

## GREENS SWEEPER PROVES IDEAL FOR CLEANING AND RENOVATING

An important new application has been found for Turfmech's SQRL walk-behind green sweeper.

Extending the SQRL's primary function of collecting and removing hollow cores, scarified material and other debris from fine turf is the ability to pick up soil and vegetation from synthetic golf and practice tees to leave a clean and neatly groomed surface.

The SQRL's additional capabilities were uncovered by Graeme Clarkson, head greenkeeper at the Worcestershire Golf Club, an 18-hole parkland course laid out in the lee of the Malvern Hills.

"We purchased the SQRL originally to mechanise greens' clean-up after the Graden scarifier-aerator had done its work," explained Graeme. "Used for the first time last autumn, the SQRL did a first-class job, saving us a great deal of time and effort in getting the greens quickly back into play. When the work was completed, the machine was put away with no thought that it would be back in action again within six weeks."

The synthetic surfaces benefiting from SQRL treatments are winter tees installed in mid 2007 on the club's three par-3 holes. Commissioned by the Worcestershire to help take the pressure off natural grass, the tees were constructed using a high quality all-weather turf with a high fibre density able to accept a tee peg without the need for a filler. Brought into play in late October, the tees were starting to suffer from a build-up of mud and grass clippings being walked onto the surface by golfers during periods of wet and frosty weather.

"The staff did their best to clean the surface with a hard brush and back-pack blower, but the appearance of the tees was starting to draw adverse comments from members," commented Graeme. "The club was on the point of asking the supplier for advice when I suggested using the SQRL to clean-up and refurbish the pile. The results were superb, with each tee being restored to an as-new finish in less than 10 minutes."

## EXPERTS COMBINE

A specialist aeration company and the landscape design section of a well-known group of garden centres have joined forces to ensure that homeowners get the best from their gardens.



Nick Mansell, Project Manager for Notcutts Design and right - Steve Oates of Terrain Aeration working with the Arforce Tracker

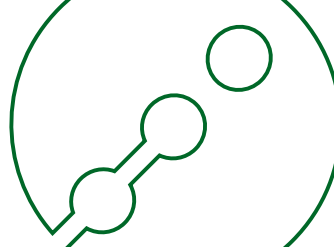
Terrain Aeration, the one metre deep, compressed air de-compaction experts, often called upon to treat badly drained, waterlogged lawns have been giving customers grass after care advice for many years. But following a recent contract for Notcutts Design, (the landscaping and design wing of Notcutts Garden Centres) this advice has expanded to include a comprehensive plant guide, pinpointing the right plant for the right situation.

David Green, Terrain Aeration's MD says that not only do homeowners need to know about his company's aeration process, (which breaks up compaction by injecting compressed air one metre below the surface) but also how to care for their lawn after treatment. "As well as cutting regularly, treating the grass for any disease or insect pests, spiking once a month, feeding, weeding and scarifying and top dressing every autumn, we also point out that rainwater from patios, decking and shed roofs should not, if possible, be allowed to run onto the lawn," he says. "If, at the end of the day, the situation is totally unsuitable for growing grass – the garden could be completely over shadowed by the canopy of a mature oak carrying a Tree Preservation Order for example – then the home owner will be better off abandoning his lawn and using suitable plants instead."

Malcolm Veitch, senior designer at Notcutts Design (whose family has been in the landscaping business for over 50 years) says that he is delighted to be providing plant information alongside Terrain Aeration's grass growing advice. "All too often people will plant something totally unsuitable, an exotic for example in a cold, north facing spot and then they're disappointed when it dies," he explains. "What both companies want is people getting the best from their gardens."

Notcutts' "Plants For Specific Situations – Soils And Climate" will be handed to homeowners free of charge alongside Terrain Aeration's "Aftercare Following Airforce Terralift Aeration" lawn care letter, once aeration treatment is complete.

# Membership



## VANESSA DEPRE, MEMBERSHIP SERVICES OFFICER, UPDATES US ON MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### Harrogate week



Thank you to all the members that came to visit the BIGGA Stand at Harrogate Week. It was a great show for Membership and we have lots of new members that will be listed in the magazine next month.

### Mechanics Membership

Don't forget that BIGGA now has a category for Mechanics too. BIGGA Mechanics members will receive the same benefits as Greenkeepers except that they will not be able to vote at section level.

If you are working as a mechanic or you know someone who would like to join just give us a ring on 01347 833800 and select option one.

### BIGGA Merchandise

BIGGA members and golf clubs with members get 10% discount on all BIGGA clothing. This includes the waterproofs. We have several waterproof suits available in different price ranges.



We can also embroider your clubs logo on the clothing if required. Give us a ring now on 01347 833800 for more information.

### Goodbye

I will be leaving BIGGA at the end of February to move back to Belgium. Although my time at BIGGA has been quite short it has also been very sweet.



I have enjoyed every moment and have met some truly amazing people along the way. I would like to thank all the BIGGA staff, Section Secretaries and members for making my time here so enjoyable. I wish you all the best for the future.

## BIGGA WELCOMES

<b>SCOTTISH REGION</b>	
William Forsyth	North
Paul Cranston	East
Stuart Adamson	Central
James Atherton	Central
Steven Howie	Central
Craig Berry	Central
Kenneth McAllister	Central
William Swan	Central
Michael Gartshore	Central
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	
James Dennett	North Wales
<b>MIDLAND REGION</b>	
Matthew Hatton	East Midland
Paul Wintle	Midland
David Smith	East of England
<b>SOUTH EAST REGION</b>	
Paul Butler	Surrey
Neal Tregaskes	Kent
Mark Bell	Kent
Peter Hawkes	Surrey
<b>SOUTH WEST &amp; WALES</b>	
Mark Wells	South Wales
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	
Mark Thompson	Northern Ireland
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>	
William T Green	Overseas
Albert Schwelmer	Overseas
<b>STUDENT</b>	
Karolina Hofferova	Central
Benjamin Vernon	Berks/Bucks & Oxon

# Learning & Development

## Key Sponsorship:

### UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF GREENKEEPERS

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

### THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING KEY SPONSORS



#### GOLDEN KEY



#### Golden Key Individual Members

JH Fry; JH Greasley; WJ Rogers; Chris Yeaman; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Bruce Cruickshank; Frank Newberry; Andrew Cornes; Christopher Lomas MG.



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### SAMI COLLINS, HEAD OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES AN UPDATE



As the Rolling Stones sang, "It's All Over Now". Harrogate Week 2008 is just a memory and an air of calm will hopefully begin to descend over the Learning and Development Department. Rachael will be ably holding the Fort, as I'll have done an unlikely impression of Wonder Woman and whirled my way to Orlando and the Golf Industry Show followed by a well-earned week's holiday.

On my return, life in the Learning and Development Department will move up a gear as we start to implement all the ideas and improvements that have been sitting on the shelf since Ken retired and Harrogate Week consumed every working minute.

### Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2008



After months of plotting and planning we finally kicked off Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2008, on Sunday 20 January. Most things went like clockwork and those that didn't, we fixed fast!

The workshops were a great success with reports that the Stress Awareness workshop should be compulsory for everyone – the delegates even got a massage thrown in, so they were very happy. The Introduction to Golf Course Design saw holes being designed with plasticine along with eight foot stickman golfer – perhaps you had to be there to experience that one!

We had great attendance at the Fringe Sessions and have received good feedback on the speakers. Now the fun begins – planning Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2009.

### BIGGA Higher Education Scholarships

Supported by



Ransomes Jacobsen is once again supporting the BIGGA Higher Education Scholarship Scheme.

All greenkeeper members of BIGGA, in or about to enter higher education could apply for a scholarship. Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. Type of education course
2. If you are a BIGGA Member
3. Number of years as a BIGGA Member
4. Contribution to BIGGA
5. Previous Training and Development
6. If the course contains an environmental module

#### Applicants should be aware that:

The fund may award scholarships of up to 50% of the cost of the course however, it will typically be capped at £1500.

If you are awarded a Scholarship your name and the course that you are studying will be included on the BIGGA Website and in Greenkeeper International.

The first recipient of 2008 is James Billington for an On-Line Foundation Degree in Sportsturf.

#### Refund of Fees

The Refund of Fees scheme, supported by the Education and Development Fund, enables BIGGA members to claim 80% (up to a maximum of £350) of education and training course costs.

To be eligible for a refund, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a member of BIGGA and have been a member for at least two years.
2. Have paid your own fees and be able to provide proof of payment e.g. receipt/credit card slip or statement.
3. Have completed a course or component part of a course and be able to provide evidence of completion e.g. certificate/end of course report etc.
4. If you are starting a course in 2008, you may apply for a refund to be paid on course completion as in (3.) above.
5. The course must not be subsidised, already, by BIGGA.
6. The course must be relevant to your job as a greenkeeper e.g. N/SVQ, National Certificate/Diploma, Spraying Courses, First Aid, Engineering, Language courses etc.

Application forms for both the Higher Education Scholarships and Refund of Fees are available on the Education page of the BIGGA website or from the Learning and Development Department.

# Learning & Development

## MANAGING TURF DISEASE THROUGH EFFECTIVE ITM

By Simon Elsworth

**An outbreak of turf disease can ruin all the hard work put into preparing the playing surface for any sporting event. Integrated Turf Management (ITM) has an essential role in countering turf disease, through a carefully controlled combination of nutrition, irrigation and maintenance.**

Some turf managers and agronomists refer to ITM as an “Art”, inferring a level of mystery with little science or technical skill involved. In reality, it takes a greater level of knowledge of all the facets of turf management, and a better understanding of the way they interact – combined with the best practical know-how of the turf manager – to make ITM work effectively.

Turf disease problems are undoubtedly on the increase for all turf managers: Earlier disease attacks; More aggressive pathogens; New disease appearing; Longer periods of disease attack.

Turf disease issues are being exacerbated by: Climate change; Environmental pressures reducing managers’ options; Player demand for ever higher quality turf.

The fact is turf quality judged as fine by players 10 years ago, would be deemed unacceptable by many today. The pressures placed on turf – and those responsible for its management – have increased accordingly.

### THE TURF DISEASE TRIANGLE



The incidence of turf disease will be affected by: Environmental conditions, Disease pathogens present, The type of turf - All three factors must be present and, with an ITM plan, turf managers must decide which of the factors they can successfully influence to redress problems more effectively, and where the role of fungicides can be most effectively employed to minimise the impact on turf quality.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

If environmental conditions are not suitable disease development will be slower, or may cease altogether. Managers must also recognise turf stress brought on by environmental conditions, such as drought or water logging, can also make turf more susceptible to disease attack.

The weather is the primary factor in the equation and, for the most part, is outside the turf managers’ influence. However, modern weather forecasting can predict when disease will strike and can enable managers to tailor turf management programmes to prevent damage. [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk) gives local disease forecasts and weather information to support the implementation of an ITM plan.

Furthermore, there are management practices that will influence the local environmental conditions and may, where practical, be adjusted by turf managers: Irrigation, Drainage, Turf nutrition, Mowing height, Maintenance programmes.

Recognising where there are environmental weaknesses can help predict where disease may be a greater problem, such as a shaded green that lies damp for most of the day will be more susceptible to Fusarium Patch, for example. Although it may not be practical to cut back surrounding trees, it may be a focus for remedial drainage work, to sweep off dew first each morning and to treat as a priority with a preventative fungicide if disease is forecast.

Turf managers do also need to understand the environmental conditions that favour each individual turf disease pathogen. Alleviating the conditions conducive to Fusarium, for example, may make the turf more susceptible to Anthracnose.

### THE DISEASE PATHOGENS

Detailed analysis of most fine turf situations will reveal many of the primary disease pathogens are already present in the thatch or basal leaves – awaiting the right conditions to break out. The role of ITM is to minimise those conditions.

However, disease can also spread from outside sources. Domestic lawns, roadside verges and untreated amenity grass areas can all give rise to aerial infections.

Effective use of fungicide programmes will assure high quality turf in the short term by suppressing the disease pathogens. It will also reduce the

disease pressure and the sources of inoculum to enable ITM practices to work more effectively in the long term.

For effective treatment, turf managers must be able to identify the target pathogen and understand the best route for its control – both in the selection of the appropriate fungicide and its application timing, as well as the optimum ITM solutions.

### THE TURF

The composition of the turf – in terms of grass species and variety – is a key factor in the susceptibility to disease. However, disease is only one element of turf management, and other attributes of the turf use will be the primary factors in selection. In the short term, it will be a matter of managing the turf that is there, although in the longer term it may be possible to change the composition of turf through seed and management.

In most cases bents and fescues provide the most consistent surfaces and the inherent disease and stress resistance will have an important role in maximising the success of ITM strategies. While they have proven difficult to maintain at the low cutting heights required to achieve satisfactory ball speed on many soil types, the advent of the PGR to achieve better quality turf at raised cutting height could further extend the attraction of fescues and bent turf.

*Poa annua* is found in many fine turf situations and, with the right management, can produce outstanding quality playing surfaces. However, *Poa* is generally far more susceptible to disease attack, which can be made worse with heavy play and low cutting height.

Rye-grass provides the most hard-wearing, resilient sports turf surface of immense value in an ITM regime, but has traditionally proven difficult to create a high quality tight-cut surface. New varieties, which can be cut down to 5mm, may increase the attractiveness, but will still require intensive management and nutrition to maintain quality.

### FUNGICIDE ROLE

ITM can minimise the effects of disease, but in many practical situations it cannot eliminate the problem sufficiently to maintain high quality turf all year round.

Fungicides remain a key component of turf disease control within an ITM programme. A good ITM plan will, however, help to achieve the best results from any fungicide application, as well as extending the length of time of protection – which could help to reduce the total number of fungicide applications required over the course of the season.

The key elements of fungicide selection are product choice and application timing. For product choice, the aim is obviously to select a fungicide that will give good control of the primary target pathogen. Secondly, since there will be a number of pathogens present at lower levels, an effective broad spectrum fungicide will help reduce the level of other diseases. An application in July where Anthracnose is a problem, for example, may also control Take-all, Leaf Spot, Brown Patch, Rust and Fairy Ring that may occur at the same time, as well as reducing any Fusarium Patch that could flare up when conditions turn cool and wet in the autumn.

More recently, with the advent of more effective preventative fungicides, ITM plans have begun to look at fungicide application prior to disease symptoms breaking out, which can provide better results from lower inputs of modern products with lower environmental impact, and avoid issues of visible damage.

Utilising the knowledge of how different fungicides physically work on the developing fungicide pathogen, STRI trials have shown the best turf quality can be maintained by well-timed applications after disease has landed on the turf leaf, but before it has had the chance to germinate and penetrate into the plant. Later applications still have curative activity and will stop disease sporulating and spreading, but prevention is better than cure.

### ROTATION, ROTATION, ROTATION

An effective ITM fungicide plan must also include provision for fungicide rotation, using products with different modes of action to minimise the risk of disease developing resistance to any one group of fungicides. If a pathogen population begins to build up resistance to a dicaboximide fungicide, for example, switching to a demethylation inhibitor (DMI) would still offer complete control. The STRI ([www.stri.co.uk](http://www.stri.co.uk)) provides a valuable list of product groups and activity to minimise risk of resistance developing.

### HOW DO YOU MAKE AN ITM PLAN?

**Site assessment** – Identifying what pests and disease are likely to pose a threat and where the risk is highest. Create a map of high risk situations.

**Set thresholds** – Decide what level of pest or disease damage is acceptable to managers and players, and when action will be required.

**Identify management options** – Look at all available options, including cultural, biological, genetic and chemical. How should each one be used and to what degree?

**Build pest profiles** – Record outbreaks on your turf area: type of disease; conditions that favour it; treatments to control etc. Accurate identification of pests and disease is essential to put in place the right plans.

**Create a proactive turf management plan** – How you are going to treat the problem. Record work carried out to control the pests and disease.

**Evaluation** – monitor the results and continue to update the plan: did the treatments work?; can anything else be done to improve conditions in future?

Simon Elsworth is Head of Syngenta Professional Products for the UK and Ireland, including development of the specialist turf business and the web-based decision support system for turf managers, [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk)



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# ROTARY MOWERS: EVOLUTION IMPROVES THE BREED

By James de Havilland

**At one time, the rough started where the fairway ended. Now there are semi-roughs or intermediate roughs and non-fairway areas that are mown to a standard that would have passed muster as a fairway not so long ago. How these areas are mown will obviously depend a great deal on resources and how the course is managed. For some, a rotary mower is the ideal tool.**

There is no point getting tangled in the debate over cylinder versus rotary mowing for rough areas or tees and green surround either for that matter. Off fairway mowing will have so many variables that making blanket comments is pointless. What cannot be denied is that rotary mowers have evolved; there are a range of models that can consistently produce a good, clump free finish to suit differing demands and applications.

This development has certainly helped many courses bring semi-rough and rough areas up to the standards that the modern game demands, in some cases helping to tame areas to the point where a cylinder machine has subsequently taken over. The key issue is that there is a mower choice to suit pretty much every demand.

There are some interesting rotary models to consider too. The Toro Groundsmaster 3500-D is offered with the now well established Sidewinder cutting system. This enables the three decks, offered in a choice of 68" or 72" overall widths, to be offset by up to 24" to either side of the mower.

For those unfamiliar with the system, key advantages include being able to mow up close to the edge of a bunker without the weight of the mower compromising the wall or using the offset to alter wheelings each time an area is mown.

John Deere has a different take on moving decks with its all-new 7400 TerrainCut. Offering a nominal width of 74" from its three 27" decks, the two outer decks are mounted to allow them to be drawn in to reduce the cut width to 68". The idea is that this will increase the overlap with the central deck, eliminating the chance of inter-deck misses over large undulations. Courses built on former agricultural land with ridge and furrow areas may well want to give this machine a try. It is designed to hug awkward terrain when necessary but expand out to its full width on level ground.

This is not the only trick up the sleeve of this thoughtfully designed mower. The JD 7400 system also allows either of the outer decks to be pushed out up to 15" from the standard working width. Like the Toro

Sidewinder, this allows close mowing up to a bunker edge or around a tree. The difference is that the other two decks remain in place. According to Deere this can help ensure the mower remains stable when working on a steep bank.

John Deere has also replaced its established 3245 C five 21" deck model with the new JD 8800. Fitted with an all-new power unit as used on the new JD8500 and JD8700 fairway cylinder models, the new model number matches up with its 88" mowing width. The five spun cast decks are of a similar design to those used on the JD 7400, their narrow 21" width enabling them to follow ground contours for a clean cut.

Jacobsen also take this rotary sector seriously, the company having at least eight ride-on models to choose from. These include the 192" HR 9016 with its potential to mow 16.5 acres/hour (6.7ha/hr) at the productivity end. The AR250, with its five 22" side-discharge or mulching units, has a still wide 88" cut and the rear rollers leave a good striped finish.

The Jacobsen AR5 has a slightly greater operating width at 90" and a different style of deck designed for mulching with a rear flap for rear discharge if required. This model will deliver a finish good enough for surrounds and intermediate roughs, the three deck AR3 suiting tee surrounds and around bunkers.

It is interesting to take a look at the decks on offer. Turn them over and take a look and it is clear that there is more to a rotary than just its blade. Even these vary in design. The Contour Plus rotary decks fitted by Toro to its Groundsmaster 3500, 4500 and 4700 models, for example, have air pockets in the deck that help draw the grass up so it is evenly cut. This is said to help in wet conditions.

Match contour hugging with carefully designed systems to help reduce the risk of scalping, and it is clear a modern rotary can help produce a good, even finish. Modern decks also have greatly enhanced clipping control, reducing the risk of clumps, even when mowing in less than ideal conditions.

For some, a rotary mower will never be anything other than a glorified brushcutter. For others, a rotary mower is the tool to keep a course consistent, with few penalties for members whose balls stray a few feet of the fairway. There are no definitive answers when it comes to mowing, but few will argue that maintaining consistency is easier if the right tools are available.





Powered by a 36hp turbocharged diesel, the all-new John Deere TerrainCut has three 27" decks. The 'Width on Demand' system enables the mowing width to be set at the standard 74" on level ground or reduced to a narrower 68". This will allow undulating ground to be mown with no fear of inter deck misses. All three wheels are powered to optimise traction



The controls on the John Deere 7400 are extremely simple. All it takes to adjust the mowing width or push out an outer unit is the touch of a button. The mower is a joy to use, with low noise and vibration levels



As demonstrated by this Jacobsen AR3, ride-on access to difficult to access areas is a key rotary mower strength. This particular model is purpose designed for this type of work, three-wheel drive and a pokey 33hp diesel combining traction and power





Jacobsen offer huge rotary model choice, the pictured HR 6010 having a 60hp power unit and mowing width of 116" or 127". Designed for tough rough mowing, the HR 6010 is just one of the company's offerings. Those seeking a finish good enough for intermediate roughs and the surrounds of greens and tee should consider the 90" Jacobsen AR5

Jeff Anguige, Toro's UK sales manager, suggests US golf equipment manufacturers have responded to the demands for rotaries that meet the UK's diverse weather patterns.

"Toro Groundsmaster rotaries are designed to work in all weather conditions", he says.

"Though every course is different and subject to a variety of conditions, our rotary mowers cope successfully and consistently achieve a quality finish. The Groundsmaster range has different blade options, including atomic blades. Unique to Toro, these give a superior finish and provide better grass dispersal through the large rear-discharge aperture. The optional recycling accessory also allows the operator total control over how cuttings are dispersed. A modern Toro rotary is designed to cope with the wide range of summer conditions prevalent in the UK and Ireland."

These sentiments are echoed by John Deere and Jacobsen. A modern rotary mower should deliver a good finish in less than ideal conditions, with modern designs including those that can mulch or rear discharge according to end user needs.



The Toro 3500-D with Sidewinder is a well proven design, its decks delivering a good finish. The ability of this model to work close to a bunker wall, hedge or tree adds to its versatility



# MEET THE CHAIRMAN

*Kenny MacKay is an ambitious, driven man and as Scott MacCallum found out he will be giving his year as Chairman his full attention*

**If BIGGA's new Chairman invests just a fraction of the commitment and energy on Association business that he has used in his own greenkeeping career, you can be sure the future is in good hands.**

Kenny MacKay doesn't stand still, not for very long anyway. As Director of Golf Courses & Grounds at The Belfry he is used to packing as much into a day as is humanly possible - in modern parlance, going "eyeballs out" then paying for it later.

"I go flat out for about six weeks, then take a holiday when I either sleep or go down with something," he explained, while revealing that he'd been laid low over that Christmas holiday.

But don't go worrying that with such a huge job Kenny will not have the time to devote to BIGGA business over the next 12 months.

"Personally, I think the size of the job here makes it easier to take on the Chairmanship because I have so many more guys on my team than most large staff with team leaders and a structure which makes it easier for me to delegate," he said.

That's not to say Kenny didn't take time to think it over when Billy McMillan called him in November 2006 to ask if he'd consider becoming his Vice Chairman, and in line to become BIGGA's 21st National Chairman.

"I spent a week talking to people before making the decision. Obviously I discussed it with Maria, my wife, first and she said that if I thought I could do it, bearing in mind how busy I was, I should do it. I also spoke with Quinn UK, including Nigel Gray the Operations Director for Quinn UK, who is my direct boss. They felt it was quite a feather in The Belfry's cap as well as my own," said Kenny, who also spoke with Billy and John Pemberton about the time commitment that is required from the Chairman.

Having give the answer in the affirmative Kenny can look forward to what his year as Chairman will have in store.

"I'm a busy type of person anyway and while I feel there will be pressure I do feel I'll handle it. I'll pick and choose the things I'm going to do and know that I won't be able to accept every invitation which comes my way.

"Billy has been a fantastic Chairman, as I knew he would be. I didn't actually do much to stand in for him at all, but that might not be me this year. That's the beauty of a different Chairman as there are many different ways of tackling the role."

Kenny was born in Glasgow and brought up in East Kilbride. A mad keen golfer and footballer he reached a very acceptable standard in each –