



A pair of lightweight fairway mowers, working together

that must be made; others being maintenance, the cost and consumption of fuel and the cost of manpower.

Maintenance is dependent upon the number of cutting reels on the unit. Generally reels need to be ground annually, with bottom blades replaced at the same time. Reels should be checked for adjustment each day and readjusted a least every week. The practice of backlapping will help keep blades keen.

Maintenance should be calculated by following recommended schedules based on hours worked. Though it is difficult to generalise, assuming your mower is operating for about 300 hours annually an average first year contract maintenance cost is around £1300 for a triplex, increasing to upwards of double that figure over five years (as the machine gets older), while for a 5-reel fairway unit the costs are close to £2000 annually, again increasing with age.

Manpower costs can accurately be linked with a mower's productivity. A rule of thumb is that a 30-inch reel cutting at five miles per hour will cut one acre each hour, allowing for overlapping, turning and getting to the site but excluding collection and disposal of clippings. A triplex will mow three acres per hour while a 5-reel unit will tackle five acres in the same time, a 7-reel unit seven acres.

The larger the area the more apparent the advantages of larger units becomes. For example, if you were to cut 30 acres twice each week with a triplex your operator would spend 20 hours on the job each week. Switching to a 5-reel unit reduces this time to 12 hours; a 7-unit to just nine hours each week.

From this you will see that increased unit size impacts favourably on man-hours worked. For example, a switch from triplex to 5-unit cutters will reduce man-hours by one third. Assuming labour costs at around £10 an hour, the savings would be considerable at £6,240 for the 5-unit against £10,400 for the triplex.

Clippings removal can add as much as double to the man-hours worked, thus a larger unit will allow more frequent cutting and the elimination or reduction of clippings removal.

Of course, larger units require more horsepower and fuel as the width of cut is increased, yet fuel consumption per acre is lower due to higher productivity. Favourable comparisons can be made by calculating the number of gallons of fuel consumed each hour. A petrol-powered triplex will consume an average 0.7 gallons per hour; a diesel engine on a 5-reel unit marginally more and a 7-gang unit with a diesel-powered water-cooled engine about 1.2 gallons per hour. Calculating the area to be mowed per hour per unit, figures will reveal that 5-and 7-units consume roughly one third less fuel per acre.

Total costs can therefore be arrived at by adding maintenance, man-hours, fuel and purchase costs, these providing a more accurate figure for the true cost of buying and operating a larger unit. While no two golf courses are the same, the lower costs of operating larger units can often provide you with justification for a larger unit. Your case will look healthier when you back it with facts and figures, providing sound reasoning for not only reducing overheads but, in many cases, adding improvements in overall course conditioning.

NEW SITESAFE

MODULAR SYSTEMS



...make all the difference to secure storage & accommodation units.



GARAGE



PAVILION



WORKSHOP

For further information please contact:

Irvine Weston on Tel: 01427 752058 or Cleveland Sitesafe Ltd. Park Farm, Dunsdale, Guisborough, Cleveland. TS14 6RQ. Tel: 01642 475009 or Fax: 01642 471036.



Ad Ref 56



Established 1896

BE PREPARED FOR WINTER

THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS ARE NOW IN STOCK:

- Winter Hole Cups and Cutters
- Dewmaster and Switches
- All styles of Bootwipers
- Dragbrush
- Winter Tee Mats
- Polyimide Squeegee

ALL ARE PROMOTIONAL ITEMS FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY!

TEL: 01494 79 46 46
FAX: 01494 79 47 47

Ad Ref 35

TOUGHEN UP YOUR APPROACH TO WEAR AND TEAR



A great new fibre for super-efficient rootzone stabilisation

LOKSANDTM
fibre

The stabilising influence

If wear and tear is knocking the stuffing out of your course, its time to toughen up your act with a new product from the world leaders in rootzone stabilisation fibres. The unique, crimped profile of LOKSANDTM fibre will bring back the bounce and give long-lasting durability to high-wear areas of turf.

Call Simon Senior for the very latest success story in sport.

Ad Ref 597

Plasticisers Limited Drighlington Bradford West Yorkshire BD11 1BY England. Tel: 0113 285 2202 Fax: 0113 285 3328 Website: www.plast-fibres.com

Past Chairman, John Crawford, is now Head Greenkeeper at Stirling Golf Club and is still enjoying some great success.

Stirling service



It is rare in these modern times, for the top professional or amateur events ever to venture away from new high profile golf courses, or even those few traditional clubs which have gathered reputations throughout the history of the game. Having said that, outside of The Open, the top pros now don't seem to even get a chance of visiting the traditional favourites. Think about it. It wasn't so long ago that the European Tour visited the likes of Sunningdale, Walton Heath or Fulford in York, but now it's modern venues like The Oxfordshire, Loch Lomond, Hanbury Manor, the Forest of Arden and huge venues like Wentworth which hold the big events.

Stirling service



Right: A magnificent view of Stirling from the course

Below: John Crawford watched over by Stirling Castle



Most of the top amateur events visit the likes of Ganton, Royal Porthcawl, and Hollinwell, which simply drip with tradition and history so that's why it was so refreshing to see a top British amateur event being staged at a fine members' club making its debut in the top echelons of Championship golf. Stirling GC, in Braveheart country, is almost equidistant from Edinburgh and Glasgow and last month Europe's top amateur women converged on the parkland course, watched over by the famous castle, for the British Ladies' Stroke-play Championship.

Despite a summerful of lousy weather, which didn't offer up any concessions to the ladies the course was a credit to the club and to the Head Greenkeeper, former BIGGA National Chairman John Crawford, and his team.

"We'd been working seriously towards the Championship for at least the last year and the boys certainly enjoyed preparing the course for them and definitely wanted to impress," explained John.

"We had the greens stimping about nine or nine and a half which isn't bad for an inland course in the summer. If the weather had been better we would have been able to top dress the greens and have a drier cut which would have allowed us to present the course a little tidier," he added, before revealing that the work was done by a staff of four including himself, one YTS trainee and one summer worker.

Their achievement is all the more laudable as the course was not closed at all in the run up the Championship.

The entire club lapped up the



week with members offering to caddie and ball spot while one of the pre-Championship favourites was local member and former British Champion Alison Rose.

"It is undoubtedly the biggest event the club has ever hosted," said John.

The club, while not as old as the castle which overlooks the course, has a fine and long standing pedigree. Having said that, there is a record of golf balls being bought for King James IV in 1505, to play on the land, which now forms the golf course. Young Tom Morris was its first professional and it was the four-time Open Champion who turned the original seven hole design which had opened in 1869 to a nine holer. Another legendary name responsible for extending it to 18 holes was five-time Open Champion James Braid, of the

Great Triumvirate, who undertook the work in 1938.

So that's two huge names in the history of the game. Anyone else? Well, how about three-time Open winner Sir Henry Cotton, who redesigned the course in 1968 in readiness for the Club's centenary? He also said that irrigation for the greens was a top priority and on this recommendation it was installed at the same time as the other alterations.

There can't be many golf courses around which have been designed and altered by the winners of a grand total of 12 Open Championships.

The golf course itself offers some interesting posers for its green-keeping staff.

"Probably two thirds of the course is built on rock, and on the higher parts, the rock actually

comes through the surface and has become a feature of the course" explained John.

The 3rd hole is actually called Rocking Stone after the stone which sits behind the green.

To the uninitiated, that would seem to be a recipe for jarred wrists and broken Calloways but the real problems are caused to John and his staff, with John finding this out in spectacular fashion not long after he started.

"I decided to vertidrain the greens but little did I know that around the aprons of the green some of the irrigation pipes were only about three inches below the surface. When I put the irrigation system on in the spring it was frightening. I certainly found out where the shallow pipes were," he said laughing at the memory although probably not at the time.

Outside of three of the greens the other 15 were all constructed out of the existing land.

"We have every maintenance characteristic included in the greens. The 1st was reconstructed 25 years ago and is a pure sand green, the 9th and 13th were reconstructed about seven years ago, similar to the USGA spec, but the remainder are local soil, which was just scrapped into a pile and levelled out."

The piece de resistance however is the 14th green which must have about three different types of construction in it alone.

"They must have kept adding to the green using a different construction method each time. When you shift the hole sometimes you are in pure sand, sometimes sand and loam and on other occasions pure loam."

Equipment Inventory

- Kubota GC 36 Tractor
- Kubota 2850 Tractor +
Front Loader
- Massey Ferguson 135
Tractor
- Huxtruk + Top Dresser
- Toro Reelmaster 5100
- Toro GM 3200 + Tee and
Vert Cut Units
- Ransomes 160D GM +
Tee Units
- 4 Ransomes Super Certes
- 3 Ransomes Marquis
- Sisis Autorotorake
- Allen National
- Ryan GA30
- Ransomes Hydraulic
Gang Mowers
- Allett Gang Mowers
- 2 Sisis Spikers
- Royer Shredder
- Royer Powerscreen
- CP Sprayer
- Vertidrain
- Wessex Sweeper
- Sisis Fairway Spiker
- 2 Trailers
- 4 Stimmers
- 2 Flymos
- Cushman Dumpbox
- 3 Knapsack Sprayers



Photo: David J. Whyte

While it must have him tearing his hair out John hasn't lost his sense of humour. To the question "How do you ensure that the playing characteristics are the same?" he just laughs and says "I could say 'With great skill' but a lot of the time it is more luck than judgement."

"We have to treat each one as a separate entity with the two newest greens being treated completely different from the rest...except the 1st. It keeps the job interesting."

John, who is a native of Aberdour, in Fife, was BIGGA's National Chairman in '93-'94 and has nothing but fond memories of his year in office.

His career has taken him from Aberdour where he served his apprenticeship before moving first to Glenrothes and then on to Dunfermline GC where he was Head Greenkeeper from 1975 to 1990. During the early part of his year as Chairman he was Course Manager at Hagg's Castle in Glasgow, before arriving in the his-

toric town of Stirling.

"I would say that my year as Chairman was the highlight of my greenkeeping career. It must be as it is a great honour to be representing all this country's greenkeepers. You certainly do feel that and not just BIGGA members but all greenkeepers in the country, especially when you visit other countries."

"The one and only time I ever wore a kilt was at the GCSAA Banquet during the Conference and Show in Dallas. Wear a kilt there, and you're made!"

He also feels that he came out of his year a better greenkeeper having attended any number of education seminars regionally, nationally and internationally.

"Anyone who didn't improve as a greenkeeper would have had to have missed something. You are mixing with so many people from this country and abroad and the exchange of practical knowledge was superb."

While he is convinced that the standard of greenkeeping is

improving all the time he does feel that the fun has gone out of the industry.

"It is much more serious now and greenkeepers are under much more pressure from their employers with golf much more popular and clubs wanting their courses open 365 days a year."

You get the impression that despite this John, who his friends will be delighted to know has now recovered to full rude health, will always have time to share a laugh.

Just like the one he left me with.

"During my year as Chairman the Scottish Hayter Final was played, by coincidence, at Stirling. We decided to stop off, me still in my Chairman's red blazer, at the Granada Service Station in Stirling on the way home for something to eat. When I got to the head of the queue the guy on the till said 'It's OK, bus drivers get it for nothing'."

"So if you want a free meal wear a red jacket to a Granada Service Station," he laughs again.

Membership benefits

Membership has experienced tremendous growth since 1987 when the amalgamated membership figure from the three associations stood at 1,200. Eleven years later, in 1998, membership had exploded to a record breaking 6,300 members and is still recording year on year growth.

Membership is not just for greenkeepers, it is open to anyone connected with the fine turf industry and BIGGA now has three membership categories:

Greenkeeper membership - for anyone who is employed on a full-time basis as a greenkeeper at a golf club.

Associate membership - for anyone who is not employed as a greenkeeper but is involved or works within the fine turf industry.

Student membership - for people studying full-time at college for a qualification in greenkeeping.

These categories ensure that everyone can contribute to the profession and benefit from the many services BIGGA has to offer.

Each membership category benefits from:-

A monthly copy of of BIGGA's award winning magazine 'Greenkeeper International' full of news, views, reviews, updates, section information, recruitment advertisements and editorial features. With a circulation of over 9,000, this is THE magazine for anyone working in the fine turf industry.

Social activities and networking:-

Members of BIGGA also become members of their local section. Each section organises events throughout the year varying from seminars and lectures in winter to golfing days and outings in summer. This is an excellent way to establish your own contacts and network.



For more information on the many other benefits that BIGGA membership can offer you, and for an application form, contact Tracey Maddison, Membership Services Officer on 01347 833800

SHARPES INTERNATIONAL



A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE IN SEED FROM TEE TO GREEN



IMPROVE DISEASE RESISTANCE

IMPROVE SUMMER COLOUR

REDUCE MOWING NEEDS

Sharpes International Seeds Limited, Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 7HA. Tel: 01529 304511. Fax: 01529 303908. e-mail: sharpes@dial.pipex.com

Ad Ref 453

WHITEMOSS AMENITIES

ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF

ADRIAN MASTERS
WHO WILL MANAGE SALES OF ALL THEIR

- TOP DRESSINGS • ROOT ZONES
- RED-PATH • WHITE BUNKER SAND • SPORTS SANDS
- GRAVELS & AGGREGATES • SOILS & PEATS
- ALL GRADES OF BARK PRODUCTS ETC
- THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN ENGLAND AND SOUTH WALES

Sales Office Tel: 01270 213456/211149
Sales Office Fax: 01270 253772
128 Crewe Road, Haslington,
Crewe, Cheshire CW1 5RQ

Adrian Masters: 07971 229068
Mike Crabtree: 07970 815146
Andy Law: 07970 752034



Ad Ref 606

North of the border

Wednesday, November 11 & Thursday November 12, The Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston Showground, Edinburgh. Opening Times: Wednesday 10am to 4.30pm Thursday 9.30am to 3pm.



Scotsturf is an annual event which Scottish greenkeepers have "ring fenced" in their diaries from very early on indeed and only a dire emergency would keep them away from keeping the date. Coming at the end of the growing season - although the seasonal element of the British weather seems to have been consigned to history if the last two years are any measure - the show is an ideal opportunity to assess new or replacement machinery or take a look at the seed, fertiliser or chemical products which are currently on the market.

EXPERTS RECOMMEND REGULAR LIGHT DRESSINGS OF GREENS, TEES AND FAIRWAYS

ULTRA PLANT

HAVE THE MACHINES TO DO IT



UB30S
Spinner Top Dresser.
Spreads to 5 metres.
Ideal for regular light dressings of Greens and Tees.



HL40
Highlift Trailer.
For loading top dressers, gravel/sand hoppers, bunkers, etc.

UB50
Precision Spreader.
Truck mounted or tractor towed for greens and tees.



UB60S
Spinner/Loader
Fairway Dresser.
The ultimate dual purpose machine. Spreads to 11 metres. For loading top dressers etc.



FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:
TEL: 01868 747582
FAX: 01868 746387

ULTRA PLANT



SCOTTISH
GRASS
MACHINERY



Scottish Grass Machinery distributing Ransomes, E-Z-GO, Iseki, Ryan, Cushman and Jacobsen throughout Scotland under the **TEXTRON Turf Care and Specialty Products** banner

TEXTRON
TURF CARE AND SPECIALTY PRODUCTS

SGM House, Belleknowes, Inverkeithing, Fife KY11 1HZ
Tel: 01383 413333 Fax: 01383 418866

Ad Ref 604

Why go to Scotsturf?

Two of Edinburgh's best known Course Managers were put on the spot and asked Why Do You Attend Scotsturf? There answers were quite illuminating!



Steve Dixon, Course Manager, Kingsknowe GC, Edinburgh.

* To discuss new contracts and budget prices for the following year.

* To allow my staff a day out at the Show - a wee thanks for the hard work during the season. This is our equivalent of the Highland Show.

* To view any new products for turf maintenance - fungicides, fertilisers etc

* To meet friends who you might not see for one year to another.

* To view any new machinery products and discuss with dealers any problems on existing products.

* To check out which stand has the best promotions girls - although I must say BTME is slightly ahead in this department!

Wiedemann

Terra Spike Speed Link



Triplex Rotary Mower



NEW

Material Collection Systems



Please visit our stand on the East balcony and view our machinery range

Wiedemann (UK) Ltd
Stoney Brae, Potterhill, Paisley PA2 7TG
Tel: 0141 884 2552 Fax: 0141 884 6252

Ad Ref 326

NEW FOR 1999

GREEN-RELEAF™

ORGANIC GRANULAR FERTILISER

SCOTSTURF
Stand number
42

INOCULATED WITH BENEFICIAL MICROBES

- Unique triple action extended release
- Combines NPK, minor elements and complex organic substances
- Available as 15-4-7 and 8-2-4

CONTACT YOUR EXCLUSIVE UK DISTRIBUTOR

Midlands, North and Scotland
RICHARD AITKEN LTD
Glasgow: 0141 4400033
Yorkshire: 01977 881155



South, London and South West
AVONCROP amenity PRODUCTS
Bracknell: 01344 426600
Bristol: 01934 820868

Green Release Europe, 102a Longton Road, Barlaston, Staffs, England ST12 9AU
TEL: 01782 373878 FAX: 01782 373763

Ad Ref 563