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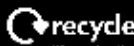
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Environmental Care is not an Optional Extra

The latest issue of Golf Monthly has just dropped onto my desk – an excellent, often thought provoking, publication and one which is particularly close to my heart as it was as Assistant Editor back in May 1986 that I started out in the golf business. I still read it every month and this time one element in particular caught my attention.

The Golf Forum asks readers questions, and these are always keen golfers and generally club members, and this month it posed the following:

“Do golfers have duty to encourage environmentally friendly course management?”

It elicited the following from among the responses.:

“Eco-friendly options are often too expensive to implement and ultimately it is us that have to pay for it.”; “I don’t expect to go to my own club, which I already pay a sizeable sum to every year and start helping them with their environmental responsibility too.”, and “In these hard times I don’t see it being too high on any club agenda...”

A few things struck me about the answers. The first one was the belief that to be eco-friendly is a costly business and is almost a bit of an extravagance for a golf club. Well, we all know that there are many sound environmental policies and practices that don’t cost a fortune and can even bring revenue into a club – making and selling your own compost or fire wood for example, while harvesting grey water may have an initial cost but will undoubtedly make savings for the club in the longer term.

Secondly, if the guys who replied to the Golf Monthly question are at members’

clubs there is no real understanding that the environmental responsibility for the golf club is as much down to them as it is down to the people they employ at the club to carry out the work.

Basically it reaffirms the belief that golfers are interested in playing golf - period. Anything else is merely a sideshow or, worse, a damned inconvenience. How often do you get grief when you do some mid-week aeration work? Everyone knows it is for the long term benefit of the golf course, but they still complain if it happens just before their Wednesday morning bounce game.

In fairness to the club golfer, the game is a hobby, a recreational pursuit, and adding “responsibilities” on top of those they carry Monday to Friday is perhaps unfair. However the very nature of a members’ club is that each member does have a share in the club and that carries with it some responsibility.

The bottom line is that members has a duty as responsible landowners, or tenants, to carry out environmentally friendly course management and can’t run away from that just because they are only really interested in the speed of the greens, the height of the rough and the quality of the sand in the bunkers.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all Greenkeeper International readers.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

CONTENTS

A look at what's inside the magazine this month

December 2009

FEATURES

18 In Peak Condition

Scott MacCallum meets Pete Smith, a southerner who has taken to life at Cavendish Golf Club like duck to water.



25 Onwards and Upwards

The Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Fund has enabled a huge number of greenkeepers to further their career. Here three recent graduates talk about their experiences.



33 Harrogate Week 2010

Your Guide to The Largest Indoor Sports Facility and Turf Maintenance Exhibition in Europe

34 An Industry Comes Together

The Sports Turf Industry's event of the year is just around the corner and preparations for Harrogate Week are well advanced. Make sure you make the most of it.

42 Green Surrounds Raising the Standards

Stuart Ormondroyd gives some excellent advice on improving your green surrounds.

46 2mm (or Above)

The second instalment in the on going debate in preparation for Harrogate Week's much in demand Seminar of the same name.



Stuart Ormondroyd, STRI Head of Turfgrass Agronomy & Assistant Director, offers some advice on improving your green surrounds

42



25



46



33



33



18



30



16

REGULARS

- 6 News Desk
- 13 Chairman's Word
- 14 GTC
- 15 Learning and Development
- 16 Industry Update
- 30 New Products
- 55 Quick Guide to...
Workshop Compressors
- 56 Around the Green
- 61 Chief Executive's Column
- 62 Membership
- 63 Assistant Profile
- 63 What's Your Number?
- 69 In the Shed
- 71 Soapbox
– Kerran Daly



The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.



Gary Pearce is Club Manager of the Year

Gary Pearce, general manager of Fulford Golf Club in Yorkshire, has been named as the GCMA's 'Manager of the Year' for 2009.

The announcement was made at a gala dinner at the GCMA's national conference at the arceló Hinckley Island Hotel in Leicestershire, in front of about 250 fellow golf club managers and leading figures in the golf industry.

Gary, who has been manager of Fulford since 2005, was picked ahead of five other finalists by a panel of four independent golf club management experts, including Keith Lloyd, chief executive of the GCMA.

His prize includes a holiday for two to Rioja in Spain, where he will be given a tour of the world-famous Marqués de Cáceres winery, be dined in the directors' boardroom and be treated to a round of golf at the prestigious El Campo De Logroño.

Paul Napier, general manager

of Clondon Regis GC in Surrey, was named runner-up, and won six bottles of Champagne.

Gary pictured left, with David Sandford, National Captain of the GCMA, won the prestigious award largely due to the work he has done to restore the reputation Fulford had in the 1970s and 1980s as one of the premier golf clubs in the north of England.

Under his tenure, Gary has pushed for and overseen major capital investment projects for the course and clubhouse, with minimal disruption to members and visitors.

He then helped ensure that the club hosted numerous important championships and implemented a data capture and communications project, which resulted in Fulford seeing membership and green fee revenues hit record levels and a two-year waiting list return for 2009 – even though the country has been in a recession.



Life is Tweet

Sparrows are increasing in Islington following the planting of four green roofs on the same building in February last year.

Designed by Bere Architects as the company's London base, the building is topped by two partially wild flower meadows, one native Hazel coppice and a native Hawthorn thicket.

According to Linda Laxton, of British Wild Flower Plants (BWFPs), whose specialist Norfolk nursery supplied plants for the two meadows it is the tufted and common vetch that are so important.

"These plants became infested with aphids in early spring and just as the few local house sparrows nested there, they had a ready supply of food for their chicks," she explained.

Roofs offer an almost perfect environment for the birds.

"They're undisturbed, safe from cats and the plants are attracting an ample food supply. Since the 1970s with the rise of the car many front gardens have been paved over to provide parking space, and the sparrow population in urban areas has dwindled," said Linda.

For further information on British Wild Flower Plants contact the company on Tel: 01603 716615 or visit their website at: www.wildflowers.co.uk

An Insight into Better Drainage

Geoffrey Davison, who is internationally acknowledged as an authority on sports-turf drainage is available to give winter talks on the subject.

He is happy to talk to Sections or Regions in afternoons or evenings for no fee merely travelling expenses. To discuss available dates contact Geoffrey on 01568 797024.

As much notice as possible would be appreciated.



Coming Up Trumps

On a wet and windy day our Scottish Chairman, John Geddes, arranged a walkabout around the Donald Trump development/golf resort on the Menie Estate on the outskirts of Aberdeen prior to work starting. There were 19 Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and a good mix of members from the North East of Scotland.

On arrival we were met by Project Manager, Neil Hobday. He started by briefing the group on this “very special piece of real estate” (his words). The ground work and planning that has already gone into the project and some of the ups and downs they had encountered. He also talked about the enthusiasm Mr Trump himself has had for the project since day one.

Having donned waterproofs and woolly hats, Neil, took us for a tour of the course which lasted for two and a half hours. We started off walking past the site of the new clubhouse and on towards the 1st tee.

Neil pointed into the distance to where the 1st green will be situated and said, “Can you see what I mean about this very special piece of real estate?”

He didn't have to say any more, at that point we could all see the layout of the 1st hole. Stunning. Construction work on this hole will comprise of a selection of tees, a green and an area of fairway, the rest will be natural links, as most of the course will be.

We then walked out to the 5th hole, the far end of the front nine, then back to the clubhouse, pointing out to our left where the second 18 hole course will be constructed, then out again up the dog leg left 10th. The site for the 10th green will be enclosed by natural links dunes. From there we set off across the area of shifting sand dunes,

where work has already started. This work involves the planting of marram grass to help stabilise the sands around the 13th hole.

Moving to the 14th tee Neil said he was relaxed and comfortable with what he was doing. He also mentioned that it was nice to show a group of greenkeepers around, rather than politicians and journalists. He felt that we understood what he was trying to get across. Again all he said was, “Gentlemen. The 14th Hole”. Facing north with the North Sea to our right over the sand dunes looking down the 14th fairway.

If you ever hit a golf ball in your life, this is the place you dream about. Neil told us that this was his and Mr Trump's favourite hole and you can certainly see why.

We all returned to McDonald Golf Club for a welcome plate of soup and sandwiches. I think that we now believe that Mr Trump and his team will build one of the World's Greatest Links golf courses on the North East coast of Scotland.

The visit to the Menie Golf Estate was sponsored by Kenny Liddle, from Bayer.

From Ben Brookes on behalf of John Geddes and Brian Hunter





A Loyal Customer

Cricket commentator and writer, Christopher Martin-Jenkins, an Allett mower owner and user for more than 25 years, has just taken delivery of a new model.

"I remember seeing Allett mowers cutting the outfield on a number of first-class cricket grounds," he recalled.

"Having long admired the finish produced by the machine, I was determined to have an Allett of my own and purchased in 1983 a 36in Regal with trailing seat to maintain the lawns at our former family home in Sussex."

That machine served him well until he moved recently to a house with a smaller garden.

"The Regal was a bit too big for the grass areas at our new home. I needed the ability to cut somewhat longer, tougher grass so I asked Allett for their advice," explained Chris.

The machine recommended, and subsequently purchased by Christopher, was a Buffalo 34 equipped with an 8in diameter, eight-bladed cutting cylinder.

Club Car Appoints New Dealers

Club Car has appointed Stubbings Bros as the new Club Car dealer for Isle of Wight and Isle of Man Farmers for Isle of Man.

"Club Car is continuing to grow and find areas to develop. Ensuring that we have distributors easily accessible to all areas of the country is crucial to this. We feel that the dedicated service that Stubbings Bros and Isle of Man Farmers can offer to accounts in Isle of Wight and Isle of Man respectively will ensure this is the case," commented Tony Swinnerton, Business Development Manager - UK / Eire & Benelux Region.

Club Car is the official car of many prestigious organisations including The European Tour, Ryder Cup and The US National Golf Course Owners Association.

Horticulture Examination Success



Sherriff Amenity's Tito Arana and Rebecca Turner have passed the BASIS amenity and horticulture examination.

"We strive to give our customers cutting edge technical advice, this can only be achieved by investing in the training and personal development of our staff," said Amenity Director Mark Pyrah.

"It is vital that our customers are confident in the advice we give.

For example, the use of fungicides can be an important

and expensive part of a

disease management strategy, however the choice and timing of these is absolutely critical in order to maximise the results achieved and avoid costly mistakes being made."

"I am delighted for Tito and Rebecca and we will continue to invest in high quality technical training in the future," said Mark.



Digger Donation from JCB

JCB is donating equipment worth \$250,000 to help the disaster relief effort in the city of Padang following the devastating earthquake that struck off the Indonesian island of Sumatra on 30 September.

The donation of a 20-tonne JS200 heavy excavator and a 3CX backhoe loader was offered by JCB Chairman, Sir Anthony Bamford, in response to an appeal from the Indonesian authorities for foreign aid to help the relief effort.

Sir Anthony said: "Thousands of people in West Sumatra have been

affected by this dreadful earthquake and there is a desperate need for heavy equipment to assist in the clear up operations and to help alleviate large-scale human suffering.

The excavator and backhoe loader will be put to use straight-away in Padang and will hopefully help local people to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of this awful disaster."

JCB machines also proved invaluable in the aftermath of the Asian Tsunami.

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Celtic Man is Scottish Groundsman of the Year

Celtic Football Club's Head Groundsman John Hayes is the 2009 IOG Scottish Football Groundsman of the Year. He collected the award from IOG Chief Executive, Geoff Webb, and David Carson of sponsor Rigby Taylor.

It is the third time in the past four years that John has won the award, previously collecting the trophy in 2006 and 2005. In 2006 he also won the IOG's Professional Football Groundsman of the Year award.

The award is judged on criteria that includes available resources, scope of operations, presentation and housekeeping standards as well as technical knowledge – based on a shortlist drawn up by the IOG Scotland Region from a league table of pitches formulated using weekly reports from referees.



"We are now in our sixth season with our reurf pitch and it is testament to all the Celtic FC groundstaff that I've been recognised by this prestigious award."

The Groundsman of the Year Award is competed for by the winners from the Scottish

Premier League as well as Divisions 1, 2 and 3.

In the Premier League, the finalists were Paul Fisk, of Aberdeen FC, and Stephen Connelly, of Hibernian FC.

The 1st Division title was won by Mark Farrell, of Greenock Morton FC, with Chris Smith, of

St Johnstone FC, runner up.

The 2nd Division award was won by David Montador, from East Fife FC, with Alex Latto, of Raith Rovers FC, as runner up.

The 3rd Division trophy was collected by Martin Gray, of Forfar FC, with Kenny Waters, of Dumbarton FC, runner up.



Triumphant Tom

Winner Tom Murray, of Ratho Park Golf Club, received the AGM Trophy, kindly donated by retired member, Jimmy Neilson, formerly of Murrayfield Golf Club.

The new Trophy will be played for annually at the East Section's AGM.



Bathgate Corporate Golf Tournament

Bathgate Corporate Golf Tournament at Mobberley Golf Club in Cheshire in September was an opportunity for BIGGA Chief Executive, John Pemberton to meet up with representatives from Bathgate and the golf club.

From left to right. Gary

Donnison, Golf Director at Mobberley Golf Club; Mark Price, Chief Executive of Bathgate Group Limited; John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA; Roderick Walker, Chairman of Bathgate Group, and Jeremy Hobson, Co-Owner of Mobberley Golf Club.