

BIGGA's Fantastic Outdoor Range

BIGGA currently have a great stock of outdoor clothing at fantastically low prices for all of its members. BIGGA's new range includes jackets, fleeces, trousers and waterproof suits. All products are available in numerous sizes and colours and can be purchased by contacting Rachael Duffy on 01347 833800 at BIGGA HQ.

1. The Highlander Cargo Suit is the whole package. The suit features a coated micro fibre shell and waterproof breathable lining, with two cargo style pockets, plus two pockets on the trousers. The suit comes in M, L, XL & XXL. £55

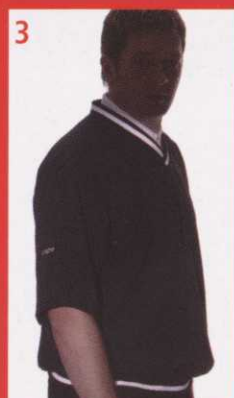


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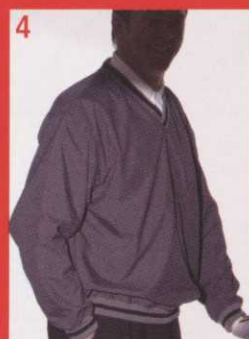


2. The Tour Suit, which comes in either a Weatherbeater or Full Zipper style (pictured), has a waterproof outer fabric, which is fully lined. The Weatherbeater jacket is a short zipped pullover style with two pockets and has an adjustable draw cord waist. It also contains zip off half sleeves. The trousers come with a three pocket styling. The Full Zipper version comes with a full length covered zipper on the jacket and the trousers have velcro adjustable bottoms. Jacket size ranges from S - XXL and the trousers come in 27", 29", 31" & 33". The suits come in a choice of colours. £130

3. This does exactly what it says on the tin. The Four Seasons Breaker is just that, perfect to wear all year round. This item is a multi option pullover style top with a short zip and elasticated draw cord. This breaker zips off in two places to create three different garments, full sleeve, 1/2 sleeve or a sleeveless top. Available in a multitude of colours and sizes. £26



4. When it blows, it really does blow and the Windbreaker ensures that you don't feel any of the resulting chill. This stylish top features a soft Teflon coated microfibre outer coat and is a pullover style, with high v-neck and two side pockets. It comes in navy, black or charcoal. Sizes S - XXL. £25



5&6. This top, which is Teflon coated and contains a soft waterproof breathable lining system, comes in two different styles. The Sport Weatherbeater (5) has an adjustable draw cord and is a short zipped pullover style. The Sports Jacket (6) is a blouson style with a full covered zip. Both come in a variety of colours and sizes are available from S - XXL. £42

7. The Reversible Waistcoat has two pockets both sides, is fully reversible and has an adjustable elasticised draw cord. Teflon coated, this top comes in black and grey or navy and stone (as pictured), with sizes ranging from M - XXL. £22.50

**PHONE 01347
833800 to
order your
kit today!**

8 The Gear Crew Neck Fleece is ideal for work and play, is fashionable and practical. Available in S, M and L. Colours red, navy and grey. £22

9. If you truly want to be protected from all the elements then look no further than the Outerwear Jacket. This strong jacket is a acrylic coated waterproof, has a full zip with storm flap, and concealed hood. £40



10. These smart, yet tough, polo shirts are made with a fabric that actively pulls moisture away from the skin by rapid evaporation. The Dry Gear shirt is just £16 and is available in white, with either blue, green or red collar trim. The Nailshead polo shirt is moderately priced at £19.50.





A guide to who's who at BIGGA

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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October 2006

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by November 7 2006.



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How can greenkeepers achieve a high quality course appearance, which is consistent from the first hole to the last, gives an improved green speed and is more profitable? Maureen Keepin reports.



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.



Welcome

FAIRIES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GOLF COURSE

Congratulations to Gerry Byrne and his team at the K Club who did a superb job in difficult conditions to produce a superbly conditioned course for the Ryder Cup. Having to cope with the tail end of a hurricane and torrential rain at some stage of each of the three competition days, it says much for Gerry that the course held up as well as it did.

Obviously there are many, myself among them, who would have preferred the match to be played on one of Ireland's classic courses - Ballybunion, Portmarnock or the like - but in today's money motivated environment that is no longer going to happen and it is the person with the deepest pockets who attracts the biggest events at the expense of courses which may well produce more interesting golf. Gerry made sure that K Club owner Michael Smurfit's dream became reality.

Indeed a traditional course hasn't hosted the match on this side of the pond since Walton Heath in 1981 - prepared by our own Clive Osgood - when the Ryder Cup was a much more low key affair. Since then it has been at The Belfry four times and Valderamma once and the next two venues are Celtic Manor, whose course is still to be completed, and the PGA Course at Gleneagles - oh how I wish it would be the traditional King's Course. After 2014, and its visit to Scotland, it's quite likely it won't hit these shores again for a number of years with Sweden and possibly Spain in line for matches. That would make it at least 2026 and you can be sure that the venue for that one is currently no more than a not yet formulated dream of some 15 year-old soon-to-be dot-com billionaire. It will quite likely be held on some reclaimed brown field site on the outskirts of Wandsworth.

Talking about the Ryder Cup, I was forced to text Radio 5 Live early on Saturday morning after I heard Nicky Campbell talking to the Director of Golf at the K Club about shaving the green surrounds and asking him whether he was responsible for the horticulture of the course. Nicky is renowned for the research he does before he goes on air but like many people when it comes to golf, different rules seem to apply and they believe they know far more than they actually do. I don't think my text made it to air, at least I didn't hear it, but hopefully Nicky will be made aware of its existence and realise that there is a profession involved in maintaining golf courses and it's not just a few of the less high profile colleagues of Alan Titchmarsh and Monty Don.

It just goes to reinforce to us the enormity of the task we face in raising the profile of greenkeeping and BIGGA. It's as though perfectly sane people believe that there are the golfing equivalent of fairies at the bottom of the garden, who emerge unseen to work miracles on golf courses and then disappear again until the next time.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

SURREY BOWL

The final of the Surrey Bowl was played at Foxhills GC on the Longcross course on August 31. The finalists were Brian Turner and Paul Robinson from Worplesdon GC, and Darren Woodward and Simon Kirkham from West Surrey GC.

Brian and Paul went on to win the event quite easily by five and four - congratulations to them. The West Surrey guys, obviously disappointed, are proving to be Surrey's most consistent team reaching the final for the last three years, and winning in their first final.

The Longcross course was in good condition in spite of the difficult weather conditions experienced this year, and our thanks go to Dave Wyborn and his team

for their efforts. Thanks must also go to Dave Langheim for his organisation of the Surrey Bowl event.

The sponsors were ETT, and Richard Fortmuller one of the company's Area Sales Managers, spent the whole day with us supporting the final, handing over the sponsors cheque, and giving out the prizes for the finalists, thank you for you and your company's support which is to be continued next year.



NEW MARKETING APPOINTMENT



Hayter have announced the appointment of Claudia Reyland as Marketing Assistant. In her new position Claudia will be responsible for all marketing activities relating to exhibitions, advertising and promotions for both commercial and consumer products.

Before joining Hayter in June 2005, Claudia was in an Electronics Defence Systems company where she worked in various departments including Human Resources, Quality and Programme Management.

Commenting on the appointment David Sturges, Sales and Marketing Director for Hayter said.

"Claudia's knowledge and experience will strengthen the marketing function. With her solid business background, enthusiasm, and marketing know how she is the ideal candidate for this important role at Hayter."

ASTHMA CURE FOR TURF!

"It's like when someone has asthma. Difficulty in breathing makes them feel thoroughly run-down. As soon as they get a better supply of oxygen they feel better. Turf reacts in much the same way. Our Aer-Aid breathes life into our turf - sideways."

That's the comment by David Barling, Director of Upchurch River Valley GC in Kent. Constructed on 120 acres of farmland, the views over the River Medway and Thames Estuary add to the quality of the two 9-hole and one 18-hole course's - designed by David Smart.

Brothers David and William Barling purchased the farmland in 1989 as a diversion from their previous business of builders and developers. In 2005 the brothers decided the greens needed a natural boost. The SISIS Aer-Aid was demonstrated and almost immediately a few lethargic greens started to recover. The Aer-Aid was purchased, and over the past

12 months steady progress has been seen. The depth has been varied from 25mm to 125mm to allow fracturing of the soil at different depths. Using the same machine, 7mm pencil tines have been used from time to time to complement the programme.

One of the biggest advantages the club has found is that regular air injection has allowed a reduction in water usage, without the greens suffering. Indeed they have improved both visually and physically. During the very hot summer weather this year the height of cut has been increased from 3mm to 5mm, and as there is little disruption to the putting surface, aeration with the Aer-Aid could continue.



THANKS RANSOMES JACOBSEN!



The Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Scheme has helped fund many aspiring greenkeepers through their study, and aided them in

completing their ambitions of becoming fully qualified greenkeepers.

Among those who benefited from the scheme this year was Katherine Walls from Taunton, Somerset. Katherine has recently completed a Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Science at Myerscough College and won the Ernest Jones Award (First Prize).

Katherine is now continuing her studies to Honours Degree level on the BSc Sportsturf Science course at the College.

Obtaining an MSc in Sports Surface at Cranfield College was Ian Somerville.

Ransomes Jacobsen funds Sports Surface, Sports Turf and Sportsturf courses at Merrist Wood, Askham Bryan, Cranfield, Writtle, Elmwood and Myerscough College. Students received their relevant awards for their hard work and study in late summer, thanks to the BIGGA scheme greatly supported by the manufacturing giant.



Katherine Walls



Ian Somerville

THE NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY

Auchterarder GC was the venue for the annual team event for the Norrie Whytock Trophy.

The North have won this trophy for the last three years and once again provided a strong team led by their Captain Steve Sullivan.

Archie Dunn, Head Greenkeeper decided that foreign shores was an attractive proposition and left the course in the very capable hands of his deputy, Alistair Tough and the remainder of the Auchterarder staff who presented the course in superb condition.

To the scoring, the North Section once again produced a fine total of 100 Stableford points normally sufficient to win, but not on this occasion, as the Central Section ably led by the former Deputy at Auchterarder GC, Brian Heggie, won with a total of 106 stableford points.

The Central team comprised: Team Captain, Brian Heggie, Piperdam GC, 29; Paul Armour, Aberdour GC, 2; Derek Scott,

Scoonie GC, 38; Kenneth Mitchell, St.Andrews Links, 39. Best three scores to count – 106.

The runners up North Section: Team Captain, Steve Sullivan, Craigie Hill GC, 36; Roy Donald, Oldmeldrum GC, 32; Jim McCormack, Kirriemuir GC, 31; David Duggan, Fortrose GC, 32. Best three scores to count – 100.

Our Chairman, Iain Barr, was on hand to thank Auchterarder GC for the facilities at the club. He went on to thank Bayer and David Drummond, their representative in Scotland for their support and took the opportunity to wish David Drummond well for the future.

Next year's event will be held on Monday 20 August 2007 at Auchterarder GC.

Peter Boyd



2006 RYDER CUP HOST PICKS PROLINK SOLUTIONS

ProLink Solutions European distributor, Elumina, will install the ProLink system at the K Club, Ireland, commanding the international spotlight as host of the 2006 Ryder Cup.

ProLink's solutions-based GPS system will be installed at the K Club's Palmer and Smurfit courses, two of Ireland's most highly regarded championship golf facilities. Together, these critically-acclaimed courses comprise of what many consider to be the finest 36 holes of inland golf in Ireland, a nation

steeped in golf tradition and rich with courses ranked among the best in the world.

Talking about K Club's decision to use ProLink Solutions, Director of Golf John McHenry said: "Our golfers will benefit from the precise yardages and hole descriptions, while the club will achieve greater efficiency in all golfing operations. The stylish ProLink monitors fit seamlessly with our golf car fleet and provide a look and feel consistent with the club's high-end aesthetic."

HOLE IN ONE 4CHILDREN

Children's charity 4Children has teamed up with Brocket Hall GC, Hertfordshire for a charity golf day and gala dinner on Monday, October 16 2006, to raise vital funds for 4Children's work with children and young people.

This is a unique opportunity to play a round of golf on the championship 72 par Melbourne course designed by Peter Alliss and Clive Clark. The course follows the natural undulations and contours of the 18th Century parkland around Brocket Hall, home to two former Prime Ministers, the course also crosses the River Lea several times and golfers are carried across the Broadwater by ferry to complete the 18th hole!

The day will start with time in the Faldo Golf Institute a state-of-the-art golf instructional centre based on the six-time Major Champion's improvement and development programme, breakfast lunch before teeing off with a shot gun start. There will be a prize table and presentations for top teams and individual winning scores, followed by a gala dinner and charity auction in the evening.

4Children are looking for teams of four to take part in the competition, playing to full handicaps on stableford scoring, with the best two stableford scores, counting on each hole. The maximum handicap will be 24 for men and 30 for women. A team costs £1,200 and includes a morning at the Faldo Institute, breakfast brunch, golf, prize table, hole-in-one competition, reception, four course gala dinner and celebrity auction.

For further information visit:
www.4children.org.uk/golf or call Carol Williams on: 020 75122112 to reserve a team place in the competition.

TURF TEAM TOUGHER

Peter Holmstrom has joined Countrywide Farmers (CWF) as Regional Sales Manager, for the Turf and Amenity Business, covering Mid and South Wales, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and West Gloucestershire.



Having previously worked as First Assistant Greenkeeper at Newport GC, Peter is well qualified in both practical and technical aspects of modern turf management and has obtained high qualifications at Cannington and Pencoed Colleges.

NEW AMENITY WEBSITE

British Seed Houses has launched a brand new website for the amenity sector at www.bshamenity.com

To help you choose the best cultivars for your needs, each has a technical data sheet which can be printed off or downloaded to your desktop for future reference.

Groundsmen, greenkeepers, specifiers, golf and landscape architects, turf growers and ecologists can keep up-to-date with the latest company news, new product information, special offers and updates from BSH's amenity breeding programme at IGER by subscribing to the free e-newsletter.



A GENERATION OF AERATION

As part of the celebrations commemorating the Verti-Drain's UK Silver Jubilee, Charterhouse Turf Machinery have held a competition to find the oldest machine that is still in regular operation. "We have had a phenomenal response," says Managing Director Philip Threadgold. "It has made users look closely and appreciate their machines, and it emphasises the Verti-Drain's build quality."

One of the many entrants is Douglas Park GC in Bearsden, Glasgow. Course Manager Drew McKechnie enthuses about his Verti-Drain 105145. "This machine just has to be one of the most important tools available to the greenkeeper. It has been well used on all areas of our course, and especially for hollow coring of greens."

Another golf course hoping to carry off the prize of a brand new Verti-Drain is the Bedfordshire GC located near Bedford. Course Manager John Gubb says that his 005120 model is used for aerating greens, tees and approaches. "It is great for deep tine aeration. We can penetrate down to 10-12in (25-30cm) on the greens, and if you use a mower immediately afterwards you don't even realise that the Verti-Drain has been there first."

SORRY

GI would like to clarify that Head Greenkeeper of Belleisle GC is Kevin Johnston, NOT Thomson as printed on our letters page of our September issue. Sorry Kevin!

CHALLENGING PERCEPTIONS

The IOG has launched a ten-point strategic 'Challenging Perceptions' development plan that will carry both the IOG and the grounds care profession it represents forward for the next six years.

With 'quality surfaces supported by quality services' as the central thread, the strategic areas highlighted by the IOG for development also include: Leadership; Working partnerships; Professional services, membership and communications; Training and Education; Health and safety; Research and development; Natural environment; Events and exhibitions and 2012 opportunities.

Unveiled at IOG SALTEx, Geoff Webb, Challenging Perceptions is the result of an intense seven-month review of IOG activities.

"The Challenging Perceptions strategy lays the foundations for a new era of the IOG as the Institute and its members continue to establish wider awareness of their role as the preparations for the Olympic Games gather pace," said Geoff

"At a time when many eyes will be focused on the skills and aptitude of grounds professionals, the

IOG is positively looking to improve and promote the overall professionalism of the industry with Olympic organisations and in the wider public community as well.

"This, indeed, is a core attribute of Challenging Perceptions - it's about gaining recognition for an industry that has held its light under a bushel for too long!" he added.

Among the initiatives is a new Level 2 National Certificate in Sports and Amenity Turf Maintenance, due to be introduced by the end of 2006, will be complemented by a new Advanced National Certificate in 2007.

"In addition to also instigating the industry's first ever accurate survey of the actual size of the UK's grounds care industry, the strategy highlights the areas where the IOG feels that it both should and could make the most impact over the coming years.

"It will not be easy, but we believe that progress can be achieved with unified effort, hard work and a practical approach," concluded Geoff.

BIGGA MIDLAND REGION - ACCIDENT REPORTING AND HEALTH & SAFETY WORKSHOP

The Midland Region is holding a Practical Accident Reporting and Health and Safety workshop at Gay Hill GC on Thursday, November 16. The workshop will run from 9am until 4pm and will involve practical exercises in groups, looking at a simulated vehicle accident and H&S Hazards in the

Greenkeeping Shed. Attendance is open to BIGGA members and golf club officials and invitations will be sent out in early October. Refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact Peter Larter, Midland Regional Administrator, on: 01476 550115 or email: petelarter972@aol.com

GATOR GETS ROYAL RECOGNITION

John Deere's new HPX Diesel 4x4 Gator utility vehicle was overall winner in this year's Royal Show New Equipment Awards - in addition to winning the estate maintenance category. The award was presented at the show to John Deere's National Account Manager Joedy Ibbotson, by HRH Princess Michael of Kent.

Organised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England in association with Farmers Guardian, the award was open to all those exhibiting agricultural,

horticultural and forestry equipment offered for sale for the first time during 2006. The judges were Brian Finney, RASE Honorary Consulting Engineer, and Mervyn Bailey, Technical Editor of Farmers Guardian.

The new HPX 4x4 Gator is ruggedly designed for a range of transporting and general material handling duties, in any environment, but is especially suitable for farming, rough terrain, heavy duty haulage and commercial applications.



RETIREMENT

One of most familiar faces in the industry began a well earned break at Saltex when Mike Shephard, of Vitax, retired. The occasion was marked by a drinks and buffet reception during which Clive Williams paid tribute to Mike and the work he had

done over the last 20 plus years with the company. Watched by another slightly older but equally familiar retired member of staff in Alan Stowe, Clive commented that there was no truth in the rumour that Vitax doubled as a home for aged reprobates.

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CANADA GEESE FACE EXECUTION

Until now, geese foes have had to obtain permits from the government to kill Canada geese or destroy their nests and eggs. The US Fish and Wildlife Service have issued a new rule making it easier for farmers, airports, landowners and public health officials to kill the geese without permits.

Animal rights activists say there's got to be a better way to deal with the birds.

The new rule includes several provisions, which now allow:

- Airports, public health officials and landowners to destroy nests and eggs without federal permits;
- Private and public airports to round up the birds for destruction without federal permits;
- Local governments to round up the birds if they threaten public health by congregating at reservoirs, athletic fields, parks and public beaches.

The Fish and Wildlife Service said the rule was prompted in response to "growing impacts from overabundant populations of resident Canada geese." The resident Canada goose population has increased an average of two percent per year over the past four years and was estimated at 1.15 million last spring.

MAKING AMENDS

Our sincerest apologies to Irriplan for wrongly attributing Marcus White's "Controlling your own water supply - building a golf course reservoir" in our "Pooling Resources" September issue article. Marcus is a Director of Derbyshire based consulting engineers, Irriplan Limited, who specialise in irrigation engineering, reservoir engineering and water resource management for golf courses.

MASSEY FERGUSON SIGNS NEW PARTNERSHIP

AGCO and MTD have entered into an exclusive partnership agreement covering the production, supply and after sales support of an extensive range of Massey Ferguson grass and grounds care machinery, to be sold in Europe through the Massey Ferguson Dealer network.

The new ranges of equipment will complement Massey Ferguson's existing lower horsepower and compact machinery ranges which include the MF 1500 series, recently enhanced by the launch of MF's new advanced change on the move Dyna QPS™ transmission. All new products will be built by MTD to Massey Ferguson's design criteria and specifications. MTD will also provide comprehensive pre and after-sales product support directly to Massey Ferguson Dealers and their customers.

For more information visit: www.agcocorp.com and www.masseyferguson.com

2006 JUNIOR OPEN



Guy Cannings, Course Manager at Heswall GC with TurfWorks Vibro Rollers attached to his Jacobsen Greens Mower

Heswall GC is an attractive, undulating parkland course situated on the Wirral Peninsula on the bank of the Dee Estuary overlooking the Welsh Hills, which hosted the R&A Junior Open, just four days before the seniors Open, at Royal Liverpool Golf Course, Hoylake. Heswall GC, situated just five miles from Royal Liverpool Golf Course welcomed competitors from over 60 nations with ages ranging from 12 to 16 years, and to both boys and girls

with varying handicap categories as high as +2. Playing at the event was Stefan Langer, son of Bernard Langer, Miguel Angel Jimenez Junior and Angel Cabrera Junior. Guy Cannings, Course Manager at Heswall, was very keen to present the course for the R&A Juniors as he would for a senior's competition, many months of extra hard work and preparation with a lot of consultation with the R&A over layout and expectations. The speed and consistency of the greens was of high importance to Guy and this led to him purchasing a set of TurfWorks Vibro Rollers. "I purchased a set of Turfworks Vibro Rollers to assist with the greens issue, I knew the Turfworks had been used for the British Masters earlier in the year and Hoylake would be using the Turfworks Vibro Rollers with brushes for The Open. It is my belief that the Junior Open deserve to play on surfaces as good as the Seniors, so the Turfworks were a necessity, the greens for the competition were excellent and the members that have played the course have asked if I can use the Turfworks regularly after The Open." The competition for the lowest gross score was won by Patrick Reed of the USA with a final round of 74 for a 54-hole total of 217. Guy stated, "One of these Juniors could be a future Seniors Open Champion, and they are the future of Golf."

SOUTH EAST SEMINAR

The annual South East Seminar will take place at Thorpeness Country Club on Wednesday, November 1. Speakers include agronomist David Stansfield; Jimmy Kidd, of Gleneagles and Sandy Lane fame; plant pathologist, Kate Entwistle; ecologist, Ray Harding; John Grindrop, of WRAP and John

Pemberton, of BIGGA. Membership Services Officer, Rachael Palmer will also be in attendance.

Cost of the day is £15 and all members will be sent full details of the event. Special rates for accommodation are available if booked in advance.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Andrew Black, 41, has recently celebrated his 25th anniversary at Ransomes Jacobsen's grounds care dealer, Rickerby Ltd, at Hexham, Northumberland.

Andrew joined the company in April 1981 as an Apprentice Fitter aged 16 and after completing his apprenticeship, eventually rose through the ranks to become Workshop Foreman. In 1998 a vacancy arose in the Sales department and Andrew was offered the job.

For the last eight years he has really made his mark in the north east and is one of the 'characters' of the grounds care industry in the region. He has an excellent working relationship with the local senior football clubs and is on first name terms with Sir Bobby Robson and Alan Shearer, having sold both of them mowing equipment for their gardens. He was also instrumental in securing the £ multi-million preferred supplier agreement with Newcastle City Council.

Presenting Andrew with a commemorative clock at a short ceremony at the Hexham dealership recently, Paddy Rickerby, a director of the family-owned business said: "Andrew is everything we could wish for; as a person and as an employee. He's jovial, good-natured, very professional, well organised, obliging and a tremendous asset to the business. His relationships with golf courses, football clubs and municipal authorities across the region are excellent and, on behalf of the Rickerby family, we thank him for his loyalty and hard work; it's very much appreciated."



PLANT NUTRIENT MANUFACTURER AND SEER JOIN FORCES

Forfar based Angus Horticulture Ltd (AHL) made a key announcement at the Scotgrov Trade Show, held recently at Pentland Plants near Edinburgh. AHL has now signed a four year Agreement with Rockdust Ltd, the trading subsidiary of The Seer Centre Trust, to carry out the marketing, promotion and distribution of the Seer Rockdust products.

The first new line, Seer Rocksoil, is the Seer Centre' growing medium that produces the superb crops where local farmers said they "would never even be able to grow tatties". Seer Rockmix is a top dressing. The two new lines, launched this summer, are a blend of Forth Resource Management Ltd's garden compost and Seer Rockdust. All three products are now attracting significant interest from throughout the UK and overseas.



Nick Cooke, RDL Director; Dan Morgan, SEER Chairman; Alistair Ballantyne, AHL Sales Director and Jennifer Cook, AHL Sales Manager

TWO NEW COLLEGES ADDED TO GTC LIST

The Greenkeepers' Training Committee (GTC) has added two new colleges to its list of centres which work with the sector and within the awarding bodies' criterion to deliver sports turf qualifications.

Duchy College in Cornwall and Kingston Maurward College in Dorset have been added to the list. The GTC's Education Director, David Golding, said: "Both centres are providing specialist turf programmes on a local basis for clubs and greenkeeping candidates and have established industry liaison committees to monitor the deliver. "A major part of our work is to monitor the quality standards of sports turf education and training in association with the awarding bodies."

"Our team of staff are absolutely delighted that they have recently been provisionally approved as a GTC centre," said Duchy College Operations Manager (work based learning) Chris Shepherd. "The status means a great deal to all training providers and is a hard-earned and fiercely guarded prize.

The college looks after about 450 apprentices or work based learners in the land based sector across all of the vocational areas associated with a land based college. "Within this number we cater for around 30 greenkeepers at any one time across Devon and Cornwall," she said.

"Our association with the industry started in autumn 2000 and since then around 150 greenkeepers of all ages have taken part in NVQ training programmes. As relative newcomers, what has been striking is the level of support that we have received from the industry. Many other vocational areas in the land based sector could learn a great deal from the way in which the greenkeeping industry has organised itself and promoted work based learning opportunities. I have experienced first hand the extremely effective case put by the GTC to LANTRA when it comes to designing apprenticeship frameworks and NVQ content. The GTC learning materials (NVQL2 and L3)

are a superb source of information to all learning their profession," said Chris.

"The support from the Devon and Cornwall greenkeepers has been amazing and it feels as if we could access both the physical and human resource across all of the clubs with whom we work. Our regular assessor update sessions are very effective in keeping contact with the industry and communicating with the many qualified assessors out there. We look forward to developing our partnership with the industry and value greatly the constructive advice and guidance given so openly."

Kingston Maurward College is a specialist land-based college located in beautiful countryside in rural Dorset. It, like most other land-based colleges, provides a range of educational provision in various disciplines. The college has an estate of approximately 500 acres of which 35 acres are made up of formal gardens and a lake.

The key curriculum areas are agriculture, animal care, equine, horticulture, IT and outdoor leisure and recreation. The college has approximately 500 full-time students and 4500 part-time students.

The Horticulture Department includes arboriculture, floristry, forestry and horticulture. It offers a range of short and long, full and part-time courses from Level 1 to Level 4. The bulk of the turf related provision is delivered through NVQ2 and NVQ3. The College has a dynamic Industrial Liaison Committee which meets regularly. There is a wide range of sports turf employer representation including golf courses, council sports playing fields and private school playing fields.

The College has a good reputation for providing high quality education. This was confirmed in the recent OFSTED/ALI inspection when it was awarded grade 2's across the board with the exception of IT which was awarded a grade 1. Several previous students have gone on to win the RHS Young Horticulturalist of the Year.

CARNOUSTIE FACELIFT

A £1.5 million revamp is on the cards for next year's Open as a number of projects have been approved by Angus Council's Infrastructure Services Committee, to ensure the town is looking tip-top next summer.

The main elements will be the erection of 16 new 8.5m high banners around the town with graphics promoting the many attractions of Angus. These colourful additions to the town will be complemented with a number of landscaping and environmental improvements at locations near or on route to the Championship Golf Course.

Angus Convener of Infrastructure Services David Selfridge said: "The Open is a major sporting event with more than 150,000 people attending and worldwide broadcast coverage so it is vital the council capitalises on this by ensuring the town looks its best."

A SAFE PAIR OF HANDS FOR INTURF

Paul Robinson, the Tottenham Hotspur and England goalkeeper, has chosen Inturf Lawn for his new garden at his Hertfordshire home. Now, as well as defending his goal on premiership pitches installed throughout England by Inturf, he can enjoy the same quality turf when he's relaxing.



Paul said: "I wanted turf that was hard wearing and easy to maintain but with a superior appearance. Having looked at several suppliers I chose Inturf."

"We have installed our turf on the majority of pitches Paul will play on in the Premier League," says Andy Church, Director of sales at Inturf. "It is very pleasing to know that Paul has also chosen our turf for his garden - and that he sees Inturf as a safe pair of hands!"

RELOCATION

Turf grower and topsoil supplier Rolawn, have relocated their Edinburgh depot to larger premises. Philip Cuthbert, Commercial Director commented: "the new site is in a higher profile location opposite the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland showground, it will enable us to further expand our business in Edinburgh and compliments our Glasgow Depot. Together these two depots, under the overall management of Senior Depot Manager Alistair Matheson who has worked with Rolawn for 17 years, and our extensive stockist network give Rolawn an excellent platform from which to further improve customer service and expand our market share in Scotland."



BACK TO SCHOOL

In this month's article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, looks at the qualifications which offer greenkeeping students a route to a Degree.

While tremendous progress has been made by the greenkeeping sector to implement vocational training and qualifications we must also continue to promote the more college/university-based awards.

The GTC, in recent years, has been invited by Awarding Bodies to be represented on validation panels to discuss qualifications ranging from the Higher National Certificate (HNC) to the Masters Degree in Sports Turf Surfaces.

We have been very aware of not approving a proliferation of qualifications, all of which may have been submitted by different institutions with a slightly different turf or golf related title.

The GTC has continually discussed the need to keep a small range of qualifications for sports turf while accepting that the institutions will offer the courses through different modes of delivery e.g. distance learning, full-time, on-line.

Greenkeepers with the work-based vocational qualifications should also consider the HN qualifications as they are designed to compliment occupational standards.

I can reassure any greenkeeper that has progressed "through the tools" that the HNC and Foundation Degree are not just for full-time students, far from it!

Just before I start to lose some of you with all the various titles of qualifications, I can confirm that England, Scotland and Wales all have a HNC and while the progression north of the border is to the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Golf Course Management, the HND in England and Wales has been re-badged as the Foundation Degree (FD) in Sports Turf.

Still with me? Some of the older readers will remember the criticism especially from employers that students entering the industry straight from full-time college with a HND had very limited greenkeeping skills.

Well Higher qualifications were never designed to be skill based (they are the more vocational qualifications such as N/SVQ's) however, the GTC has to listen to the employers and as this issue has been mirrored by other industries, the relatively new Foundation Degree takes into account both the in depth, turf related, knowledge requirements and skills.

The FD is therefore an ideal option for those greenkeepers with VQ's seeking to embark on a course with a Degree at the end of programme.

How many greenkeepers would have even dreamt of achieving a Degree when they embarked on a career having left school at the earliest opportunity!

All this can be achieved without giving up your job and several GTC Providers will be willing to discuss the various study options to achieve your goal.



This could be You!

The GTC will continue to support the HN qualifications and is fully aware that the majority of students/learners will prefer the work-based route but of equal importance are the HNC/D and B.Sc and M.Sc Degree qualifications.

Why every time there is a national debate on Degrees the media, in particular Radio 2, seem to mention Golf Course maintenance as one of the qualifications having no worth to Nations productivity, I don't know, but again the Government will continue to approve only the qualifications where industry has given its full support and the GTC certainly continue to support the academic qualifications.

The M.Sc offered by Cranfield might only have a few students registering annually on the programme but great credit to the staff and the advisory board who continually monitor the programme to meet both the students and employers needs and also the changes in technology, environmental issues and turf grass research.

This consultative process is a condition of all qualification approvals, which the GTC insists on and fortunately Government inspectors look for when reviewing programmes.

Ask your local provider how your current qualifications and experience can be accredited towards a qualification.

Why not consider the HNC/D - Degree qualifications? Visit the Training Provider page on the GTC website for more details on the various courses on offer: www.the-gtc.co.uk

If you wish to discuss independently which qualification or training course might be best suited to you, please do not hesitate to contact the GTC.

David can be contacted direct at the GTC on: 01347 838640 or email: david@the-gtc.co.uk

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