport and incinerate hundreds of full grown trees.

This insect's capacity for rapid spread is high. Adult beetles will fly at least 400 metres in search of a food supply and anyone felling or pruning an infested tree and subsequently transporting debris to a landfill or re-cycling centre will inadvertently spread the pest.

Experience from the US shows just how far and fast this beetle can spread. After arriving in New York in 1996 and Chicago in 1998, ALB subsequently spread into the New England States, Ohio and Canada. Estimates for damage and cost of control run into hundreds of billions of dollars.



Willow showing adult Asian longhorn beetle exit holes.
(Picture Forestry Commission)



Parts of Paddock Wood are beginning to look like a lunar landscape. Felled poplars shown here (Picture Forestry Commission)

Grand Finale

Wentworth's Chris Kennedy is honoured during the 2012 BMW PGA Championship

The sun beamed down on Chris Kennedy, Golf Courses Manager at Wentworth, for the BMW PGA Championship, his 52nd and final European Tour event as world number one, Luke Donald produced a dominant display to successfully defend his BMW PGA Championship title.

Chris described the conditions running up to the tournament which brought drought then heavy rain with low temperatures throughout, as 'the most difficult build up I have ever known', a strong statement after 22 years at Wentworth and 50 all told in the industry!

Nevertheless the yet again rejigged West Course was immaculate and the most recent course changes notably at holes 12, 15 and 17 as well as the raised landing area on 18 were seamless in appearance.

The great weather for the week brought out a record crowd of over 95,000 for the four tournament days to witness Europe's finest players



competing for the Tour's flagship title. Donald's closing 68 for a 13 under par total of 275 saw him cruise to a four shot victory over Paul Lawrie and Justin Rose.

It was an eventful week for Chris beginning with a tribute from the Association of Golf Writers and closing with the presentation of a silver salver on the 18th green during the main prizegiving from the European Tour's Chief Executive George O'Grady (right).

Congratulations to Chris on his well earned retirement and we wish him well as he relocates to his native Scotland.

Good luck also to Kenny Mackay as he takes over the reins from Chris for the next

chapter in the Wentworth story.

As usual a Support Team of BIGGA volunteers co-ordinated by Clive Osgood assisted with the event, providing back up on the first two days and then each individual match was accompanied over the weekend, by a member.

A full complement of forty-five BIGGA Members, from all over the country, took part and had to take on plenty of water in the course of their duties, because of the high temperatures with hardly a cloud to be seen in the sky over the last two days.

By all accounts everybody was kept on their toes with frequent visits being made into many of the well-placed and



formidable West Course bunkers throughout.

27-year-old Mike Ellis, Course Manager at the Lakeview Country Club in Cornwall, had the honour of accompanying the last match out, and safely brought the winner home on Sunday.

Thanks to all of the volunteers for giving up their time to assist with the event, they did the Association and the event proud.

Wentworth Club's Chris Kennedy Awarded Tribute from AGW

The Association of Golf Writers paid tribute to Chris Kennedy, the retiring Golf Courses Manager at Wentworth Club, during their annual lunch at Wentworth Club on the eve of the BMW PGA Championship.

The BMW PGA Championship was the 52nd European Tour event where Kennedy had managed the course preparation at Wentworth and his contribution was recognised by the AGW with Chairman Bill Elliott and John Jacobs,

the founding father of The European Tour and Honorary Life Vice President of the AGW, presenting a silver Quaich.

Elliott said: "We as golf writers talk so much about how much equipment has moved on in our lifetimes and so much over the last 20 years and actually I think the greatest advance in that time is the conditioning of golf courses.

That's down to fantastic skill, commitment, enthusiasm and passion, no



one has that more than Chris Kennedy here at Wentworth. You have been a terrific asset to this club and an example to greenkeepers across the country and we thank you for what you have done here."

Jacobs was also joined by Judy Williams, the wife of the

late Michael Williams, golf correspondent of the Daily Telegraph for some 25 years, to present Colin Harding with the Michael Williams Hoggett, awarded to the winner of the Golf Writers' Spring medal played over Wentworth Club's Edinburgh Course.



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

All good things...

I've mentioned the weather several times in my previous reports, but I've come to the conclusion that I am a jinx, and just as we think we have seen one extreme we witness another. I hope the guys who endured the recent floods are coping and wish them the best in their efforts to restore their courses.

No doubt some of you will have heard the news that I am moving on, so this will be my last official column as Chairman.

I have been offered and accepted a position on the "Dark-Side" as many Greenkeepers refer to it, as General Manager of Hydroturf International in Qatar. It certainly won't be dark there though, and those who know me must be smiling at the thought of my fair skin under that blistering sun. It will be a new challenge for me, in many ways, but I'm looking forward to it.

Leaving my current employer was a tough decision, as I love the job. Elmwood has been a great experience for me from which I've learnt a great deal and I will put that to good use in my new role. The demands and location of my new role mean that I must step down from the Chairmanship of BIGGA. That is something I'll do with some sadness, but also with a sense of satisfaction, knowing that BIGGA is in very capable hands with a dedicated team of staff, well supported by volunteer members through all the Sections, serving on Boards and committees to ensure that BIGGA delivers to the members. I'd like to thank all the members who have offered their support and advice to me, while I have been on the Board, and all those I didn't meet but whose participation makes BIGGA so strong.

I have really enjoyed my time with BIGGA, from the day I started greenkeeping, eagerly waiting for the magazine to see what more I could learn, and to see what everyone else was doing. When I got involved at Section level it was so good to meet so many people who were all willing to share their experience with me and offer support when I needed it. I'd like to thank the Central Section, who I've spent the majority of my time with over the years, for their friendship and for teaching me so much. They are a fantastic example of all that is good about BIGGA.



"I leave with a sense of satisfaction, knowing that BIGGA is in very capable hands, well supported by volunteer members through all the Sections, to ensure that BIGGA delivers to the members"

I've been fortunate that my employer, Elmwood College has supported me in every way as I've sought to learn more, and in allowing me to spend more time in serving on the BIGGA Board. I'm very grateful to them for that support, and the experience of remodelling Elmwood Golf Course and being involved in the education of so many greenkeeper students. That has been especially rewarding and it is so good to see so many of them progressing so well in this industry. The team at Elmwood Golf Course have been a great support to me over my 30 months on the Board and their extra efforts have ensured that while away on business everything ran smoothly; some would say even more smoothly!! They are a great team and I'll miss them all.

Through my involvement in the Board I have experienced a wider view of the industry, witnessing welcome support for

our profession from all the various Golf Industry Associations and Organisations and the trade. It was great to see such overwhelming support when we celebrated our 25th Anniversary at BTME in January. Our increased collaboration with the various International Greenkeeping Associations has huge potential and it's good to see the willingness from them to work more closely together in future.

I'm extremely grateful to the founding members of BIGGA, and those members who served on the previous Associations before they merged to form BIGGA. Their foresight and perseverance has served to advance the standards of greenkeeping and the condition of golf courses. Their input to the formation of the GTC, and to the colleges in developing education is something we take far too much for granted today. Conditions of employment now, and the support

and the great opportunities available to budding Greenkeepers are in large part down to their efforts all those years ago. There is still work to be done though, and we have a duty to ensure that the Association they created continues to drive forward better education, support for all its members, and recognition of the huge contribution they make to the game of golf, and the pleasure and livelihoods it provides to so many.

I would like to thank all the current and previous staff at BIGGA. In some ways they work for the biggest greens committee in the country – imagine what that must be like! Their dedication and professionalism provides all the services and benefits BIGGA now brings to its members and I'd like to thank them sincerely for their friendship and continued commitment during an economic period which has not been the easiest for any organisation and brings added pressure to us all.

At the helm we have Jim Croxton, who has succeeded John Pemberton as CEO. I'd like to thank both of them for their support to me while on the Board. Their professional management of every aspect of the Association has ensured that BIGGA developed successfully and will continue to do so going forward. I've worked closely with Jim this last year, and his energy and enthusiasm, and his wealth of industry knowledge will be a great asset to us.

In July, Tony Smith from Teesside will step into my shoes. I've known Tony for about ten years, since he bought me a few pints in Southport at a conference (I've bought my fair share since in return). He has become a close friend, and he is totally dedicated to ensuring BIGGA serves the best interests of the members. His considerable experience will be of great benefit to the Board and I'd ask you all to support him and the Board in ensuring the Association continues to be of valuable service to its members.

I've made many new friends during my time in BIGGA, and I will continue to offer any support I can to an association, which has helped me so much. I intend to continue making the annual pilgrimage to Harrogate to keep up with all the developments in the industry and to catch up with everyone.

My wife and kids have been very patient, thankfully, during my time as a greenkeeper and all the time I spent obsessing about the course, and lately with BIGGA. Although I will be working hard in my new job, I'll definitely be spending more time with them and I'm looking forward to it. (I hope they are!)

So over to Tony – I must admit, not having HQ chasing me every month for the column is not something I'll miss, but I will look forward to receiving Greenkeeper International and keeping up to speed with everything. Thank you sincerely to everyone in BIGGA and I wish the Association the very best for the future.

My best regards, Andrew Mellon
Chairman 2012, 07780 995602
amellon@elmwood.ac.uk

Save the Date - 2013 Turf Managers' Conference at BTME



The third edition of the very popular Turf Managers' Conference will take place on Monday 21st January 2013 during BTME at Harrogate.

The finishing touches are just being applied to the conference programme and full details will be available on www.bigga.org.uk shortly.

We are pleased to announce that the world-renowned expert on green speed and performance Dr Thom Nikolai will be opening the conference and further topics to be covered include the latest news on Turf Diseases, Communicating with employers and golfers and Organisational Politics amongst others.

The Turf Managers' Conference is a not to be missed opportunity to broaden your knowledge of cutting edge turf management whilst improving your wider managerial skills.

Turf Grass Information File Closer to Full-Text Availability

The Turf Grass Information File (TGIF), the largest online collection of turf related research and information has passed a truly significant milestone – as of June 2012, 50% of all TGIF records link to full-text of the item.

This is a particularly important achievement for users of TGIF worldwide.

Full-text availability is highly desirable in these instances, saving valuable time and effort dedicated to locating physical copies for personal use. With half of all TGIF records linking to full-text, this means thousands and thousands of records link directly to content.

BIGGA announced recently that the TGIF has been made available free of



charge to all Members through bigga.org.uk by visiting the Members Area, selecting Member Resources from the options on the left hand side and scroll down to Turfgrass Information File (TGIF), from here you can click through to the site.

Back at the end of 2005, TGIF had 108,741 records with only 21% linked to full-text, approximately 23,000 records.

Today, however, TGIF has about 204,000 records total, meaning a little over 102,000 records are full-text accessible.

In the span of just six years, the TGIF database has nearly doubled in strength, while the availability of full-text has tripled.



Learning & Development

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

July is a busy month in the Learning and Development Department. Rachael will be heading off to The Open at Lytham St Annes and will spend the week ensuring that every member of the greenkeeping open support team is where they need to be, at the time they need to be, and making sure that everything runs smoothly.

The 2012 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year finalists (2011 winner Matt Perks, shown right) will be selected and the deadline for the completed Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2013 education programme will be fast approaching.

If you see either Rachael or I in July, we will probably just be a blur!

New Team Member



I am delighted to welcome Stuart Green to the department in the role of Learning and Development Executive.

Stuart is joining BIGGA from Askham Bryan College and will bring knowledge and experience to the department with his background in greenkeeping and the sports turf education system.

His skills will help BIGGA to ensure the development and delivery of the Learning and Development pathway for our members. I'm sure you'll all join me in welcoming Stuart to BIGGA.

BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX

BIGGA is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2012.

This year we will be bringing you some of the greatest hits from the extremely successful Continue to Learn at BTME 2012. The seminars will take place on Wednesday 5 September in the Grandstand at Windsor Racecourse.



Gold Key Individual Members: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison Andrew Turnbull, W J Rogers Frank Newberry, Sam Langrick Antony Calvert, Espen Bergmann
Silver Key Individual Members: Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn Douglas Duguid, Ade Archer Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley Michael Beaton, Paul Jenkins

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.



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Inside...

CONTINENTAL SHIFT
Holland is the destination for this month's course visit

TREADING THE BOARDS
The benefits of BIGGA's website bulletin boards

Perks of the job

2011 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner is Matthew Perks

10.15 am – 11.15 pm Managing Winter Kill

Presented by David Cole, Golf Course/Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club

In the winter of 2009/10 the greens at Loch Lomond suffered from devastating winter kill.

This session will give an insight to the damage that occurred and the precautions that were taken in 2010/11 to prevent similar problems.

11.30 am – 12.30 pm From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years

Chris Haspell, Course Manager, Castle Stuart Golf Club

In this session Chris will discuss his experiences of building a links golf course and it's grow in.

He will also describe the journey towards the Scottish Open 2011, the event, the rain and the recovery.

1.00 pm – 2.00 pm Organic Matter – Friend or Foe

Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager, Symbio

Measuring organic matter levels is becoming very popular, almost an industry standard procedure.

This information can be invaluable to green keepers and grounds men.

However, how do we decipher between thatch and organic matter and why it is important to do so.

This seminar will discuss the various differences between problematic thatch and beneficial organic matter, the problems with working to a figure, the difference between drainage and percolation rates and how you can turn the thatch to your advantage.

CPD BIGGA CPD

BIGGA CPD Credits - 0.5 CPD credits are available for each seminar. A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.



Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update



BIGGA Open Support Team 2011

This month I would like to welcome the BIGGA Open Support Team to Royal Lytham and St Annes for this years Open Championships from 15th – 22nd July. BIGGA play a valuable role within the Open Championship providing support to the home greenkeeping teams since 1984.

All Greenkeeping BIGGA members are eligible to apply to be on the Open Support Team.

The 50plus strong team is selected using a number of different criteria including experience and BIGGA involvement but there is also a category for first time applicants to ensure everyone has an opportunity.

One of the top 5 qualities of any successful event is an excellent well trained team.

Rachael Duffy, Sandra Raper, John Young and myself are the representatives from HQ, together with support from the Board of Management, however, we need to rely on experienced members who have previously been part of the support team.

'Core' members are selected to take on the roles of mini bus drivers, pod leaders and first tee representatives, once this team is selected from suitable applications, we then review the rest of the applications, as this is a fantastic opportunity for members we are

usually oversubscribed for places, so applications for consideration are carefully reviewed.

A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority is given to those who are more active members.

If you are applying to become part of the Open Support Team why not consider becoming more involved with the Association, for example get more involved in your section, join the CPD scheme or attend Harrogate Week.

If you are over the age of 25 why not volunteer to be a mini bus driver or a deputy mini bus driver. Successful applications are then entered into a draw to make up the full team.

Have we got your right email address?

We know you all love receiving your monthly copy of Greenkeeper International, but living in this digital age, BIGGA want to complement the magazine with an e-newsletter.

To ensure you receive your copy check with us that we have your up to date email address.

Either check the information on your membership renewal form, if this is due or you have recently renewed, or send an email to membership@bigga.co.uk with 'Email address' in the subject line.

SALTEX

If you plan to visit SALTEX this year, 4-6 September, at Windsor Racecourse make sure you check out the series of three seminars presented by BIGGA on Wednesday 5 September.

Whilst you are at SALTEX don't forget to come and say hello to the BIGGA Team on stand E33, we hope to be in the usual cabin sheltering from the rain or enjoying the lovely sunshine on the seats outside!

Bioflow Sport Wristbands

BIGGA are pleased to announce that we have secured a 15% discount for BIGGA members off the price of Bioflow sport wristbands.

Bioflow wristbands have been supporting the sports market for over 15 years and are chosen by professionals worldwide to help enhance their performance through the benefits of magnetic therapy.

Visit the bioflow website at www.bioflowsport.com select the wristband colour and size to suit and at checkout enter the code WG15 in the voucher code field under the payment section.



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John Young Sandra Raper



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

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



Back to the Future for Kubota

Kubota UK has completed the restructuring of its management team with the creation of a new role for Dave Roberts. Dave left the company in 2010 after 21 years of service and has been enticed back to head up Kubota's three product sectors as Sales and Marketing General Manager.

The main product categories of Engines, Construction Equipment, and Tractor & Groundcare have historically had a Head of Sales and Marketing reporting separately into the MD of Kubota UK. Whilst those positions are still retained, Dave now effectively 'umbrellas' those functions to bring in a more unified approach to Kubota's operating methods.

The Engine sales division now sees Daniel Grant responsible for Sales and Marketing, with Neil Winfield carrying out the same function for the Construction division. Over in the Tractor and Groundcare division Dave Roberts has resumed his previous role running alongside his umbrella function of all three divisions.

Announcing this restructuring Dave explained, "The idea is to bring benefit to our customers with a more unified approach to our operating methods. This will make more efficient use of our resources and enable a common message with regards to marketing." He continued, "We have retained industry expertise where appropriate, but are now able to deploy common resources that transcend the divisions such as marketing, demonstration activities and to a degree, administration.

"My 18 months as Operations Director of Farol Ltd has been invaluable. Being involved in all aspects of the dealer has broadened my knowledge and experience, which will help in my new role here at Kubota."

The new Sales & Marketing Manager of the Construction division is Neil Winfield.

A seasoned Kubota employee having joined in 1999, Neil saw service first as an Administrator in the Engines Division before moving over to Construction

in 2001 as Distribution Coordinator. Neil graduated to field sales support and then Sales Coordinator before this promotion to Sales and Marketing Manager.

Daniel Grant has followed a similar path in that he too studied Agricultural Engineering. He then went on to provide field sales support at Dealership level for various premium brands. His entry into Kubota came in 2005, "I joined Kubota as an internal Sales Engineer within the Industrial Diesel division. My position progressively evolved to Regional Sales and finally achieving Regional Sales Manager. I was primarily responsible for the sales and distribution into Southern UK as well as Scandinavian/Nordic OEM's and Dealer/Distributor accounts," he contributed. Daniel sees the experience he's gained at Kubota, together with the experience he previously gained working within a dealership environment, will help him in his position of Sales & Marketing Manager, Engines Division.



RJ MAKE SALES MANAGEMENT APPOINTMENTS

David Timms and Nick Penn have been appointed to regional sales management roles at Ransomes Jacobsen.

Both report to UK and Ireland sales manager, John Quinton, and are responsible for business development, equipment sales and dealer support across their respective territories.

David Timms, whose territory covers the west of England and stretches from Lands End to Barrow-in-Furness via Wales, joined the company in August last year following nine years in a sales management role at JSM Distribution, the niche products division of John Shaw Machinery.

Nick Penn joined the company in March 2012 and is responsible for a territory from West Midlands to the Welsh border, and down to parts of Hampshire, Berkshire and Surrey.

For the past two years he was area sales manager at Burrows Grass Machinery responsible for Manchester and Cheshire and the fleet hire division.

Commenting on these appointments John Quinton said:

"It is obvious from their CVs that we have added two very experienced sales professionals to our team here at Ransomes Jacobsen. We have a momentum within the business that has seen us grow market share in the past two years and these two guys will help us sustain that, going forward."

Rain Bird fly into Renewable Energy with New Product Manager Iain Macpherson



Rain Bird has recently entered the Renewable Energy market, with their newly appointed European Energy Product Manager; Iain Macpherson.

"We are confident of delivery in the immediate coming months of our first UK project; having already signed up a Golf Club.

We look forward to helping more clubs to significantly reduce energy costs, and give clients confidence of product choice.'

Iain has had a long felt belief that golf courses needed to look at cost, particularly in irrigation. Electricity is a large running cost of irrigation pumps and club houses, and rose by 16% last year – a serious impact on any club's finances. Iain adds:

"The Feed-in-Tariff (FiTs) backed by the government offers incentives; that are importantly index linked, and certainly make Britain presently the envy of this worldwide developing industry – The UK is committed to a 15% carbon reduction and with 60% of the wind across Europe crosses Britain - why wouldn't we

try to make use of a free energy that year on year is consistent, non-destructive and adding to a carbon neutral green preferred way of life?"

"In 2010 global investment in new Renewable energy projects exceeded investment in new fossil fueled plants for the first time. Europe; particularly Germany and Denmark, have lead the way; however we are sat on the best opportunity on this Isle to take advantage."

"China are putting up 36 turbines a day - Is everybody else wrong?" Iain thinks not.

"The Rain Bird turbine proposal is the size of an oak tree. It specific in its target of delivery in kw of electricity; appropriate to your average European sized golf club.

"We take care of the planning, its installation and servicing and importantly to clubs.... 'It is 'plug-in any flavour", says Iain.

Iain can be contacted on 07712 631467 / 01777 818919, or

e-mail: imacpherson@rainbird.eu

What's your number?

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

Name: Andrew Pickup

Company: Stourton Forestry

Position: Consultant & Company Manager

How long have you been in the industry? A very busy four years

How did you get into it?

From an early age I've loved trees and the outdoors, so I decided to study Forestry at the University of Wales, Bangor. When I joined Stourton Forestry they had an established reputation as specialists in trees on golf courses and my involvement has grown from there.

What other jobs have you done?

In my student days I spent several summers working outdoors, including plenty of grass cutting, landscaping and gardening.

What do you like about your current job?

I get to visit and work on some amazing sites, from nationally renowned golf courses to private woodlands and estates that the general public doesn't usually get to see.

I particularly enjoy watching sites develop over the years- people often think they will never see the benefits of tree planting in their lifetime, but even after just a few years, young trees can make a real impact.

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

The biggest change in the past four years has been the demand for wood as fuel- we've seen the wholesale price of round timber for firewood almost double. Even relatively small volumes of timber that were once a waste product are now in high demand.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy relaxing with friends and family, playing tennis and tending my allotment.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

I'm definitely in the woodland management sector for the long haul, as to exactly what and where, you'll have to watch this space!

Who do you consider best friends in the industry?

I'm delighted to work with anyone who has a shared love of trees and the foresight to invest now for future generations.

What do you consider to be your lucky number? 122

Andrew has picked Barry Eagle from Gripclad



Wessex Country

The Wessex Country range has been developed to meet the needs of landscapers, private estate owners and smallholders.

In the range, the AT110 ATV toppler is designed specifically to suit the ATV user working to a budget, without sacrificing quality.

The toppler has a 1.1m working width and power comes from a 12.5hp (9.32kW) Briggs & Stratton engine. Cutting is from a single blade bar, height adjustment is simple and the drawbar allows for use to the left, right or centrally behind the ATV.



The Wessex ranges for ATV's and UTV's also include further rotary mowers, flail mowers, collectors, trailed spreaders, sprayers, land rollers, drag harrows, trailers and accessories for equestrian facilities.

Wessex products are manufactured and distributed in Great Britain and worldwide by Broadwood International

01420 478111

www.broadwoodintl.co.uk



TORO ASSIST GLENEAGLES RYDER CUP PREPARATIONS

Gleneagles Golf Resort in Scotland has recently renewed its five-year exclusivity deal with turf maintenance machinery manufacturer Toro and its distributor Lely UK.

The Perthshire resort plays host to the prestigious Ryder Cup in September 2014, with the updated Toro equipment particularly helping prepare the PGA Centenary Course for the three-day tournament's matches. The King's and The Queen's championship courses will also continue to benefit from Toro machinery.

Commenting on the continued partnership with Toro, Gleneagles golf courses and estate manager Scott Fenwick says: "We're delighted to have renewed our contract with Toro, which will see us through to the Ryder Cup in 2014, and beyond. As we prepare to host one of the world's greatest sporting events, it's even more important that our courses are in the best possible condition. Our continued work with Toro will help to achieve this."

The Toro Company's

corporate accounts manager Andrew Brown adds: "We are delighted that Gleneagles has once again entrusted Toro and our distributor Lely UK to provide the quality of products and service the resort has come to rely on over the past eight years. The Ryder Cup will be an ideal opportunity for Gleneagles to showcase the exceptionally high standard of course preparation it offers to members and guests from all over the world, and Toro is honoured to play its part in that success story."



PRAISE FOR EURO 2012 TRAINING PITCHES

The England training camp's immaculate pitches in Poland hit the headlines, thanks to Sports Turf Research Institute's (STRI) remarkable transformation of the site ahead of Euro 2012.

Sporting pundits heaped praise on Hutnik Nowa Huta football club's new Premier League-standard playing surface, pictured here, and Barenbrug helped STRI achieve such impressive results.

Eight months ago, the Kraków club's pitches were worn and muddy. The FA tasked STRI with creating a world-class surface for the England team to train on that would also leave a lasting legacy for Hutnik.

STRI chose to grow the pitch from seed, using a combination of Barenbrug's sports mixtures. With the team working through Poland's coldest winter for 40 years to deliver the pitch on time, BAR 50 SOS' cool soil temperature germination characteristics certainly proved a wise choice.

Seventy-five bags of Barenbrug grass seed have gone to Hutnik, while a further four tonnes of Royal Barenbrug Group seed is being used across Polish and Ukrainian Euro 2012 tournament venues. This includes the Warsaw National Stadium, which plays host to the opening game between Poland and Greece on 8 June.

JOHNSONS HELP SOW THE SEEDS



The Northumberlandia giant earth sculpture is turning green as the swathes of seed sown across the iconic structure spring to life. DLF Trifolium Johnsons and hydroseeding specialists CDTS teamed up to create and apply a bespoke mix that puts the finishing touches to a project that was first mooted a decade over.

DLF Trifolium Johnsons supplied the seed mix, and Amenity Sales Manager Paul Hadley, who selected the grass and microclover varieties, said: "Our brief was to prepare a mix that was low maintenance, drought resistant, robust and able to cope with a low nutrient environment. Microclover was the key as it helps fix nutrients from the atmosphere. In a sloped environment like this one, soil is likely to leech nutrients, so using cultivars that help maintain levels was crucial for it to stay green."



Poorly draining green transformed by topdressing material

Significant improvements in water infiltration rates have been achieved on a previously poorly-draining green at Kent's Sittingbourne & Milton Regis Golf Club, following applications of Everris' Greenmaster Topdress Z.

Trialled initially by head greenkeeper and BIGGA member, David Horn, the product - a fine particle (0.5mm - 1mm) granular material with an open-cage structure designed for use as a top dressing and as a soil amendment in new rootzones, has enhanced the porosity of the soil, leading to noticeably faster downward movement of surface water while simultaneously boosting the soil's nutrient-holding capacity.

"The improvements in drainage and nutrient retention were rapid and clear, creating a far better turf-growing environment and a greener, firmer playing surface within days," commented David. "As a bonus, the upgrading of the soil's structure means that moisture is retained for longer in dry weather, helping combat drought and the restrictions now in place on water use. Very clever."

Following the impressive results achieved with his first application, David treated the same green again last September and is planning another treatment shortly.

Both previous applications of Greenmaster Topdress Z have followed hollow coring of the affected 11th green, one of four par 3 holes on the 6,295 yard parkland course.

"Although we verti-drain all of our greens regularly, the course has nine older push-up greens dating from 1929, eight of which have benefited from additional treatment in the form of Whizz Wheel trench drainage," explained David. "The remaining green has clay pipes lying too close to the surface for mechanised drainage, leading to the poor water infiltration that has been cured now with help from Everris."

David says that the green also dries out in less than a day (instead of three days or more following periods of heavy rain).

"Within a year, the 11th green has gone from being one of the poorest on the course to one of the best," he concluded.



Further Support for SGU

Jacobsen, together with its golf car partner E-Z-GO, have signed a three-year agreement to sponsor the Scottish Golf Union (SGU) and boost the governing body's role in supporting clubs.

The new partnership, a first of its kind for SGU, will see Jacobsen become its preferred and recommended supplier of golf course maintenance equipment, while E-Z-GO will support the SGU's national events programme, through provision of a vehicle fleet to assist with the running of the governing body's 15 national championships.

Worth £30,000 over the next three years in addition to in-kind support, the sponsorship is the latest addition to the SGU's growing portfolio of blue chip partners, joining Scottish Hydro and the Paul Lawrie Foundation who were announced earlier this year.

The SGU works closely with Scotland's course managers and greenkeeping fraternity, a key audience for Jacobsen. It is hoped the new partnership can help clubs improve the condition of their courses and deliver financial savings.

"We are delighted to be launching our new partnership with the SGU. We have many synergies with governing bodies, nationally and globally, providing support to many golf clubs," said Ransomes Jacobsen's UK and Ireland Sales Manager, John Quinton.

Speaking at the announcement during the opening day of the Scottish Stroke Play Championship at Kilmarnock (Barassie), SGU Chief Executive Hamish Grey added:

"Jacobsen and E-Z-GO are both leading brands and our sponsorship agreement highlights the growing profile of the SGU among key players in the golf industry. We aim to use this partnership to further our commitment to supporting clubs during these challenging times and enhancing our club education programmes."



MJ Abbott upgrades The Grove

The Grove has upgraded its golf practice facilities with a new all-weather practice tee and access pathway installed by specialist sports turf and groundworks contractor, MJ Abbott Limited, to design specifications prepared by original course architect, Kyle Phillips.

"The replacement of individual mats with a full-length synthetic

practice tee will help ensure that the facility can be used successfully and kept clean and looking pristine all-year-round," said manager, Phillip Chiverton.

Alongside the tee improvement, MJ Abbott was commissioned to replace a short wood-chip access path with a hard-wearing synthetic pathway spanning the full length of the practice tee.



Less Mowing, More Growing

The current harsh economic climate has seen councils forced to reduce their mowing frequency.

This has resulted in the requirement for grass cutting equipment to withstand more demanding applications and longer grass.

However, there may be issues with roller mower performance in these conditions, which is not surprising as the roller mower

was designed as a fine turf mower.

To counter this, Broadwood International have redesigned the popular Wessex RMX 360 and RMX 480 hydraulically folding roller mowers, to allow larger volumes of cut grass to clear the deck quickly and so greatly increasing performance in longer grass applications.

The two machines are available as 3 point linkage

mounted or trailed on the popular ProGlider chassis and are ideal for councils, contractors, air fields, race tracks and other large amenity areas. Smaller, rigid models from 1.8m to 3.0m are popular with councils, schools and sports clubs.

Broadwood offer free demonstrations in conjunction with local dealers.

Call 01420 478111.
www.broadwoodintl.co.uk

Basis Points

BCPC has just launched its newly designed UK Pesticide Guide Online.

This comprehensive database provides information on over 1,300 pesticides and adjuvants for pest control use in the UK.

"Plantprotection.co.uk provides you with essential pesticide information at your fingertips," advises Martin Lainsbury, editor of BCPC's The UK Pesticide Guide.

"Users can access product, adjuvant and supplier factsheets, search for control measures against specific diseases in chosen crops and access an up-to-date list of SOLAs (now known as Extensions of Authorisation for Minor Uses). There are also quick links to the relevant documents on the Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) web site."

Responding to user feedback the redesigned site has simplified navigational options, making it much more user-friendly.

Users now have the opportunity to make more complex searches, and regular updates will be made to the content throughout the year ensuring users have the most up-to-date pesticide information to hand.

12 months subscription to plantprotection.co.uk, which is jointly marketed by BCPC and CABI, is just £60 + VAT.

BASIS members who subscribe to plantprotection.co.uk can gain 3 CPD points with their purchase and all subscribers will have free access to BCPC's Identipest pictorial diagnostic tool identifying pests, weeds and diseases in 34 UK field crops.



Go Solo With a New Strap-on Sprayer

From cutting back overgrowth, tidying up battered and broken branches or spraying turf for disease, the Solo outdoor equipment range has everything you need to keep your course in top condition.

Solo's backpack sprayers, boast a generous spraying capacity, and even liquid distribution together with a light weight that allows for longer working periods.

Solo state these compact yet powerful sprayers are ideal for an array of tasks: easily and effectively handling fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides, disinfectants and formulations for tree, shrub and plant protection as well as wood or concrete finishing and treatments.

They are easy to operate and

maintain with an ergonomic design, and padded shoulder straps ensure the sprayers fit comfortably against the body.

To find out more about the Solo product range,

including the 142 and 154 Series brushcutters, and the 651 SP power chainsaw, call distributor Lely UK's Roger Lupton on 01480 226800 or email solo.uk@lely.com.



Heavy Duty Gator



Gets a Makeover

John Deere's 24hp ProGator 2030A diesel utility vehicle has been improved for 2012 with the addition of hydraulic disk brakes on all four wheels for increased performance, and a higher maximum payload capacity of 1594kg.

This new version of the heavy-duty, two-seater ProGator also features enhanced styling, including a green two-post ROPS frame in common with other John Deere self-propelled machines. It can be equipped with a standard tipping cargo box for use as a general materials transporter, or with specialist turf maintenance equipment for a wide range of applications in the golf & turf and commercial groundscape markets.

These include sprayers (such as the John Deere HD200), spreaders, top dressers (including John Deere's own TD100), materials collection systems

and other equipment capable of utilising the vehicle's factory installed auxiliary hydraulic services.

The ProGator has a five forward, one reverse speed synchronised transmission, now with a tighter gear shifting pattern, and a maximum speed of nearly 20mph.

It offers a choice of two- or optional four-wheel drive plus full front and rear suspension, hydrostatic power steering and a large 30-litre fuel tank.

The tilting steering wheel has five positions for maximum driver comfort.

Cargo box capacity is 876kg and towing capacity at the rear hitch is 680kg, while overall payload capacity with driver, passenger and loaded attachment has increased by nearly a third. An optional cab can also be fitted in place of the ProGator's standard ROPS frame.

New Training Book for Turfcare Technicians

John Deere highlights its award-winning engineering apprenticeship programme with the publication of a new training prospectus, designed to promote training and careers in the turfcare industry.

Aimed at young people aged 16 to 19 interested in a career in landbased engineering, the prospectus provides details of John Deere's apprentice technician and parts training programmes, managed by training provider Babcock.

"Apprentice technicians will very quickly find themselves working with highly sophisticated equipment, from computerised controls and satellite navigation systems to advanced, fuel-efficient engines and Formula 1 transmission technology," says John Deere Limited's training manager Chris Wiltshire.

The programmes are based at Babcock's purpose built training facility in Ruddington, near Nottingham. The John Deere apprenticeship is the first landbased agricultural and turf machinery programme with training delivered in the workplace, with assessment and guidance from Babcock's team of expert learning advisers.

Technicians on the programmes work towards City & Guilds or NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. Turf Tech apprentices can go on to gain the John Deere Diploma and register at LTA Level 2 in the industry's Landbased Technician Accreditation scheme, while starting their adult training within the John Deere University.

Applications are now being invited for enrolment on the next set of courses starting in September 2012.

www.JohnDeere.co.uk or call Babcock on 0870 013 0325; an online application form is also available on the Babcock website at www.babcocktraining.co.uk/info/landbased

John Deere Engineering Apprenticeships



An engineering apprenticeship with John Deere is your stepping stone to a rewarding career

XYLEM LOWARA LAUNCH NEW FLOODKIT



Xylem Lowara has launched a new easy to use emergency dewatering kit for light commercial buildings, which are at risk of flooding.

The new kit, called Floodkit, contains a stainless steel Lowara DOC3 drainage pump which requires a power supply of 220-240v in order to deliver heads of up to seven meters. The pump has a six meter long flexible hose, quick coupling to ensure fast deployment and a float switch which automatically stops the

pump, once the water level has receded.

The equipment is contained inside a plastic crate that can be used to store the kit when not in use, or as a strainer during operation. The Lowara Floodkit requires no special tools to setup, once the pump start-stop is adjusted and the float switch level is set, the pump is ready for use.

Floodkit provides a quick and efficient solution to flash flooding and is ideal for use in flooded basements, garages or in residential and light

commercial buildings, such as shops, cafes and offices. The lightweight kit weighs 8kg for easy transportation and comes with a ten meter power cable for ease of use in hard to reach areas. All materials on the kit are corrosion resistant.

Gary Wilde, Business Development & Marketing Manager for Xylem Lowara UK, comments: "As with any flood situation, time is of the essence and the Lowara Floodkit can be set up instantly.

www.lowara.co.uk

Husqvarna Turn to Ride-On Battery Power

Husqvarna has announced the launch of its eagerly awaited battery products. A total of seven handheld machines, range of accessories and the flagship of the series - Husqvarna's first front-mounted Rider Battery (below) will be launched in the UK during late 2012 and early 2013.

Although a number of battery products have already been released, this will be the first unified battery range for Husqvarna.

With the same genuine feel and professional results as the petrol range, the battery products will be free from direct emissions and deliver low levels of sound and vibration. The

battery range will also provide finely tuned weight distribution and a special energy saving mode.

An interchangeable battery system between products as well as a highly efficient quick-charge mechanism is also on offer.

Husqvarna now hopes to gain significant presence in the battery segment.

When setting out to design their

first ever battery powered Rider the perfect place to start was its Rider 111B - its lightest petrol driven ride-on lawnmower for domestic use - highly appreciated for its handling abilities, ergonomics and efficiency. The new model builds on the same weight optimised platform, but with completely new technical solutions inside. Made for the environmentally conscious homeowner it offers not only operation - free from direct emissions - but also an extremely low noise level.

"Our goal was to reach at least the same level as our petrol driven models. A full tank generally equals about 90 minutes of mowing, which is just what you get from a fully charged battery," explained Andy Eastaugh, Trade Marketing Manager at Husqvarna.



Battery Power

See our feature on Electric machinery Page 40

A cut above...

This new 553 RBX brush cutter, also from Husqvarna, has been developed to deal with the toughest grass and brush-clearing in difficult terrain. Featuring heavy duty bevel gears and a specific grass bevel gear, the 553 RBX is designed to ensure high torque is available and cutting equipment remains parallel to the ground, helping to achieve the best cutting results.



Clipless

Clipless, a new plant growth regulator from Headland, works by blocking the production of a specific gibberellic acid, a plant hormone responsible for promoting top growth in grasses within the plant leaf, stopping cell elongation and upward growth.

The pesticide is absorbed by the grass foliage and transported to the growing points at the base of the plants. One application helps shorten the blades of grass for up to 4 weeks. This results in a more compact growth habit. Energy is diverted away from vertical growth towards lateral growth and root development, providing a closer, denser sward.

The result is a turf that not only requires less mowing, but also producing a more robust plant with extra ground cover.

Mark De Ath, Headlands Operations Director, concludes: "Not only can it help to create a grass plant more able to withstand all types of mechanical and physiological stress, it also helps produce a higher quality playing surface across all areas."



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An Open return

The Open Championship returns to Royal Lytham and St. Annes Golf Club this year and Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith, provided GI with an insight into the preparations for the Championship and some fascinating background information on the historic links course

A good ten years have passed since my first Open and much has and also has not changed. We are probably all more acutely aware and recognise how important our roles are in maintaining golf's green future. The Greenkeeper's role is pivotal, the policies we implement affect the original design characteristics of the course, the playing challenge it presents and the playing strategy adopted by the golfer. Our activities affect the ball and turf interaction; a soft course is a dead course. What

is particularly significant is how our practices enhance and protect the ecology of our green spaces.

The Open Championship is something very special indeed and to be a part of this is a great privilege. It is a challenge that I relish, but one that is not without a headache or two or perhaps the odd broken nights sleep along the way. However, my greatest challenge of all still remains keeping the membership happy. These are the challenges and pressures that we all share in seeking near perfection for that special day on the golfing



calendar, which are not all that different no matter what course you are custodian of.

It is not until the final putt is made and the champion golfer is crowned that we can put our feet up momentarily before resuming normal business. Then we can reacquaint ourselves and spend some quality time with our family and friends. It is not always easy to maintain a work life balance being a greenkeeper and custodians of our precious green spaces. I was once given some sound advice by a wise old greenkeeper as he approached retirement after devoting many



years of loyal service: "Make sure you have a life outside work laddie". And that is what we must all strive to do. Fewer jobs can be quite as demanding but in the same light as rewarding.

The Open Preparation

The preparation and conditioning of the course for an Open Championship is never far from my mind. This work is always ongoing. There is a sustainable ethos to course management and maintenance policies, which are set out with the intent to deliver consistently good standards of play 365 days of the year.

Managing a course in a holistic, sustainable way as close to nature as possible, has always been a challenge for the greenkeeper. Of course it does entail the use of water, fertiliser and chemicals but the art is to utilise these as sparingly as possible to give nature just a little helping hand in presenting a natural course.

Maintaining a consistently good quality course is achievable but delivering perfection is not. With just a little help from Mother Nature and a small amount of man's intervention we can achieve something worthy.

Royal Lytham and St. Annes presents a management and maintenance challenge. The 205 bunkers that we have on the Championship course provide not only a major challenge to the golfer, but also for our team.

Eighty bunkers have been rebuilt during our last phase of the bunker programme, in tandem with general turf reinstatement work. A great effort was made to ensure that this work was completed by Christmas. However, this winter has been a blessing compared to the winters of 2009 and 2010. The conditions have been conducive to completing our winter programme schedule, whilst ensuring that we have maintained good winter playing conditions.

The Build Up

January to February: The course gets a very early and thorough spring clean. Specific activities will include aeration, topdressing and grooming. This is the period when our manpower resources also focus on the careful process of bunker preparation. During a careful bunker-by-bunker review, we will specifically ensure that the depth and angle of sand is appropriate to ensure playability for the

Championship. The angle of the greenside bunkers is set at 65–70°, fairway bunkers are set at an angle of 55–60°. We aim to maintain the angle of the sand at approximately 15–25°. The sand is sourced locally from the beach at St Annes and is screened on site to remove the shell and pebble content. Sand selection and suitability is always a hot topic at nearly every club, but in its 126-year history Lytham has kept to using the indigenous fine beach sand.

Our aim is to maintain a relatively firm bunker playing conditions that remain consistent, especially near to the face to reduce the likelihood of balls resting close to the bunker faces.

March to April: Activities will focus on ensuring that all our turfing works establish successfully, eliminating the development of seams, and guarding against drought damage. A dedicated team assigned to hand watering achieves this. This is paramount and ensures that our water usage is specifically directed to those areas of play that need it. Even with modern day automatic irrigation systems, this is not always achievable. We try to keep returfing to a minimum during the winter before an Open. However with 205 bunkers, which require the faces to be replaced on a regular basis, inevitably an element of turfing work adjacent to the bunker perimeters is required.

The playing surfaces are continually being refined. In tandem with regular sand topdressings, light fertiliser applications and grooming.

May to June: Early May presents another real challenge in presenting the course for the Lytham Trophy, which is an early season leading amateur tournament. This year, the course proved a formidable challenge even playing from forward tees, with little rough. Europe's number one (and the current world ranked number seven) amateur, Daan Huizing, was the outright winner at seven under par, with his nearest rival some 11 shots back.

By the time we eventually reach June and July, most of the specific maintenance schedule will have been implemented and our efforts are then geared towards intensifying our cutting activities, to ensure that the playing surfaces are refined down to tournament standards. It all sounds a simple and straightforward exercise, but it can be anything but if the weather turns against you. We have to be well versed in strategies in coping



“The course at Royal Lytham and St. Annes is a fine example of nature and golf working in harmony together. Listed as a Biological Heritage Site by Lancashire County Council, its dune grassland and rare ecosystem preserve the ancient past of the site, now surrounded by red-brick Victorian houses, a school, hospital and a railway”

with the extremes in the weather these days. High winds, strong sunshine and heavy downpours are all conditions that can affect play.

Throughout our preparations well in advance of the year of the Open, the Sports Turf Research Institute closely monitors playing performance. The frequency of the STRI’s visits intensifies as the Open approaches. The objective of these visits is to ensure that specific performance criteria are met which fall within site specific tournament target ranges, which include:

The course is set up no differently for the Open than normal; the challenge remains the same as for the membership. Although it is fair

to say that we would normally be taking greater measures this year to reduce the severity of the rough in places, brought about by the wet spring and summer. The fairway widths vary from 20 to 40 yards, so the course presents a challenge but remains fair and generous in places. We will be maintaining a height of cut of 9-11mm depending on conditions. The first cut of semi rough is 3m wide at 50mm with the second cut also 3m at 100mm.

• **Soil moisture: measured as a percentage figure.**
Hardness (interaction between the ball and turf) is optimised without the potential to compromise turf health trueness



Factfile

Current species composition greens:

Browntop bent.....	43%
Fescue	27%
Poa annua	23%
Yorkshire fog.....	2%
Perennial ryegrass	1%
Others.....	4%

Current species composition tees:

Browntop bent	45%
Fescue	24%
Poa annua	17%
Smooth stalked meadow grass ..	9%
Yorkshire fog.....	1%
Perennial ryegrass	3%
Others.....	1%

and smoothness. Our target is 15 – 25%

• **Firmness: measured in gravities. Target 100 – 120 gravities**

• **Smoothness: measured by vertical deviation in mm per metre. Target <18mm**

• **Trueness: measured by lateral deviation in mm per metre. Target <8mm**

• **Green speed: Target 10 – 10½ feet.**

So attention to detail is more than ever closely scrutinised. However, there is an acceptance that these historic natural courses are not supposed to be seamlessly manicured and that the conditions are a reflection of a lifetime of sound environmental, sustainable management policies. Every effort is made to ensure that the playing conditions are consistent and fair which takes a great deal of effort and dedication bearing in mind that three greens are known to have an old clay basin, some greens are more sheltered than others depending on the prevailing wind. elevations vary and temporary structures like grandstands have some small affect again depending on wind direction.

The Course Changes

In terms of design, only very carefully thought out changes have been made. If you have a valued masterpiece you are very mindful not to meddle.

The underlying key to the changes was to make the best players think more about their strategy of playing the holes. Fundamentally, this has been achieved by making sure the hazards at the driving areas require the golfers to consider whether taking the driver is the best option. The intention was not to take the

driver out of the player's hands but to add a little more risk to the adoption of an aggressive strategy. There was no target set for the overall length of the layout and each hole was considered on an individual basis and to ensure an even balance of lengths of holes throughout the course.

Some of the changes have been minor but others significant. The work has been varied and has entailed the construction of new bunkers, tees and the creation of swales along with the development of new dune systems and the repositioning of the 7th green in 2009.

All the changes are now in play and have strengthened a formidable course. Based on the changes that have been made it should give a sterner test than in 2001. What is really pleasing is how well the changes have blended into the existing links landscape, which has an odd mix of elevation changes of both natural and artificial sand dunes.

All in all these varied and subtle changes will only go to strengthen the course further to maintain its modern day challenge.

Ongoing Maintenance post-2001

Royal Lytham and St. Annes is a fine example of nature and golf working in harmony together. Listed as a Biological Heritage Site by Lancashire County Council, its dune grassland and rare ecosystem preserve the ancient past of the site, now surrounded by red-brick Victorian houses, a school, hospital and a railway.

A great effort has been made to improve the dominance of finer grasses. We have embarked on an extensive overseeding programme, which has been in place for some

time. Our main objectives have been to reduce the overall content of coarser grasses and reinstate the dominance of the finer grasses such as Red, Chewing's and Sheep Fescues and Browntop bents. These are the indigenous grass species colonising coastal fringes. Unfortunately decades ago there tended to be the misguided use of inappropriate grass species, in particularly Rye grass. At the time this was seen as a solution to wear tolerance issues, but these grasses tended to have higher input requirements and dominated swards at the expense of the finer grasses.

The results from our commitment to a long term overseeding programme have been gradual but we are now starting to see the rewards.

Our greatest success has been the improvement and development of the fairways, which have undergone a treatment of thatch reduction, turf conditioning and sanding. Consequently the fairway surfaces are firmer, more refined and freer draining. We have fewer issues with worm casting and are less productive in terms of clipping yields. Improvement work on the course is continually ongoing.

Since 2001 we have embarked on a progressive ecological management programme developed to enhance the course's Biological Heritage Site status, which supports a mosaic of species; rich dune grassland, heath and scrub. This work has not only improved the ecology of the site but has restored the original open character of the links.

Over the past 12 years the club has been granted permission by the Forestry Commission to clear internal pockets of white Poplar trees and degenerate perimeter specimens. Some of these areas

Current species composition fairways:

Browntop bent.....	28%
Fescue	44%
Poa annua	18%
Yorkshire fog	2%
Perennial ryegrass	6%
Others.....	2%

- There have only been 10 Head Greenkeepers in the club's 126 year history
- Henry Gillet has been the club's longest serving; he served 44 years
- Average annual rainfall 627mm
- Average annual sunshine 1526 hours
- Average day time temperature 12.6°C
- Average night time temperature 6.1°C





have been replanted with gorse and broom, which has had a positive ecological impact. One such impact has seen the increase in nesting and feeding habitat for small birds.

1. Linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*) is a red data species noted nesting within the gorse. They benefit from a variety of habitats; from dune grassland to feed and scrub to nest.

2. Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*) is an amber data species, which is another uncommon bird nesting within the gorse plantation at the 18th hole.

The general theme of restoring an open links landscape and associated habitat has also seen an increase in and special importance to ground nesting birds including both the skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) and meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*).

The Open Greenkeeping Team

We have 11 permanent full timers, one part timer working two days a week and a member of staff on a short-term contract to ease the workload this year. However, an additional 24 Open tournament support staff supplement this for the week before and the week of the Open. We also have a small team of dedicated fitters and mechanics supplied by John Deere who are providing the tournament machin-

ery support along with Hunter Grinders. So our numbers swell to 40+ during the week of the Open. And of course we have the invaluable BIGGA Support Team so the level of expertise at hand to help is quite astounding.

For some members of the permanent team it will be their last Open; three of whom Richard Atkin, Phil Medcalf and David Troup have provided the club with a lifetime of loyal and worthy service. Other recent recruits will be experiencing and relishing their first Open Championship. It will be special for everyone involved. One thing for certain is we will all take away some lifelong memories as we witness the most gifted golfers in the world pit their wits against the course, the weather and each other. That should quench anyone's thirst.



Equipment Inventory
A selection of the machinery used at Royal Lytham & St Annes

- 2 x Fairway Mower John Deere 3235C
- Fairway Mower John Deere 3235B
- 3 x Greens Triplex Mower John Deere 2500 E
- 2 x Utility Triplex Mower Toro 3100D
- 6 x Hand Mower 18" John Deere 180 B
- Hand Mower 22" John Deere 220C
- John Deere 8800 rotary
- Personnel Utility Vehicle, John Deere HDX
- 3 x Heavy Duty Turf Utility Vehicle
- Personnel Utility Vehicle, Carryall 252 Turf
- Personnel electric Utility Vehicle, E-Z-GO
- Toro Workman Drop Top dresser 1800
- Toro Workman Pro Pass Disc Top dresser
- Verti-cut units 480 T Thatchaway
- Tractor John Deere 4520 (loader)
- Tractor New Holland TN65S
- Tractor Ford New Holland 3930
- Tractor John Deere 4600 (loader)
- Trailed Semi-rough Gang Mower, Lloyds
- TM80 Ransomes Aerator
- TDS/32 Deep Spiker, Sisis
- Root Zone Injector, John Deere 700

For the full inventory, please visit www.bigga.org.uk

Next Month's GI
- The Open Review
 All the news and stories from **The BIGGA Open Support Team** at Royal Lytham and St. Annes

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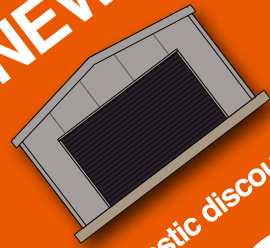
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Back in time

The Open at Royal Lytham & St Annes Special

Boasting ten Open Championships and two Ryder Cups, Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, has a quite prestigious past. Paul Smith delves through the archives to offer us some memorable Open moments, historical accounts and anecdotes through the course's colourful ages

In 1886, Royal Lytham and St. Annes Golf Club was founded and in 1897, the present course was built. Ten Open Championships have been played on the links, as well as two Ryder Cups.

To run alongside our Open preview this month, Royal Lytham and St. Annes' Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith, delves back through the archives to offer us some memorable Open moments, historical accounts and anecdotes through the course's colourful ages.

Greenkeepers Past

It is a good thing if one can maintain a good sense of humour and have a good outlook on life; these attributes serve you well in greenkeeping which is likely to help you to achieve success in your chosen career. I am sure that we can all relate to some humorous account or incident in the line of our work.

In 1907 John Barnes was dismissed after 19 years of loyal service. He developed a habit of saying he was going down to the 9th hole, when in fact he nipped over to the Fairhaven Hotel across the railway. Back on the course one day he was found rather the worse for wear by a member.

Jim Marshall the Head Greenkeeper appointed in 1948, an outspoken and able Scot, moved a hole immediately before a member of the council played his difficult approach shot. The member complained that golf was hard enough without having a moving target, which Jim replied: "You shouldn't get up so b***** early in the morning". He almost resigned in 1949 when the senior club officials of the Bunker Committee had a running



battle building and removing drive bunker.

For the 1963 Open several members of the Open Championship Committee were out with Jim deciding where best to place the holes. At the 9th Jim said the gentlemen could mark where they pleased, but he knew the greens best and the holes would be placed where he chose.

Jim was succeeded by Leslie Beetham a man with his own mind. During a course inspection with the committee the captain mentioned that there were problems with various pests on the course. A man of few words Leslie replied the biggest pests were the members themselves. When he planted some trees on course they appeared to be in poor shape: in fact, a doctor pronounced them dead. Subsequently when they blossomed forth, Leslie



MAIN ABOVE: The halcyon days of greenkeeping, and a bloom of colour in the rough

AND INSET: Legend, Gary Player, helping the team out

said with a wry smile, he hoped he was more successful with his diagnosis of his patients.

Jimmy A. MacDonald MBE was my predecessor and worked as Head Greenkeeper for 26 years.

He was a charismatic, friendly and fun character always with a story to tell.

However, he landed himself in some serious trouble with Mrs



LEFT: Jimmy MacDonald: not a friend of the stimp meter!



MacDonald when he was quoted as saying that: "Lytham St. Annes was not the most beautiful of courses but it's not always the prettiest of woman that make the best wives".

He also had a hatred for the stimp meter and when an inquisitive member of the greenstaff sneaked one out on the course he was caught red handed and made to feel like Judas.

A Historical Account

Hours of work have changed little since 1893. Lowe, the course architect, worked alongside eight men, starting at 7am, stopping for breakfast at 9-9:30 and dinner at 12-1. Knocking off time was 5:30pm for the men, and 5pm for the horses.

Work records included carting, lopping, scrub cutting (which we are still on with), thatching hay stacks, forking (now verti draining) and ploughing (now rotavating).

Making bunkers (which we are still on with today but have managed to reduce the numbers from 365 to 203), rolling (which from time to time we still do). Planting star grass, Lyme grass, making greens and tees, r兔biting, tree planting (many undesirable species we have removed), r兔biting riddling and unfortunately sweeping lime, "Oh dear".

Memorable Open Moments

There was no easy round for Bobby Jones when he went onto win the 1926 Open.

He made a remarkable recovery shot with trouble all the way to the green, with a 175 yard carry at the 17th after he had pulled his drive into sandy wastes.

This moment of brilliance during the final round was the shot that won this legend the 1926 Open Championship.

Bernard Darwin was quoted as saying:

"A teaspoon more sand would have meant irretrievable ruin". Such are the margins between winning and losing in elite sport.

In 1969 Tony Jacklin's win was significant after so many years of overseas domination.

Ballesteros hooked left and sliced right; his ball dipped and detoured through sand and scrub venturing into unseen corners of the course including the occasional car park.

He executed some of the most memorable recovery shots in Open history and had the charisma that matched his style of play.

It is certainly true that he was the People's Champion and that his career was defined not only by what he won, but how he won.

Royal Lytham & St Annes Inventory over the years

Here is an account of the materials and machinery itemised in the club's historical accounts

- W Woodcock Joiner: Making stable harness racks
- W Towler saddle and harness maker: Harnesses and mowing boots
- Nixon Bros: Shoeing the horses and repairing mowers
- T.O Richardson Veterinary surgeon - powders for horses and rasping teeth
- David Shaw & Co Manchester Sheep dip and manure manufacturers: 15 trucks of ground shoddy
- Phoenix Mill two tonne of basic slag phosphate manure
- Sheppey Glue and Chemical Works Sheerness slug destroyer
- T Braddell & Son Belfast 18 patent golf holes
- Dickson, Brown & Tait Finest mixture of the finest grasses and clover (and the odd bag or two I suspect of the coarse stuff!)
- W.Thompson, Seedman of Ipswich - Lotus Comiculatus Trifolium, Thymus, Serpyllium. These plants all have modest water requirements, tolerating dry conditions in poor soils and can survive harsh conditions. Some of which are low and prostrate in growth habit and can tolerate pedestrian traffic (perhaps these can be reintroduced?)

On the 9th December 1896 P.Sebire et Ses Fils, Horticulteurs-Pepinieristes of Ussy, (Calvados) France the following trees:

- 4,000 Canadian Poplar - 3 years
- 4,000 Italian Black Poplar - 3 years
- 1,000 Japanese Green Spindle trees - 3 years - none of these trees survived

Leech bros Manchester ironmonger's cricket roller and pump

- T Jackson Singleton Blacksmith new cart
- Alex Shanks & Son Arbroath 36" horse lawn mower
- J & H Keyworth Liverpool 20" Excelsior lawnmower
- J Bellamy Millwall 100 gallon cistern

Drainage was laid inland except from the 3rd and 4th fairways, where at the clubs expense, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway constructed a drain under the line for an annual rental of 5/-

Grazing rights produced £30 p.a, while the sale of rabbits provided a further source of income £18.7s 4d in 1896

The Lancashire Steam Motor Company of Leyland sent a Sumner steam lawnmower with roller and fire pump combined, together with a man to work it, on a 14 day trial in September 1897

Amongst the advantages listed were:

- Costs only 1d per brake horse power per hour when at work, and no expense for grooming and keeping when not at work
- One man or youth can work a two man machine with steam power and do double the amount of work
- No damage to borders, no marks left by horses, no boots to buy
- No slipping of the rollers (a constant source of evil with horse machines)

The price of the mower was £75

The cost of laying out the links and buying the equipment was £2,500 of which £400 was for rental for 4 years and £1,000 for wages

During the war the ladies Links was ploughed up for crops and allotment holders were permitted to use

Rain stops play...



...but not for long, thanks to the team at Slaley Hall

Jim Cook completes our series on the PGA Seniors Tour, as the De Vere Club Championship concludes at Slaley Hall

“In all my years of greenkeeping, I’ve never squeegeed rough before.” So said Slaley Hall Golf Club’s Course Manager, Steve Cram, when talking about the inventive methods used to ensure play could continue at the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship in June.

When a deluge of rain caused play to be abandoned, tremendous work by the team at Slaley Hall led to the resumption of play and the eventual conclusion of the tournament.

Steve said: “We had the double shotgun pro-am on the Wednesday before the tournament and we had a lot of comments from the players that the course was looking as good as it has ever looked.

“We had the greens running at 11 feet and got the Thursday done, which was the first tournament round, then on the Friday we had 25mm of rain and they suspended play at 11am.

“Then on the Friday night into Saturday we had another 20mm, so we had 45mm of rain over about 24 hours.”

He continued: “So that was fun and on the Saturday we were using the squeegees on the greens and pushing water off the fairways, just to try and get play happening. It was a tough day.

“We had heavy showers all day and there were two or three greens that couldn’t take any more water so we had guys on those greens with squeegees all day, taking water off when the players were coming through.

“My staff and also the PGA and Senior Tour officials all mucked in, it was all hands to the pump. You’d get a radio message saying which green to go to and we were jumping around like that all day. It was a great team effort by all concerned; tremendous really.”

He added: “Our normal golf course set up routine for the tournament was gone on the Saturday and it was just a matter of making the course playable. The bunkers were big work because we had to get rid of every drop of water in them. We pumped it out and even used buckets to move the water. All through the tournament we started at 4am and we were finished at

about 8pm, with a little break in the middle, but on the Saturday we worked all the way through as there was so much extra to do with the squeegees.”

This was when he mentioned about having to use squeegees in parts of the rough. He said: “The water was right in the landing area and there was nowhere for them to drop so we had to push the puddles away.”

Another inventive method employed was to lift up the tines and use the roller off their verti-drain to move water away from



All images courtesy of Getty Images



landing areas. "I've never done that before either, so that was another new one. But it worked and that was the main thing," Steve said.

Previously they had used the verti-drain in its usual guise to help water drain from a few of the landing areas.

He spoke about how cutting became impossible: "Right up until the Thursday we cut everything every day, so greens were cut three times a day and rolled, fairways, tees and semi were cut every day, but when it got to Friday it was so wet that we couldn't cut anything except the greens.

On Saturday morning though, we couldn't even cut the greens because there were ball-markers everywhere from when play was suspended. Then on the Sunday we tried to cut as much as possible as the weather improved. So our schedule was severely impeded because whilst the course still looked good as we had put a lot of work into it beforehand, we couldn't present it how we would have ideally wanted to."

The tournament should have been 72 holes but was cut down to 54 holes.

Steve said that preparation over previous years had helped enable the tournament to be played: "If it had just been a general play day, the course would have been closed and a lot of the courses in the area were closed at the time. I think the big thing for me was that the work we have done over the last four years helped. Without some of the work we've done on fairways and especially greens, the tournament wouldn't have been completed. Whilst it wasn't great, it was still a success because we managed to get it played."

Their efforts were much appreciated by the players, as Steve highlighted: "The feedback we got was excellent. You always get good feedback from the player who wins, but all the way through the field people were positive and just happy that it could be played.

All the players had played either in the Wednesday pro-ams or had practiced on the Tuesday, so they saw what condition the golf courses were in before the rain.

The greens were running really well and true. I think they felt a bit of disappointment on our behalf, but just pleased that it could be played.

A lot of them were thanking us on their way around when we were using the squeegees. "Well done lads, you're doing a great job, keep it going", they would say."

He summed-up his thoughts



about how the tournament went overall: "There is a mixed feeling really. On one side a bit of disappointment that we couldn't present the golf course to how it should have been and how it was before the rain. On the other side though, there is that sense of achievement that we managed to get it played under adverse conditions."

The next big tournament at Slaley Hall will be the PGA Cup in September 2013 and Steve said they were now busy working on what might need to be done to the greens in preparation for future downpours.

At every level in greenkeeping there are constant occurrences of fortitude in the face of adversity, often in the form of Mother Nature! The efforts by the team at Celtic Manor in 2010 would be a fine example. The endeavours at Slaley Hall were another such accomplishment.



"In all my years of greenkeeping, I've never squeegeed rough before"
Steve Cram
Courses Manager



ABOVE: Paul Wesseling and RIGHT: receiving the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship trophy

(All images courtesy of Getty Images, except Steve Cram, courtesy of Slaley Hall)



Wear and tear

Dr Terry Mabbett discusses the wider weed and disease implications of wear and tear on turf, a topic of interest to greenkeepers at all levels

2012 was supposed to be the year when wear, tear and stress on UK sports turf would reach unprecedented levels from a population fuelled and fired up into frenzied sporting activity, inspired and encouraged by the Olympics being held on home grown turf for the first time in more than sixty years.

In late March it looked almost certain that UK turf, having been well-trodden during a much heightened sporting season, would take an accompanying and related hammering from unprecedented hot and sunny weather and intensifying drought.

Grass plants were already struggling to grow and sports turf faced the looming possibility of being 'hung out to dry' to a degree not seen in living memory even during the summer of 1976. A clutch of water authorities covering southern and eastern England and parts of The Midlands completed the deteriorating picture by introducing severe water-use restrictions, including hosepipe bans, on all and sundry including the sports and amenity sectors.

Hosepipe bans and monsoons

Having reached this 'high and dry' point everything promptly started to go wrong or right whichever way you care to look at it, and in classic British style. Temperatures plunged in April so that sports and amenity turf along with every other growing system, including flowering shrubs and bedding plants, were placed in 'suspended animation' for at least one month. Consequently what appeared in March to be one of the very earliest springs on record was transformed into one of the latest.

Repercussions from this truly 'upside down' and 'inside out' weather pattern subsequently spread far and wide not least there being hardly any May Blossom (hawthorn flowers) to celebrate May Day and garland 'The Queen of the May' and something that very rarely happens. To crown it all rain started to fall within hours of the hosepipe bans coming into effect and rain it did. Apart from a pre-Jubilee week of very warm weather it feels like the rain hasn't stopped since April and for me brings back memories of trying to work in the



The 'seeds' of diseases like Fusarium Patch and Anthracnose are established on turf stressed out during mid to late summer (Photograph 2) from drought and heavy traffic. But the symptoms invariably do not show until the long shadows and fallen leaves of autumn

rainy season in Trinidad where it buckets down for days if not weeks on end.

As I pen this piece just after the Queen's Jubilee it is not so much 'Flaming June' but 'June Monsoon' but without temperatures in the 75 to 85°F range that accompany the monsoon in the hot and humid tropics. Wear and tear on turf appears to be no problem and is the last thing on most people's minds, simply because the weather is just too bad and playing surfaces too inundated to play sport. Indeed the grass looks lusher and greener

than I can ever remember for mid-June. Major and iconic sporting and amenity events including cricket matches and county shows are being cancelled.

However, there is still time. Turf and sports turf in particular is the most reactive of all terrestrial green plant surfaces. Not only does it rebound and recover growth, colour and quality quickly, even after receiving the most severe hammering from intense traffic and high-temperature low-moisture conditions, but will just as quickly regress when such conditions return.

Weather forecasters are predicting unsettled and very wet weather for the rest of June but the promise of a 'proper' summer from July onwards is on the cards. If this turns out to be true it won't take long for today's soaked and sodden turf to dry out. Following two hot dry months all this water and green grass could be a distant memory by early September.

What's more I suspect a lot of ground is still compacted, in spite of near record rainfall levels, from the prolonged winter and early spring drought. At the same time appalling weather conditions experienced since April will have disrupted a lot of 'bread and butter' turf management work designed to alleviate ground compaction and to promote grass growth.

Wider implications

The immediate implications of heavy wear and tear on turf are heightened physical damage and physiological stress, accompanied by soil compaction and the formation of hard-pan soil surfaces which simply add onto and aggravate grass plant stress. Heavy traffic and higher wear and tear is invariably accompanied by high-temperature, low-rainfall conditions for the very good reason that sunny dry weather brings out sportsmen and sportswomen in their droves.

Tunnel vision and vertical thinking has no place in the long term management of turf. Turf managers are required to understand and appreciate the bigger picture and wider implications of turf stress from wear and tear and heat and drought, and not least when it comes to turf disease and weed growth in professional sports and amenity turf.

Specific turf weeds and diseases which become prevalent during periods of summer stress are relatively easy to understand and appreciate. However, there will be



Sports turf is a highly reactive surface. Golf tee shown here (photograph 1) during the hot dry April and May of 2011 and just weeks later in June 2011 (Photograph 1A) after substantial rain

other and often more serious long term problems, the 'seeds' of which are sown during summer stress but which do not show until autumn.

For turf weeds

As wear and tear builds up and turf progressively dries out the ability fine grasses as a sward to compete with broad leaf weeds changes. Balance will be progressively and often violently tipped in favour of the clovers, tap-rooted rosette weeds that can penetrate and withstand the hard compacted upper layer, and inherently drought resistant weeds like yarrow.

Grass effectively stops growing being unable to access sufficient water and therefore soluble nitrate for leaf growth. The clovers including white clover, yellow suckling clover, black medic and bird's foot trefoil do not have this problem. They can fix their own nitrogen via bacteria in the root nodules and therefore carry on growing, flowering and setting seed at the expense of turf grass.

During periods of mid to late summer drought it is not unusual to see huge patches of these patch forming weeds in full flower. These clover biotypes are well adapted to turf by presenting a ground hugging prostrate habitat that allows flowering stems to escape the mower blades, and adding to the weed seed load that finds plenty of germination sites in the now threadbare turf.



Under drought conditions it is not unusual to encounter huge patches of white clover which is a typical matt forming weed of turf



Bird's foot trefoil has the added advantage of a sturdy and deep seated tap root enabling it to access water from a deeper position within the soil profile and to withstand the physical forces and physiological disadvantages (compressed spaces between soil particles unable to hold water) of an increasingly resistant compacted soil. Other weeds with tap roots and indicative of dry compacted soils include the plantains and a range of weeds from the plant family

Compositae (Asteraceae) including dandelion and cat's ear, and even ragwort and sowthistles where unrepaired divots provide prime germination sites.

Other weeds which thrive under these conditions include creeping cinquefoil and yarrow, the latter perhaps the ultimate drought resistant weed due largely to finely divided leaves and a thick leaf cuticle that massively restricts water loss by transpiration.

Yarrow is perhaps the summer inspired weed problem with the greatest long term effect. During

exceptionally hot and dry summers it is not unusual to see a completely dried out and 'browned off' turf grass sward with increasingly large rosettes of yarrow still green and in flower.

Come autumn, with rain and a dose of fertiliser for good measure, the highly reactive turf grass sward will bounce back, but not as fast as yarrow with its head start because the yarrow plants never stopped growing. For this reason September and October are invariably the months when yarrow is seen at its highest incidence in turf.

For turf diseases

Much has been written about climate change and how this will change the spectrum and incidence of diseases on UK turf. Given the popular scenario for hotter and drier summers followed by milder and much wetter winters, dollar spot, red thread and brown patch, which are more commonly associated with hot spells and summer conditions, would appear be among



the most likely candidates.

However, after several consecutive years of cold dry winters and exceptionally cool and very wet summers these particular climate change predictions appear to have gone astray. Best that can be said is that our current climate is 'changeable' under the influence of what has recently been dubbed 'global wierding'.

As such hot and dry, high traffic spells putting turf under stress will continue to benefit the two most important classic diseases of UK turf (Fusarium patch and anthracnose). The pathogens causing these diseases are essentially put 'on their marks' in summer but don't explode off 'the blocks' until autumn.

Return of rain in September, often accompanied by heavy dews and mists, and the subsequent appearance of soft, succulent fertiliser-promoted grass growth by an inherently weakened sward provides ideal conditions for these thatch residing fungi to move up through the gears and into a full parasitic disease-causing mode.

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TOP LEFT: The strong and deep seated tap root on bird's foot trefoil allows this 'clover' to ride out drought

TOP RIGHT: Completely dried out turf with yarrow (white flowers) and creeping cinquefoil (yellow flowers) still green and in flower

BOTTOM LEFT: Tap rooted weeds of the Asteraceae (Compositae) like ragwort shown here will exploit drought stressed turf especially with unrepaired divot damage

INSET RIGHT: Yarrow is inherently drought resistant thanks mainly to its finely divided (fern-like) leaves with a thick waxy cuticle characters that minimise water loss through transpiration

INSET BOTTOM RIGHT: Heaviest infestations by yarrow invariably occur in autumn, the weed having a head start over drought stresses grass when wet weather sets in during autumn and the sward receives fertilizer.



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Managing greens performance

Sid Arrowsmith MG (left) enjoyed a visit from Laurence Pithie, of Turf Master One Ltd, at Frilford Heath GC in Oxfordshire. The challenges faced and the work involved in implementing a measured greens improvement program, were on the agenda



Frilford Heath GC, formed in 1908 lies seven miles south of Oxford and is one of a handful of clubs to offer three courses of genuine championship quality.

The site encompasses an area of some 500 acres (about 75% of which is designated SSSI) and is an oasis of light sandy soil overlying sandstone in an area surrounded by Oxfordshire clay.

Land that was deemed of little use for agriculture over a century ago was found to be ideal in the pursuit of golf by Frilford's founding generation.

The original Red course was laid out by JH Taylor. Soon after the end of WW2, the Green course was added, first as 9 holes then eventually 18 by JH Turner and CK Cotton respectively and more recently Simon Gidman produced the Blue course which opened for play in 1994.

The club is a popular venue for tournaments and is regularly stages national championships and international matches. The English Amateur championship makes a return visit in 2013 and each year, the club plays host to the first of the year's PGA EuroPro Tour

events; an acknowledgement of the course being in excellent playing condition early in the year.

SHARED OBJECTIVES

A board of directors has been appointed to run the club's affairs and to ensure its future viability. Recent changes to the board have brought about the desire for a strategic review and, following the appointment of 'Jimmy' James as General Manager, a process of change has been instigated. Course Manager Sid Arrowsmith, one of only 61 BIGGA Master Greenkeepers, takes up the story.

"Until recent times, the aim has always been to produce courses which are of good quality and offer enjoyment to members and visitors alike, while carrying out as little disturbance to the playing surfaces as possible.

Over a prolonged period of time though, trees encroach upon playing areas, the level of scrub increases and the build-up of thatch and fibre continue on greens and fairways. No club is immune from having to carry out work which is often deemed unpopular and disruptive and although a

discreet balance was successfully maintained, the issues facing the club never disappeared."

Sid, who has been at the helm of Frilford Heath since 1993 after spells in Paris and at Royal Portrush, continues, "Although the club was previously aware of many of these issues, it wasn't until 2010 that plans were drawn up and a more concerted effort made to enhance the quality and reputation of the club.

"As part of the review process, the club sought external expertise to produce environmental reports which included trees, other vegetation and rare plants. This together with a more recent irrigation appraisal and bunker review has given the club the background information it requires in order to move forward and further develop the courses within their natural environment.

"In order to achieve the all-important requirement of excellent putting green performance, which would meet the necessary criteria for the forthcoming English Amateur, the STRI were invited to assist with this process.

The main objectives were to provide putting surfaces that were



firmer and more consistent for longer periods of the year”.

ABOVE RIGHT: Regular testing the green's firmness with a 'Clegg Hammer' measuring device

GATHERING OF INFORMATION

Before embarking on any planned changes, it was necessary to have a base or start point as well as a target objective. The necessary data was collected to measure the organic content across each course via the LOI (loss on ignition) testing process, followed by firmness using the Clegg Hammer, moisture content using the Theta Probe and pace using the Stimpmeter. The final part of the process was to use the Smoothness Meter whereby putting quality was accurately measured. This scientific approach has the advantage of reducing the degree of subjectivity and gives a clearer picture of what needs to be achieved. The following is a brief summary of the conditions present in the greens in 2010.

A presentation was made to the club followed by a member question and answer session hosted by the STRI. This allowed members the opportunity to ask and discuss the various options available before finally agreeing on a plan of action.

WORK PLAN

Following initial testing and gathering of data, the club purchased most of the measurement tools previously used by the STRI which has allowed Sid and his team to gather relevant information on a



regular basis. This has helped to determine what work is required and also the important aspect of communicating results back to the club. With key objectives set out by the Board, all details of work planning are discussed and agreed by the management team, consisting of the General Manager, Professional and Course Manager, with the emphases being on surface quality and management of organic matter.

Once this objective is achieved then the focus will switch to a gradual change in grass species and greater sustainability. It was also agreed not to be overly aggressive with regards to surface cultivation since it was necessary to provide the golfers with an acceptable playing surface. This necessitated a more cautious approach but also a reflection on the fact that the greens were already in reasonable condition and not at a level whereby more severe treatment was required. The agreed program of work consisted of the following;

- **Aeration:** Two corings, spring and summer, using 8-10mm tines; Regular slitting using the Planet Air machine; Annual verti-drain work using 13-16mm tines; Regular use of the Toro Hydroject throughout the summer.

- **Top Dressing:** An increase to using 100 tons of medium grade kiln dried sand following each coring.

- **Over-Seeding:** One or two sowings of Colonial Bent using a drop seeder at a rate of 4 gms/per m2

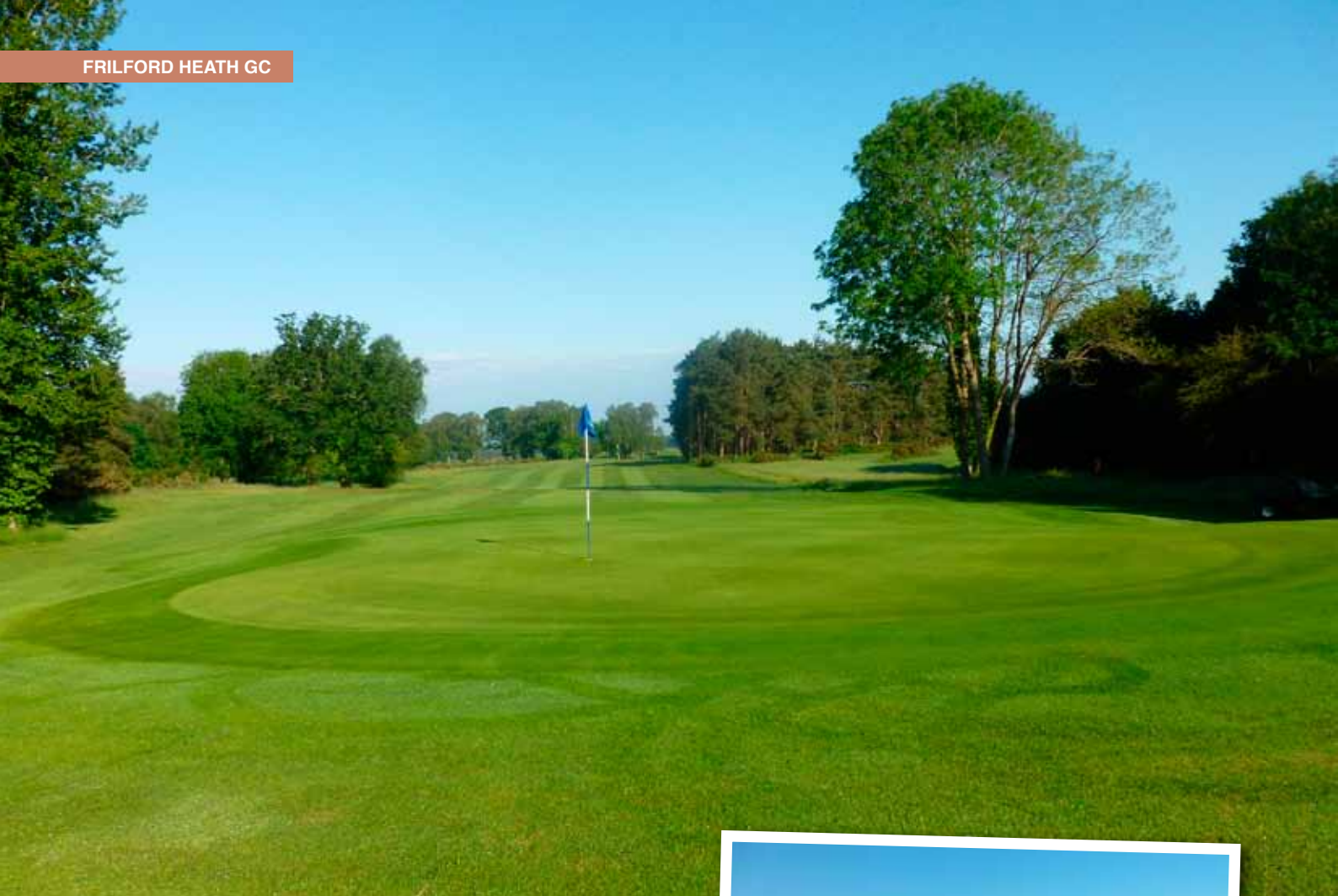
and following a double verti-cut to 3mm depth.

- **Fertiliser:** Largely the same as before, using three applications of granular products supported by foliar applications of Farmura Porthcawl and other amendments containing seaweed extracts and humic acids throughout the growing season.

- **Chemicals:** No real change other than introducing phosphite applications as a mild form of fungicide and the use of Primo Maxx for sward improvement and poa seed head suppression.

Having the benefit of three courses, it was easy to focus attention on one course at a time while it remained closed for one or two days. This allowed the work to continue unhindered and since most of the work was carried out during the growing season, recovery was swift which was greatly appreciated by the members.

Over the last three years, the Directors have been fully committed to this program of work and have not only allowed Sid to increase his staffing levels, but have ensured that the level of investment has remained consistent, to date this is in excess of £300,000. Further investment will follow when required. Recent purchases have included fairway and surrounds mowers, utility vehicles, a multi pro 5800 sprayer and a pro-core aerifier, all from Toro as well as other essential items including two turfing irons, a spinner dresser and a contra-rotating brush.



In order to strengthen Frilford Heath's growing reputation, the Directors have recently signed an exclusivity agreement with Toro. This will not just be about equipment purchasing, but will ensure that Frilford Heath will be at the forefront of future industry developments arriving in the UK. Later this month will see the arrival of the PS 6000 site survey machine from the US, which will be a first in Europe.

RESULTS

Progress to date in the two years since the program started has been largely positive with encouraging feedback from the members. The OM content is now 8-9% which is a fall of 6-7% and only slightly above the target range. Soil moisture content still tends to vary but is leaning more towards the desired range. The reduction in OM content has also led to improved firmness; one noticeable aspect being the reduction in pitch mark size giving faster recovery.

Green speed has increased to an average of 9-9.6, which is now at the clubs desired level for membership play. Although the Smoothness meter has yet to be used this year for testing, ball roll is more consistent. It is clear that the combination of reduced OM

content, increased sanding and the use of a turfing iron have resulted in an overall improvement of the putting surfaces.

So far so good is probably a fair summary. It is also true to say that the approach by Frilford Heath has been steady, well planned and implemented. Another year of this level of intensity is required, probably adding a pass using the Graden Sand Injector or Blec Sand Filler to further reduce the level of thatch. Raising the quantity of sand top dressing to 120 tons per annum is also under consideration as well as moving slightly more towards a feeding program based more on foliar feeds in order to level out periods of growth.

Previous over-seeding has not resulted in any significant change but that is probably due to low mowing heights meaning Bent is unlikely to establish. As the putting surfaces become firmer and the crown of the plant is further protected by increased dressings, the aim is to raise the mowing height by 1mm and to roll more frequently. This should result in the pace being unaffected but more of the plant remaining, improving the success rate of future over-seeding. Consideration will also be given to slit seeding, thus ensuring good seed to soil contact.

Sid concluded "Without the

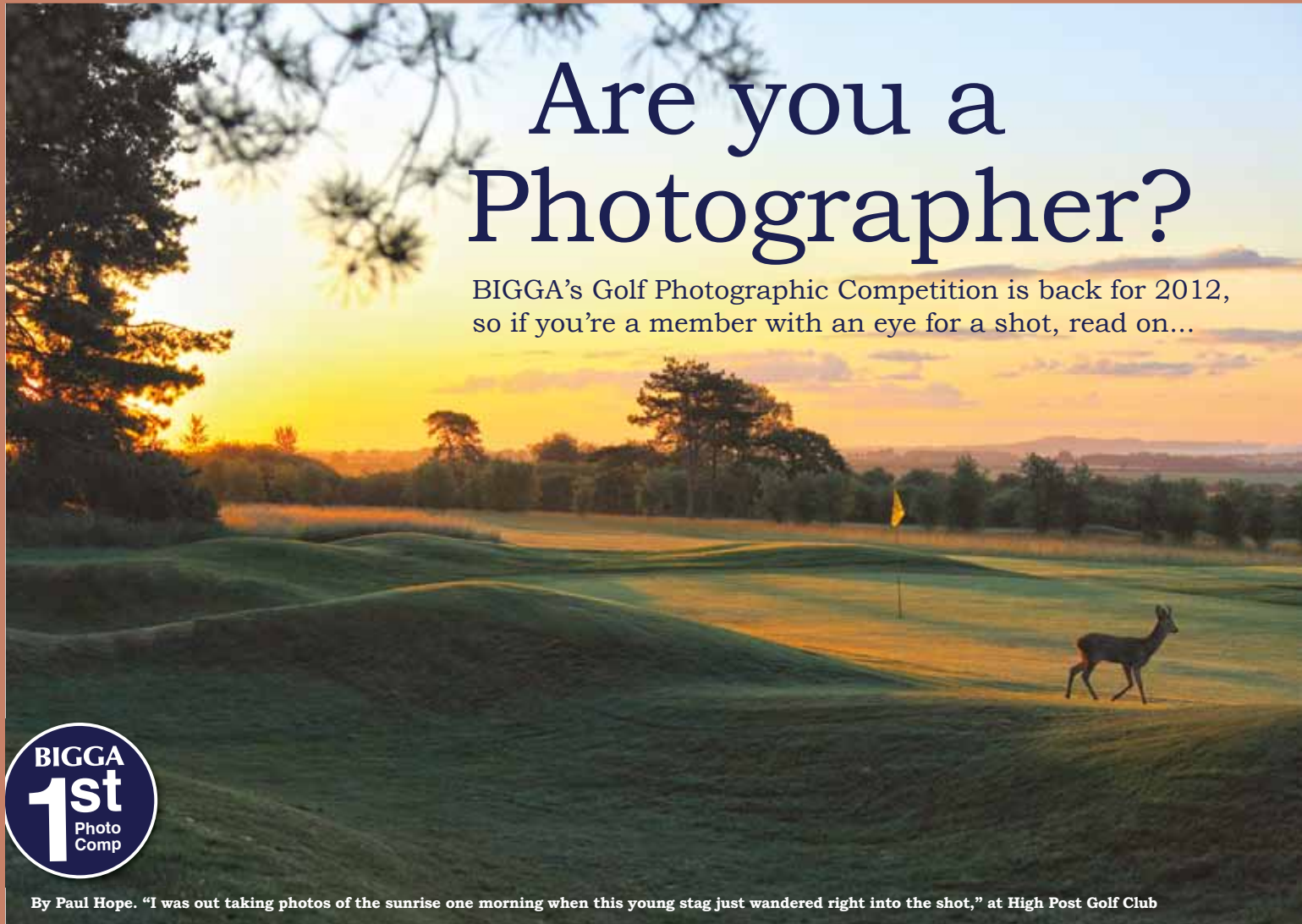


support and on-going commitment from the club, the improvement to date would not have been possible. It is important that when embarking on such a program, there are clear objectives in place and that the work is agreed, measured and evaluated for any changes that are deemed necessary.

The other key aspect is communication. Sometimes we forget that it is the members' course and that the playing surfaces are of paramount importance at all times. Therefore the members need to know what is happening on their course on a regular basis. Fortunately we have a good system of communication within the club via a weekly electronic newsletter, along with a clear vision of providing premium quality".

Are you a Photographer?

BIGGA's Golf Photographic Competition is back for 2012, so if you're a member with an eye for a shot, read on...



By Paul Hope. "I was out taking photos of the sunrise one morning when this young stag just wandered right into the shot," at High Post Golf Club



By Adam Grieve. Early morning strimming creates mist in the sunlight, a beautiful effect, on the 3rd green bank (Devonshire Course) at The Royal Eastbourne GC



By Gareth Ansell. Spectacular cloud formations compliment the surface shadows and bunker layout on the 15th at Bon Oval Golf St, Palacio Pálms de Mallorca

The BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition, back for its sixth year, creates an opportunity for members to display their artistic flair, while also earning some publicity for their club.

The winner will receive a full course profile in GI and a special prize, while the 12 best pictures will be selected for the 2012 BIGGA Calendar.

Digital pictures need to be high resolution, at the largest size capable by the camera, as it may ultimately be scaled up to A3 print size (42cm wide x 29.7cm high).

Please label your entries with captions - the name of the course plus a brief description (around 10 words). It would be great if you could also tell us the spec of camera it was taken on too.

Please try to avoid reducing the file size to fit on email as this will reduce the quality of the image.

If the file size is too large to send, we recommend using a compression facility such as winzip or a website such as:

www.mailbigfile.com.

Please note, cropping may occur if photos are to appear in the magazine or calendar. Also ensure digital photos do not show the time/date display!

Anyone wishing to enter should email them to: tom@bigga.co.uk, entering 'BIGGA PHOTO COMP 2012' as the email subject header.

All entries need to be received by July 31, 2012, and only BIGGA members are eligible to enter.



One of Royal Dornoch Golf Club's six new Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid 3420 riding greensmowers, featuring Toro's first all-electric cylinder drive system, in action.



All-electric power. Are we there yet?

Battery powered equipment is still far from ubiquitous. That does not mean you have little in the way of choice; bang up to date ride-on and walk behind greens mowers are two examples of really advanced thinking. But are you ready to take the all-electric challenge?

Take a look at the list price of a Jacobsen Eclipse 322 greens mower. Offered in hybrid petrol, hybrid diesel and all-electric forms, you would perhaps expect the latter battery-powered model to be the most expensive.

As it turns out, selecting the all-electric route could prove the most economic option. Even when you allow for the fact that batteries have a finite life, replacing the complete set will cost in the region of £1,000 to £1,200. This is something that you should only need to do at three years or more.

Of course that new batteries figure will buy a fair amount of petrol or diesel. But take in purchase price and day to day running costs into account, and the sums stack up very nicely for the all-electric Eclipse. So what's the battery catch? The short answer is that there isn't one. The more considered response is to accept that whilst the all-battery powered option has its plusses it is still not the right choice for everyone. But a fully battery powered Eclipse has perhaps a wider range of courses it does suit than many may initially think.

The same applies to walk behind mowers. Those who have had a chance to actually work with battery powered mowers - the Toro eFlex or Jacobsen Eclipse - typically suggest it is the quality of cut that they concentrate upon and not how the mowers are powered. Take a look at the eFlex controller. You can key in how the mower's forward speed and rate of cut are linked so you can essentially ensure a consistent clip rate across all your greens. With the Jacobsen Eclipse walk behind you simply key in the desired clip rate and the machine automatically synchronises the cylinder speed with the forward speed, again maintaining the clip rate across all greens. As we have often pointed out, there is far more to harnessing electricity to drive equipment than just power. A key component is also the accuracy that can be dialled in to drive various elements of a machine.

Growing hybrid sales will boost motor development

Increasing acceptance of hybrid drive has no doubt helped establish just how effective electric motors are at powering the cylinder reel. If there is a downside with current motor designs it is that at the moment these drive motors are relatively 'bulky'; hydraulic motors



Jacobsen has tested a solar panel that fits in place of the roof canopy of its all-electric version of its Eclipse 322 to help top up the batteries 'on the go'. Sounds simple, but there is more to keeping the six 8-volt deep cycle lead acid batteries topped up than you may think.

are still pretty big lumps too, but they have been getting smaller over the years.

With electric motors, much of the bulk is related to the need to enable the motor to deliver the right speed and torque directly to the cutting unit and to have a large enough surface area to dissipate the heat that motors generate during work. But as sales volumes of drive motors increases, the incentives to invest in developing lighter, slimmer, cooler running and more powerful units will also climb. But don't expect a sudden revolution in design. Steady evolution is the name of the game.

What will help spur motor development is increasing sales of hybrid mowers. As these models become increasingly popular and efficient, the benefits will also impact upon all-electric mowers. A modest development in motor efficiency can have a significant impact upon the running times of a battery-powered machine.

If this suggests current hybrid and battery-powered mowers are at the wrong end of the development cycle, it is not meant that way at all. John Deere suggested its 2500E hybrid greens mower could save up to 30% in fuel use when compared to its all-hydraulic

“With the ability to tackle more demanding terrain, the electric Cushman Hauler 1200X has extra ground clearance and more suspension travel. A limited slip rear diff helps traction in slippery going too”



Battery maintenance is eased by systems that make topping up the electrolyte pretty much fool proof; worth specifying if not offered as standard. Modern batteries are far more resilient too, with a well-proven history in the golf sector.



“Anyone who has operated an all-electric utility vehicle will typically suggest they prefer driving one to a CVT automatic diesel or petrol equivalent. John Deere has seen increased sales of its Electric Gator in recent years”



sibling. Jacobsen claim in excess of 40% and anecdotally have been advised by end-users that 50% is not uncommon.

In practice, such claims are always hard to verify as no two golf courses are exactly alike. But even if the fuel savings are a more modest 20% that will still have a significant impact upon operating costs. Current technology is definitely well worth a look.

Ransomes Jacobsen can point you to operators of its original Greens King E-Plex electric models made in the 1990s that are still earning their keep.

Those mowers are pretty old tech now but the fact there are a good number still at work suggests the basics that were right then will be even better now.

Those who are interested in any form of electric power may still be waiting for the next big development. But you can end up never making a decision.

As is so often the case, it is easy to ‘spend’ someone else’s money when it comes to making suggestions. An entry level walk behind greens mower is a costly purchase, so even at this level going for an all-electric version will take some careful consideration.

The only way to get a genuine insight into the benefits of battery power is to talk to those who have taken the plunge and to learn from their experiences. But arranging for a demonstration is not going to be that difficult either. If you are in the market for a greens mower, why not add an all-electric model to your demonstration list?

Why not exploit solar power?

Surf the internet, and you will see there are a few companies offering solar panels that can be bolted on the roof of a battery powered mower or utility vehicle to help top up the charge of the batteries on a sunny day. Sounds like a good idea but it is not without its pitfalls. For starters, the sun can be shy to make an appearance in the UK!

In the US, Ransomes Jacobsen has taken a look at the idea and given cautious approval to a panel that will fit its Eclipse 322. Tests, however, went beyond measuring the panels charging efficacy. The impact upon the balance and stability of the mower itself were also tested.

“There are also issues relating to how the electronics that measure battery capacity respond to a charge coming from a solar panel in work,” says Ransomes Jacobsen Director of Marketing and Product Management Richard Comely.

“Adding a charge as the mower works can ‘fool’ the electronics into suggesting there is more battery capacity than is actually the case, and so allow the mower to be worked beyond the 20% maximum discharge. This is the limit set to preserve the batteries and enhance their working life.”

Adding that these issues, along with tilt testing a panel equipped mower, has led to cautious approval of just one panel at present. But the approval comes with a caveat that suggests its use can compromise the life of the batteries; deep cycle batteries subjected to



With battery power comes more advanced control and fault-finding options. Both the Toro eFlex and Jacobsen Eclipse pedestrian mowers can be set up to operate in a certain way, a great help when you seek consistent mowing over every green.



Courses not geared up for electric mowing may look to buying a walk behind as an initial step. All you need is a charger and somewhere to plug it in. It is only when you really work with battery power that you will know if it suits your needs.



Handheld kit such as this Stihl HSA85 hedge trimmer benefit from being able to use advanced Lithium-Ion batteries. This type of battery is used in the automotive world but at present would be prohibitively expensive for a mower or utility

charge on the go may have a shortened life span.

“The key is working out the benefits of having the potential to enhance the capacity of the mower against any degradation in the life of the batteries,” says Mr Comely. “But the point is that we do look at ideas and developments and for some users replacing a roof canopy with a solar panel may be worthwhile.”

Perhaps a ‘better’ way of trapping the sun’s power is to fit solar panels to the roof of a clubhouse or workshop. Up until December 2011, there was a potential to earn £0.42 for each kWhr generated by a solar panel.

The figure has subsequently dropped through £0.27 to £0.12, the latter making the cost of installing solar panels less lucrative than it was. But even so, opting for an increasing use of battery power plus solar electricity generation is something that is worth looking into. If nothing else it is a clear demonstration of a desire to ‘go green’.

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TRIFLEX 3400

Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



Scotland



Central

We had an excellent turnout of over 30 members for the presentation from Eric Lyons of Guelph University at Elmwood on 6 June. His talk on silver thread moss was very informative, but more importantly, the cultural controls he spoke about were all good, sensible green-keeping practices which are relevant and helpful for so many of the problems or challenges we face. It was great to see such a good mix of experienced course managers and young student greenkeepers get together at such an event. The next presentation is on 12 July from John Kaminski of Penn State and Rick Latin of Purdue University.

The only other events arranged are the autumn outing at Piperdam on 19 September and the section AGM which will be held at Elmwood on 30 October where we hope to organise a speaker prior to the meeting. If anything else is arranged at short notice then people will be emailed the details.

Congratulations to Craig Boath on stepping up to act as Head Greenkeeper of the championship course at Carnoustie, filling Sandy Reid's post after his promotion. Also to National Chairman Andy Mellon who is leaving to take up a position in Qatar. Andy has done a power of work, not only for the Association but also particularly for the Central Section and will be a difficult act to replace. Get a big house as you will have a lot of visitors in 2018 when Scotland are over playing in the world cup finals.

Colin Powrie from Ladybank

won the voucher for completing the online survey, apologies for the results not being on the website yet but everyone has been hard at work these past few weeks.

Finally the Pairs Competition is reaching the end of the league section and everyone seems to have enjoyed the games so far.

Gordon Moir



East

The East section committee met on 29 May to discuss the relevant points of interest. The next event is the Willie Woods trophy to be played on the fine golf course that is Mortonhall, remember it's a team event, so bring along a partner on 22 August and have a wonderful day's golf. The event this year is sponsored by Hendersons Grass Machinery (Haddington), so thanks to them for all their support.

The match against the secretaries was halved and a good day was had by all, 'thanks Des for stepping in at the last minute'.

Phil Bett a Greenkeeper at Kelso G.C is recovering from a very bad accident, whilst cycling to work a bus struck him. I believe he is in a wheel chair at the moment, so we wish him 'all the best' in his recovery.

Now our education guys want you to know about the proposed NPTC spraying course to be held at Murrayfield G.C on a date to be arranged in the back end of the season.

NPTC update course, pa1 pa2 and pa6

- The course if registered with GTC and the NRoSO

- 12 CPD points are awarded

- A copy of the code of practice for using plant protection products on cd and hardback

- Certificate of attendance

- Course split into 3 sessions over one day

- Practical assessment

Should you wish to attend the course, or need any other information, please contact: phil180.butler@virgin.net

Phil Butler was married on 5 May to his lovely wife Hazel, near North Berwick with the Bass Rock as a background. Apparently he had to hitch a lift from a farmer to his wedding as his car broke down, but he made it on time, well done to both of you. Congratulations to you both from all the section.

We the East section are sad to announce the passing of Mr. Duncan Herd. Duncan was a Life member, a regular at golf outings in his day and good friend to our older members including myself. Our thoughts and condolences go out to the family, he will be sadly missed.

Now George Oliver wants your feedback on a couple of social nights he is planning. The Jon Cluvers Club is the first, with comedians as the main show, or a competitive social night in Murrayfield Indoor Sports Club as the second event. Proposed dates are in October or November so please email: georgeoliver@yahoo.co.uk

So get in touch please and enjoy the summer months ahead

Stewart Crawford
s.crawford@live.co.uk

Northern Region



Northern

Morning guys.... Afternoon sports fans,

As I sit writing my notes the rain is banging down outside and looks like it's in for a while,

it's welcoming after having had the very hot couple of weeks at the end of May!!

Not much to tell you this month I'm afraid, but by the time these notes appear we will have played our 2nd event at Scarcroft for the President's day. We are hoping for a good turnout seeing as it's an afternoon kick off.

Finally a mention for the course manager at Chester Golf Club Stuart McCall for the condition of his greens I had the pleasure of playing a few weeks ago. They were fantastic considering he had closed the course the day before! Also to the guys at Henlle Golf Club and Llanymynech Golf Club down in Wales.... superb courses.

That's all folks...the Sheffield match up is coming next so if you wish to represent the section at Howley Hall please give me a buzz.

Cheers.

Andy Slingsby
07506407867

Andy.slingsby98@google-mail.com



North West

Hi all,

Well the weather here in the North West just gets worse by the day as summer is well and truly passing us by and mid-summer will have passed by the time you read these notes.

Not a lot happening this month except an incredible amount of Fusarium knocking around and greenkeepers scratching their heads whether to spray or not?

Thursday 14 June John Deere hosted the North West regional qualifier at Shaw Hill Golf Club, the winner goes through to the GB and Ireland final at Slaley

Hall in September, the winner of which gets a trip to USA for a world finals. Now that's a prize! So thanks must go to the sponsor Balmers Garden Machinery and Darren Barker our area rep for the hospitality also to Shaw Hill Golf Club for allowing the event to take place and last but not least Neil and his team of greenkeepers for presenting the course, beautifully!

Unfortunately our team at Penwortham Golf Club didn't win but as the last teams had not arrived in I will only be able to bring you the winners in next months 'around the green'

There have been a couple of new starters at Mere Golf Club for Gwynn Davies the Course Manager, so good luck to Lee Whittaker and Lee Burton.

Lastly a couple of apologies to make in last months piece it was quoted that the Head Greenkeeper of Leasowe Golf Club was a Chris Peddie well this was wrong information, the Head Greenkeeper of Leasowe Golf Club is Ian Turner so thanks to Ian for the day at Leasowe. Chris is at Wallasey Golf Club so my apologies to both of you.

One thing I won't be apologising for, even though it apparently hasn't gone down well is wishing a friend luck in last months piece for his application for a job promotion at a golf club he is already at!

Anyway it is currently 4 am so if there are any mistakes this month please contact me personally I cant put things right if I hear on the grapevine. This also applies to the notes, I really do need people to pass me any information so I can ensure you get a mention.

Regards Spencer Lloyd-Pye
Spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk



North Wales

The weather hasn't really been on our side so far this year, a red-hot end to the winter followed by a wet and cold spell (which put paid to our spring tournament!) and then wet, wet, wet. I'm sure if this summer carries on this way we're all going to develop webbed feet and gills.

Due to the weather the spring tournament is now going to be the 'two days before the summer solstice' tournament, let's

hope this one isn't rained off or there won't be any North Wales qualifiers for the National. Full results and write up next month and pictures as normal on our Facebook group.

The North Wales v North West tournament at Lymm Golf Club has been rearranged to 7 August due to clerical errors, I hope anyone invited to play will do their utmost to help us keep the trophy in Welsh hands.

The inaugural North Wales v South Wales match takes place at Aberdovey Golf Club on 27 July. I hope anyone that goes puts a good show of North Welsh metal there as well.

I think that's about it for now, as always I do look forward to hearing from you and all your news.

All the best,
Pete Maybury, E-mail
petemayb66@aol.com Phone or
Text 07756001187.

Facebook group North Wales
b.i.g.g.a



Sheffield

Hi everyone,

My apologies for the shortage of news over the last couple of months, things have been a little hectic to say the least. As an apology I have a stack of news to bring you this month.

Firstly I have a couple of congratulations. Joel France and his new wife Lindsay tied the knot back in June and I'm sure he will have had a wonderful day. May you both have a happy life together and enjoy all the decorating! Secondly I would like to congratulate Andy Riley and his wife Becky on the birth of their daughter Eloise, enjoy those sleepless nights Andy!

Our spring competition was held at Hickleton Golf Club and we had a really enjoyable day, thanks to Bob and his staff for presenting an excellent course despite the unfavorable weather conditions leading to the event. I would like to thank Pro Turf for once again sponsoring the day and I would also like to thank all members and trade who attended the day. Remember everyone, there are pictures from the day on our Facebook page.

Our next competition will be held at Rotherham Golf Club on 12 October, everyone will

be receiving invitations and it would be nice to see a few new faces. If anyone is not receiving any information that we post out for any events then please get in touch and we can try and rectify the problem.

Stewart Pigott will be trying to complete a 24hr golf challenge in August for Weston Park Cancer Charity if any members would like to sponsor him for what is an extremely worthy cause then you can do so via the following link, all donations will be greatly appreciated. <http://www.just-giving.com/Stewart-Pigott>

That is all from me for now good luck for the month of July and see you all in August.

James Stevens
07738719614
jimmy_jams20@hotmail.com
Facebook - biggasheffield
Twitter - sheffieldbigga



Midland Region

Midland

I shall begin this month's waffle with the wonderful news of a new arrival. Jim Gilchrist.

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Around The Green

thanks to Simon White and his team for their great efforts. As always a special thank you to all of our sponsors of the day; Campey Turfcare for the main prize table, Sherriff Amenity, Sharrocks and Whitemoss for the nearest the pin prizes, Farols for the much needed beverages around the course and all other trade members who brought raffle prizes. The results of the day were awarded as follows; 1st Gross: Adam Jones, 1st Nett: Roger Bannard 36pts, 2nd: Aaron Saunders 35pts, 3rd: Clint Eastwood, sorry Woodall 34pts. Best Category's 1: A.Jones, 2: D.Fellows, 3: A.Brougham. Trade winner:

P.McCrainor. Nearest the pins were won by Mike Hughes x2, Roger Bannard and Paul Mills-ey.

The draw for the 1st and 2nd rounds of the Everris Doubles event took place after the golf and a full review of the draw, including play by dates and rules are available on our website, www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk <<http://www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk>>

This month's kind calendar sponsor is our old friend Burrows Grass Machinery. Please consider them for all your Ransomes and Jacobsen machinery needs. They can be contacted on: Midlands Depot 01785 666 100 or Northern Depot 01565 880 800. I must confess that the lines on this month's picture are superb, well done to the Greenkeeper responsible.

And finally to conclude, there is our summer education trip to Tillers Turf Farm on 25 July, please contact Tony Cheese for further details on 07778 665 506. Also good luck to all at the summer Golf Event at Oxley Park on the 11th of this month.

Just time to wish H.Q's ex-Editor Scott MacCallum all the best in his new venture. It has been my pleasure to have worked with you over the last 12 years. Mad men rule O.K.

Sean McDade.

the best for the future Peter.

Our latest golf day was held on Thursday May 24 at Cleethorpes Golf Club. For the first time in living memory the wind, which usually affects play, actually dropped and all at the seaside enjoyed a warm sunny day. The course was presented in excellent condition by Rob Welford and his staff, particularly the greens which continued to prove that they are the best in the area (Immingham are right behind you though!). We were well looked after by the Cleethorpes catering staff with everyone enjoying the fish and chips provided. The day was sponsored by LMS Lincoln through Dave and Joe, who continue to support our section.

The results of the day were as follows: -

1st, Russ Moody; 2nd, Mervyn Davies; 3rd, Rob Welford; Trade: Martyn Lumb; Nearest the Pin: Carl Chamberlain

Longest Drive: Ben Lowry (Change to the usual Messrs Bemment and Welford!)

Finally congratulations to Rob Bemment, Steve Hopkins and Bruce Hicks for their selection for this year's Open Support Team. Also joining them is Sean Sullivan from our twinned GCSAA Peaks and Praries Chapter.

Many thanks, Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

David Langheim course manager at Wimbledon Park G.C has been rewarded for all his hard work by becoming the 61st Master Greenkeeper. Many congratulations Dave from all Surrey section members.

Flaming June has been postponed so we look forward to a warm and sunny November. Yesterday many Surrey courses were closed due to the unwelcome and continuous downpours in the South East and passing the river Mole at Cobham I could just make out the tops of the riverside benches. Fortunately none were occupied but for the second time this year they have had a thorough cleaning.

I do hope that the rain stops for all your sakes and please believe me, my hope has nothing to do with my imminent holiday, you've guessed it, The Isle of Wight. For full reports of my adventures there please send the usual donation, cash would be preferred.

Brian Willmott

Brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk



Kent

After our football team's last trouncing some four years ago many thought that our best times on the pitch had long since past. That was however, until our Essex counterparts challenged Kent's finest to come out of retirement and do battle at the academy of football of Upton Park!

Well, how could we refuse?! A team quickly made themselves available for selection for such a prestigious event and a memorable day ensued. After meeting early doors at Redlibbits Golf Club for breakfast (where were the BBC?) the team coach left for the journey through town to West Ham. Thousands of cars joined us in the procession through Blackwall tunnel as we neared the hallowed turf. We were met at the stadium by Head Groundsman Shane O'Brien and escorted into the 'Away' dressing room. A quick change and discussion about who wants to play where ensured

South East Region



Surrey

May 22 was the date for our spring meeting and qualifier for the national tournament. Blackmoor G.C was the venue and Lee Blackburn, who used his local knowledge was our winner, followed by Mike Lake and in third place the unforgettable Paul Weston. John Mathis recorded the best gross score. Qualifiers for the national tournament are Lee Blackburn and Kevin Boxall. Many thanks to James Norris and his team for an excellent course and to Blackmoor G.C for looking after us so well.

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Gareth Evans, North Section
Scott McClenaghan, North Section
John McKerracher, North Section
Shaun McLaren, Central Section
James Naylor, Central Section
Eamon Sullivan, Central Section
Andrew Terras, East Section
Gregor Wilson, Ayrshire Section

Northern Region

Lloyd Balazs, North West Section
Neil Dixon, North West Section
Ian Hanson, North West Section
Matthew Johnson, North Wales Section
Marc Lewis, North Wales Section
John Meredith, Northern Section
Tim Murphy, Northern Section
John Phillips, North East Section
Nick Roberts, North Wales Section
James Rutter, North West Section

Midland Region

Roger Bannard, Midland Section
Daniel Davy, BB&O Section
Josh Dunn, MidlandSection
Carl Gordon, Mid Anglia Section
Thomas Hayes, Midland Section
Ian Jones, East Midland Section
Tonderai Kennedy Nyemba, BB&O Section
Ben Koracevic, BB&O Section
Oliver Lochman, BB&O Section
Anthony Mills, BB&O Section
Danny Morten, BB&O Section
Daniel Mounteney, BB&O Section
Anthony North, BB&O Section
Scott Osler, BB&O Section
Matthew Parker, BB&O Section
Kieran Poff, BB&O Section
Paul Reeves, Midland Section
Ston Robinson, BB&O Section
Daniel Spencer, BB&O Section
Stuart Swift, BB&O Section
Daryl Vanterpool, BB&O Section
Paul Walton, BB&O Section

South East Region

James Bruder, Surrey Section
Luke Harman, Surrey Section
Charles Hunt, East Anglia Section
Ryan Mochrie, Kent Section
Tom Shattock, London Section
Craig Ward, Sussex Section

South West & South Wales Region

Adam Malone, South Coast Section
Alan Gawman, Devon & Cornwall Section
Bradley Hicks, South West Section
Chris McMillan, South Coast Section

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



East of England

I would like to start this month by wishing Peter Larter a long and happy retirement. On behalf of our section I would like to pass on our thanks for all the support he has given to us on both golf days and section seminars. Whilst his presence will be missed we look forward to welcoming our new regional administrator Sandra Raper and working with her to take both the section and the region forward. In honour of the work Peter has done for us it has been decided that a the winner of our golf order of merit will now be presented with a trophy donated in his honour as well as receiving the blazer which will still be kindly sponsored by Simon Banks. Once again all

we were as ready as we were ever going to be for the match. However a five-minute warm up then ensured we weren't.

We feared an early onslaught from the more experienced Essex team but a combination of poor long-range shooting and cat-like reflexes of the incumbent Kent man between the sticks kept the Northerners at bay. Then, hitting them hard on the break a superb cross was powerfully headed home by Wayne Syers to put us 1 up. Further great defending and attacking saw Mark Todd put through just before the break to put us 2 up.

After the break play resumed and Kent's defence was finally undone by an Essex free kick from the corner of the penalty box. The low, in-swinging shot was pushed onto the post by the Cat but only to bounce straight back out in front of goal to the following Essex attack who were more alive to the ball than our defence. A simple slot in put the score at 2-1. Shortly after, Kent's defence were left scratching heads again after a quick short corner by Essex and the attack shot through the legs of a multitude of players stood in front of the unsighted keeper, 2-2 and game back on.

Ten minutes or so before the end another Kent attack broke down the left saw Zaffer the Turk fire home a great left foot volley to put the score 3-2 to us and, despite Essex throwing everything at us to re-level the scores, Kent hung on to seal victory.

Many thanks to all who took part, the Essex section for hosting and especially to Larry Pearman and Lely UK for sponsoring the event including suitable post-match refreshments in the Billy Bonds suite.

We also had a golf day last month. This was held at the lovely West Kent Golf Club superbly presented for us by Darren Burdis and his great team at West Kent. Despite most of us having never visited this fine course before many managed to score well on a very hot day on a course that demands high levels of accuracy and fitness!

Everyone I spoke to was very complimentary of the great course and welcome extended to us by the club. A great dinner too rounded off a great day for us at West Kent. Many thanks

for being such gracious hosts. Results as follows: 1st Ian Rawlings (36pts), 2nd Aaron Launchbury (36pts), 3rd (Paul Larsen (35pts), Trade Prize won by Rob Holland, Near pin by Darren Burdis and Longest Drive by Jamie O'Connell.

We've taken loads of names now for our summer pairs knockout tournament but still open for more if you would like to take part. You don't both need to be from the same club and trade members are welcome to join in too. Please get in touch ASAP to be part of this great event.

More details and pictures from the football on our website: www.kentgreenkeepers.com

Best of British
Rob Holland

South West and South Wales



South West

I hope that everyone is well. This month is going to be a little shorter than usual, this is me hinting at you guys to forward me some short stories about what is happening around the section.

I don't like doing this, but I have to start on a sensitive subject...the section visited Clevedon Golf earlier this month, captained by the steady, clam and collective Wayne Vincent. As always, the section took a strong team, on what was a steaming hot day, we just didn't match up to the weather, losing 5-1. However, I would like to thank the secretaries for a great match, and we will be see you again next year. This isn't normal for us, I can ensure you it will not happen again...sorry captain!!

Our next match is with the Welsh section and will be played at Royal Porthcawl on Friday 10 August. If you are keen to play please contact section captain Wayne Vincent, after our last performance... there is a good chance you will get a game.

As for the section, Thursday

4 October will be our next event, our AGM and will take place at Bristol & Clifton Golf Club.

Now for the important subject that is happening in the world at the moment, Euro 12, what a great start...magic is the word! I am tipping Germany to win with Gomez top goal scorer?

We would also like to thanks our patronage partners for 2012, Farmura, Countrywide, Headland, Eco-solve, TH White, Irrtech Ltd, Avoncrop.

We also have a Facebook page for the southwest section, that will make it much more convenient for you all to use, you don't have to do anything, just enjoy this amazing feature you have at your fingertips.

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk



South Wales

Good Morning South Wales. In my time in South Wales I have seen many visitors to our golf courses including the Royals, International sports stars and many more celebrities but our latest visitor tops the list for me. Bryn Meadows Golf Club played host to one of the unlikeliest visitors in history an EMU!! Second in size to the ostrich it popped in for a few holes over the weekend of 21 May, unfortunately she was asked to leave because she didn't have a handicap certificate! Eventually she was reunited with her owner who was based at a small holding just a mile away.

Congratulations again to Jim Mackenzie and his team for setting up a fantastic Handa Wales Open. The course, as always in magnificent condition and with the drying conditions prior to the event it made the course play in a slightly different manor with ball striking needing to be played to some tough pin positions set by the European Tour. Congratulations Jim in not only having a successful 13th Wales Open Tournament but also passing a personal milestone... the big 50 on the Thursday of the event, Happy Birthday.

Assistant Profile

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

Name:

Andrew Ross

Age: 36

Club:

Thornhill

Position:

First Assistant

Nickname:

Floss



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

17 years

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

Working outdoors and being on a golf course all day

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

Firefighter (I do this on a retained basis just now)

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

Hand cutting greens, you get a nice early morning stroll

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

Strimming, hurts the back

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

More communication with members so they understand our job better

7. Hobbies?

Darts and Bowling

8. Favourite Band?

Iron Maiden

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

Nottingham Forest

10. What is your claim to fame?

Believe it or not but Im actually a qualified Financial Advisor aswell!

Around The Green

Our spring competition was held over the well-manicured Greenmeadow Golf Course. Numbers for this event unfortunately hit an all-time low mainly in my opinion the weather changing and many of you guys having to play catch up in keeping the growth levels down nevertheless an exciting competition took place. Eventually Stuart Ross of Brecon Golf Club ran out clear winner with ever present Andy roach in second and Gareth Knight back in third. Longest drive was again one by Big D however it wasn't his normal massive best, struggling with a rib cartilage injury he struggled around the golf course and at the longest drive he hit the lowest worm burning drive I have ever seen which ended up 300yds plus! Nearest the pin was won by Clive Moran now of Tredegar Park. A big thank you to Green Meadow Golf Club for their generous hospitality shown and presenting the golf course in great shape.

Unfortunately a negative bit of news to report we have had to cancel the Rigby Taylor Matchplay competition for the first time since the event started over 15 years ago due to lack of teams to enter the event I guess

down to pressures of work and the weather not helping things again.

This year as most of you should be aware we have started the patronage scheme where all supporting trade companies pay a nominal fee rather than an individual company sponsoring golf and educational events, this would allow the section more money to spend on prizes at the golf days, to support an individual to attend BTME and to attract better speakers to attend education days or evenings. Without greenkeepers supporting all events it does make it harder to attract further sponsors and being able maintain the level of support the Trade companies give us. I know that time is precious in the work place and we therefore are looking at ways to tempt people back out to all events so please if anyone has any suggestions on how to improve what we are doing please contact myself, Gareth Knight or any of the patron companies to forward your ideas. Sorry to have a rant but that's all from me keep it green!!

Kind Regards
Peter Holmstrom
07732503855

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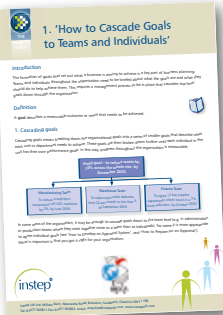
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Exclusive to BIGGA members



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








These short, handy guides provide practical, step by step guidance on a range of subjects. The guides can be downloaded and used to help you develop your knowledge and implement new processes within your workplace.








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



instep
Development & Training

The 'How To...' guides 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 2012 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
JULY 2012			
July 4th	Devon & Cornwall Section Event	Launceston Golf Club	George Pitts email: gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
July 4th	North West Section Event	Stand Golf Club	Chris Sheehan email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk
July 11th	Summer Meeting – South Wales Section	Creigau Golf Club	Gareth Knight Tel mobile: 07595 988512
July 11th	North West Section Event	Ashley Cricket Club near Tatton Park	Chris Sheehan email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk
July 11th	Midland Section Event	Oxley Park Golf Club	Andrew Smith email: andysmithhace@hotmail.co.uk
July 11th	South Coast Section Event	Blackmoor Golf Club	Alex McCombie email: southcoastsecretary@gmail.com
July 11th	Evening Course Walk – Devon & Cornwall Section	Treose Golf & Country Club	George Pitts Tel Mobile: 07929 754401 or email: gpitts@yelvertongolf.co.uk
July 12th	Midland Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Gay Hill Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
July 12th	Northern Section Event	Meltham Golf Club	Andrew Slingsby email: slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com
July 15th – 22nd	Open Championship	Royal Lytham & St Annes	http://www.theopen.com/
July 25th	Northern Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Bingley St Ives Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
July 27th	North v South Match – South Wales Section	Aberdovey Golf Club	Gareth Knight Tel mobile: 07595 988512
AUGUST 2012			
August 1st	East of England Event	Belton Woods Hotel & Golf Club	Bruce Hicks Tel mobile: 07931 714922 or email: brucehicks1@gmail.com
August 1st	East Anglia Golf Event	Royal Norwich Golf Club	Ian Willett Tel. Mobile 07929 205398 or email: info@biggaeastanglia.co.uk
August 9th	Midland Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Verulam Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
August 15th	South West Section Golf Management	Bowood Golf Club, Wiltshire	Jane Jones, Tel: 01454 270850, Mobile: 07841 948110, jane@bigga.co.uk
August 16th	Scottish Team Event Golf Day	Auchterarder Golf Club	Gordon Moir Email: gmoir@standrews.org.uk
August 16th	Essex Section Day	Rochford Hundred Golf Club	Arnold Phipps-Jones Tel mobile: 07764 862337 or email: essexbigga@talktalk.net
August 22nd	Scottish East Section Tournament	Mortonhall Golf Club	Stuart Ferguson Email: stuferg@btinternet.com
August 22nd	Northern Section Event	Horsforth Golf Club	Andrew Slingsby Email: slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com
August 22nd	Northern Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Birchwood Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
August 22nd	Northern Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Birchwood Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk



BIGGA National Championship 2012

The quest to find BIGGA's best golfer returns in 2012 when the National Championship moves to The Irvine Golf Club, Bogside, Ayrshire, on October 8-9, 2012

(Visit the club website at www.theirvinegolfclub.co.uk)

Fill in the form below to book your spot

The 14th green at The Irvine Golf Club

BIGGA National Championship 2012, The Irvine Golf Club, October 8-9 • Entry Form

Please select the relevant category:

- Full Member
- Affiliate Member

The entry fee of **£95** includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

Name

Address.....

.....

..... Post Code.....

Mobile.....

E-mail.....

Membership No.

Handicap.....

BIGGA Section.....

Golf Club

Payment method (please tick)

- I enclose my cheque made payable to BIGGA Ltd value **£95**
- Please debit my Mastercard / Switch / Visa / Delta card with the fee of **£95**

Card number.....

.....

Start DateExpiry Date

Last 3 security digits.....

Issue No. (Switch/Delta only)

Signature.....

Date

Or E-mail your details to:
rachael@bigga.co.uk
Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

Deadline for entry is 11th September 2012.

Completed entry forms should be sent to:
BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd over 36 holes in both the nett and gross categories, additionally after each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. If you have a poor first day an alternative Stableford competition will be held on the second day of play.





Greenkeeper Training



A guide to the range of training provided throughout the UK

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the standard of Greenkeeper Training. The Association is a member of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including Section, Regional and National workshops, seminars and conferences.

The range and quality of training now available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry.

Golf Course Managers should ensure that their staff are trained to the highest standards. This begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC. There is a clear link between education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff.

There are now a number of GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers identified by the GTC Quality Assured logo



Sami Collins
Head of Learning & Development
BIGGA

01347 833800

sami@bigga.co.uk
www.bigga.org.uk

SCOTLAND



Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JB

Contact: michaelclark@elmwood.ac.uk

Full-time and Part-time National Certificate Greenkeeping, Block release/fast track and workbased learning options for SVQ Level 2 and Level 3. ILM Level 3 & 4 Management. HNC and HND Golf Course Management available both online/ distance learning and full-time/ part-time options. HNC/HND Golf Facility Management. Sportsturf Courses available. SVQ Level 2 & 3 in Landbased Service Engineering and Golf Course Mechanics Courses. Abrasive Wheel, BTLIA/NPTC Irrigation Course, Chainsaw, Tree Climbing and Rescue Techniques, Spraying and Noroso Certification/Courses.



ENGLAND



Askham Bryan, York, North Yorkshire, YO23 3FR

Contact: Central admissions 01904 772211

enquiries@askham-bryan.ac.uk www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Extended Diploma and Subsidiary Diploma in Horticulture. Foundation & Extended Foundation Degrees in Sports Surface Management, Horticulture, Landscape and Garden Management or Arboriculture. All available full or part-time.

Block release courses: WBL Diploma Levels 2 & 3 Greenkeeping WBL Diploma Levels 2 & 3 Groundsman Sportsturf Maintenance.

Short courses: FEPA spraying, irrigation, chainsaw and brushcutter courses.



50 Brook Street, Glasgow, G40 2AB

Contact: Lesley Lowrie 0141-556-3999

Fax: 0141-556-4999 learn@gostatraining.co.uk

SVQ Level 2 and 3 and Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping/ Sportsturf and Landscape. Attendance Day release or Distance Learning. SVQ Level 4 Management is available with flexible learning options. Lantra and NPTC Industry related short courses with certification include Pesticide courses, Chainsaw, full range of Machinery training, First Aid and many more. Candidates may use their Individual Learning Account to fund many of the courses. Training courses are available in Glasgow and Edinburgh areas throughout the year.



BRIDGWATER

Bridgwater College (Cannington Centre for Land-based Studies), Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2LS

Contact: Helen Goodland; Tel: 07786311429;

Fax: 01278 444363

Email: goodlandh@bridgwater.ac.uk
www.bridgwater.ac.uk

Level 2 and 3 apprenticeship and work-based learning schemes available as well as full time BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sports Turf. Additional short courses include PA1, 2 and 6, Spraying, Chainsaw, First Aid, Manual Handling and PAT Testing.



ENGLAND

GTC QUALITY ASSURED CENTRES AND TRAINING PROVIDERS



A full list of GTC approved training providers can be obtained from the GTC. The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) are continually reviewing the approved status of centres and training providers offering greenkeeper training courses.

For more information contact the GTC on: 01347 838640 or visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk



Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY
Contact: Stewart Brown 01995 642305 www.myerscough.ac.uk

Myerscough College is a pioneering centre for Sportsturf Education and Training in Europe. Courses are available at all levels from Introductory Diploma to Honours Degrees in Sportsturf Science and Management. There are options for full-time and part-time study with our FdSc Sportsturf and BSc Sportsturf Science courses uniquely available ONLINE also and having students enrolled throughout the UK, Europe and the USA. A new "Top-Up" BSc Degree in Sportsturf Science and Management is now available for those already holding FdSc or HND qualifications in Sportsturf. Our Work Based Training group offer NVQ's in the workplace from levels throughout the UK.



Stoke Climsland, Callington, Cornwall, PL18 8PB
Duchy College, Rosewarne, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0AB
Contact: Liz Clarkson 01579 372345/07785 105087
liz.clarkson@duchy.ac.uk www.duchy.ac.uk

Duchy College offers a range of courses throughout the South West including Level 2 and 3 workbased Diplomas and Apprenticeships in horticulture including Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship. NVQ 4 Amenity Horticulture (Management). Level 2 and 3 Diplomas in Horticulture (Including Sustainable Horticulture) FdSc and BSc (Hons) Horticulture. RHS Level 1, 2 and Advanced Certificate. We also offer Institute of Leadership and Management courses to Greenkeepers and short courses in pesticides, plant machinery, vehicles, forestry and arboriculture.



OAKLANDS COLLEGE
Smallford Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA
Contact: Andrew Wight 01727 737735
andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk www.oaklands.ac.uk

Full time courses: City and Guilds Level 2 Diploma options in Greenkeeping/Sports turf and Horticulture.
 Work Based learning- Level 2 and 3 Diploma in Greenkeeping and Apprenticeship routes.
 Short courses: NPTC PA 1/2/6

HADLOW COLLEGE

Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0AL

Tel: 0500 551434
 E-mail: enquiries@hadlow.ac.uk
 Website: www.hadlow.ac.uk



City & Guilds work-based qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 in Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship and Landscaping for apprenticeships for all ages. We also offer a range of short courses, such as Health & Safety, COSHH, Chainsaw and Pesticide Application.

Additionally full and part-time courses (post GCSE through to degree level) are available in horticulture and a variety of other land-based subjects.



Plumpton College
Ditchling Road, Plumpton, NR Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3AE
Tel: 01273 890454 Fax: 01273 890071
enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk www.plumpton.ac.uk

Foundation Degree: Garden Design. Levels 2 and 3, Diploma in Horticulture. Part time courses: Work based Diploma: Level 1 and Level 2: Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship and Landscaping and Horticulture. Level 3: Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship and Landscaping and Horticulture. Parks, Gardens and Greenspace. Also RHS Level 2. Short courses available. FEPA Spraying and Chainsaw. Bespoke Training, following Training Needs Analysis (TNA).



Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE www.merristwood.ac.uk
Contact: Philip Mayes 07896 67 47 89 pmayes@guildford.ac.uk
or Andrew McEvoy 07896 67 47 86 amcevoy@guildford.ac.uk

Part-time courses: New Sports Management NVQ Level 4 - on-line distance learning course, Sports Turf Diploma Level 3 - on-line distance learning, Sports Turf Apprenticeship Diploma Level 3, Greenkeeping Apprenticeship Diploma Level 2, Groundsmanship Apprenticeship Diploma Level 2, Automatic Turf Irrigation Systems NPTC Certificate, NPTC courses including Safe Use and Operation of Mowers, Tractor Driving, Hedge Trimmers, FEPA Spraying and others. Please contact us for up-to-date listings, qualifications and advice on courses and funding. Open evenings are held regularly at the College.



Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF
Contact: Gareth Phillips 01270 613236
enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk www.reaseheath.ac.uk

Block release industry tailored courses include Level 2 and 3 Work Based Diploma in Horticulture / Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship. Also: NVQ Level 4 Sports Turf (distance learning) and apprenticeships plus full-time Level 2 / Level 3 Diplomas in Horticulture. Short courses include pesticide application, chainsaw operation, safe use of mowers. Bespoke courses and overseas programmes available on request. Campus facilities include a commercial golf course, rugby and football pitches and Crewe Alexandra training grounds.

ENGLAND

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or visit www.bridgwater.ac.uk

Bridgwater College Cannington Centre,
Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2LS



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Myerscough College's Degree programmes are validated by the University of Central Lancashire



Myerscough College

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For more information call **01995 642211**
or visit www.myerscough.ac.uk



Moreton Morrell, Warwickshire CV35 9BL

Contact: Laura Savage 01926 318261 Fax: 01926 318300
employers@warkscol.ac.uk
www.warwickshire.ac.uk

Warwickshire College offers apprenticeships in Sports Turf Management with routes in groundsman and groundkeeper. Apprenticeships are a great way for students to earn and learn and a fantastic opportunity for employers to take on a member of staff who is still in training.

The college also offers short courses in pesticide application including the PA2 for amenity users, chainsaw certificates, landscape design, first aid and many more. Bespoke training packages are also available for employers on request.



Sparsholt, Winchester SO21 2NF

Contact: Admissions
01962 797280
enquiry@sparsholt.ac.uk
www.sparsholt.ac.uk

Apprenticeships in Amenity Horticulture (Sports Turf). Short courses are available in C&G NPTC Chainsaw Operations, tree felling and clearing, operating brushwood chippers, MEWPs and other machinery operation, and safe handling and application of pesticides.

BE SEEN HERE

Your training provider could appear here, as an advert or listing, in our next edition of Greenkeeper Training

Get in touch with our Sales team on 01347 833800 to find out more





Greenkeepers Training Committee

Donald Steel, GTC Chairman, takes over the GTC seat at GI for this month...



In all walks of life, we should all try to have a better understanding of other people's predicament...

"We specialise in miracles. The impossible takes a little longer". That has always seemed an appropriate motto for greenkeepers, an impression more than confirmed by the meteorological events of 2012.

One of the instinctive skills that cannot be taught is the ability to identify weather patterns, and to adjust to them, but the warmest March, the wettest April, the coldest May and the windiest June have posed unprecedented problems.

Some golfers, who should have known better, took advantage of the situation to be critical of course presentation- one publicly. If only they had stopped to think about these problems, they might have made allowances. Jim Arthur always used to maintain that, in greenkeeping terms, April and May are winter months and that those preparing courses for important events before the arrival of summer are on a hiding to nothing. However, such are the standards that greenkeepers have set, and golfers have come to expect, that any criticism can be seen as a back-handed compliment.

Courses can rarely be prepared to order although deterioration and improvement can be rapid. For last year's Open championship at Royal St George's, they were praying for rain (which came in abundance). This year, Lancashire has prayed for it to stop but, in any event, Royal Lytham's rough, bunkers and the likelihood of wind have invariably proved capable of exacting adequate revenge on those straying from the straight and narrow.

Royal St George's and Royal Lytham have seen significant layout over the years but British and Irish courses are better able



Royal Lytham & St Annes GC

than most to remain playable no matter what the heavens send- or don't send. This is attributable to several factors not least the fact that traditional design offers a variety of shot-making that rewards ingenuity and invention. The wedge has long since become a standard, as opposed to a secret weapon, but great courses offer options. When shots are all-carry and the greens are firm, it is no wonder golfers cry foul.

On other types of course, there is less, if any, choice but the price for higher cost courses lies in the need for large numbers of staff and a huge resources budget. When times are hard, thriftiness is a virtue, a policy on which natural greenkeeping is based. A young Head Greenkeeper whom I met recently was a creditable product of the GTC, a good man joining the band with a career in mind as well as the prospect of authority at an early age. Seen as a legacy, staffs generally, are trained these days to develop multi-skills, the finest grounding employers can give them.

Costs of equipping a course with modern equipment is a sizeable investment but, as the game expands in parts of the world where organisation is not so far advanced, the knack of passing on knowledge is a growing responsibility. It is certainly something the GTC recognises and is working to promote in countries which, without

proper guidance, are in danger of adopting the wrong principles and framework.

Irrespective of climate and the different grasses to be found, there are several common denominators. Throughout the world, fighting thatch by regular aeration to establish vigorous root growth and to assist drainage is key among them. The feed and water brigade also need to be reminded of the folly of their ways although the volume of irrigation to be applied is governed by local factors.

The GTC's widening involvement is an obvious step as no other body has their qualification to assist. Their remit is through the channels of the European Greenkeepers Education Unit as there is still a preference for the production of a British-type vocational training system for the staff of European golf courses to complement the education of talented Course Managers.

Advice on course presentation is all part of any curriculum but greenkeepers can only maintain what architects design and, while some leading professionals may be able to cope with some modern challenges, the rank and file always need "somewhere to go". As Bobby Jones said long ago, "from the standpoint of the inexpert player, there is nothing so disheartening as the appearance of a carry that is beyond their best effort and that offers no alternative route".



The GTC is funded by:



Contact Details

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GTC Education Director

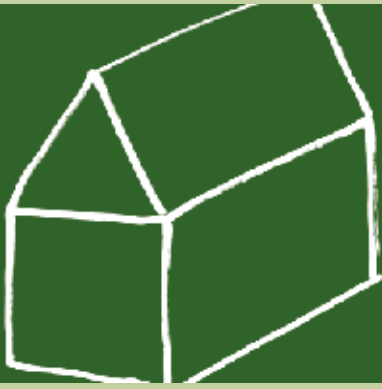
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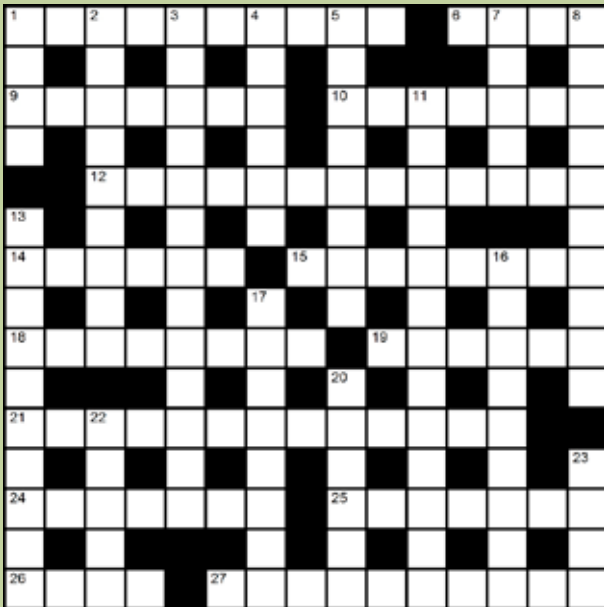


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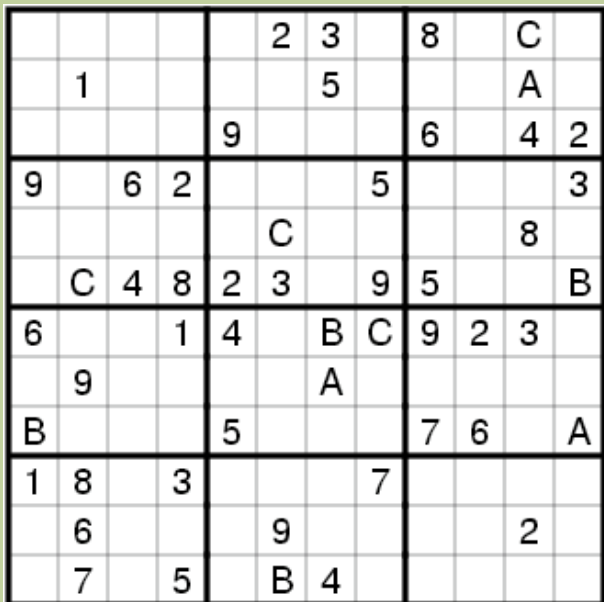


Across

- 1 Conformity to law or principle (10)
- 6 Title of former hereditary Iranian ruler (4)
- 9 Bullet compartment (7)
- 10 Skilled craftsperson (7)
- 12 The last of the James Bond films to feature Pierce Brosnan as 007 (3,7,3)
- 14 Strip or cube of bacon used to add fat (6)
- 15 Italian bread made with olives and herbs (8)
- 18 Classification of plants or animals (8)
- 19 Occurred to (as an idea) (6)
- 21 Judicial process in which a fair trial is impossible (8,5)
- 24 Extremely pronounced (7)
- 25 Two-handled jar for storage of oil or wine (7)
- 26 The other 4-letter song title from the Spandau Ballet album True (4)
- 27 Body of soldiers usually abbreviated as OR (5,5)

Down

- 1 Peanuts character noted for pulling a ball away from Charlie Brown as he is about to kick it (4)
- 2 Annual horse race held in June at Longchamps (5,4)
- 3 South African landmark originally called Taboa do Cabo (5,8)
- 4 Harbour area for small boats and pleasure craft (6)
- 5 One who collaborates on a written work (2-6)
- 7 Adherent of strict Orthodox Judaism (5)
- 8 Faintly improper sexual behaviour (5,5)
- 11 Religious event which forms the basis of the Eucharist (3,4,6)
- 13 German military tactic which translates as 'lightning war' (10)
- 16 UK game show adapted from the French original Des chiffres et des lettres (9)
- 17 Lacking power or ability; infertile (8)
- 20 Musical interval of 8 notes (6)
- 22 Relating to birth (5)
- 23 Type of guitar given prominence by eg Mark King (4)

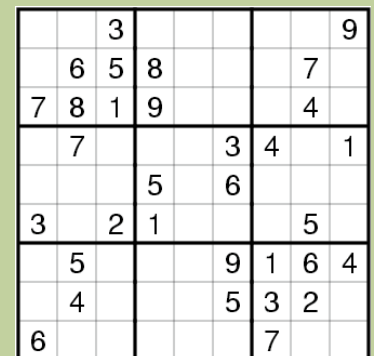


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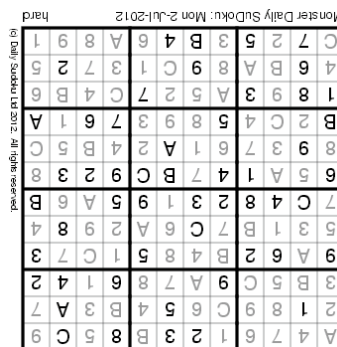
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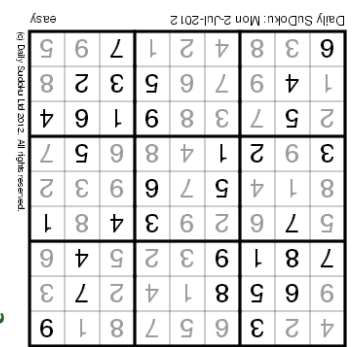


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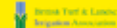
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(Figure 4) – Ryegrass establishment (Lolium perenne, var. Ligala Amenity PRG, DLF Trifolium, Worcester). Photo taken 13 days after sowing.

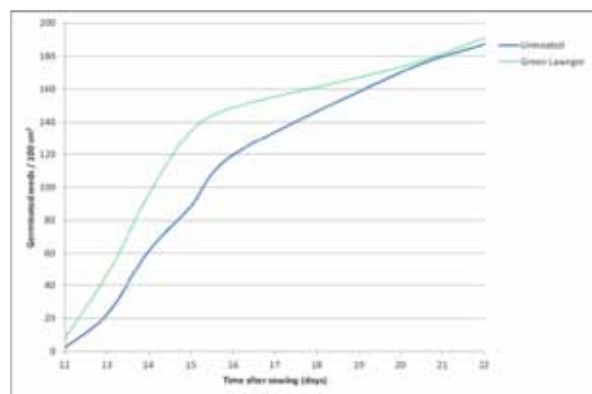


ABOVE (Figure 3) - Bent grass establishment (Agrostis stolonifera). Photo taken 26 days after sowing.

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(Figure 1) The graph below demonstrates that sand treated with pigment increases the speed of seed germination of creeping Bentgrass (Agrostis stolonifera).



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Recruitment



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It is hoped the selected candidate will take up the position by 1 March 2013. Accommodation is available as part of a competitive remuneration package.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

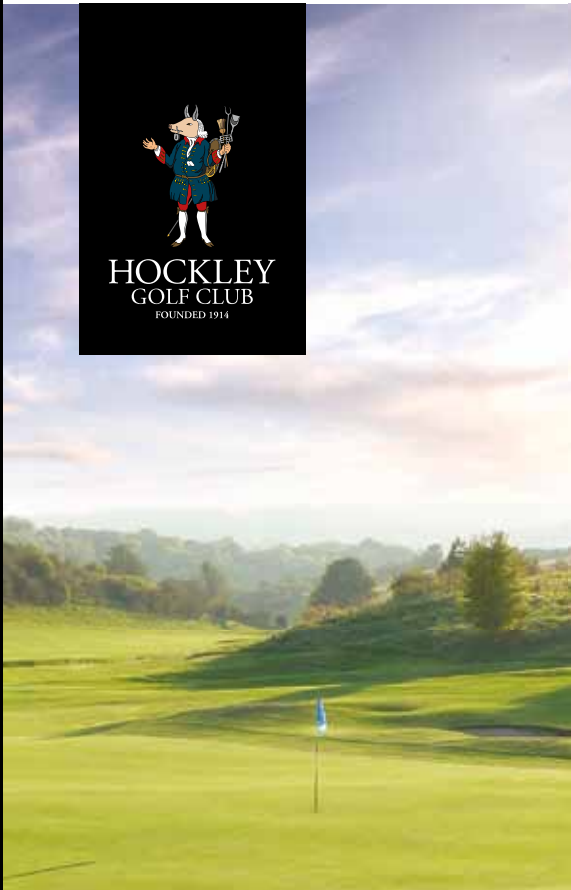
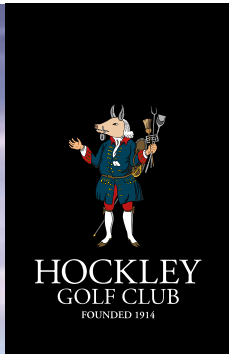
Interested candidates are invited to send their C.V. and a covering letter by 21 September to:

The General Manager, Beaconsfield Golf Club,
Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2UR.

Email: secretary@beaconsfieldgolfclub.co.uk

www.beaconsfieldgolfclub.co.uk





Course Manager

As a long established and highly regarded members club, Hockley Golf Club is proud of its heritage and James Braid designed downland course near Winchester, Hampshire.

With a new General Manager, to whom the successful candidate will report directly, the club has a Vision to realise its natural potential to be a pre eminent course in the South of England.

The club are seeking an exceptional, up and coming individual who is looking for a demanding yet rewarding role, within a progressive environment. The club will actively support such an individual with continued professional development, competitive salary, and offer the potential of on-site accommodation.

The successful applicant will be expected to stamp their own mark on the role and will be able to demonstrate experience of:

- Proven track record as a Head Green Keeper or Deputy
- Short and long-term maintenance and renovation planning along with implementation on the course
- Implementation of operational procedures and accurate record keeping including greens performance and labour allocation
- Strong man management and motivational skills
- Development of detailed forecasting budgets and monthly budget reporting
- An ability to communicate confidently
- Machinery condition reviews, repairs and replacement planning

In addition to the above specialist requirements, strong candidates should also have core skills including:

- The ability to train, develop and enthuse staff
- Hands on attitude to the job along with key IT skills
- Knowledge and relevant qualifications in all matters needed in the successful operation of a Green Keeping team

The successful candidate will be an individual driven to maximise Hockley Golf Club's reputation and potential, and in turn seeking to enhance their own career.

Letter of application should be made with complete CV by post or email to general.manager@hockleygolfclub.com

Marc Dryden, General Manager, Hockley Golf Club, Twyford, Hampshire SO21 1PL. Tel 01962 713165 - Closing date for applications 31st July 2012



Headland Amenity is an expanding business involved in the manufacture, marketing and agronomic support of a wide range of fertiliser and related products to the professional sportsturf and amenity markets in the U.K, Ireland and continental Europe.

As part of our planned growth in the UK we are are creating an exciting new position of **Technical Sales Manager (ref:S011)**, to service both existing and new customers in the Central & Southern U.K. with special emphasis on Sports Grounds, Schools, and other non-golf facilities. This field based professional will be able to support and develop sales of our quality products in the U.K. turf and amenity market and contribute to new product development.

The successful applicant will have relevant experience and be highly motivated, with exceptional communication skills and good customer service. You would be a member of our existing close team of Technical Area Managers, but also be expected to act on your own initiative as well. Applications are invited from persons who wish to be part of a dynamic, rapidly growing company and who has good I.T. skills including, Microsoft Office.

Salary is negotiable and offers benefits

after a successful qualifying period

Request an application form at:

info@headlandamenity.com

Check out www.bigga.org.uk/careers for more detailed information

Greenkeepers

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Facilities include Function & Conference Rooms (up to 120 guests), Gym, Swimming Pool, Two 18 Hole Championship Golf Courses, Driving Range.

Under the general guidance of the Course Manager carrying out turf maintenance, preparation of the course for play, machinery operation and maintenance, course construction, estate maintenance and identification of different grasses and plants. The role includes early mornings and weekend work.

You must demonstrate effective organisational skills and the ability to use initiative. You will have a NVQ Level 2 Qualification. Clearly customer focused, with a passion for greenkeeping, and a positive and progressive outlook. You will be flexible and able to work early mornings and weekends.

Interested candidates should forward a current C.V. to:

cmoore@mentmorecountryclub.co.uk

www.MentmoreCountryClub.co.uk



Course Manager

(Reporting to: General Manager)

Weybrook Park Golf Club



Weybrook Park Golf Club is a members owned course with a growing membership of approx 600 situated just outside Basingstoke in Hampshire. We are currently an 18 Hole Golf course, although we are half way through an exciting extension project which will conclude with 27 Holes, we are now looking for a Course Manager to take our club to the next level who is a Dedicated and committed person who shows initiative and drive. Responsible for the maintenance of the golf course and clubhouse grounds and to supervise the servicing and maintenance of all golf course equipment and golf carts in compliance with maintenance standards.

Further responsibilities are to:

- Organise, implement and participate in a comprehensive program of maintenance work, including greens, tees, fairways, bunkers, roughs and all other areas of the golf course to ensure that the course is being maintained and presented to the agreed segmentation standards.
- Ensure the safe and effective operation of all golf course equipment, irrigation system and golf carts, to supervise their maintenance and repair and to ensure that appropriate service records are maintained.
- Maintain the security of the golf course and maintenance compound and to ensure that all internal areas are maintained to a satisfactory standard.
- Make all necessary purchases of supplies and materials from approved vendors within budgetary limitations and to maintain appropriate records.
- Prepare Yearly Maintenance Plans and to submit to the GM for approval.
- Produce an annual budget in order to achieve the agreed standards and being representative of the proposed maintenance plan.
- Follow the Maintenance plan, any subsequent reports and adhere to the agreed budget.
- Maintain a close business partnership with the General Manager.
- Train, motivate and effectively direct all members of staff, as well as following appropriate maintenance procedures upon hiring, disciplining and terminating any employee contracts.
- Conduct and chair Health & Safety meetings with all maintenance staff on a quarterly basis.
- The candidate should also have had some construction experience inc Greens/ Tees & should also have a level of grow-in knowledge.

Letter of application should be made with complete CV by post to:

Martin Hucklesby, General Manager, Weybrook Park Golf Club, Rooskdown Lane, Basingstoke, Hants RG24 9NT (or e mail to manager@weybrookpark.co.uk)

Closing date for applications will be 20th July 2012

NB. The above list is not exhaustive or exclusive and the Course Manager may be expected to undertake other work commensurate with the nature and seniority of the position within the Company at the reasonable request of the Company.

The Back Nine

A new column for writers and members to air and share their views on golf greenkeeping topics

This month, Robert Laycock, delves into nutrients and the potassium fallacy

Getting turf nutrition wrong can cost a greenkeeper his reputation and possibly his job. So it is important to get it right. Take potassium. In my experience, many golf greens are fed far too great an amount of potassium salts each year. The advice I give my agronomy clients is to maintain adequate potassium levels but not to provide more than the turf needs.

Cast your mind back to your days at college. Do you remember being taught that if you analyse healthy grass clippings, the ratio of the major nutrients N, P and K is roughly 9N:1P:6K. If you analyse turf leaf tissue it will contain the major nutrients in this approximate ratio, depending on the species of grass concerned. It always did and it still does! When expressed in the way the fertiliser trade traditionally does this, using the oxides of phosphorus (P2O5) and potassium (K2O), this becomes 4:1:3. This indicates that the turfgrass plants need these elements in this kind of ratio and fertiliser programs should be planned to reflect this. This isn't rocket science. It is basic plant science (or botany, as universities called it when I graduated). The trouble is that many of the people who sell fertiliser and some of the people acting as agronomists do not have much knowledge of plant science!

When potassium is deficient in turfgrass plants it renders them prone to drought damage and infection by pathogens. Applying additional potassium under these circumstances is beneficial. However, applying additional potassium to turf that is already well supplied does not convey additional disease resistance or drought-tolerance.

Potassium salts are soluble and so one would expect them to be leached from soils, particularly the sandy soils encouraged for golf greens. However, many soils contain vast amounts of potassium and, time and again, university research

has shown the capacity of grasses to exploit "non-exchangeable" soil potassium to satisfy their requirement for potassium without the need for potassium fertiliser supplements.

Plants can take up nutrients that soil tests don't detect as being available to them. Surprisingly, many sands contain potassium which is available to turfgrass plants. Soil tests that show low "available" potassium may not account for potassium from the natural weathering of sand, for example. With the right sand, it is quite possible for turfgrasses to survive with no potassium inputs, relying solely on the potassium content of pure sand for their needs.

So what if grasses take up too much potassium. Is that a problem? Yes, there are downsides.

Unfortunately, when grasses take up potassium, they don't know when to stop and are able to take it up far in excess of their actual requirements! "Luxury uptake" occurs, which can be shown to depress the content of magnesium and calcium in the cells of the turfgrass plants. In agricultural grassland this leads to nutritional disorders of grazing animals, such as hypomagnesaemia, where luxury uptake of potassium lowers the amount of magnesium in grass and forage with severe effects on the health of the animals that eat it. In broad-leaved herbaceous plants, induced magnesium deficiency symptoms can be easily spotted.

In these species other than grasses, where larger leaf size means that deficiency symptoms are easier to monitor, the effects of low calcium on plant structure would become apparent, but these are not so clear in grasses.

But there may be other consequences: when he was working at Cornell University, David Moody completed some interesting research which confirmed earlier US research findings that the effect of a high level of potassium on the content of other nutrients are more wide ranging than previously



thought. For example, in the case of induced calcium deficiency caused by high potassium levels, the most important finding is that low cell calcium content was correlated with a greater incidence of both pink and grey snow mould. Analysis of cell contents shows that there was a subclinical deficiency of calcium within the cell which interfered with cell biochemistry, specifically with the Krebs cycle, which is the series of chemical reactions the turfgrass plant uses to produce energy. This finding contrasts with the traditionally held idea that high potassium levels improve disease resistance.

The aim when feeding turfgrasses must be to achieve a natural nutritional balance. This will produce healthy turf, which is less prone to pest and disease attack.

So what if grasses take up too much potassium. Is that a problem?

about the author



Robert Laycock has had a wide-ranging career as a turfgrass scientist, beginning with MSc research at Imperial College, London. This was followed by six years cutting edge research at the STRI and then working with a plant breeder in the grass seed industry before becoming Technical Director of Rolawn and General Manager of Karsten Turf Science. He is a Chartered Biologist and a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and first began working as an independent professional agronomist 20 years ago. Recently relocated to the North York Moors National Park, Robert is mainly occupied advising on golf courses of all types across the UK. www.robertlaycock.co.uk

If you are going to apply potassium to turf, compare the available sources. Potassium nitrate is frequently used as a source of nitrogen and potassium because it is soluble and readily available. Unfortunately, potassium nitrate (13-0-46) contains far more K than N and when used on its own can cause oversupply and luxury uptake.

Unbalanced turf nutrition renders turfgrasses liable to infection by diseases and, I suspect may be at the root of the recent problems with nematodes, something which has never been a problem in the past even though nematodes have always been around. Nematode resistance is certainly related to plant nutrition in other plant species, with high fertiliser potassium being associated with higher nematode activity.

To summarise, potassium deficiency exists and is occasionally seen in turfgrasses but it is rare so in most cases only a little extra potassium needs to be applied as fertiliser each year.

The views expressed within this column are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper

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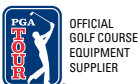
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