

GI

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL



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Jason Dufner celebrates winning the USPGA Championship

A supreme sporting summer

What a summer of sport we've had: Andy Murray winning Wimbledon, the British & Irish Lions' triumphant Tour down under, the Ashes retained comfortably and just recently a thrilling and convincing win for Europe's Solheim Cup team, their first ever victory on American turf.

Additionally the reassuringly comfortably built Jason Dufner taking the USPGA Championship sealed a vintage year for golf's Majors. Attention now turns to the qualifying process for the 2014 Ryder Cup which began at Celtic Manor in August.

It doesn't seem a year since Europe's historic win at Medinah and the next twelve months will pass in a flash for Scott Fenwick, Steve Chappell and all the team at Gleneagles who are charged with preparing the PGA Centenary Course for golf's most exhilarating event. The last few months' clement weather will no doubt have been welcome as the changes made to the course for the event settle in.

Without wishing to usher 2013 too quickly to a conclusion it is now time for the Association to look forward, as registration has opened for the 25th edition of the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) to be held once again in Harrogate in January.

Go to www.btme.org.uk to register for your free entry and ensure you beat the queues on the door.

I am delighted that we are now officially sold out for stand space in all of the four Halls and have actually begun a waiting list for additional interested exhibitors, meaning there is the possibility of expanding into an extra 5th Hall.

The comprehensive and excellent Continue to Learn education programme is complete and will be contained within this magazine's next edition, demand is sure to be high especially for the very popular Turf Managers Conference

which features Ohio State's Professor Karl Danneberger amongst others.

This month entries close for our National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, at the time of writing there were still some spaces left for this 36 hole event to be played over the excellent Red Course at Oxfordshire's Frilford Heath Golf Club, a course that will have played host to the European Tour's Qualifying School only seven days previously. I hope you can take part and compete for the increased prize fund for 2013.

Entries also close soon for the fantastic opportunity provided by Bernhards to be part of the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show in Orlando in February. If you are not one of the privileged few to have been a BIGGA delegate in the past I would urge you to apply this time around. The combination of education, camaraderie, networking and industry insight that the Bernhards trip provides truly is an unparalleled career development opportunity.

This month's magazine features a fascinating diary provided by David MacIndoe (page 34) on the trials and tribulations of growing in Belarus's first ever golf course. Once again the adaptability of this industry's practitioners is tested to the maximum with outstanding success. Additionally there is an illuminating insight from Huw Morgan on the challenges of his dual role as Club and Course Manager at Ashburnham Golf Club (page 28).

Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
BIGGA CEO

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From Belarus with love

When David MacIndoe was made redundant from his Course Manager role he became a Lawn & Sportsground Consultant – and one of his first challenges was a role as grow-in consultant for Belarus's first ever golf course. It's a nation where temperatures can drop to minus 20 with snow cover for a third of the year – and here he tells GI how he battled language barriers, snow mold and missing home



April 28
After securing a visit I've started work on a three month grow-in for the quiet lovely city of Minsk. I've checked out the course with Mike Chalka, owner of Minsk-Golf, who later built many courses in Eastern Europe, along with Head Designer Andy and his partner. It's good to get an indication of what appears to be a first class project and golf course. However, pine and silver birch trees dominate the site, a real headache for us as the trees have seed with good management could be as good as the best landscaped courses that we take for granted in the UK.

The back area is under construction, but the front area which was constructed last year and sown towards the latter part of the year looks like a desert. I've got a feeling this is not going to be successful.

The greens areas with Jacklin bent grass did not survive the winter. Some could have been having snow cover for 119 days? 30 days later some can't even produce. I have to accept plant loss, after 90 days reports the record 50-117 days with one-work there in the middle of August means devastation to 90% of plant cover.

Then, barrows and roughs sown with a bent/fescue mix survived better, grass cover at around 70%, although some areas are thin, work and drained but at least I have something to work with. Snow mold issues cover all areas of the course, but it's not actually too bad and many with temperatures of 25 to 26 degrees.

Day to day features full covering of the front area grass to be followed by the front area mix. The barrows would be long cut in the shape of plenty of ripples and a quick application of the only fertilizer available – an agricultural balanced with a lovely smell of approximately 1000. Great on barrows not quite so good on grass – but first rule is be adaptable and get on with it. So the first tactic work has ended with grass and trees on the front area all mowed and finished.

May 13
My second week has been a mixture of 22 hours days, but very enjoyable and with temperatures now approaching 20 degrees, work on the irrigation system in the main block. It requires a lot of work, with extremely deep wells and three big concrete pumps. On the main second hole, four hole academy course and during range they have recently been getting out 800 cubic meters a day. I hope they can cope when it rains again and raining.

May 27
I saw my second snail on the course – black with yellow mark.

I didn't hang around to take a photo. The hot weather ended in Thursday as it has taken a bit of pressure off the course. It's good to be back on the course things are settling down well. We've established a better routine and are cutting holes 1 to 13 plus the 11th hole and the 17th green. We have received a consignment of 1.2 tonnes of green grade fertilizer. Several 10-20-5 fertilizers and murexium – not my first choice but they are just as normal.

The greens have responded well compared to the agricultural products used previously so, for all you cynics out there, I really don't pay to

I shared an open carriage with three ladies 15 like to say to my wife Sharon that it was all ready to go and they were shared some food with me.

May 30
I have secured a second visit until the end of June – via an interesting overnight train journey there.

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The official monthly magazine of
**British and International
Golf Greenkeepers Association**



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

Retirement reality hitting home

Having returned from The Open, and after a very busy couple of months for the Association, it dawned on me that this was now the first summer in half a century that I haven't been working on maintaining and improving a golf course.

It is a strange feeling to have no course or staff to manage and no club championships or major events to prepare for. I'm sure anyone who has retired will recognise that slightly unusual disconnected feeling – not only do I miss the work itself and the pride all greenkeepers take in preparing a first-class course, I also miss the daily communication (and fun) with the team, members and visitors.

No longer can I throw myself into course projects, renovations and all manner of other work.

I'm fortunate this situation is on my terms having made the conscious decision to take early retirement from Teesside, but it has led me to think about any of our members who currently find themselves out of work or who feel the potential threat of redundancy or difficulties at work.

I want all members to understand that the Association is here to help, we have specific Member Benefits that are always available - the Legal Assistance Helpline (0800 177 7891) or our Lifestyle Counselling Helpline (0844 770 1036) – but perhaps more importantly we also have a network of staff and members who can offer advice and support.

The first port of call should be your Regional Administrator who can listen to the problem, and help you find solutions. Recently the Association has heard of employment problems when the situation has progressed too far, and sadly the opportunity to genuinely assist and make a difference has passed. If you know of someone in difficulty please bring it to our attention as soon as possible.

The Association is doing all it can within the industry to improve general employment conditions for its members, but individual situations need individual, tailored help which is out there – so please get in touch at the first sign of a problem.

On a lighter note - clearly turf management is firmly in my blood, for as



I want all members to understand that the Association is here to help, we have specific Member Benefits that are always available

soon as I retired I found myself managing bowling greens and am currently in demand for all sorts of lawn consultancy!

By time you read this I will be in Windsor for IOG SALTEX. For a variety of reasons last year's show was considered a disappointment, but I'm hopeful for an improvement this year as the industry needs healthy, strong trade shows.

As always I'm looking forward to meeting Association members, our friends in the trade and catching up with the latest innovations.

For the third year running we have organised some excellent seminars to be held during the event. Whilst SALTEX is mainly aimed at the IOG's Groundsmen membership it is an important date in the general turf management calendar.

We are delighted to support our friends at the IOG and provide an opportunity for our members in the south east to take part in some excellent education.

The presentations are on subjects

as diverse as greens drainage, the management and construction of bunkers on limited budgets and dealing with winter disease on greens and I know it will be an informative and entertaining day.

Once SALTEX ends all the focus switches to our own exhibition, BTME in January. The team at HQ has done a superb job ensuring all the allocated stand space is now sold, and excitement is already building for this the 25th edition of our flagship event.

As we head into autumn after a good summer at last – probably the first decent one since 2006 – I hope you have all enjoyed the warm, sunny weather which we so desperately needed after last year's relentless downpours and have got plenty of work done on your courses.

I'm jealous!

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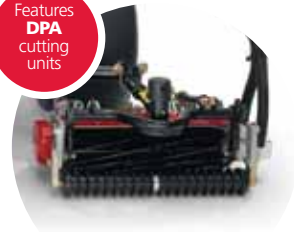
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FULL HOUSE FOR BTME 2014

BIGGA are delighted to announce that all the planned stand space for BTME 2014 next January has been sold – however there are still possibilities for anyone interested in exhibiting.

We've had a superb response from both returning clients and new companies keen to join the unmissable turf event of the year meaning all of the halls we opened last year are now full.

In fact, we're very pleased to announce several new companies making their BTME debuts including: Amenity Sales, County Turf, Etesia, Hunter Industries, JK Sonics, JUB, Mansfield Sand, Sports Metals and Toms Locker.

However, if you are interested in showcasing your products to thousands of movers and shakers across the whole range of the turf industry please get in touch as we are considering opening another hall at the Harrogate International Centre to meet demand.

To add your name to the list or register your interest please call our Business Development Manager Jill Rodham on 01347 833800 or email jill@bigga.co.uk.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Registration for BTME 2014 is now open – and it's still free! Simply visit our dedicated website at btme.org.uk and click on the 'Register Now' icon.

NORTH WALES WIN CRICKET BATTLE



The Annual BIGGA cricket challenge match between North West and North Wales, sponsored by Bathgate Silica Sand, was held on 24 July at Ashley Cricket Club.

The North West innings of 154 from 20 overs seemed enough to secure a victory.

However, North Wales battled to victory in a thrilling final over. Captain Paul Morton hit 53, ably supported by our very own Steve Wragg on 33. Steve also scored 6.2 for his dramatic dive to safety to avoid a run out! Man of the match: Steve Hemsley. Thanks to all who attended.

Sandra Raper

NEW FACES AT BIGGA



BIGGA HOUSE CHARITY RUN

Four BIGGA HQ staff have raised hundreds of pounds for charity after pounding the pavements of York on a 10k run.

From left, Membership Executive Elaine Jones joined Business Development Manager Jill Rodham, General Manager Tracey Maddison and L&D Executive Rachael Duffy in a 10k challenge in the city last month.

The quartet had undergone several weeks of training – clocking up the miles in the countryside around Aldwark Manor.

They then had to brave the summer heat on a glorious Sunday morning for the charity run, but managed to cross the line together in an impressive time of 1 hour 7 minutes. They've currently raised just under £700 for Macmillan Cancer Support. It was quite an achievement for the team and you can still donate to this extremely worthwhile cause at www.justgiving.com/TraceyMaddison

GCMA CONFERENCE

The GCMA Conference 2013 will take place between 11-13 November at the Hinckley Island Hotel in Leicestershire.

It will feature all manner of seminars, presentations and debates as well as the new 'Ideas Fair' where attendees can display their words of wisdom on a visual board. Keynote speakers include trained psychologist Philip Hesketh, Steve Otto – Director of Research and Testing at the R&A – and legendary British athlete Steve Backley OBE.

For much more detail and a booking form visit the GCMA's website – www.gcma.org.uk



The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Regional Administrator for the South West/South Wales Region to replace Jane Jones. Tracey Harvey has been appointed on a full time contract. Tracey is a skilled administrator with a strong track record in event organisation.

Originally from Bristol, Tracey spent eight years at Thornbury Golf club as events coordinator, then moved on to have a spell in event management in the hotel industry specialising in weddings. Her previous role prior

to joining BIGGA was a PA for an environmental consultancy.

She said: "I've immersed myself in golf ever since the role at Thornbury. My partner and son are both very keen low handicap golfers, and as a family golf is a major part of our lives.

"Everyone is so welcoming in the industry, and very passionate about what they do, and I can't wait to get to know members in the South West and South Wales. It's terrific to be involved in the sport again and I'm looking forward to the challenge."



We're also pleased to welcome James Whittaker to the team at BIGGA House as Business Development Executive.

James, who completes our Sales and Administration team alongside Jill Rodham and Susannah Williams, has a wealth of business development and sales experience including working within the health club and cleaning industries as well as a spell working for Mercedes Benz.

He's a keen AFC Wimbledon fan and has followed them throughout their journey from the lower leagues back to their rightful place

in the Football League. He's also part of the commentary team for Radio Wimbledon covering some away games and is also a talented amateur footballer.

James said: "I'm delighted to join the team at BIGGA and am already getting to know our client base. I'm confident I can transfer my skills and experience from my previous field-based roles into the turf management industry.

I'm really looking forward to working closely with Jill, the rest of the team, our clients and our members across the country and beyond."

Beetle mania

Last month the Forestry Commission (FC) sent out a press release begging the public to help find populations of the Asian Longhorn beetle/ALB (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) and its close cousin the Citrus Longhorn beetle/CLB (*Anoplophora chinensis*).

Several outbreaks of CLB having arrived on infested Acers (maples), probably imported from plant nurseries in the Netherlands and originally sourced from China, have thankfully been eradicated over the last few years. ALB was found in spring 2012 at Paddock Wood in Kent (Greenkeeper International July 2012), having arrived in wooden crates from China, and was responsible for the precautionary felling of virtually all trees across eight hectares.

Hopefully this single ALB outbreak has also been eradicated since FC and FERA have said virtually nothing on the subject since autumn 2012. However, they are clearly concerned that more beetles could arrive in the country.

Martin Ward, the UK Government's Chief Plant Health Officer, said "Government plant health services cannot do this work alone, and we need the public to act as our eyes and ears in gardens, parks, woodlands and workplaces to help us spot threats quickly before they become a serious problem."

Fat chance, according to a recent Woodland Trust survey 80 per cent of the UK population can't even distinguish a huge ash tree from a huge oak tree and 50 per cent can't even identify an English oak tree – in England!

FC and FERA have finally



woken up to the traitorous activities of the native oak jewel beetle, a buprestid bark boring beetle called *Agrilus biguttatus*. In cahoots with a couple of plant pathogenic bacteria, this beetle is currently killing mature English oaks in their thousands across East Anglia and the Midlands by causing acute oak decline (Greenkeeper International March 2013).

Plant health authorities in North America are keeping a watchful eye on *Agrilus biguttatus* and have already marked it down as a 'quarantine pest'.

And with good reason since a close cousin called the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus plannipennis*) arrived from Asia and is currently destroying all species of native and exotic ash across a swathe of 18 contiguous mid-west, Appalachian and North East states and into adjoining areas of Canada (Ontario and Quebec).

If emerald ash borer ever gets into the UK it will destroy our native common ash (*Fraxinea excelsior*)

before even *Chalara fraxinea* (chalara ash dieback) has a chance to.

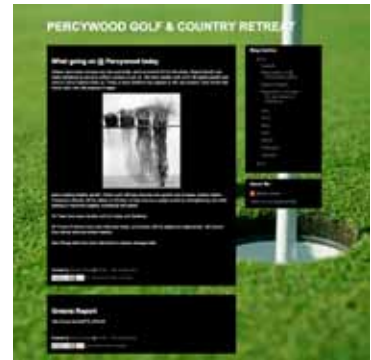
The United States has another *Agrilus* beetle this time a native species called the bronze birch borer (*Agrilus anxius*) which as the common name suggests attacks birch trees.

Native European species of birch have absolutely no resistance to this insect pest which will wipe out our native silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) if it ever becomes established in the British Isles.

And now there is a British, native ambrosia beetle called oak pin-hole borer. Having been given a new lease of life in oak trees flattened by the 1987 Hurricane, the beetle has graduated over the years from a relatively rare insect of British oak woodland into a huge pest problem for the oak timber trade.

This beetle will make a mess of your club's new designer oak wood kitchen before it has even been made.

Dr Terry Mabbett



BLOGGING AT PERCY WOOD

This month's featured blog comes from Simon Olver, Course Manager at Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat in Northumberland. We've had a great response to this so far with greenkeepers really embracing blogging as a superb tool for communicating with members and visitors alike and helping to remove some of the myths surrounding the greenkeeping profession.

Keep your blogs coming to steve.castle@bigga.co.uk.

Simon explained: "Our blog gives members a detailed up to date diary of what's going on around the course, allowing the team to carry out efficient maintenance work seamlessly and alert our membership to important information. Feedback has been fantastic showing that clear and concise communication is a must for any successful business."

"There has been unanimous appreciation for all the time put aside to keep everyone informed, resulting in greater respect for myself and the team. Since our blog began committee meetings have halved in time as most questions have already been answered."

"Our advice to any greenkeeper thinking about creating a blog is to build up your social network connections first, this will allow you to spread your blog further than you could ever imagine. Also to remember your Blog can enhance your CV, so make sure it showcases your ability."

See for yourself at <http://percywoodgolf.blogspot.co.uk>

NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY TRIUMPH FOR THE WEST

The Scottish Region's annual Norrie Whytock tournament sponsored by Bayer CropScience was held at Auchterarder Golf Club on 15 August. A strong field assembled to compete for the honour of winning this prestigious title for their respective sections.

Although the weather forecast prior to the day was pretty dismal, the competitors were provided with warm and breezy conditions with a few light showers along the way. Indeed the weather was a distinct improvement on last year's event that was plagued by heavy showers with play eventually stopping at the 15th following thunder and lightning.

As expected the course was in fabulous condition and praised very highly by all players. Our sincere congratulations to Archie Dunn and his team for providing an excellent playing venue for this competition. The fairways were immaculate, the rough fair and the greens true and firm, what more could the players want!

There were some excellent individual scores returned on the day with 2 players reaching the 36 point mark and a further 3 scoring 35 points. Indeed 2 players returned 3 over par gross scores of 72, Phil Butler (Murrayfield) had one to go along with his 36 points.



Reigning champions the North Section could not replicate the form from the previous 2 years and failed to collect the prize this year. In the end only 2 points separated the winners and runners up with Ayrshire putting up a valiant effort of 96 points - Iain Barr the main contributor.

However, the honours were reserved for the West Section with an excellent total of 98 points. Dougie McIntosh from Cathkin Braes led the team with 35 points and grossed the other 3 over par score. He was ably assisted by Alistair Read (Williamwood) with 31 points and our former Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd who posted a great score of 32 points. Former Regional Chairman Stuart Taylor (Glasgow) made up the team on the day and I know he would not want me to mention his points tally!

Andy O'Hara, Scottish Chairman, thanked all competitors for taking part and

their continued support of the association. The chairman thanked Bayer CropScience for their sponsorship and Auchterarder Golf Club for hosting the event and providing the courtesy of the course and use of the excellent clubhouse facilities.

Our partnership with the competition sponsors, Bayer CropScience is essential to the success of the Norrie Whytock competition. Dave Orchard, National Accounts Manager was on hand to present the prizes and to thank all for attending.

Winning team captain, Dougie McIntosh, concluded the proceedings by accepting the Norrie Whytock Trophy and passed on his teams thanks to all concerned with running the event, to Bayer, to Auchterarder Golf Club and especially Archie Dunn and his team for presenting an excellent golf course for the competition.

John Young

GOLF DAY SUCCESS AT BRISTOL AND CLIFTON



The inaugural H Curtis and Sons, Reco and Baroness golf day was recently held at the superbly presented Bristol and Clifton Golf Club - huge credit to Matt Hawker and his team for producing such a fantastic golf course.

The competition was played as a Texas Scramble with 8 teams of 4 taking part. It presented a showcase for the massive strides Curtis's have taken in the short time they have been in the grounds care industry.

Reco had an impressive display

of tractors and utility vehicles for golf courses on show. It was also an opportunity to present the new Baroness 315 Greens Triple which was unveiled for the first time at BTME.

Andrew Curtis, Managing Director of Curtis's, said he was delighted with the day and the support it received from the greenkeepers in the area and was already looking forward to building on its success next year.

Pictured are the winning team of Matt Curtis, Craig Fudge, James Leitch and George Bidney.



Membership News

The latest news from BIGGA

Following the Greenkeeper International survey, we've revamped the Membership pages – and we want you to get involved.

As before, this section will highlight the many benefits BIGGA membership gives you, but will feature you, the members.

We want to hear your stories and experiences – so whether you've

found a new job through BIGGA, got help through our Legal Helpline or Lifestyle Counselling, worked at a high-profile tournament or even won a golf competition we want to hear from you!

SUPPORT AUTUMN EVENTS IN YOUR SECTION



This month we're urging BIGGA members to support events in their area. We've got the Regional Conferences coming up – more details on this page – but members across the UK are busy organising all manner of educational and golfing events for your benefit.

General Manager Tracey Maddison said: "Many of the members give up their own time to plan, organise and deliver excellent educational events so you can imagine how dispiriting it is when only a few people

turn up. We're very aware that everyone is busy but it's vital that they are supported, and if you don't attend you really are missing out."

There are many ways to keep up to date on what's going on – the Events page on the BIGGA website, our Facebook and Twitter pages plus Section Facebook, Twitter and web pages. There's also a monthly round-up of Events in each region in Around the Green – so there's no excuse not to be fully briefed on what's happening.

For example, September

alone features BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX (4 September), an East of England v GCMA match (12 September), the North Wales Autumn Tournament (18 September), the Northern Section Autumn Tournament (19 September), the Essex Section Golf Day (24 September), the Scotland North Section Autumn Outing (24 September), the Essex Autumn Trophy & Blind Pairs (25 September) and the Sheffield Section Autumn Competition (25 September)...this is just a quick example of what's happening, so get out there and get involved!



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BIGGA REGIONAL CONFERENCES

BIGGA Midland Regional Conference

– Wednesday 6 November at Forest Hill Golf & Country Club, Botcheston, Leicester LE9 9FH. £15 members, £25 non-members, further details soon!

BIGGA South West & South Wales Regional Conference

– Thursday 21 November at the Oaktree Arena, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 4HA, further details soon!

BIGGA Northern Regional Conference

– Thursday 7 November at the Phoenix Golf Club, Brinsworth, Rotherham S60 5PA. £10 members, £20 non-members, further details soon!

British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association





L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA

NEW SCOTTISH CENTRE GIVEN FULL APPROVAL

Lever Training Ltd, based in Fife, have received full approved centre status from the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) to deliver and certificate awards within the areas of Horticulture and Sportsturf across the landbased sector.

Wayne Roberts, Managing Director at Lever Training Ltd, said: "The landbased sector plays an important part in the UK economy, supporting many different areas including the soft fruit industry, production horticulture, woodlands and forestry and leisure and sporting activities.

Being able to provide sustainable long term employment and business development across the country is important to success. It is therefore vital that employers have ready access to training that directly supports employers and candidates in the workplace and fully considers the seasonality of training".

Working with employers from their base in Fife, Lever Training are able to provide work



based delivery, assessment and certification fully in the workplace across Scotland and the North of England. This reduces the time candidates are away from the workplace and maximises the learning opportunities that modern organisations can provide.

Wayne added: "The number of requests that we receive leads us to believe there is an ever increasing demand from the sector

for specialist workbased delivery, carried out completely in the workplace and we are excited to be now meeting and supporting this demand."

For more information on the range of courses being offered, Lever Training can be contacted at learning@levertraining.com or by contacting Jackie Carstairs, Learning Manager on 01592 786709/719.



JOHN DEERE



Gold Key Individual Members:
Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison Andrew Turnbull, W J Rogers Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray

Silver Key Individual Members:
Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley, Michael Beaton, Paul Jenkins, David Barker

SLIC MOVE BY TRAINING PROVIDER

SLIC Training are offering a 16 week 'taster' course in Land Based Engineering free of charge.

If you are based in Coventry, Warwickshire and Leicestershire and service your own Land Based Equipment they have a fantastic offer for you.

They are the largest Horticultural training provider in the UK and currently work with a number of national landscaping and grounds maintenance contractors.

They have received Government funding to engage

with companies in Coventry, Warwickshire and Leicestershire to offer a 'taster' course in Land Based Engineering mechanics.

We can offer this to your eligible, existing staff, over the age of 19 years old - COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE.

The course is made up of a number of units taken from a Level 2 Diploma in Work-based, Land-based Engineering Operations for which the learner would receive accreditation. This is a fantastic opportunity to get some 1:2:1 training,



AND FINALLY...

A reminder that the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year final will be held on 17 September at BIGGA HQ. Good luck to all eight candidates who were listed in last month's Greenkeeper International.

Next month's issue will feature coverage of the final plus an interview with the eventual winner.

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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David Langheim
Master Greenkeeper

MASTER GREENKEEPER

C E R T I F I C A T E

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It is a prestigious industry award gained by

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- Through formal and informal training
- Golf course management assessment
- A rigorous, two-part examination

All Full, Associate and International members of BIGGA are eligible to join and earn Stage 1 Credits. Applicants must be Course Managers (Superintendents)/Head Greenkeepers to progress to Stages 2 and 3.

Do you have what it takes? Download an application form at www.bigga.org.uk by clicking on Education.



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BARONESS MOWER IS WELSH WIZARD

The Head Greenkeeper of Llandrinod Wells Golf Club has given his full backing to Baroness after purchasing one of the company's Greens Mowers.

Head Greenkeeper Eric Read is pictured with Terry Harrison of Terry Harrison Machinery after they delivered a new Baroness 315 Greens Mower to the Powys-based club.

Eric said: "After trialling several brands of Greens Triplex Mowers the Baroness Mower was an easy choice. Many outstanding features came to the fore, such as the excellent traction on our hilly course, its agile manoeuvrability and its exceptional quality of cut, with minimal impact on the greens. I see it as the only machine which achieves such a high quality finish."

BIGGA SEMINAR AT SALTEX

Michael Fance, Senior Technical Area Sales Manager for Everris, will be co-presenting with Dr Simon Watson from Syngenta as part of the BIGGA seminar programme on Wednesday 4th September.

Their seminar, focusing on an integrated approach to disease management on golf greens, takes place at 1pm in the grandstand. One BIGGA CPD point is available to CPD-registered greenkeepers who attend.



EX GREENKEEPER JOINS BAYER

Bayer CropScience has appointed turfgrass protection specialist, Dr Colin Mumford as their new Technical Support Manager. He brings a wealth of experience and replaces Dorin Pop who has moved elsewhere within Bayer.

Colin has been involved in the sports turf industry for nearly 25 years. With hands-on, course management experience, Colin was previously Head Greenkeeper at North Weald Golf Club in Essex, before returning to full-time education where he gained a BSc (Hons) in Landscape and Amenity Management from Writtle College, as well as an MSc in Sports Surface Technology and an Engineering Doctorate (EngD) from Cranfield University.

Since completing his studies Colin has worked in New Zealand as the Technical Officer for the New Zealand Sports Turf Institute, which exposed him to a variety of artificial and natural turf sports surfaces. Colin returned to the UK and spent two years as Technical Manager for an artificial sports surface specialist, where his role was to develop the company's products and services, as well as advising clients on the construction, maintenance, and redevelopment of artificial sports surfaces.

Colin has become a respected authority within the industry and has presented at national and international conferences. He has had several papers published and has also written numerous articles for trade journals.

He said "This is a very exciting opportunity for me at Bayer CropScience. It offers me the opportunity to galvanise all the skills and knowledge I have accumulated in the sports turf industry, and I'm looking forward to supporting turf managers in developing effective and practicable solutions in crop protection."

Greenkeeper Training

Europe

Greenkeeper Training - Europe (GT-E) is pleased to announce they have been successful in a joint European Union (EU) project bid.

The project, which will commence in October, has eight partners, and is scheduled to be completed in two years. David Golding, GT-E's Standards Director, explained that the project's main aim is to develop, test and introduce a Quality Assured Scheme for greenkeeper training which involves the following countries, colleges and organisations:

- * Kao College, Finland
- * Benesov College, Czech Republic
- * Czech Greenkeepers Association
- * Kainuu College, Lithuania
- * Luua Vocational Training Centre, Estonia
- * Elmwood College, Scotland
- * Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Association
- * Greenkeeper Training – Europe

David, pictured below, added: "Several partners in the project have experience in developing, delivering and monitoring greenkeeper education and training over many years. Their knowledge and experience will prove invaluable to assist golf developing countries looking to establish a quality structure of greenkeeper education and training, best suited to their country using the Standards of GT-E."

David believes even more countries will benefit from the project as GT-E is always looking to advise and give guidance to countries with little or no formal structure in greenkeeper training.

Greenkeepers will be at the very heart of the project, supported by the various colleges. There will be a real emphasis on engaging golf club employers as they benefit from investing in greenkeeper training by having better maintained and managed golf courses.

The GT-E, which is based at Aldwark near York, is currently funded through a special R&A project and is currently working with the European Golf Association and its 43 member Federations and Unions to establish core funding to assist with the administration and management of the GT-E.



HEADLAND'S TRICURE BANISHES TURF STRESS AND DRY PATCH TO GREAT EFFECT

Drought conditions are something that not all greenkeepers may have experience of after our recent wet summers. Alex Hawkes, Regional Technical Manager for Headland Amenity, is a former Course Manager and has first-hand knowledge of tackling this challenging problem - knowledge that has become invaluable.

During his six years at South Winchester Golf Club keeping moisture in the greens was probably the biggest challenge that he and his greens crew had to face.

The 210-acre course is located on the South Downs chalk belt that runs through the area. The site is at a high elevation and extremely exposed to the sun and to wind from all directions. The greens and tees are also constructed from very coarse sand providing little in the way of moisture or nutrient retention.

"Essentially, our winter advantage was our summer achilles heel" says Alex. "Even though recent summers had not been the driest, the rate at which the tees and greens dried out, demanded a rethink. Myself and my deputy made a 'hit list' of the worst affected areas and we started out on a monthly wetting agent plan to blanket spray the greens with Headland Tricure AD supplementing with the Tricure Tablets to hand water as required. We always did this prior to areas becoming Hydrophobic (water repelling), to avoid trying to catch up on areas that were already showing signs of Dry Patch. This worked very well but there were still odd areas needing a great deal of labour intensive hand watering. So having found success with

Tricure AD Liquid and Tablets, we decided to try the Granular form at the three month rate. Each April we would treat all the areas that we knew would be the first to dry out, as a proactive method of avoiding the turf stress that comes with Dry Patch.

"The results were superb and a huge headache was relieved. More than simply controlling the dry patch, we found that once the weather broke and natural rainfall came, the reduced turf stress resulted in less Anthracnose (which in my first year had been a huge problem in the latter part of summer). We repeated this method at the beginning of each season and found ourselves using less water to keep the greens alive. This was especially pertinent as we had to draw water at high cost from the mains once the lakes dried out. The Granular Tricure AD, in particular, making the best use of any rainwater, our irrigation water and even drawing down dew.

"This is all starkly relevant at the present time as we find ourselves in the first really hot, dry period for some six or seven years. Utilising a high performance wetting agent to maximise water efficiency and prevent Dry Patch is essential in such conditions. The key now is to maintain regular liquid applications and not to wait until your turf has reached its permanent wilting point and cannot be brought back. Acting quickly when required by spot treating with Tricure pellets will maximise your opportunities to get water into the root zone and keep it there. It will also reduce the stress associated with turf diseases such as Anthracnose."

The latest products on show at SALTEX

WESSEX AND SNOWEX AT SALTEX

SALTEX SPECIAL

BUFFALO HUNTING AT SALTEX



Broadwood International displayed selected Wessex ProLine mowers and SnowEx winter salt, grit and brine spreaders on stand N04. When only the best will do the Wessex ProLine RMX-560 and RMX-680 roller mowers have proved to be highly popular with councils, contractors and sports complexes.

Wide area mowing offers cost-efficiency and the triple deck mower leaves a finish equal to a cylinder mower on fine turf, at a fraction of the cost. New this year is the Wessex FRX professional outfront flail mower which builds on the performance and popularity of the previous model.

Considered one of the best for cutting long grass on roadside verges as well as leaving a premium finish on sports turf, this is the ideal all-rounder for councils and contractors.

For mounted mowers the Wessex ProLine RMX 240 and RMX 360 are widely used for quick and effective mowing in public parks, playing fields and areas of amenity grass.

Whilst the country is bathed in sunshine and enjoying a heatwave it seems hardly the time to be thinking about winter maintenance for snow and ice. Planning ahead however pays dividends and it's worth looking at the wide range of the SnowEx spreaders that were on show at SALTEX, from the 2300 litre capacity V-Maxx SP-9300 to walk-behind pedestrian models.

The versatility of SnowEx spreaders is demonstrated with

a trailer mounted SP-8500 and an SP-6000 rigged on a Navara pick-up. The Bulk-Pro and Mini-Pro utility spreaders are ideal for councils, contractors, farmers and estates with the facility to mount them on commercial vehicles, 4x4's, UTV's, ATV's, tractors and fork-lifts.

The use of brine solutions for winter maintenance is an increasingly popular practice and the SnowEx VSS liquid de-icers are leading the way.

KUBOTA JOIN FORCES WITH BROWNS AND LISTER WILDER

Kubota teamed up with two of its dealer partners at SALTEX 2013 to showcase its market leading and high performance range of tractor and groundcare solutions.

The company joined forces with George Browns and Lister Wilder on stand D20, giving visitors the opportunity to see Kubota's extensive range of solutions for the groundcare sector, including some of its latest introductions and innovations for 2013.

New solutions for 2013 that featured on the stand included Kubota's recently launched RTV400Ci utility vehicle and the M6060 mid range tractor. Kubota also displayed a number of its popular compact tractors and ride-on mower solutions at the show.

Allett Mowers launched their latest Buffalo 34/5 all-purpose pedestrian cylinder mower at SALTEX. Known as the great all-rounders in the Allett line-up, the robustly built Buffalos have large diameter cutting cylinders which give them the ability to cut longer grass, even in wet conditions.

The new Buffalo 34/5 sees a range of improvements to a machine developed primarily as a sportsground mower. The engine is now centrally mounted on the chassis, giving the user a better view of the cutting area. There is a larger diameter front roller to give straighter lines with less ground pressure. One handed fitting and removal of the grass box has been made possible by adding a handle and grass box hoop in place of arms. This new grass box feature has also been extended to the rest of the Buffalo range.

Irrespective of forward speed, the Buffalo has a fixed clip rate and anyone hunting for a cylinder mower that will cut long and wet grass will find that the 200mm diameter 8 blade cutting cylinder is designed to cope well in those conditions. The bottom blade setting is made easy with a single point adjustment for the cylinder and the



GROUNDSCARE AT SALTEX

GroundsCare Products, sole UK importers of Turf Teq and ZipLevel products, ran live demonstrations of these unique landscape maintenance and survey products.

The Turf Teq range consists of:

- Edger/Trencher
- Power Broom
- Rough-cut Mower
- Surface Preparation Rake
- Snow Plough

....all powered by the hydrostatically-driven Turf Teq walk behind tractor with 13hp Honda engine.

New for this year is the revolutionary ZipLevel high precision survey level for landscapers, civil engineers and the construction industry. Easier

to carry, set up and use than a laser or automatic level, the ZipLevel does not need line of sight, and reads out results on a digital display; no maths needed.

Also on display was the Rotowash walk-behind, flat surface pressure washer. Now available in two sizes, the machine offers working widths of 530mm (21") or 380mm (15"). Model 600 is ideally suited to cleaning large areas such as car parks or multiple tennis courts. Model 400 is more manoeuvrable and easier to use in restricted areas such as domestic patios. Both are supplied with a 9m hose and lance so they can be used as a traditional, static washer if required.



VAST ARRAY OF PRODUCTS FROM CHARTERHOUSE

SALTEX is always a good opportunity to update yourself on what products are available - and there was no better stand to do that on than Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

The company has a vast array of equipment to nurture natural surfaces and groom synthetic ones.

With end of season maintenance in mind turf managers' attention will turn to aeration, scarifying, top dressing and overseeding of grassed areas or rejuvenating synthetic ones.

On stand was the recently launched Redexim Verti-Drain 1517; part of the new high-speed 15 series that feature lighter weight machines. Suitable for use with a tractor from as little as 28hp, the 1517 weighs in at just 520kg but offers a productive 1.76m working width together with a depth of up to 150mm (6in). Alongside were examples from Charterhouse's extensive range of overseeders, from pedestrian spiked units to high capacity disc seeders, and the company's Rink topdresser line.

Continuing the theme of lighter units, the new Redexim Verti-Top 1200 for synthetic turf maintenance is a physically smaller machine that will be of particular use in more confined spaces. It is still a high work-rate machine having a 1.2M working width, but weighing in at only 360kg. It has all the features to maintain synthetic turf by removing, cleaning and redistributing the infill material, but with only the need for a 22hp tractor with a 400kg lift capacity.

TORO LAUNCHES PREMA AT SALTEX



Two mowers, the first for the amenity and landscape sector, and another for golf, headlined the Toro exhibit on the Lely - Partners in Turfcare stand at SALTEX. In addition, Toro launched PREMA - a brand new programme for quality pre-owned Toro turf machinery.

Pride of place on Stand No A05 was the LT3340 heavy-duty triple mower. Designed for high-productivity grass-cutting on jobs from parks and roadside verges to schools and caravan sites, this machine also gives

a great finish. Optional all-weather cab and high levels of comfort keep operators working longer. While easy access service areas help reduce running costs and increase profitability.

Next up was the new Toro Reelmaster 3550-D. Weighing in at just 900kgs, Toro claim it's the lightest fairway mower on the market, and have dubbed it the lightweight fairway champion. It floats effortlessly over contours without leaving any unwelcome impressions on the turf.

THE WORLD'S FIRST UTV WITH POWER TAKE OFF

Leading off-road vehicle manufacturer Polaris has announced the BRUTUS range, the world's first purpose-built side-by-side utility vehicle with front-end Power Take Off.

Based on the Polaris RANGER, BRUTUS comprises three models – BRUTUS, BRUTUS HD and BRUTUS HD PTO. The line was built to be the most versatile, most capable and most comfortable side-by-side utility vehicles ever created, enabling users to complete more tasks without spending more time and energy. The new BRUTUS models are specifically engineered for individuals and businesses that seek durable all-round task vehicles.

The ability to operate several front-end attachments provides users with new levels of versatility, and ultimately, a cost-effective and more productive work solution.

The Pro-Tach™ attachment system, standard on the BRUTUS HD and BRUTUS HD PTO, delivers the capability to change from one attachment to the next quickly and easily. Creating levels of productivity never before seen in its class, a revolutionary, front-end PTO system on the BRUTUS HD PTO draws power directly from the vehicle's engine. The high efficiency, mechanical PTO maximizes power to a line of purpose-built, out-front commercial attachments. Featured in the complete line of attachments are three PTO-powered attachments – angle broom, finishing mower and snow blower – and three hydraulically-powered attachments – snow blade, pallet forks and materials bucket – allowing users to sweep, mow, blow, lift, plow and scoop with just one machine.

"The introduction of the BRUTUS



product family is part of our commitment to offer customers innovative and relevant vehicles that best suit their needs," David Longren, Polaris Vice President, Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) and ORV Engineering said.

"Through our 60 years of engineering experience, strategic alliances with other industry leaders and our incredible network of dealers, we are able to provide the commercial market with the most productive, reliable and versatile vehicles."

The BRUTUS models offer a 24-horsepower diesel engine with hydrostatic transmission which delivers all the torque and power needed to get the job done. An innovative treadle pedal

allows travel in forward or reverse without shifting gears, providing an ideal setup for commercial applications. BRUTUS vehicles provide a class-leading six inches of suspension travel, which combined with On-Demand True All-Wheel Drive, allows for safe and comfortable transportation of passengers and cargo over virtually any terrain.

BRUTUS models are the first side-by-side utility vehicles that use a multi-link coil over De Dion rear suspension to deliver superior ride quality.

The rear suspension supports a 566.9kg (1,250lb) cargo capacity and minimizes suspension sag when fully loaded.

EXCLUSIVE DJ TURFCARE MACHINES HIT WINDSOR

DJ TURFCARE showed their exclusive range of fine turf, golf and sportsturf machinery on stand K55 at IOG SALTEX.

The PLUGGER PL855 Pro HD aerator features hydrostatic-drive and uses both solid and hollow tines. It is highly manoeuvrable and is ideal for superior grass maintenance in more difficult areas, being easy to transport and handle. It is particularly useful for large areas of fine turf, and cricket and bowling clubs have found the Plugger invaluable in reviving compacted squares.

The second-generation ATOM EDGERS, both professional and domestic – with new Mitsubishi engines – were also on show. They are tougher, easier-to-use and have improved controls.

The Atom Professional Edger Pro 580

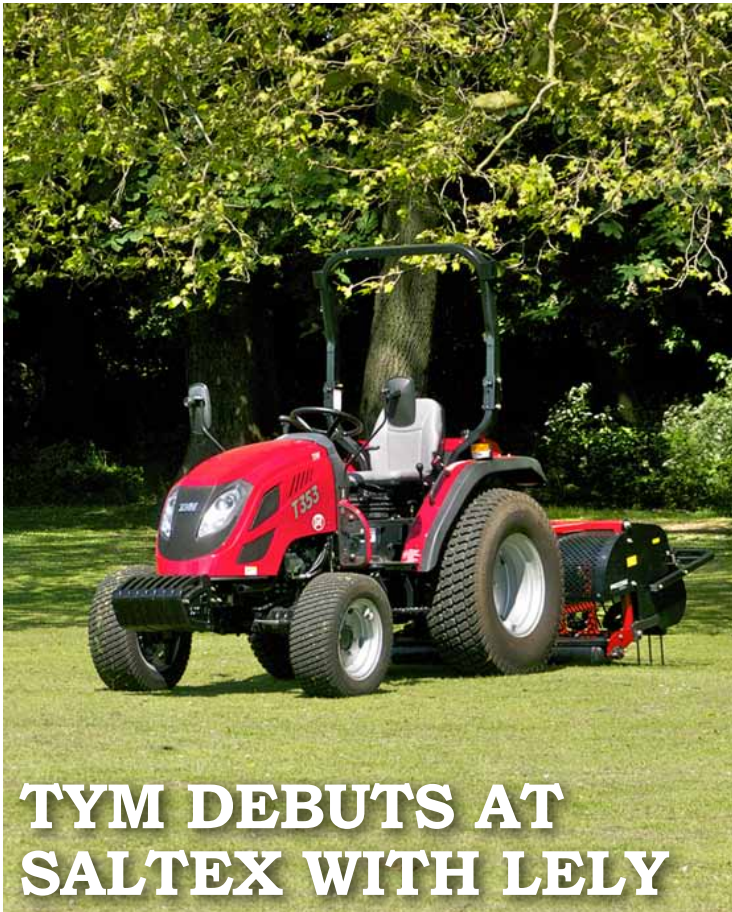
is aimed at local authorities for kerb use and the Atom 450 Deluxe is designed for gardeners with large areas of lawn to edge.

Also on the stand was the updated ATOM BUNKER EDGER – now celebrating its seventh year as a leading product for the golf industry from the DJ golf and groundcare range. It has a powerful easily-maintained Mitsubishi two-stroke engine.

The BUSHRANGER EDGER (seen for the first time at IOG SALTEX two years ago) made another appearance.

Aimed primarily at local authorities and those looking after large landscaped areas, the Bushranger Edger is ideal for producing razor sharp edges, especially up close to raised paving because of its drop-down wheel.





TYM DEBUTS AT SALTEX WITH LELY

A new addition to the leading turf machinery distributor's portfolio, Lely UK has exhibited TYM tractors at IOG SALTEX for the first time.

On stand A05, as part of its Lely – Partners in Turfcare exhibit, which also includes Toro, and Solo outdoor maintenance equipment, Lely displayed a number of TYM tractors.

"TYM tractors are fast becoming the tractor of choice for golf clubs, sports stadiums, local authorities and landscape contractors," says Jeff Anguige, turf products national sales manager at Lely UK. "There's a wide range of models from 23hp to 100hp to cater for all needs, and we showed off the 23hp, 35hp, 43hp and 100hp units at SALTEX."

All TYM tractors benefit from a reliable and powerful four-cylinder diesel engine that maximises fuel efficiency. Dual-air filter elements protect and extend engine life, and a heavy-duty, four-wheel-drive front axle offers greater traction where needed.



NEW FROM RJ

Ransomes Jacobsen returned to SALTEX with a host of new products for both the municipal and golf sectors. The Ipswich-based manufacturer launched the Ransomes Spider Mini II, a smaller version of the unique remote-controlled mower for mowing steep banks.

From the Iseki brand comes the all-new TJA 8080 and 8100 comprising of models rated at 80 PS and 100 PS respectively. These powerful and versatile workhorses are suitable for landscape and grounds care contractors, farmers and local authorities, where a range of implements can be used for a host of tasks.

Also making debuts at SALTEX were the Turfco WideSpin 1550 top dresser and the Turfco TriWave 40. The 1550 is the most advanced addition to Turfco's WideSpin family, offering unprecedented control and precision. It has more capacity, is easier to load, has programmable presets, rate calculation and can tackle a wider range of applications. The new TriWave 40 trailed overseeder can be towed behind a utility vehicle, quad bike, bunker rake or tractor, providing added versatility and is the easiest to operate of any overseeder on the market.

The Smithco Spray Star 2000 was another SALTEX debutant; this dedicated spray vehicle features an ultra low-profile 757 litre (200 gallon) capacity tank, hydrostatic drive and a liquid-cooled diesel engine

GLOBAL TURF EQUIPMENT OFFER SUPERCAR PRIZE

Global Turf Equipment (GTE) – the UK branch of the world's largest independent seller and exporter of pre-owned golf course equipment – offered a supercar experience as a prize at SALTEX.

Serving golf facilities in more than 80 countries worldwide, GTE offers owners, operators, and golf course superintendents substantial cost savings with fiscally-prudent alternatives to brand-new machines. GTE prides itself on its reputation for high-quality, low-hour, off-lease equipment.

GTE recently established an overseas partnership with County Mowers as part of long-term plans to offer late model lease return mowers and equipment to UK golf courses.

"We met golf course owners, operators, superintendents and others at SALTEX," says Jim Sartain, President, GTE.

"As we now warehouse and service products in the UK, it's easier than ever for European courses to take advantage of our exceptional value proposition."

In addition to receiving the latest company information, visitors to GTE's stand (L35) were invited to enter a prize draw. One lucky person will win the opportunity to drive a luxury supercar (Lamborghini, Ferrari and / or Aston Martin) for two hours around a famous track like Silverstone, Goodwood or Thruxton.

If you were unable to stop by the GTE stand you may still enter by sending an email with full name, company name, address and telephone number to Kasey@GlobalTurfEquipment.com before Sunday September 15.

Via its partnership with County Mowers, GTE specializes in stocking and servicing pre-owned, professional turf machinery and equipment for golf and turf facilities in the U.K. Services include sales, maintenance and repair of machines, accessories and machine parts.

An inventory of fairway mowers, green mowers, rough mowers, top dressers and spreaders, trim mowers, turf aerators, turf sprayers, turf vacuums and blowers, utility vehicles and more is available.



Carnoustie

What happened next?

Sandy Reid and Craig Boath spent years working under the tutelage of John Philp at Carnoustie. A year on from John's retirement, how is one of the world's most famous courses moving forward?



PROFILE

Name: Sandy Reid
Role: Links Superintendent
Born: Perth, 7 February 1977
Handicap: Scratch
Hobbies: Curling, golf
Favourite sports team: Aberdeen

Name: Craig Boath
Role: Head Greenkeeper, Championship Course
Born: Dundee, 10 May 1980
Handicap: 9
Hobbies: Fishing, golf
Favourite sports team: Dunfermline



Steve Mitchell (Buddon Links, Head Greenkeeper), Sandy Reid (Links Superintendent), Craig Boath (Championship Course, Head Greenkeeper), Colin Law (Burnside Head Greenkeeper)

'Hogan's Alley' - named after the legendary golfer who enjoyed such success here in 1953



It was impossible to speak to Sandy Reid and Craig Both in their recently refurbished maintenance facility without first acknowledging the elephant in the room.

The pair worked with John Philp MBE for many years before his retirement – a man credited with bringing The Open back to this most traditional of golfing venues, and was even honoured when the 11th hole on the Championship Course was named after him. But it was significant that, on the day of its renaming, John was quick to salute the efforts of the team who had supported him throughout his long tenure.

On a blazing hot afternoon on the East coast of Scotland, just days before The Open began 40 miles south at Muirfield, two of that team were keen to discuss their progress over the past 12 months. Sandy (Links Superintendent) and Craig (Head Greenkeeper of the Championship Course) were effervescent in their affection for Carnoustie – and honest about some of the problems they've had to deal with, problems which may surprise some.

I began by asking Sandy - a former curling champion and a scratch golfer - to define his role, a title which is normally the preserve of American greenkeepers. He replied: "It's the three Head

Greenkeepers that run the courses – I'm basically the buyer! The Head Greenkeepers largely think for themselves so they're in control of their own work, and primarily accountable for it too. As good as John was, when I was the Head Greenkeeper of the Championship Course I didn't necessarily want him interfering with my work. Call it stubbornness if you like, but you don't want constant advice. He was always there for guidance but you want to make the decisions yourself and learn from them. I therefore try to manage the Head Greenkeepers in a way that I like being managed myself.

"This way of working allows the Head Greenkeepers to plan ahead, not just for the day or the week, but for months in advance. In turn, this means the staff are more dedicated to the courses as the information from the Head Greenkeepers is more consistent. At least we try to run it that way!

"I'm not really that involved with, for example, setting cutting heights and other routine tasks, or what Craig, Steve Mitchell (Head Greenkeeper of the Buddon Links) and Colin Law (Head Greenkeeper of the Burnside) should or shouldn't use as a fertiliser. I may give some guidance and help confirm their decisions but I don't dictate what they should do. All three courses

Carnoustie have 30 full-time greenkeepers, four staff in the workshop and employ eight seasonal staff.

The course is sand-based with a black sand rootzone. The greens are predominantly bent, with around 50% bent, 30% fescue and 20% poa on the Championship Course. The Burnside is around 50% bent, 15% fescue, 35% poa, and the Buddon Links has more fescue with less bent. The poa is mainly poa annua var. reptans rather than poa annua var. annua.

The team's aeration programme varies. They vertidrain greens in November with either 8mm and/ or 13mm tines, last year they were top dressed after the 13mm.

In summer there's a lot of hydro-jet work on the Championship Course, with the team injecting seaweed to encourage root development with varying forms of solid and star tining taking place on the other two courses.

Earlier stage of construction of new holes on the Buddon Links



Later stage of construction of new holes on the Buddon Links



Flooding in December 2012





run similarly anyway, with similar products and shared machinery.”

Sandy has been at Carnoustie since 1997 when he joined as Assistant Greenkeeper after spotting an advert in a local newspaper, having spent time at nearby Letham Grange Golf Club. Craig joined as a trainee greenkeeper a year earlier, so with over 30 years at Carnoustie between them they are steeped in the culture of the place. They’ve also been involved with countless projects on the course – the latest an exciting redesign of some of the current par threes on the Buddon Links.

Sandy said: “PULL QUOTE The Buddon is seen as the third course and we wanted to strengthen it by lengthening the course and reducing the number of par threes. Over the years we’ve lost holes for various reasons and two holes have been made out of one, so we hope these changes will improve the challenge.”

Both Sandy and Craig readily admitted their fortune at having excellent resources at their disposal. But they were equally honest about the problems they’ve had to overcome – mostly caused by the Barry Burn. It may be famous worldwide for troubling the world’s best golfers, but did you know it once flooded the course so badly it washed away an access bridge crucial to the greenkeepers?

Sandy recalled: “There was a bad flood in September 1985, but it didn’t happen again until September 2009, and since then we’ve had floods of varying severity. We had water in the pump house which badly damaged our irrigation system and the halfway hut near our maintenance facility. However, the biggest problem was that our main access bridge to all three courses got washed away. Craig and I were 30 seconds away from driving over it when it collapsed in front of us. We had to live without that for six months until it was rebuilt and take different routes all over the place – and it’s a 340 acre site. It wasn’t until it was gone that we realised just how important it was.”

Craig added: “We’ve been looking at ways to either prevent the flooding entirely or limit the damage. We’ve raised the 17th fairway, raised embankments, raised bridges and consulted with Angus Council to see if they can help us. We’ve also highlighted areas where we intend to install extra drainage because we’ve had to just pump the floodwater away – floods leave this layer of silt which water struggles to penetrate.

“I’ve been here since 1996 and there’s no doubt that over the last few years, we’ve experienced more intense periods of really heavy rain. Before it would rain normally for

a couple of days - but it’s the two or three hours of intense rain that causes problems. Flooding can be a problem, just as it unfortunately is at so many other courses in the UK, but I feel we’re making real progress.”

Sandy was quick to hail the work ethic instilled by John – and he looked back with great pride on the team’s preparatory work before The Open in 1999, which he was involved in as soon as he arrived.

He said: “The intensity of the work and attention to detail struck me immediately. We knew we had got The Open so for two years beforehand we focused on the Championship Course with some big jobs such as renovating the third fairway. I loved it.

“I remember we felled trees behind the 15th and 16th to create mounding for spectators. We also built a new putting green, returfed some of the rough as well as revetting all the bunkers. All of the work has always been done in-house, we have the resources to do it and a supportive committee.

“The whole team do a great job, we’re mostly local and very passionate about the area which comes through in the end product – we have three terrific courses here.”

With John’s legacy complete, it seems certain one of the world’s most famous golfing venues is in safe hands.

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Playing a **dual** role

Huw Morgan is both Club and Course Manager at Ashburnham Golf Club in South Wales - Laurence Pithie met up with Huw to find out more about his dual role





I first met Huw in 1988 when he was named 'Young Groundsman of the Year'. At the time he was an aspiring Head Greenkeeper at Fairwood Park GC near Swansea before moving on to Southerndown.

From 1993, he spent 13 years at the Wildernesse course in Kent, gaining his HNC in 2001 and the Master Greenkeeper award a year later. In 2007 the opportunity to manage a top links course enticed Huw to Ashburnham as Course Manager.

His remit was to improve the condition of the course in time for the Home Internationals in 2010. He was assisted by a £120k investment in equipment, as well as an operational budget that would allow the level of expenditure to match increased expectations. Staff training was also a necessary requirement for the work that lay ahead.

The task involved a combination of turf improvement work, creating additional tees and renovating all 70 plus bunkers in under three years. All was going to plan when just prior to the tournament, the club found themselves without a Club Manager. Huw takes up the story. "Three secretary/managers departed in five years with the latter resigning just ten weeks before the Home Internationals.

"There wasn't enough time to recruit a replacement and we needed stability when expectations were high, so I offered to fill the position for six months initially. I realised I would be stepping outside my comfort zone."

Challenges

Huw continues: "By June 2010 when I started my dual role as both Course and Club Manager, the country and in particular this region of south west Wales was in full recession. However I could see the club's potential and I had a passion to make it work, and thought it was a natural progression after 25 years in managing turf. I was to oversee the management of the course and a temporary greenkeeper was hired for six months to make up the shortfall in course work.

"Finance, golf competitions and matches were managed by the club but I would be in charge of everything else. A steep learning curve followed to gain an understanding of tee booking and other computerised systems, as well as catering, while at the same time working with a new board of directors who had

limited understanding of the running of a golf club. The early days meant that the members were not happy to see me in the office, nor were my greens staff!

"I needed to be flexible, an effective communicator and have a thick skin - I also needed diplomacy to keep a cool head when faced with an irate member or customer! It wasn't long before I realised that I needed to organise each day better and avoid tackling too many jobs at once. It was better to complete a smaller number of tasks before moving on.

"I had to get a better grasp of computers and to work more closely with other staff, whether it was in the office, bar, restaurant or kitchen. What I brought to the club was passion, experience, understanding golfers' needs and having a methodical approach to solving problems. This is something which most Course Managers are good at and I had to put this to good use on many issues ranging from blocked toilet drains to failed irrigation pumps."

Decision Making

After Huw's successful six months as interim club manager - which included hosting two major events - the club were faced with a dilemma. As is sadly the case with many clubs, membership numbers had decreased resulting in a significant drop in revenue. Ashburnham had a significant number of retired members with just 8% of the membership female, and very few members under the age of 30.

It was also noted that there was a reduced interest in competitive golf with friendly golf gaining the upper hand.

Visitor numbers remained steady, but two more courses opened nearby which affected Ashburnham. The reality was stark - the club could not afford to hire both a course manager and a general manager. Therefore the club retained Huw in his dual role but agreed the temporary greenkeeping position would not be filled for the forthcoming season. This meant Huw continuing to be in charge of the course, bar, catering and the professional shop, while being responsible to a board of six elected directors.

Working Progress

Now after three years as club manager, work generally follows a tried and tested routine. He said: "My day starts en route to the club





“The reality was stark – the club could not afford to hire both a course manager and a general manager”



with a brief telephone conversation with the Head Greenkeeper Paul Hopkins, who has over 25 years of experience.

“We discuss work past and present having previously agreed a monthly plan. I generally tour the course every two weeks although I try to squeeze in the odd game of golf with a member or board director to measure course playability. This works well at Ashburnham since much of the work is routine.

“After checking any messages, the real work begins - dealing with any club issues, banking, tee sheet bookings...and much more! Key member concerns tend to be depth

of sand in the bunkers, length of rough, greens speed and the weather.

“It is also worth noting that since very few members have low handicaps, the course is set up more for their enjoyment as opposed to ‘tournament’ condition. However, Ashburnham is a true links course with an emphasis on firm, smooth turf that encourages the ‘running’ game.”

The Course: Past and Present

Huw continued: “When I first started in 2007, we ran the course with six staff including myself.



Now we're running with five, which includes an apprentice greenkeeper. We have reduced our operational costs by £10k without having any real negative impact on the course. A detailed review of all expenditure was carried out including wages, overtime and materials purchased and highlighted areas where justified savings could take place.

"All equipment is now owned outright after a five year lease deal ended in 2012. We are due to replace much of the fleet in 2015, giving the club two years free of any leasing costs.

"Since 2007, only two machines have been purchased but we have sufficient equipment to maintain an 18 hole links course.

"All main equipment servicing and repairs are carried out by an external contractor, but on-site which has proved to be more cost effective as opposed to being sent to a dealer.

"Our irrigation system consists of class 'C' PVC pipe in 6 metre lengths which is coming to the end of its useful life and will need to be replaced in the future.

"In terms of maintenance, it is true that I now have a different view being a club manager as to what and when key cultural practices take place.

"The main difference now is that there is no disturbance to the putting surfaces between early March and mid-October.

"We do not hollow core, only deep tine out of season and spike or sarel roll during the summer. Top dressing is limited to the older methods of heavier applications at either end of the season, followed by over-seeding with straight fescue.

"Mowing height remains at 3mm during the summer with regular 'ironing' of the greens. Nutrient input is very low and hasn't really changed in six years, using monthly applications of Farmura Porthcawl and Revolution wetting agent.

"Although this works well on the natural links course here at Ashburnham, it may not be as appropriate on shaded or 'heavier' inland courses."

Huw is confident these changes have had no negative effects on course performance. The work has been limited to 'off-season', and since his feeding program is minimal and typical of many links, he can make this change without negatively impacting the course.

Summary

Huw concluded: "Since becoming a club manager, my priorities are different. Being 'sustainable' is more about profit and loss and less about growing fescues and controlling organic matter content. When you are a club manager, you have a different perspective than when managing the golf course.

"It's all about impact on the business. For us that means minimal

disturbance to the playing surfaces during the main season.

"My main challenges are no longer chafer grubs and badger damage but membership numbers, revenue and cash flow."

Finally, I asked Huw about any advice he had to others who may wish to follow his lead.

"Being flexible, helpful in accommodating golfers' needs, looking forward not back, being open minded and enthusiastic are all attributes that spring to mind.

"Learn new skills by enrolling on business management courses. Both the GCMA and CMAE run management courses to help prepare for club management. If I can do it, anyone can."

about the author



Laurence Pithie MG

With 42 years in the golf industry, Laurence has used his experience and knowledge to produce a number of recent 'case study' articles.

Laurence is grateful to Huw Morgan and Ashburnham GC for their help and input in producing this article.





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From Belarus with love

When David MacIndoe was made redundant from his Course Manager role he became a Lawn & Sportsground Consultant – and one of his first challenges was a role as grow-in consultant for Belarus’s first ever golf course. It’s a nation where temperatures can drop to minus 20 with snow cover for a third of the year – and here he tells GI how he battled language barriers, snow mold and missing home



April 28

After securing a visa I've started work on a three month grow-in the quite lovely city of Minsk.

I checked out the course with Maris Gullans, owner of Modo Golf, who have built many courses in Eastern Europe, along with Head Greenkeeper Andrey and our interpreter.

It's good to get an immediate feel for what appears to be a first-class project and golf course.

Heather, pine and silver birch trees dominate the site, a real heathland piece of land that in time and with good management could be as good as the best heathland courses that we take for granted in the UK.

The back nine is under construction, but the front nine which was constructed last year and sown towards the latter part of the year look like a desert. I've got a feeling this is not going to be straightforward...

The greens sown with Jacklin bent grass did not survive the winter - how could they after having snow cover for 119 days? 30 days under snow can mean problems, 60 days under snow means you have to accept plant loss, after 90 days expect the worst. So 119 days with a one-week thaw in the middle of January means desiccation to 90% of plant cover.

Tees, fairways and roughs sown with a bent/fescue mix survived better, grass cover is around 70%

although some areas are thin, weak and stressed but at least I have something to work with. Snow mold scars cover all areas of the course, but it's now actually lovely and sunny with temperatures of 20 to 25 degrees.

Day two features full overseeding of the front nine greens to be followed by the front nine tees. The fairways need tender loving care in the shape of plenty of irrigation and a quick application of the only fertiliser available - an agricultural balanced with a lovely prill of approximately 3mm. Great on fairways not quite so good on greens - but my first rule is be adaptable and get on with it. So the first hectic week has ended with greens and tees on the front nine all reseeded and fertilised.



May 13

My second week has been another marathon of 12 hour days, but very enjoyable and with temperatures now approaching 30 degrees, work on the irrigation system is the main focus. It's quite a major system with extremely deep wells and three big Grundfos pumps. On the nine seeded holes, nine hole academy course and driving range they have constantly been putting out 800 cubic metres a day - I hope they can cope when 18 holes are up and running.

May 27

I saw my second snake on the course - black with yellow mark-

ings. I didn't hang around to take a photo! The hot weather resulted in thunderstorms so it has taken a lot of pressure off the constant irrigation.

We are now cutting all the front nine greens and tees and will cut all the fairways on the front nine this week too.

The 17th and 18th greens which we sowed on May 3 received their first cut today at 8mm, another leap forward, and the 10th, 11th and 12th have now all been sown and grass is starting to appear.

May 30

I have secured a second visa until the end of June - via an interesting overnight train journey where

I shared an open carriage with three ladies! I'd like to say to my wife Sharon that it was all totally innocent and they even shared some food with me...

It's good to be back at the course - things are settling down well. We've established a better routine and I feel much more in control.

We now have 14 holes seeded and are cutting holes 1 to 13 plus the 18th hole and the and 17th green.

We have received a consignment of 1.2 tonnes of green grade fertiliser - florinid 16-28-5 with iron and magnesium - not my first choice but hey, any port in a storm!

The greens have responded well compared to the agricultural products used previously so, for all you cynics out there, it really does pay to



use the best products...sometimes!

The last remaining holes have also been seeded. The construction crew are now concentrating on washout area so they remain very busy especially after a storm brought six inches of rain in 12 hours (although there is no official rain gauge, just a bottle of coke with the top cut off).

June 14

The whole golf course is now seeded and is all mine to grow-in, happy days!

There's much excitement as the John Deere fleet of new machinery started to arrive. I believe my good friend Howard Storey, Product Marketing Manager for JD Europe and Middle East, put in a considerable amount of effort to break new ground for JD in this part of the world.

So construction is finished but of course there are still difficulties in the world of growing turf! The constructors are now driving all over the young grass to clean out, prepare and sand all 80 bunkers.

This is sadly typical in the life of a greenkeeper - we nurture and spoil the young grass and try to present it at the highest levels but as we are all too well aware, nothing ever goes as smoothly as it should.

June 24

We're now cutting all eighteen greens. The snow mold scars have been eradicated and the reseeded greens are all performing well.

As one problem is fixed, however, more arrive - this time in the shape of the construction crew and nature itself.

Temperatures have soared into the middle 30s alongside humidity of 90% resulting in some dampening off and Rhiztonia brown spot showing on several of the greens, particularly the newer back nine. Getting chemicals is a problem here. I asked that they be stocked in my first week on the course but I'm still waiting. It could be an interesting week ahead!

Only the fairways of 14 to 17 are still waiting to grow enough for cutting and then the whole course will progress as one entity.

The Club have approached me to continue to advise them on a full time basis for the rest of the season and to prepare the course for the opening, expected in late August. They would also like me to help the Head Greenkeeper train and develop the new staff. I'm considering my options.

I like the people who are all friendly and helpful - although the language is very difficult - I like the

“I know most greenkeepers will understand the ethos of my course, my baby! However I miss my family and friends and Belarus is difficult to get to”

terrain and the character of the course and it would be great to see it reach its full potential.

I know most greenkeepers will understand the ethos of my course, my baby! However I miss my family and friends and Belarus is a difficult place to get to.

July 10

The course is now progressing well, but not without a few expected and unexpected disasters!

I expected washouts, disease and a few minor problems, but I didn't expect the pump house to be hit by lightning, destroying the phase box and 24 decoders.

A new box was found in Sweden and will be sent to us immediately. Fantastic - until we realised it was being sent by boat - and we're 1000km from the sea!

Have you ever tried irrigating 700 plus heads by hand in 15 hours of 30C of heat?

It's been a tough time. but as we

Keep an eye on an upcoming edition of GI as David updates us on the latest from Belarus...



near the end of my contract there's a great deal of satisfaction that despite major setbacks with irrigation, fertiliser, delays and washouts galore we are in a position to hand over the golf course from Modo and their partners GTP services and myself.

July 10

I've decided to continue as full-time advisor consultant, trainer, cook and bottle washer till the end of the season.

Sorry to all you guys who were seeking my experience - I am out of circulation till November!

Now I have to assemble a brand new greenkeeping team - no point in advertising for experienced greenkeepers in a country with zero golf courses! So it is back to the wall time once again.

July 16

Started training three new staff this morning. No time to waste as the contractor finishes in four days. So no raking bunkers, flymowing, divoting as normal for new staff - they're straight in at the deep end cutting greens!

What fun we had, me with no Russian and them with no English - isn't sign language a wonderful tool? We started at 9.25am and had all 18 greens cut by 5pm. I did have some minor problems getting the Health and Safety message across before cutting could begin.

But that evening I sent three very tired but (I think) satisfied budding course maintenance crew home happy that they had conquered and mastered that wild animal known as the greens mower!

Tees and greens surrounds quickly followed and in less than a week they are becoming quite proficient. Next task will be fairways and roughs and flymowing, but will leave that for the moment.

July 24

I am out of here! Contract with Modo Golf finished - I'm reasonably happy with how the grow-in has progressed although some of the last seeded fairways have suffered with the heavy rain showers and once again, the Modo Golf team are repairing severe washouts.

I am flying into London to meet my family. I think it is true absence does makes the heart fonder, I'm looking forward to seeing them all.

I officially start with MGC on 1 August to get the course in top condition for opening on 1 September.



David (left) with architect Paul Thomas, interpreter Gilep and Head Greenkeeper Andrey

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Burghill thinking bang up to date

James de Haviland finds a blend of traditional and contemporary thinking at Burghill Valley Golf Club

Burghill Valley Golf Club, just outside Hereford, was initially opened as a nine-hole course in 1990 and upgraded to 18 holes in 1992. At 6,255 yards, the par 71 parkland course has evolved admirably, as proved by a 700 plus membership and a full car park midweek.

Steve Lloyd joined Burghill Valley as assistant greenkeeper in 1997. When the club's Head Greenkeeper emigrated a couple of years later, Steve was promoted to the vacant position – aged just 20. He now heads a team of five and from even a brief look at the course you can tell he is a stickler for detail, with a player's eye for golf.

"We have 20 greens that cover a total of 0.8ha, on average each one covering around 400m²", he says. "Where other courses have greens that are perhaps double the size, the challenge here is to hit the greens to get a fair, true and level putt as the reward for a good shot. The course provides accessible play for Junior members, of which

we have 70, whilst still offering a challenge for both our Senior and visiting players."

It does not take long to establish that Steve is a keen golfer as are all the members of the greenkeeping team, trophies on his office windowsill and a set of well-used clubs proving the point. He suggests it is this keenness for the game that has helped evolve how the course is developed and maintained.

"The club is privately owned but it remains very much a member's club," he adds. Our owner now prefers to buy equipment outright and to renew individual items as required. This suits me as my hands are not tied to having to use just one make of mowers and related equipment."

So when the existing fleet of Jacobsen mowers passed its five-year birthday last year, Steve was in the position to approach the course owner with a plan that saw the mowers' cutting units completely refurbished, with just one mower, a well-used Jacobsen AR250 semi-

roughs unit, being replaced by a new Jacobsen AR522.

"The remaining Jacobsen mower tractor units were all in good order so I decided to invest in the cutting units," adds Steve. "The G-Plex III greens mowers deliver the quality of cut we demand, so I saw no need to renew them. This will put us in a better position to invest in other equipment. A new sprayer to replace our 15-year-old Hardi is on our shopping list. I would also like to have our own deep aeration unit. If we had a new fleet of mowers, I would not be able to think so much about other kit."

Those who feel that a team running supposedly 'old' equipment are at the mercy of reliability issues will find Steve responding that they look after the kit they use. The entire team have the mechanical skills to carry out both repairs and maintenance. This ensures they have faith in the dependability of their existing mowers as they all use them and have a hand in caring for them.



“We do not have a one mower, one person policy. We can all operate all items of equipment and we all know how to look after and repair that equipment. Of course there will be occasions when we have an issue that requires outside help, but we have local hydraulics specialists we can call upon if we have pump, hose or motor issues and TH Whites, our

322 greens mowers and I was impressed by their performance. But I am not ready to make the change yet. This is not down to the electric mowers but more that we are used to hydraulic mowers.

If adopting electric drive for the cutting units I would want to have in-depth training to ensure the mowers were operated cor-

“We do not have a one mower, one person policy. We can all operate all items of equipment and we all know how to look after and repair that equipment.”

Jacobsen dealer, offer superb technical back-up and parts support.”

Adding that he and the team also do cylinder and bottom blade grinding in-house, it is clear that Steve is the right person to adopt a ‘replace as needed’ equipment regime. But does that also mean he is unlikely to embrace modern developments such as hybrid and full electric mowing equipment?

“I keep a close eye on mower developments. We have had a demonstration of Jacobsen Eclipse

rectly. Hydraulic units will allow the mower to work with cutting units that are starting to get blunt. Electric mowers detect the extra power draw and will start to behave differently. Operators need to know why.”

If this suggests Steve is stuck in his ways that would be wrong too. Hand mowing of the greens was abandoned a few years ago, the ride-on G-Plex III mowers now do all the greens mowing with a Tru-Turf ‘turf iron’ following as required to



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deliver a smooth finish. When hand mowing, Steve did cut at 2.5mm to deliver fast greens in summer but now cuts at 3mm and still delivers a consistent 11 on the Stimpmeter that can be increased to 12 and a half feet if needed.

“If there was one item of kit that I would not be without it is the turf iron,” says Steve. “Our greens are 55 to 60% Poa and have to put up with 45,000 rounds a year. The size of the greens and heavy trafficking, plus our location, mean we will never be able to have a heavy ryegrass and fescue mix on our greens, so a true surface is the key to consistent and reliable speeds. I believe we can only achieve a true surface by using a dedicated tool to roll the greens.”

Similarly, Steve does not see the need to overseed the greens, the self-seeding nature of the dominant Poa varieties and relatively long cut of the greens helping to ensure they remain in good fettle; they have not seen fresh seed in six years. Overseeding is carried out but it restricted to walk-off and high traffic areas.

“I think there is room for different approaches to course management

in the UK,” says Steve. “We adopt a sustainable approach at Burghill Valley because it works as opposed to us seeing it as a requirement. We look after our machinery and use it in the best way to deliver what we want.

We use water, fungicides and fertiliser in a thoughtful way as it just makes sense. We are not trying to force grass varieties that do not thrive locally to grow on the course and this means we can manage the greens accordingly.”

This approach could be described as traditional. But as Steve points out, some of the ideas practiced by his grandfather, with whom he worked back in the mid-90s, such as sweeping the greens and fairways, are now coming back into fashion. Regular sweeping has long been practiced at Burghill.

“We prepare for winter by raising the fairway mowing heights and rolling rather than cutting the greens to keep them smooth,” he says. “We treat the greens with respect and do the same with our equipment. My aim is to ensure the course plays well and that we keep the members are happy. That is what counts.”

systemic

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A Royal course where nature is king

Neville Johnson travels to Lancashire to discover how Chris Whittle, Course Manager at Royal Birkdale, deals with the unique conservation challenges posed by the area





“As far as rare and treasured plants are concerned, Chris has a sensitivity map showing where these are to be found and creates ‘no go areas’ which are roped off in big tournaments to make sure they are fully protected”

Royal Birkdale’s special charm is that there are countless parts of the 95ha site close to the Lancashire coast where it doesn’t seem like a golf course at all, so natural are the surroundings. It is dune land par excellence.

Towards the sea are frontal dunes, constantly moved and reshaped by the weather. On the course itself are dozens and dozens of fixed – or grey – dunes covered by natural marram grasses that sway in the wind. This has to be an inspiring backdrop for any golfer.

Many in the world of golf regard it as the ultimate links course, challenging yet fair to all those who play it, and perfect for spectator vantage points. It is firmly one of the elite UK courses chosen regularly to host the Open Championship. Nine have been held here since it first staged the event in 1954.

A lot of trust is required to keep Royal Birkdale close to the top of the Open course ‘leaderboard’, and Chris Whittle, Birkdale’s Course Manager for 19 years, is understandably proud that that the eyes of the world are so often on his course.

What pleases him so much, as well as looking after such a challenging test of golfing skill, is the

trust placed in him to conserve its wonderful natural heritage. He gets enormous job satisfaction – as do the nine full-time staff in the club’s maintenance department – in two quite contrasting ways.

Royal Birkdale is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Less than 25 per cent of the course area is what Chris describes as managed grass. Much of the rest is precious environmentally, both in terms of wildlife and plant life, and looking after it comes within the course care remit every bit as much as the greens, tees and fairways.

The site is renowned for sand lizards, great crested newts and natterjack toads and it’s important to maintain an environment that allows them to thrive. Southern and northern marsh orchids, petalwort, Baltic Rush and varieties of Helleborine are among the rare plants on the course. Chris and his team are as much custodians of nature as they are professional greenkeepers.

“It’s a privilege to have such a wonderful golf course in such natural surroundings,” says Chris, who is by instinct a conservationist. “As a links we have all of nature’s advantages and disadvantages. It’s important to preserve the balance and that’s quite a challenge.”

Conservation is most definitely a serious business at Royal Birkdale. Chris and other club representatives meet at least a couple of times each year with other coastal landowners and tenants in the region – National Trust properties, council amenities and other golf courses – to exchange information on conservation matters, including formal records of wildlife and plant life numbers and movements.

This collaborative exercise helps to identify trends and make decisions about any action that might be necessary.

The club also works closely with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the British Trust for Nature Conservation Volunteers to see that nature rightly remains a priority across the site.

No two holes on the Royal Birkdale course are alike in terms of the surrounding landscape. Looking left and right you will see quite different flora, but what’s adjacent to the managed areas is there because it is native to the land.

As far as rare and treasured plants are concerned, Chris has a sensitivity map showing where these are to be found and creates ‘no go areas’ which are roped off in big tournaments to make sure they are fully protected.



INSET TOP: Dog Rose
INSET ABOVE: Marsh Orchid



There has been a big effort over the years to increase the emphasis on the managed areas of the course back to natural fine grasses – fescues, and bents in particular. There is still some meadow grass, but Chris says they are winning the battle. Reseeding and round the year management encouraging the wanted grasses is gradually tipping the scales in his favour.

“The way you cut, the way you irrigate, the way you feed and top-dress: they all contribute to this,” says Chris.

“We are a natural golf course and we resist introducing anything that shouldn’t be there. Fescues should naturally be the dominant grass because of the dry sandy conditions, but your grass will always reflect what nature throws at it, so a wet summer may change things and bring in coarser grasses quite naturally. You have to go with that to a certain extent.”

Chris says it is essential to define the holes on a course like Birkdale and it is the roughs that do this magnificently here. Generally he leaves the rough to its own devices.

“Nature put that grass there because it should be there, and that’s how we see it,” he says. “We might do an occasional bit of trimming or scarifying if a particular

area becomes too difficult, but otherwise we leave well alone. We don’t cut the rough at all. We just mow the semi-rough next to the fairways and we might widen this from five to 10 metres to suit a particular tournament need.”

There’s no getting away from it, Royal Birkdale is quite an awkward course to look after and machinery is all-important. Chris’s equipment policy is quite specific, and always has been.

He buys each item of equipment on its merits to do a particular job for him – there’s no compromise.

He trusts his judgement and it’s served him well, both here at Birkdale and before that at Muirfield where for six years he was also Course Manager, presiding over the 1992 Open.

He also trusts his greenkeepers to give the right judgement on each individual piece of equipment. Out on the course and back at the maintenance department it is John Deere machines that dominate, supplied and supported by local dealer Turner Groundscare of Tarvin, near Chester, and that’s because Chris trusts them to do the right job on the course.

All of the triplex mowers at Royal Birkdale are now John Deere 2500E electric hybrids and Chris is a big

fan of them. These machines are central to the mowing programme at Birkdale and are used for all tees and aprons work, and alternately with John Deere 220 Series walk-behind mowers on the greens.

Chris believes that it is the quality of cut on the greens, tees and aprons that helps to define each hole so emphatically.

“I want machines that don’t let me down. Mine don’t, and the peace of mind I get from this is priceless,” says Chris.

“The worry in the back of your mind that you always had using a triplex on greens and tees was that the hydraulics might leak,” he says.

“Using the 2500 E-Cut mowers means that’s all in the past. It was one of the main reasons for buying them, and I liked the way John Deere responded to the perpetual concern we course managers had about leakages by coming up with the hybrid design.

“I think we actually bought one of the first ones in the UK, and there’s no chance we’d ever go back now.

“I’ve never worked on anything but links courses. I wouldn’t be happy at a parkland, however good it was, and I count myself very lucky to be in charge of Royal Birkdale.”

Q&A

Robert Jack, Area Sales Manager from Dennis Mowers, answers questions on setting up your mower and explains the basics



Professional mower performance depends on the correct set-up and adjustment procedures. Although there are design variations in cutting units, most require the same basic procedures.

Accurate height of cut tools including a setting bar and proper instructions are essential for setting up a cutting unit. As a leading British manufacturer of innovative professional grounds maintenance equipment, Dennis helps greenkeepers from around the world to create their ultimate natural turf surface.

Why is a sharp, clean cut so important?

Playability and presentation. A well-maintained course stands out. Cutting or tearing with a blunt cylinder will result in bruising the grass leaf. This will lead to the tip where the tear has taken place turning white - not a pretty sight. Disease can attack this area causing further problems and cost to remedy the situation.

Why is this poor cut happening?

Either a poorly set mower or wear in the cylinder or bottom blade...or cylinder bearing failure. All of these will need attention.

Why is height of cut important?

Setting the height of cut is critical for a number of reasons,

particularly on the greens. If the grass is too long then the accuracy and the speed of the ball is affected.

How do I set height of cut?

Setting the height of cut is generally done using a height setting bar. This is usually supplied by the manufacturer or can be obtained from your dealer. The bar should be long enough to go under both front and rear rollers. There is a threaded bolt with a locking nut that goes through the setting bar. The desired mowing height is measured from the top of the bar to the underside of the bolt head.

On a pedestrian mower the bar is placed under the two rollers with the mower tipped back. The underside of the bolt head is placed on the top of the bottom blade. The mowing height is adjusted by raising and lowering the front roller as the rear roller is fixed. When the front roller rests on the top of the setting bar the roller can be locked in position. Both sides must be set to be certain of the same height of cut across the full working width. If this is not the case then a step in the cut will be obvious for all to see.

Why do greenkeepers use cassette system cylinder mowers?

It is very much down to the individual greenkeeper's preference whether they use a dedicated cylinder mower or a cassette system. Cassette systems offer flexibility and a single

power unit solution for many daily maintenance tasks such as scarifying, verticutting and brushing. Additional cassettes can be purchased to enhance the system and also cassette machines reduce the maintenance costs because there is only one engine and drive system to service. The system also takes up less space in the club's maintenance facility which can often be an issue.

Does the amount of blades on a cylinder affect the quality of cut?

Generally speaking the more blades in the cylinder, the finer the cut will be. Other factors need to be considered such as the diameter of the cylinder and the speed of rotation. When selecting a cylinder, frequency of mowing must be a major factor as the more blades you have in a cylinder the less grass is taken off on each cut.

Can I fit a new bottom blade myself?

In order to achieve a good quality of cut, firstly the cylinder will need to be sharp. This can only be realistically achieved with the use of a cylinder grinder. The bottom blade must be a mirror image of the cylinder. If it isn't then you will not be able to set the cylinder on cut properly or it will not stay on cut for long. The chances are the two surfaces will have to be set too tightly to achieve a cut which would result in excessive wear.



For further information or a no obligation demonstration, please contact Dennis 01332 824 777 or visit www.dennisuk.com. For more news, reviews and insightful views, you can follow Dennis on Twitter @DennisMowers and like the company's Facebook page - www.facebook.com/DennisMowersUK. You can also view the latest Dennis videos by visiting www.youtube.com/DennisMowers.



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Sprayer test to pinpoint accurate application

A national sprayer testing scheme is set to be introduced across the amenity and landscape sectors within the next three years. Whilst the testing process will impose a further cost on the industry, the benefit of more accurate application through a well-maintained sprayer and avoiding further problems will more than recoup the charge, believes Syngenta Application Specialist, Tom Robinson.

When the Agricultural Engineers Association instigated the Sprayer Test Scheme for farm sprayers in 1997, a quarter of the sprayers tested failed during the first two-year round of inspections. Of those, a third (33%) failed with worn sprayer nozzles, which made accurate application impossible to maintain.

“New nozzles are capable of delivering very high levels of accuracy, but they are a wearing part like any other piece of machinery,” according to Tom. “They do need to be replaced when worn, to maintain the desired high levels of accuracy and consistency.”

“Furthermore, changing the nozzles now enables operators to take advantage of the latest developments in nozzle technology for turf applications, he added.

A new set of Syngenta XC Turf Nozzles cost less than 15% of the value of a typical fungicide and fertiliser tank mix, so the expense would be quickly recouped from more accurate application alone – along with other significant improvements in application technique and reduced spray drift to achieve enhanced results.

“We are frequently asked how

often a set of nozzles should be changed – but the answer depends largely on how much they are used and what is applied. If they were only used for fungicides and growth regulators across a golf course, for example, the nozzles would last an age; but some fertilisers and particularly trace elements can be far more abrasive and lead to high levels of wear if applied regularly.”

Syngenta best advice is to regularly check the consistency of nozzle output across the full spray boom, using a measuring cylinder to collect and record the output from each individual nozzle for 30 seconds; work out the average and if any nozzle deviates from this figure by more than 5%, the whole set is unacceptably worn and all the nozzles should be replaced.

Nozzles that are working consistently can easily be calibrated to



apply the required water volume.

Tom added that, in the early days of sprayer testing, worn hoses were identified on 20% of sprayers that failed the test, with leaks on 18% of sprayers. A dripping spray hose, or worse still a leaking hydraulic oil pipe, could have catastrophic effects on the turf if it finally burst on a green – with further costly implications for environmental clean-up.

“On 20% of failed sprayers the sight gauge was also unreadable, which makes accurate filling difficult and impossible to assess accuracy during spraying,” said Tom. “If you have calibrated to apply 250 litres across 18 greens, then stop after three and check you have used around 40 litres, and again after six holes etc., to pick up any inconsistency at the earliest opportunity,” he advised.

Other common problems that lead to sprayer test failures included faulty pressure gauges and missing control labels.

Duncan Russell, National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) manager at the Agricultural Engineers Association added that the introduction of the sprayer test scheme has seen an important significant improvement in the overall standard of spray application equipment, along with a rise in the professionalism of operators in maintaining machines to give more efficient results. Well maintained and tested machinery also retained better second-hand values.

“At a time when costs and budgets are under pressure, the financial losses that could be easily avoided by regular maintenance and simple calibration testing are consider-

able,” he said. “Even at low levels of inaccuracy the cost of sprayer test would be quickly recouped, along with fulfilling demands of club managers, players and regulatory authorities for greater justification and accountability.”

The new rules, implemented as part of the EU Sustainable Use Directive, apply to all boom sprayers over three meters used in agriculture, landscape and amenity. All sprayers should be tested by 26 November 2016 and every five years until 2020, then every three years; however the NSTS recommends testing every year – which is also seen as best practice by the industry-backed Amenity Assured scheme.

There is an exception for knapsack and hand held sprayers, which do not require testing under the SUD.

Section Notes

Please email your notes to
steve.castle@bigga.co.uk
by the 10th
of the month

All the latest news from your Section,
in your new-look notes pages...



Around the green

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Contact your Section correspondent with news,
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Events Coming Up

Central - The Section are staging a one day irrigation course at Elmwood Golf Course on Wed 25 September in conjunction with the Toro Company and Lely UK with Adrian Mortram of R Hume Associates and Callum Oliphant of Applied Irrigation delivering the course.

It will be a mixture of showcasing the latest technology and designs and practical demonstrations of repairing and adjusting sprinklers/ troubleshooting. Attendance is free but numbers are restricted to 40 so you must register with gmckie@standrews.org.uk. There will also be a limit on how many people can attend from the one Club or organisation.

The AGM will be at Elmwood GC on 29 October.

East - Our Autumn Golf/Education day will be held at Haddington GC on 17 September, please contact our secretary to confirm your attendance.

The 27th Annual General Meeting will be held at Ravelston GC on Tuesday 5 November, more details to follow next month.

West - The Autumn outing is at Eastwood GC on 19 September - it will be interesting to see the new layout, and the AGM will be held at Hags Castle in October, I will confirm the date next month.

Ayrshire - Bernhard Grinders Seminar at West Kilbride Golf Club, 10 September between 12-4pm. We're very keen to get a good attendance for this so please attend if you can. Any questions please call Jim or Derek.

News

East - Birthday wishes to Jimmy Nielson (80) - the section hope you enjoyed Benidorm - and George Stavert (86).

West - I attended the Norrie Whytock tournament held at Auchterarder on 15 August with Douglas Mackintosh, Alistair Reid, and Peter Boyd, and believe it or not we won, no thanks to my efforts though. I would like to thank my team mates for their good golf on the day and the last minute replacement of Peter who gave a valuable contribution, well done boys. Congratulations to Archie Dunn and his staff for once again producing a lovely golf course it is a joy to play even the way I did.

West - Stuart Clayton was on the phone recently and although not out on the road yet, he has informed me he will be going round everybody just to say hello. Stuart has been through a lot in recent months since his car accident, he apologised to me and others but I think his health comes first, so from all the section I would like to pass on our best wishes and I hope he makes a full recovery soon.

West - I mentioned David Carson recently regarding his knee operation and saw him recently walking with no problems, nice to see him out and about. Gents, please get in touch if you have any other information to let the other members around the country know about, I can be reached on 07790823914 or on e-mail at stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com so don't be shy.

Ayrshire - Congratulations to George Morrison and his partner Maggie who have tied the knot. Best wishes from all the Section.

Movers and Shakers

Central - Three new members are welcome to the section; Gary McLaren from Leven Links, Remi Passiatore from Dunfermline GC and Samuel Zeng who is at Elmwood College. We hope you are able to attend events.

East - One new section member is Sam McCall (Murrayfield GC).

Results

Central - The results of the Autumn outing at Stirling GC should be on the website, www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

Welcome new members

Richard Bell - Dullatur Golf Club, Philip Jinks - Paisley Golf Club, Gareth Quinn - Paisley Golf Club, Dominic Dougan - Airdrie Golf Club, Danny McGurn - Langside College, John Dale - Renfrew Golf Club, Remi Passiatore - Dunfermline Golf Club, Samuel Zeng - SRUC (Elmwood), Gary McLaren - Leven Links Golf Course, Ronnie Frame - Affiliate member - Rigby Taylor Ltd, Christopher Wilson - Turriff Golf Club, David Robertson - Gairloch Golf Club, Jack Harrison - Golspie Golf Club, Stuart Gillies - Golspie Golf Club, Craig Mackay - Golspie Golf Club, Alexander Macdonald - Golspie Golf Club

Northern

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

North East - The Autumn tournament will take place at Westerhope GC on Wednesday 9 October. Timings will be posted on our Facebook and Twitter pages, you will all be also notified via our new text service!

Northern - Autumn tournament at Woodsome Hall GC, Huddersfield on 19 September, tee off 1.45. Northern Regional Conference : Phoenix Golf Club Rotherham on 7 November £10 for members, £20 visitors.

Sheffield - We would like to remind members if they would like to go on the trip to St George's Park to get their forms in quick as places are running out. Our next comp is at Hillsborough GC on 25 September.

North Wales - The autumn tournament takes place at Royal St. David's golf club, Harlech on 18 September, also keep in mind that the Christmas tournament is at Royal Liverpool GC, Hoylake on 25 November. There is a seminar in the pipeline provisionally booked on 7 November at Deeside College further details soon.

News

North East - Massive congratulations to Martin McCririck of Chester le Street GC, who recently won the Durham county matchplay championship at Consett GC, which according to Martin was in 'great nick' (credit to Dave Jobey and his team). Martin has now won both codes of Durham championship events having won the stroke play in 2011 - all the lessons I gave him as a kid have obviously paid off!

Northern - We had to settle for a draw against the Sheffield boys in our match up due to a massive downpour stopping play halfway round - so the Sheffield chaps retained the cup! Many thanks to Howley Hall for their support.

Northern - Please could all members wishing to contact me try and ring after 2pm. If urgent please text and I will ring you back but if it's to book your place for the golf days a text would be brilliant too - thank you.

North Wales - James Hampson a member of the greenkeeping team at Llanymynech GC became club champion in August, I know the club are very proud of his playing ability.

Movers & Shakers

North Wales - Don Rowlands, Deputy Head at Chester GC, has decided to step down from the role after 25 years faithful service. Paul Stanley will take over the vacated role, congratulations Paul and best wishes go to both of you.

Results

Northern - Invitation Day: 1 Paul Davies & S Oliver 42 pts, 2 Rob Turner & D Hughes 40pts 3 Joe Walsh & K Miller 40pts. Nearest pin: K Miller & Tony Gerrard.

North Wales - The North Wales v North West cricket match took place at Ashley CC on 24 July and North Wales won, a big thank you to Ashley CC for the facilities and everyone who took part, it was a very entertaining evening. I'm afraid the North Wales v South Wales match at Borth and Ynyslas GC on 26 July was cancelled due to under subscription.

Thanks to Sponsors

Northern - An enormous thank you goes to Rigby Taylor and Mike Brear for their fantastic support of our Invitation day at Wetherby GC and their continued support of our section. Big thanks to Wetherby for looking after us and giving us courtesy of the course, the staff were excellent and catering was first class. Thanks to Darren and his team for their hard work setting up a outstanding course. Also thanks to Golf and Turf Machinery for their sponsorship of our match against the Sheffield section.

Sheffield - We would like to thank Mansfield Sand for sponsoring our spring comp. Also thanks to golf and turf machinery/Platts Harris for sponsoring the Sheffield v Northern match.

Welcome new members

Colin Donaldson - Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat, Jack Friar - Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat, John Hogg - Seahouses Golf Club, Ciaran Porter - Close House Golf Club, Christopher Davies - Portal Golf & Country Club, Michael Etchells - Ulverston Golf Club, Joe Needham - Staining Lodge Golf Course, Daniel West - Staining Lodge Golf Course, Frank Strickland - Heaton Park Golf Centre, Mark Whiting, Affiliate member - Rigby Taylor Ltd, Simon Oliver - Cookridge Hall Golf Club, Ryan Healey - Oulton Hall Golf Club (De Vere), Vincent Casey - Heaton Park Golf Centre, Richard Marshall - Stocksbridge & District Golf Club, Jon Gleed - Wath Golf Club, Nathan Bradey - Bawtry Golf Club, Lee Greveson - Hallamshire Golf Club

A new look

Based on feedback from the recent GI survey, we've refreshed and improved this section of the magazine.

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 10th of each month

Midland

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...



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Events Coming Up

Mid Anglia - Autumn Golf Day at Berkhamsted GC on 16 October. Get your entries in ASAP. AGM to follow.

East Midland - Our AGM/Autumn competition will be held at Lutterworth GC on 31 October, the AGM offers the opportunity for members to put themselves forward for committee selection or form a coup d'état and completely overthrow the present incumbents...food for thought.

East Midland - November 6, Midland Region Education Seminar at Forest Hill Golf Club. More details next month.

News

BB&O - Summer golf event took place at Caversham Heath Golf Club. A great turn out saw 52 people take part, and was kindly sponsored by Rigby Taylor. A big thank you to Course Manager John Scoones and his team for all their hard work which ensured the course and day was a great success! See results.

BB&O - The Rigby Taylor Pairs Knockout continues - good luck to all teams left in the competition. If anyone is interested in or needs any training be it chainsaw or spraying courses etc plus funding then please get in touch with our RA Sandra Raper sandra@bigga.co.uk

Midland - Apologies to Dave Healy, who was kind enough to send me something to report two months ago. Moor Hall GC has been blessed with the services of Graeme Phipps and on the 20 June he celebrated working there for 40 years. I trust that a platinum watch was presented Sir. I'm sure that the section will join me in congratulation.

East Midland - 1 August saw Dave Leatherland's Kedleston Park host our Summer Tournament. Despite having had over 50mm of rain in the days building up to the day Dave and his team produced slick true greens and a beautifully presented course. The sunshine certainly had an effect on a suncream-free Chairman who presented the prizes with rather a red face - results below.

Mid Anglia - Our thanks go to Steve Braddock - Head Groundsman at Arsenal FC's Training ground for allowing a group of us to view their very impressive facilities.

Movers & Shakers

Mid Anglia - Congratulations to Steve Cherry who after a brief flirtation with groundsmanship is now back in greenkeeping so good to have you back amongst us.

Results

BB&O - Summer golf day: 1 36pts John Quinn; 2 34 pts Adam King, 3 33 pts Patrick Whelehan. NP - Rob Catlin, NP- Simon Mallock, LD- Matt Smith NPIn2- Brian Witney.

East Midland - Summer Tournament: Category 1 1 Nick Miles, Nett 75, 2 Ken Harding Nett 76, 3 Mark Blacknell Nett 77. Category 2 1 Asa English Nett 69, 2 Greg Skinner Nett 79. 3 A Mitchell Nett 86. Trade prize: K Haslam.

Mid Anglia - Summer Golf Day held at Brookmans Park GC on 6 August. Our thanks go to Trevor Smith and his team for providing us with the course in beautiful condition. Results: 1 48 pts N Pestle and I Worsley, 2 45 pts R Groves and L Owen, 3 45 points D Watt and N Roberts. The nearest the Pin prizes went to R Goddard at the 9th and Rob Catlin at the 11th.

Thanks to Sponsors

Mid Anglia - Autumn Golf Day Sponsors Avoncrop Amenity, Amtech Amenity, Vassgro Amenity, Farmura, Headland Amenity, ALS, Tuckwells and Rigby Taylor Ltd. Also thanks to our Golfer of the Year sponsor Banks Amenity.

BB&O - The longest drives and nearest the pins were sponsored by Swan Golf Designs, Banks Amenity and Countrywide. Without the continued support of our sponsors these days could not happen and in particular a thank you must go to Gareth Acteson of Rigby Taylor.

Midland - Our thanks to Everris for this month's calendar page. Please consider Emma Kilby of Everris for your fertiliser and maintenance products. Tel: 07784 111965 or email emma.kilby@everris.com

East Midland - AGM Autumn Comp to be kindly sponsored by Farols of Hinckley in conjunction with John Deere with a tremendous offering of prizes.

East Midland - The committee would like to thank Mansfield Sand for sponsoring our Summer Competition and also for Tacit supplying prizes for Nearest The Pin (Mark Blacknell) and Longest Drive (Lee North). The event also attracted Trade members from Banks Amenity, Farols, John Deere, Aitkins and also Tracey Maddison from BIGGA.

East Anglia - A massive thanks to Vassgro Amenity, Avoncrop Amenity, ALS, Amtech Amenity, Headland Amenity, Farmura, Tuckwells Machinery and Rigby Taylor for your continued support. Banks Amenity also sponsor our Golfer of the Year Trophy.

Welcome New Members

Ashley Webb - Oakland Park Golf Club, Jack Andrews-Newbury & Crookham Golf Club, Callam Gwynne - The Nottinghamshire Golf & Country Club, Andrew Green - The Nottinghamshire Golf & Country Club, Martin Hickling - Rothley Park Golf Club, Alan Mitchell - Scraftoft Golf Club, Scott Cranny - Bedford Golf Club, David Evans - Woodthorpe Golf Club, Lee North - Scraftoft Golf Club, Jayne Leyland, Affiliate member - Rigby Taylor Ltd

South East

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Events Coming Up

East Anglia - 9 October, event at Bury St Edmunds (I didn't even know he was dead!), 4 December, Thorpeness turkey trot. Merry Christmas in case I forget.

Sussex - The next event is on 20 September at Beauport Park GC. Please contact Pete Smith for more information and entry details on 07880 030113.

Kent - 19 September, Autumn event at Sene Valley GC. Please advise us of your attendance ASAP.

Surrey - Coming up are The Cresta Cup at Wimbledon Park GC on 24 September and the final for the Surrey Bowl is on the 1 October at Foxhills GC.

Surrey - Merrist Wood College has been booked for early evening educational seminars, which are scheduled to take place on October 17 and November 28.

News

East Anglia - Stowmarket in June was lovely thanks to Mat Gill and his team - 50 souls turned up. Prizes were presented by Dick Taylor, Stowmarket Captain. Larry Pearman won the loo seat mainly because he hadn't won it before! Results below.

Sussex - 1 August saw 28 members turn out for our section's summer competition at the glorious heathland course of Piltown. Many thanks go to John and all of his team for the condition in which this pretty course was presented. Thanks again to the sections annual sponsor for enabling another enjoyable day, and also Pete Smith for all his organisation for the event. I would be grateful if you could contact me with anything of interest for future articles - thanks.

Kent - Congratulations to Russ Bain of Chislehurst GC. He and his wife Kelly have welcomed baby Ruben who arrived on 14 August. Congratulations too to Lydd GC Course Manager and Kent FC reserve goalie Darren Burton who has managed to qualify again for the Trilby Tour. Be prepared to see him on TV plying his trade in a silly hat.

Essex - Recent golf day, a big thank you to Tony Stubbings the owner of Channels Golf Club plus Ray Clark and his team for the fantastic

condition of the course and a golf day to remember, the revised set-up is a true test of golf. Results below.

Essex - The next golf day is at Braintree Golf Club on Tuesday 24 September (Please note the revised date). Lunch will be served before we play with, prizegiving straight after play finishes. Times to be advised.

Entries to Antony Kirwan: at "Play Golf Colchester" Bakers Lane, Colchester, Essex. CO3 4AU or antz16@btinternet.com by Friday 20 September.

Essex - Ben Scrivener is still waiting to hear from those seeking further education. For more information please contact Ben at gingermonkey@hotmail.com

Movers & Shakers

Surrey - The Willmott & Weston duo are launching their Cookbook and TV series after successfully providing the catering recently at The Sunningdale GC McMillan Tankard.

Results

Mid Anglia - Stowmarket: 0-9 Mick Buck 38, Graham Hurren 31; 10-18: Adrian Hollins 37, Mark Broughton 30; 0-10: David Driver 34, Adam Mulley 32.

Sussex - Summer Comp: Winner of Division 1 Richard Webber 40 points. Division 2 Pete Smith with a poor 31 points. Division 3 Kane Smith with just 28 points.

Surrey - The 33rd McMillan Tankard Comp: 1 Craig Ayton 40 pts with 25 scored on the front nine, described as a dream round and the best golf he has ever played. 2 Grant Steward 37pts, 3 Tom Brearley 36 pts. Jack and Rita McMillan presented the prizes on a day fuelled with friendship and camaraderie on and off the green.

Essex - Channels Golf Club - Greenkeepers: 1 Ross Bennett 39pts, 2 Stuart Rogers (National Qualifier), 3 Antony Kirwan (National Qualifier). Trade: Michael Fance. Guest: Steve Crosdale. Nearest the Pin 11th: Andy Cracknell - 17th Roy Shepard.

Thanks to sponsors

Mid Anglia - Main sponsors at Stowmarket were Toro, others were Aitkens, Rigby Taylor, Collier Turf Care, Headland, Tomlinson, Everris and Lely UK.

Surrey - A superb and interesting course walk and presentation by Murray Long on heathland management proved very popular. Thank you to Sunningdale GC and those who gave up their time to organise this event.

Welcome New Members

Howard Jenner - RAF Marham Golf Club, Luke Curtis - Epping Golf Course, Adam Oakley - Bishop's Stortford Golf Club, Nigel Harris - Langley Park Golf Club, Zach Hall - Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, Tyler Rodgers - Langley Park Golf Club, Adam Peck - Silvermere Golf Club, Jack Hamer - Silvermere Golf Club, Matthew Fox - Queenwood Golf Club, William Hammond - Broadwater Park Golf Club, Conor Walsh - Beaverbrook Golf Club, Kristian Knight - Beaverbrook Golf Club, Dylan Brychta - Beaverbrook Golf Club, Andrew Axell - Willingdon Golf Club, Alex Merritt - Rookwood Golf Course.

South West & Wales

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the Green...



SOUTH WEST –
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j.goodchild@
bowood.org



SOUTH COAST –
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bosgc@gmail.com



DEVON & CORNWALL
George Pitts
gpitts@
yelvertongolf.co.uk



SOUTH WALES
Peter Holmstrom
pholmstrom@
countrywide
farmers.co.uk

Events Coming Up

South Coast - Next golf fixture is at Meon Valley Golf and Country Club on 9 October. We haven't played there for many years so please come and support the event, entries as usual to Kevan Glass at Keepers Cottage, Brokenhurst Manor GC, Sway Rd, Brockenhurst, Hants, SO42 7SG, or glassy2003@hotmail.com.

South Coast - Match against the South West is at North Wilts GC on 26 September. I need a team of 10 so if you want to play please let me know on greenkeeper@gmail.com as soon as possible.

South Coast - The Toro Irrigation Roadshow Seminar is to be held at Sherbourne GC on 23 October. This is a full day educational programme on the importance of your irrigation system, finishing with a workshop on repairs and trouble shooting. Included in the day is coffee and a bacon roll on arrival and a 2 course lunch for the incredible price of £10. The section committee will be assisting in organising the day so entries to Alex McCombie, for more info southcoastsecretary@gmail.com. This will be open to other sections so be quick with your entry. More info next month.

South Wales - Next meeting is our AGM at Machynys Penisular GC on Wednesday 16 October

South West - SW Section v South Coast Section at North Wilts GC on 26 September, South West Section AGM at Filton GC on 16 October and South West Section Christmas Tournament at Ogbourne Downs GC on 19 December, enquiries to Wayne Vincent. There are a few spaces still to be filled on Excavator Safety Training Update to be held towards the end of the year, a must-do for all licenced operators in order to maintain their certification, please contact Paul Worster for details and keep an eye on the BIGGA Bulletin boards for more details.

News

South Wales – We've recently received the sad news that Chris Jenkins, Course Manager of Tenby Golf Club and lifelong supporter of the bowling club network in Pembrokeshire, had suddenly died. Our thoughts from everyone in our section go out to all his family and friends.

South Wales - I am now a grandfather at the ripe old age of 34 only a step one thankfully!

South Wales - Our golfing team unfortunately went down 4.5-1.5 recently a big thank to JK and his team at Chipping Sodbury Golf Club for their hospitality and of course the superb golf course set up.

South West - A thoroughly convincing victory of 4.5 to 1.5 was had by the South West Section over South Wales Section at Chipping Sodbury on 15 August, many thanks to John Keenaghan and his team for all of their efforts in preparing a fantastic golf course.

South West - Once again the South West Section will be sponsoring a place to attend BTME in January 2014 to include accommodation, transport and education. Please contact any of the committee members to express your interest in this fantastic opportunity.

Thanks to Sponsors

South West - Many thanks to our section patrons Ecosol, Irritech, Headland Amenity, Countrywide, Greensman and Farmura for their much valued support of section events and training contributions.

Welcome new members

Shayne Savident - St Pierre Park, MJay Anderson - Romsey Golf Club, Stephen Dear - Romsey Golf Club, Rob Donnelly - Hockley Golf Club, Matthew Amy - La Moye Golf Club, Owen Haskins, Affiliate - Tony Valentine Golf Centre, Sean Chapman - St Mellion Hotel G&CC

Welcome new overseas member

Ryun Holden - Limpachtal Golf Club



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Greenkeepers Training Committee

In a new series, the GTC has invited representatives from its Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers to discuss their particular specialism within the sports turf sector



In this first month, Martin Ward, Managing Director of Symbio, explains the basics of good greenkeeping practices and how the company is intent on helping course managers and greenkeepers understand what happens below the surface. There is also a series of workshops planned...

20 years have passed since the first products containing soil microbes became available for turf managers. In the early years they were designed to solve specific problems like black layer, nutrient retention and thatch degradation, based upon easily observed actions of common soil bacteria.

The early results sparked off a wave of research initially by professors interested in microbial reactions on turf with Professor Alan Gange at Royal Holloway College, University of London at the forefront. Latterly colleges offering degrees in turf science have played a practical role guiding students through research into a range of topics for their degree theses.

Dr Andy Owen and his colleagues at Myerscough College, a leading GTC Quality Assured Centre, have played a leading role in this respect.

Specific turf research in the UK and the USA has increased our understanding about the myriad of relationships between the grass plant and the chemistry, biology and physical properties of sports turf rootzones. So how does this information affect the daily management practices of the course manager?

The main areas where healthy soil allows management practices to improve to help produce fast, even, low thatch greens are:

Reduced Physical Aeration (it is still needed but in less disruptive form)

Reduced Fungicide Use

Reduced poa annua - improved perennial grass growth

Reduced fertiliser input

The main change is the treatment of organic matter. Organic matter comprises of dead grass i.e. thatch which is generally considered bad and roots, organic nutrients, soil

biomass (bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, arthropods and worms), humic compounds and organic acids which are essential for healthy plant growth.

Thatch is also the primary food for fungi. Traditionally thatch has had to be physically removed with costly invasive practices, deep scarification and hollow coring, however aeration provided by micro tines into the thatch layer is sufficient if it is to be degraded by fungi and bacteria.

Thatch is converted to plant food and humic compounds which increase cation exchange capacity (CEC) and reduce fertiliser inputs but more importantly, the rootzone develops a fungal biomass which we now know is needed if perennial grass is to be grown instead of poa annua.

This means that less top dressing is required to maintain a fast surface, less fertiliser is required for more consistent surfaces and you do not need to starve greens to reintroduce bent and fescue.

Percolation rates are also a function of the biological activity in the rootzone. Practically all beneficial microbial activity is undertaken by aerobic microbes but it is perfectly possible to manage many golf greens without large tine hollow coring, because bacteria, fungi and beneficial nematodes all maintain friable, fast draining, aerated soil.

Regular microtining and occasional vertidrainage should be all that is required for all but the most compacted, thatchy greens.

Disease management is now high on most people's agenda with the cost and gradual reduction in available fungicides.

The basic premise is that healthy grass is less susceptible to disease but the stresses put upon greens, tees and fairways means that the grass is always susceptible to pathogen attack.



The GTC is helping to organise a series of seminars around the UK this autumn to explain the practical aspects of making soil biology work for you.

For further details visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk

Also contact Symbio direct for dates, venues and to book your place on a workshop:

Tel: 01428 685762
Email: polly@symbio.co.uk

The good news is that there are four natural methods that greenkeepers can employ to manage disease.

All require a healthy population of bacteria and fungi around the root system. When the microbial population is in place: -

1) The beneficial microbes form a protective barrier around the roots and leaf lesions.

2) Some produce natural antibiotics to kill pathogens.

3) Pathogens become a food source for the beneficial microbes.

4) Some microbes and biostimulants encourage the plant to produce hormones called phytoalexins that help it fight off disease.

Fertiliser requirements are also reduced, microbes are made from carbon, nitrate and phosphate so they live on and hold applied nutrients in the soil but more importantly they help convert the proteins and carbohydrates produced by the grass during photosynthesis and are the driving force behind the nitrogen cycle.

Apart from reduced physical disruption the key changes to management practices required by the modern greenkeeper are to introduce the correct microbiology to the rootzone and to keep it alive by the correct use of biostimulants, aeration, fertilisers and fungicides.

If you want to manage poa annua greens you will need a bacterial dominant rootzone that supports annual plants and feed the biology simple sugars and carbohydrates.

If you want to grow and manage perennial grasses, a balanced fungal bacterial mix is required that is fed by more complex carbohydrates, seaweed, humic and fulvic acids.



The GTC is funded by:



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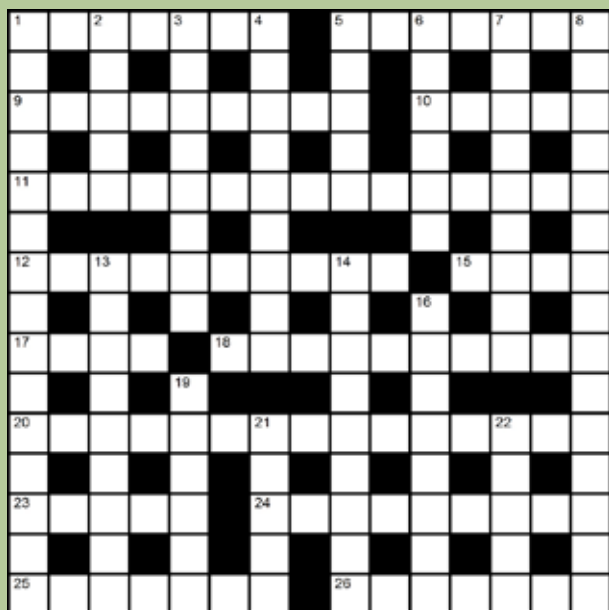
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puzzlepage

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained

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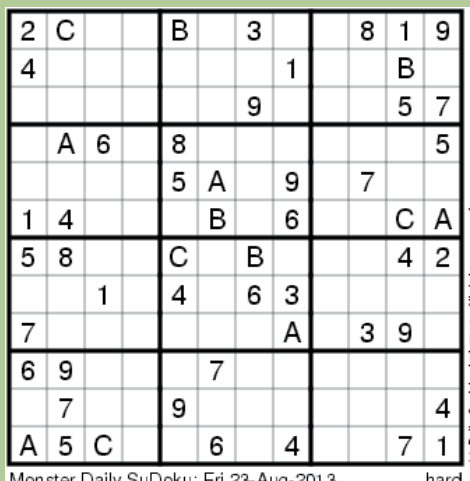
- 1 Large container for carrying post (7)
- 5 Subclass of Eutheria, mammals excluding monotremes and marsupials (7)
- 9 Of a woman's garment, having a low-cut neckline (9)
- 10 --- box; a television, colloquially (5)
- 11 1869 travel book by Mark Twain (9,6)
- 12 President of Venezuela who died on 5th March 2013 (4,6)
- 15 US sitcom in which Danny DeVito played Louie DePalma (4)
- 17 1977 Commodores hit written by Lionel Richie (4)
- 18 Leading newspaper commentaries (10)
- 20 One who is unacceptable or unwelcome (7,3,5)
- 23 Drive out (5)
- 24 Flour from which some bran and germ have been removed (9)
- 25 Add afterwards, append (7)
- 26 Line which touches a curve (7)

DOWN

- 1 1978 Alan Parker film whose title is prison slang for an inmate's attempt to escape (8,7)
- 2 Pertaining to an ancient Peruvian people (5)
- 3 Device used to control the water level in a cistern (8)
- 4 Permit allowing permanent residency of a foreign national in the US (5,4)
- 5 Musical which features the song I Know Him So Well (5)
- 6 Hat named after the heroine of a George du Maurier novel (6)
- 7 Small thin sausage (9)
- 8 Novel which introduced the character Sherlock Holmes (1,5,2,7)
- 13 Inn providing restaurant quality food (9)
- 14 Outgoing person (9)
- 16 Town whose soccer ground is the Falmer Stadium (8)
- 19 Stage name of US rapper Artis Ivey Jr. (6)
- 21 Ancient Egyptian city, its name associated with two dams across the Nile (5)
- 22 --- Laurie Blue Adkins, English singer-songwriter (5)

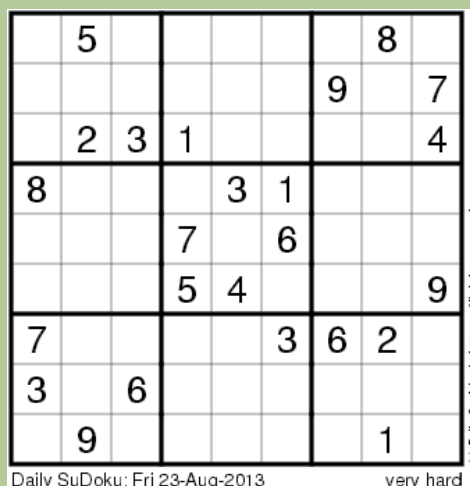
QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ - Nine questions all about the opening weekend of the Premier League season...

- 1) Which player scored the first goal of the Premier League season?
- 2) Who was the first player to be sent off?
- 3) Three players missed penalties on the opening weekend - name them.
- 4) Which manager was charged by the FA for comments made against a decision - days after vowing to be more subdued in interviews this season?
- 5) Name the scorer of Norwich's second goal on the opening day.
- 6) Which Everton scorer was on loan at Leeds last season only to be largely ignored by their then manager Neil Warnock?
- 7) Which 40-year-old striker made a substitute appearance in his side's first game?
- 8) Who scored Arsenal's goal before it all went wrong against Aston Villa?
- 9) Name the four players who started Mourinho's first match back in charge of Chelsea who also started his final game in his first spell in 2007.



MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Puzzle Answers on page 65

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Head GreenKeeper Sandilands Golf Club

Sutton on Sea, Lincs

Sandilands Golf Club are looking to appoint a Head GreenKeeper with a proven track record to manage their mature 18 hole links golf course to the highest standard. The successful applicant must be qualified to at least NVQ3 or City & Guilds and have at least 5 years experience in all aspects of Golf Course management. A thorough knowledge of the relevant H,S & E regulations, Fine Turf Cultivation, PA1 & PA2 spraying and the Effective Utilisation of Modern GreenKeeping Machinery are mandatory. Also essential are the ability to lead and develop the existing GreenKeeping Team, to maintain budgetary control.

The Head GreenKeeper is also required to plan and execute small scale course improvement projects.

Salary £18k - £20k depending upon experience and qualifications

Interested applicants should apply in writing, with a full CV To:

Miss A M Askew, Club Secretary, Sandilands Golf Club
The Grange and Links Hotel, Sea Lane, Sandilands, Sutton on Sea, Lincs LN12 2RA

Or alternatively email your CV with a covering letter to: grangeandlinks@googlemail.com



CREWS HILL GOLF CLUB

Crews Hill Golf Club has recently purchased £200k of golf course machinery, has a new extensive greenkeeping facility under construction, in addition to the already existing facilities. Starting this September the greens team will be constructing a short game practice facility and an extensive putting green complex. This is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable construction experience.

Assistant Greenkeeper

The successful applicant will be qualified to at least NVQ2 and have at least 2 years experience in all aspects of Golf Course maintenance. Experience in construction of greens, tees & bunkers and use of mini digger is desirable but not essential. An understanding of the basic principles of golf course construction is, however, essential. A good understanding of good practice and the ability to work to a very high standard; this is a demanding but rewarding roll and a great opportunity for a forward thinking driven individual. A starting salary plus benefits will be offered to the successful candidate, subject to experience and qualifications, upon proving ability remuneration will be increased.

Apprentice Greenkeeper

Crews Hill Golf Club is looking for a hardworking and motivated individual hoping to start an exciting and rewarding career. If you are ambitious, have a genuine passion for green keeping and you are looking for opportunity, then this could be a perfect start to your career! An Apprenticeship programme is a fantastic combination of academic learning combined with practical application giving you the capability to work within the Horticulture Sector, training to NVQ level 2/3 and beyond is potentially available.

Interested applicants should apply in writing or by email with a full CV and covering letter no later than **Monday 16th September** to: Adam McColl, Course & Club Manager, Crews Hill Golf Club, Cattlegate Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 8AZ.

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puzzlepage answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

- 1) Daniel Sturridge
- 2) Steven Taylor
- 3) Jonathan Walters, Christian Benteke & Frank Lampard
- 4) Ian Holloway
- 5) Ricky van Wolfswinkel
- 6) Ross Barkley
- 7) Kevin Phillips
- 8) Olivier Giroud
- 9) Cech, Cole, Terry, Lampard

CROSSWORD

M	A	I	L	B	A	G	C	E	T	A	C	E	A	
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MONSTER SUDOKU

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

Monster Daily SuDoku: Fri 23-Aug-2013 hard

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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

Daily SuDoku: Fri 23-Aug-2013 very hard

The Back Nine

A column for writers and members to air and share their views on golf greenkeeping topics

Sean Sullivan's Scottish adventure continues as he finally joins up with The Open Support Team, spends a fortune on merchandise and embarks on an epic journey back to the States

Once in Edinburgh, it was back on a bus headed for our accommodation at the city's University. Now the official Open experience had begun.

Tuesday morning I was up at 3.30am, on the bus at 4am and ready to start preparing bunkers by 5am. It was wonderful to see all the operations going on at the same time we were raking – all manner of mowing, fine-tuning and security measures.

I was surprised how difficult it was to get the bunkers right - the sand was very different from the coal slag I have at my course. We all did the best we could, and were done by mid-morning. We were then able to walk around the course watching the practice rounds, head to the souvenir shop or watch the golf on TV. It was good to get the first day under my belt.

Second day was the same as the first, except for the Muirfield staff sweepers that followed us through the course. Once done, it was more golf and shopping for my members at Briarwood. I ended up purchasing roughly £900 of merchandise to take home. It was tough to find room for it all but I just managed to keep it under the weight limit for the flight home!

On Wednesday night the early morning prep team was informed that the Muirfield staff would take over from us as the dry conditions limited the amount of prep work required, which in turn freed up maintenance staff to do the bunker work.

We then got our match assignments for the first day of the tournament. There was a different air to The Open, this year. Not better, not worst, just different. Because of the restricted size of the first tee area, we did not have the same access to the players as we had last year but as I followed my first round match, I felt more at ease than I did last year as I knew what to expect. This allowed



Sean's home course The Briarwood in Billings, Montana

me to focus on how the players handled the hot, dry conditions. The players I followed were struggling to score well, and I ended up raking eight bunkers on the first day.

It's hard to describe how much of an honour it was to be on the Support Team. Having dinner and drinks with other BIGGA members and swapping stories of our work was brilliant! The second day was similar to the first, the young players I followed were struggling to score well as the conditions got drier and faster.

Of the six players I followed only one made the cut. I raked 12 bunkers the second day and once again it was one of those days that I'll remember for a long time. I didn't get a match on Saturday, so I was able to work the practice bunker and then watch the golf.

On Sunday I raked for the defending champion Ernie Els and Richard Sterne. Ernie eagled 17 which really energised the crowd and players – something I'll always remember. I then made it back to the marquee in time to see Mickelson win his first Open Championship.

That evening I was able to share a drink with new and old friends. I was

After 17 more hours of flying I got back home at 11.30pm - then I was up and out at 4.30am

about the author



Sean Sullivan is Golf Course Superintendent at the Briarwood Golf Course in Montana in Western USA. It is an 18-hole Championship course with hills, creeks and open rangeland, and is particularly notable for its coal slag black bunkers.

Sean has added many personal touches such as painting the flags of the nations in the UK on the club's ball washers, and has now twice been a member of BIGGA's Open Support Team.

not leaving until Tuesday morning, so I saw the sights of Edinburgh with some of the guys, before heading to the airport. I ended up trying to grab some sleep there but it turned out I was awake for two days straight, thank God for Red Bull!

After 17 more hours of flying I got back home at 11.30 pm - then I was up and out at 4.30 am to prepare for my own tournament at Briarwood, which was followed by two 17-hour work days.

The Open experience is not just raking bunkers behind the world's best players. It is visiting new places, meeting old friends, making new friends and creating long lasting memories.

There is no other place in the world I would rather be than at the Open and on the Open Support Team and there will be a new tattoo to follow!

The views expressed within this column are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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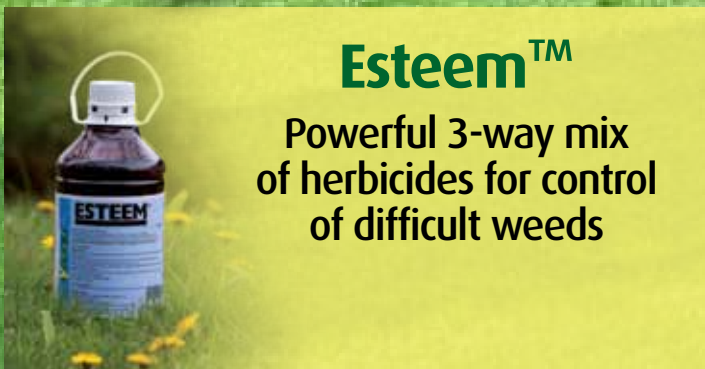
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