

are available for improving our surfaces for the coming season and beyond.

Short and sweet - I look forward to seeing many of you in the near future. If you do have any news for future editions please get in touch as it really helps.

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SOUTH EAST



Surrey

The beast from the east, bad weather has returned to haunt our roads and golf courses with some of the coldest and harshest temperatures to test our resolve for some time. This monsoon style of weather just continues, as we start to slither towards the start of the Chinese year of the water snake, yes I did say water, which starts on February 10. According to ancient astrology predictions, new inventions, outstanding medical breakthroughs and worryingly, the devastating and dangerous weather patterns we experienced in 2012 look set to continue and possibly intensify. Let us just hope that myth and Chinese wisdom get it wrong. Roll on the summer.

Congratulations to James Lewis who has just celebrated his birthday at Camberley Heath GC at the young age of 60, this keen but anxious Everton supporter is known for working with surgeon-like precision around the course giving inspiration to his fellow greenkeepers. All of them have told him its been statistically proven that birthdays are good for you. The more you have the longer you live. Happy Birthday James.

Three-wheelers have been rolling around my mind recently - not because I've been watching Del Boy run his errands in repeats of Only Fools and Horses - but because I paid a visit to North Hants GC and found myself intrigued by Rob Schofield's recent investment in a purchase of a new vehicle. This vehicle has can be seen flying in and around the

North Hants area, described as the yellow peril, the vehicle is a cross between a Reliant Robin and a French passion wagon. Far from Trotter's beaten up old car, this new iconic design has a modern twist and is crammed full of technology. Test drives are available if you are brave enough.

A note for your diary: the annual regional dinner at Walton Heath GC will take place on 6 March 2013 and it is sure to be once again a fantastic event and a chance to let you hone your golfing skills at one of the greatest venues on the golfing calendar. Regional Administrator Clive Osgood can be contacted on 07841948410 who will be able to provide more details on this event, updates on the section website.

BTME - recently passed and packed with memories to treasure, an education feast to savour and friendships to last a lifetime, magic and sparkle makes this North Yorkshire venue a favourite throughout the industry, all of which characterise and set benchmarks of excellence in the world of greenkeeping. Long may it continue.

Mark Day



Kent

It would be very easy to theme this month's column around the recent weather issues being experienced by one and all. However, I shall resist the temptation as I'm sure none of you need reminding how cold and bleak conditions have been of late. I always find that this time of year is ideal for developing teams. Much of the work being carried out during cold snaps is done with multiple numbers of staff and encouraging team relationships during these periods is ideal for staff bonding and trust which, in turn, pays dividends by helping to ensure the playing quality and condition of the course in future months. Morale in teams can be quite low at these times of year so I think it is important to, where practical, encourage as much staff interaction as possible

to get us through the winter months.

Individual appraisals and team meetings are also often enlightening experiences for managers and staff alike. And all educational opportunities should be exploited to the max until the frozen tundra starts to defrost itself. Staff development is something many of us struggle to find time for when the season is in full swing so it is important to make the most of quieter times of the year when more attention can be given to each individual.

On to issues in our fair county. Well, as usual, no-one has contacted me with any news so I guess everything is fine. Harrogate will have been and gone by the time you read this. I hope those of you that made the trek up enjoyed the experience and feel suitably enlightened by the seminars.

One noteworthy item I have experienced when I was working at Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club recently was that one of the greenstaff, Dean Read, has an ambition to become a hair-stylist and regularly practices by honing his mercurial talents during breaks on the rest of the greenstaff at the club (the ones with hair anyway!). Consequently Dean's skills have resulted in surely the most coiffured group of greenstaff in the region! Dean has set up a freelance sideline business now and I'm sure will soon be a stylist to the stars! Good luck mate.

Just want to say thank you to those companies who have chosen to sponsor us this year. Your names and links to your homepages should now be on our webpage.

That's it for now. All news on fixtures etc. online at webpage below.

Don't forget to contact me if you need any help on your courses. All details on webpage.

Best of British

Rob Holland

Premier Golf

www.kentgreenkeepers.com



Sussex

I would like to start by wishing you all a Happy New Year.

Assistant Profile

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



Name: Rich Morris

Age: 28

Club: Brickhampton Court Golf Club

Position: Greenkeeper

Nickname: Footlong

1. How long have you been greenkeeping? Seven years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you? Being outside and being involved in golf

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

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why? Cutting the greens, for the instant result.

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why? Raking bunkers, we have a high population of foxes and they use our bunkers for business and pleasure

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot? More availability of job progression

7. Hobbies? Golf and fitness

8. Favourite Band? Oasis

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

10. What is your claim to fame? Granddad played rugby for Gloucester