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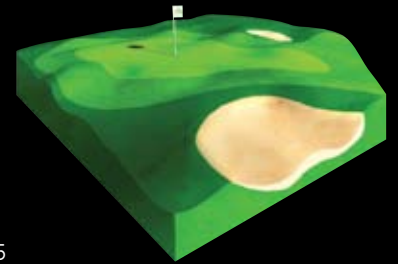
Jonathan Gaunt, international golf course architect



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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



Behind the Scenes

This month the magazine highlights a project that has been worked upon behind the scenes at BIGGA for most of this year.

Powakaddy approached the Association in the spring and asked if we could help them gather research data from greenkeepers to assist them with a new wheel the company was hoping to introduce. That led to a survey going onto our website and then further meetings at BIGGA HOUSE with ourselves and Terry Hale, the Powakaddy Chief Executive, and Lee Manvell, the Group Product Manager, where we offered more hands-on assistance to the project.

Several BIGGA members were then invited to take part in testing sessions for the new tyres on golf courses. The comment and advice that was offered was gratefully received by Powakaddy and the results, as discussed in the article, will be seen when the new winter tyre goes on sale in October.

What has come out of the whole process is how much the opinions of Course Managers were valued and respected by a company that operates in the wider golf industry. I can tell you that Powakaddy was very reluctant to move the whole development process forward without first taking on board the comments and criticisms of Course Managers.

To me, that was incredibly refreshing and is a superb example of how BIGGA can work to the betterment of the game as a whole. Powakaddy recognised the benefits of talking to the experts about how tyres can impact on ground under various, sometimes extreme, conditions, and BIGGA enabled these meetings to take place.

Hopefully what will emerge is an ability for golfers to use their powered caddie cars in conditions that would previously have been impossible and allow Course Managers to be comfortable in the knowledge that in doing

so the course is not being damaged. It might open winter golf up to those people who in the past had been unable to take part because the caddie cars were banned under certain conditions and if that means more golf and more green fees, etc golf clubs will benefit.

But the wider picture is also a positive one. A major golf company had greenkeepers, and BIGGA, at the top of its list for advice when it came to making decisions that carried huge financial ramifications.

Elsewhere in this issue the GTC's David Golding discusses the latest generation of greenkeeper education qualifications which have taken over from the NVQ system, everywhere outside Scotland - the National Occupational Qualifications.

In my time with BIGGA I have talked to hundreds of greenkeepers. The older ones talked about having got their City and Guilds while the younger ones talked about which level of NVQ they had or were going through.

The new qualifications are designed specifically for our industry which is a major step forward and are at three levels – Golf Greenkeeper – Golf Course Supervisor – Golf Course Manager. These will ensure that education – much of it to be delivered in bite size learning packages – will be appropriate for the level and needs of the student.

I wish David well as he assists with the complicated process of moving from one system to another and hope that this new era of education proves to be another significant step in the development of the industry.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

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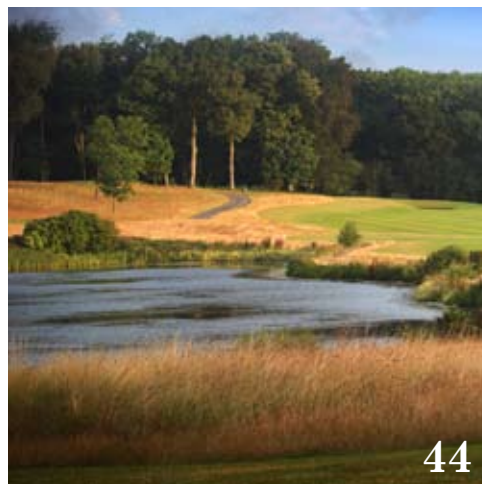
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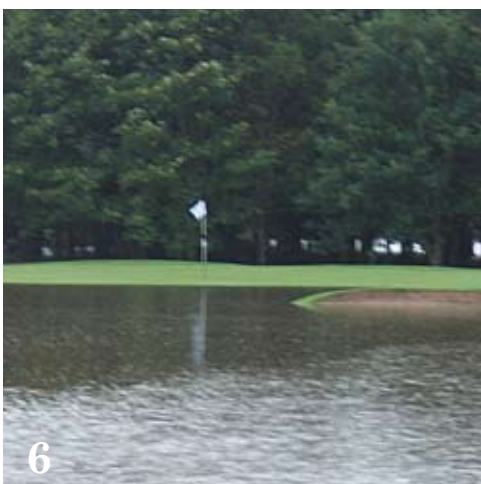
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McDonald Golf Club

The recent rain in the North of Scotland, especially in Aberdeenshire and Moray, created some spectacular sights. Over the course of a single day and a half there was a total of 96mm. Pictured is Scottish Chairman, John Geddes' McDonald Golf Club, in Ellon.

It is of the 7th hole which is a Par 3. In some areas it was five feet deep. One of his greens staff commented that it had become the perfect golf hole - a bit like the 17th at Sawgrass. Tee - Water - Green.

The water has now dried up and members can now play the front nine without getting their feet wet.

An iPhone App for Turf

iPhone users in the fine turf industry can now download an app to assist them with their work

An iPhone (and soon also Blackberry) can now be an interactive turfgrass textbook Turfgrass Management app. Containing the equivalent of four or five textbooks, information can be accessed at the touch of a button.

The app is called "Turfgrass Management," and it covers turfgrasses, weeds, diseases and insects, as well as information on controlling turfgrass pests. The numerous detailed photographs make plant, disease and insect identification much easier because, unlike a print publication, the electronic format allows a nearly unlimited number of photographs. The app will be updated continually as new products become available and new turfgrass diseases and pests are discovered.

The iPhone app is currently available at the iTunes store price £11.99, while the application for the Blackberry should be available shortly.

Oatridge Conference

Bad weather and slashed budgets have created difficulties and uncertainty. Now however the new Oatridge Conference aims to help all of Scotland's growers, greenkeepers, garden designers, landscape architects and local authorities to overcome current problems by providing practical strategies for weathering the storm.

Among the speakers at the event on Thursday, 26 November are Brian Wright, director of FBD Consultancy and Gillian Craig, senior associate with MacRoberts.

Other speakers include Dr David Reay, of Edinburgh University, and Paul Mathers and Iain Gulland, of WRAP.

For more on the Oatridge Conference, as well as information for delegates and exhibitors, please contact: 0131 333 0969.



An Interesting Demo

A group of 20 greenkeepers were invited to Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club by Course Manager, Paul Johnson, to view a Linear Aeration and sand injection operation on the club's 18th green.

In addition to the Linear Aeration Machine, which was hired from Graden, Paul was also supported by Turfmech, who provided a CAT 800 machine to work in conjunction with the Linear Aeration operation, to make light work of this otherwise often highly labour-intensive task.

Including those who attended were South Wales BIGGA Section Secretary, Steve Chappell; BIGGA Vice-Chairman,

Paul Worster, and Laurence Pithie MG, of Turfmaster1.

The 18th green was taken out of play at 12.29pm, the Linear Aeration set at 25mm spacings and to a depth of 20mm with the slots immediately filled with kiln dried sand, then took around 25 minutes utilising a chain of five greenstaff with buckets filling the sand hopper," explained Paul Worster.

"The clean-up job, so often the Achilles Heel of this operation, took just 10 minutes with one operator on the CAT 800. three tonnes of material was removed, which was tipped into a nearby trailer. With only the barest of hand-switching required,

the green was rolled with the Club's Toro fitted with Greentech rollers, the hole trimmed, and the green put back in play by 1.05pm," he said, adding that the acid test was passed when the Chairman of Green turned up unexpectedly and started putting on it – after an expectant hush, the green was pronounced as fit for play!

Turfmech also later used the smaller pedestrian version CAT 300 on the 17th green which proved to be just as effective..

Everyone present agreed the collection machinery took the hard work out of this task.

Paul Worster



Wembley Winner

Tom Peirce is the 2009 winner of the Wembley Stadium Turf Scholarship.

The 19-year-old from Dunstable in Bedfordshire has become the third winner of the scholarship scheme, which is sponsored by Toro and Lely UK and sees a promising young turf professional win a six-month stay at the world-famous stadium.

Tom is a student at Hertfordshire's Oaklands College in St Albans, chosen as Wembley's exclusive education partner in the scheme because of its close proximity to the stadium. He says the prospect of winning motivated him throughout his course.

"When I first heard about the chance to work at Wembley I was really encouraged to work hard to gain my qualifications in hope that I might win the scholarship," he said. "I'm ecstatic that my hard work paid off and can't wait to join the team and develop my skills."

Ayrshire clinches the Norrie Whytock Trophy



In August, members of BIGGA Scotland returned to Auchterarder Golf Club for the annual team event sponsored by Bayer.

Due to the unseasonable weather we were told on arrival that the course was closed and an inspection would be made at 12 noon. The weather had been horrendous over the previous three weeks, rain, high winds.

After the inspection, Donald Burns, Assistant Greenkeeper, announced that the course would open at 1pm. The staff at Auchterarder are to be congratulated on presenting a course in such excellent

condition considering the amount of rainfall they have had to endure.

The West Section won the event last year, but there was to be no repeat of their success. The high winds made things extremely difficult and low scoring was proving elusive. Two teams tied on 86 points- Central Section and the West Section but with the fourth score to count, Central emerged in second place. Team comprised, Gary Semple, Andy O'Hara, Alex Walker, and Brian Heggie.

The winners for 2009 were Ayrshire Section for their first ever win in 12 years of trying

with a total of 92 points, Team Captain was Denis Tweddell, ably supported by Duncan Gray, Derek Wilson and Martin Lothian.

Denis thanked Bayer and Kenney Liddell, Scottish representative of Bayer for their continued support. Thanks go to Captain and Committee for the courtesy and facilities. In Course Manager, Archie Dunn's, absence, Donald and his staff did a great job in preparing the course for play.

Peter J Boyd
Regional Administrator

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) – it's all change!

It is all change in the world of work based qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A change in Government policy on education has required a review of the National Vocational Qualification's (NVQ's) across the majority of industries and with it comes the demise of NVQ'S which are being replaced by work based Diplomas.

Scotland is retaining the Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ's) for the present time.

The GTC's Education Director,, David Golding,, has contacted all Approved Centres to help turf staff come to terms with the changes designed to encourage employers to engage in bite size learning for staff as well as continuing to use

the traditional apprenticeship and full qualifications.

"The GTC has championed the need for funding to follow Units rather than just full qualifications as not all learners are in positions within their employment to gain all the skills and knowledge required within the full qualifications," said David.

He firmly believes more employers will take advantage of the changes to the qualifications especially as Centres access the funding for short courses based on Units from the new Diplomas in Greenkeeping, Golf Course Supervision and Golf Course Management.

A copy of the Centre update can be viewed on the GTC website.

It is important that the GTC works

within the Government framework of qualifications as funding support is made available to employers through Approved Centres offering nationally accredited qualifications including the highly related sports turf apprenticeship," added David.

There is little change in the sports turf Units content but for a full explanation of how the changes will affect Centres, employers and learners within the greenkeeping sector contact the GTC or visit the website: www.the-gtc.co.uk

NOTE: Candidates registered on NVQ's prior to 31 August 2009 will be unaffected by the changes and will have until 31 August 2011 to complete and their Centre claim the certificate.

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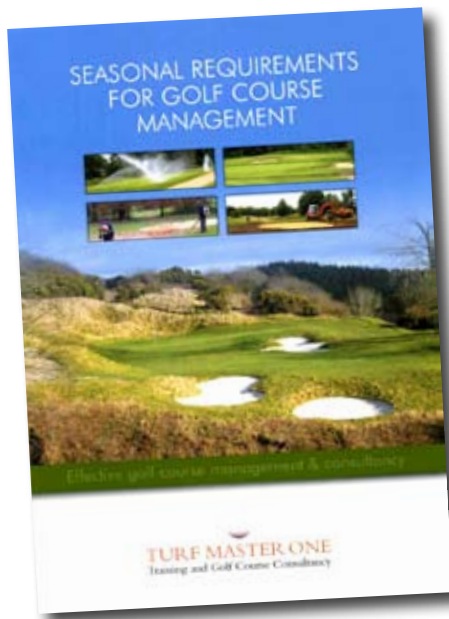
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SEASONAL REQUIREMENTS BOOK

Ever wondered what work is required on a golf course and when it should be carried out?

Well help is at hand in the form of an easy to read short book that is full of practical information with work focused on the four seasons of the year.

As well as acting as a reference book, it describes the key tasks required in each season and the reasons why they are an essential part of any planned maintenance program.

The book is packed full of the reasons and benefits of why such work is essential and it is aimed primarily at Golf Club Managers, Secretaries, Owners & so on.

However, it will no doubt find its place at colleges as well as with Course Managers; being useful as

a training tool for students of the game. Included with this book are numerous colour photos as well as a few useful data charts.

This book has been written and produced by Master Greenkeeper, Laurence Pithie and is the second in a planned series of short books aimed at giving both practical and technical information to golf clubs both in the UK and in Europe.

The book consists of 48 pages in colour and is available from Turf Master One Ltd at £22 plus P & P.

To purchase a copy, contact turfmasterone@aol.com or call Laurence on 01666 505233 or 07774 414207.

Details of this and other publications can be found on the website: www.turfmasterone.co.uk

On Top Down Under

Andy Hugill, formerly an assistant at Whitby Golf Club, in North Yorkshire, has been named Australia's top Superintendent.

He began his greenkeeping career as a self confessed "cocky" kid at Whitby Golf Club under the guidance of Course Manager, Ian Lavelle,

Having completed his apprenticeship, as a 19 year-old he left to work at the Colony Club Gutenhof in Vienna, Austria, where he stayed for five years before moving to Australia where he was lucky enough to get a job at the prestigious New South Wales Golf Club.

After just eight months he was appointed Assistant Superintendent and he remained there for five years before moving across to Eastlake to take up his first Superintendent position.

In 2003, he was appointed Superintendent at Mona Vale Golf Club and within five years bring the quality of the golf course to a level where it is generally recognised as the best conditioned on the northern beaches of Sydney.

Six years later he won the 2009 AGCSA Excellence in Golf Course Management Award



Longest Standing Member?



Mark Holmes may just hold the record for the longest serving member of a Greenkeeping Association with 70 years under his belt. Now 87 Mark, became a Greenkeepers in March 1937 at age 14 and a half as apprentice greenkeeper at Dore and Totley Club in Sheffield.

After war service he returned for two years before moving to Sherbourne in 1949. He became Head Greenkeeper at Sherbourne for a year then moved to Hesketh in 1950. During his four years there he was Secretary and then Chairman of NW Section of Greenkeepers Assoc.

In 1955 he moved to Hallamshire GC in Sheffield again he became Secretary and then Chairman of Greenkeepers Assoc. He held office for five years.

In 1963 he moved back to Hesketh in Southport where he remained until he retired in 1986. He held office again as Secretary and Chairman of NW section for a total of 13 years.

Can anyone beat Mark's record?