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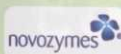
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Education Update

Ken Richardson reveals Harrogate Week's one-day workshops.

You should have received a copy of the Harrogate Week brochure with this copy of Greenkeeper International or, in the case of golf club officials, by direct mail. It is packed full of educational opportunities for everyone involved in turf management and golf club management at prices everyone can afford. For example, there are 27 seminars on offer, of which 20 are free of charge and the other seven attract attractive discounts for quantity. Book all seminars and it will cost £122.50. That means that the average cost of each seminar is £4.53. When you consider that it costs at least £23,000 to run the seminars less a generous £5,000 worth of support from the GTC, we need an average of 147 delegates at each seminar in order to break even.



Following on from my last article that looked at two-day workshops, this article looks at the nine one-day workshops.

Continue to Learn 2007

One-day workshops will be held on both Sunday, January 21 and Monday, January 22 in the Queens Suite of Harrogate International Centre.

WORKING WITH PEOPLE WHO CAUSE YOU STRESS

This is a workshop that the vast majority of us could find useful but as it is limited to 12 delegates you had better book early to keep your stress levels down. All jobs can be stressful at times and some stress is important for high performance. However, bad stress can be unhelpful and lead to ill health. This workshop will show you how to reduce stress by managing relationships in a more productive way by looking at communication styles and how to manage conflict.

BUDGETING-MAKING NUMBERS COUNT

Following last year's successful two-day workshop, Andy and Brin have redesigned it as 2 one-day workshops. They did this to try and include even more useful financial management information. The workshop will be very intensive and delegates will have to prepare themselves through pre-course reading and research. It will look at how to prepare a budget, expenditure reports, monitoring trends, controlling delegated budgets, costings, cash controls and basic maths.

ARE YOUR FINANCES BELOW PAR?

This one-day workshop follows on from the previous workshop and delegates must have completed last year's two-day workshop or the Making Number Count workshop plus some pre-course reading.

This workshop takes a wider look at financial management in golf industry. It is aimed at Course Managers, Golf Professionals and Club Secretaries. It will look at how external influences have an impact on financial decision making, on the flow of finance, on budgets, on cash flow forecasting and on investment decision making.

COACHING IN THE WORKPLACE

We all coach our staff, some of it is formal coaching and some of it is more informal mentoring. Why not enrol on this one-day workshop and discover how you can add to your management skills portfolio. Save your club time and money and improve the skills of your staff.

DRAIN BEFORE THE RAIN

Following this year's drought, it is a sure bet that we shall have a wet winter. Make sure that your drainage systems can cope by attending this one-day workshop presented by the Land Drainage Contactors Association.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Don't be like Basil Fawlty - make sure that your communication skills are appropriate and effective by attending this one-day workshop presented by Mike John. Good, effective communication is vital in a competitive market place and it involves everyone.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

As more and more pressures are brought onto golf clubs and sports ground to be 'greener', it is even more important to manage your club with the Environment in mind. Come to this one-day workshop and identify the strengths and weakness of your current approach and assess your course against European Commission Standards.

R&A SWARD IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP

More than 300 delegates attended the Sustainable Golf Course Workshop held during Harrogate Week last January. Some delegates wholeheartedly agreed with the philosophy of sustainability set out by the various speakers while others disagreed. Some delegates were not convinced that they could change from their current grass species to bent fescue and were content to continue their current management regimes.

This one-day workshop will concentrate on showing how swards can be converted without impacting adversely on playing quality. Come and listen to eight greenkeepers explain how they managed to increase the proportion of desirable fescue and brown top bent on their greens and see if you agree that it can be done at your course.

A1 ASSESSOR UPDATE

This session is a must for all assessors who have been qualified for some time. Bring your skills up to date by attending this free one day workshop.

Rachael and Gemma are pleased to welcome 55 new members to the Association and talk about the latest edition of the handbook.

Membership Update

2006/2007 Members Handbook

Your 2006/2007 BIGGA Membership Handbook should have arrived in the post by the time this magazine is published. We have made this year's Handbook better than ever before with added features as requested by you, the membership.

NEW for 2006 is a coloured map defining the boundaries of the sections and regions, making it far easier to locate other members. For the first time the Association's Constitution has been published at the back of the Handbook. A diary running from October 2006 to September 2007, with all the important events of the year has also been added making this year's Members Handbook a useful addition to any desk space.



WIN THE ULTIMATE FERRARI EXPERIENCE

Ever wanted to get behind the wheel of a Ferrari? Well now you can! Drive a Ferrari 328 and F360 or drive a Ferrari F355 with an opportunity to drive a single seater. The prize also offers the chance to put a Land Rover through its paces on an off-road course or drive an MG on the track. The experience also includes a full safety briefing with training laps in a hot hatch and the day finishes with a high-speed passenger ride.*

To enter the prize draw to win his fantastic prize 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 in the draw. Remember the more new members you refer the more chances you have to win!

It doesn't stop there either, if you win the Rally Driving experience then the new member you referred also receives a RED LETTER DAY VOUCHER that can be used on an experience of their choice, on a range of at least 20. Typical experiences include Snow Boarding, Zorbing or Capoeira.

The draw will take place on the 16th October 2006 and the winners will be announced in the November edition of Greenkeeper International.

Call either Rachael or Gemma today on 01347 833800 to request a new member application form.

*Choice of activity is dependant on which location is booked. A full manual driving licence is required. The minimum age for this experience is 18.

OCTOBER'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a monthly draw to win a £10 Music Voucher. Our congratulations go to Ronnie Bunting of Ballochmyle Golf Club.



LOOKING FOR CAR BREAKDOWN COVER?

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with immediate effect
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BIGGA welcomes...

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Garry Goodwillie, Ayrshire
Mitchell Green, Ayrshire
Thomas Kolakovic, Central
Barrie Lewis, East
Colin Mcadam, Ayrshire
William Murray, Ayrshire
Malcolm Parsons, North
Paul Sharp, North
John Whitelaw, Ayrshire

David Roberts, North West
Matthew Shimwell, North West
Theo Travis, North West

Steve Murton, Kent
David West, London
Marc Wise, Kent

MIDLAND REGION

Dale Ashley, East Midland
Ron Bingham, East of England
Ronald Briggs, East Midland
Luke Cordery, BB&O
Christopher Goodall, East of England
Richard Hodgson, Mid Anglia
Marcus Lilley, Mid Anglia
Paul Mercott, BB&O
Edward Ramm, BB&O
Jonathan Strange, BB&O
Jack Weiss, East Midland

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

Andrew Sims, South Coast
Stuart Webster, South Coast

NORTHERN REGION

Paul Anderson, Northern
Lewis Booth, North West
David Boyd, North West
David Coulson, Cleveland
Kevin Griffiths, North Wales
Alec Hennis, North West
Christopher Hyde, North West
John Mcaloney, North West
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SOUTH EAST REGION

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Jamie Hazell, London
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STUDENT MEMBERS

Tim Butler, Northern Ireland
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Darra Hudner, Northern Ireland
Graham Stott, Central Scotland

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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As Easy as ABC



You never stop learning so, in conjunction with the GTC and lecturers from some of the UK's top greenkeeping colleges, GI has launched a new series which gives the developing greenkeeper the chance to add to their knowledge with some useful advice.

USE YOUR STIMPMETER!

With the popularity of golf increasing, the pressure on the Greens crew for the perfect 18 holes is growing. A significant part of this is to achieve a uniform green speed.

So where is your stimpeter? Is it propping open the canteen door, or gathering dust somewhere in your office? Really, it's just as important as the Switch or that drainage you installed over the winter.

Constructed of aluminium, and with a V shaped groove along its length it has a notch at one end where the ball will rest. If you place the ball in this notch and raise the end of the meter the ball will release at 20°.

Now, head out to your greens and get some readings. You will need the stimpeter, 2 tee pegs, 1 golf ball, tape measure, pen and paper.

Step 1: Select an area of the green that is level (ish). Check this by using ball and stimpeter as a spirit level.



Step 2

Step 2: Mark the release end of the stimpeter with a tee peg. Lift the other end until the ball rolls.

Step 3: Using the same starting point and repeat with 2 more balls. Make a note of the average stopping distance with your 2nd tee peg (in ft). Record the distance.



Step 4: Next, repeat this process in reverse using your stopping tee peg as the start point, heading back in the direction you came from. Again, measure and record the average distance (in ft).

Use the following formula to get your stimp reading.

$$\text{1st distance} + \text{2nd distance} \div 2$$

The outcome relates to the following chart. (Feet)

Membership Clubs	Tournament Clubs	Speed
7'6"	Less than 8'6"	Slow
7'6" - 8'6"	8'6" - 9'6"	Medium
More than 8'6"	More than 9'6"	Fast

Using your stimpeter on a regular basis can influence your maintenance regime, therefore improving playing conditions. It important to note that faster greens are not the ideal, rather uniformity over the 18 holes.

HOBBIES

GI is beginning a new feature this issue, finding out what greenkeepers get up to in their spare time. Here's something you didn't know about me...



Name: David Ray
Age: 40
Club: Slinfold Park Golf and Country Club
Position: Course Manager
Hobbies: Managing an Ice Hockey team and diving

In July of this year, I celebrated my 40th birthday, and it has been 28 years since I first tied a pair of ice skates to my feet and did my 'Bambi' like impression on the ice.

This evolved into skating regularly and ultimately playing for the Brighton Junior Ice Hockey team. This would involve playing matches all over the UK. At the age of 15, I progressed into the senior league, still representing Brighton and now playing in international tournaments in Finland, Holland and training with members of the Swedish National Ice Hockey Team.

By the time I was 17, I had been offered a professional contract, to play for Oxford. However, I declined this, and signed a semi-professional contract with Brighton and continued to play for this team until the team folded, (age 23) I then signed a contract with the Bracknell Bees Ice Hockey Team. At this point, I must add that we were training for 15 hours a week on the ice, plus gym work.

I played in their very first televised match, but due to injury, this was to be my very last competitive game (cracked sternum)

Roll the clock forward a number of years, add a bit of grey hair, and a few more pounds, and out of the blue, I received a telephone call from an old team member, Paul Howes.

Paul was trying to get the old Brighton Team back together to play our arch rivals, a Dutch team called the Tillberg Trappers, at their home ground.

Paul succeeded in getting the team back together, unfortunately, we didn't and



lost our game, but had a great weekend. A lot of our wife's and certainly most of our children had never seen their husbands, dads skate, let alone play Ice Hockey.

We all enjoyed playing so much that we have decided to continue playing, in the British recreational league (for old timers) to have fun and try to highlight to the people of Brighton, that Brighton needs to have an Ice Rink.

That is why we play now, to have fun and to try to build a bit of momentum, to help the people of Brighton have a fantastic leisure facility.

Why am I the manager?... well perhaps I got the short straw.

Why do I love playing?... well I'm competitive, I like team sports and as a child I had fantastic balance (which later lead into ski-ing).

The secret to being an excellent Ice Hockey Player, is the same as anything, if you want to be the best, you have to train, train, train.

Why should people get involved in the sport?... to watch a game that is fast paced, has real action, real men (not footballers who fall over a long piece of grass) lots of goals and high tension.

To play Ice Hockey is another story, and I'm not quite sure what I could say to encourage anyone to play, however, I would say that I have had the opportunity to travel Europe and the UK extensively, I have made some fantastic lifelong friends.

With regards to managing my life, well I like to be busy, and one day I would like to look back and say that I made the most of my time, they say you only get one chance.

Since being runner up in Toro Student of the Year Award in 1995, I have made progressive steps up the ladder to my current position and am a great advocate of training and education for all greenkeepers. Just to add a bit of further excitement to my life, I have recently applied and been accepted to undertake a Foundation Degree in Sportsturf Science, via, distance learning with Myerscough College.

Lastly, all of this can only be achieved with the loyal support (and patience) of my wife, Vera. We have great fun, we always ski together, dive together and both love to travel and make the most of our time together.

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

Send to: Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email them to: scott@bigga.co.uk.

Letters ▶▶▶

Response to July Greenkeeper International Article 'The Appliance of Science'

I am a horticulturist that has been involved in the US golf and composting industries since 1984. I have renovated and built several golf courses, including tees and greens, using compost with great success. I have also been working with the UK composting industry since 1999, most recently through WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme). There was a statement made in the 'The Appliance of Science' article in July's Greenkeeper International regarding the use of composted green waste in topdressings that I would like to address.

Statement: A growing practice among some top dressing suppliers is the use of recycled composted green waste as one of the organic constituents. However, there remain some question marks over the effect this might have on consistent product quality, the argument being that no two batches of recycled waste can ever be the same and therefore the pH level of the top dressings are bound to have variations.

Response: Obviously, like any industry, there can be good and bad players. I have always suggested to companies that I work with, that if you find a good supplier of green compost (or anything else), stick with them - even if the product costs you a few pence more. It will be worth it in the long run. There will always be composters that are more 'product minded' than others, and they are the ones that greenkeepers should be buying from - as they are likely to work harder on manufacturing a consistent product. However, it should be noted that 'no two batches' of peat, sand, topdressing, topsoil 'can ever be the same' either. This is a myth. These are all 'natural' products that we work to keep as consistent as possible. I do not minimise that goal in the least, but remember, the organic constituent of a topdressing only makes up 1 to 2% of the mix (by weight), therefore has very little overall affect on the overall consistency of the top dressing.

To address the issue of green compost consistency, The British Standards Institutions Publicly Available Specification 100 (BSI PAS 100) was launched in November 2002, in conjunction with WRAP and The Composting Association. The specification covers the entire composting process - from raw materials (inputs), process and quality control, to laboratory testing and traceability. Essentially, the programme is an intensive quality control programme, which monitors incoming materials, the ongoing composting process, as well as tests the final product. As one of the first quality assurance schemes for composted products in the UK, BSI PAS 100 should give professional end users the confidence that they are buying a safe and consistent product. Few other products in the golf industry likely go through as much scrutiny. There is currently more than one million tonnes of BSI PAS 100 composting capacity in the UK, either certified or in the certification process.

Further, WRAP has completed scientific trials, such as 'Assessment of the potential for site and seasonal variations of composted materials across the UK' to address concerns brought up in the July article. However, the 'variations trial' found minimal variation of the product characteristics within a compost specific site (even from season to season). This research should dispel much of the concern about major variations in green compost quality. With that said, however, compost is produced using a biological process, and therefore, must be closely monitored during processing. The lesson - buy from a reputable composter - and one that is in the BSI PAS 100 scheme. By the way, the STRI also completed an in depth study on the use of green compost as a stand alone topdressing (for fairways and sports pitches) and as a component to sand-based products ('Demonstration trials of the utilization of composted materials in the maintenance of sports and amenity turfgrass') and the results were very positive. All of these research papers can be found on WRAP's website at www.wrap.org.uk.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention that green composts possess a myriad of benefits when added to a top dressing as an organic constituent. It not only will supply fertilisation, but also possesses an excellent cation exchange capacity (ability to hold nutrients), and has also been shown to suppress several soil borne diseases.

Ron Alexander

R. Alexander Associates, Inc.

Apex, NC USA

Davie Gall Retires

Davie Gall, who spent the last 30 years as Head Greenkeeper at Cardross GC, retired last month. Davie was one of the West Section's most respected members.

Davie started his career at Buchanan Castle GC as an apprentice in the late 50s, making him the first official apprentice in Scotland.

He moved to Dumbarton GC at the age of 23 as Head Greenkeeper, before moving to Estorol GC in Portugal, and becoming one of the first Greenkeepers to move abroad.

After a successful period abroad, he moved back to Britain and took up the position of Head Greenkeeper at Ifield GC in Surrey, before his appointment at Cardross GC where he remained for the duration of his career until his retirement.

The Section would like to take this opportunity to extend to Davie and his wife Liz our very best wishes for their future. May they both have a very long and happy retirement.

Written by Derek Duthie, Aitkins.

Opportunity

I have presented numerous television programmes on terrestrial channels, about gardens and garden design for the last ten years. Combined with journalism in national broadsheets, books published throughout Europe and the US, and my celebrity clients, my profile in the gardening world is reasonably high. (See my website: www.ann-mariepowell.com for further information.)

I've been very successful in securing one of only 20 exclusive show garden plots at the Chelsea Flower Show 2007 (May), showcasing the top-end of international garden design. I am therefore very happy to offer a rare sponsorship opportunity in a Central London location. The benefits to an investor are huge.

Commercial benefits are: Corporate Hospitality packages including: Gala tickets (supported by Royals, Celebrities and Captains of Industry); Business Breakfasts; Exhibitor Guest Evening and Hospitality Village. Media coverage including: guaranteed primetime TV and radio nationally and overseas; preview features in national newspapers and magazines and contact with over 1,300 journalists, programme makers and photographers. Plus the marketing opportunities are enormous.

I am available for discussion on the numbers below.

Hope you and yours are well,

Ann-Marie Powell.

Cost of sponsorship: between £150,000 to £250,000.

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REMEDYING THE EFFECTS OF SUMMER STRESS



As this year's drought progressed, particularly in the south of England, so golf courses suffered. Hosepipe bans and drought restrictions were granted for several regions, although at the time of writing none had been fully enforced.



Cracked Fairway

In such conditions, Dry Patch on the greens, and how to manage it, becomes one of the main areas of concern for Course Managers and greenkeepers, while drought-damaged fairways also represent big problems. Irrigation system deficiencies were also exposed as the drought continued and temperatures reached into the high 30s.



Dry Fairway

The Open Championship at Hoylake illustrated clearly how dry the turf can become, with no irrigation implemented for several weeks. True links, or traditional golf, was exemplified by the conditions, and the professionals had to change the way they played the game. What a wonderful event!

However, a friend who is an American Superintendent saw it very differently. He called and asked if the Superintendent still had his job! Explaining that, of course, he most certainly did - because the course had been set up that way, exactly as requested by the R & A - his response was that none of his members would have accepted those conditions and therefore he would most certainly have lost his job. What a shame that, for many clubs, the members are more concerned with course aesthetics than the quality of surfaces produced for them to play on.

The drought has caused considerable damage on many courses. In particular, high-wear areas have lost grass cover and will have required renovation work. Much of this work will have been well underway by the end of August in anticipation of decreased temperatures and increased rainfall.

So what remedies are available to Course Managers and greenkeepers to help put things right?

First, removal of the dead and dying grass, prior to seeding, will ensure that the new seed comes into contact with the soil, resulting in better germination. A combination of operations is the most effective way of removing dead material and creating a seedbed, the most common of these being hollow tining and scarifying.

Hollow tining as a renovation operation is normally implemented with the largest tines available, approximately 19-20mm in diameter and 100-125mm long. This operation should be carried out with the machine set to create the largest number of holes, but without destabilising the surface. It is good practice to remove the resulting cores prior to undertaking the next operation. However, if the underlying soil is of a good quality, it can be beneficial to allow the cores to dry slightly and then implement scarification with 2mm blades, set 10-15mm into the surface of the ground. This will pulverise the cores, releasing the soil and creating a seedbed, however the thatch and dead organic material should be removed prior to seeding.

Scarification or, as it is now known, linear aeration, has been around since the 60s, although certain companies would like us to think that it is something new. There are several machines that can be used for this operation. In an autumn renovation programme, where the intent is to reseed the area, the minimum width of blades should be 2mm and they should be set so that they penetrate through the thatch layer into the soil below. The main reason for this is that seed held within a thatch layer with

By Bruce Jamieson

no soil contact will be slow to germinate. The seed should either match the sward or contain grasses, which have a distinct advantage over the ones which have been lost.

In some instances, the soils contain so much clay that they will have already cracked along old aeration holes (as pictured). Hollow coring in this situation would be unwise, but once scarified, top-dressed with a sandy loam and then seeded, recovery should be fairly rapid. Once renovation has begun, the treated areas should be roped-off to protect them. Irrigation should be implemented, if possible, but once the seed germinates it is important to prevent it drying out and then dying. Ideally, seed germination should be timed for late September, when autumn rainfall is usually more regular.

Light fertiliser applications could also be applied to assist recovery, but this should be based on understanding individual soils and the types of grasses used to recover the areas.

Dry Patch on greens occurs for a number of reasons, but the one that has been most noticeable this year has been the failure of irrigation systems to cover areas around the perimeter of the greens. Clearly, if this is the reason for stressed and dead areas, then an audit of the irrigation system is required to identify issues which are affecting the efficiency of the system.

Perhaps the sprinklers have reached the end of their useful working life and need to be replaced, or the pumps require replacement or a combination of both.

A collapsed gate valve was subsequently identified on one course as being the main reason why the 'irrigated areas' started suffering, as the flow of water to certain points of the course could only come from one side of the ring main. For any irrigation system over 10 year's old, a qualified irrigation specialist should be brought in to ensure that your system is working efficiently.

The majority of British golf courses will have suffered from localised Dry Patch, either resulting from poor irrigation coverage, from a thatch layer that has become hydrophobic, or from the residual effect of mycelium from Fairy Rings. The recovery of these stressed areas will be accelerated if they are hollow tined, the cores removed and top-dressed.

Several fairway scarifiers are now available which can be fitted with 2mm blades and set 15-25mm into the surface, and some will also collect the resulting debris. Thatch builds up gradually and may take several decades before it reaches a depth that will cause problems for the Course Manager and the greenstaff. But once it does start to become an issue, aggressive management over several years will be required to resolve the resulting problems.

This year's drought conditions will certainly have highlighted many of the above problems. However, they will all benefit greatly from the type of remedial attentions described here.

Bruce Jamieson is an agronomist who runs his own consultancy, and is well known in the greenkeeping industry.

IRRIGATION WATER



Hollow Tining and Irrigation



No Irrigation



Top Dressing

Course Feature

On the Up

Scott MacCallum visits Trevoze Golf Club, where the arrival of a big amateur event in 2008 is a tribute to the on-going course work being carried out.

Cornwall is known for many things – pasties, cream teas, surfing, tin mining – the list goes on and on, but one of the things for which it isn't necessarily associated, is its golf.



Neil Taylor (left) and Nick Gammon (right)

Sure there are some fine courses in the county. St Mellion for example, has hosted European Tour events in the past, but the royal and ancient game isn't something that you particularly link with Britain's southern most mainland point.

However, that may all change if the great work at Trevoze Golf Club continues. The club has already attracted one of the amateur games top events in 2008 in the shape of the Brabazon Trophy, while Course Manager, Neil Taylor, has his sights set on bringing even more prestigious events to the picturesque club on the North Cornish coast, near Padstow.

Neil took over as head man at Trevoze four years ago, thus fulfilling a lifelong ambition, while at the same time Nick Gammon succeeded his father, Peter, as Managing Director of the club. Together they shared a vision of improving the Harry Colt-designed course so they could attract such major amateur events and they set to work.

"We had a six year plan to get Trevoze back to where we felt it should be," explained Neil, after he had driven me around the course and revealed the stunning views of the Cornish coastline and layout.

"However, since we got the Brabazon we are trying to cram three years worth of construction into one winter," he said, smiling at the very thought, rather than being weighed down by the prospect.

"We will be building more tees, levelling and extending others, continuing bunker renovation, extensive fairway programs while the roughs natural marran grasses are being transplanted and promoted throughout the course."



The Trevoze greenkeeping team

Neil and his 2-handicap playing Managing Director, are fortunate to have Harry Colt's original blueprints to work from, plus the original charts and course planners which ensures that whatever they do is in keeping with the original intentions of the great architect.

"From the yardage charts you could see that, for arguments sake, the tee shot off the 1st was expected to go an average of 140 yards, bearing in mind they were using the equipment of the day."

They discovered that the bunkers that were built to trap the original second shots are there for the tee shots, now thus meaning that they haven't had to make as many major alterations as might have been the case.



Trevoze golf course and Constantine Bay

Neil, one of only three Head Greenkeepers in the history of the club and a genuine lover of the game, has to pinch himself that he is involved in making changes to such a fine layout on a course and since reading about Harry Colt, whose CV carries the names of some of the most revered courses in the world – Sunningdale, Wentworth, Royal Lytham and St Annes, Muirfield, Ganton and Pine Valley in the States to name but a few – he has come to appreciate some of the intricacies of the great man's work.

"Colt never placed an even number of bunkers on each side of a fairway or green. It is, for example, either two one side and one the other or three one and two the other. He felt that was the best way to introduce a risk and reward element to the game. He would always have several small bunkers rather than one large one."

Neil and his deputy Ashley Noyce, manage a team of seven greenkeepers who are responsible for the Championship 18, a nine-hole Headland Course, opened by Peter Alliss in '95 and a Short course aimed at beginners (along with the accommodation grounds) – have worked particularly hard to ensure that the bunkers are one of the main features of the course.



"We have revetted the faces of them but have been careful to ensure the faces are of an angle which players of all abilities can enjoy the difficulty of them. From your tee or fairway shot these can look particularly imposing not being able to see the sand, this adds a psychological factor to your game."

The club also welcomes many professionals who enjoy staying at Trevoze so they can use the practice facilities while also fine tuning their Links golf games, among regular guests are Australian golfer, Rodger Davies, and European tour pro's Richard Boxall and Jeremy Robinson.

Neil, originally from Clevedon, first visited Trevoze as a youngster in his



being kept in a traditional manner and we are being rewarded for it." summer holidays and joined as a country member. He started his career under former premier greenkeeper of the year Ian Harrison. Neil kept in touch with Peter Gammon who in turn followed his career with interest.

The arrival of the Europe's top amateurs for the Brabazon is a fine opportunity to tighten up the course.

With the improvements to the layout of the course well under way Neil, who describes himself as a greenkeeper who enjoys taking risks, is continuing his agronomic policies aimed at ensuring Trevoze retains a traditional links look.

"I firmly believe that people are prone to overfeeding and we haven't fed the greens here for about three and a half years. Instead we work hard to improve the root system. We keep greens tight and lean with our winter height being four mil going down to two and a half in the summer.

"I'm not saying this would work for everyone, as Cornwall has milder weather than the rest of the country. Having said that we did have frost and snow last winter which we haven't had in 20 years and we kept the same cutting regime without any problems. I think the grass just got used to growing at that height."

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Course Feature



17th hole

Neil talks enthusiastically about looking at the grass and working out what its needs are. "It gets its food from down through the roots so all we are doing is making sure the root systems are healthy. The pH level on our greens is 8.9 and we have some of the highest lime contents anywhere in England because we are built on a dune. In all honesty grass shouldn't be growing, but it is, without me putting anything on. If I did alter things I might change the indigenous grasses and that is one reason why I don't feed."

"My aim is to keep the natural links greens, true, consistent and fast year round. When our greens have a pale and slight shine to them, that's when I am happy." Neil paid tribute to Hoylake and this year's Open as being a great boost to British greenkeeping as they achieved this superbly.

"A lot more people are now accepting a dry fairway and a crusty green which is great."

While the Old Course the previous year also boasted magnificent links conditions, Neil believes it is the incredible heat that really brought the issue to the forefront at this year's Open.

"We stuck a thermometer in the ground when we got back from The Open and it read 42 degrees celsius and was killing off the grass. Hoylake was burnt up even more than we were, so when members were asking us why we weren't using our irrigation they were then seeing the best players in the world playing on burnt up fairways."

