



# Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

## An interesting and challenging year

**The time has flown by since I wrote my last column. I'm glad to say that I have not required much time away from work recently enabling me to concentrate on my family life and busy role at Elmwood. There I was thinking winter is here and we get a very mild November despite the weatherman's predictions, giving us more mowing to do than predicted and less time for some of the other tasks.**

I did attend a Management Training Course delivered by the Scottish Golf Union and Scottish Ladies Golf Association, with collaboration from many other golf bodies, BIGGA included. Many thanks to Lee Strutt MG who presented with Steve Isaac (R&A) on our behalf.

It was aimed at Golf Club Management and it was very interesting to learn about all the other aspects of managing golf clubs and to hear from experts and delegates who work in these areas.

It gave me a good insight into some of the challenges they face, and confirmed how important effective management of the golf course and its staff and resources are in maintaining the overall health of any golf club.

It also confirmed how important it is that each department works together, aware of their impact on each other and the customer experience.

Our staff at HQ have been very busy, and bookings for the Continue to Learn programme at Harrogate are very brisk.

Make sure you check out all that is on offer and take advantage while space is still available.

Planning your visit to Harrogate will enable you to access some great education, see all the new equipment and products you need to research, and make time to meet your colleagues in the industry and catch up on what will have been a challenging year for everyone.

I'm sure there will be lots to discuss and lots of good help and advice available on meeting the challenges in the industry at present. I'm certainly looking forward to it, especially as we will be celebrating 25 years of BIGGA.

Many thanks also to the BIGGA members and trade members who delivered presentations at the recent round of Regional seminars and at IOG Scotsturf.

They were all well attended and feedback was excellent from the delegates.

To keep up with all that is going on check the "Events" page on the website.

The judging for the Bernhard and Company sponsored BIGGA Delegation to the GIS show in Las Vegas took place. Congratulations to the worthy winners and commiserations to the many fine applicants who didn't make it.

The quality of candidate is tremendous and shows how professional many of our members are in developing their careers.

The L&D department is continuing the review of the CPD scheme, Accreditation programmes and the Master Greenkeeper Award. The aim is to identify the needs of

Resort of the Year, and Fife was awarded European Golf Destination of the Year.

All fantastic achievements which should help in raising the profile of golf as an important part of our UK economy, and in influencing the tourism sector.

With that in mind, Jim Croxton and I were invited to attend the All-Party Parliamentary Gardening and Horticulture Group at the House of Commons, Westminster, by Brian H Donohue MP, at the behest of David Gwyther (Horticulture Trade Association).

Although the focus was on that sector, it gave us an opportunity to build some further networks and see how such events can be used to raise the profile of our industry and try to exert some influence on developing policies which could impact on our industry.

Time will tell, but if you don't try you will never know!

**"We all get very passionate about our golf courses, and this tremendous industry we work in, but its important that we keep it in perspective and realise that our family and friends play the most important part in our lives and we need to get the work/life balance right"**

Greenkeepers and Course Managers at every stage in their career, ensure that relevant content and provisions are made, and make it accessible. Facilitating education for its members is one of the main objectives of BIGGA, and we will continue to seek improvements and developments to that end.

Locally the "Home of Golf" has been gaining wider recognition with the achievement of several awards, which would not be possible without the excellent work of many of our members.

Kingsbarns set the ball rolling by winning the The Golf Tourism Scotland Gold Standard Course of the Year. Next up, St Andrews Links became the first Open Championship Course to achieve GEO certification.

At the IAGTO awards held in Turkey, Fairmont St Andrews won European Golf

Many thanks to David for the invitation.

I am off to China again for a week teaching on behalf of Elmwood, and meeting some contacts there to see what might be gained from relationships with BIGGA.

It's been a long, interesting and challenging year, but exciting also. I am looking forward to the holiday season, and spending some valuable time with the family.

I know we all get very passionate about our golf courses, and this tremendous industry we work in, but its important that we keep it in perspective and realise that our family and friends play the most important part in our lives and we need to get the work/life balance right.

Enjoy the festive season,

My very best regards,

**Andrew Mellon**

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## NEW RECRUIT FOR CHARTERHOUSE

Dougie Archibald, has joined Charterhouse Turf Machinery as Northern Area Territory Manager.

Dougie, 37, who is from Dunfermline, in Fife, brings a wealth of experience with him as he initially was a groundsman working at Murrayfield. He then moved on to being a product demonstrator, and latterly an area sales representative for a well respected John Deere dealership in Scotland.

In announcing the appointment, General Manager at CTM, Nick Darking, explained, "When the vacancy occurred we went about setting the criteria for the ideal candidate, and there was Dougie. Not only does he have hands on experience, he also comes with a solid sales background. We're delighted to have him join the team and expand our position in the North."

Any spare time Dougie has is spent playing golf, watching football or tinkering with classic cars.

## AFT See Heworth GC into Centenary Year



A combination of AFT Trenchers and Sandbender successfully combat surface water at Heworth Golf Club.

In 2012 the Heworth Golf Club celebrates its Centenary year. The course has matured and is always immaculately presented by Head Greenkeeper, Colin Pringle and his team.

Colin runs a team of five including himself and Harry, the young apprentice, combining college and greenkeeping experience.

"We maintain an 18 hole course which is constructed on very heavy clay soil. Our biggest issue has always been drainage and we installed a complete main drainage system using an AFT 45 trencher, 12 years ago." Despite much of the country suffering from drought, this is has not been a problem in Tyne and Wear, the home county of the club. "We have found that if anything we have had excessive levels of rainfall this year and because of that we have invested in the AFT Sandbender to give even more structure to keeping the course free of surface water," explained Colin

The AFT Sandbender has revolutionised the way sand slits are installed on sport surfaces. The unique blade design and oscillating movement installs drainage slits with well consolidated sand. In this instance the Sandbender has been used to successfully divert surface water on the greens to the existing lateral drains.

Colin is delighted with the results so far and is confident that the course will be at its best for 2012, when the club is hosting the English Golf Union Seniors County Finals.

Please email your news and press releases to the editor, Scott MacCallum, [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

## John Holt Retires after 30 years with Rigby Taylor



After 30 years with Rigby Taylor and the past 10 as Commercial Director, John Holt has retired.

John joined the company, as a rep in 1979 and in the early 1990's became Sales Manager.

While Commercial Director he played a significant part in product development, culminating in many new fertilizers, formulated with traditional greenkeeping in mind.

John's lifelong interest in golf came as a result of his parents, who were steward and stewardess at Blackburn Golf Club. He spent many hours watching the professional repair clubs, which gave

him his interest in club making.

For many years, while working as a greenkeeper, John was a category one golfer and this interest in all aspects of the game led him to become a member of the British Golf Collectors and The James Braid Golfing Society. His present collection of golf artifacts includes approximately 800 golf clubs.

As a member of Clitheroe Golf Club since 1975 John has spent many years as Chairman of Green.

He would like to thank all the greenkeepers and colleagues who have supported him over the years.

## Abbeydale is Where it's ATT



Abbeydale Golf Club in Sheffield has been a long time advocate of ATT's turf maintenance equipment, and five years ago were one of the first clubs to trial the TMSystem.

Previously, the club had used dethatching cassettes, but the TMSystem offered a first opportunity to perform more maintenance tasks with a single power unit.

"We have two John Deere greens triples, one of which is kept for mowing and the other used with the TMSystem," says Head Greenkeeper, Warwick Manning.

"I was immediately impressed with the build quality of the system and the range of cassettes available."

The Ultragroover is the most frequently used attachment used on a regular basis to take grain out of the meadow grasses on the greens.

"We have reduced thatch to a manageable level, so all that is needed is surface management of the sward, and the Ultragroover does an excellent job."

Vibratory rollers maintain green speeds and also help to work topdressings in, while the sarel rollers spike the surface, ensuring that dressings penetrate for greatest effect.

The vibration brush is also used after top dressing, while the scarifier cassette can be employed as and when necessary.



## Buggy Solutions

Wyevale East Nurseries in Swanley, Kent, has taken delivery of their second S1 sit-on 2 wheel drive electric vehicle from Electric Powered Solutions.

Nursery Director, Richard McKenna, first saw the vehicle at the Four Oaks trade show in 2010 and immediately recognised its potential for moving stock around their 10 acre site.

Depending on the motor size the buggy can load up to 500kg and w a trailer carrying up to 1,000kg.

## What's your number?

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

**Name:** Ian Marshall  
**Company:** Crocodile Golf Products  
**Position:** Managing Director



**How long have you been in the industry?**  
5 years, since August 2006

### How did you get into it?

As an established manufacturer of rotary blades for domestic lawn mowing machines, we acquired plant and machinery from a failed engineering company that manufactured cylinder mower blades and bottom blades for a number of original equipment lawn mower manufacturers engaged in the turfcare industry, we quickly identified the demand for replacement parts and launched Crocodile Golf Products in 2009.

### What other jobs have you done?

Following a thorough apprenticeship in the foundry industry, managed a number of engineering companies in the automotive, presswork, steelwork and construction industry and manufactured a range of hand-tool and agricultural tools in Thailand, Ghana and Nigeria.

### What do you like about your current job?

Easily the people! Having worked in a variety of different industries the people in the turfcare industry are head and shoulders the nicest and most accommodating people I have ever worked with. The care and attention showed by groundsmen and greenkeepers world-wide is a much understated commodity!

### What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

We have only seen growth. In spite of this recession and the obvious cut backs in spending, the demand for our range of quality replacement parts continues to exceed our expectations.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

Would it be too obvious to say play golf and spend time with the family? But you do have to get the balance right!

### Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

In a box! Seriously, I would like to see us establish a global centre of excellence for wear resistant cutting tools providing a comprehensive service to the international turfcare industry.

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

Without doubt, the greenkeepers.

### What do you consider to be your lucky number?

5

# Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director,  
with a monthly update



**As we approach the season of goodwill and enter a New Year, maybe it is an appropriate time to not just catch up with and family friends, but, also a time to consider your own personal development and how you could improve all aspects of your life?**

Easier said than done you might say, during difficult times for many golf clubs and in the middle of winter but some people I know, do take stock of their situation as a New Year approaches.

One thing that January always brings for our sector is the opportunity to meet up with friends, old and new, during the Harrogate Week exhibition and Continue to Learn programme.

During the day there is so much going on with workshops and seminars available seemingly around every corner and the range of latest equipment, machinery, advice and materials for every visitor to see first hand.

In the evening the socialising starts in abundance and this is where the counselling and support network really shows its true colours and what a fantastic camaraderie there is within greenkeeping and groundsmanship.

So many wise words available from the more mature greenkeepers present, all of them always willing to share their knowledge and experiences with the next generation.

Many of the younger Course Managers are now presenting at seminars and workshops throughout the year and they have much to be proud of, as golf course standards are not only weekly in the spotlight of TV coverage but at every site where golf is played.

I am amazed at the talent now within the industry and as BIGGA celebrates its 25-year anniversary we must continue to promote all which is good about the profession and ensure the game has well trained and educated greenkeepers for many years to come.

On this occasion I think we can take a break from talking about

the formal education and training opportunities available through courses leading to qualifications and focus on the various informal routes to gain new knowledge and experience to improve your lifestyle.

The Greenkeeping Associations from 1912 have always been the main support network for greenkeepers on a local, regional and national level but in recent years with the advent of the Internet there is an incredible source for knowledge and arguably more important peer group help and guidance accessible 24/7.

The various websites and bulletin boards are an ongoing resource to share and assist with other greenkeeping problems.

During 2011 the GTC has hosted a series of workshops specifically aimed at assisting golf club employers understand more about the role of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and what is involved in maintaining and managing a golf course to the highest standard possible given the budget and resources available.

More employer focused workshops are planned for the New Year covering such subjects as Health & Safety, Improving Communication within the Golf Club and more dates for the now tried and tested Chairman of Green – Secretary Manager workshops, will be announced shortly.

What is pleasing for the GTC is that the intended aim of these workshops, to improve the relationship between the employer and employee, has without doubt been achieved.

To see Chairmen of Green, Secretary Managers and Course Managers together at workshops where the open debate sessions are so beneficial for all delegates is very rewarding for the GTC.

So whether it is reading magazines, searching the relevant websites, attending seminars and/or workshops, attending Harrogate Week please remember you are part of an industry where there is a tremendous amount of support available.



Short courses provided by GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers are also an opportunity for you to improve your personal development and I sincerely hope you visit the GTC website to keep you up to date on all matters greenkeeping?

The updated website has live links to all our supporting bodies who also have so much information to share.

Finally, if during your reflective moments during the festive season you feel the GTC can do more to assist you and or your golf club by way of greenkeeper education and training please do not hesitate to contact us.

On behalf of the GTC Board of Directors, Fiona and myself may I wish you and yours a very peaceful, relaxing Christmas and a very Happy New Year!!

See you on the GTC stand during Harrogate Week maybe?



The GTC is funded by:



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# Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,  
with an update on education issues

**Christmas is coming... I hope you're all organised and have bought your presents. Don't leave it too late - a can of de-icer, upholstery shampoo and a Magic Tree from the local garage are not great gifts!**

**Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week**

Continue to Learn boasts a packed programme of education events. I'm happy to report that many workshops are now sold out, so if you haven't booked your place yet you might want to check the Harrogate Week website for availability. It certainly looks like the Queen's Suite of Harrogate International Centre is going to be the place to be from January 22-26.

We are fortunate to be presenting a number of seminars from companies who are exhibiting at the trade show, these include:



**Gold Key Individual Members:**  
Steven Tierney; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Frank Newberry; Andrew Turnbull; Ian MacMillan MG; Ian Morrison; Antony Calvert  
**Silver Key Individual Members:**  
Ade Archer; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Richard McGlynn; Sam Langrick; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie; Michael Beaton; Douglas Duguid; Derek Grendowicz; Jaey Goodchild

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.



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## Tuesday, January 24

- Suppression of Fusarium Patch By Phosphite in Cool-Season Amenity
- Turfgrasses - Turfcare
- Understanding Cutting Unit Performance - John Deere
- Activated Microbial Turf Management - Great Turf Company
- Use of Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria for Healthy Turf - British Seed Houses
- Use of Synthetic Turf in Golf - SAPCA
- Organic Matter - Friend or Foe? - Symbio
- Perceptions in Greens Management - What's Most Important? You Decide - Ransomes Jacobsen
- Tier 4 - How Will it Affect You? - New Holland

## Wednesday, January 25

- Achieving Smooth Golf Greens - Myerscough College
- The Ultimate Renovation Package - R & K Kensett
- BASIS Contribution for the Future of Amenity Industry - Sheriff Amenity



- A New Approach in Wetting Agent Technology for Enhanced Turf Health, Consistency and Playability - Syngenta
- Sustainable Golf Course Management and the Impact of the Cutting Unit - Bernhard & Co

## Thursday, January 26

- Bunker Construction - The Way Forward - Blinder Bunker Liner
- Using an Integrated Management Approach to Eliminate Turf Disease on Fine Turf Surfaces - Evverris
- The Rescue Club

Further seminars are being added. Check the website for the most current information [www.harrogateweek.org.uk/education](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk/education).

Remember, all of the Seminars are FREE and are available on a first come, first serve basis. Ensure that you are at the Queen's Suite in plenty of time to secure your seat.

## Master Greenkeepers

I am delighted to announce that we have two new Master Greenkeepers:

Steven Tierney MG - Golfpark Nuolen AG, Switzerland

Justin Ruiz MG - Indian Summer G & CC, Washington, USA

My congratulations go to them both.

## Field Guides



We are waiting for the delivery of updates to two of our On Course Field Guides. Additional pages have been produced for:

*Grasses Found in Golf Course Rough; Trees and Shrubs on the Golf Course*

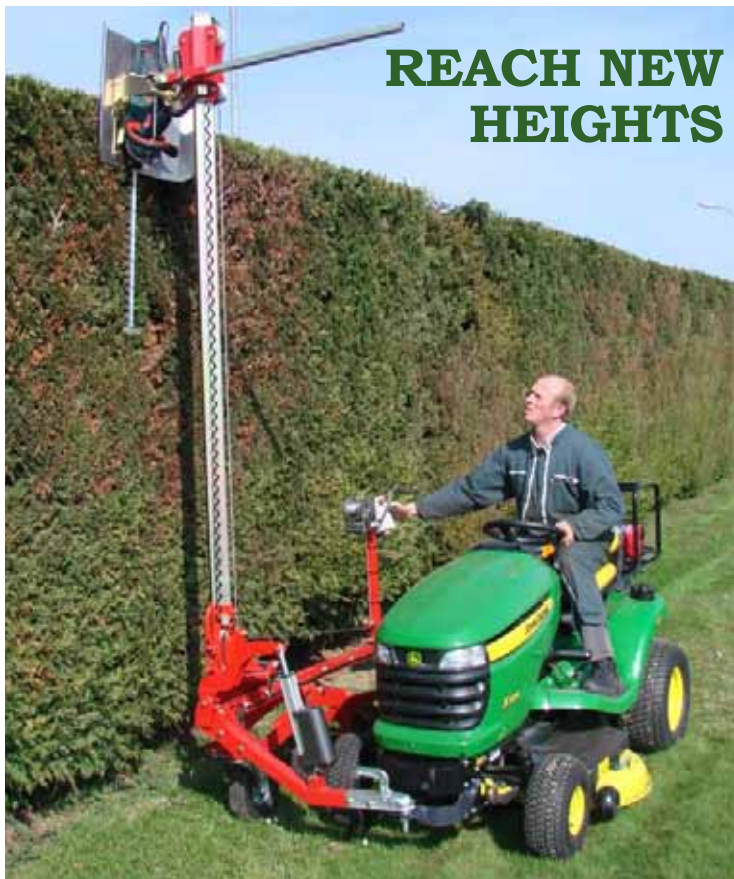
The additional pages for each guide will be available at Harrogate Week or from the Learning and Development Department from January.

## Regional Conferences

In November I attended both the South East and South West & South Wales Regional Conferences. Both were very well attended.

## Scotsturf

In early November we presented three seminars at the IOG Scotsturf exhibition. All of the sessions were well attended with a total of 150 delegates. My thanks go to all those who supported BIGGA and the education, to the speakers, Grant Frogley, Allan Patterson and Cale Bigelow, and to Stuart Taylor, Andy O'Hara, Archie Dunn and Derek Scott for helping out on the



## REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Richmonds Groundcare has launched the Cochet Hedgetrimmer, which allows gardeners to cut and top high hedges with ease and safety. Using a ladder or scaffolding makes the task labour intensive and often dangerous.

Cochet has designed a flexible hedge trimmer designed for mounting on riding mowers and small tractors. The machine features a reciprocating cutting blade hedge trimmer mounted on a telescopic arm allowing hedges up to 4m tall and 2.6m across to be cut with minimal effort. To top the hedge, the mounting bracket is simply rotated through 90degrees. The hedge trimmer can also be detached within seconds from the support arm to reach areas inaccessible by the mower.

The trimmer's patent pending chassis uses three wheels to follow ground contours and keep the blades in line with the hedge.

[www.richmondsgroundcare.co.uk](http://www.richmondsgroundcare.co.uk)



## HIGH PERFORMANCE EXCAVATORS

Designed and engineered to provide the best combination of high performance, stability, safety, operator comfort and durability in the compact excavator market, the Bobcat micro- and mini-excavator range from 1-3 tonne has recently been expanded with the launch of the exciting new E26 model.

The new 2.6 tonne zero tail swing E26 mini-excavator offers all the advantages of the new E-generation of excavators from Bobcat, including the existing high performance E08, E10, E14 and E16 models.

As well as smooth workgroup operation and superior hydraulic performance, the E26 also offers low noise and vibration and optimised operating weight - the cabbed long arm version weighs just 2700 kg - allowing it to be transported by trailer.

[www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com)

## NEW FERTILISERS FROM VITAX AMENITY

SwardPhite is based on potassium phosphite (PO) and has smaller more reactive molecules than conventional phosphate. Its effect is to promote healthy turf growth by improving natural defence systems and by stimulating meristem cell activity in roots and crowns.

Foliar applied, it will also help to avoid phosphate lock-up during

Summer stress periods and, under difficult conditions, will aid the uptake of potassium, calcium magnesium, iron and manganese.

The second new product is VitaSil, a liquid silicon stress reducer for turf. Silicon is now recognised as a vital component in turf nutrient programmes because it helps strengthen cell walls, toughens epidermal cells and

boosts natural defences against disease.

Turf blades stand more erect when fortified with VitaSil so seed heads and stalky material are more reliably mown off, giving a cleaner cut, reduced accumulation of thatch, better appearance and faster ball roll.

[www.vitaxamenity.co.uk](http://www.vitaxamenity.co.uk)





## BRUSH CUTTERS

Etesia has launched three new ride-on brushcutters. All three models share the distinctive body styling of the Attila AV98 and are powered by Briggs & Stratton Vanguard engines.

Starting with the smallest AV88, it has a 16hp engine, 88cm cutting width and like the rest of the Attila range, hydrostatic drive. The chassis has a strengthened structure

welded tubular chassis for a better driving position.

The AV95 which now incorporates front brakes for better control on descents. Power comes from the twin cylinder 18hp engine. The cutting height can be adjusted by a centralised lever with five positions from 25mm to 85mm.

The last of the new models,

the AV98X, again 4 wheel drive. This unit has powerful motors in the rear that also power the front wheels.

Power is supplied by a 23hp engine with a 98cm cutting width.

The new model also has a built in slope indicator for safer driving at all times.

[www.etesia.co.uk](http://www.etesia.co.uk)

## WESSEX LOG SPLITTER

With the arrival of colder weather and everyone across the UK looking to reduce fuel costs, the comforting warmth of the woodburning stove and crackle and glow of the open fire are back in vogue.

However, the old saying of "wood warms you twice" has been well proven by anyone with experience of laborious and back-breaking hours wielding a splitting axe, or worse – the sledgehammer and splitting wedge, which invariably pings off the log at shin height.

The new Wessex Country LS100 log splitter can be used on any compact or large tractor with a category 1 three-point linkage. With a hydraulically-powered vertical ram providing up to 10 tonne of splitting pressure, logs of up to 18" in height are split and processed with ease, while the floor-level platform means that loading larger logs onto the splitter is safe and simple.

[01420 478111](tel:01420478111)  
[sales@broadwoodintl.co.uk](mailto:sales@broadwoodintl.co.uk)

## SALT & SAND SPREADER MAKES LIGHT WORK OF WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE



Kuhn has extended its range of mounted salt and sand spreaders, adding the smaller Axexo 2.1 with a maximum load capacity of 800kg to two existing larger models.

As with the earlier models, the Axexo 2.1 is adaptable for use with salt, sand and grit. This new model has a hopper capacity that can be extended from 250 to 350 litres and includes an agitator design feature that prevents settling and compaction of materials.

Distribution over the treatment area is adjusted easily and without tools by changing the point at which material is delivered to the disc. Stainless steel deflectors control the spread width (up to 8 metres). The spreading disc has eight blades to provide improved distribution of materials, particularly at high forward speeds.

The Axexo, which can also be used to spread fertiliser, is part of Kuhn's Amenity Pro range and is available through the company's nationwide distributor network. Prices start at £3,634 plus VAT.

[www.kuhn.co.uk](http://www.kuhn.co.uk)

# Best of

Scott MacCallum visits the home of Hampshire Cricket where a superb new golf course is being built to complement the already superb cricket facilities



**Two sports dominate our summer and they can be encapsulated, albeit in cliché form, by the anguished cry of “Fore!” and the sound of leather on willow.**

Golf and cricket provide weekend relief for large chunks of the population, and for a few lucky ones other times of the week as well. Golfers do play cricket and cricketers do play golf, but they tend to keep the two pursuits separate - no-one has that much spare time! - until now that is...

INSET CENTRE: Head Groundsman, Nigel Gray (left) and Course Manager, Julian Covey (right)

BELOW: In-fill arriving on site

The Rose Bowl, in Southampton, is home to Hampshire Cricket and the newest venue on the Test playing rota. In addition a superb 18 hole golf course is currently under construction, alongside the ground, to replace an existing nine hole. Cricket and golf working in harness!

The spectacular cricket ground has already hosted a Test Match – last June’s match with Sri Lanka, which was so rain affected that Head Groundsman, Nigel Gray, was regarded by many experts as the Man of the Match. He actually did win the Test Match Special Champagne Moment award.

Despite the weather it was regarded as a triumph, with the wicket being roundly applauded, and it marked a significant milestone in the progress of The Rose Bowl, with the new golf course another key development.

“We knew that Hampshire Cricket wouldn’t work as purely a domestic cricket ground and a nine hole golf course – there just

wasn’t sufficient earning potential to maintain the facility,” explained Managing Director, Glenn Delve.

“We had a fantastic facility for cricket and 160 acres available for golf, but only had nine holes on it.”

Having decided to invest in a new 18 holes, the plan which was hatched to make it happen could be regarded as a piece of outstanding “outside the box” thinking, and will lead to The Rose Bowl gaining its new course for the princely sum of £1.

And it is all down to importing inert in-fill.

“It was one of our more interesting days in the office when we realised we could have a £5 million golf course for £1,” said Glenn.

“It’s a very interesting business model, not completely unheard of but for the quality of golf course we are building it is unusual.”

The constructor, Keltbray Golf Environmental, handles all aspects of the project, from first spade in the ground to signing off on a completed golf course.





# both worlds



"We charge a tipping fee and a proportion of that goes towards building the golf course and any other infrastructure, then there are our building costs and whatever left is our profit," explained Dave Coussell, the Project Manager for Keltbray.

"We charge the same for pure virgin dig soil as they do for those loads which are in need of cleaning and screening but the material is constantly monitored for quality and anything that does not meet the required standard is either rejected or put into quarantine and sent for testing," he explained.

"If we get nice clean clay we use that for tee or green complexes, while the poorer loads, which may include concrete will be crushed and used for the internal road.

Julian Covey joined The Rose Bowl as Course Manager in mid 2010, and is maintaining the existing nine hole course, along with his Deputy, Ian Reeves, and Assistant, Joe Weston, as part of a three man team, as well as co-ordinating the

temporary lay-out which will be used by the membership while the new course is under construction.

"It is such an exciting venture, particularly at a time when the golf boom has slowed down," explained Julian, who has been involved in greenkeeping since he left school and who has been involved with Hampshire Cricket since his son, Ryan, played age group cricket for the County. Ryan is now a greenkeeper at Worldham GC working with his older brother, Richard, who is Course Manager.

Julian has been greenkeeping at a number of clubs in his career including Liphook, Isle of Purbeck, Hindhead, Old Thorns and The Tytherington Club in Macclesfield and moved into golf course construction in the early '90s.

"I have the best of both world's here. A project to work on and a course to maintain. It's a real professional challenge but with emotional ties. I love the hustle and bustle of a construction project, but this one allows me to be at home and I can



**"I love the hustle and bustle of a construction project, but this one allows me to be at home and I can ensure that everything is as I want it for the on-going management of the course"**  
Julian Covey

ensure that everything is as I want it for the on-going management of the course."

Paramount among the thinking for the new 18 holes was to ensure that the existing club members always had a good quality 9 holes to play until the new course came on stream.

INSET ABOVE: A tee is rebuilt on the course



“The project is split into ten different phases with the objective always to make sure that the current members always have nine holes to play and that means putting in some temporary holes, which might be there for two or three years,” explained Julian, who added that the one downside of an in-fill generated project is that it can only move at the pace of the house building and construction industry which generated so much of the in-fill.

“It would have been easy to have given the members nine little par-3s, but nobody wanted that.”

Part of the brief was that the golf course had to act as a car park for the cricket ground when Test matches, ODIs or big Twenty20 matches come to town.

“It was a condition of planning that we incorporate an exit route through the course for cars attend-

ing the cricket while the 1st fairway is used for corporate parking. The road is also used as the haul road for the lorries moving around the site for depositing the imported material-fill,” explained Julian.

Once the new course has been completed new areas for parking – spurs off the road – will be identified.

“We are lucky that where the car parking is, it is relatively dry. In fact we had a few hundred cars on our existing 1st fairway just a couple of weeks ago and you wouldn’t know,” said Julian.

While the quality of the inert in-fill arriving at the site may vary, what goes into the construction will meet very exacting standards.

“During the construction it is my job to see that all materials, the gravels, the rootzones etc are all tested by a laboratory and ensure that it performs to the correct specification ie particle size, percolation rates, compatibility etc. We spot test every 500 tonnes that comes on site to ensure that it is within the tolerance levels of the lab tested material. I am absolutely comfortable that there are no compromises as anyone is only as good as their last job and this is a high profile project, Keltbray will ensure that the golf course is constructed to the highest standard.”

The timescale for the new course is around four to five years but is dependent on the rate of the importation.

“The time scale is fine as we will always have nine holes open for play, while nine holes are growing



**“I am absolutely comfortable that there are no compromises as anyone is only as good as their last job and this is a high profile project”**  
Julian Covey

