

and Earnest Doe.

All the prizes were presented by Dave Tyres, the Club Captain, and we thank Newmarket Golf Club for their hospitality. A truly memorable day.

Mick Lathrope



Kent

So here it is Merry Christmas!

At the time of writing this report our annual extravaganza of Turkey Trot and AGM at Birchwood Park is yet to come but eagerly anticipated by a remarkable number of early entrants. I shall take that as a compliment, Thank you.

One of the items that will have been discussed at the AGM, which was highlighted in a separate letter sent to all of you with the agenda, was a notification that we are actively seeking persons to help us organise educational events and training courses for you all wherever demand exists. I sincerely hope that we are able to find a willing soul, as providing relevant and current training for you all is one of the fundamentals of each Section remit.

Much education comes by way of effective communication. This is something we have recently improved significantly by launching a re-vamped website at www.kentgreenkeepers.com I am on a very steep learning curve on running websites so please excuse the odd area that requires improvement. I wanted to get something out on the net as quickly as possible in order to facilitate direct interaction. More will follow and on a regular basis.

One thing that is a priority for me on the webpage is an area where we recognise the invaluable generosity of our sponsors. At the moment we have listed who they are but I shall, when I learn how, provide a link via their logos to their individual websites. Meantime, thanks to all of them for their support and patience! I sincerely hope you will be able to provide similar support for us next year.

Please understand that this is your website. I really do want your input regarding news and pictures. Given the right regular

information I think we can make it relevant, useful and entertaining.

Lastly, it is Christmas time and the end of another year so I won't go on but I would just like to say to our regular attendees, on behalf of Kev and me, thank you all very much for your support this year. The reason we continue doing what we do is because we regularly thoroughly enjoy your company at our events. You will have received your extraordinarily good fixture list for 2010 by now if you were at the AGM and I hope you're looking forward to these events as much as I am. Full details are also on the website so please make a note in your diaries. We do endeavour not to make our events infringe on the valuable work that we all carry out on our own courses by requesting first tee times at our host courses for as late as possible in order that we can fulfil our responsibilities.

If there is anything more we can do for you, please contact us via the website or on the phone, but, again, thanks for a great year and the very Best of British for 2010.

Have a good 'un
Rob Holland



Essex

This month's news is extremely short I'm afraid.

I have heard on the grape vine that Roland Hughes, Course Manager at Forrester Park Golf Club, has been ill and has spent some time in hospital, I understand he is home now and we wish him a speedy recovery.

The New Chairman and Committee will have been elected and the Christmas bash at Orsett GC will be over by the time you read this. I will have all the news and results by the next issue.

Have a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

If you do have any news for the website or for GK International, please contact me on 07764 862 337 or via email essexbigga@talktalk.net


Arnold Phipps-Jones
Press Officer




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Dates for your diary

18-20 January 2011
24-26 January 2012
22-24 January 2013



Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

Harrogate Week 2010

BTME and Clubhouse Exhibitions - Tuesday 19 - Thursday 21, January, 2010

Visit the Membership Services Team on the BIGGA Stand

Come and chat with us on the BIGGA Stand, renew your membership, bring your colleague along to join or simply receive advice and guidance to help you get the most out of your membership.

Remember all members receive a one-year subscription to Greenkeeper International. Look out on the BIGGA website for membership offers at the Show.

Don't miss the BIGGA Social Night - Wild West Bonanza, The Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate

Join us on Tuesday 19, January 2010, from 7pm and be transported into the wild and wooly past of the American Wild West.

Try your hand at poker and replicate Wild Bill Hickok's legendary Dead Man's Hand, a pair of aces and a pair of eights, all black, but beware he was shot dead holding this hand!

The BIGGA Western Saloon offers a Saloon Bar Shootout, Tin Can Alley and the infamous Bucking Bronco, with plenty of arcade game machines and eight luxury full size casino tables this promises to be a wild west night than even Jesse James would not forget!

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- a) greenkeeper, a groundsman or are involved in the fine turf industry, and
- b) you are a member of BIGGA and
- c) pay for your own annual membership subscription

then you may be able to deduct the cost of the membership subscription from your taxable income and reduce the amount of tax you pay. The HMRC recognise that membership of BIGGA is helpful to your job and BIGGA's activities are relevant to your work.

BIGGA have been approved by the HM Customs and Excise and we appear on their approved list <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/list3/list3.htm>

It is possible for a person to go back several years to get tax relief.

How to get tax relief

BIGGA produce an easy to complete 'Tax Relief Claim Form' for members to fill in and send to their local tax office, instructions are clearly given on the form but your membership team are always here to help if you have any queries.

Download a form from the BIGGA website, www.bigga.org.uk select 'Members' from the options across the top, select 'Tax Relief Forms' from the menu on the left, here you can download the form. Or contact a member of the Membership Team at BIGGA HQ to send you a copy.

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Mobile: 07841 948110
janejones1@btconnect.com



Peter Boyd

Peter Larter

Clive Osgood

Jane Jones

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scottish Region

Ian Carr, North
Simon Gunning, West
Aiden Love, Ayrshire
Anke Perplies, Central
Sindre van den Brink, North

Northern Region

Ashley Brear, Northern
Christopher Green, Northern
Will Holmes, Northern
William Price, North Wales
Stephen Yorke, Northern

Midland Region

Christian Brain, Berks/Bucks & Oxon
Stefan Carter, East Midland
Dean Gregory, Mid Anglia
Lewis Mattholie, Mid Anglia
John Merriman, Mid Anglia
Jonathan Taylor, Midland
Peter Tuckett, Berks/Bucks & Oxon

South East Region

Jake Boardman, Surrey
Bob Carriek, East Anglia
James Ellis, Kent
Jamie Faulkner, Surrey
Andrew Gill, Surrey
John Hockley, Surrey
Nick Hollin, Surrey
Mark Hollingsworth, Essex
Patrick Kidd, Surrey
Craig Marshall, East Anglia
Michael Pointer, Surrey
Aaron Robertson, Surrey
Jamie Sedgewick, Surrey
Alan Walker, Essex
Robert Watkins, Surrey
Ryan Watt, Surrey

SW/SW Region

Jacob Armal, South West
Ian Clarke, South Coast
Greg O'Reilly, Devon&Cornwall
Simon Stait, South Coast
Mik Wells, South Coast
Craig Williams, Devon&Cornwall
Craig Williamson, South Coast
James Wright, South West

Northern Ireland

Ross Burns

International

Justin Ruiz, USA

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Assistant Profile

Each month we take a light hearted look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...

Fairweather greenkeeper Ben is an avid Gers fan and is waiting for this magazine to come out to enjoy his greatest claim to fame!



Name : Ben Peters
Age : 20
Club : Ratho Park Golf Club
Position : Assistant Greenkeeper

1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

Three years at Ratho and one year full time at Oatridge college.

2. What was it about the career that attracted you?

Enjoyed working outdoors.

3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?

In the Army.

4. Which task do you most enjoy?

Hand cutting greens, leaves a good finish.

5. Which task do you least enjoy?

Strimming bunkers.

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise- would improve the greenkeeper's lot?

Less rain and more sunshine for working in.

7. Hobbies?

Going to the gym, running, watching football, socialising.

8. Favourite band?

Kings of Leon, David Guetta, Black Eyed Peas.

9. Which team do you support?

Glasgow Rangers.

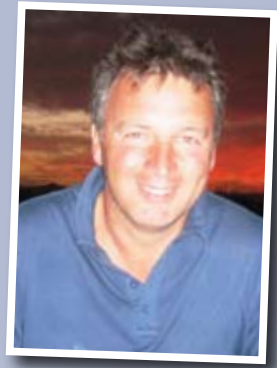
10. What is your claim to fame?

Being in the Greenkeeper International Magazine!

What's your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...

Nigel Wyatt of MJ Abbott comes under the spotlight



1. What is your position within the company?

Contracts Director, MJ Abbott Limited

2. How long have you been in the industry?

31 years

3. How did you get into it?

I left school at 16 and started working for Mike Abbott. It was the lure of all that machinery! After a year I attended courses at Lackham College in Chippenham with the view to becoming a farm manager. On completion Mike was keen to get me back. The rest, as they say, is history!

4. What other jobs have you done?

I worked on my father's farm and delivered milk. We used to bottle our own milk. I still have some glass milk bottles with my grandfather's name on them, ET Wyatt & Sons.

5. What do you like about your current job?

I relish a challenge and every project we're involved in poses its own challenges. I like the variety of work, travelling and visiting interesting places, and meeting people.

6. What changes have you seen in the industry?

We work with the agricultural community in the South West but our staff work across the UK and overseas. The industry has become tightly regulated and from H&S safeguards to being CHAS registered, there's a lot more to being a good contractor now. Tools and machinery have come in that enable us to do a better job. When this hasn't happened, our workshop has built or modified kit.

7. What do you like to do in your spare time?

I get out and ride my motorbike, an Aprilia RSVR Factory - it's fast! Equally enjoyable is a Saturday morning visit to the local butcher...on my retro scooter...very Jamie Oliver!

8. Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

I'd love to have a smallholding, a Range Rover and a Porsche! Dreams aside, I'll probably still be at MJ Abbott!

9. Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?

I've made many friends but without doubt, my wife.

10. What do you consider to be your lucky number?

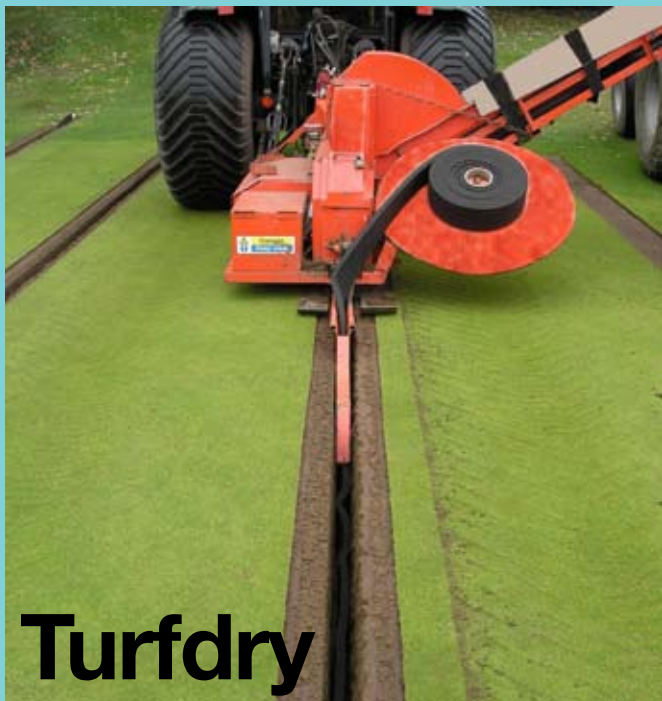
Anything over a million!

11. Pick a number.

48

Nigel has picked Tim Webb of Tacit

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Turfdry operates throughout the UK from its base in Derbyshire. Most projects carried out by the firm are on a design and construct basis, with completed contracts in 2009 ranging in value from £5,000 to over £250,000.

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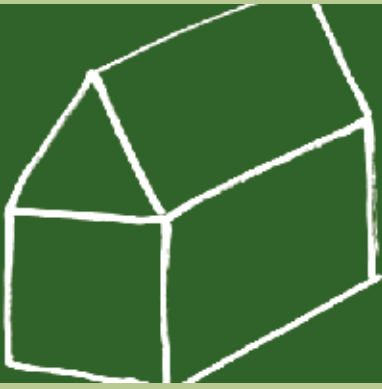
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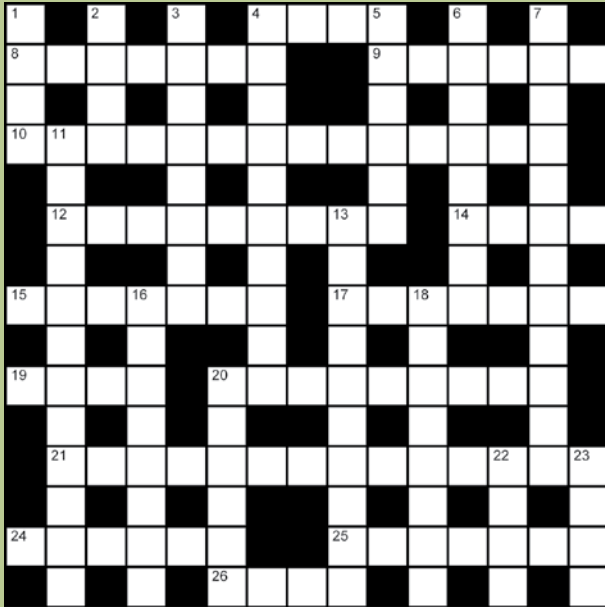
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in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors..

CROSSWORD



Across

- 4 Long narrative work (4)
- 8 Celestial point at which day and night are the same length (7)
- 9 Public speaker (6)
- 10 Planet designer in The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (14)
- 12 Savagery (9)
- 14 Ill-mannered, aggressive person (4)
- 15 Item of property given as part payment for new one (5-2)
- 17 Cumbersome, inelegant (7)
- 19 Nickname for cocaine based on its appearance as white powder (4)
- 20 Ambulance (slang) (4,5)
- 21 "A bit of the other" (4,4,6)
- 24 Not in accordance with fact (6)
- 25 Visionary, idealistic (7)
- 26 Flowerless plants typical of damp areas (4)

Down

- 1 Street whose residential buildings were originally stables (4)
- 2 Insect between larva and adult stages (4)
- 3 Precarious, not firm (8)
- 4 Joie de vivre (10)
- 5 Having a high price; resulting in sacrifice (6)
- 6 "Reactive programming" usually applied to spreadsheet software (8)
- 7 Capital of Haiti (4-2-6)
- 11 Convoluted, maze-like (12)
- 13 Deliberately disloyal (10)
- 16 Moving from a higher to lower position (8)
- 18 Indonesian volcanic island between Java and Sumatra (8)
- 20 Condition of chaos (6)
- 22 Frozen rain pellets (4)
- 23 Crosspiece forming step of ladder (4)

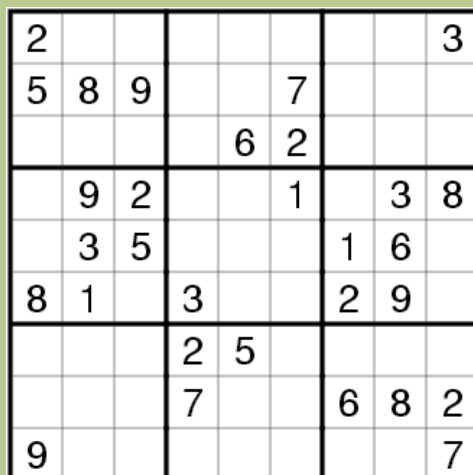
QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Who was the Blackburn forward who transferred to Manchester City at the start of this season?
2. Which female athlete won the 100 metres, 200 metres and anchored the American 400 metre relay team to gold in the 1960 Rome Olympics?
3. Which football team formation is named after a piece of foliage brought out at this time of year?
4. Who won the US Women's Open in 1997?
5. What does the fifth day in the song 12 Days of Christmas and the Olympics got in common?
6. What is the name of Stephen Hunt's brother who used to play with him at Reading?
7. Which lake in the middle of Hyde Park is traditionally the venue for a Christmas Day swim?
8. Which Christmas related destination is an anagram of DALPLAN?
9. What was the name of the Simpson's greyhound?



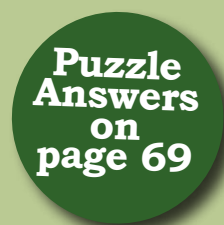
MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



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Applications should be sent to:

Peter Craig
The Grounds Manager
The Hurlingham Club
Ranelagh Gardens
Fulham
London
SW6 3PR

Email: peter.craig@hurlinghamclub.org.uk

The closing date for applications is Thursday 31 December 2009



intheshed answers

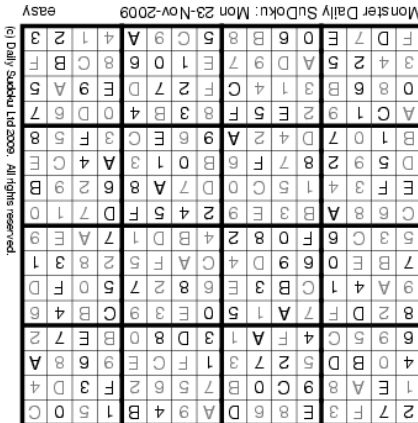
QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Roque Santa Cruz
2. Wilma Rudolph
3. Christmas Tree
4. Alison Nicholas
5. Five gold rings
6. Noel
7. The Serpentine
8. Lapland
9. Santa's Little Helper

CROSSWORD



MONSTER SUDOKO



SQUIGGLY SUDOKO





On the Soapbox

A new vehicle for people within the industry to express their viewpoint

One Saturday morning back in October I had just returned from the golf club. As usual I suspected that the course was probably in reasonably good nick but all I saw as I went round were the things which could be better - the curse of the Course Manager.

Never mind, get the wet socks off and put the kettle on, the world will seem a better place after that.

My 20-year-old daughter looked chirpy and well after another night on the town (I vaguely remember when I could do that) and with a good-morning smile handed me my post and a cup of tea.

The BIGGA mag and a cup of tea on a Saturday morning, what could be better?

I tore off the polythene to tip out the bump.

Ah, what's this? Continue To Learn education programme 2010.

Anything new and different? Is Frank on? God bless Frank.

I skim through. Ah ha! - Wednesday morning 8.20 to 10.30, 2mm mowing, fescue/bent et al.

We are invited to discuss and debate the merits of 2mm and 5mm mowing and 'the issues involved to succeed with each'. 'To succeed with each!' My heart sinks. I ask myself, 'What is there left to debate?' This seems to be self indulgence of the highest order.

The news puts me in something of a dilemma. At a time when all industries are seeking to minimise global damage for the sake of our children's future, should we as a profession be hosting a debate which suggests that we might wish to consider mowing even lower?

I am all for free speech and defend the right of any greenkeeper to maintain their course as they see fit but for any practice which could have far-reaching consequences for our profession I would want some time-tested theories and scientific back up before we legitimise it at our national conference.

Professional seedsmen, agronomists, architects and constructors stipulate and deliver to golf course greens, fescue and bent seed or turf.

Professional greenkeepers are employed to develop these into mature golf greens consisting of the aforementioned perennial sportsturf grasses - 'simples' as meerkat might say.

Research and past history clearly show that low mowing will strongly favour annual

meadowgrass over fescue/bent. If we are to deliver our remit as professional greenkeepers and provide greens based on perennial sportsturf grasses, the real art of greenkeeping, what is there to debate?

For an agronomic debate you need two reasonably sound scientific theories backed up by evidence.

We seem to be 50% short.

Now I know that professionalism has taken a bit of a dive these days, with the 'Hand of Henri' and In Eduardo's case, quite literally, as he did his dying swan act in the Celtic penalty box, but surely professional greenkeepers should not need to be debating the merits of 2mm mowing.

The thought that we should contemplate heading into the next decade on the basis of ultra low-mown swards, with all their attendant high cost, high maintenance, high input, high irrigation and pesticide requirement is hardly the socially responsible thing to do and gives a very false impression of the environmentally aware state of the British

same today not like back in my day when we had The Beatles versus The Rolling Stones.

At last I have a debate and as she points out 'As children are the product of their parents, if you win the debate you have failed as a parent'.

She has got me there. I console myself with the thought that while I may sometimes fail in my struggle to convert poa greens to fescue/bent, I have obviously not failed as a parent. The student has outwitted the teacher. That is as it should be, I have done a good job.

Roll on the football tonight and the weekly debate about divers and professionalism. The odd diver might win the game for his team occasionally but give me Ryan Giggs any day.

There's a fescue/bent man if ever I saw one.

'And if you tolerate this

Then your children will be next

Will be next, will be next, will be next'

Should we tolerate this?

greenkeeping profession today. Why are we debating it? The logic escapes me.

The noble profession of greenkeeping is the sound practice of preparing perennial sportsturf grasses for the game of golf.

The act of routine mowing at 2mm constitutes the stressing out of perennial sportsturf grasses in favour of a weedgrass, a bastardisation of the profession. What's to debate?

Ah well, the tea was refreshing and my feet have warmed up. The wife has fed the rabbits and we are off to do the weekly at Tesco's.

As usual, I will point out all the cheap items that taste just as good and she, the professional shopper, will tell me to read the label and see just how much salt, sugar and fat I would be pouring in to me and my daughter's bodies and what the eventual outcome would be.

She is right of course. I don't bother to debate the point. There is only one side to the argument and that does not constitute a debate.

I lure my daughter over to the array of CDs and tell her that they all sound the



Course Manager and BIGGA Member

Kerran Daly

The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International