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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



The finest greenkeeping performance of all time

When I wrote about a successful Ryder Cup in my Editorial last month I did so in advance of the match itself and based my views on what I knew and had seen of Jim McKenzie's preparations.

I did have the foresight to suggest that the weather might be the obstacle to a successful week, but certainly didn't appreciate just to what extent it would play its part.

I also didn't predict that it would be those appalling weather conditions that have given the greenkeeping profession its biggest boost for many a decade, if not ever.

Generally speaking, the lot of the greenkeeper is to toil away in the background, and work on the premise that no news is good news. An occasional bit of praise is nice - from those enlightened people who suspect that a golf course doesn't look after itself - but, as you well know, golf course comment generally carries a health warning and comes with optional hard hat!

At Celtic Manor, however, that "behind the scenes" work was carried out in front of huge soggy galleries and a worldwide television audience of many tens of millions. Had it not been executed in such an expert fashion by the 130 plus Celtic Manor and volunteer staff the Ryder Cup would almost certainly have had a different conclusion, and may have even been abandoned early.

And for a change people noticed.

To read a thread entitled "Three Cheers for the Greens Staff" on the BBC 606 Forum is a welcome first, and shows what a bit of exposure can do for greenkeeping. Admittedly it only got eight replies, but it's a start, isn't it?

In all seriousness, while there must have been times, and Jim McKenzie admitted to as

much in the Ryder Cup Special elsewhere in this magazine, when everyone involved was in the depths of despair and wondering if it was ever going to finish, it will probably go down as one of, if not *The* finest greenkeeping performance of all time.

And, let's face it, if the 2010 Ryder Cup had enjoyed perfect weather and perfect playing conditions it would have been back to the usual state of affairs of no-one noticing.

We, in the business, would have taken pride in what had been achieved and marvelled at the presentational touches and the smooth putting surfaces, but we would have retained a similar public profile to that of The Borrowers or the fairies who frequent the bottom of our gardens.

It is a cliché, but bears repeating nonetheless - Without greenkeepers there would be no golf.

With cut backs threatened, or being implemented, at golf clubs throughout the country, those in charge of the sharp pencil should remember as much. A poorly maintained golf course will lead to the fortunes of the golf club heading in only one direction.

On behalf of everyone involved in the sports turf industry may I say thank you to Jim and his magnificent Ryder Cup crew.

Jim, you may have done this industry one great turn.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

GI CONTENTS

A look at what's inside the magazine this month

November 2010

FEATURES

20 Ryder Cup Special... *How the Ryder Cup was won (20-25)*

Jim McKenzie talks exclusively with Scott MacCallum about the most dramatic week in golf

What a week (26-27)

A diary from a member of the Ryder Cup Volunteer Greenkeeping Support Team



28 Golf of the highest standard

How Paul Frith won the BIGGA National Championship

32 Making a lasting impression

At Burghley Park Golf Club

38 A post pesticide prognosis for turf patients and carers

By Dr Terry Mabbett



42 Snap happy

The 2010 BIGGA Photo Comp

48 The anatomy of... a rotary mulch mower



52 Jobs for the boys

Opportunities for ex-servicemen

53 Lean system for lean times

56 BIGGA delegation to USA back on

72 Servicing your most expensive asset



How the Ryder Cup was won

Celtic Manor's Jim McKenzie talks exclusively with Scott MacCallum about the finest greenkeeping achievement of modern times

Jim McKenzie was in the middle of his professional life. It was Sunday morning and the Ryder Cup, the event he'd been dreaming about and playing for since 1996, was in the middle of its second big rain delay.

They weren't going to finish that day and there was no prospect of the match not going the full distance for the first time in its illustrious history.

"I was tired of all the ascenders down to the hotel and had a chat with Debbie, my wife, which cheered me up a bit and on the way back I came out of the lift and bumped into Colin Montgomerie. He said, 'Come with me, and we will see a corner and had a coffee,' revealed Jim.

"Colin said, 'The bottom line is this. We're currently two points down and if we don't play today all the matches out there will be drawn/habit and we're up on six of them at the moment. If that happens we go into the Singles and two points down and we're not traditionally strong in the Singles. If we can get off the matches completed this afternoon it gives us a chance,' revealed Jim.

With that message ringing in his ears, Jim returned to his room – 66 of his own Celtic Manor staff and 77 volunteer greenkeepers – and urged them to fill their tired bodies once again for yet another monumental effort.

"I told them that I'd just spoken to Colin and that he'd asked that if there was any way we could get playing we could go down in history as the first greenkeeping crew to help win the Ryder Cup."

And that is exactly what happened. The crew worked tirelessly to make the saturated course playable for an afternoon and the players did their bit by turning their overnight boots into feet and a half day and there was no prospect of the match not going the full distance for the first time in its illustrious history.

"If we hadn't pulled it off on Sunday we would have gone into the Singles two points down and we would probably have got no more than nine points, instead of the magic 14.5."

The shift that the guys put in on that Sunday afternoon, and the Saturday night before, was absolutely astonishing – outrageous. And that Sunday afternoon turned out to be the greatest day in the history of European golf," said Jim, who is not one given to hyperbole.

Weather conditions were always the one variable, double about the 2010 Ryder Cup. The venue was custom built to cope with the demands of the third biggest sporting event in the world and no stone had been left unturned in creating a successful Cup.

However, the pressures on the worldwide golfing calendar had pushed the match into October for only the second time in its history and the South Wales weather can be notoriously fickle. And so it was.

"We had 25% of our monthly rainfall in two days – about two inches," said Jim, who did say that a White Open a few years ago had endured three inches of rain and finished within half an hour of its scheduled time.

"Colin asked if there was any way we could get playing, we could go down in history as the first greenkeeping crew to help win the Ryder Cup"

Jim McKenzie

20

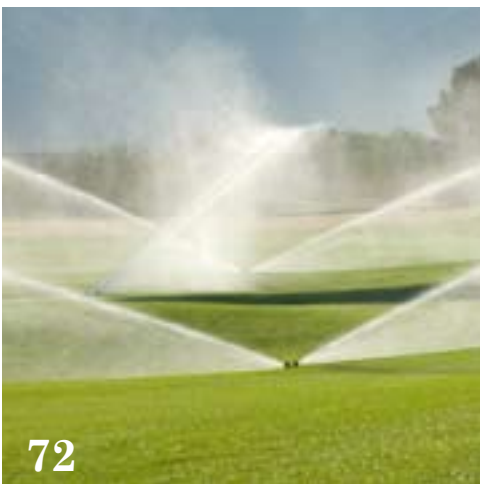




42



52



72

REGULARS

- 6 Newsdesk
- 15 Chairman's Word
- 16 GTC
- 17 L&D
- 18 Industry Update
- 19 What's Your Number
- 57 Dealer of the Month
- 60 New Products
- 61 Around the Green
- 65 Assistant Profile
- 66 Chief Executive
- 69 Diary of Events
- 70 Membership
- 75 In the Shed
- 82 Soapbox
– David Jenkins

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Featured Inside...

Ryder Cup Exclusive

7-page special: How the 2010 Ryder Cup was *really* won

Also inside...

84 pages including: BIGGA National Championship Review, Photographic Competition Results, Burghley Park Golf Club, BIGGA Delegation News, Jobs for the Boys, and much more...



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

GI NEWSDESK

The latest news from around the globe



Off and Running

Harry Jurgens, of AFT Trenchers, is taking part in a vintage car rally from Peking to Paris.

The route from China to France will take the teams more than 30 days to complete, through more than nine countries, with plenty of stops along the way. 100 cars from around the world are competing.

"We are taking part in the 4th Peking-to-Paris event that retraces the steps of 11 pioneering automobile adventurers in 1907.

"It has also presented us with an opportunity to raise awareness and hopefully funds for Parkinson's disease," said Harry, who is competing with a friend.

Class of '76

David Salisbury, Course Manager at Burghley Park Golf Club, has a huge library of old books and photographs and he has uncovered this photograph taken in 1976 of delegates at a training course at the STRI.

See if you can spot younger versions, and haircuts, of some familiar faces.



SPORTS TURF RESEARCH INSTITUTE
 COURSE OF INSTRUCTION FROM 22ND - 26TH MARCH, 1976

Back Row: S.R. Griffiths, Hefyn & District G.C.; B.C. Hatcliffe, Birmingham Parks Department; D. Tye, Longcliffe G.C.; P.W. Lehmann, Otley G.C.; A. Morton, West Byfleet G.C.; J.R.A. King, Telford Development Corp. (Gt. May G.C.); M. Wilcock, Stratford G.C.; N.J. Dwyer, Gris's Dyke G.C.; V.G. Suxham, Loretto School.

Middle Row: F. Fitzjohn, Porter's Park G.C.; M.G. Hawtree, Addington Court G.C.; B. Burton, Powfoot G.C.; T.M. D'Arcy, Castletroy G.C.; V.P. Holden, Warkworth G.C.; K. Almond, Mexham G.C.; P. Dods, Kingsknowe G.C.; N. Wilson, I.C.I. Fibres (Harrogate); S.P. Ellis, Bradford G.C.

Front Row: G.R. Butler, Brett Essex G.C.Ltd.; J.W. Manning, Faversham G.C.; P.J. Frank, Addington Palace G.C.; D. Salisbury, Burton-co-Trent G.C.; S.W. McClune, Coombe Wood G.C. Ltd.; P. Walshav, Silkstone G.C.; J.R. Johnson, The Ganton G.C. Ltd.; S. Hill, Rotherham Borough Council.

GI NEWSDESK
 Email your news to scott@bigga.co.uk

Moffat Man Retires

Robin McMillan retired recently after having served nearly 37 years as Head Greenkeeper at Moffat Golf Club, in Dumfriesshire.

Robin, like myself, was born and bred in Moffat and he developed an interest in golf when, as a youngster, he became a message boy for the local grocer, Mr Stewart, who was also a fine golfer and a great believer in getting youngsters involved in the sport. His method was quite novel. He expected his message boys to caddy for him in the evening, without payment, but he encouraged them to try it out for themselves. I followed Robin as Mr Stewart's message boy and it certainly worked for both of us.

It was with great pleasure that I was able to attend the celebration to mark Robin's retirement. The club and his friends had arranged a golf match and dinner in the clubhouse where a presentation was made to him for his many years of devotion to the club. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening where friends and work colleagues paid their respects and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Robin became a greenkeeper at the club where his uncle was the Head Greenkeeper (nepotism was alive and well). After four weeks his uncle decided to retire and left him as the sole Green Staff member. A daunting task at an 18 hole golf course. Robin embraced the challenge and he has

been a stalwart and a fine example of a hard working and conscientious greenkeeper who has been a credit to greenkeeping and, especially, Moffat Golf Club. Robin has always been a member of BIGGA and a great supporter of the Association.

Robin leaves Moffat in the capable hands of Mike Wilson who has been his deputy for a number of years. Mike is taking on the responsibilities of Head Greenkeeper and we wish him all the best.

Robin is looking forward to all the opportunities retirement will bring.

He is a staunch supporter of Queen of the South Football Club and will now have more time to attend the matches. Golf is also high on his agenda. We wish Robin well and hope he has a long and happy retirement.

*Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator*



PAUL AND JANE UNDERY

Paul and Jane Undery, long time PR consultants for Etesia, were presented with a memento at Saltex by Etesia's Managing Director Patrick Eves, to mark Paul and Jane's retirement.

The couple were invited to Etesia's traditional Saltex breakfast so they could meet up with their friends in the press and say goodbye.

New book for the British Standards Institute

This informative, simple, cleanly laid out book brings together all of the relevant information needed to manage the risks presented by the use of machinery. By answering the most frequently asked machinery safety questions the book offers practical health and safety solutions.

With questions featuring in a purple font and plenty of white space this A5 book would be a valuable read for anyone involved in Risk Assessment and general H&S.

The author, John Glover, is a graduate of the Institute of Occupational Safety and has practised health and safety law and safety of machinery for a number of years.



It can be obtained from the BSI, Group Headquarters, 389 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 4AL www.bsigroup.com



Golf Environment Award Winners

Portmore Golf Park and James Hutchinson, of Fairhaven Golf Club, are the two main winners in the 2010 Golf Environment Awards.

Portmore, in Devon, won the Overall Achievement Award and James, the Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year, and Owner/Manager of Portmore, Colin Webber, and James each win a Study Trip to the USA.

Regional Winners were: Scotland. Loch Lomond GC; Wales. Aberdovey GC; Northern England. Silloth on Solway GC and Southern England. Aldeburgh GC.

Individual Project Award winners were: Nature Conservation. Delamere Forest GC; Water Management. Maesteg GC; Waste Management. Machrihanish Dunes GC and Turfgrass Management. Royal St David's GC.



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OPEN DAYS

Ransomes Jacobsen threw open the gates to its European head office and invited the UK turf industry to an Open House event over two days in late September

Over 400 guests, including many current customers, prospects, dealers and distributors, representatives from the media and local dignitaries, attended the event which provided a varied programme of activities. Industry partners including BIGGA, STRI, IOG and GEO were present as were suppliers to the sector, Scotts, Syngenta, Bernhards and Broadwood International.

The event took place in a relaxed atmosphere, somewhat similar to a country fair, with equipment displays and demonstrations, historic Ransomes equipment including the first Budding lawnmower, a working Ransomes steam engine, thrasher and ploughs, factory tours, outdoor games and a nearest the pin competition on the company's three-hole golf course.

On the following weekend a Family and Friends Day with a similar format saw 620 people invade the premises to see the array of turf maintenance equipment produced in Ipswich. A model steam railway provided rides for the children and entertainment included fete and fun-fair-type games, a



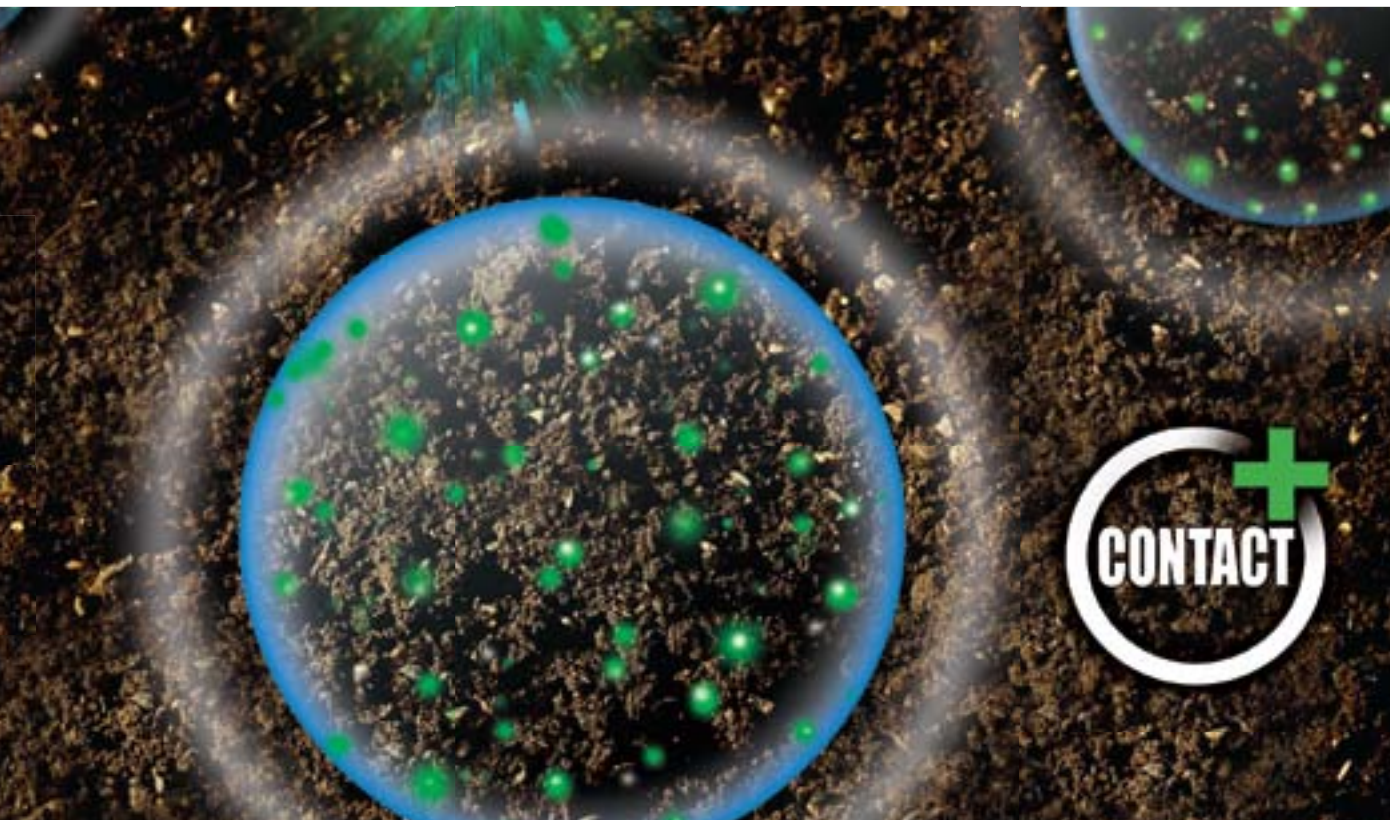
'beat the goalie competition', music from a local school band, a putting competition and a BBQ lunch. The local police and fire and rescue services were also in attendance with their latest vehicles.

Commenting on a very hectic three days, Managing Director, David Withers, said,

"It was quite a week and exceeded all expectations. We had around 430 visitors over the two industry days and 258 of those toured the manufacturing plant.

Some came from as far away as Holland and Austria. Many remarked that they had not appreciated that we produced mowing equipment on this scale, so it was pleasing to get the message across to so many.

"The Family and Friends Day was equally successful and provided the opportunity for the staff to show their loved ones where they worked and showcase how they contribute to the success of the business here in Ipswich," said David.



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NORTHERN REGION INTER SECTION GOLF TOURNAMENT

The third Northern Region Inter-Section Golf Tournament, sponsored by Whitemoss ECO Supplies, was held on September 22, at Llangollen GC.

For the first time all six Sections in the Northern Region competed on a fine day on superb course prepared by Course Manager, Jez Hughes, and his staff. The format was a three man team from each Section playing Stableford with all three team members'

scores to count. The event was once again a very close run affair with the Sheffield Section just claiming victory with 108 points over the second placed North Wales team with 104 points.

The longest Drive was won by Paul Roberts from the North Wales Section and Nearest the Pin was won by Andy Peel also from the North Wales Section.

The Region thanks all teams for making the effort to play, some travelling great distances.

The Region's thanks are also extended to Llangollen Golf Club for providing the venue and some excellent food; everyone was made to feel very welcome. Particular thanks are extended to Andy Law, Managing Director of Whitemoss ECO Supplies Ltd, for his continued sponsorship.

Photograph shows the winning Sheffield Section Team and others from left to right: Stewart Pigott, Sheffield Section; Ian Holoran, Northern Region Chairman; Jez Hughes, Course Manager; Andy Law, Whitemoss ECO Supplies; Matt Holden and Tom Strong, both Sheffield Section.

Back to the Future: The 5th European Golf Business Conference!

"Back to the Future" is the theme of the European Golf Business Conference 2010.

The fifth edition will be held in London: the first time the event been held in the UK - from November 30 To December 2.

An international group of representatives from the golf industry will gather in this city, to exchange ideas of how the game can grow, to discuss current developments of the industry and to share knowledge and information on golf course management.

More information about the programme, speakers and location can be found at the conference website:

www.conference.egcoa.eu.

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