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Course Feature

A Break with Success

Scott MacCallum travelled to Robin Hood country to meet Ryun Holden, a Course Manager who has made the most of his opportunities.

If we are honest we all sometimes feel in a bit of a rut and hanker after taking the plunge and doing something completely different for a while. Thanks perhaps to the need to keep paying the mortgage most people resist the urge, soldier on and eventually work it out of their system. Others do make a life changing decision and head off in a completely new direction with varying degrees of success. Others treat it more as a sabbatical, a chance to spring clean the mind, and return to the profession they left with renewed vigour.



The current view from the 1st tee

About five years ago Ryun Holden, First Assistant at his local club near Blackburn, decided to take a break from greenkeeping and spend a year abroad. He gave up his job and spent six months in France and six months in Spain working in bars, learning to play the guitar and indulging in his love of art. He even managed to sell a few paintings.

You could say that it was a voyage of self discovery during which he discovered that he actually missed greenkeeping. So on his return he trawled the pages of Greenkeeper International for First Assistant and Deputy jobs. With his first interview he came up trumps and landed the position of Deputy Course Manager at Oakmere GC, near Nottingham, a significant set-up from the position he had left over a year before. There was more, however, as six months later the Course Manager, Andy Bowey, decided to return to his West Country roots and Ryun was promoted to Course Manager.

Since then, although it doesn't remove the possibility that without the break he may have achieved equal success, he has become a veritable walking advert for taking a year out as he has gone about his job with an energy, vigour and no little intelligence. He has designed and built three new holes; overseen the club's successful application of planning approval for the removal of around 2,000 trees; secured lottery funding for a heathland generation scheme; reduced the club's on-course disease by 100%; built a golf academy for the club's team of professionals; built or rebuilt 80 bunkers and much, much more.

Oakmere, in the Sherwood Forest area of Nottinghamshire, is an unusual club. It is owned by a lady descended from an Admiral who fought in the Battle of Waterloo. A hillside overlooking the club is bare but for groups of copses which are laid out

exactly how the battalions lined up during that famous battle. It was her husband's rank of Commander which provided the name for the 9 hole course.

Oakmere's Course Manager was lured into greenkeeping by the age old route of being a young golfer who worked on his own course Darwen GC in the summer and being bitten by the bug. He is a 10 handicap golfer.

"I supposed I may have regretted not continuing with my A Levels and going on to college or university but as it has turned out I became a Course Manager at 25 and I may not have achieved as much had I got a degree," said Ryun, whose father is a golf professional based in Switzerland.

He thoroughly enjoyed his time at his local club Darwen rising to the position of First Assistant, working under the late David Young, but had concluded that there was no real possibility at that time of promotion when the opportunity arose for him to spend the time abroad.

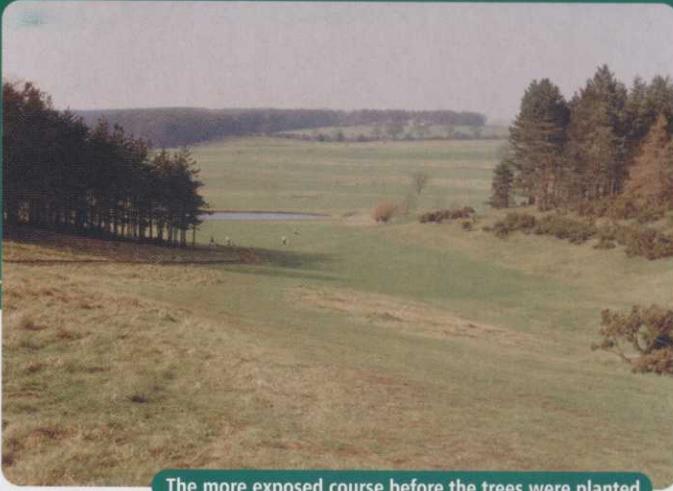
"I wasn't sure that I'd return to greenkeeping and with my love of art and golf was contemplating moving into golf course architecture and spoke with the Institute of Golf Course Architects about their diploma course."

However after a tremendously enjoyable 12 months he realised that he missed greenkeeping.

"I don't regret going for one minute and it got me out of the small town mentality I'd developed where you think you'll drop off the end of the world when you leave the outskirts of your home town."

Having secured the Deputyship at Oakmere Ryun found himself riding a very steep learning curve with Andy Bowey throwing him in at the deep end.

"Andy was a very good manager and had me involved in disciplinary matters and



The more exposed course before the trees were planted



The Oakmere Team

the budget from day one - all the business side of things which I'd never dealt with before. He got me up to speed very quickly."

Before he headed back to the West Country and a Course Manager's job in Taunton, where he would be closer to his family, Andy put Ryun forward as a potential successor and before he knew it, having been at the club for no more than six months, he was Course Manager.

Oakmere's Director of Golf, Daryl St John Jones, together with Andy, had made massive strides in improving both the course itself and the profitability of it as a business and when Ryun took over as Course Manager he had a superb platform from which to work.

"The membership has increased from around 300 to around 1000 and Andy had started an extensive tree planting programme under the guidance of Eamon Wall Associates. Over 20,000 broad leaved trees indigenous to the Sherwood Forest area have been planted and once they are established it will make for a superb treelined course," explained Ryun.

Ironically, it was that huge tree planting programme which caused a few problems for Ryun when it came to putting into practice the re-routing of the 18 hole Admiral's course.

"The course had the 9th green and 10th hole at the furthest point from the clubhouse and it was decided that the club would benefit from three loops of nine holes. That would involve rerouting the course and Daryl and I looked at the wood in the middle of the site and decided we could put three holes through the wood and achieve our aim of creating three loops of nine. By bringing mature trees into play we would also be producing an instant 'wow' factor.

Ryun applied to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence but was told that for every tree they took out they would have to replace it with another.

"I explained that we'd just planted 20,000 trees and that there was no room for any more but I was told that the replacement couldn't be retrospective and with three and a half hectares and around 2,000 trees to remove it just wasn't feasible."

Plan B involved acquiring planning permission from the Sherwood and Newark Council which would override the need for a felling licence and again Ryun was heavily involved in the planning process.

"It took a great deal of work and I was delighted to have Eamon Wall's help throughout. Meetings with the Council were held on site and Eamon's environmental surveys were instrumental in our success as we created the argument that because we would be cutting sections out of the wood to create the three holes we would

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Course Feature



The dense woodland before work began

be producing more woodland perimeter and as most wildlife lives on the woodland edge we would be increasing the amount of habitat. We were also to be thinning the woodland which would extend its life."

Approval was duly granted and Ryun produced another master stroke by making the extensive project self financing.

"I negotiated with the company who did the removal that they could sell the timber," said Ryun, who also acted as the Project Foreman.

For a man whose wish had been to become a golf course architect the opportunity to design three new holes for the course was a dream come true.

"It wasn't easy as, although we could look at the forest and agree what the best route for a hole was it wasn't until we got right in among it that we could actually appreciate the nature of the land."

However Ryun produced a beautifully drawn plan which is still on display in the clubhouse for the two new par-4s and one par-3 which as well as giving the "wow" factor achieve the aim of producing the three loops of nine which would be so useful to the club.

The arduous task of tree and stump removal began in September '01 and the holes are due to be opened officially on May 26.

The layout will therefore be the first six holes remaining the same, the 10th will become the 7th, the 11th will be the new 8th, the 9th is one of the new holes as is the 10th while existing holes take you to the 16th which is Ryun's new par-3 which he hopes will become the club's new signature hole with the existing 17th and 18th bringing the course home.

You can tell just by chatting to Ryun how delighted he is to have been given the chance to combine his golfing, artistic and greenkeeping skills to such good effect.

However it was his, previously underutilised administrative skills which were again put to good use when he won lottery funding for the club's heathland creation scheme.



The tree clearance provided some outstanding potential

"We previously had grant aid from DEFRA for a heathland stewardship scheme but this was subsequently withdrawn and, as I was keen to continue the work we had started in creating heathland, I approached the Sherwood Forest Trust, a wonderful body who run the Sherwood Initiative, which had secured lottery funding covering the whole Sherwood Forest area.

"As there is now only 10% of the heathland in Nottinghamshire as there was 100 years ago the funding was available for regeneration and as golf courses are a prime target as areas where heathland can be created."

There was a great deal of paperwork to produce in support of the club's bid for funding and Ryun spend a great deal of time reading up on the matter to make his case as strong as possible but he was rewarded with £70,000 over five years.

"There was more paper work involved than with the Stewardship scheme but with the Sherwood Forest Initiative lottery grant they were not looking for instant results."

The project which is on the 9 hole Commander Course involves the introduction of acid grasses - wavy hair grasses and fescues - while they are also scraping off top soil and putting down heather seed and brash.

"We are getting good results and a lot of germination which augers well for the project. It's hard work but we are getting there."

The team, there are six and a half staff members for the 27 holes on a huge site has also built around 30 new bunkers and renovated the remainder on the course as well as been involved in a drastic change to the day to day management programme of the course. In addition they have produced over a kilometer of buggy paths and some unobtrusive greenkeeper paths.

Despite all the design and building work carried out at the club Ryun still feels most proud of his course management success.

"I would say that the greatest achievement since I've been Course Manager has been to reduce disease by 100%. When I took over we were spraying fungicide once a month for Fusarium and Red Thread but after the first seven months we have only



Bunker before the improvements



Bunker after the improvements



Ryun stands on the tee of the par 3 he designed

sprayed once more.

"I changed the fertiliser programme from once in spring and again at the back end of the year to putting on a 13-0-46 mix once every five weeks, but at a very low rate - only about five bags for the 27 greens and putting green etc.

"I'm very much aware of the use of water and I've read a lot of Jim Arthur and agree with his thinking. We purchased a hollow corer and have increased the amount of aeration we do significantly. We hollow core twice a year, vertidrain once and needle tine through the summer and we've now got the greens in a healthy state."

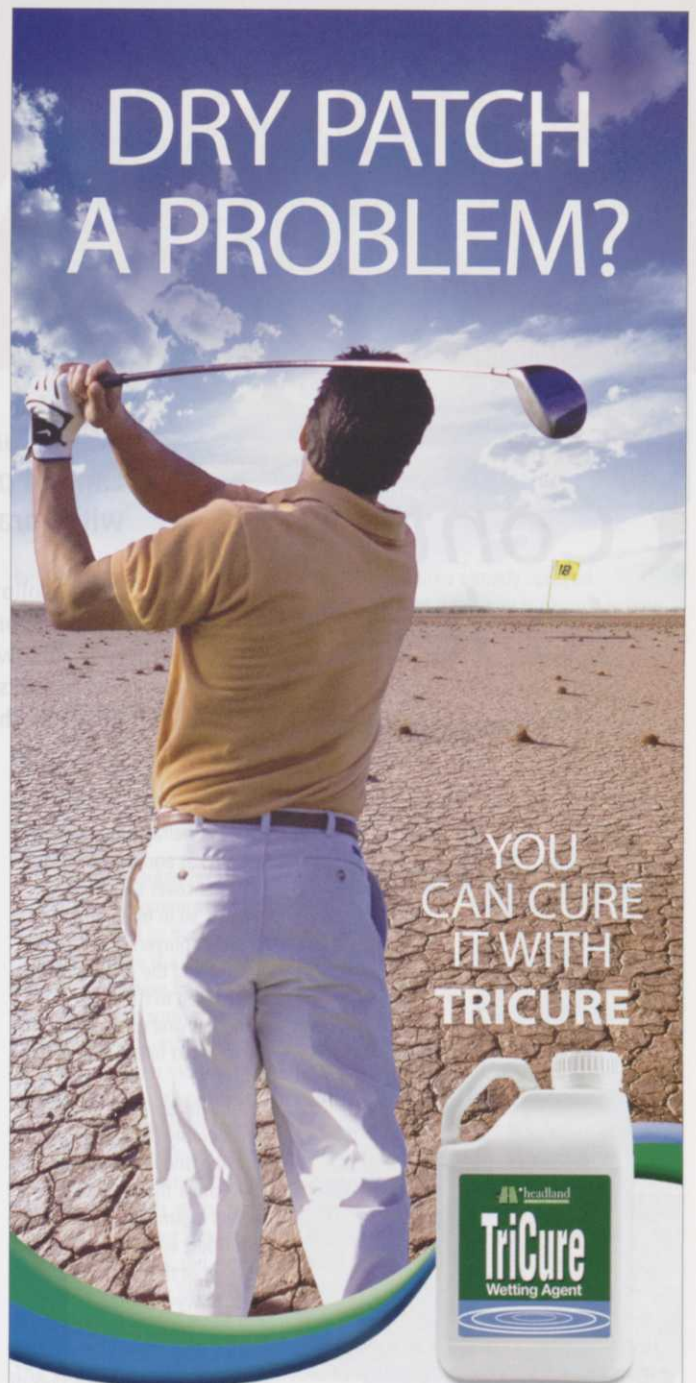
The club has a refreshingly positive way of looking at the game and thanks to Daryl is attempting to secure the membership of the future.

"We built an Academy for the professional staff complete with a long bunker which can take up to 10 at any one time for group lessons; a small chipping green; a deep and a shallow bunker and, of course, the floodlit driving range but we have also built a Tri Golf course for the under 5s.

"They use plastic clubs and big holes and the pros teach them rules and etiquette. We painted blue areas for water and brown for bunkers so that they can learn the rule for whatever situation they are in - two club lengths, dropping a ball etc. They are the members of tomorrow."

The feeling at Oakmere is of a club on the move - there are tentative plans for another nine holes upon which Ryun hopes to extend his design portfolio further - and while it will take time for many of the trees to establish themselves members and visitors can expect to see continuous on-going development and improvement.

Ryun's artistic ability was put to good use



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SPRAYERS AND SPRAYING

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Continue to learn

Bill Taylor, Application Technology specialist for Hardi Limited provides some pointers on keeping up to date with spraying regulations

Do the following terms mean anything to you: LERAP; Groundwater Directive; or Voluntary Initiative? They should. Because they are just some of a whole raft of new regulations that have come into force in recent years governing sprayers and spraying. Mainly they have been driven by the need to reduce water contamination.



All sprayer operators are required to wear protective clothing, including lightweight overalls, rubber or Nitrile gloves.

Most sprayer operators are required to hold Certificates of Competence.

The bulk of these regulations have been drawn-up and targeted at agriculture. They do however cover spraying in general, so in most cases amenity sprayers are not exempt and the rules need to be adhered to if course managers and greenkeepers are to avoid falling foul of the law.

Amenity spraying differs considerably from agricultural spraying and latest figures for 2000 show that the industry spends around £13 million on pesticides, which is a mere four per cent of that used on arable land. However, amenity spraying is still subject to the same scrutiny, if not more so in view of the fact that the bulk of spraying work is conducted in the public eye, and is potentially more risky to subsequent drinking water quality than where applied to agricultural land.

For example, until a few years ago atrazine and simazine were extensively used because of their long-term effectiveness as weedkillers. However it was found that when used on hard surfaces such as pavements, or on materials such as railway ballast, they would move through drains or the soil into watercourses. Water authorities would then have to remove the chemicals before the water could be used for public consumption.

VOLUNTARY INITIATIVE

One of the latest and most important schemes to come into force is the Voluntary Initiative, and it is something that all managers need to be aware of.

In recent years, environmental and political groups have pushed for a considerable reduction in pesticide usage, achieved by the implementation of a pesticide tax, which would cost the amenity sector dear. The Voluntary Initiative is a half-way house agreed with the Government which provides all those involved in spraying the opportunity to put their own house in order and minimise the environmental impact of pesticides.

Introduced initially for a five-year period, the scheme as its name suggests is entirely voluntary and consists of seven key areas covering:

- The maintenance, checking and testing of sprayers
 - The review of handling and filling sites, and practices when filling
 - The training and continuing professional development of operators
 - That essential best practice is followed
 - That there is full compliance with LERAPS
 - That conservation areas are identified, protected and enhanced
 - That there is a complete pesticide management plan
- Information sheets on over 1000 products will be created by April 2006 as part of this.

SPRAYER TESTING

One of the main elements in helping show that pesticides are being applied correctly is being able to show that sprayers are accurate, safe and maintained correctly. Which obviously has management benefits as well.

The Sprayer Test introduced by the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) is again voluntary, but in the three years it has been operational has shown just how many badly-maintained sprayers there are and how much money is wasted as a result. The test covers all sprayer aspects – checking for worn or leaking hoses through to inaccurate pressure gauges and worn jets, which alone account for 36 per cent of failures and typically lead to over-application.

OPERATOR SAFETY AND TRAINING

Under the Control of Pesticides Regulations, 1997, Schedule 3, there is a requirement that anybody born after 31 December 1964 who uses pesticides should possess the appropriate Certificates of Competence issued by the National Proficiency Test Council (NPTC). In addition, anybody applying pesticides on land that is not their own or that they occupy, or their employer's, such as a contractor, should also have a Certificate.

In the first instance, all those who are eligible require a PA1 certificate, which covers aspects such as safe handling of chemicals, safe storage, appropriate clothing and legislation, etc.

Having gained this, a second certificate dependent upon the type of sprayer being used is then required, which covers calibration and safe use of the sprayer. For greenkeepers this will either be a PA2, which covers tractor-mounted and pedestrian sprayers, or a PA6 for those using hand-held applicators, including knapsacks, compression sprayers and granular applicators.

Any sprayer operator is also required to wear appropriate safety clothing. This should include lightweight Tyvek disposable overalls, a face shield or goggles and ideally rubber footwear. In addition an operator should also use an apron when mixing chemical, because if any is spilled on the apron it can be quickly washed off, whereas if chemical is spilled on overalls they will have to be disposed of immediately. In addition rubber or Nitrile gloves must also be worn, not rigger-type gloves which are sometimes sold for chemical handling, as these contain absorbent cloth.

THE GREEN CODE AND LERAP

To protect aquatic life from pesticide contamination by keeping harmful pesticide sprays out of watercourses, under the Green Code certain pesticides can only be used near watercourses if a Buffer Zone of generally five metres is left unsprayed. This information, clearly marked on the product label, applies to both tractor and hand-held sprayers.

LERAPS or, to give it its proper name, Local Environmental Risk Assessment for Pesticides Scheme, came into effect in 1999 as a supplement to the Green Code.

For certain pesticides, this allows for the statutory Buffer Zone to be reduced so long as the spraying equipment used has been proven to reduce spray drift and given a 1, 2 or 3 Star rating.

This determines by how much the Buffer Zone can be reduced, with 3 Star being the highest which allows the Buffer Zone to be reduced to one metre.

Generally this applies to specific nozzles. The exception is the Hardi Defender shrouded boom, the only spray boom to have a 3 Star rating.

Under LERAP, any pesticide requiring a Buffer Zone will be divided into one of two categories that are clearly stated on the product label. Category A pesticides are those that contain organophosphates or synthetic pyrethroid insecticides for which no reduction is allowed. Category B are those that don't. Therefore they can be applied closer to watercourses so long as a LERAP is conducted.

It must be noted that, where a product carrying a Buffer Zone is used near a watercourse, it is a legal obligation to conduct a LERAP, even if it is a Category A product and no reduction is allowed. The LERAP has to be done before the area is sprayed and follows a set procedure taking into account information such as the site, flora and reason for treatment, plus the product used, sprayer, weather conditions and time of application. From this the Buffer Zone can be calculated.

SHROUDED BOOMS

The introduction of shrouded booms for amenity sprayers, such as the Hardi Defender, have LERAP benefits and provide numerous other management advantages too.

One of the biggest benefits for users from totally enclosing the spray boom in a protective shroud is the ability to spray in conditions that normally would not allow the use of an open boom. The ability to better plan spraying operations for first thing in the morning without being dependent upon still conditions ensures improved timeliness.

Also, because spray drift is virtually eliminated, spray rates can be reduced. In addition, containing spray in a protective shroud gives considerable Health and Safety benefits to the operator and also any bystanders or neighbouring properties.

GROUNDWATER REGULATIONS

Enforced by the Environment Agency, the Groundwater Regulations are designed to provide enhanced protection for groundwater. Basically they make it an offence to dispose of certain substances, including sprayer washings, in a way that may result in groundwater pollution, or to knowingly permit this to happen.

This means essentially that no longer can spray operators just flush spray washings down the drain or onto waste ground.

Under these regulations, unless a specific wash system is fitted to the sprayer, when rinsing out the sprayer the operator must fully-fill the tank with water and then dispose of these washings in a responsible manner – either into purpose-

All new sprayers are required to have a chemical induction hopper. Sprayers above 15-litres capacity must also have a clean water tank.



Shrouded boom sprayers allow spraying to be carried out in a controlled manner.

built holding tanks or sprayed back out over the area already sprayed.

To fully-fill the tank and respray an area such as a fairway is obviously time-consuming and inconvenient. However, using a purpose-built washing system, such as the tank flushing nozzle that Hardi fits to larger amenity sprayers, it is possible to use only 10 per cent of the tank capacity for flushing, so saving time, water and need of an area for spraying-out.

SPRAYER SAFETY

In addition to the introduction of environmental and operator safety regulations, tighter rules have also come into operation covering sprayers themselves.

Purchasers should be aware that any new sprayer sold in the UK now has to meet the requirements of BS EN907, which lays down what safety features should be fitted to new sprayers as standard and not as optional extras.

Among these is a requirement that all new sprayers must be fitted with a chemical induction hopper that avoids the need for the operator to have to stretch over the sprayer tank to pour chemical into the filling hole. Where this is not possible, for instance on smaller sprayers, the height from ground to filling hole should be no more than 150cm and horizontal reach no more than 30cm.

The standard also requires that any sprayer with a tank capacity of more than 15 litres must also be fitted with a clean water tank of at least 15 litres capacity.

Additionally, tests are currently being conducted with a view to introducing an international standard to improve knapsack-sprayer safety. This standard will cover aspects such as sprayer stability when filling; leakage both when upright or when the sprayer is on its side; avoiding spillage when filling; and reduction of internal residues and external surface deposits.

Clearly an article like this can only cover the various regulations in broad-brush terms. Course managers and greenkeepers wanting more details can contact the following organisations:

The Voluntary Initiative: www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk

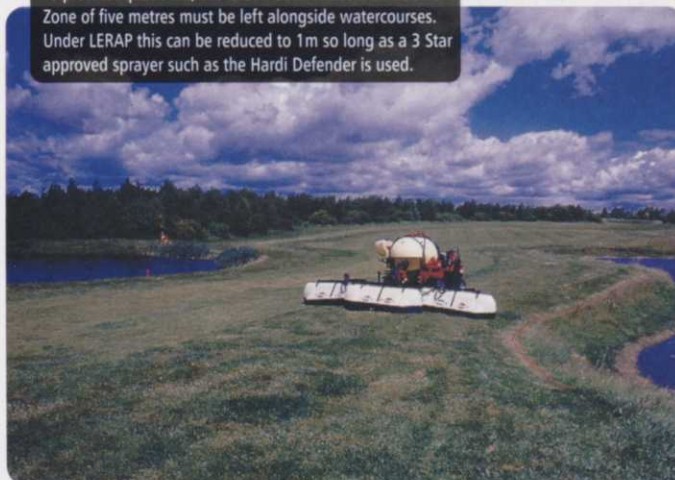
Sprayer Testing: www.aea.uk.com

National Proficiency Tests Council: www.nptc.org.uk

LERAP: www.defra.gov.uk

Groundwater Regulations: www.defra.gov.uk

To protect aquatic life, the Green Code states that a Buffer Zone of five metres must be left alongside watercourses. Under LERAP this can be reduced to 1m so long as a 3 Star approved sprayer such as the Hardi Defender is used.



Safe as Houses

Every year the theft of equipment costs hundreds of millions of pounds and there is no sign of these figures declining even with all the modern security technology that is now available. As a result insurance companies are now stipulating that owners take stringent measures to protect their machinery from being stolen. The most sophisticated security systems can be in place but if someone fails to set it correctly or to switch it on, it is useless. In addition, to having systems to protect against theft every member of staff needs to be made aware of the importance of security and being vigilant.



Seek professional advice
CCTV cameras are a deterrent

As far as golf courses are concerned, there are generally three types of crime committed involving machinery.

1. Stealing thousands of pounds worth of grass cutting equipment is very likely to be done by professional thieves and requires a number of individuals and some very careful planning. There is also the problem of disposing of their ill-gotten gains so in most cases the large thefts will be done to order.
2. Then there are the opportunists thieves. They see a chance and grab what is available. Smaller pieces of machinery tools and easily transported items are their targets. These can be disposed of easily through outlets like car boot sales.
3. Finally there is vandalism. Persons break into a building, especially if it is isolated, and destroy machines and other items just for the fun of it.

On top of losing valuable equipment there is the trauma of having been broken into and all the other inconveniences that go with the aftermath of a burglary.

Consider the following scenario. Imagine a local golf course is staging a major competition and during the week preceding this event a gang of thieves break into the main machinery store. The problems this nightmare would throw up can be devastating for all involved. First to go will be staff moral as they struggle to find equipment to maintain the high standards the players have come to expect. The insurance company, in most cases will cover the cost of new equipment but there still may be a shortfall in cash. The period taken to settle a claim could take weeks rather than days. Considerable time is taken up dealing with the necessary paperwork and helping the police. The repercussions are likely to continue for a long time. When the insurance premium next comes up for renewal the fact a robbery has taken place will reflect in the new figures.

While there is not the remotest possibility that any premises can be made a 100% secure or that someone will not take an opportunity to steal equipment, a great deal can be done to prevent and reduce the possibilities of a crime. To achieve this means working closely with the local police.

I recently put this into practise by visiting a golf course with a Crime Reduction Officer.

The officer started by saying that any crime prevention methods he made must be appropriate, realistic and most importantly cost effective. Prior to giving any advice he warns that a club may be under legal restrictions such as Building and/or Planning Regulations, Health & Safety and the Occupiers Liability Act 1984. This last act covers owners responsibilities, to any visitor to the property (including burglars) to ensure their safety.

Crime Reduction Officers use the 'Onion Peeling Principal' when conducting a security survey; they start at the outside and work in to the risk target.

BOUNDARIES

These will be extensive on most courses and are generally made up of a variety of barriers in the form of fences and hedges, which need to be maintained in good repair. Where applicable "Private Property" and "No Trespassing" signs should be erected. The positioning of these clearly informs the public where they cannot go and assist staff if there is a need to challenge a member of the public. Strangers loitering about could be harmless; on the other hand they may be up to no good. On courses where there are public rights of way, such as footpaths or bridle ways, these need to be clearly marked

Everyone should keep on the look out for any vehicle parked up in isolated areas. It might just be an amorous courting couple or a thief checking out the lie of the land and watching your working practices to determine when is the best time to strike. Even if this situation is not related to the course, by making a note of the vehicle's registration number might turn out to be valuable if a nearby house being broken into or a far worse crime is committed.

Roland Taylor gives some invaluable advice on making your maintenance facility as secure as possible

GATES AND ENTRANCES

Gates need to be locked, especially at night. Check the hinges. These should be capped to prevent the gate being lifted off using a car jack. For open entrances and driveways raised locking posts are the answer. Alarms and lighting are other deterrents (these are dealt with later).

OUTDOOR PARKING AREAS

It is best to keep as little as possible equipment in these areas, especially vehicles, ATVs, tractors and trailers. If this is not possible any machinery left on these sites needs securing using lock downs, ground anchors, wheel clamps or steering locks. Always remember to remove all keys and on some units it could be worth fitting immobilisers, alarms and trackers. Always use top quality chains and padlocks.

IDENTIFYING YOUR PROPERTY

It is good housekeeping to keep records, each piece of equipment should have a record card that includes a photograph together with details of when purchased, model, engine and machine serial numbers plus any chassis numbers.

There are now plenty of sophisticated systems, for identifying machinery and their components, now on the market. It is worth doing some research and chose a reputable security company to assist you.

Some new systems use designated numbers, which are placed, in recorded locations throughout the machine. Small quantities of warning stickers are displayed adjacent to various visible, designated number sites. This is designed to alert prospective thieves to the fact that the machine is marked and any attempt to eliminate the numbers is pointless, as finding all the locations is impossible. Electronic tagging and micro dots are also both placed on the machine and their locations are recorded. These require specialist equipment to read them so they act as an identification back up. Photographs are taken of the equipment and the owner receives a registration document that shows a small percentage of the sites where the numbers are placed. The remainder are kept on the systems supplier's secure database and qualifying parties and the police can receive full details any time it becomes necessary.

BUILDINGS

All buildings housing equipment need to be kept in good repair, especially the windows and doors. It is advisable that the windows are fitted with either bars or mesh on the inside and any that are not in use are boarded up. Secure doors with at least two shackled padlocks and use threaded coach bolts for the hinges. A lockable steel cage inside the building is ideal for storing small pieces of machinery, tools and chemicals. Spades make ideal crowbars. All workshop equipment and tools should be locked away in steel cabinets. It is important to mark all these items for identification with the local postcode. If they are stolen and turn up in another part of the country at least the police there will know the area they have come from and where to start looking for the owners.

During the day it is very easy to leave buildings open or unlocked while staff are working out on the course. An opportunist thief loves this as he can be in and out before anyone notices. Ensure that all buildings and compounds are locked even when empty and that the keys are removed.

OUTSIDE MAIN BUILDINGS

Wherever possibly all out building should be located as near as possible to the main complex. Because these are often not very attractive there is a tendency to screen them off. It is best if there is a clear line of sight from the complex to any outbuildings. High wire fencing or dense thorn hedging will restrict access but beware of the Occupiers Liability Act. If glass, barbed or razor wire has been installed and an intruder is injured they can sue for damages. There needs to be plenty of 'Private Property Keep Out' warning signs about.



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Safe as Houses



Gate hinges need to be capped so they cannot be lifted off



Place small equipment and tools in padlocked, steel storage container

ALARMS

These are part of all security packages. Professionally installed systems should conform to BS44737/EN50131 and DIY ones to BS60707. If a building is located in an isolated spot a Police Call Alarm System which is monitored is the answer if possible. There are plenty of remote alarm systems now available that will transmit over a mile and these are ideal for buildings away from the main complex.

Depending on the type of alarm it is activated by either movement, pressure, line interruption or personnel attack. Some DIY models are connected to a telephone line and will ring a home telephone or mobile, if activated.

At this stage it should be pointed out that Non Police Call (Unmonitored) systems would not normally get a police response unless additional information is supplied.

A Police Response Alarm must have NACOSS/SSIAB approval and be able to send confirmed activation by visual, audio or sequential confirmation. In addition, two key holders who can arrive on site within 20 minutes are also required.

LIGHTS

This is one of the biggest deterrents it is therefore an important consideration especially around gates and buildings in general. Avoid using very bright lights, as they tend to throw deep shadows in areas they do not cover. The type that are timed or activated by dusk and sensors are a better choice. They need to be backed up by movement activated (PIR) lighting.

CLOSE CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)

Professional advice should be sought before embarking down this route, as it can be a very expensive exercise. A major contributor to their success is quality of available light. The images recorded must be sharp if they are used for identification in court. Recording tapes deteriorate each time they are overwritten so it is important to ensure new tapes are installed regularly.

Cameras tend to act more as a deterrent. Professionals will wear some form of face mask and cover up or fit false number plates to their vehicles. The chances are that all you will be left with is a video showing unidentifiable figures moving round a vehicle at a certain time during the night. Again, it is important to display signs around the site warning of the public that CCTV is operating in the area. It is very likely you will also have to have Data Protection Registration and fulfil the requirements of the Data Protection Act regarding CCTV.

BEING AWARE

It cannot be said too often that vigilance by staff is important and they should be encouraged to report anything suspicious such as tampered locks or strangers hanging around the course and buildings. They also need to be constantly made aware of the dangers of leaving any equipment and their personnel belongings unsecured or unattended.

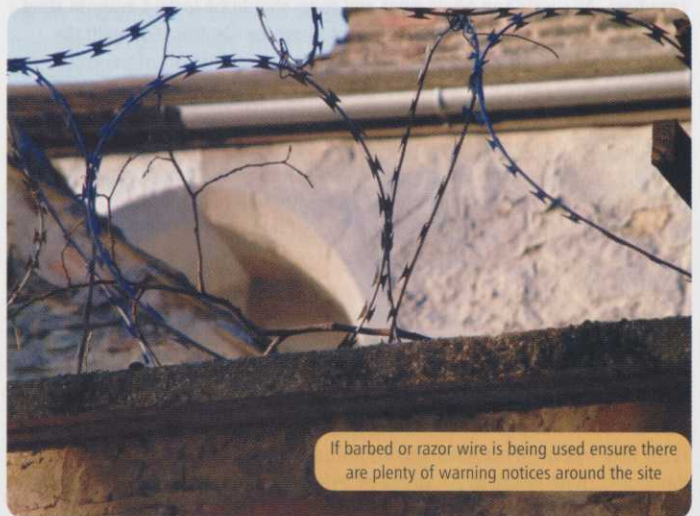
Immediately, inform your local police forces of any incidents. They really do want to catch those members of society who create mayhem and make lives a misery by stealing. To achieve this, the police need your help and evidence if they are to successfully prosecute these offenders. Prevention is far better than wasting considerable time and resources detecting a crime.

Readers who require further advice on security, or wish to arrange for Crime Reduction Officer to visit their course should contact their local Police Headquarters.

Finally, if someone sidles up to you in a pub or contacts you offering any equipment tell the police or ring CRIMESTOPPERS on 080055511. You could be doing one of your colleagues in the industry a tremendous favour.

The watchwords are "Be Vigilant".

My sincere thanks to John Middlemass, Crime Reduction Officer for Cambridgeshire Constabulary and a golf course that shall remain anonymous.



If barbed or razor wire is being used ensure there are plenty of warning notices around the site