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# What a few months in store

**The sporting season is now very much in full swing and hopefully, we are enjoying the long-promised weather to showcase the wonderful work of the country's sports turf professionals.**

As I write, people will be taking in their first look at the new Wentworth, on the eve of the BMW PGA Championship, and Chris Kennedy and his team will hopefully be enjoying the plaudits for a supreme task, successfully completed.

Two weeks later one of Chris' protégés, Jim McKenzie, will welcome the Tour stars to Celtic Manor for the Wales Open which will give spectators, who haven't been fortunate enough to get a ticket for the Ryder Cup, the opportunity to walk the 2010 course.

Jim doesn't make things easy for himself because not only is he coping with a Wales Open and a Ryder Cup in the space of 16 weeks he is also getting married this month - right in the middle of it all. Good luck to you, Jim, and the future Mrs McKenzie. I'm sure the honeymoon will have been put on hold for a few months!

Elsewhere there is sport going on everywhere with Wimbledon, Test cricket, the World Cup, in South Africa, not to mention the European Athletic Championships, in Barcelona, and the Commonwealth Games, in Delhi.

As an avid sports fan I'm not sure if my lady wife will be too happy that some of my regular chores may be neglected because I'm glued to the much anticipated New Zealand - Slovakia clash, later this month.

It just shows how much sport can impact on society and, while it often comes with negative headlines attached, in the main there is little that can galvanise a country more than sport.

This month you can be sure there will be more English flags, hanging out of windows or attached to cars, than were seen when St George arrived home to a hero's welcome having slain his dragon.

On the subject of negative headlines, the Wembley pitch has been right up there with Lord Triesman recently. I certainly don't profess to be an expert, but I would suggest that the reason the Emirates Stadium, not too far from Wembley, doesn't suffer in the same way is because it was built with some consideration to the fact that it would be home to an area of turf; that it is used as a venue much more sparingly than Wembley and that its role as a football pitch is placed about all other commitments.

The fact that Wembley is used by so many different sports and events to satisfy commercial partners, and generate the revenue required to repay the £750 million bill it came with, may or may not be the only problem, but it certainly doesn't help.

There are many wise people working on resolving the problem and I'm sure that ultimately they will come up with a solution, even if it does mean sacrifices and compromises.

But in the meantime sit back and enjoy the feast of sport we have to look forward to over the next few months. There will be excitement, thrills, spills anticipation and the odd disappointment... and no doubt, at some stage, a penalty shootout!

Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**

JUNE 2010

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James de Havilland looks under the bonnet of a compact tractor



**COURSE FEATURE**

## A dream fulfilled

Jim McKenzie bought into the dream of a Welsh businessman in 1993. In October that dream becomes a reality. Scott MacCallum visited Celtic Manor to hear the story

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**Back in 1993, a wealthy businessman talked passionately to a talented young greenkeeper about his vision of building a golf course. It was a tough pitch, not because the idea of building a course over the land surrounding the house where the meeting was taking place, was so outrageous, but because of the sheer scale of what he was describing.**

The land, in a South Wales valley on the outskirts of Newport, was beautiful, but it had never returned to an equivalent cry of "Yes!" and had it been the swindling sound of a ball dropping four inches into a cup, but this man was talking about building European Tour venues over it. He was even talking about hosting Ryder Cup!

Some 17 years on I sat in a luxury clubhouse overlooking the magnificent golf course that in 141 days time would host the Ryder Cup, listening to that same young greenkeeper recount how he felt when he listened to Sir Terry Matthews, the owner of Celtic Manor Resort, explain his dreams for the future.

"When he started to talk about golf tournaments and Ryder Cups and I thought he was absolutely nuts," said Jim McKenzie, who was in the process of considering leaving The Westworth Club, where he worked under Chris Kennedy, and heading west.

"Within an hour, though, if he'd asked me to punch my way through the wall I'd have asked him which hand he wanted me to use. He was that much of an inspirational character."

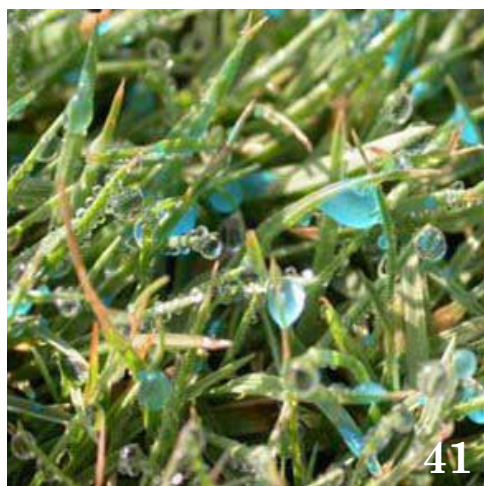
It would be fair to suggest that even Terry Matthews, and his immovable world class events and, at the beginning of October this year, the pinnacle of it all – that Ryder Cup.

The Ryder Cup is the third largest sporting event in the world in terms of television viewers after the Olympics and the World Cup," said Jim, who is now the third longest serving employee of Celtic Manor.

"As Wales will never host an Olympics or a World Cup this is as big as it gets."

All the work that has been carried out at Celtic Manor has been done with a view to hosting the Cup. The first golf course built was the Roman Road which was followed

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## John Deere Chalks Up Five Million Lawn Tractors



John Deere's five millionth lawn tractor, from the X700 Ultimate range, recently rolled off the assembly line at the Horicon, Wisconsin factory in the United States.

Production of the company's first lawn and garden tractor began at Horicon in 1963, when John Deere built 1000 units of the 110 model.

An original 110 can be seen at the Smithsonian Institution's National

Museum of American History in Washington, DC; a fully restored, working example of this pioneering lawn tractor is also on display in the foyer of John Deere's UK headquarters at Langar.

"Reaching five million lawn tractors is a major milestone for us," said Horicon factory Manager, Dan Hoffman.


"Over the last 47 years we have established a reputation for making

durable and reliable products that are now used throughout the world."

The millionth John Deere lawn tractor, a 318 model, was produced at Horicon in 1984. The second million was reached by an LX188 in 1992.

The factory achieved the 3 million mark in 1998 with the LT133 lawn tractor, and the 4 millionth machine was produced in March 2003.

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## NO VACANCIES AT THE JCB ACADEMY

THE JCB Academy has opened a waiting list for places at the unique £22 million regional centre of learning after becoming fully subscribed months ahead of its September opening.

A total of 170 young people have enrolled for Year 10 and the Sixth Form places at The Academy which will help nurture the UK engineers and business leaders of the future.

The enthusiastic response of parents and students to the only learning establishment of its kind in the UK means applicants now going on a waiting list in case some of the allocated places are not taken up at the start of the inaugural term.

JCB Academy Principal, Jim Wade, said, "We are delighted that The Academy is fully subscribed and that it has proven to be so popular that there is now a waiting list for places. I am sure this kind of interest will continue in the future."

The Academy, based in the renovated historic Grade II listed Tutbury Mill, close to JCB's World Headquarters at Rocester, will welcome 120 Year 10 students (14-year-olds) who over two years will study for the new Diplomas in Engineering and Business as well as GCSEs in the core subjects of Maths, English, Sciences, a modern foreign language and ICT.

In addition 50 Year 12 Sixth Form students have been awarded places to study for Advanced Engineering and Advanced Business Diplomas. Eventually, the world-class learning facility which is the only education provider of its kind in the UK, will cater for a maximum of 540 young people.

Like other state schools, the JCB Academy is funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, but as main sponsor JCB contributed 10% of the capital and donated Tutbury Mill.

## Sponsors Wanted for 200 Mile Bike Ride from Hartley Whitley to Paris

Agronomist Bruce Jamieson's relentless pursuit towards physical perfection, which started with a diet of protein filled shakes and not much else in the early part of last year, has continued into 2010 with another project, one which only those mad, very fit, or both would consider undertaking.

Together with his 16 year old daughter, Alice, Bruce is taking part in a charity 200 mile sponsored bike ride from Hartley Wintney to Paris in September.

The Charity is raising money for an extension to the local St John's Church and the overall target is approximately £2,000,000.

"We would really appreciate you sponsoring us. Please think kindly of me as I have started training and the bike saddle is far too small," said Bruce

Anyone wishing to sponsor Bruce and Alice should visit [www.justgiving.com/Bruce-and-Alice-Jamieson](http://www.justgiving.com/Bruce-and-Alice-Jamieson)



## Erewash Retiree

Graham Arnold, Course Manager at Erewash Valley, was the surprise recipient of a glass tankard at the end of the recent East Midland Section day. Graham who has been at Erewash for over 40 years retires next year and the Section felt that their visit was the ideal occasion to pay tribute to him.

As far as Graham was concerned BIGGA Past Chairman, Richard Barker, was going to give a short talk on BIGGA and the Section but very quickly it became apparent that Graham was the one and only subject of the tribute.

Richard highlighted some of the work that had been carried out on the golf course over the last four decades.



## When the Circus Comes to Town...

The South Wales Spring Seminar entitled 'When the Circus Comes to Town' took place at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club in April with 45 delegates in attendance.

The day started with Huw Morgan MG giving a presentation on the restoration of the links at Ashburham GC for the return of championship golf, highlighting the importance of good communication and the use of a Course Policy Document.

This was followed by Gordon Moir, of the St. Andrews Links Trust, who gave a fascinating insight into the preparations for The Open at the Home of Golf. Richard Windows, of the STRI, then took the stage by storm and entertained us all by explaining the STRI's new programme for measuring performance which

again was truly fascinating. After an excellent lunch we were treated to a presentation by John Reynolds and a demonstration by Dan Price, of the Vertigo Drainage System.

The afternoon session was then taken by Ian Kinley, Course Manager of Royal Porthcawl, who discussed his maintenance regime for the Royal during 2009 and in particular his success with overseeding and establishing fescue into the greens. Last, but not least, Jim McKenzie from the Celtic Manor Resort gave us a great insight into the running of this incredible resort which covered not only the preparations for the 2010 Ryder Cup but also a wide range of other events including tennis tournaments, political events and various other sporting events.

The day was closed by Jonathan

Harmer, MD of the event sponsor, Farmura Environmental, who chaired a Q&A session.

Thanks go to all the speakers for their participation on the day, particularly to Gordon and Richard who had to drive down from Scotland as their flights were cancelled, and to Jim for giving up his time during this very busy year. Well done to Tracey on HQ for a great round of golf on the Wednesday and to Sami for staying awake during the seminar, it was a great have you both with us and thank you to the staff and members at Royal Porthcawl GC for allowing us to use their fantastic venue. Finally to the guys at Farmura for their continued support of the South Wales Section.

Steve Chappell



## PGA Praise

Former European Tour chief Ken Schofield has hailed the standard of PGA coaching as pivotal to the success being enjoyed by many UK-based players on the world stage.

Ken delivered a glowing endorsement of the PGA's coaching programmes in the week that Northern Ireland's protégé Rory McIlroy following a brilliant victory at Quail Hollow.

McIlroy, who is coached by Bangor Golf Club PGA professional Michael Bannon in County Down, is among a clutch of top players whose games have been honed and developed with the aid of expert advice from PGA coaches.

Other well-known players include Lee Westwood who has enjoyed a long association with PGA Master Professional Pete Cowen while Open championship silver medal winner Chris Wood works with Bristol & Clifton PGA pro Paul Mitchell.

Ken paid tribute to the skills of PGA professionals during a panel discussion at the London Golf & Tennis Show which also saw a team of PGA pros deliver nearly 300 free lessons over the three days.



## JOHN QUINTON JOINS RJ

John Quinton has been appointed Regional Sales Manager at Ransomes Jacobsen.

Reporting to UK and Ireland Sales Manager, Rupert Price, he will be responsible for business development, equipment sales and dealer support across his territory which includes the southwest and northwest of England and all of Wales.

For the past four years he held the position of Territory Manager West with Hayter. Prior to this he spent a year as Sales Manager

with RS Bird and three years as Machinery Manager with Glendale.

He lives in Monmouth with his wife, Victoria, and two daughters, Sophie and Emma.

"We are obviously delighted that John has joined us at this exciting time for the company.

"He joins an expanding sales operation in the UK and his experience of the turf industry will certainly add strength to our territory management team," said Rupert.

# Benidorm or Bust

Jim Cook attended an eventful Club Managers' Conference in Spain

**The International Congress on Club Management was this year held near Benidorm, Spain, organised by Club Manager Spain and the Club Manager's Association of Europe.**

The eruption of the Icelandic volcano and subsequent airspace closures meant that alongside thousands of other stranded travellers around the world, delegates attempted to blunder home via any means possible.

On the first day of the conference, we media representatives played Bonalba golf course courtesy of our hosts, the Tourist Board of Costa Blanca. As well as enjoying a round on the well-maintained course, we also were given the chance to try out the club's new GPS systems, installed in carts.

Next day, at the conference, the CMAE Chief Executive Officer, Jerry Kilby, spoke about communication between staff.

"We must remember to have regular interactions with all members of staff. We are often guilty of forgetting the guys who rake the bunkers. They are as important as anyone as representatives of the club."

He also stated that social interaction was the key factor to a person joining a new golf club.

Gregg Patterson, General Manager of The Beach Club, in California gave two energetic performances which commanded attention. Of all the seminars in the congress, Gregg's, although delivered superbly, demonstrated most of all the cultural differences which exist between Europe and the USA.

"Building up team spirit and education comes from shared anecdote. It is the stories told afterwards that are the key thing to people learning off each other. Council staff individually. Some people may serve the food in the restaurant but not smile while

they are doing it. At the Beach Club we have a raffle, where all the staff remember all the other staff member's names for cash prizes. We have dishwashers who walk away with \$400."

Gregg made a final point.

"Use your club for more than just golf because people say they don't want to be in a club that is boring. Find out what your people want and give it to them. Members have to have a great experience. If the only thing your club has to offer is golf then you will be in trouble."

Jim Callaghan, Club Manager at Bothwell Castle GC, and CMAE Scottish Region President, spoke about the problems of golf courses run by committees.

"There are clubs going out of business because they are not run in a professional manner. If a committee makes a mistake there is no accountability, but if a manager makes a mistake; he's out."

Mike Lehmuis, Chief Operating Officer at the Congressional Country Club, in America, started a lively debate.

"I don't play golf at my club unless I absolutely have to. The last thing a player wants to see is me standing on the driving range or teeing off with my friends on an afternoon. My advice is to go and play at another club."

At which point, a Spanish Club Manager in the audience stood up.

"Here we see the social differences from the US to Spain. Many members have wanted to play with the General Manager here, so they see it as a privilege not something to be avoided. I think it is only good for staff to play on the course."

The final session looked at environmentalism on the golf course. Benjamin Warren, of the GEO, had been grounded because of the volcanic ash cloud



but sent a statement stating that only simple fine-tuning of golf clubs would be needed to turn them into environmental community assets.

Rounds of golf at La Finca and Villaitana showed the quality of presentation on these two courses.

After the conference, news of more and more flights being cancelled meant we all had to think seriously of finding another means home. News reports full of doom and gloom seemed happy to mention that the last time this volcano erupted in 1821, it lasted two years.

The general feeling of anxiety at the resort was offset by the inventive spirit people were using to find ways home over land. Some rented cars to drive to France, while others arranged a bus to take them 1,300 miles to Malmo, Sweden.

Some planned to stick it out at the resort and others virtually set up camp at Alicante airport. Unsurprisingly no-one took Gordon Brown's warship very seriously.

The prize for the most original plan must go to Simon van Boxtel of the EMS. With the necessary contacts, he managed to buy a 1995 Mitsubishi Lancer estate, with Dutch number plates, in Benidorm, and made plans to drive the 1,000 miles back to Holland.

Alongside, Lodewijk Klootwijk, Chief Executive of the European Golf Club Owners Association, Keith Lloyd, Chief Executive of the Golf Club Managers Association and Ben Evans, Editor of Golf Business Development, I jumped at this chance to make

progress towards Britain.

Taking regular breaks to stretch our legs, switch drivers, drink coffee and fill the petrol tank we made relentless progress through the rugged Spanish countryside, with its Wild West style villages dotted amidst fields of oranges and olives.

The Mediterranean Sea was always in view to our right, until darkness fell and we branched off, after Barcelona, toward the Pyrenees.

At the French border a lengthy queue of HGVs reminded us that freight carrying aircraft were grounded.

With directions printed out from Google maps, and Simon's knowledge of the route, we flew past Lyon, Dijon and Metz and entered Luxembourg at the break of day.

After an inevitable lull in spirits, these were soon raised by not only the sun but the realisation that we had nearly made it to our drop-off point in Belgium - Antwerp.

A steadily rising engine temperature caused some concerns, but after twenty hours on the road, the old Mitsubishi brought us in.

The two Dutchmen carried on to Holland as we made the relatively short train journey to Zeebrugge, where we became three of the scores of stranded travellers picking their way through midday traffic to a port designed for cars not pedestrians.

And so, by the next morning we were back on English soil feeling dazed but not unsure of what had stolen the show at this Club Managers' conference.



## CONNECT at Conwy



The inaugural CONNECT (Conwy (North Wales) exhibition for clubs and trade) took place at Conwy Morfa Golf Club in April.

The two day event showcased machinery and products of many national and international brands such as Textron, John Deere, Toro and Wiedemann, these products were shown by local distributors, who have a greater insight into local needs and preferences.

The practice area was given over to hands-on demonstrations. Traders offering other services were also present at the show, with amenity companies such as Sheriff, Crocodile and many others offering a full range of their wares

## St Andrews to Honour Golfing Greats

Three of the world's greatest golfers are to be honoured by Scotland's oldest university on the eve of The Open Championship at St Andrews.

Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson and Pdraig Harrington will be awarded Honorary Degrees by the University of St Andrews.

The University will award each of them the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* in recognition of their achievements and outstanding contributions to the game of golf.

The degrees will be conferred by University Chancellor Sir Menzies Campbell.

University Principal Dr Louise Richardson said, "Individually and collectively, Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson and Pdraig Harrington exemplify excellence, drive and achievement at the highest levels of professional sport.

"This will be an opportunity for St Andrews and Scotland to honour their determination and achievement in the game of golf and the pursuit of excellence.

"We are absolutely delighted that they have agreed to accept these Honorary Degrees at the home of golf on the eve of the 150th anniversary of the Open Championship."

Previous recipients of Honorary Degrees from St Andrews include Jack Nicklaus, Seve Ballesteros, Gary Player, Colin Montgomerie, Nick Faldo, Peter Thomson and Peter Alliss.

All have been invited to this year's ceremony to witness their fellow professionals receive their degrees.

Among its Honorary Graduates are Bob Dylan, Benjamin Franklin, Michael Douglas and the Dalai Lama.

