



Richard, fourth from left, together with his team, are looking forward to meeting everyone in October.

have been made in improving the course is that of pest control and it is a vindication of the decision to employ a pest controller on a full time basis.

“Go back through the old minutes of club meetings and you’ll see that rabbits have always been a huge problem at this golf club. We tried every thing from professional rabbit shooters to Joe Bloggs down the road who was ‘the best rabbit shooter ever’ but nothing worked. Our rabbits don’t sit still,” explained Richard, who added that the course is on a SSSI site with a nature reserve at the bottom end of the course.

“The new policy became possible when my deputy and ex Head Greenkeeper Mick Dodd retired it freed up some resources to employ a trainee and create a trail post of a full time pest controller. Mickey

was a real gentleman who showed me all the ins and outs of Burnham said Richard; he also thanked his immediate predecessor, Paul McDowell, who put many management controls in place which have been integrated into today’s management controls.

“It was actually the Chairman of Green’s idea to appoint someone full time to control the rabbit problem. It was a 12 month trial initially with the proviso that if the problem was sorted out we wouldn’t get rid of the post.” Peter Golledge, a trained gamekeeper, has now been with the club for three years and the improvement to the course has been dramatic. It has meant that at the bottom end of the course which was devoid of rough now has rough again

“Peter starts at 4am shooting rabbits, then has a break around 7am.

He then goes out and fills in any rabbit scrapes which have occurred overnight. Later he’ll go out and check the permanent rabbit fences and our electrified rabbit fence.

“The most important thing is that the person who does the job is trustworthy as you are not always there at 4am to check that he’s out doing the job. Peter is excellent and really dedicated and we only hope that the members have long memories and recall what the course was like before we employed him,” said Richard.

Burnham would not be the course it is today without the excellence of the greenkeeping team which consists of seven including Richard and has over 96 years experience of working this wonderful links between them, with Richards Deputy Paul Dunn being the longest serving member of staff with 39 years of service followed by Andrew Briggs Mechanic/ greenkeeper on 24 years.

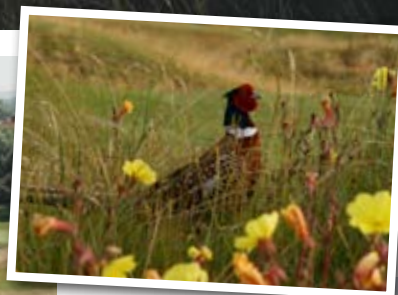
A traditional members club Burnham and Berrow 18 months ago moved with the times and scrapped the large committee structure in favour of a slimmed down five man board of management.

"I don't have Greens meetings any more but regular meetings with the Chair of Green and our Managing Secretary, Michael Blight. It's critical if you have a small board that you get the right people on it.

Board members are elected on a three year team and can be re-elected after their term of office.

The Board is very aware that the club must continue to go forward to enable Burnham to continue to be recognised as one of the finest links courses in England.

"We are really looking forward to welcoming BIGGA to Burnham and Berrow and I'm sure that those who come will meet a very warm welcome and a tough challenge on the golf course.



**Please select the relevant category:**

- Full Member
- Affiliate Member

The entry fee of £80 includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

Name .....

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.....

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E-mail.....

Membership Number .....

Handicap.....

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Card number.....

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Expiry Date.....

Last 3 security digits .....

Issue No. (Switch/Delta only) .....

Signature.....

Date .....

Or E-mail your details to:  
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 Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

**Deadline for entry is 11th September 2009.**



Completed entry forms should be sent to:  
**BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd over 36 holes in both the nett and gross categories, additionally after each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. If you have a poor first day an alternative Stableford competition will be held on the second day of play.



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# So Nearly a Miracle!

Scott MacCallum, reports back from Turnberry on the work of BIGGA's Open Support Team

**Had Tom Watson not struck his 8-iron to the final green quite so purely and left himself 20 feet from the hole rather than through the back, against the collar of rough, we would have been talking about the greatest sporting, not just golfing, achievement of all time.**

That 8-iron left him with a trickyish up and down which, under the pressure of the occasion, increased the difficulty factor by quite a bit. That aside his third shot, a putt, wasn't great and the eight footer it left him to win the Championship was certainly no gimmie. Under the circumstances holing it would have taxed even the great Tiger but Watson will be disappointed by his effort – a dribbly one, reminiscent of one of mine, which didn't threaten, or even reach, the hole.

Tom's disappointment was matched by that of the gallery, who had willed him on, not just over the Sunday afternoon but on every one of the 72 holes, and although everyone there still held out some hope it was inevitable that the redoubtable Stewart Cink would prove too tough a nut to crack in the play-off.

So it proved – Cink's 2 under-par for the four play-off holes would have won against most players and certainly a nearly 60 year-old, who had dealt with the stresses of being on the upper reaches of the leaderboard since day one.

Cink played extremely well to get into the play-off, birdieing the 15th and 18th, and had it not been that he deprived Watson, and the gallery, would have been much more warmly received as Champion.

While it was "What might have been" for Watson it was very much a case of "fulfilment" for George Brown. George arrived at Turnberry in November 1985 just before the '86 Open, and over the 24 years in charge, together with his team, has built on the quality and presentation of the Ailsa Course to the extent that it was the real star of the show.

The players had nothing but praise for the course and the television pictures, particularly the aerial shots, were absolutely stunning.

George did a wonderful job and looked proud as punch as he stood on the 18th green at the presentation ceremony. As a send off it couldn't have been bettered and he retired a short later to take up a consultancy/ambassadorial role. He is succeeded by Euan Grant, who joined Turnberry in January and supported George over the last seven months.

BIGGA's marquee was a change from the norm. Instead of being positioned in the tented village alongside the Home Unions and the Stewards' Association this year it was to be found in a unit of the hospitality village. It was certainly less easy to find than usual but was

Ed Ainsworth and his young scoreboard carrier pose for a picture







George Brown talks to the Support Team during the Wednesday evening briefing

a super facility, with reception area and raised decking and the finest toilets to be found anywhere.

Guests were welcomed from all over the golfing world and enjoyed the hospitality on offer.

As usual The Open Championship provided members with memories they will keep for the rest of their lives.

The players are very good at handing out balls to those who walk around with them and there are many Support Team members who have gone home with golf balls from the top players. Some are signed and some carry identifying marks that indicate who they belonged to. Stuart Appleby's balls all carry a stamp of a bee and an apple for example while Tiger Woods' balls are all printed with his name.

The man with the honour of walking with the first match on the opening day was waved off by his colleagues as he headed to the 1st tee for the 6.30am match. He had to be called back though as he'd forgotten one thing – his rake! No names mentioned but his picture is elsewhere in this feature.

The winner was brought home on the final day by John France, of Fursticher GC, in Germany while the man who walked with Watson and raked the one bunker he found was Douglas McIntosh, of Cathkin Braes GC.

Friday was a big day in the life of Paul Jenkins, of Westridge Golf

Centre, on the Isle of Wight. A 50th birthday doesn't come along very often and Paul spent his on the 1st tee of the Open Championship sporting his 50 badge. He was presented with a card signed by the entire team, plus Ryder Cup Captain, Bernard Gallacher, who happened to be in the Hospitality Village.

Keith Kemp was minding his own business on the 18th fairway on the final round when Luke Donald gestured over. Keith looked behind him thinking Luke may have been waving to a friend in the gallery but no, it was him.. He walked over to Luke, wondering what it might be for, to be told "Walk beside me and you'll get yourself on television."

Board Member, Jeff Mills, showed a Tom Watson-like ability to defy age and drew the admiration of the younger members of the team on Saturday night in the Auchincruive College bar with his skill in the beer bottle game. The game involved keeping feet still and crawling out across the floor holding beer bottles before stretching out and placing one of the bottles as far out as possible. Then, holding the single bottle, the idea was to slide back to where you. Showing the core strength of a man half his age Jeff left most of the fellow competitors on his wake.

Many thanks to all the Support Team members who gave up their time to work at The Open.

Under the spotlight. David Harfield rakes the bunker found most during the week at the rear of the 15th on the final day after both Jim Furyk and Retief Goosen found sand



Turnberry man, Denis Tweedle, shows the Support Team how they want the bunkers raked





## BIGGA Titbits

A mouse ran in front of Luke Donald as he prepared to play his second shot to the 10th and nearly up a camera man's trousers.

*Information supplied by Douglas McIntosh, of Cathkin Braes Golf Club and a member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

Bryce Molder's putt on the 11th green stopped on the edge of the hole and after about 20 seconds dropped in.

However the referee said that it had passed the time allowed to wait for a ball to drop and he had to make do with a par instead of a birdie.

It was an eventful day for Molder as he also hit a spectator full toss on the head and compensated the victim with one of his gloves.

*Information supplied by Aaron Small, of Donaghadee Golf Club, County Down and a member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

A ball spotter working on Colin Montgomerie's match was removed from inside the ropes after walking in the Ryder Cup Captain's line twice and then arguing with him when Monty confronted him.

*Information supplied by Terry Crawford, of Clondeboye Golf Club, and a member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

Ryo Ishikawa lost his ball on the island bunker on the 10th hole. An army of helpers converged from all angles to help find it leaving the poor BIGGA Support Team member to rake the entire bunker of footprints once the ball had been located.

*Information supplied by (that poor greenkeeper) Robert Sandilands, of Elsham Golf Club and a Member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

Azuka Yano's approach to the 5th struck a lady spectator on the head and bounced over the back of the stand. A medic was called and a young spectator passed out while watching the lady being attended.

*Information supplied by Oliver Pennington, of La Moye Golf Club and a Member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

An over excited spectator following the final match on the 12th hole shouted at the players in the group, stole a bin and ran off laughing.

*Information supplied by Scott Gibson, of St Enodoc GC, and a Member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*

Brandon Grace birdied the 13th hole after driving the 410 yard hole and two putting.

*Information supplied by Philip Cooper, of Milton Abbey School, and a Member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.*







ABOVE LEFT: The Support Team  
 INSET LEFT: Paul Jenkins celebrated a significant milestone on the Friday.  
 BELOW LEFT: An unusual sight. A promotion for a gin company created some attention  
 INSET ABOVE: Dale Robertson had the honour of taking the first game on Thursday  
 RIGHT: Robert Meikle leads the way on the Friday.  
 BELOW: Complete Bunker Stats since 1995

	1995 St. A's	1996 Lythm	1997 Troon	1998 B'dale	1999 C'stie	2000 St. A's	2001 Lythm	2002 M'field	2003 St.G's	2004 Troon	2005 St. A's	2006 Hlake	2007 C'stie	2008 Birkdale	2009 T'berry
Bnkrs	112	185	84	117	115	112	197	148	106	93	112	96	113	123	85
Rd 1	214	501	344	355	539	148	557	359	388	393	252	352	442	472	272
Rd 2	201	577	272	406	468	164	547	372	405	371	203	353	482	379	332
Rd 3	130	269	107	226	202	65	224	175	149	148	100	183	189	219	172
Rd 4	156	271	136	153	265	71	257	169	181	185	121	204	198	198	185
<b>Total</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1618</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>1140</b>	<b>1474</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>1078</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>961</b>



# Proactive disease management proves better than cure

Today's turf managers are under ever increasing pressure to deliver high quality playing surfaces all year round. Every golfer wants to putt on Augusta quality greens; every footballer to play on a Premiership pitch. Syngenta Technical Manager, Simon Watson, reports an outbreak of turf disease can ruin all the hard work put into preparing the best possible playing conditions, but proactive disease management can help preserve premium playing surfaces.

**With autumn approaching, all greenkeepers will know the fear of waking up to find 'The Fus' (Fusarium Patch) has struck on a green that the previous day looked immaculate, or when summer Take-All patches continue to spread and look worse and worse every day.**

The greenkeeper or groundsman is judged primarily on the quality of the surface presented; once the visible signs of disease occur and the surface starts to break down, there's precious little consideration from players for the difficult weather conditions, or the management constraints that have been imposed.

The simplest solution would be to routinely apply a broad spectrum fungicide every six to eight weeks at times of disease risk throughout the year. However, routine prophylactic treatments could rightly be called into question regarding the good stewardship of fungicides in use, and the economics of such a strategy are likely to prove prohibitive for all but the most intensively managed premium surfaces.

## Protecting turf quality

That doesn't, however, make the application of a fungicide before symptoms are visible wrong, since the plant is often infected with disease for a considerable time before



### about the author

Dr Simon Watson is the Syngenta Turf & Amenity Technical Manager for the UK and Ireland. He oversees the company's huge investment in turf R&D, as well as providing practical advice for greenkeepers, including the Syngenta turf website: [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk)

visual symptoms are seen. STRI trials have repeatedly shown that proactive disease management with fungicide applications made during periods of high risk - when disease is likely to already be developing in the leaf but before the visible signs of disease breakout - gives the most effective control and the best results for turf quality. Furthermore, Dr Ruth Mann has demonstrated that this approach can be successful in using fewer fungicide applications and at lower cost over the course of the season, compared to routine applications or treatment at the first signs of infection.

Understanding the disease pathogen life cycle will help turf managers assess the best time for





appropriate fungicide timing (Fig 1). Clearly targeting disease early to stop initial infection - preventing fungal spores from germinating and penetrating the leaf - will ensure that no visible damage occurs. Curative fungicides get to work after disease has got into the leaf, but before it has the chance to develop and cause visible damage; they cannot repair leaf tissue which is already dead due to the effects of disease, so applying them early in the disease development cycle is critical to the achievement of good results.

Once there are visible signs of attack and you are seeing blistering and lesions erupting, then fungicides with eradicant properties will be necessary to stop spore produc-

tion at this timing. At this point the preventative and curative elements of a fungicide have an essential function to protect surrounding clean leaves and to halt further spread.

The fact is that the most damaging disease pathogens are probably already present in your turf surfaces; they are just waiting for the conditions they favour in order to multiply - when the damage will be caused. The key for proactive disease management and the most effective fungicide use is to know when the conditions are right for the disease to develop and attack turf plants.

Fusarium Patch, for example, likes mild and moist conditions -

**MAIN ABOVE LEFT:**  
Anthraxnose Foliar Blight  
**ABOVE RIGHT:**  
Fusarium Close Up  
**BELOW RIGHT:**  
Take-All

Turf disease problems are on the increase:

- Earlier disease attacks
- More aggressive pathogens
- New diseases appearing
- Season long infection

being most prevalent in autumn and spring; with autumn attacks most damaging if turf is less able to grow and recover. However, a period of thundery, humid weather could cause a flare up at anytime over the summer. Irrigation could also exacerbate a problem. Anthracnose, by contrast, enjoys hot dry conditions.

If weather conditions have rumbled on at low risk levels for several days, the pathogen can still build up, even if there are no visible signs and the turf is still able to grow on apparently healthy. Just a short period of high risk weather could see infection explode. In this situation, proactive treatments ahead of the high risk periods knock down the pathogen population within the



turf and slow down its build up, ideally until after the risk conditions are past and the turf is once again safe.

### Predicting risk

Today's forecasting systems for turf management are now far more sophisticated and well proven. The GreenCast disease models, have been validated for UK conditions and sports turf surfaces and are available free to turf managers and agronomists at [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk).

Using localised weather and disease forecasting can enable turf managers to predict when their turf is likely to come under most intense disease pressure, and time their fungicide applications accordingly to prevent damage. Over 1500 turf managers are already signed up to GreenCast, with the five-day weather and disease forecast the most popular page, used by many on a daily basis to help with management decisions.

Some use the forecasting allied to their own 'indicator greens' - areas that tend to show up disease earlier than others and, when the symptoms are seen, trigger treatment across the course. It provides good validation and vindication that treatment was justified.

For some diseases, primarily soil borne fungi such as Take All and Fairy Ring, there is little real curative activity, so effective treatment has to take place before visible effects are seen. Application of approved fungicides when the symptoms are visible may help minimise the severity of the attack and help to limit its long-term spread, but to achieve good control turf managers need to be taking note of where Take-All patches are being seen and treating accordingly the following season.

Disease risk forecasting can again predict conditions where the pathogen will develop within the soil, enabling treatment before infection causes visible damage to turf. Although typically seen during June and July, changing weather patterns we are seeing attacks perpetuating through into September and October. These late attacks further compound the problems for turf managers, since there is little chance to reseed or aide recovery going into the winter.

Once the Take-All pathogen is in the soil, areas that suffered visible signs of disease should be treated in subsequent years if there is a medium risk of infection. But if the risk increases to high it would be judicious to treat all similarly

vulnerable areas around the course where the pathogen is likely to have spread.

One technique which has proven useful is to mark infection areas on a course map, so as to be able to treat the area if the risk increases in subsequent years. A further advance that is now readily available is to use a hand-held GPS to mark down affected spots and enable more precise monitoring and proactive preventative treatment in following seasons.

### Appropriate fungicide choice

Disease risk forecasting also enables more appropriate fungicide choice. Most options are good on the most common Fusarium, but where Anthracnose, Dollar Spot or Take-All, for example, are also seen to be posing a potential risk, then selecting the right product can significantly enhance control. Turf managers also need to take into account the prevailing growing conditions, with systemic activity most appropriate when turf is actively growing - to move the fungicide within the leaf and protect new growth from infection - while contact fungicides can give good protection to leaf surfaces, as well as some with enhanced curative and eradicant activity.

The other crucial element of Integrated Turf Management (ITM) is to make conditions within the turf as inhospitable to disease pathogens as possible. Many diseases, including Fusarium Patch, thrive in the warm, damp conditions that occur within thatch; so aeration and scarification to open up the turf can significantly reduce the risk. Good drainage, removing surface moisture and allowing space so that turf can dry quickly in the morning will help.

Fertility and nutrition are also crucial to keep turf as healthy as possible and minimise impacts of disease. Strong turf is better able to withstand low levels of disease pressure and can recover faster from attacks. However, as with all cultural controls, there is the difficult balance between feeding that encourages vibrant green growth which can be more susceptible to Fusarium attack, for example, and leaving turf short of nutrients that will make it more vulnerable to Anthracnose.

### Changing disease

The problems for turf managers are being further compounded by the changing nature of disease

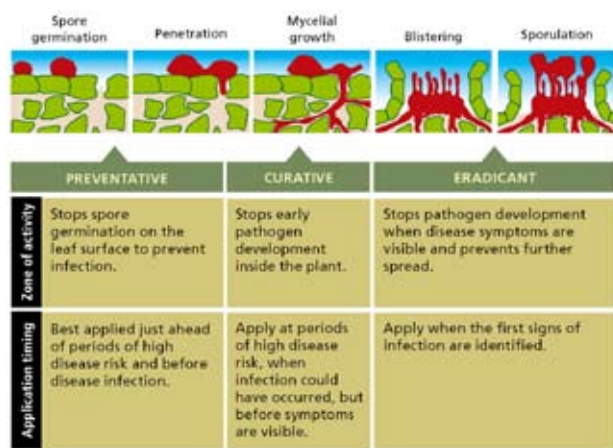


Fig 1: Foliar disease life cycles dictate the optimum time for different fungicide activity

Turf disease issues are being exacerbated by:

- Climate change
- Environmental pressures reducing options
- Player demand for ever higher quality turf

attacks. Fusarium remains the number one problem, but we are increasingly seeing high risk situations occurring through the summer with intense periods of heavy rainfall. The rising temperatures are also seeing Anthracnose infection occurring further north, along with Dollar Spot outbreaks on a wider scale. Take-All is also far more widespread, and is typically more severe and lasting for longer.

These changes in disease patterns are an ongoing process and unlikely to cause a major problem overnight, but turf managers must remain vigilant for different signs and be ready to act. It will have an effect on all the Integrated Turf Management practices that may be helping stop one disease, but exacerbating another. Stopping a pathogen at an early stage with proactive treatment is easier, and cheaper, than fighting a firebrigade action when it's out of control.

**GreenCast**

**Decision support for fungicide selection**

The interactive web-based decision support system – [www.greencast.co.uk](http://www.greencast.co.uk) – provides valuable help with appropriate fungicide selection and timing of application.

**GreenCast provides:**

- Early warning of local disease risk – enabling preventative fungicides to be applied ahead of likely infection.
- Alerts of potential disease infection – for more effective curative product timing if an infection period has recently occurred.
- ITM disease profiles – for improved disease identification and effective eradicant product selection.