



Proactive approach gets greener results

We speak to a course manager reaping the rewards of taking a more proactive approach to winter disease control

The outstanding playing conditions at Woodhall Spa Golf Club in Lincolnshire, which is the home of England Golf, attract golfers all year round.

But the sandy soils and dry conditions ensure the Hotchkim course remains playable when others are closed.

Maintaining turf cover and quality on the greens over the winter is imperative for Course Manager, Sam Rhodes, to satisfy the early season demand.

Over recent years he has adopted a proactive approach with his fungicide programme, seeking to prevent infection breaking out before damage occurs on the playing surface.

“In the past we had simply reacted to disease attacks; we were fighting to control outbreaks and limit the extent of damage to greens over the winter.

“Then we had to work extra hard in the spring to get them back in good condition as quickly as possible.

“It was the same cycle every year.



syngenta

“We wanted to look at preventing disease damage.

“However, we were adamant that we didn’t want to go down a routine prophylactic treatment of spraying a fungicide every five or six weeks.

“We are keen to minimise the use of any inputs, from an ecological and economic standpoint.

“The solution has been to introduce a proactive approach that integrates new developments in fungicide technology and turf disease risk assessment, alongside traditional greenkeeping techniques and experience - with

the aim to maintain clean surfaces right through the winter.

“We recognised that with the potential of the new fungicides, we needed to be smarter in the way that we used them to get the best results.”

Sam believes they now understand better what they are aiming to achieve with each application, and selecting the most appropriate option that best matches the situation.

That means he will pick a systemic when turf is actively growing; a cool weather systemic as it starts to slow in the autumn, and then only switch to a contact when growth has effectively stopped.

He uses soil temperature information as a guide to turf growth and selecting the appropriate fungicide.

“With the changing weather patterns you really can’t apply fungicides by the calendar anymore, which makes weather-based prediction even more important.”

As part of this, Sam now also uses the local five-day disease fore-

casts on the GreenCast website as a key tool to pre-empt and prevent damaging disease attacks.

He stresses that it certainly doesn’t replace his local knowledge and experience of the course, but is a valuable adjunct in supporting his decision making.

“This approach has really made us think about every application, and how we can integrate them with better cultural controls to help improve results.”

Assessing any impending disease risk, Sam will look at what fungicide was last applied and when; how much growth there has been; if the turf is under any particular stress and any other factors that might make the greens more or less susceptible to specific disease infection.

“If we feel there is still sufficient protection in the plant or if it is all looking particularly healthy, for example, the risk assessment helps give us the confidence to leave it a few more days, or possibly apply an iron treatment.

“But where we can see the risk is high, we can be assured that we



syngenta

Temperature controlled fungicide selection

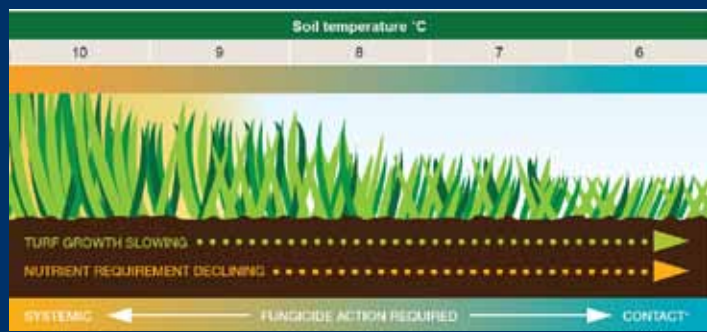
Soil temperatures that dictate turf growth rates give an essential guide to appropriate fungicide selection to avoid damaging disease attacks through autumn and winter conditions, and protect playing surface quality, advises Syngenta Technical Manager, Dr Simon Watson.

Over recent seasons, late autumn and early winter has seen prolonged warm temperatures, or more specifically higher soil temperatures, with continued growth.

When turf is actively growing a systemic fungicide is essential; contact or local penetrant fungicides applied at this time will quickly grow up the leaf and be cut off – leaving new growth at the base of the leaf exposed to infection within hours of application.

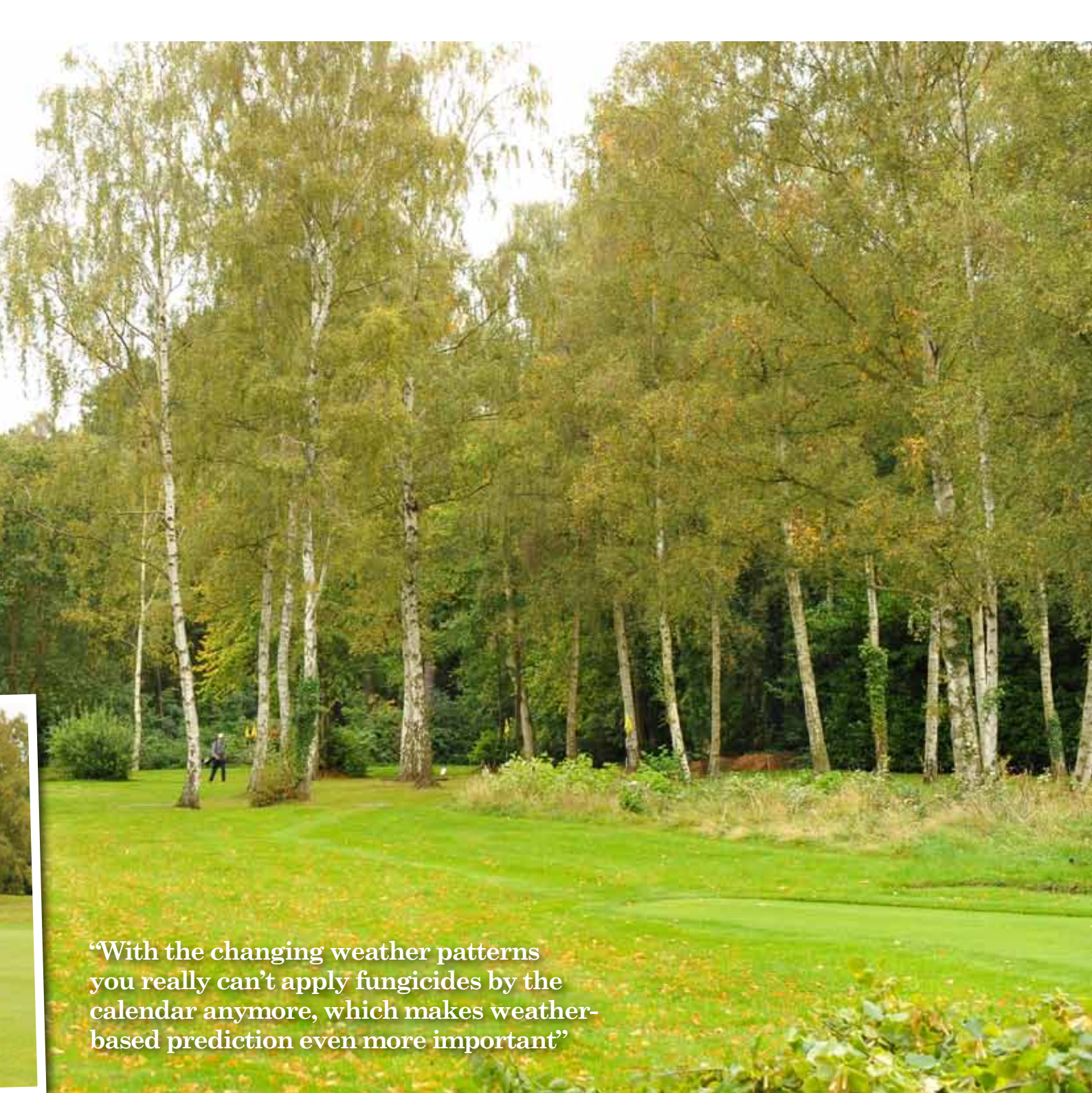
As temperatures cool, but whilst turf is still actively growing, a cool weather systemic will provide fast moving protection, to prevent loss of turf quality.

As growing conditions slow further, the contact+ Medallion TL will be more appropriate to reduce the pathogen presence in the thatch and protect the leaf through the cold weather, when the grass plant is dormant.



Checklist for autumn and winter fungicide selection:

- Track soil temperatures and clipping yield to check turf growth
- Employ ITM practices to reduce risk of disease build-up
- Use a cool weather systemic fungicide whilst turf is still growing
- Switch to contact+ protection with slow or zero turf growth
- Manage nutrition to keep turf healthy, but avoid soft growth
- Use GreenCast local disease forecasts to pro-actively prevent infection



“With the changing weather patterns you really can’t apply fungicides by the calendar anymore, which makes weather-based prediction even more important”

are taking the right action with a fungicide application.”

Sam recalled that last winter GreenCast predicted a high risk of Microdochium Patch (Fusarium) and the looming prospect of cold weather.

He fortuitously took the decision to apply Medallion TL prior to the snow, and when it finally cleared after several weeks the greens surfaces were completely clean.

“We didn’t know the snow cover was going to be so long, but having seen the high risk of snow it did prompt us to get the protection on early.

“We were also confident the protection would stay in place with

zero growth beneath the snow.

“With the combination of improved cultural controls and more targeted fungicides, even the most susceptible greens have stayed completely clean, which has received favourable comments from players.”

Seeing and experiencing the results means the Woodhall Spa members and club management have been convinced that it is the right approach, which Sam believes will make further activities easier to implement.

“We are extremely proud of the ecological credentials of the course, but are also aware that the quality of the greens and the course is essen-

syngenta



**ENGLAND
GOLF**

tial to attract members and visitors.

“With the proactive and integrated approach to managing the playing surfaces we are only using treatments where they are required, and we are able to justify every application we make.

“Even with the extremely challenging weather conditions we are increasingly experiencing, we have found that we are able to maintain better turf quality.

“And by using the fungicide treatments more effectively, we have actually made fewer applications over the course of the season.

We certainly feel much more in control and ready for what might happen.”

BTME 20

The BIGGA Turf Management

incorporating:



**BIGGA Seminars
& Workshops**

20-23

January 2013



Register now at www.btme.org.uk

The 24th BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition is officially open for registration at www.btme.org.uk – and this year it features a distinct Ryder Cup flavour.

In the wake of Europe's astonishing triumph at the Medinah Country Club, Curtis Tyrrell MG – the Club's Director of Golf Course Operations – is a guest speaker at one of the 'Continue to Learn' seminars.

He'll be joined by Jim McKenzie, who conquered atrocious conditions at Celtic Manor two years ago to help the Europeans emerge victorious, and Steve Chappell who is now looking forward to welcoming the party to Gleneagles on 2014. Where else will you be able to get the lowdown on the past, present and future Ryder Cups?

BTME 2013, incorporating Continue to Learn, will also host the third annual Turf Managers' Conference featuring Dr Thom Nikolai, one of the world's eminent turf professors, looking at green speed. There will also be dozens of educational seminars and workshops featuring everything from soil analysis to IT.

Turf professionals and buyers cannot afford to miss this annual chance to browse, buy and seek crucial advice from many of the world's top manufacturers and service providers. We've already filled 90% of the available stand space – so don't delay if you're still looking to book a slot.

This is all before you consider the superb networking opportunities available – the event could potentially boost your career or business.

The event kicks off on Sunday 20 January with our Continue to learn seminars and workshops, and the full exhibition opens on Tuesday 22 January until Thursday 24 January.

Make sure you register today at www.btme.org.uk to beat the queues!

The BTME website includes bags of information about the big week including how to book a stand, accommodation, travel tips, lists of exhibitors and a product guide.

Book your place at the ultimate turf management event today. We'll leave the final word to BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton...

"Quite simply a well planned visit to BTME makes you a better turf manager. In this competitive age, this is an opportunity not to be missed."



2013

22-24 January 2013 at the Harrogate International Centre

Exhibition



“Quite simply a well planned visit to BTME makes you a better turf manager. In this competitive age, it’s an opportunity not to be missed”

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO



Register Now

To book early, avoid the queues, and view the full list of educational events, visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon.

Register now

CLICK HERE FOR FREE ENTRY



IMAGES:
A selection from BTME 2012, courtesy of SiRA Studio
sirastudio.com

IMAGE: Arion 2 hand-held blower from Etesia





Solutions for the autumn fall

As the 'fall' gathers momentum and leaf debris becomes an issue for golf course and amenity managers, Phil Evans takes a look at the various solutions within this critical area of course management

Pellenc manufacturer a choice of options which are available through Etesia UK.

The Airion is a hand-held blower intended for cleaning roads, parks and gardens as well as areas around a clubhouse.

Weighing only 2.6 kg and with a noise level of just 80 db, it is claimed to be the lightest and quietest professional blower on the market.

It is very comfortable to hold owing to the soft touch new generation handgrip and is optimally balanced for natural tilting towards the ground.

Low Emission Levels

Comparing the direct emissions of CO² of the Airion with a petrol blower, the difference is enormous.

A petrol engine blower has a direct emission of over 4 tonnes of CO² per year while the Airion only emits 47 kg.

The Airion prevents almost 99% of the direct emissions of a petrol engine.

If Pellenc batteries are recharged with the recently launched Solerion solar charger, direct CO² emissions are totally eliminated.

Contact Etesia UK on 01295 680120 or visit www.etesia.co.uk

New HPV Vacuum

At Saltex 2012, Little Wonder launched the new HPV vacuum for the Golf and Amenity Professional.

This latest version of the HPV has superior suction and airflow thanks to its 17inch, 5 blade reverse angled impeller and unique scrolled housing design.

In terms of debris management, this vacuum will collect almost any item including leaves, litter, plastic bottles plus sand and grit.

This top loading vacuum is ideal for golf course club and hotel grounds, car parks, sports facilities, parks and grounds maintenance.

Self-Propelled Debris Management

Little Wonder are at the forefront of debris management and have also introduced a new line up of models across their Optimax range of blowers.

The models are available with 270cc or 390cc Honda engines or 400cc Subaru engine.

With the new Remote Chute Deflector Control located at your fingertips, you can control the patented split air-stream discharge with ease.

This removes leaves and debris with unmatched air power more easily and without stopping.

The introduction of the new self-

propelled Blowers with a choice of Honda engines provides a new level of performance in the walk-behind blower market.

Contact Schiller Groundscare (Little Wonder) on 0800 840 0888 or email : info@littlewonder.uk.com

Solo Backpack Blowers

Distributed by Lely UK, the Solo range of Backpack Blowers is ideal for both small and medium-sized debris-clearance jobs around the golf course.

Thanks to its high airflow rate of approximately 1,400m³/h, the Solo 467 Backpack Blower keeps emissions low but output high to make this one of the most effective and environmentally-friendly models on the market.

The new, more powerful 66.5cc engine with magnesium crankcase provides the professional performance you'd expect from the high-quality Solo outdoor equipment range.

The clever design also reduces vibrations to the hands and back, while an ergonomic padded backrest makes for an ultra-comfy working experience.

Another great choice is the 440 hand-held model, which benefits from a 760/630m³/h airflow rate together with a light weight of just 4.1kg that makes it the ideal choice for quick clean-ups around the course.

The 440 and 441 also benefit from Solo's unique anti-vibration technology for a comfortable working experience.

With its product portfolio also spanning brushcutters, hand-held and knapsack sprayers, chainsaws, hedge-trimmers and accessories, the German-manufactured Solo range is the perfect choice for golf course greenkeepers seeking high-performance equipment that is built to last.

To find out more about the Solo range, call distributor Lely UK's Roger Lupton on 01480 226800 or email solo.uk@lely.com

Proforce Debris Blower

Perfect for big clean-up jobs around the golf course, the Toro ProForce Debris Blower delivers unrivalled air power, durability and ease of use for fast and efficient removal of grass clippings, leaves, aeration cores, sand, gravel, rubbish and other debris.

The utility vehicle-mounted ProForce combines a 20.1kW (27hp) Kohler engine with a highly efficient turbine-style fan design to provide greater air-volume-flow than any single nozzle turbine-type debris

blower currently available.

This means that the ProForce has the superior productivity needed to make fast work of those big autumn maintenance jobs, such as clearing paths and other hard-landscaped areas of leaves, and blowing grass clippings, aeration cores or other organic debris off fairways or greens.

Hand-held wireless control

A key feature is the hand-held wireless remote control, which allows the operator to start and stop the engine, adjust the engine throttle up and down to match air power to the job at hand, and rotate the nozzle 360 degrees – all from the driving seat of a Toro Workman MD Series or similar utility vehicle.

This feature increases productivity as, unlike some competitor models, the user doesn't have to walk to the engine to physically start or stop the machine.

For more information on the Toro ProForce debris blower, visit www.toro.com or call distributor Lely UK on 01480 226800 or email toro.info.uk@lely.com

A Sucker for Hard Work

The Trilo S3 vacuum sweeper, from The Grass Group, is the latest product to emerge from a programme of producing equipment for use with sub 30Hp tractors.

The industry has been asking for a smaller vacuum sweeper to work at 1.5 metres wide to work at hard to get to areas where ground pressure and dimensions mattered.

The result is the Trilo S3, a smaller sister to the S4 released last year.



Along with a smaller working width came a reduction in weight to only 1200kg, so that only a mid-range compact tractor of 28 HP is required.

The new design is the result of many years of experience to meet the requirements of councils, contractors, groundsmen and greenkeepers in this economically challenging environment.

A 5 metre long 200mm diameter hand held wander hose makes the S3 suitable for versatile use all year round to clean hard to get areas such as bunkers, shrubberies or refuse bins.

Email : tim@thegrassgroup.com
/ www.thegrassgroup.co.uk

New Backpack Blowers

Available now from specialist STIHL Dealers, three new backpack blowers have joined the STIHL range and simply drive away debris with their hurricane air speed.

Usually the domain of professional users, the new backpack models will put their great power and performance into even more hands with prices and power ratings to suit everyone from the domestic gardener to the hard-working contractor.

Outdoor blowers are handy year-round assistants both in winter, spring and summer there will inevitably be litter or debris to clear and in the autumn they really come into their own.

BR 430 – The hard-working professional

At the top of the new range the BR 430 is built to be extra tough.

Its additional power plus features like an enlarged fuel tank and advanced anti-vibration system make it ideal for hard-working and extended periods of use around golf and amenity areas.

Ensuring total operator comfort over the envisaged longer use, the harness on this model also comes with extra wide shoulder straps and enlarged back padding, so it is perfect for sportsturf managers or landscape contractors, clearing leaves on uneven terrain or litter from leisure stadiums for example.

The new backpack blowers are available now from the network of STIHL Approved Dealers nationwide.

For further details on the full backpack range, plus information on handheld blowers and vacuum shredders from STIHL, visit www.stihl.co.uk or speak to a local Approved Dealer.



PAGE 38: FROM TOP: The Trilo S3 vacuum sweeper, a Solo Backpack Blower and an Optimax blower

PAGE 39: A STIHL blower (above) and (right) a TORO Workman



How to get the best out of your maintenance equipment

James de Haviland reports on how having a little knowledge can save you money



In many cases, the routine service and daily maintenance demands of modern equipment has been reduced, but that does not also mean a quick wash is all it takes to keep a given item of equipment running efficiently. A little mechanical knowledge and sympathy can go a long way in cutting costs and improving efficiency.

A key management skill is establishing the right balance between those machinery maintenance tasks that can be carried out in-house and knowing when to call in third party skills.

It would be a brave golf club that would forgo its own workshop facili-

ties to rely solely upon a third party for all its equipment maintenance needs.

But whilst a well-equipped workshop remains pretty much as a 'must have', ensuring there are individuals on hand to exploit such facilities is not always a primary consideration.

To get the best from your equipment it pays to firstly establish what can be done in-house to look after it and what is best left to a dealer specialist to sort out.

A modern ride-on mower may still 'look' pretty similar to kit that was in action a decade or more ago but increasingly electronics are in integral part of the design.

These can make operation easier

as switches replace various levers but it can also mean you need to have access to a different set of skills to find any faults and remedy them.

It is here where having some mechanical skills can really pay dividends. It is all too easy to take the wrong action when a given type of equipment develops a fault.

The first is to simply call someone in to fix the issue.

Good call if the problem takes specialist skills to diagnose and fix, less so if a squirt of WD40 to displace some moisture is all that is needed.

The flip side is the error of trying to carry out an in-house repair and to subsequently do more damage.

ABOVE: Setting up the mower

ABOVE RIGHT: setting the bar