

The Membership Department would like to welcome 44 new members to the Association and discusses the Personal Accident Insurance policy in a bit more depth.

# Personal Accident Insurance

Some confusion has arisen, recently, about what is and what is not covered by the BIGGA Personal Accident Insurance Policy.

We hope that this article will help to clarify the situation.

The BIGGA Personal Accident Insurance Policy provides cover 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Members are covered at work, at home and during leisure activities if they sustain 'Accidental Bodily Injury' which causes death, permanent total disability or temporary disability.

The policy does not cover illness or disease not resulting from an accident or injury, nor any naturally occurring or degenerative disease/illness, nor any gradually worsening condition such as arthritis or osteoporosis. Moreover, it does not cover the first 28 days of any qualifying incapacity.

These conditions exclude cover for any illness that is



not the result of an accident. However, it is sometimes difficult to be specific as each incident is different. For example if a member was hit by a golf ball and died from a subsequent heart attack, which was deemed to have been caused by being hit, then the insurers would consider this as a valid claim. However, a heart attack, which was not as a result of an accident, would not be covered.

It is difficult to give precise clarification as every claim is judged on its merits. However, the key word in the cover is 'Accident' which must result in 'Accidental Bodily Injury' for the claim to be successful.

If you have been injured as a result of an accident and would like to make a claim then call 0800 316 1331. If you would like a copy of the insurance policy leaflet issued to members then call the Membership Department on 01347 833800.

## People

How well do you know the people who work for the Association?

In this new series we give you a chance to learn a little more about a member of BIGGA's Headquarters staff



### Katie Davies

**Position:**  
Sales Administrator in the Sales Department

**What does your role involve?**  
Copy chasing, generating new sales leads, following up existing sales opportunities and helping with the daily running of the magazine's sales team

**How long have you worked for the Association?**  
Nearly four months now

**Where were you born and brought up?**  
Harrogate – where BTME & ClubHouse is held

**Where did you work before you joined BIGGA?**  
I worked for a company that supplied saunas, spas and steam rooms to the leisure industry. I was responsible for all consumable sales

**What are your hobbies?**  
Socialising with friends and generally having a good time! (Oh yes and talking!)

**What is your favourite food?**  
Mmmmmmm... Paella, Steak, Duck and Pancakes, Raspberries, Carrot Cake - I love food so anything and everything!

**What is your favourite film?**  
Catch Me if You Can, Eight Mile and The Crow and loads more that I can't think of

**What was the last book you read?**  
Started to read a diet book about a month ago, but got bored by the third page so decided it wasn't worth the hassle and tucked into some cake!

**Who is your all time hero?**  
Everyone gives this answer, but it's so true – my Mum. x

**What was the best event you've ever attended?**  
Peter Kay live in Leeds. I think he's the funniest man ever and his series Phoenix Nights is not to be missed.

**What is your claim to fame?**  
Having my picture in Greenkeeper International!

We're giving away a fantastic digital camera to one lucky member. The camera features a movie facility and a multi mode flash. It has a 1.5" LCD screen and a picture resolution of 2 million pixels. The package also includes a memory card.

To enter the prize draw all you have to do is introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA. Make sure your name goes on their application form as the person who referred them and we will enter your name into the draw. Remember the more new members you refer the more chances you have to win!

Either call Gemma today in Membership Services on 01347 833800 to request a new member application form or complete the form on the outer cover of this magazine and return to BIGGA HOUSE before 30 September 2003.

The draw will take place on 1st October and the winner will be announced in the November edition of Greenkeeper International.

# WIN A DIGITAL CAMERA



## Message of the Month Winner

Our congratulations go to September's winner, Marc Haring from Cumberwell Park Golf Club whose message was posted on the 21st July under the 'Talking Shop' section. A fantastic FM desktop scan radio is on its way to you!

### BIGGA welcomes...

#### SCOTTISH REGION

Fraser Brown, North  
Graeme Farquharson, North  
Stephen Mcblain, Ayrshire  
Steven Mcleod, West

#### NORTHERN REGION

James Atkinson, Cleveland  
Michael Barker, North Wales  
Mark Barras, North East  
Graham Curtin, Northern  
Shaun Drum, Northern  
Matthew Gilbertson, North East  
Dean Gosney, Northern  
Christopher Gotts, North West

Robert Havelock, North Wales  
Alister Mcfarlane, North West  
Joseph Monaghan, Northern  
Carl Peacock, North West  
Christopher Porter, North West  
Steven Rendall, North West

#### MIDLAND REGION

Benjamin Bierley, East of England  
Christopher Buchanan, East Midland  
Mark Flecknor, Mid Anglia  
Alan Key, East of England

#### SOUTH EAST REGION

Alan Abrey, Surrey  
Anthony Brennan, Kent  
Stephen Matthews, East Anglia  
Steve Peters, Surrey  
Jason Rook, Kent  
David Rowland, Surrey  
Bill Shepherd, Kent

#### SOUTH WEST/SOUTH WALES

John Barnes, South Coast  
Victor Dyer, Devon & Cornwall  
Sean Heard, South West  
Andrew Johnson, South West  
Keith Kemp, Devon & Cornwall

Shaun McCanna, South Coast  
Joe Missen, South Wales  
Luke Rand, South Wales  
George Stephens, Devon & Cornwall

#### STUDENT MEMBERS

Tommy Mcfadden, Northern Ireland  
Steven Halliwell, North West

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Richard Greville, East Midland  
Mike Wattam, Sussex  
William Brennan, Usa

### AUGUST'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a fantastic BIGGA Clock/calculator/calendar and alarm. Our congratulations go to September's winner, Andrew Harding of Boyce Hill Golf Club.

# Course Feature

## To the Manor Born

Scott MacCallum met up with Kneale Diamond, whose job at Marriott Hanbury Manor brings all sorts of challenges.



There are some occasions when a nice quiet round of golf, a chance to smell the roses, is just what the doctor ordered. On other occasions it is good to feel the thrill of being at the sharp end, where the action is.

An example of the two bunker types with the older darker sand in the foreground and the modern lighter sand in the background

Kneale Diamond

Marriott Hanbury Manor near Hertford, north of London, can offer a bit of both, but if you are really in the mood for a bit of excitement how about going through your pre-shot routine for your approach shot. You take careful aim, about to undertake a smooth, kink-free back swing only to have to pull away. A helicopter is taking off just a short distance away and the noise of the rotors is barely drowning out the screams of excited young girls.

That could have been the scenario if you were playing the course at the beginning of August when Robbie Williams, watched by a host of young admirers, flew off, having used the hotel as his base during his world record breaking Knebworth concerts.

Course Manager, Kneale Diamond, was on "crowd control" duty that Monday morning, just another example of what he finds himself doing at one of the highest profile hotels and golf course developments in the country.

"We have a lot of celebrity visitors at Hanbury Manor, a lot of footballers are members, but I must say it was good to see Robbie Williams from only 20 yards away," said Kneale, as we spoke the following day.

Kneale has been at Hanbury Manor for three and a half years having previously been Assistant Course Manager at the London Club.

"When I arrived it was as Acting Course Manager under Kenny McKay, who was about to move to Marriott Forest of Arden. I was attracted to the fact that it was a big name, quality venue, with the potential to go further and I liked the idea of working for a hotel chain which included other golf courses," he said, as we sat in the lobby of the five star hotel.

"It was also a tournament venue having hosted three English Opens in the late '90s won by Per Ulrick Johansson, Lee Westwood and Darren Clarke."

The golf course was designed by Jack Nicklaus Jnr and opened in 1991. It breaks down into distinct halves with a completely new nine forming the front nine and the back nine, which has a more parkland feel to it, built on land which had been home to a Harry Vardon-designed course. Two of the original Vardon bunkers are incorporated into the Nicklaus Jnr layout.

When he did take up the post Kneale found that he had quite a bit of work to do if his ambitions for the course were to be realised fully.

"Like every Course Manager who takes over a new job you do find a few shocks in store, and for me it was the irrigation system," said Kneale.

"We were losing four fifths of the water we were putting on through leaks," he revealed.

"That meant if we wanted to irrigate tees, greens, approaches and fairways taking into account the amount of water we were losing, it would take 24 hours to do it, which would mean closing the course for a whole day just to irrigate as opposed to a seven hour job if we didn't have leaks. We used to soak the golf course for two days and get as much water on as we physically could, then shut the system down and two guys would then spend three days a week repairing all the leaks," said Kneale, who added that in addition to the time spent on the job the water wastage could amount to over £300 a night.

"My first job was to convince my bosses that what had been in place wasn't good enough, bearing in mind that it had coped with three English Opens and the



The Hanbury Manor Team

development of Hanbury Manor into one of the top courses in the country," explained Kneale.

"It was a case of building up my bosses confidence in my abilities by showing them what I could do and what I'd like to do in future. I told them just how much water we were losing and the cost and manpower implications of that."

He then sat down with Mark Ganning, of Rainbird, and designed two systems - one all singing and dancing, a triple row system with very efficient full circle on fairway and part circle on edges and another cheaper version with just a single row of pop-ups.

"Obviously I wanted to go for the better one, anyone running a golf course would. I put forward the cost implications of both systems and persuaded them that we would be investing in the future if we went for the better system as it would be more efficient. Happily they agreed."

Not having had any experience of project management, but keen to make sure he kept a hands on approach to the installation of the new system, Kneale spoke with greenkeepers who had been through similar jobs and sought advice as to how best to work.

"I was delighted to work with Rainbird, who had been very good to work with in the past and we specced the system to do exactly what we wanted it to do, with larger pipe sizes so we could run for shorter periods and move water about more efficiently. It was very solid."

MJ Abbott were the installer and Kneale has been delighted with the quality work they produced.

The system is going in in three phases with the first two completed and the other being carried out in October this year.

Phase one was putting in the mains for all 18 holes, tees, surrounds and approaches and this was done between February and May last year. Phase two was the front nine fairways and some of the landscaped areas, while phase three will be the back nine fairways and a weather station.

"The project has been phased as we have a lot of corporate golf and prestigious golf days and members expect the highest levels of presentation so we had to keep disruption to a minimum. Also, financially, it made sense to break it down into three phases."



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A view of the front nine

The decision to go ahead last year has been vindicated by the weather subsequently.

"March was bone dry here with very little rain at all while this July saw average temperatures of 25.4 degrees," said Kneale, as we sweltered on the hottest day of the year so far. August temperatures are likely to break yet more records.

Having tackled the irrigation problems, Kneale and his team, also took on the courses 84 bunkers as another major project.

"In the initial planning approval for the course it was stipulated that the bunker sand be the same dark orange colour as the hotel bricks. It's not always the most appropriate sand for bunkers."

With the course now established and the planners a little more relaxed they have been able to move to a much lighter coloured sand and the change was made as part of a complete overhaul of the bunkering.

"We carried out the work in-house removing the sand, reshaping the bases and replacing the drainage. Basically we rebuilt them from scratch and have completed all greenside bunkers and two thirds of the fairway. The remainder will be completed by October."

Working on the bunkers highlight another problem that hadn't revealed itself in the relatively youthful history of the course.

"We have uncovered cars, engines and brick walls not too far under the surface. Only recently we found a car engine just six inches below the surface of a fairway. In bunker reconstruction we often found brick walls under the surface which caused headaches and had perhaps caused a change in the shape and depth of the bunker," said Kneale, who has also recently added additional cart pathing to areas of the course.

Being part of a large group has given Marriott the flexibility to make changes to cope with the downturn in the general and golfing economy.

To facilitate this Kenny McKay, in addition to his role at Forest of Arden, has recently taken on the role of Senior Courses Manager for the group and is looking at ways of the hotels, which include such illustrious venues as Dalmahoy, St Pierre, Tudor Park and Meon Valley, working together.

"Kenny has visited all 11 venues and done reports on each and we are working much more closely together. For example when the seasonal staff finished last year, I worked below full staffing but took on a couple of guys from Dalmahoy for a period. It worked very well. Another example of co-operation is the fact that we had perhaps 10 hollow corers in the group and whereas in the past another venue might have hired one in, now we would lend one out, as it may well have been sitting in the sheds doing nothing anyway. We now all have trailers to enable us to transport machinery around the country."

Kneale is well supported by his Director of Golf at Hanbury Manor, Iain McNally, who started at the Hertfordshire resort just a short time after his Course Manager.

"The challenge which Kneale has and with which he copes very well is that the golf course is a fixed cost area, in which I mean that whether the course is played or not it has to be maintained. In the case of banqueting and bedrooms, for example, if they are not used there are minimal costs involved so costs can be flexed but not so with the golf course."

Iain is also keen to look at ways of helping Kneale and his team which includes three gardeners to make life easier for him.

"We have 10 acres of formal gardens and when everything is in bloom they look great but we have many weddings each year and the gardens only look their best for a couple of weeks, so looking at ways of using plants which look good for longer and are easier to maintain may be the way ahead."

Kneale, at 29, is the oldest greenkeeper on the staff with his Deputy Jon Clarke, 25 and the majority of the rest of the team coming in at around 20-21.

"As we don't offer tournament golf at the moment we had to look at what we offer staff who work at Hanbury Manor. I want to make it a real learning experience for staff and have looked to set up a scholarship scheme similar to that in place at Gleneagles, and I have spoken to Jimmy Kidd on the subject.

"We have organised exchanges where guys can work around the world and included among these have been trips to work at the Hong Kong Open, and to assist Peter Bradburn in the grand opening of Aphrodite Hills in Cyprus. We also send staff to work at other Marriott properties to help prepare for tournaments such as the Europro Series. These opportunities are all explained to staff at interview. I'm delighted to say we have had zero turnover in the last year and when people do go it tends to be to bigger jobs - the two Head Greenkeepers at Forest of Arden were here previously and we had someone who is now a Contracts Manager in Abu Dhabi."

Among the other projects in the pipeline is a new maintenance facility, practice facilities and continued development of the golf course so crowd control duties for Robbie Williams' visits are going to have to take second place to his greenkeeping work.

## MACHINERY INVENTORY

Toro Workman 43000  
 2 Toro 5500  
 Toro 40000  
 Toro 32500  
 Toro GM3100  
 Toro 31000 S/W  
 4 Toro 1000  
 4 Toro 500  
 Toro Sandpro  
 Toro Greens Aerator  
 4 John Deere 6x4D Gator  
 Kubota ST30 + Loader  
 Kubota L3300  
 Antonio Carrero TTR 4400HST  
 Groundsman 8120 CTM Aerator  
 Vertidrain 1.2m  
 Shattermaster  
 Gambetti 800L Sprayer  
 Toro Topdresser W/M  
 Blowers/Strimmers/Trimmers/Chainsaw etc  
 Various Trailers  
 2 Massey Ferguson ATVs  
 Trilo SFI50 Vacuum

# COMMUNICATION - MAKING YOUR CASE

There's an old saying: "I want never gets". It's true, but not because of what you want, more probably the way you ask for it.

It makes no difference whether you are the Prime Minister or a Course Manager, the principles of persuasive and professional presentation of your case are important in winning support for it. The only difference is that successful politicians tend to recognise this and are always working to develop their skills, whereas the greenkeeper may not see this as an essential part of the job!

Successful presentation of your case to the committee or the proprietor involves two key areas: planning and delivery. In short, what you are going to say and why, plus how you say it – the skills of the presenter. Let's look first at what you are going to say to make the case for what you want.

*Continue  
to learn*

## PREPARATION – Consider the Benefits

First, think BENEFITS. Think about the machine you want the club to buy, or other new investment you want it to make. For example, an irrigation system or new buildings. What will this do that the club wants to be done? Unfortunately, it's more common to think in terms of the features of a machine, which may not be particularly persuasive. For example, a feature of a new greens machine may be that it has a diesel engine. By itself, this may mean little to the person making the buying decision. However, when you add that it will reduce running costs by £x per season through reduced maintenance, lower fuel costs, etc, you are turning a feature into a benefit.

## The "SO WHAT" Test

There is a simple test you can run to check whether you are talking about a feature or a benefit. Just ask "SO WHAT?" after the statement. It's important to avoid using benefits in a presentation like a shotgun – blasting away and hoping that some will stick. Instead, they need to be used like a rifle, to pinpoint the specific needs of the club. If the decision makers are concerned about the operating costs of the club, then the benefit of changing to diesel will have real value impact. However, if the club has more pressing needs that are not addressed by your proposal then this benefit lacks impact. Finally,

always attempt to quantify the benefit. In the example above, that means working out the total potential savings per season in hard cash.

In most commercial organisations, which should include members' clubs, benefits usually relate to financial returns – ie, money earned or saved – even if this comes in a less direct way such as the presentation of the course to attract more visitors, which increases green fee income. Other important motives include "fear" – for example, the prospect of the inability to turn the course out in a specific condition for a major tournament because the machinery isn't capable of doing the job; and "status", which could mean buying new machinery to take advantage of the opportunity to stage a prestigious tournament.

TABLE: Features Functions Benefits Proof. (See below.)

## A Three-Part Structure

Next, is the structure of the presentation: "Tell them what you're going to tell them", "Tell them" and finally "Tell them what you told them!" This simple structure will serve you well, if you follow it carefully.

Telling them what you are going to tell them means setting out a simple route map for the presentation. It is important to open with impact, to grab

## FEATURE or BENEFIT?

### FEATURE

What the product is or has – eg, it has a diesel engine, capacity, power output, manufacture, etc

### FUNCTION

What the product does or has that the decision maker wants or needs, eg, it is more economical

### BENEFIT

What does this mean to the club or business – eg, cost savings, increases in performance or output. This links to a buying motive – eg, financial, fear, status, etc

### PROOF

Evidence that substantiates the benefit – eg, manufacturer data, independent reports, the experience of other clubs, etc

Each of these elements should be linked using phrases like "which means that", "as a result", etc, to form a simple, flowing statement.

## Keith Jaynes looks at how effective presentation skills can help greenkeepers get the new course equipment they need

**TORO** Count on it.

the attention of the audience, whether it's one-to-one or the whole committee. Using the example above, you could ask a rhetorical question "Do you know how much it cost us to run x machine last season?" following with the answer, "Ey".

You can then go on to set the agenda with a short statement like: "In the next 15 minutes I'd like to show you some of the options we considered to reduce these costs, and one solution in particular that I think fits the needs of the club pretty well because it could help us save up to 15% on our machinery operating costs."

Having set the scene, follow with the main part of the presentation. First, outline the current situation and make sure you relate this to issues that are the direct concern of the audience. Remember, you must state the need (yours is the machine) in terms with which the audience can identify, for example revisit the rising cost of maintenance or the challenge of staging the major tournament.

### Consider Other Options

At this stage you can include an additional step that adds real power to your ideal solution. This is to suggest one or two alternative possible solutions you have considered but, more importantly, why you have discarded them – eg, refurbishment of an existing machine – ruled out because of high cost and temporary reduction of machinery fleet at critical time. This step shows that you have considered your proposal very carefully and also serves to pre-empt some possible objections you might encounter later from the audience.

### Presenting Your Solution

Next, present your ideal solution. It is important to de-personalise this and instead of using phrases like "I think" or "I need", which could infer that this is in your interests only, pick out the specific points of your solution that relate to the needs which the audience has already agreed are important. If the key need is reduction of costs, select the features of the machine and its operation that do this. Explain how they do this, never assume that the audience already knows or understands your world in the same depth that you do! Make sure you turn the features into benefits and that these are tailored to the needs of the audience or the club.

### Ask for a Commitment

Finally, it is important to summarise what you have said, restating your ideal solution and the major benefits. However, one final step remains, "Ask for a commitment!" Naturally, what you want is agreement to go ahead and place the order with the supplier. Getting agreement means you must ask for it. This requires a closing statement – eg, "On the basis of what I have shown you, will you go ahead now and approve the purchase of this new machine?"

The best technique is to put up and then shut up! Always wait for the answer. It can only be one of three things, "Yes", "No" or "Maybe", so come to terms with the fact that people do say "No", but also that they are less likely to reject a well thought out proposal. Having said that, "No" should always be challenged to establish "Why?"

The commitment may also include the agreement of committee members to attend a demonstration of a new machine, or a visit to a club with similar machines or installations where you know you will receive backing from a fellow greenkeeper!

However, don't bank on this unless you prepare for success by planning the demonstration or visit down to the last detail. The more substantial your proposal the more important thorough planning becomes to eliminate nasty surprises.

### Good Preparation = Confident Delivery

If what you say is one key element of a successful presentation, then how you say it is the other. Many people have a genuine fear of making formal presentations. This is probably because public speaking involves a set of skills

that are not called for under normal conditions in their jobs. Surprisingly, these are not new skills, but ones we already possess. It's just that practice is required to develop them to the point where we can use them confidently and effectively in public.

### The Speaker's Assets

Most important is the use of the voice. It has many different components that can add colour and interest to what we say. These include its pitch, its volume, its pace and its tone. We also have the ability to turn it on and turn it off! Silence is a valuable aid to add dramatic effect.

Second is the "presence" of the presenter and the descriptive use that is made of hand gestures and mannerisms. Unfortunately, nerves and lack of confidence can often make the hands head for the safety of the pocket where they are free to jangle car keys or to count loose change! When this happens, you can bet the attention of the audience turns to what's happening to the keys rather than the speaker's message.

### Facial expression is important too

Your expression should mirror the message you are sending, for example, no one would dream of delivering bad news with a smile, but nerves can often have this effect on the mouth. The eyes also have an important part to play in receiving feedback from the audience – eg, are people nodding in agreement or do their expressions and actions show they are losing interest or concentration?

Finally, there is the use you make of simple visual aids and other presentation support media – eg, pictures that show what a particular machine looks like (these may be from the manufacturer's brochure) or a broken component from an existing machine. You may have access to an overhead projector or the opportunity to work with a specialist from the manufacturer, which will add interest for a larger audience.

Similarly, a pre-prepared flip chart may also help to keep your presentation on track.

It certainly helps to write the key points that you want to make on a series of numbered post cards (numbered in case you accidentally drop them during the presentation and need to find your place again in a hurry!). In addition, cards don't betray a small shake of the hands if you are nervous! Simply list the key points you want to make but leave the words open, letting you speak normally and with animation. Nothing is worse than presenters who read their presentation word for word!

### The Way Forward

The key to successful presentations is good planning and preparation. This takes time and effort. It is important to talk to committee members or proprietors and managers regularly to understand their views about the course and what they are trying to achieve. It also helps to run through your presentation and hone it with someone you trust. This will increase your confidence.

Formal training also helps, where you have the opportunity to master both the development of the material and the speaker skills in a controlled, non-threatening environment.

*About the author: Keith Jaynes is a Director of Key Associates, a company that specialises in training, marketing support and financial services for businesses in the agricultural and turf-care industries. He has held senior training and marketing positions in a number of major UK and international companies and has worked extensively delivering tailor-made skill development programmes in the UK and Europe. He is also a member of Committee and a past Captain of his local golf club.*

# TALKING HEADS

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

# 1

What sort of system do you have at your course and how old is it?

# IRRIGATION



Name: Ian Gunn  
Address: Strathpeffer Golf Club  
Region: Scottish  
Course type: Upland/Heathland (18 holes)  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus two

We have a gravity fed system, perhaps unique in Britain, with running water from a pond at the top of the course. There is a 600 foot drop from the highest to the lowest point on the course.



Name: Steve Oultram  
Address: Wilmslow Golf Club  
Region: Northern  
Course type: Parkland (18 holes)  
Staff: Course Manager plus five

We have a Watermation TW2 system which covers greens and tees. We spot water other areas.



Name: Cedric Gough  
Course: Broadway Golf Club  
Region: Midland  
Course type: Cotswold (unlike parkland, links or heathland, it tends to be a mix of all three based on limestone with a clay-like soil)  
Staff: Course Manager, plus five

A two-wire control system with a Watermation TW2 controller. Greens pop-ups are Royal Coach impact type. Tees are gear driven Hunter 1J1s. Installed 1992.



Name: Terry Huntley  
Course: West Hill Golf Club  
Region: South East  
Course type: Heathland (18 holes)  
Staff: Course Manager, plus five, plus mechanic

Toro Site Pro system which is four and a half years old. We have wall-to-wall irrigation for tees, greens, fairways and approaches.



Name: Phil Wentworth  
Course: Army Golf Club, Aldershot  
Region: South West & South Wales  
Course type: Woodland/Heathland (18 holes)  
Staff: Course Manager, plus five

A Watermation system for greens, surrounds and tees only. It was installed in 1980.



Name: Greg Ferson  
Address: Loughgall Country Park golf course.  
Region: Northern Ireland  
Course type: Parkland (18 holes)  
Staff: Course Park Manager, plus Head Greenkeeper, plus four

The Rainbird system was installed three years ago when the course was built. It does only greens and surrounds. We water tees manually.



# 2

**Where does your irrigation water come from?**

We have a pond at the summit and another lower down on the course, which gives us a plentiful supply. The course slopes 170ft from the 1st tee to the green.

Mobberley Brook, which runs alongside the course, is an excellent source. It is a good size and in the 13 years I have been here it has never got near to running dry.

We are supplied by mains water filling two 12,000 gallon storage tanks.

Two bore holes which are our main supply. If the river drops to a low level we can switch to a back-up mains supply.

The mains supply, which is metered, is connected to our storage tanks.

We have a 35-acre lake nearby which gives us access to plenty of water, should we need it.

# 3

**What are the plusses and minuses of the system?**

The plus is that it doesn't cost us a penny. There is never a breakdown and the pipes are so far under the ground that they don't burst. The minus is that it is labour intensive as it is a manual system.

It is a good system and does the job well, but can do only one green at a time. In an ideal world I would like a valve in head system.

Plus - Easy to maintain, all in-house maintenance. Simple to operate and reliable once original decoders, which were unreliable, were replaced. Minus is no control over individual pop-ups for more controlled watering.

Plus - infinite control over where, when and how much water we put on. Every pop up can be controlled individually and we have a remote control. There are no minuses apart from the very odd leak you get in any system.

The plusses are that the no frills system is very simple and never breaks down. It is adequate. Minus - you can only do one green at a time and we have no individual control with timers.

We don't use the system that often as we have a lot of rain in our part of the world. We can do three greens at a time, so that is a plus. There are no minuses.

# 4

**What is your policy with regard to using the system and has it changed in the recent past?**

We use it very sparingly and only when the grass is dry or to wash in fertiliser. We seem to get an eight to nine week wet spell followed by the same time dry. The policy has never changed.

A little and often and only enough to keep the grass alive, We never over water as obviously the idea is to promote bents and fescues not annual meadow grass.

Policy changed very little and only when really required. This has always been the case since an automatic system was installed.

The irrigation system is there to keep the grass healthy and alive. A little and often is the motto. A watering system can be a disaster in the hands of the wrong person. We keep our moisture levels high in May, June and July, while after August 1 very little water goes on.

A little and often. Individual greens need an individual amount of water, such as some of our sloping greens. I have not changed the system in the 13 years I have been here.

Our policy is only to water when absolutely necessary in drought conditions or watering in fertiliser.

# 5

**Looking ahead. How do you see the issue of golf course irrigation in 10 years time?**

As the water is free it never bothers us. It seems to have got wetter and windier over the years, so as far as we are concerned I can't see any change in the issue of irrigation, though it may well be that many clubs will have to put up with tighter controls in the use of water.

I think there will be pressure on the amount of water we use and we will have to show more accountability. The extraction of water will become an issue.

It would be good to have our own water source to allow wall to wall irrigation with the same policy as above, all computer controlled. Above all, I think there could be strict controls on the use of water in the future.

The main problem may be water supply, the way things are going. I have an open mind on global warming, but history seems to show that planets warm up and cool down. The future availability of water is the main issue.

It is possible there might be tighter constraints on the use of water. However, in the last ten years there haven't been changes, so it is also possible there might not be any in the next ten.

Water conservation may become an issue. I can see it being very tightly controlled in future and there will probably be restrictions.



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