

PITCHCARE

The turfcare magazine from pitchcare.com

October/November 2019 Issue 87 | £5.95

DON'T MISS

Three's company!
Grounds, gardens and golf come together on the historic Bowood Estate

THE DREAM IS REAL FOR PAUL

The career of **Paul Burgess** started at Blackpool Football Club and now he's the Director of Grounds and Environment at Real Madrid. In the latest of our Keynote interviews, Kerry Haywood spoke to Paul about his career path and life at one of the world's most iconic football clubs

Seldom stumped

One of cricket's biggest hitters speaks out about the trials, tribulations and triumphs of running a World Cup venue. Greg Rhodes meets **Vic Demain**, the Head Groundsman at the Emirates Riverside

ISSN 1751-2646



SERVING GREENKEEPERS & GROUNDSMEN

 pitchcare.com



Come and
see us on
stand H090
at SALTEX

EFFICIENCY, PERFORMANCE, HANDLING

DISCOVER THE POWER OF 3

Specifically designed for the commercial market, the **Ransomes Highway 3** triple cylinder mower brings you industry-leading productivity and functionality.

Now with an updated, more efficient drivetrain, this high specification Euro Stage V compliant machine is very productive yet manoeuvrable in tight spaces, and with the mowers raised into the storage position, it's easy to transport. We can also offer our unique, optional, TST slope stability warning system for enhanced operator protection.

**To find out more information or to book a demonstration,
please contact your local dealer or visit us at SALTEX.**

www.ransomes.com

RANSOMES®

WELCOME TO

PITCHCARE

Anti-social media?

I suppose, being one of the earlier online businesses, we could be guilty of helping to fuel the growth of the internet and, latterly, the use of social media to spread up to the minute information out into the public domain.

I originally saw the benefits of the World Wide Web as a means to disseminate technical advice and promote good practice. The subsequent and meteoric rise of mediums such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram initially harboured a degree of amusement as people posted pictures of their lunch or what they were watching on TV or film but, while these sites are mainly used for good reason, they have also created an opportunity for many to spout anti-social material to whomever will listen. Fake news has become a mainstream term, but the opportunity to cast aspersions and/or smear someone has become so much easier now than ever before.

There is no doubt that social media is here to stay but, increasingly, it has become so addictive that people cannot leave it alone long enough to pursue their normal daily lives. It is impinging on life, relationships and work and, to that end, it can't be a good thing.

It has become entirely invasive, providing a virtual timeline for many, showing a minute by minute account of what they are doing and some foresight into what they are intending to do.

Companies have had to install whole new chapters into staff handbooks about use and misuse, but employers are also becoming more adept at looking at a prospective employee's social footprint to make informed decisions regarding their worthiness in advance of any interview.

Whilst we as a company haven't yet banned the use of personal phones at work, we have to monitor their use closely and talk to individuals when it gets out of hand. Similarly, we also have

to monitor use of web browsing and we have made much of the internet inaccessible through the company routers.

As I said, there are many positives to glean from these mediums, ability to connect, ease of communication and real time tailored news, but they also offer information overload, peer pressure, privacy issues, bullying and distraction from the real world.

There was a time, when divoting the playing surface at half time, you would have to brave the occasional sledging from supporters in the stand; now you get the full inquisition via the supporter message boards post-match as well, with little opportunity to reply (company rules) and, worse still, a lack of support from higher up the club. This is the same across all sports, where the ill-informed can almost state what they like without fear of retribution.

It will no doubt take some time for generations to become re-educated into how to/not to use these avenues but, in the meantime, we all need to be very careful how we use and publish information on online forums.

**Cheers
Dave Saltman**



SAY THAT AGAIN!

"As groundsman, we are aware that pundits have to paint a picture, and the state of the pitch is really important to many more people now, but the problem is in the terminology they adopt"

Vic Demain, Durham CCC

"I got the chance to interview and, lo and behold, it was conducted by the very man that I had read about and who had inspired me to do work experience"

Paul Burgess, Real Madrid

"You can call it what you like. We are not a links, and we are not a parkland, as we are not tree-lined. I suppose you could call it a coastal course"

Tom Collings, The Point at Polzeath

"This year, we just verti-drained and seeded; that was it, as we only had a two-week period for the pitch to recover, but that turned out to be just two days when the first team were back training on it again!"

Steve Dutton, Wakefield Trinity

"It's amazing how many guys in Poland and France we found who had never been shown how to set up or use a pedestrian cylinder mower correctly.

We even had some who had never been properly shown how to mark out"

Alan Ferguson, FIFA

Meet the Pitchcare team



DAVE SALTMAN
Managing Director
t: 01902 440 254
e: dave@pitchcare.com



JOHN RICHARDS
Operations Director
t: 01902 440 256
e: john@pitchcare.com



KERRY HAYWOOD
Editor
t: 07973 394 037
e: kerry@pitchcare.com



PETER BRITTON
Advertising & Production
t: 01952 898 516
e: peter@pitchcare.com



CAROL SMITH
Grounds Training
t: 01902 440 251
e: info@groundstraining.com



LEE WILLIAMS
Editorial
t: 07375 419 442
e: lee.williams@pitchcare.com



ALASTAIR BATTRICK
IT Manager
t: 01902 440 255
e: alastair@pitchcare.com



DAN HUGHES
Sales & Marketing
t: 01902 440 258
e: sales@pitchcare.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced without prior permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the publisher. Editorial contributions are published entirely at the editor's discretion and may be shortened if space is limited. Pitchcare make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the contents but accepts no liability for its consequences. Images are presumed copyright of the author or Pitchcare unless otherwise stated.

Pitchcare Magazine is printed by the Gemini Press, Dolphin Way, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 6NZ

Pitchcare.com
Allscott Park, Allscott, Telford
Shropshire TF6 5DY
Tel: 01952 897 910
Fax: 01952 247 369
Email: editor@pitchcare.com



Issue 87 October/November 2019

Paul Burgess, Director of Grounds, Real Madrid

COVER STORY: The dream is Real for Paul

The career of Paul Burgess started at Blackpool Football Club and now he's the Director of Grounds and Environment at Real Madrid. In the latest of our Keynote interviews, Kerry Haywood spoke to Paul about his career path and life at one of the world's most iconic football clubs. **P48**

GOLF

Getting to the Point

Surrounded by beautiful countryside, The Point at Polzeath is only a mile from the Camel Estuary in north Cornwall, with stunning beaches for surfing and water sports. The coastal footpaths are unbeatable in terms of beauty for walking holidays. Lee Williams 'gets to the Point' with Head Greenkeeper Tom Collings. **P14**

Three's company!

The ongoing management of historic estates as thriving communities, where people work together to make the most of the land's assets, remains key to their commercial success and ultimate survival, and Bowood is a great example of this. Jane Carley met with Head Groundsman Geoff Partridge, Head Gardener David Glass and Head Greenkeeper Jaey Goodchild to discover more. **P22**

Full steam ahead

Located at the gateway to the Highlands, Boat of Garten Golf Club is an enchanting place. Flanking the course to the west is the quaint Strathspey Railway, and the lovingly restored steam trains occasionally puff and pant their way past the course. Head Greenkeeper Michael Mann talks about his new role. **P32**

FIFA UPDATE

Tournament Delivery

Spring 2019 was a formative time for FIFA's Pitch Management Manager, Alan Ferguson, as he and his extended team delivered the first two of four tournaments scheduled for 2019. Blair Ferguson reports. **P40**

WINTER SPORTS

Mission to mine rich vein of talent

A training ground in Wrexham has been transformed into a high end football hub for the Welsh national squads and grassroots game, reports Greg Rhodes. **P56**

Rocketman!

The Mobile Rocket Stadium (aka Belle Vue) is the home of Super League rugby league club Wakefield Trinity. One of the original twenty-two clubs that formed the Northern Rugby Football Union in 1895, they get their name from the Holy Trinity Church. Lee Williams met with Head Groundsman Steve Dutton to learn more about his role and his expectations for the future. **P66**

MULTI SPORTS

Cinderella site dressed for the ball

The Cinderella Sports Ground, a once eminent cricket venue, has returned to life under Worcester's 'City Plan' for health and wellbeing, reports Greg Rhodes. **P72**

PUBLIC PLACES

Who dares wins

No, not the Special Forces training ground in the Brecon Beacons, but the 110-acre estate that's home to the UK headquarters of SAS at Medmenham, near Marlow in Buckinghamshire. We sent freelance journalist Peter Driver to visit earlier this year. **P110**

Contents

SUMMER SPORTS

Seldom stumped for a solution!

One of cricket's biggest hitters speaks out about the trials, tribulations and triumphs of running a World Cup venue. Greg Rhodes meets Vic Demain, the Head Groundsman at the Emirates Riverside. **P82**

Blink and you'll miss it!

Blink, and you will miss the entrance to Scarborough Cricket Club's North Marine Road Ground, which is tucked away behind a line of old Victorian terraced houses. Once through the gate though, you are taken aback by the 11,500-capacity ground, looked after by Head Groundsman John Dodds, who has been at the club since 2011. **P94**

Two can play that game

Located in the heart of Scotland, Stirling County is a lively and welcoming cricket club. Founded in 1862, the club can boast a long and successful history that spans more than one hundred and fifty years. Ground Convenor/Manager, Paul Bielby, has the enviable task of looking after this unique ground - where two games can be played at the same time. **P102**

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

The four seasons

Wycombe Abbey is an independent girls' boarding school in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Its history and grandness are apparent as soon as you enter the grounds and, at the time of my visit, Daniel Davy, Head of Grounds and Gardens has been there a year to the day. Having experienced all four seasons, he talks to Kerry Haywood about the challenges during his first year. **P120**

Vic Demain, Head Groundsman, Emirates Riverside



EQUESTRIAN

Turf trotting

It's no secret the Irish enjoy a flutter or two on the horses, hence why racecourses across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are thriving sports venues. One of the big name racing venues in Northern Ireland is undoubtedly the Down Royal racecourse sited near Lisburn and just fourteen miles from the centre of Belfast. **P130**



Michael Mann, Boat of Garten

TECHNICAL

Gold dust

Over the past decade, no other material has taken on such a prevalent role in the management of sports turf than sand. Murrayfield Golf Club's Derek Fullerton looks at the differing characteristics of this precious material and the practical implications these may have in the management of your turf. **P138**



Shane Webb, Down Royal Racecourse

TRAINING

Why it's important

In this article, Reesink Turfcare's training and development manager Neil Adams discusses the importance and benefits of machinery training in today's industry, and speaks to customers who have recently undertaken some training and the benefits they attribute to that. **P144**



George Reeder, SAS

Transforming performance

Trainer and Conference Speaker Frank Newberry wonders if you are a one-dimensional person at work. Alone in your own comfort zone - or are you working with people from different parts of the organisation to transform work performance? In this article, Frank indicates why you should start transforming performance upwards, sideways and down. **P140**



Steve Dutton, Wakefield Trinity

Also in this issue

Editorial	1
News	5
Motivated by the odds	150
Life's a Pitch	152
A day in the life - Pat Fadden	154
Product News	156-158
Offside	160
Diary and Quotes	IBC



Emirates Riverside during the ICC World Cup

How to ...

Pitchcare's 'How to' series of videos proving popular

The latest in Pitchcare's 'How to' videos features Managing Director Dave Saltman outlining the geometry of linemarking.

Each video features an industry professional explaining 'how to' undertake a specific task and is accompanied by descriptive text.

The ongoing series already features such topics as:

- Setting a cylinder mower on cut
- Pre-start checks for a ride-on mower
- Pre-start checks on a pedestrian cylinder mower
- Setting height of cut on a cylinder mower
- Storing machines away for winter
- Backlapping a pedestrian cylinder mower
- The importance of using the correct sprinkler nozzle
- Step by step guide to stripping down a sprinkler
- Step by step guide to replacing a sprinkler
- Basic maintenance of a solenoid valve
- Establishing a wildflower area

The videos may be accessed via the Pitchcare website and searching 'how to'.
www.pitchcare.com

BTME update

Get up and running at BTME!

The **BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME)**, Europe's largest turf industry event, returns to the Harrogate Convention Centre from **Tuesday 21st to Thursday 23rd January 2020**.

BTME will feature more than 150 exhibiting companies spread across four zones at the Harrogate Convention Centre. Alongside the exhibitors will be the 'Green Room Podcast Live' hosted by Curtis Tyrrell MG CGCS, a Sustainability Zone in association with the Golf Environment Organisation, whilst the STRI will be showcasing 'Science in Action' in a live turf laboratory. There'll also be the return of 'Golf Course Construction LIVE' and the New Products Area.

After the first day of the exhibition, all visitors are invited to join the BIGGA Welcome Celebration hosted by the BBC's Naga Munchetty in the main auditorium. This event features welcome receptions and will celebrate all the finest achievements and milestones from this year.

BIGGA will be kicking off the second day of BTME in style, with the free-to-attend BTME Breakfast Club taking a look at "Cock-ups, Disasters and Calamities" out on the course, following the BTME Early Bird 5k Run sponsored by Syngenta helping to raise awareness of mental health.



As always, 'Continue to Learn' will kick off the week, with the education programme evolving to better suit the needs of BIGGA members. Taking place from Sunday 19th to Wednesday 22nd January, the association's Learning & Development team has put together its largest-ever package of education.

Continue to Learn features more than 250 hours of education delivered by over 90 speakers.

The Golf Course Architecture and Management Forum will showcase collaborations between architects, course managers and their greenkeeping teams at some of the biggest projects in golf, including Royal Portrush, Royal Dornoch and The JCB Golf & Country Club.

Regular favourites such as the Turf Managers' Conference, the Deputies' Conference and the Young Greenkeepers' Conference will also return.

Registration for BTME 2020 is now open.

EDUCATE EXHIBIT EVOLVE

BTME 2020 | 21-23 January 2020
Harrogate Convention Centre | btme.org.uk

The turf industry is rapidly changing and if turf managers are to thrive in a highly-competitive environment, we need to embrace new ideas and ways of thinking, evolving our methods to suit modern needs.

For almost 30 years BTME has been at the forefront of that change and the 2020 exhibition will feature product launches, major industry announcements and everything you'd expect from Europe's premier turf industry event.



**BIGGA Turf
Management
Exhibition**



Too hot to handle?

World Athletics Championship in Qatar casts a big shadow over 2022 FIFA World Cup

An event meant to showcase Qatar's readiness for the 2022 FIFA World Cup has, instead, raised questions about its ability to host the world's biggest sporting event.

Rows of empty seats at the temperature-controlled Khalifa Stadium and operational hiccups drew criticism from foreign visitors attending the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Doha.

The women's marathon, which followed the opening ceremony, got things off to a bad start. Though it began just before midnight, temperatures of 32°C and humidity above 70% meant over 40% of competitors dropped out.

Some needed stretchers and wheelchairs to leave course situated along Doha seafront, as one team official commented. "It was madness. It's a dark day for the sport."

"Qatar hosting the world's third-largest sporting event reflects our readiness to host an exceptional World Cup in 2022," Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani tweeted after the race began.

The marathon at least demonstrated the wisdom of moving the World Cup from its



traditional slot in June and July, when heat drives Doha's residents indoors or abroad. The World Cup's opening match is slotted for November 21st, 2022 - when the historical average high is 28°C, according to AccuWeather.

The football tournament will test the rigidity of Qatar's basic tenets. Malls feature signs warning women not to wear tank tops or shorts, whilst public drunkenness isn't tolerated and homosexuality is illegal.

"We need to understand that this is their country and their event, but they need to remember that the World Cup is an event for the entire world," said one visiting fan. "But this tournament isn't promoting athletics."

Qatari World Cup Chief Executive Nasser al-Khater told reporters that organisers were

seeking ways to lower the price of alcohol, currently only accessible to visiting non-Muslims at five-star hotels or to residents with their employers' permission. The Qatari Supreme Committee has pledged tolerance for other cultures, sexual orientations and religions.

Qatar also faces questions about how it will permit Israelis - currently not on a list of states whose citizens are eligible for a tourist visa - to enter the country for the event, a FIFA requirement.

Representatives for the committee expect Qatar's arenas and much of its metro system to be completed by the end of 2020, but this does not hide the fact that the Arab nation is wholly unsuited to hosting the world's biggest sporting event.

Bring a touch of class to every surface



- Cylinder Mowers
- Powered & Tractor Mounted –
- Slitters
- Aerators
- Scarifiers
- Spreaders & Top Dressers
- Tractor Mounted –
- Brushes
- Sweepers
- Seeders
- Ride on Brushes
- Mounted and Towed Implement frames
- Hand Tools



For more information on our full range of grounds maintenance equipment or a no obligation demonstration call **01332 824777**

DENNIS

World class turf maintenance equipment
www.dennisuk.com

sisis

www.sisis.com



Racecourse Groundstaff Awards 2019

The Racecourse Association has announced the winners of this year's awards

Sponsored by Pitchcare, Watt Fences and Fornells, the award winners were decided by an industry panel made up of representatives from the Professional Jockeys Association (PJA), British Horseracing Authority (BHA) and National Trainers Federation (NTF).

The winners across the three racecourse categories are as follows;

Flat - York Racecourse

Jump - Kelso Racecourse

Dual purpose - Lingfield Park Racecourse

The winning teams are deemed to have demonstrated the highest levels of commitment, innovation and excellence across the year to racecourse groundsmanship and turf husbandry.

William Derby, Chief Executive and Clerk of the Course at York Racecourse, said; "the racing surface is our most important asset, the stage on which the stars of our show perform."

Jonathan Garratt, Managing Director of Kelso Racecourse said; "the groundstaff are an excellent team, they are always open to trying something new and, above all, they are dedicated to presenting the track in the best



Kelso Racecourse



York Racecourse



Perth Racecourse



Lingfield Racecourse

possible condition for our participants."

George Hill, Clerk of the Course, Lingfield Park said; "we are delighted to receive this award and it is brilliant for the team to get the recognition for their hard work throughout the year."

In addition to this, two further awards were given; the Merit Award to Perth Racecourse, in recognition of the exceptional efforts to save a weather threatened fixture in August and also for the assistance they gave to Musselburgh Racecourse early in the season, and the Neil Wyatt Lifetime Achievement Award which went the way of Market Rasen Racecourse's Steve Bakin to celebrate his fantastic 44 year career.

Hazel Peplinski, Chief Executive, Perth Racecourse said; "2019 has been a very difficult year for our track team and I am grateful to them for how they have addressed each and every challenge which has been a monumental team effort of perseverance."

Steve Bakin added; "I am grateful to the judges for such a personal recognition and I leave Market Rasen Racecourse in good hands."

The sponsors and judges highly commended the commitment and innovation these tracks have shown throughout the year and their tireless work to enhance the quality and safety of the racing surfaces and other areas of the course.

George Noad, representing the NTF, said; "the hard work undertaken by groundstaff throughout the year is very important for the safety of all the sport's participants and they deserve our thanks."

Dale Gibson, PJA Executive Director, said "racing on a consistent, well maintained and safe surface remains vitally important to all Jockeys."

John Richards, Operations Director of sponsors Pitchcare, added; "on behalf of the sponsors, I would like to say how delighted we are to be able to recognise the outstanding contribution of Steve Bakin. I don't think we have ever received so many supporting references for a nominee."

York, Kelso and Lingfield Park will all be in the running to be crowned the 2019 Racecourse Groundstaff Champion, where the announcement will be made at the tenth

annual RCA Showcase Awards held at Hamilton Park Racecourse on Thursday 14th November 2019.



Obituary: Peter George

One of west Cornwall's most recognisable characters has passed away at the age of seventy-four.

Peter George died at the Royal Cornwall Hospital in Truro, having suffered ill health in recent times.

He was well known in local cricket and football circles and his sporting interests also included rugby and horse racing.

His association with St Buryan Cricket Club spanned sixty years as a player, groundsman and club official.

From their days in the West Penwith Saturday League the village club rose through the divisions of the Cornwall League.

He was a former member of the Cornwall League Management Committee and, for many years, supplied clubs with ground materials through his haulage company.

In the winter months Peter was a leading member in the local football world.

He was president of the Cornwall Referees Association and a proud highlight was when he refereed the Senior Cup Final.

Continue to Learn Scholarship

World class education on the cards for BIGGA members awarded ICL Scholarship

BIGGA and ICL have announced the five successful recipients of the fourth ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship.

The successful BIGGA members are:

William Curran, greenkeeper, Beaverbrook Golf Club

Phil Worth, head greenkeeper, Macclesfield Golf Club

Thomas Tomlinson, assistant greenkeeper, Boldon Golf Club

Joe Lamb, assistant greenkeeper, West Herts Golf Club

Melissa Winkworth, assistant greenkeeper, Goring and Streatley Golf Club

The ICL Continue to Learn 2020 Scholars will receive three nights' hotel accommodation and 15 hours of training and personal development at the world-leading education programme, supported by BIGGA Partner and speciality fertiliser company ICL.

BIGGA's Head of Member Development, Sami Strutt, said: "We received 75 completed applications for this fantastic member opportunity. Whittling them down to just five has been a real challenge! The recipients of the scholarship will benefit from both attending



ICL's Andy Owen speaking at Continue to Learn 2019

great education and networking with their peers. We look forward to welcoming the ICL Continue to Learn Scholars to BTME 2020 for what promises to be another great event."

Ed Carter, ICL's UK Sales and Development Manager, said: "ICL is delighted to sponsor such a worthwhile scheme. The calibre of recipients each year has been outstanding and we're delighted that these five ambitious BIGGA members will join our growing community of ICL Scholars. Each of the applicants were of a similarly high standard and the selection decision was extremely difficult, as always."

Continue to Learn at BTME 2020 will take place at Harrogate Convention Centre from

Sunday 19 - Wednesday 22 January 2020. The extensive education programme will run alongside BTME, the largest indoor exhibition in Europe for the Sports Turf industry.

ICL is a keen supporter of the Continue To Learn education programme. Through the Turf Rewards loyalty scheme from ICL and Syngenta, BIGGA members are able to claim Continue to Learn education vouchers. Points are gained by purchasing products for use on the golf course. For further information visit www.turfrewards.com

Pitchcare are an appointed distributor of ICL products. Visit the Pitchcare Shop to view the full range

ETESIA

THE ETESIA RANGE OF PEDESTRIAN MOWERS

Unrivalled Cut and Collect in any weather.

The best cut and collect or mulch performance on the market.

The Etesia range of pedestrian rotary mowers sets the industry standard.

Available from 37cm-53cm cutting widths and push, single or variable speed options, there is an Etesia pedestrian mower for any use. All this adds up to machines that are purpose built for professional mowers for professional use.

Full product details at www.etesia.co.uk or put us to the test and contact us for a free onsite demonstration on **01295 680 120**

Etesia UK *Seeing is Believing.*
 Call 01295 680 120 • email sales@etesia.co.uk • visit www.etesia.co.uk

Etesia UK Ltd
 Greenway House • Sugarswell Business Park • Sherington • Oxon OX15 6HW
 Tel: 01295 680120 • email: sales@etesia.co.uk www.etesia.co.uk

[f](#) Etesia UK
 [t](#) @EtesiaUK
 [v](#) EtesiaUK
 [i](#) @EtesiaUK

Add a rear roller to our 41cm & 46cm machines for the perfect stripe.

Duocut N-ERGY
Battery powered
41cm & 46cm cutting widths
Push & single speed models

Duocut 46
Honda or Briggs & Stratton engine - 46cm cutting width
Variable speed models

Duocut 53
Kawasaki engine
53cm cutting width
Three speeds

PRO 46
Honda or Kawasaki engine
46cm cutting width
Push & single speed models

PRO 51
Honda or Briggs & Stratton engine - 51cm cutting width
Variable speed models

PRO 53
Honda or Kawasaki engine
53cm cutting width
Hydraulic drive

Biocut 53
Kohler engine
53cm cutting width
Dedicated mulcher

OBITUARY

Walter Woods

The industry mourns the passing of Walter Woods BEM

Walter Woods BEM, 84, was the former links superintendent at St Andrews Links until his retirement in 1996.

He was instrumental in the formation of BIGGA and his efforts to modernise the industry and greenkeeper training have laid down the foundation for the profession as it is today.

Walter was the inaugural chairman of the greenkeeping association and acted as a mentor for many of the industry's leading figures, including John Philp MBE, who oversaw the return of Carnoustie to the Open rota.

"I learned a great deal from Walter," said John. "Coming back to Scotland in a multi-course system, he was very much a mentor for me. He had a strong work ethic and a passion for greenkeeping. He was a strong and fair character and was a shining example of golf course management, leadership and professionalism. Greenkeeping has lost one of its greatest ever ambassadors."

Walter began his career at the nine-hole Tillicooultry Golf Club in his Clackmannanshire home town. He got his first role in greenkeeping after trying a number of jobs, including being a grocer and a collier.

He then worked at Alloa in the dual role of professional and greenkeeper, while his wife Caroline ran the clubhouse.

A successful stint at Notts Golf Club (Hollinwell) followed, of which he was extremely proud, before he moved to St Andrews in 1974.

During his time as superintendent of the famous links, Walter oversaw four Open Championships. So respected was he that Jack Nicklaus would turn up early at St Andrews to play practice rounds with him prior to the tournament.



Walter and Caroline Woods, pictured at BTME in 2018

Speaking to the *Scotsman* in 2005, Walter said: "My best memories are Jack Nicklaus holding the trophy or the excellence of Nick Faldo. But most satisfying is the relief when it is finished, without complaints!"

Walter left St Andrews in 1995 after twenty-one years on the links, but continued as a consultant to the European Tour.

Walter's passing on the eve of the European Tour's flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship, is poignant as it was through the efforts of figures such as Walter and the late Cecil George and Jimmy Neilson that education in greenkeeping progressed to the level that surfaces such as those at Wentworth could be prepared.

Walter also played a leading role in the formation of the BIGGA support team initiatives, which provide members of the association the opportunity to volunteer at The Open and the BMW PGA Championship and help prepare the course.

Former Wentworth Courses Manager Chris Kennedy was Walter's friend for more than half a century and said: "Walter was certainly one of the guys who was at the forefront of

greenkeeping having the status that it does today."

"When you see the volunteers at The Open and the BMW PGA, he was one of the few who worked hard and could see what the future would look like. He wanted to give guys at normal golf clubs the experience of the highs and lows of tournament golf, so they could go back to their clubs and take the experience and knowledge they had gained with them."

"He had this great drive within himself and he could see a vision for the future. He was the father figure of modern greenkeeping."

Walter received the British Empire Medal and was presented with the Tom Morris Award in 2002 by the US Golf Course Superintendents Association. Previous recipients of the award include Byron Nelson, Arnold Palmer and Bob Hope and the award is given to people who 'through a continuing lifetime commitment to golf have helped to mould the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris'.

Walter died on 18 September 2019, aged 84, following a long illness.

Towcester Racecourse closed

Remaining fixtures have been sold to Arena Racing Company

Towcester Racecourse has been permanently closed and remaining fixtures sold, the British Horseracing Authority has announced.

The course went into administration with debts of more than £1.3m in August 2018 but administrators of the previous management company announced they had sold assets in November.

But racing did not resume at the course and its owners have sold its remaining ten fixtures to Arena Racing Company.

Racing first took place at Towcester Racecourse in 1876.

It was also the stage for legendary jockey AP McCoy's landmark 4,000th career win in 2013.

"We are saddened to see the closure of Towcester, a beautiful racecourse which will undoubtedly have created fond memories for

many racing fans and participants," said Richard Wayman, Chief Operating Officer of the BHA.

"We had hoped, following the course going into administration, that the new owners might find a solution which allowed racing to resume, and it is disappointing that has not proved possible."

"The BHA will now work with ARC to find the most suitable venues for the ten fixtures involved, which will all remain over jumps."

"From championship racing to grassroots, jump racing remains extremely popular, with a growing base of loyal and knowledgeable supporters. The outlook for the sport is a positive one."

Cornelius Lysaght, BBC horse racing correspondent, comments;

"The future did look rosier for the track under



fresh ownership late in 2018 - although original owner Lord Hesketh was still there - and I remember writing about the prospects of an imminent resumption. Wrong."

"There has been a certain amount of messing around, with intended fixtures being transferred elsewhere but, until now, hopes continued of it being a temporary closure."

"It's just such a pity. With an examining circuit, it was renowned as the 'home of the slow horse', whilst a location in rolling acres of Northamptonshire made it something of a 'classic' venue for jumping with historic rural roots."



Get more with the new eTriFlex™ hybrid

Introducing the quietest ride-on greensmower yet

MORE



50%
quieter*

*perceived bystander noise levels in tests

Model shown:
Toro Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360



**The new Toro eTriFlex hybrid greensmower.
Cleaner, quieter and more economical than ever.**

Reduced noise and with no hydraulics, the new Toro Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360 Hybrid says goodbye to leaks without compromising on Toro's quality of cut. Utilising all-electric components for traction, steering, lifting and cutting and 50 percent quieter*, it allows earlier mowing and tee times without disturbance.

reesinkturfcare.co.uk

**Get more from your turfcare partner this year:
More products > More advice > More training > More finance**

Reesink Turfcare UK Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Images shown for illustration only.



Member of Royal Reesink 

Objections overruled

Wellingborough's new 3G sports pitch opens despite a petition and letters of objection

The 3G pitch at Redwell Leisure Centre in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire - which uses a rubber crumb infill - was officially opened in September.

Planning permission was granted for the pitch despite more than one hundred letters of objection from people living in the Redwell area of Wellingborough, a 1,000-strong petition and a number of passionate pleas.

Rather than using a cork alternative, rubber crumb was the chosen infill because, the council stated; "the cork alternative would have been too expensive and the Football Foundation said an extensive EU-wide study found no reason to advise people against playing sport on 3G pitches with rubber crumb."

This quotes the European Chemicals Agency's (ECHA) report of three years ago which was found to have both out of date and inconclusive research, yet supported by SAPCA, the IOG and the FA, amongst others.

Since that time, there have been growing concerns about the possible health impact of the rubber material. It has already been banned in Holland whilst, over in the USA, it has been recommended that no further artificial pitches with rubber crumb infill are installed until the full findings of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are announced.

Part one of the EPA's report was released in the summer and was generally regarded as being inconclusive, premature and, in some quarters, a whitewash! Yet the product is still being used in the UK, and all based on the ECHA findings.

Despite the obvious concerns, Wellingborough councillors marked the opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by a walking football showcase put on by players from across Northamptonshire, and AFC Rushden & Diamonds girls playing inter-club matches and training.

The pitch, which cost £736,202, was made possible after funding granted by the Premier League, The FA and the Football Foundation. It will be operated by Places Leisure on behalf of the council.

Cllr Griffiths said: "I am delighted that the borough's first all-weather outdoor pitch is now open for local sports clubs and residents of all ages and abilities to enjoy."

"It was fantastic to see a number of different



Wellingborough Councillor Martin Griffiths cuts the ribbon

sports clubs and our fellow partners join us for the official opening event."

Quintin Allen, sports project manager at Northamptonshire Sport, said; "this facility is crucial to enhancing the sporting offer for residents of the borough and I would like to thank all the organisations involved in enabling the concept to be realised."

Paul Thorogood, chief executive of the Football Foundation, said; "this is one example we want to make people in Northamptonshire aware of; that they have the kind of quality pitches and changing rooms that are taken for granted in other cities. We will continue to support projects nationwide."

"Taking part in community sport at any level offers many benefits and rewards, not least the opportunity for people to enjoy themselves and socialise with different members of the community."

Whilst we concur with these sentiments, Pitchcare remains concerned that, until definitive answers are provided surrounding rubber crumb's possible carcinogenic properties, consideration should be given to all future installations, certainly until the second and 'conclusive' part of the EPA's report is released, whenever that may be!

Additional concerns surrounding 3G artificial pitches are; injuries sustained by players that are not symptomatic of natural turf pitches; the disposal of 'end of life' plastic pitches, many simply ending up in landfill; and the extreme temperatures the surfaces reach in hot weather. One pitch in Florida was measured with a surface temperature of 140°F, which resulted in a number of children being hospitalised!

Greta Tintin Eleonora Ernman Thunberg would have a 'field' day!

Going back to where it all began - Toro GM3 at West Herts Golf Club 50 years later!

The first Toro Greensmaster 3 ride-on mower was sold to the West Herts Golf Club in Hertfordshire in 1969 and, fifty years later, the GM3 is back at the club where it all began, united with the person who sold it all those years ago.

Rochelle Bedford, marketing manager at Reesink Turfcare, said; "we discovered that the very first GM3 sold in the UK was still going 50 years later! Also uncovered was the club that bought the machine and who sold it!"

The person in question, John Cockburn, tells us how it all came about: "I was working for Flymo in 1968 when I was told we'd be receiving a prototype of a new machine to trial and debut at a three-day exhibition in Meyrick Park in Bournemouth."

Andy Smith, Course Manager at West Herts Golf Club since 1993, says it was a 'blast from the past' having the GM3 back at the club."

Below: John Cockburn, right, with the Toro Greensmaster 3 and Andy Smith



BASIS Points for magazine subscribers

BASIS awards two CPD points for 'paid-for' subscribers to the hard copy version of Pitchcare magazine, due to the "diverse range of content that relates to the control, management and use of pesticides".

Subscribers can now obtain a further two valuable CPD points for their Professional

register, simply by paying for a subscription to the 'hard copy' version of the Pitchcare magazine.

Anyone wishing to claim their points should email their full name, BASIS membership number, date of birth and postcode to editor@pitchcare.com.

BASIS

Promoting Professional Standards

"BASIS is an independent standards setting and auditing organisation for the pesticide, fertiliser and allied industries.



UNMISSABLE VALUE. UNRIVALLED CHOICE.

KUBOTA COMPACT TRACTORS 16-60HP

0% FINANCE | 2+22 PAYMENTS FROM
£56.45 PER WEEK EQUIVALENT
OFFER ENDS 30th NOVEMBER 2019

*Business users only. Terms and conditions apply. Example shown for B1161.

Get to work for less this season with 0% available now on Kubota's range of compact tractors including the BX, B, ST and L Series.

Developed from the ground up, Kubota's range of robust and versatile compact tractors deliver exceptional power output, a host of performance enhancing features and unrivalled reliability for consistent, economic performance all year round.



*Terms and conditions: Finance for business purposes only. Weekly payment profile is not available and is shown for illustration purposes only. Actual finance rental payable on B1161 is 2 + 22 Monthly installments of £244.62 per month. Subject to acceptance and affordability checks. Applicant must be 18 or over. Promotion valid until 30th November 2019. Available on new equipment only with RRP 60%. The finance products offered under this promotion is a Finance Lease and Hire Purchase. For Finance Lease, VAT is due with each rental payment and you will not own the equipment at the end of the agreement. Return conditions apply. A documentation fee of £50 (VAT is applicable for finance lease only) will be collected with the first rental. For hire purchase, full VAT is due on signing. An option-to-purchase fee of £50 (plus VAT) will be collected with the final payment. You will own the machine when all payments have been made. Alternative finance options are available. Terms and Conditions apply. Images are for illustrative purposes only. Annual admin fee of £40 (plus VAT). Kubota Finance is a trading style of BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions Limited. Finance provided by BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions Limited, Northern Cross, Basing View, Basingstoke RG21 4HL. Registered in England No. 901225.

Contact your local dealer or visit our website for more details.

www.kubota.co.uk     T: 01844 873190

40 years
Excellence in the UK & Ireland

For Earth, For Life
Kubota



Jim Buttar appointed Twickenham Stadium's Head Groundsperson

The RFU has appointed Jim Buttar as Twickenham Stadium's head groundsman, a role he began on 2nd September.

Jim has over twenty years experience in grounds maintenance. He was head groundsman at Tottenham Hotspur's White Hart Lane for eleven years and deputy head for three years, during which time he was awarded Premier League Groundsman of the Year two years in a row.

He more recently worked as an International Sports Turf Development Manager for Pro Pitch. This role saw Jim provide consultancy to leading sports associations and organisations in the delivery of major events and tournaments, including the UEFA Champions League Final in 2018 and 2019, the Euro 2020 host venue in Budapest plus the FIFA Club World Cup and Asian Cup 2019.

Jim brings a wealth of experience, particularly around new technologies and the effect of pitch surfaces on player performance and recovery. Jim will use his extensive knowledge of pitch maintenance to support grassroots rugby clubs via the Rugby Groundsmen Connected network.



Somerset CCC's Head Groundsman joins Hampshire

Somerset County Cricket Club's Head Groundsman, Simon Lee, is leaving the club at the end of the season after twenty years of service.

Lee is to join Hampshire and cited a desire to work at an international ground as the main factor behind his decision.

Lee commented; "This has been a massive decision for me to make. I've given it a lot of thought and I want to challenge myself at a larger venue that regularly hosts international cricket."

"I've been at Somerset for nearly twenty years and this is one of the hardest decisions I've ever had to make."

"I feel like I'm leaving the club in a good place and that we've improved the field massively in the last ten years."

"The fact that we get so many people coming to the ground to watch cricket shows that we must be doing something right and I'm very proud to be leaving that legacy."

In case you missed it ...



FA lower league awards

FA Groundsperson of the Year Award Winners 2019

The Football Association's (FA) Groundsperson of the Year Awards is a nationwide competition for non-league football groundsmen.

The Awards recognise the contribution of groundspersons; the 'unsung heroes' who work in all weather, often as volunteers, all year round, to make sure that thousands of matches can take place on a high standard of playing surface and with a very limited budget.

The FA has a panel of judges - professional groundspersons themselves - who look at the quality of the pitch whilst also taking into consideration the skills and knowledge of the groundsperson, their ambitions for the pitch, the resources available, how often the pitch is used, and the amount of time they are able to work on the pitch.

All the award winners, runners-up and highly commended groundsmen for 2018/19 season

were invited to an awards day at the FA National Football Centre St Georges Park in August, which included presentations from Karl Standley, Wembley Head Groundsman, and Scott Brooks, Head of Grounds and Estate St George's Park.

The winners from each of the categories are as follows:

The Football Conference Award - Daniel Hunter & Declan Robinson, Boreham Wood FC

Northern Premier League Award - Michael Grimmer, Stocksbridge Park Steels FC

Southern League Award - Paul Chappell, Slimbridge FC

Isthmian League Award - Simon Rudkins, Hastings Utd FC

National Award 5 & 6 - John Berry, Shelley FC

National Award 7 and below - Roger Kerry, Sleetmoor United FC

Gordon to become BIGGA Vice President

Former St Andrews Links Trust Director of Greenkeeping Gordon Moir has accepted the nomination to become vice president of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in 2020, with a view to becoming president in 2021.

Gordon, 60, retired from his position at St Andrews Links in December 2018 after a career that saw him involved with the hosting of more than 37 championships, including five Opens.

Gordon was just the eighth person to hold the title of Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews since the first, Old Tom Morris, retired in 1904.

As vice president, Gordon will support Colin Webber throughout his year as president of the association.

Gordon said: "I was absolutely delighted to be asked to be president of BIGGA. To be honest, it was something that I really hoped would happen

and I'm glad that my retirement has enabled me to accept this opportunity. I've tried to stay involved with the greenkeeping industry since retiring, and so I'm really proud to be offered the chance to represent the association in this way and meet people from all over the country who I haven't seen for a year or who I wouldn't have met otherwise."



Gordon will be appointed Vice President of BIGGA during the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) in January 2020. He will then become President at the same event the following year.

Greenmaster[®] Liquid CalMag

Designed to supplement Calcium & Magnesium levels for immediate turf colour, quality and turf health responses.



- Boosts turf colour and quality
- Supplements Calcium and Magnesium levels
- Especially useful on sand based constructions
- Highly compatible tank-mix partner

The Greenmaster[®] Liquid range



CalMag
9-0-0+13CaO
+3MgO+TE



High K
3-3-10+TE



High N
25-0-0+2MgO+TE



High NK
10-0-10+TE



Effect Iron FE
6.3% Fe



Spring & Summer
12-4-6+TE



STEP

www.icl-sf.co.uk | www.icl-sf.ie

Tel: 01473 237116 Email: prof.sales@icl-group.com

Contact your local distributor or ICL Technical Area Sales Manager for more information.

Pitchcare are distributors of the ICL product range: www.pitchcare.com



® Registered Trade Mark of ICL Limited

The Point at Polzeath

Getting to the Point

Surrounded by beautiful countryside, The Point at Polzeath is only a mile from the Camel Estuary in north Cornwall, with stunning beaches for surfing and water sports. The coastal footpaths are unbeatable in terms of beauty for walking holidays. Lee Williams 'gets to the Point' with Head Greenkeeper **Tom Collings**



Tom Collings

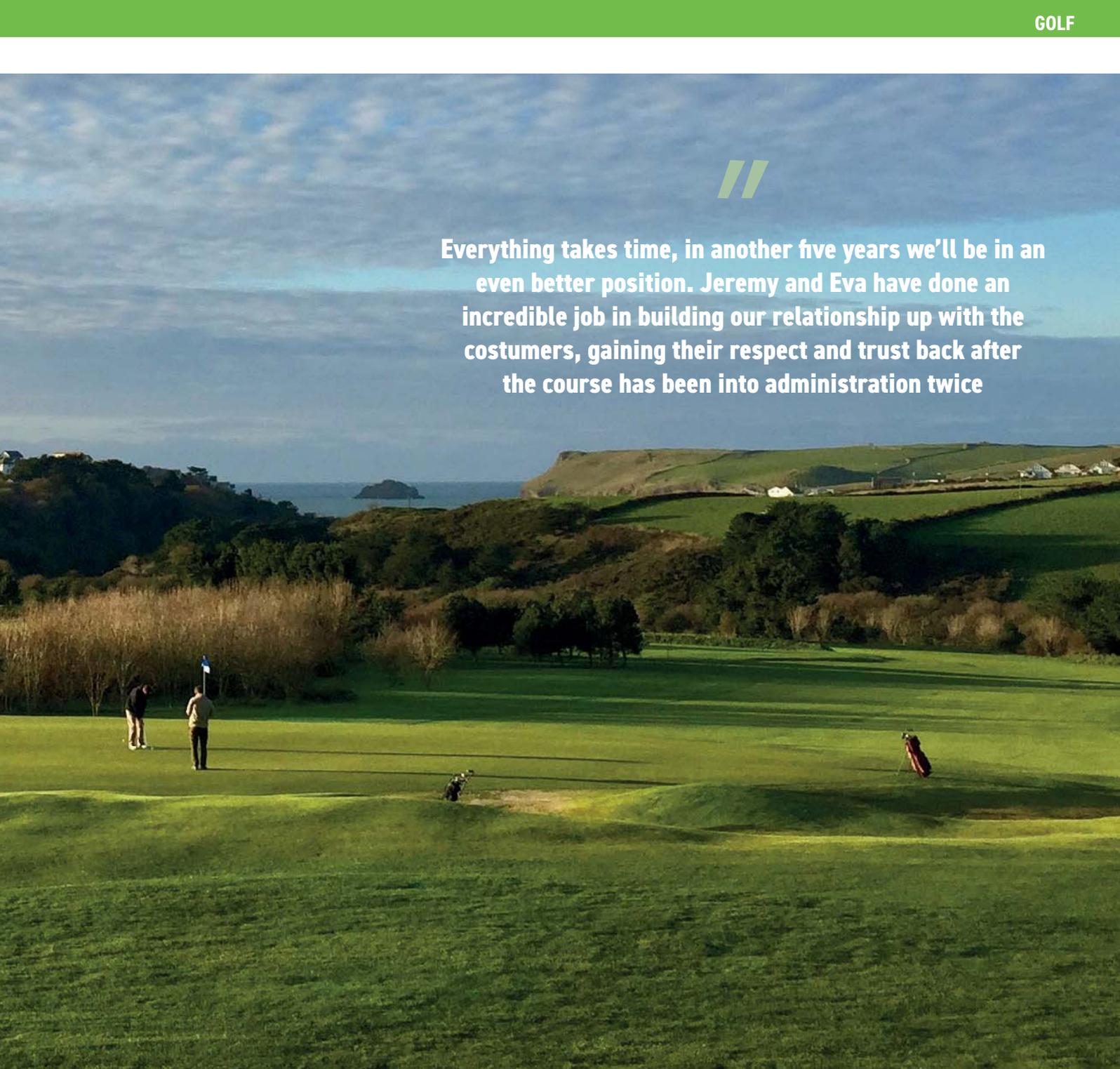
The Point at Polzeath lies less than a mile off the South West Coast Path; 630 miles of stunning scenery, wildlife and flora. From Polzeath beach, it is approximately ten miles to walk to Port Isaac - a historic fishing village now more famous for being the film location for Doc Martin, the television series starring Martin Clunes, and for the surprise hit film of this summer, Fisherman's Friends. The course is set, somewhat dramatically, within 230 acres of undulating parkland, sitting high above the river estuary and boasts spectacular views to Newlands Islands.

The Point originally started out in the mid-1990s as Roserrow Golf & Country Club, designed by former Ryder cupper turned

broadcaster, Dave Feherty.

Roserrow failed dramatically during the recession and was acquired by husband and wife team Jeremy and Eva Davies in 2012 and a new lease of life was quickly breathed into the facility. It was rebranded The Point at Polzeath, and massive investment in new machinery, greenstaff, plus the involvement of Tim Lobb (of golf course architects Thomson Perrett & Lobb and now Lobb and Partners) ensued, completely turning the golf course's fortunes around. The improvements are already significant but, according to the owners, it's still "work in progress".

Lee Williams caught up with Head Greenkeeper Tom Collings, who has been instrumental in helping turn around the once failing course of Roserrow into The Point of Polzeath, with investment of the new owners.



Everything takes time, in another five years we'll be in an even better position. Jeremy and Eva have done an incredible job in building our relationship up with the costumers, gaining their respect and trust back after the course has been into administration twice

I first asked Tom how he got into the industry and how he ended up in his current position. "My family built a golf course - Lostwithiel - on old farmland on the opposite coast close to Fowey, and that's how I got into golf. As many kids do, I wanted to be a professional golfer, but soon realised I was never going to be good enough. I always found the design, maintenance and set up of a golf course interesting and loved the outdoors so, when I left school in 1996, I got a summer job at the family club. Sadly, the club closed a few years ago, as they just couldn't get enough people through the door, like many other courses around the country."

"I spent nine years at Lostwithiel and gained my NVQ Level two and three in sports turf, before realising if I wanted to

step up the ladder in this industry, I needed to move on. I got a position at Trevoze Golf Club as the first assistant, where I spent four years, before coming over here as Head Greenkeeper when it was Roserrow Golf & Country Club. That was in 2009. At that time, I was promised the world; that the course was going to be redesigned and that another eighteen holes were going to be built. I soon had a feeling that all was not right and, after about six months, the owners were struggling to pay wages. I realised I had probably made the biggest mistake of my life, as working at Trevoze is one of the best courses in the country and I had a job for life there with a family run business. I had a nightmare two years of no money, to do what was needed to the course and sporadic payment of wages until, finally, it

closed in October 2011. I was very close to giving up greenkeeping altogether until, one very wet day in November, Robert Clive (360 Golf) and Tim Lobb came to view and walk the course to evaluate its potential. The day spent with these guys, walking the course and talking golf, convinced me to keep volunteering until there was no chance of saving the golf course. Thankfully, in March 2012, we became The Point when Jeremy and Eva took over. They have invested well and have slowly turned it into a profitable business after some early losses. Seven years ago, I would have said I should have stayed at Trevoze, but it's actually turned out to be the best decision I have made, and I'm now doing the job I always wanted to do."

Helping Tom look after the course is Sven Todd, Deputy Head - NVQ Level 2,



Left to right: Josh Taylor, Toby Trudgian, Ben Hurst, Sven Todd, Sam Polatajko and Tom Collings



greenkeeping 15 years, at The Point 4 years; Toby Trudgian, Assistant Greenkeeper - NVQ Level 2, greenkeeping 5 years, all of them at The Point; Josh Taylor, Assistant Greenkeeper - NVQ Level 2, 3 years' service; Sam Polatajko, Assistant Greenkeeper - NVQ Level 2, 2 years' service; Ben Hurst, Assistant Greenkeeper - NVQ Level 2, 2 years' service.

The course is situated near the coast, but Tom says you can't class it as a links or a parkland course. "You can call it what you like," he says, laughing. "We are not a links, and we are not a parkland, as we are not tree-lined. I suppose you could call it a coastal parkland course."

When the course was initially constructed, Tom tells me they tried to cut corners. "They sort of attempted to do it right, so the greens are built with five inches of a 90/10 rootzone mix, then it goes down into a gravel, sand and shillet mix (shillet is the local stone) and then about 12 inches down is the gravel bed. Tees are similar to the greens, but they decided to build up a big wedge of shillet, then they chucked eight inches of rootzone on the top, so I have loads of rootzone on the tees and none on the greens! The rest of

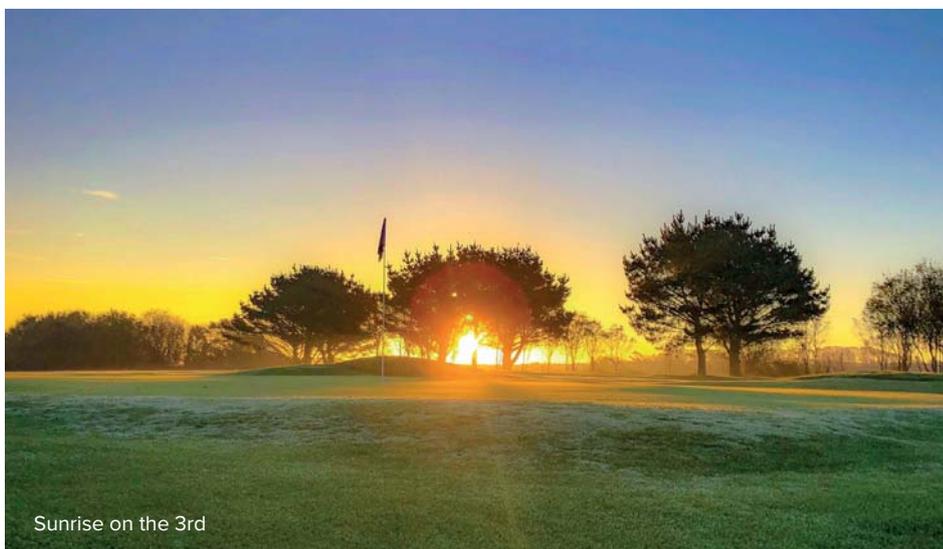
the course is clay topsoil straight onto shillet, and we have very little subsoil, it tends to go straight into the stone. The course will get wet if we have prolonged periods of rain in the winter, but it also dries out very quickly."

The site covers 230 acres and includes Roserrow village, a grass airstrip and a wildflower meadow. The golf course covers 190 acres, including a five-bay driving range, practice area, tennis courts and the clubhouse with leisure facilities.

The course has a full irrigation system which has many problems, so this has to be carefully managed. "When they built the place, they put pipework and sprinklers to the greens, tees and fairways. They based it on a polytunnel specification, so it doesn't take the pressure we need going through the system. On top of this, the water is supplied via boreholes, and can't recover enough water to irrigate the fairways, so we have capped any unnecessary pipework and removed a lot of pop-ups, especially around the greens as the configuration was all wrong and we were wasting a lot of water. The mainline leaks like a sieve and loses around a cube an hour when the system is pressurised and our boreholes only recover



The main aim is to go fungicide free from now on, especially when so many active ingredients have been taken off the market in recent years



Sunrise on the 3rd



New par 3 construction

a cube an hour, so our leaks are as quick as our feed! The system is only on/pressurised for the hours we need to water. To water the greens and tees, we now run hoses from valve points. Last year, we were only able to water three days a week and then we had to shut it down and let the tank fill up, so it was just a matter of managing our timings. I was getting in at two o'clock in the morning to try and get it done before the sun got too hot and to keep ahead of mowers and golfers."

I asked Tom if there were any plans to replace the system. "Yes, it's just a matter of trying to get ourselves in a position where we have enough money coming in to warrant it. Rodger Davey from Irritech has designed the new system for us and we have already completed the first phase, installing a new holding tank and pump station (carried out by Ocmis). Although we still have a lot of issues, the system we have now is ten times more efficient than

//

We have put out bird boxes around the course and would like to add bat boxes. Having such a large site, we can let quite a lot of areas go 'back to nature' so that the wildlife can thrive

it was six years ago. Everything takes time, in another five years we'll be in an even better position. Jeremy and Eva have done an incredible job in building our relationship up with the costumers, gaining their respect and trust back after the course has been into administration twice."

Tom is currently working on building a new par three, as well as other projects around the site. "I'm just in the process of building the green. This morning, I was just shaping

The NEW 'green' SmartLine Profihopper

Emissions compliant, no additives, saves fuel costs



Mow, Scarify, Collect, Mulch and Roll. The incredibly tough, easy to manoeuvre 'SmartLine' Profihopper - five machines in one!

- New high-capacity, hydrostatic drive for more comfortable driver control
- Improved feed auger for smoother material flow
- Easy maintenance and cleaner mowing
- New electronics with safety and service interval alerts
- New lighting pack to illuminate those long working days
- Stage V Exhaust emission compliant: no need for diesel additive fluid.



The SmartCut rotor system and 1000 litre equivalent capacity hopper - faster, cleaner and more efficient collection and emptying. Saving you time, money and fuel costs.



www.amazone.co.uk

Contact your local dealer
or phone us on 01302 751200



AMAZONE

Getting Personal

Tom Collings - he loves Oasis

Who are you? Tom Collings, Head Greenkeeper at The Point at Polzeath (North Cornwall).

Family status. Married with two children.

Who's your hero and why? Don't have one.

What would you change about yourself? More hair on my head and less in my ears!

What's your guilty pleasure? Anything sweet.

What's been the highlight of your career so far? Every day is a highlight ... I get to walk around a golf course for a living.

What are your pet peeves? The usual ... divots, pitch marks, unraked bunkers. People who moan, but don't have any idea what it takes to maintain a golf course.

If you could go anywhere right now, where would it be? A sunny beach with 3 to 4 foot waves rolling in.

What's the best part of your job? Love being out on the course.

... and the worst? Never enough time.

Do you have a lifetime ambition? To shoot 65 at Augusta.

Favourite record, and why? Anything by Oasis ... because they're Oasis.

Who would you choose to spend a romantic evening with? My wife.

If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would do? Phone my wife!

If you were to describe yourself as a musical instrument, what would you be and why? What?



Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party? Alex Ferguson, Liam Gallagher and Ricky Gervais.

If you could be anyone for a day, who would it be and why? It's hard enough being me!

Do you go to bed worrying about the next day's workload? Always.

What are you reading at the moment? Just started re-reading Game of Thrones.

What's the best advice you have ever been given? If in doubt ... don't.

What's your favourite smell? Coffee at crib time.

What do you do in your spare time? Family, surf SUP and play golf (occasionally).

What's the daftest work related question you have ever been asked? If you were to describe yourself as a musical instrument, what would you be and why? Hahaha.

What's your favourite piece of kit? Amazone flail collector.

What three words would you use to describe yourself? Happy, busy and passionate.

What talent would you like to have? Any musical talent would be great.



Early morning brushing

up the surround. We are hoping to open the new hole in spring/summer 2020, and I want to get the drainage in and rootzone down ready to seed in the autumn. Then, it all depends on the weather. Hopefully it is good to us and we can get the hole open at some point next summer. The whole place is one big project to be honest. We have already done a lot of drainage including open ditches to help keep the course open in the winter. We've constructed tees, bunkers and a putting green. For five years now we have been working on a bunker programme, getting rid of old bunkers, reshaping and repositioning to help make the course more interesting to all golfers; we try and do as much as we can in house."

"Ongoing is constant tree clearing and tidying up. Years ago, we didn't have the manpower or machinery to clear up the scrub areas or in amongst the trees. We want to show off some nice features, like old Cornish stone walls. For five years now we have been working on a

bunker programme, getting rid of old bunkers, reshaping and repositioning to help make the course more interesting to all golfers."

Tom talks me through the general maintenance of the greens throughout the season. "Cutting height is at 6mm throughout the winter. In early October, we will verti-drain using 20mm solid tines at a depth of seven to eight inches, hollow core (every other year) and overseed with the Vredo disc seeder, using Johnsons J All Bent grass seed. We have gone with bents over the last few years which has come through well. I previously went with just fescue but, in the last few years, we have had a lot of wet winters and the fescues were struggling. Also, last year with the hot weather, I found the fescues took longer to come back than anything else. We will then heavily topdress and brush in; we use about sixty to ninety tonnes of dressing a year, two heavy dressings at the start and end of the season and as many light dressings as we can through the main playing season.





Bunker on the 8th



You can call it what you like. We are not a links, and we are not a parkland, as we are not tree-lined. I suppose you could call it a coastal parkland course

Around mid-April, when we see a bit of growth, we will gradually drop the height of cut down to 4mm, this year we had to cut it down slightly earlier as we had the Cornish Festival in the first week of April and had to have the course competition ready earlier than normal. I generally like to roll more than we cut, so on a weekly basis we will roll three/four times and cut two/three, I like to have at least one day where we don't do

anything other than brush the dew off. We will tine every month, from April through to September we use 8mm or 12mm tines at a depth of four to six inches and from October to March we use 12mm or 20mm tines at a depth of five to eight inches. If we can't tine, we sarel roll."

In the past, the greens have suffered heavily with various diseases. "About six years ago, I lost two or three greens to dollar

spot, and we used to have a terrible problem with take-all patch as well. To try and make sure this never happens again, we now tine as much as we can and have a consistent monthly programme limiting how much nitrogen we put down and looking more at soil health by using Biomass sugar, HumiMax, seaweed, phosphites and only adding N and K when we think we need it. Being consistent is the

SLOPES AND VERGES: NO PROBLEM

RATED FOR
THIRTY DEGREE SLOPES

30°

OVER THIRTY DIFFERENT
VENTRAC ATTACHMENTS

30+

With five mowing decks and 25 other attachments, the Ventrac 4500 works for you all year round. And on slopes of up to 30 degrees. Save time and money with Ventrac.
See for yourself and call us today on 01284 827548 for a demonstration.

Distributed by
PRICE TURFCARE
 Tel: +44 (0) 1284 827548
 email: info@priceturfcare.com
 web: www.priceturfcare.com
 Oak Farm, Cockfield,
 Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP30 0JH

[FACEBOOK.COM/PRICETURFCARE](https://www.facebook.com/priceturfcare)
[INSTAGRAM.COM/PRICETURFCARE](https://www.instagram.com/priceturfcare)
[@PRICETURFCARE.COM](https://twitter.com/priceturfcare)

The Tipping Trailer Leaf Sucker (Ref: TPSU)

Towed Sweeper & Collector
Ref: LB

Towed & Push Leaf Blower
Ref: TS98

Suction Unit
Ref: PSU

Honda Engine

Wandering Hose

GET READY FOR THE BIG TIDY UP!

SCH manufacture a wide range of powerful petrol engined leaf blowers, leaf collection units, and accompanying trailers.

SCH
(SUPPLIES) LIMITED

Contact us today for your **FREE** brochure featuring over 200 British products, or visit our website to find out more.

01473 328272 • SALES@SCHSUPPLIES.CO.UK • WWW.SCHSUPPLIES.CO.UK

What's in the shed

Jacobsen GP 400 greens mower
 Jacobsen G Plex 3 greens mower
 Jacobsen TR3 x 2 - for tees and approaches
 Jacobsen 305 fairway mower
 John Deere 8800A first cut mower
 John Deere 9009A semi rough mower
 John Deere Pro Gator
 John Deere HPX Gator
 Jacobsen Cushman
 John Deere 4066R tractor
 John Deere 4520 tractor
 New Holland TC27D tractor
 Toro Greens pro-1200 Turf iron
 Team Demount 600L sprayer
 Dakota 410 spinner top dresser
 Jacobsen TD1500 drop topdresser
 Wiedenmann Terra Spike XF
 Sisis Rotorake 1000 scarifier
 Sisis slitter
 Sisis Flexi-Brush
 Amazone GHLT 1500 flail collector
 Fleming 10TOP5 topper
 Doosan DX27Z 360 digger
 Terex 3000KR 3 tonne dumper
 Bomag 120 3 tonne road roller
 Browns mole plough
 Stihl brushcutters x 4
 Stihl hedgecutters x 2
 Allen hover mowers x 3
 Stihl blowers x 3
 John Deere rotary mowers x 2
 Chainsaws x 2



key, keeping it just ticking over rather than lots of peaks and troughs.

From November to February, I'll add sulphate of iron as and when we need it to our monthly app to control moss, plus strengthen the plant against disease, but I'm looking to reduce this application this year and only use it if I really have too. What we have been doing seems to work as we have been fungicide free now for twelve months. We did have a bout of fusarium back in December as we were sitting at about ten degrees and it was damp, so we would go out and hand tine, core patch and seed the affected areas and try and bring it through that way. The main aim is to go fungicide free from now on, especially when so many active ingredients have been taken off the market in recent years."

Since the new owners took over the course, they have backed Tom and the greenstaff and invested in new machinery to help improve the course. "I have two machines on lease at the moment; the tractors and a couple of the mowers we have bought outright, and I have the old fleet still running, which we are looking at replacing within the next year or two. At least, that is the plan. We like to use our

local dealer Masons Kings when purchasing our machinery and, being just down the road, it's ideal for me to go and pick up spare parts. All our machines are serviced, repaired and reground in house by our self-employed ex John Deere mechanic who works out of our sheds."

Tom likes to do as much as he can to help maintain and improve the ecology around the course. "We have just seeded out a wildflower meadow and incorporated bug hotels. All our flailing, hedge cutting and any major tree work is done outside the bird nesting season before March, weather depending. We have put out bird boxes around the course and would like to add bat boxes. Having such a large site, we can let quite a lot of areas go 'back to nature' so that the wildlife can thrive."

THE POINT
 AT POLZEATH



13th green



NEW
INSTRATA ELITE
DUAL ACTION

OUTSIDE

IN PROTECTION

CONTACT and SYSTEMIC action
against Microdochium

PROTECTIVE



CURATIVE



NEW powerful systemic difenoconazole plus fludioxonil contact action delivers reliable control whatever the weather - apply and it's rainfast in 30 minutes! Two applications per year.

 **Instrata® Elite**

syngenta®

Turf
REWARDS
PRODUCT

Syngenta UK Ltd. Registered in England No. 849037. CPC4, Capital Park, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5XE
Email: golf.syngenta@syngenta.com Web: www.greencast.co.uk
Instrata® Elite is a Registered Trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. Instrata® Elite (MAPP 17976) contains fludioxonil and difenoconazole. All other brand names used are trademarks of other manufacturers in which proprietary rights may exist.
Always read the label and product information before use. Use plant protection products safely. For more information including warning phrases and symbols refer to www.greencast.co.uk © Syngenta June 2017. G0.

ICL Distributed in the UK and Ireland by ICL Ltd. Tel: 01473 201100 Email: prof.sales@icl-group.com
Web: www.icl-st.co.uk

®



Bowood Estate

Three's company!

Surrounded by glorious countryside yet close to bustling centres of population, the 4,000-acre Bowood estate in Wiltshire draws thousands of visitors each year to its historic house, Capability Brown parkland and award-winning gardens. In recent years, a sporting attraction has been added; the 18-hole PGA championship course at Bowood Golf Club, complete with golf academy and country club hotel.

Bowood House has been home to the Lansdowne family since 1754, and opened to the public in 1975.

Paintings of the house from 1725 shows that the grounds were laid out in a semi-

formal style, but were dramatically reshaped by 'Capability' Brown, who was brought in by the 2nd Earl of Shelburne (1st Marquis of Lansdowne) in the 1760s.

Brown used all his skills and experience in designing a mile-long lake that dominates the park, draining the land, damming two streams and moving earth without machinery.

An arboretum features more than 700 species and twenty-three Champion trees (the tallest or largest of their kind). Capability Brown supplied the 'forest trees', with Lord Shelburne sourcing 'curious seeds and trees' including cedar of Lebanon, one of Brown's signature trees, several of which

can still be seen at Bowood, including the largest cedar in Europe.

The nearby Pinetum was first laid out in 1849, featuring trees planted in a geographical pattern according to their country of origin.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, following the advice of the Hon. Charles Hamilton of Painshill, a 'picturesque' rock landscape, with a cascade, grottoes and a hermit's cave, was constructed below Brown's dam at the head of the mile-long lake.

As well as giving pleasure to individual and groups of visitors, the parkland is also in demand as a set for film and TV productions,



The ongoing management of historic estates as thriving communities where people work together to make the most of the land's assets remains key to their commercial success and ultimate survival, and Bowood is a great example of this. Jane Carley met with Head Groundsman **Geoff Partridge**, Head Gardener **David Glass** and Head Greenkeeper **Jaey Goodchild** to discover more



Head Groundsman Geoff Partridge

including recent historical dramas 'Poldark' and 'Sanditon'.

Extensive areas of traditional parkland are used for events and festivals, from classic car shows to concerts and sporting events.

"Reinstatement after events for damage caused by vehicle movements keeps us busy - when Sanditon was filmed in June it rained incessantly!" comments Head Groundsman Geoff Partridge, who has been at Bowood for thirty-five years and has seen plenty of change in that time.

"Initially, the house, gardens and park were only open six days a week and for six months of the year; now it is daily opening from the end of March to November, so

there is less time for renovations and improvements. But the seasons have also changed - the Woodland Garden is only open for the six-week flowering period, and that now begins three weeks earlier."

He adds that the nature of some areas of the parkland has been altered to give a more natural appearance and enhance habitats, with new wildflower areas.

"They have also made the land easier to manage. For example, the site of a former bog garden had become wetland and was difficult to mow, but needed management to preserve the historic vista to the Doric temple. Once the flowers have seeded, we cut and collect with a flail collector to



The site of a former bog garden had become wetland and was difficult to mow, but needed management to preserve the historic vista to the Doric temple



We aim to undertake as much maintenance work as possible in-house, using hired in kit, and this necessitated moving the pathway by the lake back 15m, which was a major task for our team



Bowood House lies at the heart of a 4,000 acre estate where visitor attractions include terraces and private gardens

encourage future growth.”

Mowing is an ongoing job, with 5m gang mowers required to tackle the extensive parkland turf three days a week in the growing season, backed up with ride-ons for around shrubbery and other restricted areas. The events fields are grazed, with the sheep moved on as events build up.

Legislation has also shaped the landscape

recently; flood prevention regulations decreed that extreme flood events should not see water going over the dam, but flowing onto a 15m wide flood plain alongside the lake.

“We aim to undertake as much maintenance work as possible in-house, using hired in kit, and this necessitated moving the pathway by the lake back 15m,

which was a major task for our team.”

The original Victorian drainage system also has to be maintained, with clay pipes repaired or replaced as required. Mainly sandy soil drains well, easing groundcare tasks, apart from the hilly Woodland Garden, which has to be tackled in dry conditions.

On such a large estate, even routine tasks become a major undertaking, with six miles



The mile-long lake was built by Capability Brown and was later complemented by features such as the Doric Temple



A newer attraction is the extensive adventure playground, constructed from natural timber sourced on the estate.

//

We aim to work closely with the golf club team, including sharing their kit if we need it! There are just four of us working on the grounds, but mechanisation has made the job easier

of formal hedges to cut in the autumn!

A dedicated forestry team looks after the extensive woodland, but Geoff does tree risk assessments and has a climbing ticket, whilst a new member of the groundstaff has also brought arb skills.

“We aim to work closely with the golf club team, including sharing their kit if we need it! There are just four of us working on the

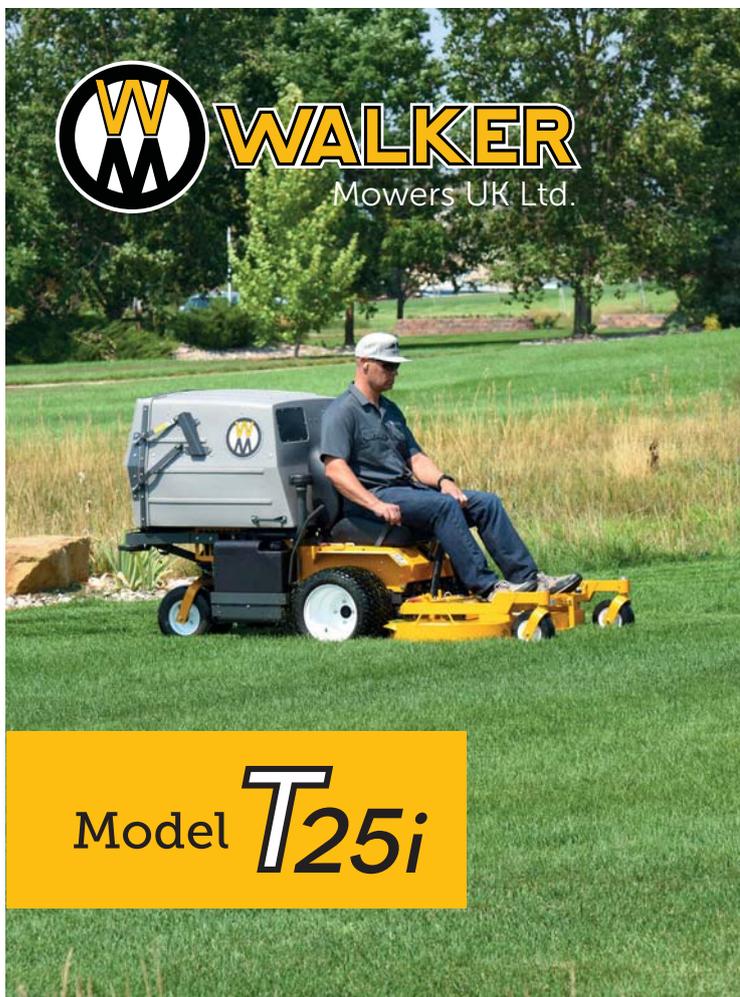
grounds, but mechanisation has made the job easier.”

This, he points out, includes leaf blowers replacing hand raking and more efficient brushcutters, which also offer HAVS protection not afforded to him at the start of his career.

Whilst much of the management is on a decidedly agricultural basis due to the sheer

scale of the park, specific areas get targeted attention; the new spillway needs grass cover to be maintained at 100mm, despite the attentions of geese, and high wear areas such as the adventure playground get extra fertiliser. Chemicals are kept to a minimum, restricted mainly to spot treatment with glyphosate.

Added from 1976 onwards - and a huge



Model **T25i**

See Walker Mowers at SALTEX and FutureScape Exhibitions

- Collection and Non-Collection models available
- Versatile attachments available allowing for year round productivity
- Beautifully cut lawns by design
- Design that is compact, balanced, and agile with precision steering, a close trimming radius, and superior reach and operator view allowing for maximum productivity

Contact us for a demo today!

01482 534470

sales@walkermowers.co.uk

Finance options available! Subject to status.



The family use the gardens for their own pleasure and to entertain guests, so they must always look good. The same goes for the public areas. For example, we plant a large border at the side of the house to offer interest through the season



The Woodland Garden features several rare hybrid rhododendrons and is open during its short flowering season



Head Gardener David Glass

attraction for younger visitors - is the extensive adventure playground featuring a full-size timber pirate ship. Realising that some of the equipment may be a bit ambitious for tiny tots, the designer also built a scaled down version for under-sevens.

"The playground has been built to RoSPA spec, and is inspected by RoSPA annually, although our use of natural estate timber for its construction is unusual," explains Geoff. "We have over-engineered every part for safety, and we check the equipment every day. Different members of the team check it so that they don't overlook a problem. It's extremely popular and brings a new generation to Bowood."

Gardens include formal terraces with views over the parkland, private walled gardens open for tours on specific dates, and the thirty acre Woodland Gardens open in the spring to showcase azaleas, rhododendrons - including thirty rare hardy hybrids - bluebells and magnolias.

Originally, the kitchen gardens for Bowood House, the private gardens were extensively redeveloped, to a plan by

consultant Rosie Abel Smith, thirteen years ago. The walled gardens are made up of four one acre squares, home to tulips, roses, lavender, peonies, hydrangeas, honeysuckle and many other plants. The layout includes a 250 metre formal border, a picking garden, working greenhouses and retains a kitchen garden full of fruits and vegetables. Arched arbours covered with trailing wisteria flowers over the pathways are the focal point in the spring, but as Head Gardener David Glass points out, the gardens have to perform throughout the year.

"The family use the gardens for their own pleasure and to entertain guests, so they must always look good. The same goes for the public areas. For example, we plant a large border at the side of the house to offer interest through the season, not just when plants are flowering, but also before and after. Tulips provide colour in the spring and there are shrubs for structure, herbaceous plants and some annuals which can be relied upon to keep flowering."

The terraces were planted with annuals in Victorian times, but have since been



Those lawns are more challenging as the hotel is built on made up ground from a former farm. It's hard work to prevent them from drying out and keep them green all year



Bowood's private walled garden is open on selected dates for tours, with features including spectacular Wisteria



Borders are planted to give colour and interest through Bowood's extended open season



There are six miles of formal hedge to cut

redeveloped as a rose garden to reflect the lower staffing levels for modern estates. David has a team of four, who are also tasked with caring for the gardens of the hotel.

"Those lawns are more challenging as the hotel is built on made up ground from a former farm. It's hard work to prevent them from drying out and keep them green all year."

The sandy soil in the Bowood House gardens does, however, facilitate a decidedly green and traditional method of weed control.

"We use hoes extensively to go through the ground and prevent weed seeds from germinating. We wear them out quickly!"

In 1992, a time when many estates were looking for farm diversifications, Lord Lansdowne decided to think big and

develop an area of rough grazing as an 18-hole golf course, selecting renowned designer Dave Thomas to realise his dream. Bowood Golf is now a PGA Championship course and home to the PGA's Academy for the south west. In 2011, it was complemented by a forty-three bedroom boutique hotel and country club.

Head Greenkeeper Jaey Goodchild explains: "We cater for members, corporate



GoGreen Plus

A sulphur-free complexed iron with 6 % potassium, that gives extended green-up, and hardens turf against the onset of disease.

- Rapid action
- Sulphur free
- Hardens turf against disease
- Surfactant/iron for dew control

For more information visit
www.sherriffamenity.com



Professional Turf Care and Amenity Solutions

T: 0115 9390202 F: 0115 9398031 E: info@sherriffamenity.com www.sherriffamenity.com



An 18-hole golf course was developed on former farmland in 1992, and Bowood Golf has since become a PGA Championship Course



The second hole is called Brick Kiln, due to its heritage as the area where clay for bricks to build the estate was extracted

clients and societies, plus hotel guests, so it's a real mix, and the parkland course is scenic and challenging with large areas of long rough, wildflowers and specimen trees with two plateaus and a valley in between."

He describes it as a typical Dave Thomas design with numerous bunkers, and enjoyed the opportunity to give the designer a tour of the established course a few years ago.

"It's a par 72 for men and a par 75 for ladies, as it's a long course at 7309 yards off the back tees, and was a true test for the recent English PGA Championships."

Soil types dictate how it is managed, with sandy loam on the plateaus and pure clay in

the valley.

"The second hole is called Brick Kiln, due to its heritage as the area where clay for bricks to build the estate was extracted."

Jaey comments that he has worked to improve the heavier areas and extend the playing window, tackling numerous fairways that struggled to support buggy traffic through the winter.

"It has required ongoing aeration, deep tining and topdressing, plus flocculation programmes such as adding calcium sulphate to manage clay and increase infiltration. Timing is key and we have to fit aeration into the golfing schedule to get the most out of it."

Drought-tolerant varieties and extra irrigation are targeted at the drier areas, and Jaey has also instigated a greens conversion programme.

"Overseeding has focused on increasing bents, supported by topdressing to create a fine, free-draining surface. I have also updated fertility inputs, using less nitrogen to stress poa," he explains. "The aim is to create strongly dominant bent grass swards, and most greens are now at 80% bent grass, with some stragglers. The challenges include the aspect of some greens, with



Head Greenkeeper Jaey Goodchild



A greens conversion programme is underway, with several greens now at 80% bent grasses, offering sustainability and more consistent performance



Long rough is carefully managed to meet the needs of golfers and provide a wildlife habitat

lower light and airflow favouring poa.”

Johnsons All Bent is the variety of choice, selected for the company’s track record and high recommended list scores.

Liquid composts are used alongside basic key nutrients, with industry veteran Martin Townsend advising on formulations.

“We have to respond to the need for golf to use resources properly, and accept that the availability of products such as fungicides is going to decline in the future,” he comments. “It’s also important to acknowledge the importance of the golf

course as a habitat and we aim to promote that to our members.”

Jaey points out that not only are bents more sustainable but contribute to more consistent greens performance, especially in spring, by minimising the influence of poa seedhead production.

This year, the greens were hollow and solid tined, overseeded and topdressed on 29th July, and the strongly established bent was clearly visible a month later.

The long rough serves a dual purpose as a habitat - attracting species such as finches

foraging for flower seeds - and an aesthetic feature, but requires careful management.

“We cut and collect at the end of the season for fertility reduction and graze with sheep from October onwards. We have an Amazone flail collector, and the shepherds also cut and bale for a higher output. The sheep play an important role in taking spring growth out and to tackle more persistent weeds such as ragwort, which we would otherwise have to spray just at the time we are busiest with mowing.”

The ecological impact of the roughs



We have to respond to the need for golf to use resources properly, and accept that the availability of products such as fungicides is going to decline in the future

TURF CARE TOOLS

IN STOCK WITH

PCpitchcare.com®
Serving The Turfcare Industry



WATCH
IN ACTION

FOLDING DEW BRUSH

FEATURES

- ✓ 3 m (10 ft) wide brush.
- ✓ Eliminates the age old problem of transportation.
- ✓ Easy to use slider design.
- ✓ Prevents any potential breakages.

£175.00



“Good piece of kit for those dew heavy mornings.”

BIG BANANA DEW SWITCH

FEATURES

- ✓ Aluminium construction.
- ✓ Solid Ferrule preventing distortion of the tube end.
- ✓ Features the BMS unique design, double plug at the handle end.
- ✓ Replaceable end sections available 2.5 m.

£69.00



“Easy to use and very efficient.”

FREE

Exclusive Offer: Call 01902 440250 or visit Pitchcare.com
Buy 1 x Folding Dew Brush and Get 1 x Helly Hansen Aker Tee Free





The undulations of the Dave Thomas-designed course add challenge and interest



The picturesque setting for the three-hole Par 3 academy, much of which can be viewed from the hotel



We have electric and hybrid mowers, and they have to be the way forward, but I'm keeping an eye on the market. I'm fortunate to have a good mechanic to look after such expensive technology

always has to be balanced with the need to keep it playable, and this has been another focus for their management.

Bowood has a fleet of ten ride-on greens mowers and Jaey is keen on alternative power sources, but says he chooses machines for a specific job.

"We have electric and hybrid mowers, and they have to be the way forward, but I'm keeping an eye on the market. I'm fortunate to have a good mechanic to look after such expensive technology."

With eight greenkeepers in the team including his deputy Samantha Day, Jaey shares ideas and equipment with Geoff and his team, and comments that being part of a larger overall squad makes it an enjoyable job.

"We've got a wider pool of experts to call on than at many golf clubs, such as the

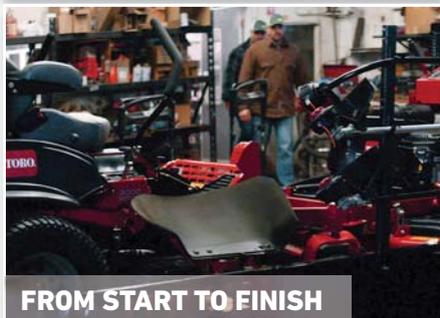
forestry team. Communications are more open and Lord Lansdowne also takes a keen interest."

David agrees: "We work more like a traditional estate team than at many establishments, and that helps us achieve our mutual goals."



The golf course is complemented by a 43 bedroom hotel and the PGA's Academy for the South West

FROM START ■ TO ■ FINISH™



See
us at
Saltex

Showcasing exciting
new products on
Stand E065

From hardscape to landscape to mowing, Toro® has you covered with a full range of solutions for the jobs you need to do.

With over 100 years of expertise in innovative solutions for the outdoor environment, Toro continues to develop equipment designed with input from grounds professionals.

Our agronomists and engineers are always hard at work developing new solutions to deliver what matters most to professionals – increased productivity, reduced fuel consumption, ease of use, durability and reliability.

From start to finish, tradesmen know they can count on Toro to get the job done.



Boat of Garten Golf Club

Full steam ahead

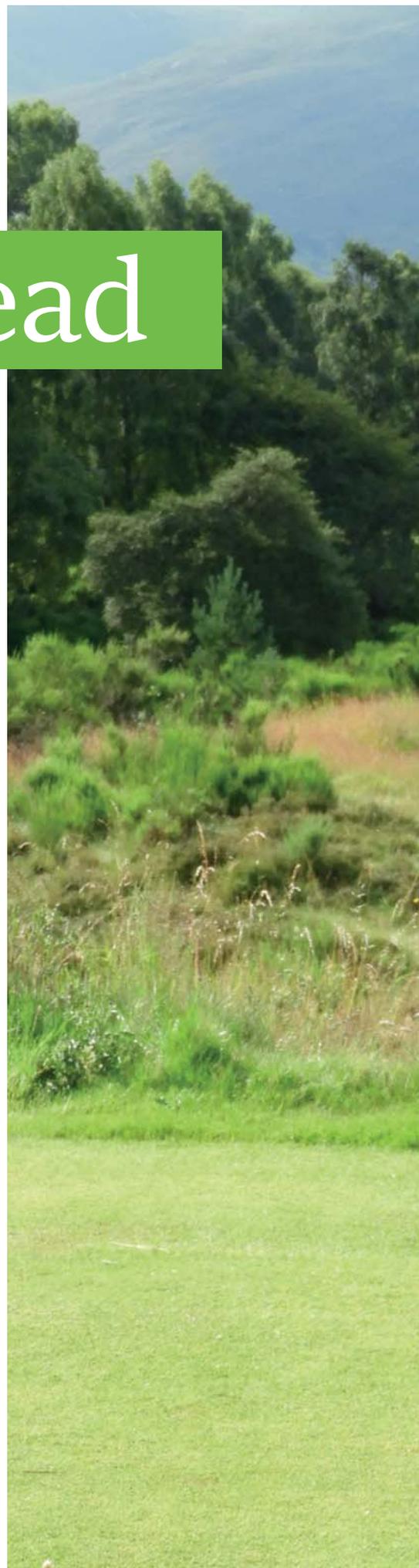
Located at the gateway to the Highlands, Boat of Garten Golf Club is an enchanting place. Flanking the course to the west is the quaint Strathspey Railway, and the lovingly restored steam trains occasionally puff and pant their way past the course. Lee Williams met with newly appointed Head Greenkeeper **Michael Mann** to see how he's settling into his new role

Michael has only been at the club since April 2019, and it has been a somewhat steep learning curve since landing the position. He explains his start in the industry and the path he's taken to be in charge of such a beautiful golf course. "Straight out of school, I got an apprenticeship at Keith Golf Club, where I spent seven years. A job then came up at Carrbridge Golf Course, which is a nine-hole course only six miles from here, where I took over as head greenkeeper looking after the course as a lone worker for most of the year. I spent twenty-two years at Carrbridge before a position opened (in January this year) as first assistant greenkeeper here at the Boat of Garten. The opening changed to a head greenkeeper position, which I was asked

to apply for instead, and subsequently started in April. Jordan Shaw moved up to first assistant (who has an NVQ level 2 in sports turf) and we took on two more guys who have also been here since April; John Ingles is assistant greenkeeper and Bruce Grant, a summer casual who is currently at university. It's been a big turnaround of staff for the club but we are slowly getting there. A member of the club looks after the gardens around the clubhouse and we will soon be looking to take on an apprentice greenkeeper. It's been a challenge, but I'm loving getting my teeth into it."

Michael has an NVQ level 2 in sports turf which he took out at Elmwood College and holds his spraying certificates PA1, 2 and 6.

The heathland course sits on a natural gravel layer with varying levels of a sandy topsoil, and this makes the course very free







We are blessed with an abundance of wildlife which can be seen when you're out on the course

draining. "Flooding on the course is very isolated. It did flood on Wednesday morning after the heavy rain and thunderstorms but, by 10.00am, we were open."

Being at the foot of the Cairngorm mountains, the Boat of Garten sits 220 metres (720 ft) above sea level, which can cause issues with snow in winter. "We had quite a late snowfall this year and, of course, if there is snow coverage this closes the course. Funnily enough, the snow has only just cleared off the top of

the mountains in June. We are also quite susceptible to heavy frosts and a lot of low temperatures but, once they lift, the course picks up naturally."

In recent years, three of the greens have been rebuilt to USPGA specifications and the rest are the original James Braid greens, which are predominantly made up of bent grass. Since he came in, I asked what work has been carried out on the greens and what plans are there for future maintenance? "We have applied between thirty-five and forty tonnes of topdressing since April, mainly filling in a lot of core holes from last winter. The verti-cutting units have been on as much as possible to help clean up the surface. We are cutting at 3.5mm using a triple mower and now they will be cut or rolled seven days a week up until the winter months."



What's in the shed

- Toro Reelmaster 3100-D fairway mower
- Jacobsen Super LF 1880 fairway mower
- Kubota L5740 tractor with front loader
- Kubota L5030 tractor
- Dakota 410 Turf Tender
- Wiedenmann Terra Spike Sweep-N-Fill brush
- John Deere Gator
- Cushman Hauler
- Lastec Articulator
- Hardi Jazz 200 litre sprayer
- Redexim Speed Seed 1100
- Husqvarna blower and various Flymo hovermowers
- Kawasaki strimmer



Michael doesn't have a set fertiliser programme for the greens at present and has not needed to use any fungicides. "In April, I applied ICL's Greenmaster Cold Start, followed a month later with Greenmaster 8:0:0. I topped this up with a treatment of ICL's H2Pro wetting agent and seaweed mix every three weeks. We have been getting some great results; the sward is thickening up and the root depth has improved significantly. I will look at carrying out soil

tests in the coming months and put a more rigid fertiliser programme together based on the results. We haven't used any fungicides since I have been here, but there was quite a lot of disease scars after last winter. As a result of topdressing, verti-cutting and a little hand seeding, it seems to have recovered and, luckily, we haven't seen any signs of disease so far this season."

Having only being at the club for three months at the time of the interview, I was



18th tee

ClearWater

Water Recycling Systems

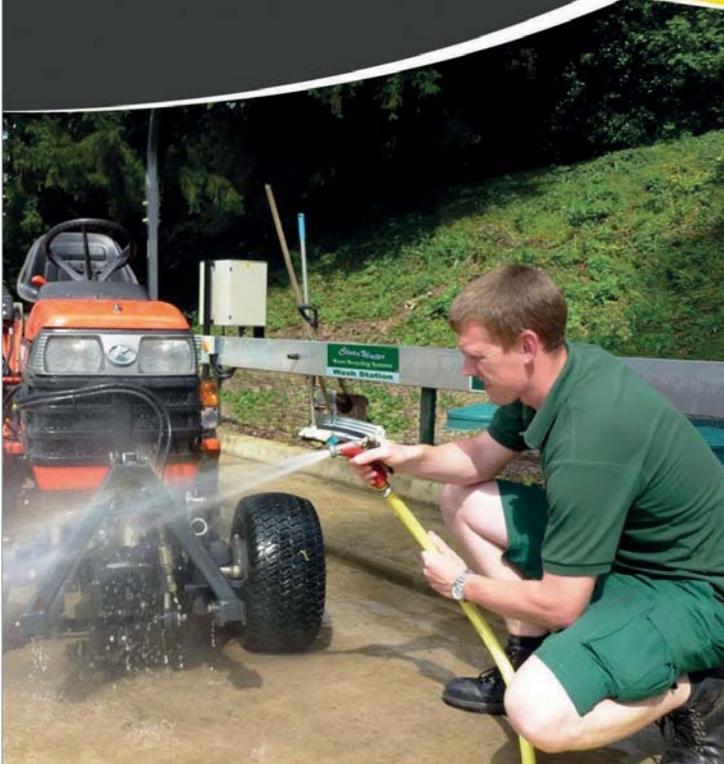
A division of Acumen Waste Services

Credit Options Available To Suit All Customers!

ClearWater ticks all the right boxes

- ✓ **A Genuine Biological Water Recycling System**
Not all washpad solutions recycle!
- ✓ **Installed Safely Below Ground**
away from vandals and it looks good!
- ✓ **Low Operating Temperature**
Well below 20°C and allays fears of Legionella developing
- ✓ **Large 5000 Litre Water Capacity**
More than most offer and allows time for full treatment
- ✓ **WTL (Water Technology List) Approved**
Means tax advantages under the ECA scheme
- ✓ **Only Two Moving Parts**
Less to go wrong and minimal maintenance
- ✓ **Self-Install Option**
The only bio-system offering this; means huge savings!

Call now 01977 529 580
www.clearwater.co.uk www.acumenwaste.co.uk
clearwater@acumenwaste.co.uk



Getting Personal

Michael Mann - he doesn't like MPs or bad golfers

Who are you?

Michael Mann, Head Greenkeeper at Boat of Garten Golf Club.

Family status?

Married to Elaine, two sons Aaron and Aiden. Aiden sadly passed away ten years ago.

What's been the highlight of your grounds career so far? Not sure if I've reached it yet.

If your younger self saw you now, what would they think? He's done well.

Which famous people wind you up? All MPs.

What job would you love, other than your own? Pro golfer.

What was the most embarrassing moment in your life? Breaking my leg in two places playing golf.

Brexit or Remain? Brexit.

What is your favourite film? Blade Runner.

What scares you? Heights.

What is your favourite sport? Golf.

What would you cast into Room 101? Bad golfers.

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party? Jimi Hendrix, Miguel Angel Jimenez and Billy Connolly.

What's the best advice you have ever



been given? Stick to your guns.

What's your favourite piece of trivia? Antarctica is classed as a desert.

What's your favourite smell? Cuban cigars.

Which three albums would you take to a desert island? Thin Lizzy - Jailbreak, Jimi Hendrix - Electric Ladyland, Temperance Movement - Temperance Movement.

What's the daftest work-related question you have ever been asked? What time will the frost lift?

What's your favourite piece of kit? Dakota 410 topdresser.

What three words would you use to describe yourself? Witty, loyal and happy.

What is the single most useful thing you could tell a 16-year-old groundsman/greenkeeper? Go to bed early.

What talent would you like to have? Play the guitar.

What law/legislation would you like to see introduced? Bring back the death penalty.



interested to know what Michael's main challenges have been. "I would have to say the biggest was getting grass back on the course as it suffered quite badly

last year in the drought. The fairways were pretty much burned out, greens were a bit thin in places and surrounds and approaches were quite poor. We have done a lot of maintenance over the last three months to get them back in play."

What's your plan going forward? "It will be a matter of 'wait and see' at the moment and determine how things develop over the summer. The club has just invested in a new Charterhouse Speed Seed, and I believe it is the first one in Scotland - it's a new model. So, I intend to overseed the greens with a bent grass seed mix then, at the back end of the summer season I will use a fescue grass seed mix on tees and any worn areas on the fairways. It will also be a case of putting an aeration programme together for the greens



We have been getting some great results; the sward is thickening up and the root depth has improved significantly



Fairway undulations



Left to right: John Ingles - Senior Greenkeeper, Jordan Shaw - Assistant Greenkeeper and Bruce Grant - Seasonal Greenkeeper



We have applied between thirty-five and forty tonnes of top dressing since April, mainly filling in a lot of core holes from last winter

and tees, consisting of terra-spiking and hollow-coring.”

Whilst Michael was giving me a buggy tour of the course, I couldn't help noticing the severe undulations in the fairways as we bounced up and down. I joked with Michael about who picks the short straw when it comes to cutting the fairways. “We take it in turns - it is a real backbreaker and

you have to take your time. We are cutting at the height of 12mm, using a Jacobson LF fairway mower with greens units as this seems to work best, but the fairways really do test the reliability of the machines.”

Since he arrived, the club have supported his requests for new machinery to help improve the quality and presentation of the course. “We have just purchased a new

seeder outright and a Toro greens machine which was second-hand. Going forward, the club is hopefully going to look at a renewal programme to replace the machines every two or three years. I haven't put a list together of what machinery is required just yet, but the main aim was getting the new greens machine. We will decide at the end of the season what's needed.”



**SEE IT AT SALTEX 2019
STAND K060**

MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE SINCE 1962 

Follow us on:    





CRX-320
GOLF & SPORTS TURF MOWER

- ✓ UNRIVALLED CUT QUALITY
- ✓ ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE
- ✓ INCREDIBLE GROUND CONTOUR FOLLOWING
- ✓ MINIMAL MAINTENANCE

The most nimble, smooth, ground hugging Wessex roller machine to date!

SCAN HERE TO FIND OUT MORE



TRY IT FOR YOURSELF! CALL US TO BOOK YOUR FREE DEMO TODAY!

T: 01264 345870 www.wessexintl.com

PC1018. Wessex International is a trading name of Wessex International Machinery.

History

The Boat of Garten Golf Club was founded in 1898 and the celebrated Scottish architect James Braid was asked to convert the original 9-hole layout to an 18-hole course in 1930. It's a short course, measuring slightly less than 5,900 yards from the back tees.

"The Boat" is set alongside the River Spey in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park, only ten minutes drive from the bustling village of Aviemore. The Boat of Garten is also known as the Osprey village. The River Spey lies to the east of the heath and beyond that are the distant peaks of the Monadhliath Mountains. Dominating to the south are the mighty, snow-capped Cairngorms.



Are you loyal to any one local dealer or manufacturer? "I do like Toro when it comes to greens machines, but it will be what best suits the course with the terrain. We will probably have to have a lot of demonstrations of various machines to see what works best out there."

General servicing, machinery maintenance and cylinder regrinding are carried out in-house. However, if it is something Michael and his team can't fix, the work be outsourced.

Plans for future projects are yet to be discussed, but Michael already knows what needs to be done. "For me, we need to do a lot of bunker renovation, and the pathways need looking at. On top of that, it will be a matter of what the club believes are their priorities and what budgets are available."

Michael tells me wildlife is abundant out on the course from rabbits, deer and

badgers - to name a few, but they can cause damage from time to time. "We try not to disturb the wildlife as they add a focal point for our overseas visitors, so we just tend to tidy up after them. Unfortunately, we do suffer from moles, so we do have a local guy who comes in to help control them."

The course is close to Loch Garten, a large Highland freshwater loch, which is surrounded by the tall pine trees of the Abernethy Forest (adjacent to the loch), which is an RSPB nature reserve. The loch is renowned for its breeding population of ospreys, which lends Boat

of Garten its nickname 'The Osprey Village.' With this in mind, I asked Michael if he's been lucky enough to spot any on the golf course. "Not yet, but I may get lucky in my time at the club. As I said earlier, we are blessed with an abundance of wildlife which can be seen when you're out on the course."



I would have to say the biggest challenge was getting grass back on the course as it suffered quite badly last year in the drought





PRECISION, **RELIABILITY** & **QUALITY** *when it* MATTERED MOST



PAUL ARMITAGE, General Manager
LE GOLF NATIONAL, HOME OF THE 2018 RYDER CUP

Jacobsen. Built for your success



From breathtaking performance and a drive to innovate, to people and support you know you can trust, everything we do is built for your success.

Experience what complete dedication feels like. Experience Jacobsen.

→ **BOOK A TEST DRIVE NOW AT:**
jacobsenbuilt.com

JACOBSEN[®]

FIFA Update

Tournament Delivery

Spring 2019 was a formative time for FIFA's Pitch Management Manager, **Alan Ferguson**, as he and his extended team delivered the first two of four tournaments scheduled for 2019. Blair Ferguson reports

When most football fans talk about World Cup football, they are usually referring to the men's event held once every four years. Beyond one of the most significant sporting events on the planet, what many people won't realise is that FIFA host four World Cups every year. The age group World Cups, as they are referred to, are held once every two years and age group finals for male and female teams are held at Under 17 and Under 20 level.

FIFA also host the Club World Cup annually, although this is about to be

changed to a 24-team tournament to be held in its new format for the first time in 2021. FIFA also manage the Olympic football tournament on behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), with the next edition in Tokyo during the 2020 Olympic games.

The U20s World Cup in Poland and Women's World Cup in France were the first two to be fully covered by the pitch management team, and the preparations, challenges and successes have profoundly influenced the process going forward to future tournaments.

The latest men's U20 World Cup in Poland

was played throughout May and June 2019. The tournament is a 24-team event and was played in the Polish cities of Gdynia, Tychy, Bydgoszcz, Bieska-Biala, Lublin and Lodz. Each host city stadium was supported by four training sites within a 40-minute drive of the stadium.

The U20 tournament is seen as a youth tournament in the eyes of the majority of hosts and, as such, host countries tend to opt for smaller stadium venues with a capacity of 15,000 to 20,000 to ensure they are full and create a good atmosphere. Alan agrees with the stadium approach, but where the FIFA pitch team has run into





Pitch testing in Lodz



John Mantrip from Tottenham shows how mowing should be done



Players with transfer values running to tens of millions of pounds, euros or dollars who play and train on some of the best pitches on the planet expect the same standards when they come to a World Cup

issues with this mindset is host countries opting for training sites outside the professional game that provide a lower starting infrastructure.

Alan explained: “The game has moved on significantly in the past six years or so, with many of the players eligible to play in this tournament already making their full debuts in the world’s major leagues. Players with transfer values running to tens of millions of pounds, euros or dollars who play and train on some of the best pitches on the planet expect the same standards when they come to a World Cup. We need to provide that for them because the tournament should be valued by everyone involved.”

“The process of pitch selection has been one of the areas we’ve become more involved in since the recent restructure. Very often, the entire selection of training sites has been dictated by the location and quality of the hotel for the teams. FIFA

guidelines for selection of training sites currently states training pitches should be no more than a 20-minute drive by coach. I’ve been heavily involved with the tournaments in Poland and France, and pitch options in several cities were limited.”

“Sometimes, we’ll drive past pitches in-between venues that are better than what we’ve just looked at, so we’re looking at extending the radius time up to 30-minutes. The initial selection of sites now involves the bid evaluation team, FIFA accommodation, FIFA team services and the pitch team. The input from all four teams gets considered and, hopefully, it’ll lead to the most practical choices being made.”

Once the final selection of training sites has been made, there is a full inspection of the pitches that are going to be used. This is now a very detailed inspection involving FIFA’s lead consultants, iTurf Management Limited, under the watchful eye of chief



The Lodz Stadium ahead of the U-20 World Cup



Delegates being shown how to set a pedestrian mower



Andy Cole takes delegates through pitch testing

technical officer, Andy Cole, who works closely with Alan. Andy has vast experience of how FIFA worked in the past having worked at the 2010 finals in South Africa, the 2014 finals in Brazil and 2018 in Russia as well as several youth World Cups. Through that experience, he has been able to assess and relay what he felt was missing in the pitch delivery process.

To give more time for pitch assessment, Alan has taken the pitch inspection visits out of the main schedule because he felt there wasn't enough time to carry out a full evaluation. Whilst iTurf focus on matters

under the surface and carry out critical tests for hardness, moisture, traction, density and level, Alan focuses on the venues equipment, staffing levels and experience and other essential infrastructure. As each venue visit is completed, all the notes are compiled into a visit report before moving onto the next one. The team will typically look at one stadium pitch and four training pitches in a day, with at least one and a half hours spent at each venue.

Once the first full inspection is completed, Alan returns to Zurich to evaluate all the reports. Pitches are scored and rated for risk

in an easy to identify traffic light system. Budget costs are also put against each venue and, gradually, a picture emerges of what the pitch delivery looks like.

Each FIFA Tournament has a director from the competitions department who will control the tournament budget. Each department involved in the delivery of the tournament will report its initial findings to the director and then agree the budget going forward.

During the inspection, Alan will have tried to gauge the skill set of the ground teams who will have to deliver the pitches under



TERRA RAKE

Highly productive & efficient thatch removal. Available in FIVE versions from 1.7m to 4.6m including an electric trailed 1.7m option.





FOR DEALER INFO VISIT
WIEDENMANN.CO.UK
OR CALL 0141 814 3366

Follow us on Twitter @WIEDENMANNUK



NEW MULTI DIRECTIONAL PORTABLE GOAL

DEVOSHIFT

Designed for high quality & synthetic pitches.

OUT NOW!

EASY TO STORE & FITS THROUGH TIGHT SPACES

MOVES IN ALL DIRECTIONS

PATENT PENDING
GB1820948.6





WWW.MARKHARROD.COM OR CALL 01785 594421



GET SOCIAL FOR ALL OF OUR LATEST NEWS & OFFERS





Andy Jackson from Stoke City shows how a centre circle should be marked



GrasPro clinic in progress



It's amazing how many guys in Poland and France we found who had never been shown how to set up or use a pedestrian cylinder mower correctly. We even had some who had never been properly shown how to mark out

the guidance of his team. Part of the new build-up to the finals involves an expanded training workshop brought in by Alan.

“Previously, the pitch element was delivered in a 45-minute powerpoint which was simply not enough,” he explained. “It’s not till you move outside the UK you realise how skilled and professional our grounds teams are here.”

“We decided to deliver a new format of pitch workshop, which we did in both Poland and France, with the main aim being able to bring all the grounds teams together. One of the objectives of my new role is to raise the quality of educational opportunities for grounds teams who work in the 211 member associations around the World. For those who are hosting tournaments, it offers me an instant chance to start that process.”

“It’s amazing how many guys in Poland and France we found who had never been shown how to set up or use a pedestrian cylinder mower correctly. We even had

some who had never been properly shown how to mark out. The new delivery has been really well received because we’ve combined classroom education with the practical side. To bring consistency to each tournament, we’ve written a technical handbook that gets translated into the host nation’s language, and that means we’re all literally reading from the same page.”

All of the work that was put into the U20’s tournament was simultaneously put into the successful Women’s World Cup in France. Unusually, the two tournaments overlapped by two weeks meaning, at one point, Alan and his team had a total of 79 pitches under their guidance between the two countries. This challenge had been anticipated, and a decision was made to monitor pitches using the data collection system, GrasPro.

The Iceland based company’s data collection product appealed to FIFA because it is easy to use, and pitch information is not shared with any third



Jonathan Calderwood's Parc des Prince pitch in Paris



Testing surface hardness in Nice

Pitch watering ahead of a game

parties. "As well as delivering the two tournaments in Poland and France, work is already underway on future tournaments," Alan explained. "We had work going on in Qatar as well as starting the build-up to the U20 finals in Brazil, so having the ability to capture and manage all the data is massive for us. The GrasPro team were also present at the workshops showing the grounds teams how to navigate around the site, and each team's site is in their own language making use of the site easy for them."

Introducing new pitch selection criteria,

education and technology has been done to rectify negative feedback FIFA received in the past. The latest edition of the Women's World Cup was under pressure from the start following criticism during the 2015 finals in Canada when all the games were played on synthetic turf. FIFA was determined that the 2019 finals would be remembered for all the right reasons and create a platform from which the Women's game can progress. The French finals were hosted in the nine cities of Le-Havre, Rennes, Reims, Valenciennes, Paris,

Grenoble, Nice, Lyon and Montpellier. Alan is in no doubt that having a hybrid pitch of one type or another in all the stadia was a massive boost. In total, there were four different hybrid systems used, including GrassMaster, Mixto, AirFibre and PlayMaster and, for Alan, they all made a valuable contribution along with the turf professionals who were maintaining them.

"The jewel in the crown was having the Parc des Princes in Paris under the management of Jonathan Calderwood for the opening game," Alan said. "I have known

Barenbrug's new top 10 variety
BARADONA
 New for 2020

Let Baradona give your pitch a
HELPING HAND

Baradona found in



We are offering TWO lucky winners enough seed to completely renovate an entire pitch

info@barenbrug.co.uk | 01359 272000 | www.barenbrug.co.uk



A delivery of Dennis Premiers



Opening Ceremony preparations



We were already halfway through the tournament in Poland, which had gone well for us despite it being the wettest spring in 60-years, when I moved to Paris where we were having the hottest summer on record

Jonathan for a long time and, in my opinion, he is one of the best and most professional groundsmen I have ever met. Now and again we get to work with some brilliant groundsmen and it makes our job a lot easier, but it also shows the importance of educating the less experienced groundsmen we work with."

"A major tournament equates to a lot of pitch hours and, to the teams, every hour they spend on grass counts. The 2019 Women's World Cup kicked off on the 7th June 2019 and concluded four weeks later on the 7th July with a total of 52 games in 9 stadia and over 700 pitch hours on 38 training pitches, bringing the overall tournament total to 983 hours and 45 minutes. To ensure those hours were successful, we had to prepare properly and be adaptable to conditions during the

tournament."

"We were already halfway through the tournament in Poland, which had gone well for us despite it being the wettest spring in 60-years, when I moved to Paris for the Women's World Cup where we were having the hottest summer on record. The readiness tour undertaken ten days ahead of the French finals had shown some of the training sites were still a bit short and not quite up to standard, but I'd taken the precaution of lining up three contractors to step in at short notice to help get the pitches over the line. We knew from the monthly inspections where we might have some issues."

"It's a massive ask for some of the smaller venues used for weekly amateur football to suddenly have to facilitate a World Cup. That's why the build-up has been set up to



Opening Ceremony in progress



The Women's World Cup Final pitch at Olympique Lyonnais - seventeen days after a new PlayMaster surface was laid

try and cover all the bases. The inspections had also revealed that many of the training sites did not have any pedestrian mowing equipment. We've learned from this and, going forward, the readiness tour will take place one month out to allow more time for late corrections to be carried out."

On this occasion, to give the grounds teams the tools they needed, Alan asked iTurf to run a tender for the procurement of 37 pedestrian mowers. The successful bid came from Dennis, due in part to their established dealer network in France, and the 37 Premiers were duly built and delivered in time for the finals. The tournament process can often highlight issues, like those of the pedestrian mowers, but others come more unexpectedly.

The final phase of the Women's World Cup was played in Lyon. The venue was selected as it is home to French and European Women's Champions Lyon and is a hotbed for Women's football in France. This decision proved to be a good one as both semi-finals and final were played in front of capacity crowds, but one thing FIFA had not planned on was the Groupama Arena holding three concerts ahead of the finals. During discussions with the venue in the early part of the year, there had been no mention of concerts. A valuable lesson was learned by Alan here as FIFA had only

stated in their contract an exclusivity period of 10 days. This left a window of three weeks at the end of the French league season which the club duly took advantage of. Two nights of Ed Sheeran and one night with Phil Collins meant the pitch that had played well all season had to be replaced.

This left seventeen days to lay a new pitch and grow it in. Alan explained: "From our side, I had to make sure the stadium picked a good system that would remain stable under play. I had already looked at stitching a natural turf, but the stadium wanted something more flexible to fit their business model. After discussions, they opted for PlayMaster."

"With such a short timeframe, we had to make sure everything went right. We provided a pitch venue manager to work closely with the Lyon stadium team to ensure everything was set for the turf arriving from Milan."

"Happily, everything went well, and the pitch played well. As well as being able to take the effects of the two semi-finals and the final, the pitch also had to take the rehearsals for the awards ceremony and closing flag ceremony. To help its cause, rehearsals were carefully scheduled to reduce foot traffic and any potential damage."

Having stadia from the French Ligue 1 for

the finals was a big help for the FIFA team. They were already well equipped and staffed, allowing the necessary funding to be invested in the training sites. Several had already had significant tournament experience from the 2016 Euro finals held in France. The 52-game programme was well delivered, and feedback from teams has been starkly different from the 2015 finals in Canada.

Poland and France have been the first two tournaments for Alan and have been instrumental in forming what a tournament delivery will look like going forward. After detailed debriefings sessions in Zurich, the lessons learned, and corrections made have already been applied for the U17s World Cup, which takes place throughout October and November in Brazil.



SPPS - World Class Ground Care



- Ultra low ground pressure
- 3m or 4m boom
- 80L or 120L tank
- Excellent manoeuvrability
- Clutch drive system

T: 01353 862044 E: info@techneat.co.uk W: www.techneat.co.uk

Techneat
engineering ltd

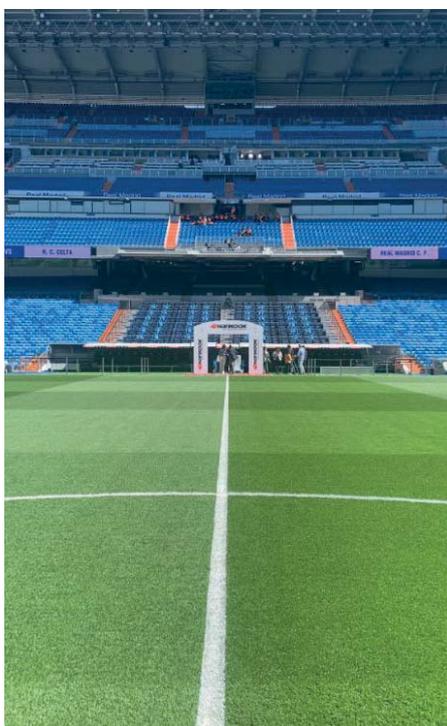
Keynote interview

The dream is Real for Paul

The career of **Paul Burgess** started at Blackpool Football Club and now he's the Director of Grounds and Environment at Real Madrid. In the latest of our Keynote interviews, Kerry Haywood spoke to Paul about his career path and life at one of the world's most iconic football clubs







Pitchcare: What sports were you involved with in your younger days - did you play football?

Paul Burgess: I both played and watched football. It was my life.

How did you become a groundsman and what has been your career progression?

When I was fourteen years old, I realised that I wouldn't make it as a professional footballer, so I wondered how else I could get involved in the game. It was 1992 and work experience was coming up at school (which involved two weeks work based placement) and, around that time, I had read an article about a head groundsman in Shoot or Match magazine (football magazines back in the day!). The article featured Steve Braddock, Head Groundsman at Arsenal FC, and this inspired me to ask if my work experience could be carried out at my local professional team - incidentally the team I supported both home and away - Blackpool FC. My teacher thought my request was crazy but set about making it happen. I did a good job and they

offered me school holiday and matchday work which I loved. Two years later, I went to Myerscough college for one year, before joining Blackpool as an apprentice groundsman (a position they created for me just before I turned seventeen). I continued at college on a one day a week release to complete my qualifications.

Roughly eighteen months later, I saw an advert for an assistant groundsman at a north London football club, but the application process went through Hewitts Sportsturf and I had no idea which team the job was for. I got the chance to interview and, lo and behold, it was conducted by the very man that I had read about and who had inspired me to do work experience at Blackpool FC; Steve Braddock. After two interviews I landed the job, moved out of my parents' house close to Blackpool and headed down to London, which was quite a big move at the time!! I worked very closely with Steve which involved long hours, but I learnt some new and interesting techniques on how to maintain and renovate football pitches.



Without doubt, grow lights improved every single pitch and, what once was acceptable, was no longer



End of season renovations



Listen, learn, communicate with your peers, visit other installations and have objectives and plans. Believe in them and go get them, but be patient

Three years after joining Arsenal, the club moved out of rented training facilities and into their own purpose-built training facility at London Colney. Initially, myself and Steve were sharing the responsibility for the supervision of this site, but it soon became clear that it wasn't the most effective policy. Steve took the decision to focus on running the training facility and so, in 1999 at the very young age of twenty-one, I became Stadium Head Groundsman - without doubt

the youngest by some years in those days! Then, thanks to the success of the team, we were playing year after year in Europe which meant that the pitch and myself were starting to receive a high profile. UEFA then asked me to oversee Euro 2004 in Portugal, which I did on my own and, it's fair to say that it went very well and is arguably one of the best tournaments for pitches to date. I was then asked to oversee various finals for UEFA and took joint responsibility for Euro

2008 with another consultant.

Whilst all this was going on, I was heavily involved in the new Arsenal stadium (The Emirates) where the design brief was 60,000 capacity and a pitch as good as our old stadium at Highbury. This project gave me a powerful and important role; probably never to be repeated! As a head groundsman, I had a vast amount of influence on the entire project - from the

IT'S WHAT'S UNDERNEATH THAT COUNTS

Mansfield Sand - Success at your feet

Demand the best for your pitch renovation or construction.

- Silica-sands (medium course, medium and fine)
- Rootzone (sand-soil and sand compost)
- Fibresand (fibre reinforced sand and fibre rootzone)

Contact us for more information about our product range, or to benefit from **FREE** technical advice from our team of experts, or for a **FREE** no obligation site survey.

Mansfield Sand

01623 707555

Email: info@mansfield-sand.co.uk
www.mansfield-sand.co.uk



Air injection



Field renovations

stadium bowl shape, roof design, airflow, big screen positioning, retractable publicity boards, pitch access and pitch design. Thanks to this project, and after extensive research putting together the Rolls Royce of technology back then (in 2005), I became the first person in the world to purchase and treat a whole pitch to artificial grow lights.

Thanks to all the hard work, we not only achieved the objective of the club in making the pitch as good as Highbury, but we actually made it even better. I would go as far to say, it was the first 60,000 stadium enclosed with winter conditions to have a good pitch - this, today, is far more common.

In late 2008, I was approached by the biggest club in the world, Real Madrid, to sort out their failing pitch which, at the time, was one of the worst pitches in Europe. The remit also included the establishment of the grounds and gardens for the newly constructed training facility. Following negotiations, I accepted the Grounds Manager position and left Arsenal in 2009 (thirteen years after joining) to head for

Spain. The end of my first year included hosting the 2010 Champions League final and then, following nine successful years, in 2018 the club made me a Director and offered me a new 'Department for the Environment' for me to create, establish and oversee - giving me the title I have today.

You are head groundsman at one of the world's most iconic football clubs. Does that put additional pressures on your work by being in the media spotlight?

For sure yes. We have 80,000 plus at every game, very high profile players and a TV audience second to none. The Spanish media are also very intense; the two biggest selling papers in Spain write fourteen pages of material a day on the club, plus our in-house 24-hour TV channels in both English and Spanish.

What tempted you to leave one of the Premier League's top clubs to head for Spain?

I always had the ambition to take my skills abroad. I wanted to prove myself in another culture, another language, have new

challenges and experience different weather and disease situations.

How quickly did you settle in Spain? Was the language barrier an issue?

I settled very quickly. The language was a huge barrier at the beginning but, with time, that got easier.

What contact do you have with the professional players?

I'm in daily contact with the coaches and spontaneous contact with the players - some more than others.

Are you able to work to your own schedule or does higher management dictate what you do on a daily, weekly or monthly basis?

I have complete control over my departments and my work - as long as I'm inside my budget, and I have the final say on pitch activity and design.

Did you find that working in a warmer climate brought additional challenges?

The climate in Madrid is very challenging. We can go to -5 or 6 in the winter to a high



Large landscaped gardens all encompassing the corporate colours and including 46,000 seasonal flowers and 9,000m² Agröstis T1



of 43 in the summer. Having said that winter, in many ways, is similar to the UK although drier with more blue sky. On the other hand, summer is very complicated with highs of 43 and lows of 30 and no rain for four months. Obviously, this has massive disease consequences and there is far less chemical availability compared to the UK. It is, without any doubt, a far more challenging environment to that I had in London. In addition to this, we also have major shade issues at certain times of year, and the diversity of our stadium business plan means it is one of the busiest venues in Europe.

What is the most difficult problem you have had to deal with at Real Madrid?

It's hard to pinpoint any one factor. However, at the beginning, I had to overcome all of these issues: the language, weather, creating a department from scratch, bringing turf culture into the club, understanding the stadium, taking on board one of the biggest training facilities when my background was only one pitch in a stadium, water quality, new diseases, working with turfed pitches and developing a stadium business plan for the pitch ... these are just a few that spring to mind!

Do the TV pundits and press folk talk common sense? For example, some pitches come in for pre- and post-match criticism. Is that fair?

I believe it is, yes. We should try and educate them better, but I think we should be judged and

made accountable both in the good times and in the bad.

Is there anything you would have done differently, professionally and personally?

Good question! I don't know really, all I can say is I did what I thought was right at the time and thankfully I have had more successes than failures. But, with hindsight, you could always maybe look at things a bit differently.

Do you have any regrets?

None!

You have been praised for raising the standard of pitches in Spain. Have you been involved in training and educating Spanish groundsmen in the art of tending turf?

Yes, I have had a very positive impact here in Spain working with various clubs, Spanish Federation and La Liga, I think I also had a huge influence when I was in the UK; without doubt, grow lights improved every single pitch and, what once was acceptable, was no longer. Arsène Wenger kindly once said to me that I improved every Premier League pitch ... his words not mine, but I do get what he is saying.

You have always been considered something of an ambassador for the groundsmanship industry. Is it in a good place right now?

That's difficult to say to be honest. I think engagement with government and federations is good, training is good however,



MHGOALS SEE US AT SALTEX

30 - 31 OCTOBER 2019

**FOR THE LATEST PRODUCTS
AND EXPERT ADVICE
FIND US ON STAND E095**

**TOGETHER WE MAKE THE GAME
VISIT MHGOALS.COM OR CALL 01502 711 298**



**Frost Protection
Specialists**

**STUART CANVAS
GROUP**



Stuart Canvas can provide sports pitch & equine frost covers that are ideal for ground frost prevention.

- ◆ Single, double or triple layer
- ◆ Reinforced hems & eyelets
- ◆ Flat sheets & inflatable rollers
- ◆ Used by top football clubs & racecourses

www.stuartcanvas.co.uk 01925 814525



SGL lighting rigs



I had read an article about a head groundsman and this inspired me to ask if my work experience could be carried out at my local professional team

attracting good staff with a good work ethic with desire, willingness and conviction to undertake all works I think is a cause for concern. I do believe we have become over reliant on technology and many basic principles have been lost. I also think that many people know how to do things, but I'm not so sure they all understand the reasons why.

How would you raise the profile of greenkeeping and sportsturf in general within the media?

I wouldn't - results will do that for you. Awareness of this industry needs to be pitched at schools.

Do you think those steps would encourage young people into the industry?

Going to schools and selling the industry would be a great step.

What advice would you pass on to youngsters getting into the industry?

Listen, learn, communicate with your peers, visit other installations and have objectives and plans. Believe in them and go get them, but be patient.

Do you think it is right that grassroots groundsmanship is generally carried out by volunteers? With the amount of money in the top echelons of the game, should funding be put in place to help resolve that situation?

In all honesty, my career has always been at the high end professional level and so I don't have a good understanding at amateur level. Funding could always be distributed in another manner, but who am I to say what is the right formula? Volunteers do an amazing job and get my full respect - the beauty of our industry is, for many, a labour of love.

What is your view on the use of 3G artificial surfaces?

I think they are good and work very well alongside natural pitches. Should they replace natural - no. Should they sit alongside natural, to take some of the burden off natural - I would say a massive yes. Unfortunately, I don't believe we have found the balance and I doubt we ever will.

What machinery developments have helped you the most?

Aerators, grow lights and electric machines.

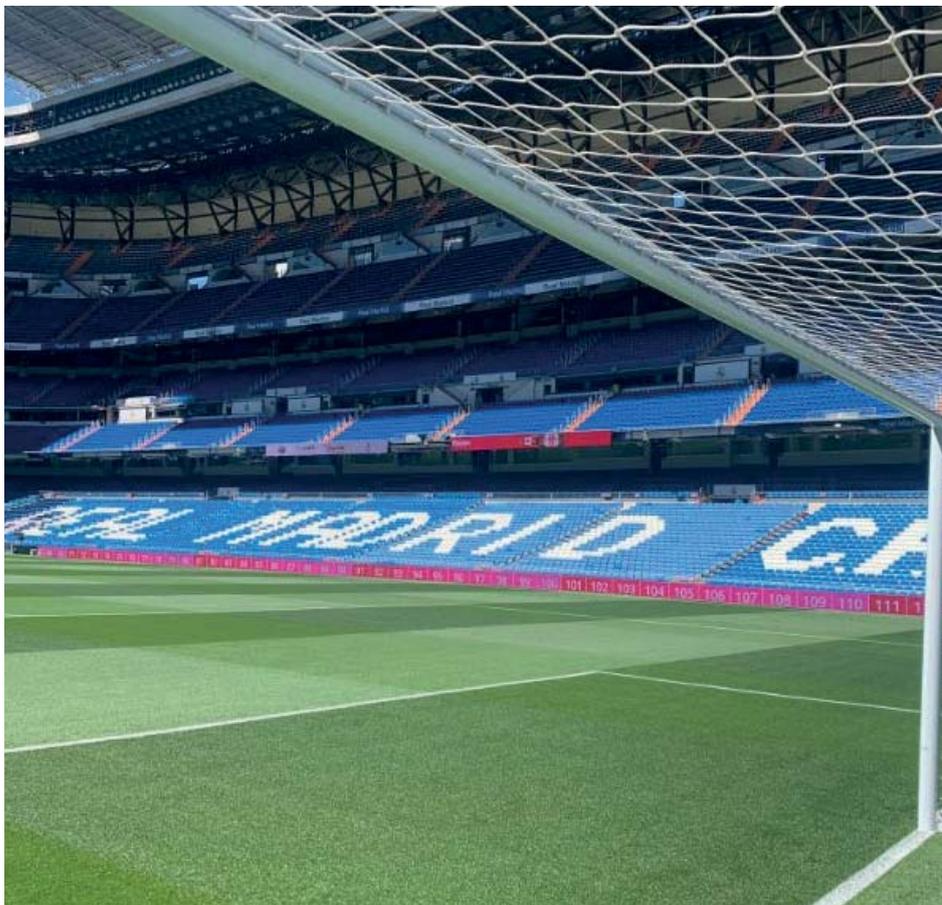
What's your favourite piece of kit?

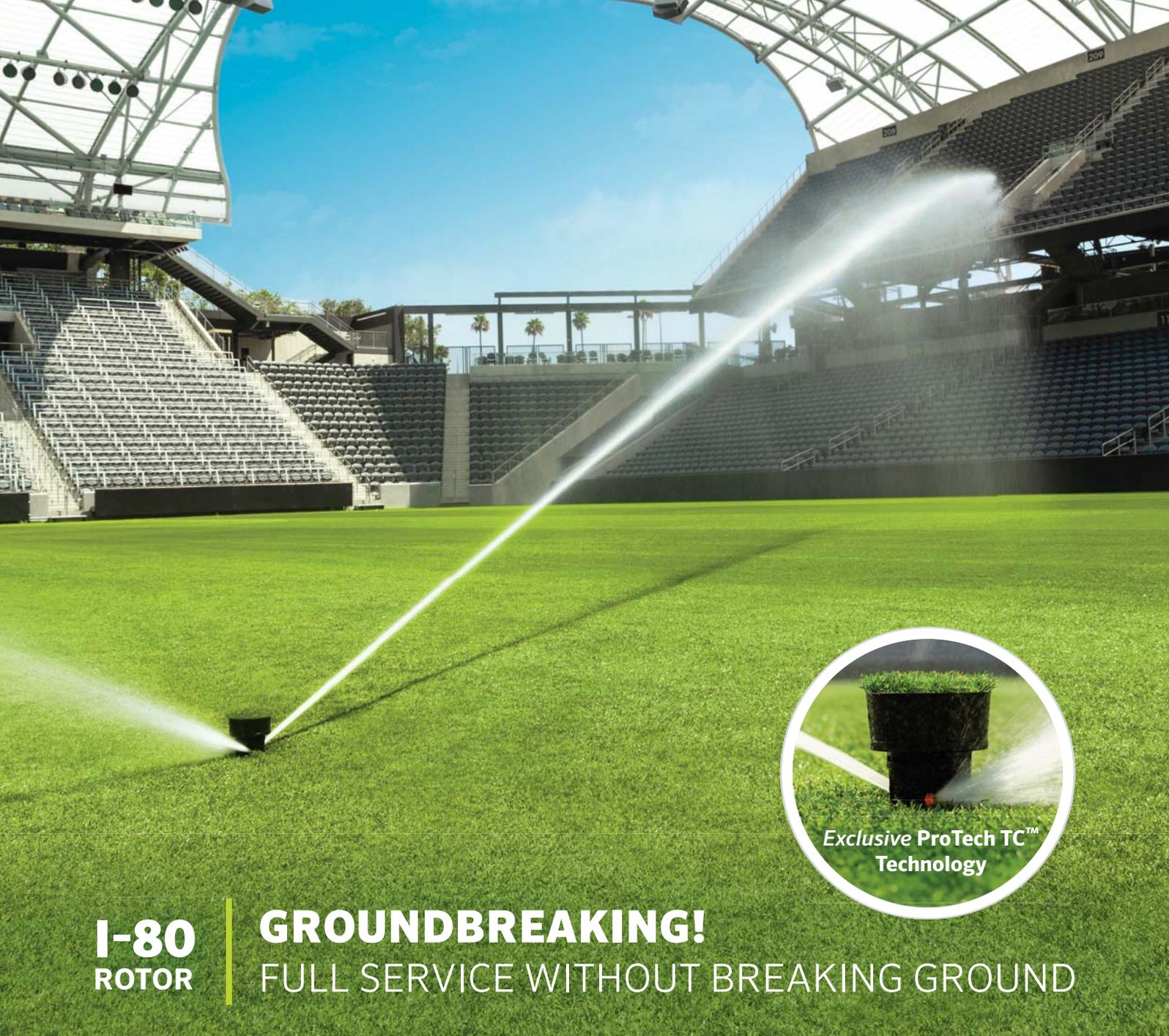
My hand fork.

How has the industry changed during your time?

Massively through technology, education and social media, machines, products, sensors and industry representation.

Thank you for your time.





**I-80
ROTOR**

GROUNDBREAKING! FULL SERVICE WITHOUT BREAKING GROUND

The most advanced gear-driven sports turf rotor in its class:

- Total-Top-Service (TTS) design means no-dig riser servicing
- Wide range of highly efficient dual-trajectory nozzles
- Exclusive **ProTech TC technology**
 - No-tool quick-change turf cup
 - Threads in turf cup ensure turf is retained
 - Easy arc adjustments without turf cup removal
 - Rubber cup and boot provide enhanced safety



RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL IRRIGATION | *Built on Innovation®*
Learn more. Visit hunterindustries.com

Hunter®

Distributed
in the UK by



Invar Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 9HF, UK.
T: +44 (0)161 793 9703 • F: +44 (0)161 794 5145 • E: sales@karuk.com

Colliers Park

Mission to mine rich vein of Welsh talent

A training ground in Wrexham has been transformed into a high-end football hub for the Welsh national squads and grassroots game, reports Greg Rhodes

Eighty-five years ago, one of the world's worst coalmining disasters overtook the Gresford mine, near Wrexham, North Wales. On 22nd September this year, a solemn ceremony commemorated the anniversary of the tragedy, followed by the official opening of a symbol of the region's rebirth - the £5m National Football Development Centre of the Football Association of Wales (FAW).

FAW chief executive Jonathan Ford spoke passionately of the quality and accessibility of the facility for training elite footballers and enabling the grassroots game to thrive locally.

In the run-up to official unveiling, Colliers Park pitches have come under the care of grounds maintenance manager Dylan Thompson, after the site had been handed over to The Football Association of Wales, managed by the FAW Trust.

Dylan, 23, realises the importance of the position he holds. "This is a great opportunity for me, at my age," he states. "I suppose it is reward for all the hard work and dedication - the will to put the graft in pays off."

With already several years' turf care experience behind him, Dylan is well-prepared for running the high-profile facility. He entered the industry whilst still at school,

gaining two weeks' work experience at Doncaster Rovers FC in 2011 - divoting, cutting, marking out, putting out frost covers and clearing snow," he recalls.

"I completed my Level 2 in 2012-2013 before attending Askham Bryan college for my Level 3 horticulture six months later at the start of February. After two months employment at Rovers, I left to join Sheffield Wednesday," he continues, "where I completed my Level 3 sports turf management for two years whilst a full-time member of staff."

After three years as assistant, Dylan departed for a grounds maintenance supervisor post at Country Wide



Maintenance. "Fourteen months later I rejoined Wednesday as assistant head groundsman."

Dylan lives just ten minutes from the National Development Centre for the North. "Living close by gives me the flexibility to pop in if anything urgent crops up or to just see how the pitches are over the weekend," he explains.

"This is a new and different role for me - and I realise that technology plays a far greater part in a head groundsman's working life. Running Excel spreadsheets and filling them with data via bluetooth is becoming standard procedure these days, for example."

"There is far more research into products too and we are ever more committed to the job and clued up about the science of turf care," he adds.

Dylan has learnt plenty about the role from working under experienced head groundsman, in his formative years, including a truism that applies across life, he believes. "Hard work and dedication reaps rewards for you - a massive lesson I took from my earlier jobs in the sector."

Working under his line manager Lucy Scott, Colliers Park Facility Manager, Dylan also has responsibility for health and safety and risk assessments for the pitches and the grounds maintenance team.

Managing staff also comes under his brief and assistant Luke Williams and apprentice Will Parry are now in place to complete the grounds team. Will has started Level 2 at Coleg Cambria, Wrexham. "An assessor comes to Colliers Park periodically to assess their work," Dylan says.

The project

After competitive tendering and quality submission, specialist contractor CLS Sports landed the Colliers Park project, which embraced two natural full-size pitches (1 and 2), smaller off-pitch training area, full-size 3G facility, under-pitch drainage and extensive soakaways, automatic irrigation, perimeter



Dylan Thompson

fencing, paths and hard and soft landscaping.

Contract manager Peter Valentine had been involved with the natural pitch scheme from day one, pricing up at tendering stage before moving on site once work began.

“The weather was kind to us right through to seeding time in September,” Peter remembers. “We had green across the soil within five days, the irrigation system was already installed to speed growth and we handed the pitches over to the client in March.”

Contract manager Chris Stephenson assumed responsibility for the 3G construction in March 2019, laying the carpet and the sand and rubber crumb infill until handover, with the maintenance yard, in May to complete the £2m contract.

Main contractor Read Construction delivered the FAW main reception rotunda, community building open to the public and a training base for staging seminars and other FAW events.

“This was an extensive scheme - delivered on time and budget under a nine-month timeline - and was one of the highest profile constructions we have worked on,” confirms Chris.

Quality submission can turn the tide in a contractor’s favour, he explains. “It includes written and visual material of previous projects and reinforces our tender by establishing our credentials to handle the work and demonstrating the scope and calibre of what we do.”

Tested and FIFA Quality accredited to competition standard by independent consultancy Sports Labs, the Lano (Belgian) synthetic turf carpet is infilled with 74 tonnes of 0.5 to 1.5 mm diameter Genan rubber crumb, applied over 148 tonnes of sand.

Completing the installation, CLS fitted team shelters, LED floodlighting, three camera gantries, two mini grandstands, large maintenance shed and washdown area, also supplying an Iseki compact tractor with dragbrush and drag net for the 3G pitch



We had green across the soil within five days, the irrigation system was already installed to speed growth and we handed the pitches over to the client in March





Given the tightness of the site, we worked extremely closely with the steel fabrication contractor on a plan for the camera gantries that would suit their function

maintenance. L S Systems were employed to fit a state of the art, computer-controlled irrigation system of twenty-four pop-up sprinklers in Pitch 1 and 2, and a further ten in the 20m x 74m drills training area between the two.

“Given the tightness of the site, we worked extremely closely with the steel fabrication contractor on a plan for the camera gantries that would suit their function,” Peter explains.

“The dugouts are positioned either side of the gantries, which are located on the centre lines of all three pitches to give the best pitch views for the training videos the FAW will be preparing.”

Commenting on the Colliers Park job, he concludes: “My involvement from tendering stage to completion of the natural turf pitches gave me immense satisfaction for what has proved to be a profile-raising project for the company.”

CLS Sports director of operations Brian Dunn oversaw the project. “Certainly our most prestigious job to date,” he states, “and showcases our construction teams ability to deliver across both natural and synthetic pitch constructions to world class standards. Our teams worked seamlessly to ensure the project was delivered on time and to budget.”

The contractor used much of its own specialist machinery, available through its



Sports Pitch Construction Specialists



Bulk Earthworks • Drainage Installation • Irrigation Renovations and Maintenance

☎ 01642 488328 ✉ info@cls-sports.co.uk

www.cls-sports.co.uk



We are keeping things simple and discovering what works and what doesn't here and applying no fungicides if at all possible, preferring to adopt cultural practices and disease prevention

Self-Drive division, to complete the project. This comprised a GPS and laser guided dozer, low ground pressure dump trucks, AFT Whizz Wheel, Muratori stone burier, Shelton fast flow hopper, Raycam speed dresser, BLEC Rotor Rake, Koro Top Drain 1500, Dakota Turf Tender, BLEC Turfmaker seeder, CLS laser grader, Wiedenmann Terra Spike, Allett self-propelled cylinder pedestrian mower, Vredo super compact seeder and a Toro ProCore.

Maintenance

June deluges delivered a wet welcome for Dylan. "A super-wet month saw 250mm of rain fall - a baptism of fire for me, but we coped with it," he says.

He has started how he means to go on. "We are keeping things simple and discovering what works and what doesn't here and applying no fungicides if at all possible," he reveals, "preferring to adopt cultural practices and disease prevention."

The ICL fertilisation programme runs at key periods throughout the year. "I adapt applications to the weather. Given that the great and the good of Welsh football could be visiting Colliers Park at any time, grounds presentation is key, Dylan maintains. "It's one of the most important parts of the job and that's why team pride across the whole park at all times is crucial."

Both pitches are likely to have to withstand heavy use, he adds, so hardwearing cultivars are the name of the game. "A perennial ryegrass mix, which gives strong shoot density and wear characteristics, was specified. It establishes quickly, handy for overseeding too, with good root development."

Not fast enough to avoid the ravages of local wildlife, however. "This is a semi-rural site," Dylan explains. "Because birds and rabbits could disrupt germination, we have invested in covers to protect the seed until it shoots."

Dylan cuts the men's national training pitch at 22mm and irrigates it before every use. "Pitch 2 we cut to 24mm in summer and 26mm in winter to protect the plant and encourage harder wear. All grass lengths are discussed with coaches a week before they are used," he adds.

A TDR350 FieldScout soil moisture meter monitors pitches. "We take thirty readings across the pitch, twice a day," Dylan explains. From that data, he decides whether or not to irrigate. "Fifty-eight sprinklers are installed across the two pitches and training areas, and I control the Rain Bird system using their IQ platform, allowing me to activate everything from my phone or desktop."

Pitch monitoring of both the two natural and the 3G pitches is important to ensure Colliers Park complies with FIFA and FAW regulations. "The Iseki tractor and GKB brush CLS Sports provided with the 3G are used after every ten hours of play," says Dylan.

"As the 3G pitch is FIFA Quality





Colliers Park is a step up for me and is also an appropriate move because I have played football and I am still active with Futsal

accredited, we have to test and maintain the surface to pre-agreed frequencies, under their regulations, which includes a reading with a speed ramp to gauge ball roll. The quarterly deep clean picks up rubber crumb, extracts debris then re-applies it.”

“I use our Clegg hammer once a week before and after I aerate the natural pitches, then every six weeks verti-draining, and use the Toro ProCore or the SISIS Multitiner in-between if needed,” he adds.

Pitch 1 is a Fibresand reinforced surface and hosts the Welsh national first team training and youth sides. CLS Sports supplied the 150-seat grandstand the FA specified, also including a 75-seat stand alongside the 3G area. Pitch 2, positioned end on to Pitch 1, is hired out to local clubs.

Dylan keeps in regular contact with Lucy via weekly meetings. “She’s one of the nice bosses and very helpful. If they take a booking, I’ll be called about it so that I will

have the pitch ready.”

He’s also relaying information to the FAW ahead of activity. “It’s all about protecting the pitches wherever possible. I send information on factors such as grass length, markings required and weather planning through to the coaches, and we have a dialogue before they arrive, ensuring that the pitches are in the best condition for them.

Lucy, who came into the post in January,

#SoMuchChoice

Machines for all Aeration applications.



Tool Carrier



Verti-Quake 2516



Verti-Drain 7626



OxyShot

Carrier® • Verti-Quake®
Verti-Drain® • OxyShot®

Charterhouse
TURF MACHINERY

See us at
Saltex 2019
on Stand
K070

www.charterhouse-tm.co.uk | 01428 661222



The centre is attracting plenty of interest and it presents a massive benefit for the region - the finest facility of its kind in North Wales. Welsh players will aspire to come here, because Colliers Park carries the wow factor locally, regionally and nationally

is herself a seasoned sports facility manager, whose last position saw her in charge of Wrexham Tennis Centre, with its seven indoor and seven outdoor courts.

She was ready for a new challenge, she says. “Colliers Park is a step up for me and is also an appropriate move because I have played football and I am still active with Futsal.”

Day to day, Lucy handles long-term strategic vision and planning. “An all-encompassing role”, she notes. “The development centre will also function as a hub for the girls’ and women’s game,” she adds.

“The centre is attracting plenty of interest and it presents a massive benefit for the region - the finest facility of its kind in North Wales. Welsh players will aspire to come here,” Lucy stresses, “because Colliers Park carries the wow factor locally, regionally and nationally.”

“We’ll evolve over time,” she says, “and the page is open as to how we develop”.

The FAW is partnering the University in the latest venture at Colliers Park and approached sports facility design and project management consultancy GEO Turf Consulting to draw up a feasibility study for its National Football Development Centre in

October 2016.

“We undertook the design work for the FAW Trust headquarters and training ground at Dragon Park, Newport, which opened in 2013,” recalls GEO Turf’s Jonathan Smith, “so we were delighted to take up this project.”

“Colliers Park proved a tricky site to model,” he continues, “with not a spare inch of space to spare. We 3D computer modelled it after topographically surveying everything, providing an earthworks balance.”

“Detailed design of existing and proposed contours gave spot levels, co-ordinates and elevations. The designs included tie-ins to the new building and footpaths to accommodate wheelchairs.”

The Fibresand pitch construction involved preparing level pitch perimeters and creating a 180mm high crown central, with a full drainage system at 5m centres with a gravel carpet placed over the drains.

“The pitches and surrounds had to rest at exactly the correct level,” Jonathan explains, “with tie-in to adjacent features to fashion the right aesthetics.”

The second natural turf pitch, lying end to end with Pitch 1, has a 1:100 gradient along the line of play to the north, as does the 3G facility, which lies next to Pitch 2.

“Pitch 2 is a more soil-based construction,”





Detailed design of existing and proposed contours gave spot levels, co-ordinates and elevations. The designs included tie-ins to the new building and footpaths to accommodate wheelchairs

Jonathan continues, “requiring less watering and fewer nutrients, whilst its drainage rates are not to the level of the Fibresand pitch, although still good.”

Pitch 1 construction saw 150mm depth of 2-6mm diameter gravel laid below 200mm of medium fine sand and 100mm rootzone, with 0.25% by weight polypropylene fibres in the upper rootzone to help stabilise it.

“High sand content increases durability and drainage rates but reduces stability,”

Jonathan adds. “Without stabilisation, the pitch can quickly turn into a beach. Both pitches were sown with R14 seed.”

Pitch 2, drainage features include 150mm depth of 2-6 m diameter gravel drainage blanket, 150mm layer of medium fine sand, covered with 150mm of site-derived topsoil, with 30mm of sand cultivated into the upper 30mm of topsoil for the final 60mm.

Sand slit drains were installed at 500mm centres across the width of the pitch,

allowing surface water to drain through the topsoil into the underlying gravel layer.

On-site soakaway tests and computer models of the storm drainage flows assisted the design of a sustainable soakaway drainage system. At the northern end of the site, this resulted in the construction of a 60-metre long, 2-metre deep and 1-metre wide gravel soakaway.

“The soakaway has capacity to cope with a once in a century storm event,” Jonathan



CYLINDER MOWERS SINCE 1965

Uplift86

Stadium Rotary Mower



THE QUEEN'S AWARDS
FOR ENTERPRISE:
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
2019



Clear up debris after matches quickly with a 34" wide machine

Produces the strong stripes all Allett Mowers are renown for with a wide rear roller.

Follow us on








sales@allett.co.uk

www.allett.co.uk

01889 271503



reveals. “and we had to prepare for that eventuality.”

Elements of the existing 3G pitch were repurposed for the new synthetic area, which is drained with lateral pipes at 7m-centre pipes that also connect to the sustainable soakaway drainage system.

“All stone removed from under the old 3G pitch was assessed and the aggregate laid thinly under the new 3G pitch, beneath footpaths crossing the park and the foundations for the maintenance yard,” Jonathan adds.

“From an environmental and cost-saving perspective, it made sense to reuse as much as we could in the new development,” Jonathan says, “as did specifying the environmentally friendly machinery washdown bay, which contains and biologically treats all washdown water on the site.”

Controlled from the reception building, the 3G pitch’s illumination system consists

of eight LED 500 Lux floodlights, switchable to 250 Lux, whilst Pitch 1 has a system of eight 500 Lux metal halide floods, also switchable to the same level.

On the east side of the natural pitches, 5m fencing was erected, linked to the main building, with 1.8m fencing at north and south ends. “The western end forms a natural perimeter of trees and bushes,” Jonathan explains, “and did not require any.”

“Contractors moved on site in June 2018, handing over the pitches this March, before the entire development was signed off in May,” he adds. “As designers and project managers for the pitch redevelopment, I can say that everything was completed efficiently. The contractors kept to the programme timeline, were easy to work with and resourced the site well with people and plant.”



Machinery and equipment used at Colliers Park

Dennis Pro34R pedestrian rotary mowers x 2

Dennis G860 cylinder mowers with steer seats x 2 c/w cassettes - 8 blade, sorrell roller, TT verti-cutter, MD brush

Toro Workman HDX 2wd utility vehicle including demount legs

Off road 8' x 5' utility trailer

Toro RM3100D mower including boxes/scrapers

Toro Reelmaster 3100D Sidewinder

SISIS Quadraplay with frame, spiker, rake, brush and roller

Kubota G26 garden tractor with high tip collector

Kubota Grand L5040 4wd

Kubota LA854 quick hitch front loader

Kubota 2 tonne hydraulic tipping trailer

Stihl 600 backpack blowers x 2

Knapsack sprayer (15ltr)

Toro ProCore 648 pedestrian aerator

Vredo Super Compact 212 disc seeder,

Raycam heavy duty rubber drag mat

Accupro 2000 fertiliser spreader

Bowcom linemarker

Toro SR72 deep aerator

Iseki TXG237 tractor and GKB brush (3G)

SISIS SSS1000 sweeper attachment (3G)

1.0m width



HIGH PURITY PROVEN PERFORMANCE

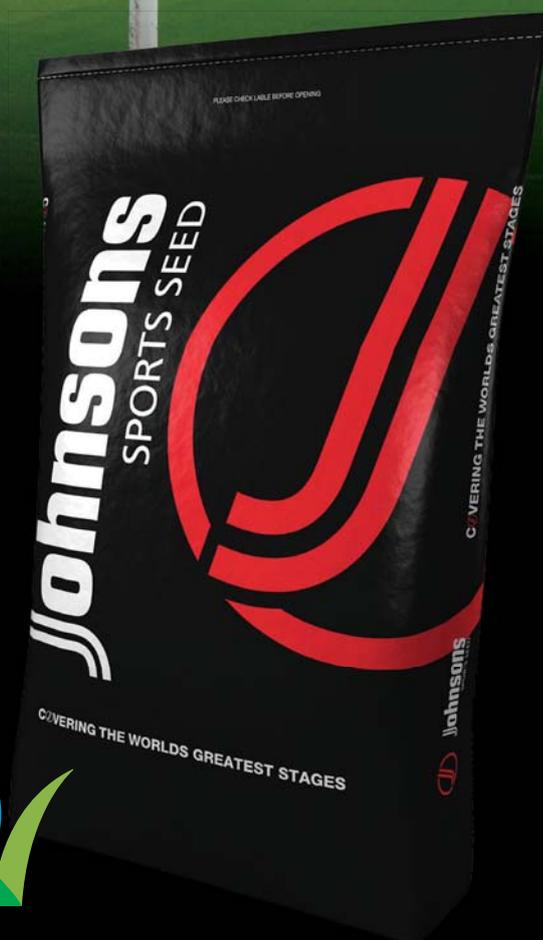


“ We have used Johnsons Premier Pitch for many years, season after season. I’m delighted with the rapid establishment we experience with the seed and the resilience of the sward in very testing circumstances.

Dan Huffman

Head Groundsman
Salford Reds RLFC / Sale Sharks RUFC

Overseeding  PREMIER PITCH



 COVERING THE WORLDS GREATEST STAGES

T: 01386 791102 www.johnsonssportsseed.co.uk  

Wakefield Trinity

Rocketman!

The Mobile Rocket Stadium (aka Belle Vue) is the home of Super League rugby league club Wakefield Trinity. One of the original twenty-two clubs that formed the Northern Rugby Football Union in 1895, they get their name from the Holy Trinity Church. Lee Williams met with Head Groundsman **Steve Dutton** to learn more about his role and his expectations for the future

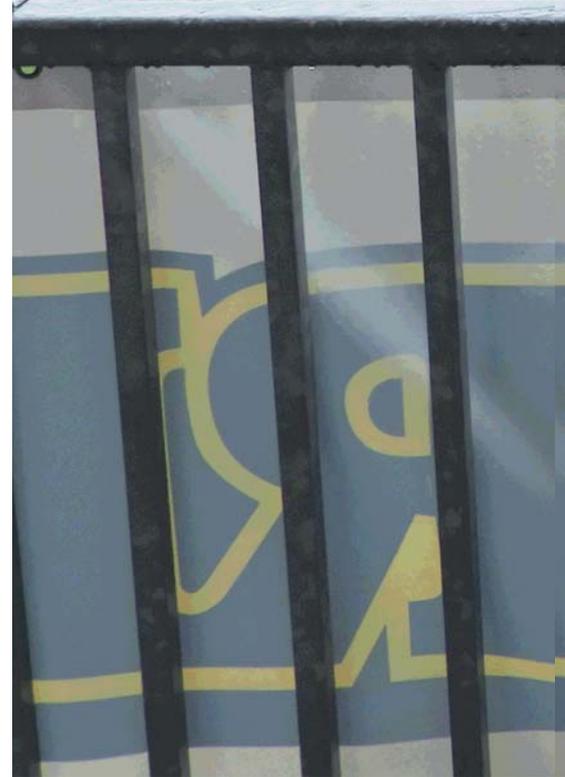


Steve Dutton, Head Groundsman and Kitman, has served Wakefield Trinity for the last thirty-four years, through thick and thin. He started his working career as a joiner but suffered a back injury whilst in the trade, which put an end to that career path early on.

He had to find work and started working at the club part-time back in 1985. His first job at the club was cleaning out the dressing rooms when the council owned the ground. When the ground was taken over by new owners, Steve found himself thrown in at the deep end. "I came in one day and was told

'you are now the head groundsman'. The conversation went like this: 'all I know about grass is it grows faster in the summer than it does in the winter'. Their response was: 'well, that is good enough for us'. Since then, I have gained my NVQ Level 2 in Sports Turf to help improve my knowledge and I have been lucky enough to lean on various other experienced groundsmen around this area for advice."

Steve took on the full-time role of head groundman in the early 1990s, learning as he went along. Since then, he has become more than just the groundsman. "My main responsibility is still the preparation of the



stadium pitch for training and games, but I'm also the club's kitman responsible for setting up the kit for home and away matches, plus washing it after the match and hanging it back up in the changing room."

Steve has no help on matchdays and, with so much work to do, I am keen to understand what a typical home game involves and what time he starts and finishes.

"If we have a home game on a Sunday, I will prepare the pitch on Saturday, which involves cutting with the Dennis G860 one way and then mark out. Then, on Sunday, I will get in for 9.00am and set the kit out in



the dressing room for the players. After this, I will put the pads out on the rugby posts and have a walk over the pitch just to check all is okay. After the game, I will gather up the kit ready for washing the next day and then go home - usually quite late!"

"The stadium pitch is predominantly a basic soil construction with sand that has been incorporated over the years during the renovations. There is no undersoil heating, no drainage system and a very limited irrigation system."

"We have one freestanding Toro TS90 sprinkler and a pump; that's it. The tank holds 8500 litres. I can water one half the

pitch one day then it takes twelve hours for the tank to fill back up, so I can water the other side of the pitch the next day. It's not ideal, especially with the prolonged summer last year, but it is something I have to cope with and do my best with what we have."

The pitch is well used, and Steve does well with such limited resources and little time in between matches to perform maintenance tasks, to keep the pitch going through the season.

"The pitch was recently used for twelve consecutive days in the hot spell we experienced. Our first team are here four times a week training, plus their Super

League matches. Then we have the reserves, under-19s, scholarship and the ladies team all playing their home games here."

Whilst I was with Steve, the pitch was being used by the Wakefield Trinity Community Trust for their summer camp, adding more wear to the pitch and even less time for Steve to prepare for a game he had coming up that night; and that isn't the end of it!

"Whilst the season is still on, we host the amateur finals and the BARLA national cup finals where they play six games on the pitch at the beginning of January."

Getting Personal

Steve Dutton - he's not the son of God, he's Danny DeVito!

Who are you? Steve Dutton, Head Groundsman at Wakefield Trinity Rugby League Football Club.

Family status? In a relationship.

Who's your hero and why? Not really got one.

What's been the highlight of your grounds career so far? I won the Unibond Premier Division North Groundsman of the Year twice and Rugby League Groundsman of the Year once.

If your younger self saw you now, what would they think? God, is that really what I'm going to look like - where's my hair gone?

Which famous people wind you up? Piers Morgan.

What job would you love, other than your own? Lollipop man. When I was younger, they didn't start work till they had retired. So I wouldn't start work until I was 65.

What was the most embarrassing moment in your life? When they filmed a scene from *A Touch of Frost* at the ground, I was flicking through a book about David Jason that someone asked me to get signed. I saw a picture of David Jason and said he looked like Gene Pitney, but realised he was standing right behind me when I said it. I never got the book signed.

Brexit or Remain? I'm sick of hearing about it.

What is your favourite film? Life of Brian.

What would your autobiography be called... and who would play you in the film? One man went to mow (cos there's only me). Jason Statham - I would like to see them train on the pitch without his permission - but would end up with Danny DeVito as he looks more like me!



What is your favourite sport? Rugby League.

What would you cast into Room 101? Politicians.

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party? Norman Hunter, Jason Statham and Pink.

What's the best advice you have ever been given? My late father used to say if you're not in bed by 12 then come home.

What's your favourite piece of trivia? What member of Band Aid gets mentioned in the song "Do they know its Christmas"? Sting ... 'the bitter sting of tears' haha.

What's your favourite smell? Fresh bread.

Which three albums would you take to a desert island? Bat out of Hell by Meatloaf; Greatest Hits ... So Far!!! by Pink, The Biggest Hits of the 60s.

What's the daftest work-related question you have ever been asked? What two different types of grass do you use to get the different coloured stripes?

What's your favourite piece of kit? Dennis G860 mower.

What three words would you use to describe yourself? Short, fat, bald.

What is the single most useful thing you could tell a 16-year-old groundsman? You never stop learning, don't be afraid to ask.

What talent would you like to have? I want to play guitar or drums.



This year, we just verti-drained and seeded; that was it, as we only had a two-week period for the pitch to recover, but that turned out to be just two days when the first team were back training on it again!

I would expect, with this amount of play on the pitch, Steve must have a substantial renovation programme in place and be given enough time to help nurse the pitch back; unfortunately, this is not the case.

"This year, we just verti-drained and seeded; that was it, as we only had a two-week period for the pitch to recover, but that turned out to be just two days when the first team were back training on it again! In the past, we have scarified, verti-drained, applied 100 tonnes of sand and overseeded, but that level of work has got a little bit out of reach in the last few years."

Steve's maintenance regime is very basic, but you can understand that when you see what he must work with and around; it can't be easy.

"I cut the pitch with the Dennis G860, with the box on, at a height of 32mm, which I keep the same all year round. I like to cut as often as I can to help tidy up the pitch after use as I don't have any rotaries or a brush cassette for the G860

to pick up any debris. When I get the chance, I will go around the pitch and take the bigger divots out with a fork. If I'm lucky, we will have a contractor come in and verti-drain the pitch twice a year, once at either end of the season. I do have a SISIS Multitiner which I try and get on as much as possible, but it is currently in a state of disrepair with half the tines lying flat. I will go around the perimeter once a week with a little rotary to tidy up next to the boards."

Steve's fertiliser programme is minimal. He will get soil samples taken at the start of the season - if he can get it done for free - but tells me that, with a limited budget, he is not able to keep to any set regime.

"To be honest, it's a matter of when it needs a feed I just get a granular fertiliser down, and any weedkiller for the perimeters I will get from the local garden centre. The club has recently done a deal with one of the corporate box owners who has a company



We are currently looking at the Hero and Eclipse hybrid pitches. The club is hopeful of getting around forty-five hours of use a week out of it without any grass loss. I'm not sure I agree that is possible

that makes organic fertiliser, so that should help keep the pitch going."

Steve is hopeful there could be light at the end of the tunnel, with the club looking to invest in a new hybrid pitch for next season. This would hopefully mean some investment in a better fertiliser budget and new machinery.

"We are currently looking at the Hero and Eclipse hybrid pitches. The club is hopeful of getting around forty-five hours of use a week out of it without any grass loss. I'm not sure I agree that is possible. The decision is down to the club; I can only advise, but my choice would be to invest in a Desso or SIS Pitch, but this is out of our reach. I have been over to Doncaster Knights, to meet Lee Blagden who has given me some advice on how much usage we can expect and how much it costs to run a year. Depending on what budget we have left, I would like for us to invest in some new machinery, as our current machinery is just not suitable to maintain a new hybrid pitch.

I suggest to Steve that, if the club is not investing in the current pitch with all the



With our current usage, and only myself looking after the pitch on a daily basis, I think we have to have a real hard look at how we would realistically manage a hybrid pitch and what actual usage we would get before losing grass cover

COMPACT IN SIZE, QUALITY YOU CAN RELY ON



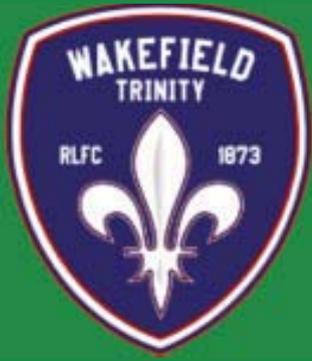
"Reliability is the unquestionable selling point of an ISEKI but also the comfortable cab, IQ transmission, lift capacity and excellent visibility"

Exceptional quality and reliable manufacturing, lightweight and manoeuvrable, the ISEKI compact tractors range from 16hp to 65hp with a lift capacity up to 1600kg. ISEKI tractors are ideal for maintaining parks and open spaces to fine sports turf. Add scarifiers, aerators or other implements for complete turf maintenance.

Contact your local dealer to book a demonstration today!

ISEKI UK & IRELAND
Tel 01473 599266
sales@iseki.co.uk www.iseki.co.uk





Club history

Wakefield Trinity is a professional rugby league club in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, that play in the Super League. One of the original twenty-two clubs that formed the Northern Rugby Football Union in 1895, between 1999 and 2016 the club was known as Wakefield Trinity Wildcats.

The club has played at Belle Vue Stadium in Wakefield since 1895 and has rivalries with Castleford Tigers and Featherstone Rovers. Wakefield has won two premierships in their history when they went back to back in 1967 and 1968. As of 2019, it has been fifty-one years since Wakefield last won the league.

Wakefield Trinity originally played on Heath Common. In 1875/76 they moved to a ground near the Borough Market (near the current Trinity shopping centre.) They returned to the Belle Vue area of Wakefield and played on a ground behind the Alexandra Hotel near Elm Street. This is on the opposite side of the road from the present ground.

The ground is primarily used for rugby. It was originally a rugby union venue before the schism of 1895, although the occasional rugby union has been played on the ground after 1895. For example, in January 1899, it hosted the Yorkshire versus Australia game.

Belle Vue was the venue of the 1922-23 Challenge Cup final, in which Leeds beat Hull F.C. 28-3 in front of a crowd of 29,335, the only occasion that the ground was the venue for the final.

The 1937-38 Rugby Football League Championship Final was due to have taken place at Belle Vue, but as both finalists Hunslet and Leeds were from Leeds, the authorities switched the match to Elland Road.

On Saturday 16 September 2006, the stadium played host to the 'Battle of Belle Vue' when 11,000 fans from Wakefield Trinity and Castleford watched the match which would decide who was relegated from Super League. Wakefield Trinity won the match 29-17 sending their nearest rivals Castleford down to the National League.



usage it gets, are they aware of the extra costs that will be incurred to look after a hybrid pitch and the investment needed in new machinery?

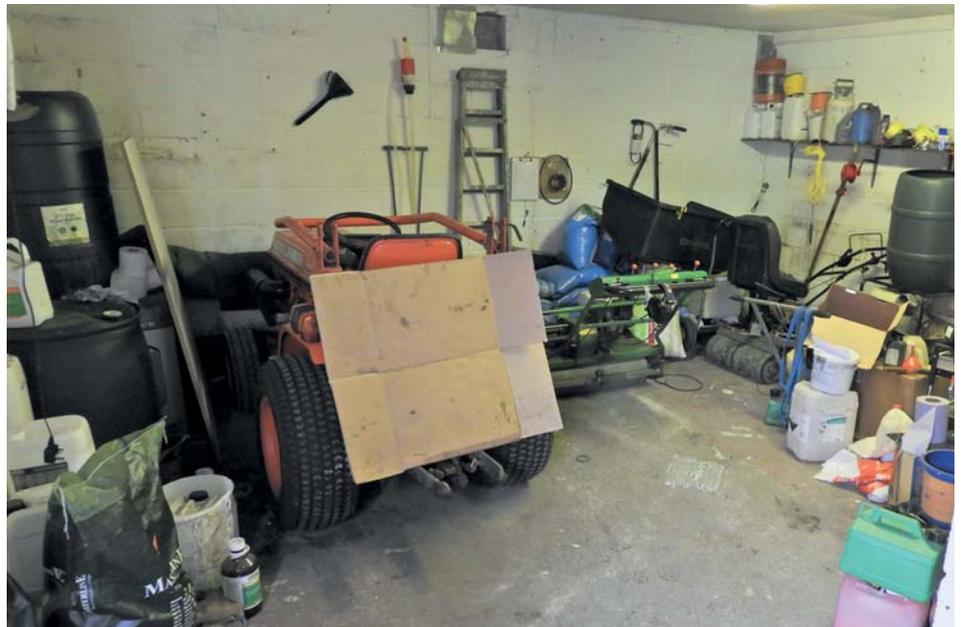
"I believe it will cost around £40,000 a year to run. The club is aware of this and plans to hire the pitch out where possible to recoup some of the costs. With our current usage, and only myself looking after the pitch on a daily basis, I think we have to have a real hard look at how we would realistically manage a hybrid pitch and what actual usage we would get before losing grass cover."

When Steve isn't working home games at the club, he enjoys going down to Wembley where he is a member of the matchday team. "I have been part of the team for the last ten years; I will do whatever events I can. I have worked the Challenge Cup Finals, NFL, FA Cup, England games, and

I've even been down after the Anthony Joshua fights to help pick up the covers. I really enjoy it; I get to see what many other people don't get to see. It's good to pick up tips, ideas and learn new skills. The experience I now have from working at Wembley will stand me in good stead if we invest in a hybrid pitch ourselves."

What's in the shed?

- Dennis G860 with cylinder cassette
- Kubota B1550 tractor
- SISIS Multitiner
- Spray linemarker
- Transfer wheel linemarker
- Knapsack sprayer
- Rotary mower



DENNIS

PRO 34R

Delivering a first-class finish

A professional rotary mower which is ideal for sports pitches and lawns.



Football



Rugby



Cricket



Lawns



Amenity

Visit
Stand No
E070
at SALTEX
2019

Follow @Wolves



DENNIS

Expert Surfaces

For more information or a no obligation demonstration
call **01332 824777** or visit www.dennisuk.com



PROUDLY BRITISH



Cinderella Sports Club

Cinderella site dressed for the ball

A once eminent cricket venue has returned to life under a city's plan for health and wellbeing, reports Greg Rhodes



We should always celebrate when grassroots sport takes an upswing. It's set to do just that in Worcester where an historic, though long-neglected, cricket ground has been brought back from the brink.

The city is addressing its dearth of cricket provision by enabling a once-proud venue to return to full functionality. The Cinderella Sports Ground had been left for nearly fifteen years to moulder and had begun to revert back to nature. Thick masses of brambles had overtaken the site and trees had sprung up in what had been the cricket square and outfield.

The home of Worcestershire County Cricket Club in the 19th century before the move to New Road, Cinderella ground had seen the great W G Grace play here in 1870, when aged just twenty, before hosting the first Australian touring side in 1878 - surely heritage worthy enough to warrant resurrecting the venue for its original purpose.

After the cricket club departed, the site

saw the Cinderella shoe manufacturer set up shop to produce ladies leather shoes and gloves, before Kays Catalogues began operating here.

The sporting function had persisted though, as a sports and social club, which included bowls and tennis for company employees, until the works shut in the early 2000s and a developer acquired the site and erected housing where the factory had stood.

But the council had shielded the sporting area from development and it stayed untended as nature engulfed a ground once renowned for the quality of its cricket playing surfaces.

Then, in September 2013, the council granted planning permission for a makeover, discussing with development partner Heart of Worcestershire College ways to finance the scheme.

Sport England's £50,000 and Worcester City Council's £65,000 pump-primed the project, as did cash from the college and that from private developers.

The council jointly refurbished the



Fifteen years of neglect, but saved from development



Cricket seems to be stabilising in the city. We know we have a shortage in the city area of three pitches at peak times. This should fill one of those gaps



Nature had engulfed the ground and pavilion



Stripping the topsoil

sportsground with the college, which has taken responsibility for the site under a sub-lease.

With such strong links with the Cinderella Sports Ground, Worcestershire Cricket had been actively involved in the project for several years, helping secure a £35,000 grant from the England and Wales Cricket Board towards the total project cost of £365,000.

“Cricket seems to be stabilising in the city,” said Worcestershire Cricket Development Director Tom Hill when project-go-ahead was announced. “We know we have a shortage in the city area of three pitches at peak times. This should fill one of those gaps.”

Bringing the Cinderella ground back to life was “a great opportunity to get a new cricket pitch back in the middle of the city and those opportunities don’t come up very often nationally, let alone in the county.”

“Once a cricket club goes, generally the site tends to go,” he added. “A new lease of life and new energy on the site will create

more opportunities for more people.”

Worcestershire Cricket is using the Cinderella ground for some of its junior games in the county age group and district programme, and is eyeing opportunities to involve its 104 affiliated clubs in the county and in Dudley.

Worcester Dominies and Guild Cricket Club have returned to the site in a groundshare with St Johns Colts Cricket Club, for example, after outgrowing their existing home.

Now ready for action after two years of preparing the square, the ground is the new home of Rushwick Cricket Club, whose thirds side faced Barnards Green thirds in its first fixture in May. College students are to play here too, as are other local sports clubs and interested organisations.

“Cricket was the driver for the project,” says Richard Savory, managing director of Raise Partnership, the consultancy that worked with the city council and stakeholders to project manage the scheme.

What has arisen from the wilderness is a



Once a cricket club goes, generally the site tends to go. A new lease of life and new energy on the site will create more opportunities for more people



Dismantling the old pavilion



Cut and fill earthworks



We assessed the site in 2016 and, by that time, bushes had sprung up across the ground, some up to six feet tall. Nature was taking control

ten-strip square, with full outfield (practice nets are planned), two full-size football pitches and two junior playing areas, one at each end of the square.

Local community use is planned and Heart of Worcestershire College (HOW) students will use it as a base for the English College Football League.

The original ornate 19th century timber-framed pavilion has been dismantled and moved to Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings near Bromsgrove, the first open air

museum in England, where it will be restored and rebuilt.

Its multi-use replacement, complete with two changing rooms, will be fitted out by HOW College this academic year under their Level 1-3 construction students.

Ground reconstruction

With funding in place, the Cinderella project moved to the next stage as turfcare consultancy STRI was called in to conduct a feasibility study for the site.

“Our brief was to bring the venue back to what it once was - a cricket square and outfield,” says Gordon Howat, Senior Projects Manager for STRI. “We assessed the site in 2016 and, by that time, bushes had sprung up across the ground, some up to six feet tall. Nature was taking control.”

“This was a classic design and specification for cricket facilities constructed to industry standards, with STRI project managing the job to ensure quality assurance,” adds Gordon.



The professional approach to ground care...



Professional quality pedestrian, ride-on and remote control mowers plus debris management equipment

Distributed in the UK exclusively by STM
For more information or to arrange a demonstration: Call 01789 488450 or e-mail info@st-mach.com

Stand K090 at SALTEX

STM Co Ltd
www.st-mach.com



Synthetic turf is wonderful for what it is, as are hybrid surfaces, but we love natural turf and, properly maintained, it can withstand prolonged use



Cricket square construction - gravel carpet



Pipe drainage - 80mm diameter lateral drains at 5m centres

After winning the competitive tendering contract for the work from Worcester City Council, local sports contractor Phil Day Sports (PDS) moved on to the ground in March 2017 for what would be a four-month timeline to create surfaces fit to stage league cricket and football.

‘Passionate about turf’, PDS has turned a played-out venue into playing surfaces “to rank with a regional, middle-tier cricket club”, says director Toby Grace, who oversaw the work and whose other turfcare commitments include renovating West Bromwich Albion’s training ground and Worcester and Gloucester rugby clubs’ training pitches.

“Synthetic turf is wonderful for what it is, as are hybrid surfaces, but we love natural turf and, properly maintained, it can withstand prolonged use, as the Cinderella Sports Ground is expected to attract.”

After clearing the site and spraying off, PDS desiccated the sward and stripped off the topsoil, removing the old tennis courts and bowling green.

Level adjustments followed, with grading of the exposed subsoil to create the formation layer of the new cricket pitch and cricket outfield platforms.

The graded subsoil was then sub-soiled to relieve compaction.

The 33m by 23m cricket square was set out at the centre of the cricket outfield area. A geotextile membrane was laid over, followed by 100mm deep 2/6mm diameter gravel layer, a 100mm layer of indigenous topsoil and finished with a 100mm depth of Boughton cricket loam. Final seed bed preparation and application of pre-seeding fertiliser preceded sowing the square.

Confirmation that the formation was suitable for spreading topsoil was followed by replacement of the preserved topsoil over the graded platform and associated embankment to a minimum consolidated depth of 180mm.

Installing site drainage involved laying 80mm diameter lateral drains at 5m centres connecting to 150mm diameter main drains



Cricket square construction - loam application



GKB Drainmaster in action



Included in the scheme were four irrigation points, one at each corner of the square, with provision to include pop-ups at a later date if the council wishes

and laying the main carrier drainage system and associated chambers.

A 100mm diameter ring main drain went in around the cricket square and connected to the outfield system.

Cultivation and seedbed preparation were the next phases of the project, relieving compaction and removing stones greater than 25mm during the cultivation work - followed by trimming the surface levels to tolerances.

Under the sand amelioration stage, PDS supplied and spread a medium fine sand layer before incorporating it into top

rootzone, installing Koro Top Drain sand bands and preparing the final seed bed.

After applying preseeded fertiliser, the contractor sowed DLF ProMaster 81 perennial rye across the whole area (selected from Table S1 of the STRI/BSBP Turfgrass Seed booklet).

"We used a laser grader for achieving final levels, which vary within only 10mm across the site," Toby confirms.

"Everything was executed well and was a trouble-free project," adds Toby.

"Included in the scheme were four irrigation points, one at each corner of the

square, with provision to include pop-ups at a later date if the council wishes."

Summer maintenance regime

In the interim period, when the decision about who will maintain the ground is still pending, PDS has been undertaking a summer maintenance programme.

"We prepared the square and outfield for the first fixture on 18th May," Toby notes, "mowing the square using a Lloyds Paladin 24in, then undertaking light verti-cutting with a Sabo pedestrian unit."

"Application of a 11:5:5 mini granular

GKB MACHINES
will be attending
SALTEX
SPORTS & RECREATION LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION

GKB MACHINES, TAKING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF CONTRACTING TO SUPPLY THE BEST POSSIBLE MACHINE SOLUTION.

BE IT A NATURAL, SYNTHETIC OR HYBRID PITCH. WE HAVE A MACHINE TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS.

WWW.GKBMACHINES.COM / TOM@GKBMACHINES.COM / 07495 88 36 17

Schedule of work

PDS were commissioned by Worcester City Council to restore the historic Cinderella Ground

Works included:

- Site clearance
- Spray off the site
- Sward desiccation
- Topsoil strip

Level adjustments

- Grade exposed subsoil to form new pitch and cricket outfield platforms
- Subsoil cultivate graded platform and trim the surface
- Confirm formation is suitable for topsoil spreading
- Replace preserved topsoil over graded platform and associated embankments to a minimum consolidated depth of 180 mm

Drainage system

- Install pipe drainage system comprising 80mm diameter lateral drains at 5m centres connecting to 150mm diameter main drains
- Install main carrier drainage system and associated chambers

Cultivation and seedbed preparation

- Cultivations to relieve compaction
- Remove stones greater than 25mm during the cultivation work
- Trim the surface to levels and tolerances
- Sand amelioration – supply and spread medium fine sand layer then incorporate into top rootzone
- Install Koro Top Drain sand bands
- Final seed bed preparation

Grass seeding / platforms

- Apply pre-seeding fertiliser
- Supply and sow grass seed selected from Table S1 of the STRI/BSBP Turfgrass Seed booklet

CRICKET SQUARE

- Construct a cricket square with dimensions of 33m by 23m, at the centre of the cricket outfield area
- Install pipe drainage - ring drain
- Install geotextile membrane
- 100mm deep 2/6mm gravel layer
- 100mm deep indigenous topsoil
- 100mm depth of approved cricket loam
- Laser grader for achieving final levels
- Final seed bed preparation
- Apply pre-seeding fertiliser
- Supply and sow cricket square grass seed



Gravel carpet layer being ameliorated

fertiliser and selective weed control using a Team pedestrian sprayer followed. Pre-season rolling and marking out completed our work on the square.”

“In the outfield, we used a calibrated broadcast spreader to apply a slow-release granular fertiliser,” Toby explains, “a 18(4):3.5:8+1MgO and trace elements. We followed that by applying selective weed control using GPS-guided low ground pressure equipment.”

“Using a Vredo 222 series, we overseeded with ProMaster 81 at 25g/m² and deep aerated with a verti-drain fitted with 25mm diameter solid tines, using a Charterhouse 7626 machine.”

From May to September, PDS continued to maintain the square and outfield, mowing the square with the Paladin 24in, light verti-cutting using the Sabo unit and applying granular fertiliser as required.

“We’ve undertaken some repairs to strip ends and overseeded with our special cricket mix where needed,” Toby adds, “with rolling, marking out and watering as required. The outfield has been mowed and rolled with a Trimax Striker also through the season.”

The next stage

Andy Price, curriculum director at the HOW College, is coordinating activity at the ground. “Our reason for involvement in the Cinderella ground is under our strategy of trying to promote more sports participation among younger people, particularly up to eighteen years olds,” he says. “The idea was to attract a local cricket club and a local football club to use the ground as their base and to run junior sessions and league fixtures there.”

“Rushwick Cricket Club has played its first game at the ground and, by the end of the season, the third eleven will have played up to seven more there.”

“This is the first season of play so it’s been low key,” he adds. “The square is highly specified and it is vital that the ground is kept up to standard.”

Rushwick’s feedback on the surfaces’ performance this year will largely shape the fixtures programme at Cinderella in 2020. “The club posted positive reports about the playing quality, helped by a spell of really good weather, and are considering using the



Rolling the cricket square



The new sports ground complements the housing development

ground for all their second and third eleven fixtures, so that's good news," Andy says. "However, the square will need two or three seasons to bed in before first team cricket can be considered."

As of August, there were no plans for football to kick off the 2019/2020 season, he continues. "The football pitches will be trialled through the winter and then we can decide if football can start to be played there from 2020/2021," Andy explains.

Maintenance of the ground will fall on the

football and cricket clubs that will be based here. "It'll be a joint partnership between the college and the clubs, but we are ensuring that all necessary weeding, feeding and maintenance of the ground perimeter is kept up, delivered by Phil Day Sports, until the agreements are in place, when the grounds maintenance contract will go out to competitive tender via Heart of Worcestershire College."

Sport and leisure facilities are being developed across the city and beyond under

a strategy of health and wellbeing. HOW College is already actively involved with helping boost participation among the young.

"We stage our football academy at the Perdiswell ground, which includes five football natural pitches and one for rugby," Andy says, "along with training during the week." The extra pitches bolstered the existing two 7-a-side football pitches and synthetic playing surface.

BIG ON WIDE-AREA MOWING, SMALL ON MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

PRESENTING

PEGASUS // S4

**JOIN US AT
SALTEX 2019
STAND: C055**



READY TO BE AMAZED? BOOK A FREE DEMO TODAY!

CALL US ON +44 (0)1933 652 235

f t i v // TRIMAXMOWERS.CO.UK



Worcester’s ‘City Plan’

“Building a successful future on 2,000 years of history” is Worcester’s clarion call in its City Plan for 2016-2021.

In terms of sporting provision alone, pursuit of the mission is progressing powerfully, as the Cinderella site takes root in the community and other key facilities are moving out of the planning stage.

A “vibrant, sustainable” city is the vision of the tripartite plan, which sees Labour, Conservative and Green group leaders unite in a shared vision with stakeholders.

The five-point plan includes ‘A Healthy and Active City’ in which people “have the opportunity to be as fit and healthy as they can be by using all of Worcester’s assets . . . an inspirational sporting city, hosting regular national and international competitions and boosting grassroots participation for people of all abilities”.

Key goals

1. Support for sports clubs within the city
2. Using the city’s major sporting facilities and grassroots provision in “an inclusive, creative and dynamic way”
3. Partnership and cooperation with cricket, rugby, football, hockey and basketball clubs and the University of Worcester

The Cinderella ground redevelopment has followed hard on the heels of Raise Partnership’s £10.5m transformation of Worcester’s main leisure centre, which enabled construction of a new regional competition standard public swimming

pool and leisure centre, which opened a couple of years ago.

“I became involved with the ground when working on the pool with the council’s leisure team,” Richard Savory explains. “The site had presented a longstanding headache for the council, which did not know quite what to do with it but, within six months, we had the project up and running after being stuck for more than fifteen years.”

Barriers to sporting development were complex, Richard adds. “The ground was owned by a housing developer but the council had protected it as an open space. However, it required a lot of money spending on it and the process involved numerous stakeholders.”

“Our approach was to come at the problem completely differently,” he adds, “building a common purpose across the stakeholders - the glue to keep it all together.”

The consultancy is no stranger to complicated schemes. “We specialise in untangling messes,” says Richard, who has project managed and raised funding for several projects in and around Worcester.

Raise had reconstructed the Football Foundation-funded Perdiswell soccer hub under a £300,000 Phase 1 development, for which PDS was the sports contractor.

HOW College was again involved, working with Raise to develop a sporting campus at the leisure centre and soccer hub - renting three pitches from the council. A neighbouring high school uses the other three pitches. At weekends, the hub hosts

Worcester City FC junior teams and Sunday league games.

Further phases will see more pitches devoted to grassroots football in what is another example of meeting the mission of ‘A Healthy and Active City’.

Under that plan, Raise’s next projects are a hockey centre, with two water-based pitches and an indoor tennis centre to further expand provision across Worcester and its surrounds.

“These facilities will help elevate sport to another level across the city,” Richard predicts, “and will create momentum and an investment proposition.”

The consultancy scored a first for Worcester recently when it landed the first award for parks tennis under the Lawn Tennis Association’s national grassroots funding programme, following sale of its interest in Queens Club.

“The LTA was touring the country promoting the programme, but had not committed any funding as yet, but we managed to persuade them to sink money into a city tennis programme.”

Using local skills and resources for sports and leisure projects underlines Worcester’s commitment to a sustainable future across the board, as stated in the 2016-2021 plan. Here’s a city to watch with interest in the coming years as that vision is realised.

**22 YEARS' EXPERIENCE.
12 MILES WALKED
EVERY DAY.
500,000 FANS
EVERY SEASON.
4 ACRES OF
TRAINING PITCHES.
1 LAWN MOWER.
STIHL LIFE.**



Ed Mowe
Head Groundsman,
Leicester Tigers.

When it comes to the challenge of looking after parks and pitches all year round, STIHL tackles it head on. With a range of tools designed to maintain grounds to the highest and most professional standards. Not only does STIHL set the standard for quality, efficiency and reliability, our tools are also easy to maintain and offer superb parts availability. All of which adds up to minimum downtime and maximum performance.



The STIHL **RM 655 RS** is a professional rear roller petrol mower with 53 cm cutting width for large lawns.

Find out more at your local
STIHL Approved Dealer or visit
www.stihl.co.uk/pro

STIHL®

Durham County Cricket Club

Seldom stumped for a solution!

One of cricket's biggest hitters speaks out about the trials, tribulations and triumphs of running a World Cup venue. Greg Rhodes meets **Vic Demain**, the Head Groundsman at the Emirates Riverside

We're looking out over the Emirates Riverside stadium - home to Durham Cricket. At 1.8 hectares, the playing area is one of the largest in the country, Head Groundsman Vic Demain informs me.

That said, a cracked pane of glass in the scoreboard control office gives evidence that spectators have witnessed some mighty hitting of late that's breached the long boundaries big-time.

You might say Vic is one of groundsman's biggest hitters, notching up a few key innings since his days as head groundsman at Uxbridge CC, one of Middlesex's outgrounds, where Pitchcare last interviewed him.

It was at a county fixture there during a particularly wet spell that visiting Nottinghamshire CCC spotted the good

work Vic had achieved in such adverse conditions.

A move to Trent Brent as deputy head groundsman followed. Two years later, he was taking up the head groundsman's post at the Riverside, Chester-le-Street, in charge of a team of three full-time staff and one part-timer.

If ever there was a man in the right place at the right time, Vic can lay claim to it this summer as he prepared for and witnessed a trio of ICC Cricket World Cup fixtures at the Riverside that each hit the headlines, for very different reasons.

Hosting those games was a triumph in itself for Durham as the cricketing spectacle played out before record-breaking audiences from 30th May, when England played South Africa at The Oval, to the unbelievable final at Lord's on 14th July; forty-eight fixtures later, when the host



Vic Demain with the club's chairman Ian Botham







As groundsmen, we are aware that pundits have to paint a picture, and the state of the pitch is really important to many more people now, but the problem is in the terminology they adopt



Vic Demain



Hours can be gruelling, especially in summer. They think: 'why am I still on site at 9.00pm when I should be with my kids at home or enjoying a drink in the pub'



nation clinched the trophy amid a riotously close super over.

Whether World Cup fixture or an Ashes clash, groundsmen were in the firing line as pundits laid into the quality of the pitches. Reacting in the aftermath of the media frenzy, Vic says: "The scrutiny of pitches these days is massive and the language of pundits can be downright abusive."

"As groundsmen, we are aware that pundits have to paint a picture, and the state of the pitch is really important to many more people now, but the problem is in the terminology they adopt."

"When staff mental health issues are causing problems in groundsmanship, some of their comments come too close to the bone."

Reportedly, planning is underway to assemble the national media in a bid to put across the message that strident words can cause mental turmoil, affecting wellbeing for some.

Perhaps partly as a result, recruitment and retention present mounting problems across the sector. "Two of our staff have left this season, citing work/life balance for their departure," says Vic.

"Hours can be gruelling, especially in summer. They think: 'why am I still on site at 9.00pm when I should be with my kids at home or enjoying a drink in the pub,'" he states.

Then there's the sheer intensity of the modern game. "The new 100-ball competition comes in next season to further complicate our job. The season is stretching out too, starting in March and finishing at the end of September. I've never known anything like it."

"The traditional four-day championship games are pushed to the start and end of the season, with all the faster formats so popular now filling the warmest months."

Amid further controversy over test wickets after Australia retained the Ashes, England's record wicket-taking pace bowler James Anderson was said to have uttered that England had been "let down" by test venue groundsmen this summer.

"I think they've probably suited Australia

more than us, he is quoted as stating. "I would have liked to have seen a bit more grass, but that's the nature of the game here. We don't use home advantage enough. I feel like we could just be a little bit more biased towards our own team."

Adding insult to injury, former-player pundits have spoken of "the slagheap pitches of Durham" - words that must surely wound the hardiest of grounds professionals and cricketers alike.

"Your John Arlott and Brian Johnstons would never utter such words," Vic says in agitated tones, "and, in five minutes, such sensationalist talk can spread all over social media. Keaton Jennings, who was selected for England a couple of years ago, was picked due to the amount of runs he scored at Durham, which are said to reflect what they believe are bowler-friendly surfaces. During big matches, I take myself out of the arena. Some younger colleagues have a different disposition and may stomach the flak."

Even before all the furore this season, last winter, an England batting coach interviewed on TV identified pitches as one of the issues in the game, claiming they were unsuitable for county championship fixtures.

Cricket groundsmen can be viewed as soft targets and end up as casualties, as Keith Exton, former head at SWALEC stadium, found to his cost.

Those in other sports are at the sharp end too. "Guys like Carl Stanley at Wembley and Neil Stubley at Wimbledon are under immense pressure and come in for plenty of stick," says Vic. "Something has to be done soon."

"A heck of a lot of scrutiny surrounds pitches, but until we can educate people, the media first of all - those who pass the message out to the public, about how little real control we have over what is a living surface, punditry will only worsen, I fear."

Breaking our conversation, a bird flies into view and lands by the covers, soon joined by another. "They're a pair of oystercatchers," Vic enlightens me. "Ollie and Ozzie live around here and are regular



A quick tidy up

visitors. A flock of them descended on us earlier in the season. They made quite a sight and sound with their red beaks and squealing. We also attract gulls, which roost here."

Beyond the square opposite us is the Don Robson stand. "He was a local man, cricket mad and started Durham on its professional career thirty years ago, taking the club from minor county to first class status," Vic explains.

Next to it, the Graveney Club, reflecting links to Durham of England's former

chairman of selectors, David Graveney OBE, who played for the club between 1992 and 1994, captaining it for the first two of those years.

"England opening bat Colin Milburn grew up in County Durham and excelled in minor league cricket until he signed for Northamptonshire. The grassroots game remains strong in the North-east - Durham, Newcastle, Sunderland - and, over the winter, I try and meet the region's groundsmen to give them some of the benefits of my experience."



A heck of a lot of scrutiny surrounds pitches, but until we can educate people, the media first of all - those who pass the message out to the public, about how little real control we have over what is a living surface, punditry will only worsen, I fear

"Education is key in the sector. When I started out, my habit was to go to the boys down the road to seek help and advice, so I like to give back something in turn."

Transformation from grassroots to international level, with all its adverse media commentary, might have phased a less sanguine personality. Now turning 61, Vic sees the groundsmen's predicaments in the round.

"I felt under no pressure at Uxbridge, where cricket was more recreational," he recalls. "The ground occasionally hosted

Martin Lishman

Spraying just got smaller

See more at Saltex 2019
Stand D092

www.martinlishman.com

☎ 01778 426600
 🐦 @ML_Amenity
 📘 /martinlishmanltd



I spent two years at one of the most iconic grounds in cricket. My time there was really enjoyable - and I helped prepare a test match wicket, which proved to be the highlight of those years

Middlesex games and, in 2012, Nottinghamshire were guests. Despite appallingly wet weather, we managed to stage plenty of play."

The visiting team took note and, when Vic spotted an advertisement at year-end for the Trent Bridge deputy head groundsman's position, he thought, "What's the harm in sending in an application".

It paid off. "I spent two years at one of the most iconic grounds in cricket. My time there was really enjoyable - and I helped prepare a test match wicket, which proved to be the highlight of those years."

"When you compare the job at professional and recreational levels, the key difference I believe is that there is far more attention to detail at the higher end."

Although "very happy" at Trent Bridge, when opportunity called, Vic didn't hesitate. "The previous head groundsman had left Durham and they were seeking a replacement. I threw my hat in the ring and, after two interviews, landed the job."

"I'm no bluffer and believe that honesty has stood me in good stead. All you can do



Everyone hit the deck - a swarm of bees was the highlight of the South Africa v Sri Lanka game

is the best possible job you can."

Relegated from Division One three seasons ago after a financial points penalty had been applied, Durham has moved on to the front foot this year. The dawn of 2019 saw the club ring the changes with director of cricket, ex Australian Test batsman Marcus North, head performance coach and former New Zealand international James Franklin and captain Cameron Bancroft (current Australian player) all taking up their new posts.

"I spent a year with James when he played for Nottingham, so we know how each other operates," says Vic.

Despite the international flavour of the appointments, "we are still very much a north-east club", he declares. "As a southerner, I've had to learn of the region's cricketing prowess. Durham bowler Mark Wood, who came up through the academy to play for England in the World Cup and Ben Stokes spent time with local supporters at our first T20 after England had won the trophy."

"Coaches and captains always push the

grounds team for home advantage," he says. "Groundsmen can be seen as grumpy old so and so's, stuck in our ways, who hate people walking on the grass, but we are team players."

"If someone asks us to do something and we refuse, there's only one loser, the groundsmen. Whilst we are not 'yes' men, we all want to be the best we can. I'm certainly working with the new guys. James and I have a good relationship. We discuss the pitches and the coaches are open to our point of view. They appreciate that, in inclement weather, we have no way of achieving what they want."

The World Cup comes to the Riverside

So the day dawned when the Riverside hosted its first World Cup fixture as Sri Lanka played South Africa. The game was marked out for distinction when a swarm of bees invaded the ground. "Everyone hit the deck," recalls Vic. "The same thing had happened in South Africa a few years ago, so the team knew the best action to take."

When Sri Lanka played West Indies in the second Riverside fixture, pop star and



Rihanna turned up to give the West Indies her support. Twitter went ballistic. She didn't sing, but was a vision in white



Rihanna resplendent in white



Kiwis remarkably uninterested!



A huge sexual issue surrounds things like this. You have to think that cricket is a family experience and youngsters shouldn't be exposed to such actions

celebrity Rihanna turned up to give her team her support. "Twitter went ballistic. She didn't sing, but was a vision in white," says Vic.

And, to round off the trio of Cup games, up popped a stalker to disrupt the England/New Zealand clash. "I heard the roar go up. He ran out on to the field wearing just a green frog helmet, kissed the pitch - The Kiwis were batting - with security in hot pursuit. They tried to throw a jacket over him but he dipped his shoulders and was away to roars from the crowd."

When 'Twickenham Streaker' Erica Roe made her topless appearance at the rugby venue in 1982, she caused a flurry of media interest, but a wholly different dynamic holds true today, says Vic.

"A huge sexual issue surrounds things like this. You have to think that cricket is a family experience and youngsters shouldn't be exposed to such actions."

"This was a serious crime." Even then, the Durham groundsmen "got it in the ear", Vic adds wryly. "Why didn't we run on to assist removal of him from the ground."

World Cup preparations

When the cricket World Cup came to town, the organisers requisitioned ten of Durham's twenty-four pitches on the Riverside square, seven for practice and three for competition, explains Vic. "Our fixtures dropped here, but we played some at South Northumberland CC at Gosforth, near Newcastle, where Marcus North hails from."

Each of the three Cup games was played on a different wicket, as the ICC instructed. "Everyone likes a fresh pitch to play on but,

DRAINAGE OR COMPACTION PROBLEMS?



Drill n Fill or Deep Drill is the solution

Drill n Fill aerator

- ▶ Drills to 310mm, extracts and backfills in one action
- ▶ Ends puddling after downpours
- ▶ Minimises winter closures
- ▶ Percolation ducts connect to deeper drainage layer

Deep Drill aerator

- ▶ Drills to 450mm to ease compaction instantly
- ▶ Extracts rootzone in one action
- ▶ Penetrates hard pans and marl layers
- ▶ Promotes deeper roots to knit loam layers



Ecosolve Ltd, Army Cross,
Malmesbury, Wilts SN16 9RJ
Tel: 01666 861250
email: info@ecosolve.co.uk
www.ecosolve.co.uk



For contract work, sales or a no obligation chat, call the UK & Europe's sole importers today



When I saw the fixtures, we worried. Ours was England's last group game. If they lost, we were out of the competition. As they say, a cricket pitch is only good if the home side wins



England versus New Zealand in the group stages

as I said at the time, 'you don't know how it's going to play', and that's part of the joy of it."

The weather leading into the competition left the first pitch a little bit damper, softer and slower, he remembers. "The second pitch was a belter, delivering good scoring. The batsmen could swing and provided great entertainment."

Pitch 3 served up "the ideal characteristics for an international and the weather couldn't have been better but, as the pitch slowed, it became trickier for the batsmen. England won the toss and started like a train, then limped along".

"When I saw the fixtures, we worried. Ours was England's last group game. If they lost, we were out of the competition. As they say, a cricket pitch is only good if the home side wins."

"The pitches were prepared exactly the same as for any other game," Vic continues. "When the ICC pitch inspector visited us, his only instruction was 'prepare the best pitches you can'."

That translated into "consistent in bounce and pace - sufficient to allow batsmen to play specific shots - and minimal spin movement".

The Durham turfcare team started work on the three strips three weeks before the Sri Lanka/South Africa game. "We cut to 10mm height, soaking if necessary, scarified to thin the grass, with lots of verticutting and grooming using a 10-blade, 22in pedestrian mower with groomer reel to take out lateral growth," Vic explains.

Rolling followed to consolidate the top 100mm into a solid block to prepare for the pace bowlers. "Cracking is fine for the four-day game but not one-day matches," he says.

Focus shifted to light rolling, moving up to 3.5te to really compact the surface. "Once we'd consolidated the top four inches, we returned to the light roller. Anything below four-inch depth has no impact on ball bounce."

"During the last week before the game, we reduced the cut height to 8mm, although

that's too high for many, I appreciate. The day before the game, off came the covers, we brushed the pitch, cut again to 8mm final height, marked up and gave the strip a last roll."

Getting down and dirty with Vic preparing the World Cup pitches was Simon Harvey, an old friend of his. "Simon, who works at Royal Melbourne Golf Club, came over from New Zealand to spend a season of work experience with me at Uxbridge in 2008," Vic recalls.

"When he heard that we were hosting the England/New Zealand game, he was on to me in a flash asking if he could help out and I bit his hand off."

"I loved working with him again for such a prestigious event. He's one of the best groundsmen I've ever worked with."

The World Cup games Riverside staged are "the highlight of my career," says Vic, "and it was a huge anti-climax afterwards. My peak had been preparing for the Test against Sri Lanka in 2016, but this surpassed that. I knew the Test match was booked for

the Riverside and that's partly why I applied for the post."

Match results

Friday 28th June: South Africa beat Sri Lanka by nine wickets (match 35)

Monday 1st July: Sri Lanka beat West Indies by 23 runs (match 39)

Wednesday 3rd July: England beat New Zealand - England's final group game - by 119 runs (match 41)

Future-proofing

Well-publicised problems over recruitment in groundcare have haunted Vic in his mission to build his dream team at the Riverside. "We've had no end of trouble finding people," he admits "I started the season down to three and, in March, I was looking to increase that to five, starting with filling a position with a slightly more experienced groundsman. We sourced someone, offered him the job but he declined.

The search continued. "In April, we returned to Ben Hall, a lad who'd worked



Vic with England's Jos Buttler and Eoin Morgan



Vic and his team in World Cup attire



I give the team their heads and trust them to make their own decisions, but I put my name to everything. I'm a hands-on head who wants to keep on making cricket pitches

here and wanted to come back. Then two more staff left. One had been with us a year and realised that it wasn't for him."

"The girl who had been on the team for three years lost interest in the work. I had high hopes for her. She could certainly handle herself in the job, but had no interest in cricket. Women can do the job really well and are just as capable as men and I prefer to run a 'mixed' team when I can."

Some members are staying put. Ben Hall, 30, has worked at Riverside for ten years in

two spells and tends the off-ground practice facility,

Mark Patterson, Vic's deputy, is in his early 40s and has clocked up twenty years for Durham. He focuses on the stadium's eight practice pitches (Vic caring for the sixteen other strips, including two hybrids installed for T20, junior and corporates).

May new-starter Tom Wilson, 25, has held various posts, including York City FC and a local golf course. "He's in charge of the outfield and is as keen as mustard to be a

great groundsman. I can't speak too highly of him," says Vic.

Loving his part as a team player is volunteer Johnny Connolly. "He's a great lad, who doesn't let learning difficulties impede his work here twice a week."

The old issue of work/life balance is seldom far from Vic's thoughts. "A working week of eighty to ninety hours was common, but groundsmen can have another life now."

"We do enjoy more time off these days - 22 days, mostly in the off-season, and Bank

GOSTD

Graded Organic Sports Turf Dressings

"GOSTD" Loams

Pronunciation

[Ghost (loams)] noun

Definition

A comprehensive range of naturally occurring finely screened & blended loams, developed with our extensive knowledge, incorporating over 50 years of ongoing scientific analysis to ensure perfect results every time!

Synonyms

The Future of Loam - The Original - **Surrey Loams Ltd**



Come and meet us at the UK's leading turf management event for groundscare professionals. The NEC Birmingham on October 30th & 31st Saltex 2019 - stand F180

For more information visit www.gostd.com or call us free on 0800 500 3900



Test matches and other internationals present opportunities to pull people in and boost ticket sales, as well as benefitting the local community



The Riverside grounds team in a less pressurised environment

Holidays - but still have to juggle the social needs of staff and the schedules. And Vic? "I rarely, if ever, take time off and lost holiday hours last year."

Ever mindful to build the best team he can, Vic took on two apprentices in May - both are taking their NVQ Level 2 at local Houghall College. "Ethan Fordy is assigned to Chester-le-Street CC Fridays and Mondays," explains Vic, "and the Riverside Wednesdays and Thursdays, with college on Tuesdays. Christian Henderson works with me full-time. Both are on two-year apprenticeships with no commitment to take them on full-time afterwards."

With a full-time team of four and two apprentices, "we're stronger now than we've ever been", Vic enthuses. He runs a tight ship but is relaxed about individual roles. "I don't believe in pigeon-holing people," he states. "If Tom's away for example, somebody else can jump on the machine to cut the outfield."

"I give the team their heads and trust

them to make their own decisions, but I put my name to everything. I'm a hands-on head who wants to keep on making cricket pitches."

Vic strives to encourage lasting values and a sound work ethic, which can mean long hours when necessary. "Tensions can arise, of course, and we've had dissenters and disruptors. When team members come here straight from school or college it can take six months for them to see what's going on and how we do things here."

He's clear on the qualities he seeks in grounds professionals. "Passion for the industry, pride in your own work and the drive to get you out of bed, do the job and achieve."

His startling confession though is that "I only realised recently that these are qualities I have in my locker. Every day, I return home having done everything I can. We work with a living surface and I always have a reason for what we do and can justify those actions to whoever might question them."

Expansion

The Riverside was left off the test venue list in 2017, with no five-day internationals scheduled for five years, due to the club's financial difficulties at the time.

"Test matches and other internationals present opportunities to pull people in and boost ticket sales, as well as benefitting the local community," Vic notes.

"England's World Cup game against the Blackcaps here attracted a full house - the other two almost doing so," he adds.

The other formats are bolstering Durham's fortunes though. The advent of T20 sparked a need for ground improvements, with floodlights coming on stream in 2016, new to the Riverside surprisingly.

"Up here, it's light until midnight on the longest day, but illuminating the pitch for T20s is an exact science and we needed the floods to conform to ECB regulations."

Stadium expansion became necessary. "We're racking up T20 attendances," Vic reports, "from around 5,000 before, we attract a crowd of 7,000 - 8,000 now."

"Acquiring some of the temporary spectator seating used at Dornay Lakes for the London 2012 Olympics rowing event has boosted capacity by 5,000 to 15,500."

Cultural practices

Cricket has extended its boundaries dramatically during Vic's time as a groundsman. "We had far fewer formats of the game to contend with back then. It's great to say you have hosted test matches, World Cup fixtures and T20s, but can the team prepare appropriate pitches day in day out for every demand? That's the challenge."

"The World Cup fixtures allowed us to prove that we can deliver and comments from managers of competing teams confirm that belief. We punched well above our weight when you consider the Riverside has no grow lights, no hover covers, no huge grounds team or pots of money."

The team delivered surfaces that were the equal of many venues and I'm exceptionally



Attention to detail!

proud of that achievement." A story of what can be achieved.

"I was pleased and privileged to play a minor part in England's triumph at the third biggest global event. A great honour."

"At Uxbridge, I sprayed pesticides as a prevention, not a treatment, for leatherjackets or worms every autumn. Now, I'm learning to live with them. Casts are not a great help as they can act as a seedbed for weeds but, on the positive side, worms aerate the ground and we brush in the casts."

The clay soil can cause drainage issues. The Riverside's outfield was relayed a decade ago to ease percolation. "The top four inches are mainly sand and drain easily," Vic reveals. "When needed, we apply the Blotter round the edges. As a floodplain for the river Wear, the ground has suffered, but that was before my time."

Base feed of slow release granular fertiliser is applied across the outfield in March and October, topped up monthly with a tank-mixed spray of liquid iron, soluble nitrogen - occasionally seaweed - and growth regulator.

"The slow-release feed lasts up to six months, kicking in when temperatures rise but staying locked if colder. In winter, iron-based liquid feeds top up nutrient levels."

Keeping the outfield irrigated are eighty computer-programmed pop-up sprinklers, which give the ground complete cover

From our vantage point overlooking the



Vic Demain - learning to live with worms!

ground, signs of fairy rings dot the outfield. "There are plenty about, but you can spend so much trying to rid the sward of them and still fail," Vic admits.

He's one to keep the work in-house whenever possible. "Keith Exton [who set up on his own after leaving the SWALEC] is the only contractor I use for stadium work, mainly for Terra Spiking and Verti-Draining, whilst another local contractor, Andy Pierson, cuts the nursery ground."

"End of season renovations we prefer to do ourselves as we complete the work when the weather is right. In October, we're busy preparing for winter as seed germination stops below 8°C."

"We cut all the grass off the square, scarifying in five directions and creating a seed bed by placing seed into the scarifier grooves, brushing then rolling and topdressing with Ongar loam. Germination sheets are laid over; then we go out every

Lloyds

Manufacturers of high quality Mowing equipment Est. 1878

The finest finish you will ever see!

Lloyds range of high quality mowers offer robust design. They are engineered to give outstanding performance with years of trouble free service.



MOWERS; PALADIN, LEDA GANG, ROTARIES, HOVER & FLAIL COLLECTORS, TURFCARE SYSTEMS; MAREDO RANGE, TURF MAINTENANCE; AERATORS, SCARIFIERS, TOP DRESSERS, BLOWERS

www.lloydsandco.com

Whatever the game... you need precision

Hunters Precision Grinders is a division of Lloyds and offers world class precision mower grinders.



CUTTING EDGE PIONEERS

JUPITER ATI, AMAZON, JUPITER, JUNO, ORION
HIGH PERFORMANCE RELIEF & SPIN GRINDING
REDUCE TIME GRINDING BY MORE THAN 65%



www.huntergrinders.com

BIRDS HILL, LETCHWORTH, HERTS SG6 1JE

Telephone: 01462 683031 Fax: 01462 481964 Email: sales@lloydsandco.com



On site net facility

day looking for green shoots!”

Vic remembers his first job on his first day at the club. “I called in a supplier to take soil samples and, from the results, we prepared a fertilisation programme. I’m old school and believe reps are honest in what they tell me - until they cross a line, then I never use them again.”

After trialling various seed mixes, Vic found Johnsons J Premier Wicket a good fit. “It establishes quickly and germinates well in, what is, our colder climate. The east coast is fairly dry and can be windy - mainly south-westerlies in summer. Winds from the north-east can bring mist and drizzle all day, whereas the Pennines protect us from the rain coming from the north-west.”

“We’re 5 to 6% colder than the Midlands and a good 10% chillier than the south-east, though thankfully far drier than Manchester and Cardiff.”

Vic’s wealth of weather data leads on to a critical finding. “The Riverside has lost less Test Match play due to rain than any other UK venue,” he states proudly.

Nursery ground

Behind the Riverside lies the Nursery Ground, the base for women’s academy cricket. Sports contractor CLS Sports installed a 160ft grass training net facility in May 2018, which comes online next year to add to the six-strip square and the three synthetic pitches Total Turf laid.

“CLS had laid the ground and seeded, then we had no rain for four months but the grass still germinated,” Vic recalls.

“Women’s cricket is growing a lot stronger,” says Vic, “and the club is keen to develop it further here to foster the next generation of international players. Junior sides up to U15s play at the nursery ground, which hosts the Ladies Super 4, six-a-side round robin event.

“Women cause far less damage to the

itches than men,” he continues. “They are not so heavy footed. Boundaries are a little shorter.”

The club also enjoys strong ties with Durham University to the south. “The club works closely with them. Players can access their gym and we use their Racecourse ground when needed, whilst aspiring student cricketers have access to the Riverside where the club assist them with training. The collaboration is a north-east tradition stretching back in time.”

One of the top six varsity grounds in the country, the university’s Racecourse venue stages the season curtain-raiser with Durham Cricket. “The three-day opener is usually a close game and a chance to talent spot youngsters,” Vic notes.

Self-effacing to the end, Vic cannot avoid the truth that he is an industry winner - lifting The Alex R Millar/Ransomes/DLF Johnsons Groundsman of the Year 2017; the first such award to a cricket grounds professional.

“I believe I won the accolade for my work in training local groundsman, not because I was the best in the business or cut the straightest grass. Being open and helpful for colleagues matters to me. I’d hoped we’d win the cricket grounds team of the year award as we had come runners-up the previous year. After all, it’s a team game, in more ways than one.”

Vic’s diary, which he’s written religiously over the last fifteen years, should make riveting reading if it ever materialises as his memoirs.



What’s in the shed?

Tractors

John Deere 3320 tractor

John Deere 670 tractor

Iseki tractor

Mowers

John Deere 2653B triple mower

Allett Regal 36” cylinder mower

Ransomes Matador 24” cylinder mower

Dennis FT510 20” cylinder mower

Dennis G760 30” cylinder mowers x 2

Lloyds Paladin 20” cylinder mower

Ransomes Auto Certes 20” cylinder mower

Viking 18” rotary mower

Etesia 18” rotary mower

Scarifier

Sisis Rotorake 600

Sisis Auto Rotorake

Aerators

Wiedenmann Terra Spike XP

Groundsman 345HD

Sisis Dimple Seeder

Rollers

Auto-Roller 4ft

Bomag road roller

Powerroll County

Blotters

CMS Super Blotter

Others

Stihl FS 91 R brushcutter

Tractor mounted sprayer (make unknown!)

Cub Cadet®

**SALTEX
2019**

SEE US AT
STAND H075



INFINICUT III®

THE PERFECT CUT. EVERY TIME.

From the dynamic return floating head mechanism to the variable clip speed, height of cut adjustment, moveable bed-knife and swappable dual power source, the INFINICUT® provides more functionality than any other pedestrian mower - while providing an unrivaled quality of cut.

The Cub Cadet Professional Sports Turf range is proof positive of innovation through experience.



www.infinicut.com



MADE IN
SHEFFIELD



@Infinicut

Scarborough Cricket Club

Blink and
you'll miss it!



Blink, and you will miss the entrance to Scarborough Cricket Club's North Marine Road Ground, which is tucked away behind a line of old Victorian terraced houses. Once through the gate though, you are taken aback by the 11,500-capacity ground. Lee Williams met with Head Groundsman **John Dodds**, who has been at the club since 2011

First established in 1863, Scarborough Cricket Club's North Marine Road Ground has held a record 22,946 people who watched Yorkshire play

Derbyshire in 1947, back in the days when it was known as The Queen's Cricket Ground.

The North Yorkshire seaside setting also hosts Yorkshire County Cricket Club, who play a series of games in the second half of the season each year, and the club annually hosts the Scarborough Festival.

John Dodds first got into groundsmanhood whilst playing cricket at Stamford Bridge in York. "They were looking for a part-time groundsman and, ironically, brought in the then Scarborough head groundsman, Mike

Corley, to advise them and I started to learn the profession from him."

"I worked at Stamford Bridge for around fifteen years, whilst still doing my full-time job in the building trade. I started getting asked by a lot of clubs around the York area if I could help them with their autumn and winter work, so I decided to set up my own little business."

"I was then contacted by Geoff Cook, who used to be the director of cricket for Durham. Stamford Bridge hosted many of Yorkshire second XI games and, at that time, Durham used to visit a lot. Geoff liked the work I was doing there and asked me if I would move to South Northumberland CC, and that was the first full-time role I had as a





History

The two 'ends' are known as the Peasholm Park End and the Trafalgar Square End.

Cricket was first staged at the ground in 1863, when the tenancy of Jackson's field on North Marine Road was obtained, matches having been played at Castle Hill in Scarborough since 1849.

Yorkshire has played here since 1878, with the MCC beating them by seven wickets. The first County Championship game was held in 1896 when Yorkshire beat Leicestershire by 162 runs. With the demise of the other grounds, Scarborough is the only regular venue for county cricket in Yorkshire other than Headingley Stadium, Leeds.

The end-of-season Scarborough Festival, staged to capitalise on the large numbers of tourists in the seaside resort, saw touring teams, county teams and Yorkshire play in a mixture of friendly, championship and one-day cricket.

The Fenner Trophy, a one-day competition featuring four counties, ran from 1971 to 1996 under the names of various sponsors. The centenary of the festival was celebrated in 1986, with Sir Len Hutton as president.

The ground has also staged two One Day Internationals, pitting England against the West Indies and New Zealand in 1976 and 1978.

The ground is situated close to the sea and features a raised cricket pavilion built, in 1895, at a cost of £2,150. A new seating enclosure was added in 1902 and further extended over the next five years. A concrete stand was added in 1926, at the cost of £6,700 and, in 1956, a new West Stand was erected, costing £16,000.

More recently, the Jack Knowles Building was completed in 1995, and cost £210,000, new all-weather nets and a press box were constructed in 1997 for £50,000, and the enclosure and tea rooms were refurbished in 1998 for £95,000.

After the 2010 county season, *The Guardian* named North Marine Road 'Ground of the Year'.



professional groundsman. I spent four years there."

"But, when Paul Harrand, who is now the Scarborough chairman, contacted me to say they were struggling, and would I like to take up the position of head groundsman, I jumped at the chance. As a young boy, I used to watch a lot of cricket here, and I have enjoyed every minute so far."

John has been head groundsman at the club since 2011 and one of the first things he noticed was that the training pitches needed some improvement; he also felt he could get more pace out of the strips.

"When I came here, the practice facilities were not very good. We have county cricket here, and they would not use them. I was finding that, if I had a county match in July, by the time I had got practice and match pitches for them, I had nowhere left to play club cricket! To solve this problem, I made the decision to extend the square down towards the West Stand purely for practice."

"They are all constructed with Ongar loam, which is what is on the main square as well. I employed a contractor to construct the new pitches as it was easier for them to do with the equipment available to them. For example, they could use lasers to get the levels correct and follow the slope of the

ground. They were built on the natural base with four inches of loam on top. The rest of the club pitches are very old and the chap who was here before me, who had a farming background, brought in a power harrow from the farm and power harrowed them all and mixed them up. This meant they were fairly slow, but I now dress them heavily with fourteen bags of Ongar a strip each year. They have now improved to a state where they are the quickest in the area."

John has twenty-four pitches, used for junior, practice, club and county matches, but not all the pitches are the same. "The six county pitches are constructed in a slightly different way. Where you would normally have a ten-foot-wide strip, the county pitches are constructed with an eight-foot-wide, twelve-inch-deep slab of Ongar loam. One of the critical things with the square is that I must always have the exact point where the corners of the county pitches are. It is imperative that they actually play on the eight-foot."

I am intrigued to know how John knows exactly where they are year on year? "Well, I use an old method really. I just have a stump hole and, every time I go out with the stumper, just put the stump in again and have it there at each end, it's just a basic old



fashioned way of doing it.”

The outfield soil profile consists of a very fine black sand, which John tells me compacts itself and sets like concrete. There are minimal drains; some work was done on one half of the outfield in recent years, but they don't perform as well as he would like. Irrigation consists of a mains tap and a hose which is dragged over to the square when needed.

John doesn't worry too much about the lack of drains, with the ground being on a slope. “A bit of history about the ground which I find impressive is that it was built in 1863, and I'm told that the natural lie of the land is the bank on the east side of the ground, which is dug down about eighteen feet and was all done by hand and brought

across to the other side which has a massive drop. This has given the ground a natural fall across the field so, when we get the torrential rains, it all gathers on the west side of the ground.”

“I had a situation four years ago, on a Sunday night, where we had some really heavy downpours and I was worried the game on a Monday would be called off but, within four hours, there was no water left standing on the ground. Hats off to the guys who constructed the ground all those years ago to achieve what they did in that day and age.”

Additional equipment available to John includes seven Stuart Canvas domed mobile covers; four of which were purchased this year. He



Leading Manufacturers of Cricket Ground Equipment



STUART CANVAS
CRICKET



www.stuartcanvas.co.uk 01925 814525

GROUNDSMAN[®]

Leading by design

Come see us at

SALTEX

SPORTS AMENITIES LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION

30th - 31st October 2019
The NEC, Birmingham
Stand K078

Turf / Sod Cutters

- Exceptional Traction & Cutting Ability
- Low Operator Hand Arm Vibrations
- 12 - 24 inch Sod Cutting Widths



Turf Aerators

- Solid or Hollow Coring Tines
- Proven Reliability & Performance
- Consistent Depth to 5" Depth



Soil / Core Collector

- Aerator & 3 Point Linkage Attachment
- Cores and Linear Aeration Soil
- Clean Collection Wet or Dry



Tractor Aerators

- Core and Collect in one Pass
- Fast Coverage
- Clean Collection with No Smearing



Versatile
Reliable
Performance...



Tel : +44(0) 28 2766 7049
info@groundsmanindustries.com
www.groundsmanindustries.com

Getting Personal

John Dodds - he'd have liked to be a popstar. Not many people know that!

Who are you? John Dodds, Head Groundsman at Scarborough Cricket Club.

Family status? Married.

Who's your hero and why? Mike Corley, former Scarborough groundsman and TCCB Deputy Pitches Consultant who sadly passed away in 2003. He created my interest in being a groundsman.



What's been the highlight of your grounds career so far? Laying and preparing pitches in Toronto, Canada in 2000.

If your younger self saw you now, what would they think? You've done okay.

Which famous people wind you up? Footballers.

What job would you love, other than your own? I would have liked to be a popstar.

Brexit or Remain? Brexit.

What is your favourite film? The Italian Job (the original one).

What scares you? Getting old.

What would your autobiography be called... and who would play you in the film? My Sporting Life in Yorkshire, Michael Caine.

What is your favourite sport? Cricket.

What would you cast into Room 101? Plastic wrapping.

Which historical time and place would you most like to visit? The Victorian era.

Do you have a lifetime ambition? To travel the world.

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party? Ben Stokes, Sir Ian Botham and Dame Judy Dench.

What's the best advice you have ever been given? Don't take life too seriously.

What's your favourite smell? Freshly cut grass.

What's the daftest work-related question you have ever been asked? How do you get the grass greener in one stripe than the other?

What's your favourite piece of kit? Dennis FT 610.

What is the single most useful thing you could tell a 16-year-old groundsperson? Listen to experienced people and never be afraid to try things.

What talent would you like to have? To be able to sell myself better.



also has a set of flat sheets which cover the whole square should heavy rain be forecast, but he much prefers the mobile covers for their ease of use.

John is kept busy when the season is in full swing. "We have Scarborough Seniors who have three sides, county matches, junior cricket (all age groups), and we host all the local cup finals and a lot of junior representative cricket; and the girl's cricket has started to get stronger in recent years. We have no specific girls team at the minute, but that is developing well."

"On average, we will host around one hundred and twenty games a season, along with training sessions between April and September."

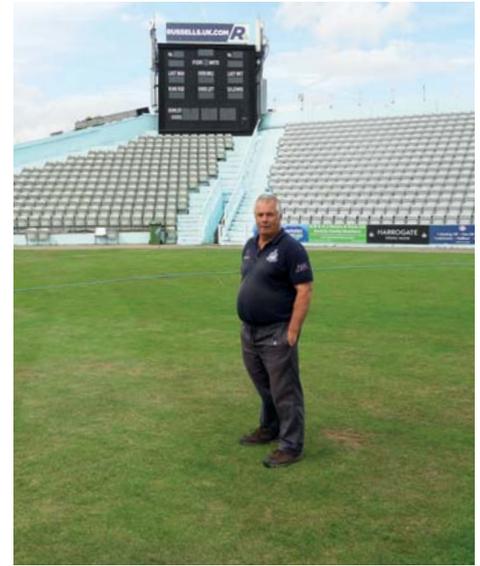
"The season has got longer over the years; one of the last games we have is a county second XI game. With the county season being extended, the seconds games marry up with the first XI to keep them match fit, so their last game is at the

end of September, which is a friendly. This means we are one of a few club grounds that are still open."

Steve talks me through the maintenance of the outfield and the pitches. "I will scarify the outfield hard, at least once or twice, using the tractor-mounted Sisis TM1000 Rotorake, which I run without the box on. With the amount of debris that comes out, I have a sweeper collector to clean up the surface. It is then 'shockwaved' or verti-drained by an outside contractor, and then I will apply a granular fertiliser. I generally only use a few bags of seed to overseed any high wear areas, but last year, with the extreme temperatures, we found ourselves having to overseed the whole of the outfield with forty bags of a straight ryegrass mix; the same as I use on the square."

"As a rule, I will cut the outfield at 14mm with the Toro Reelmaster, depending on the weather and growth. This varies from one to four





times a week. Starting in the autumn on the pitches, I will cut them down to pitch length, then flood them for two or three days, depending on what's happening from above, to get plenty of moisture in and then let the surface dry. I then scarify a couple of times using the TM1000. Last year, I had the county pitches fraize mown - and that will be done once in every six years - and clean them off. After this, I apply pre-seed fertiliser and overseed using a bag of seed every six pitches."

"Finally, I topdress with Ongar loam. I have

always been an advocate of using more than others. I will often be in double figures; a minimum I will use per pitch is ten bags. It's an extra expense, but I'm lucky the club supports this, providing the right results are achieved."

With the amount of cricket John has to accommodate, how does he use the pitches? "I have a varied amount of cricket here, from county right down to under 11s that play hardball cricket. I have different areas of the square I use for different games; starting nearest the top end, I have

two junior pitches for under elevens and thirteens. Then I have a pitch that can only take lighter use, so the girls and women play on there. Then four club pitches, six counties, another four club pitches and the rest become net areas as the boundary comes into play. I like to get as much use out of each pitch as I can, depending on who is playing on it."

"Procedure after a game on a standard pitch would be to sweep the ends off and, if the pitch is in a satisfactory condition, I will not do anything with it until the day before

TIGHT BUDGETS? SPENDING CUTS? NEED THE EQUIPMENT BUT CAN'T AFFORD IT?...



Verticutting Groomer/Dethatcher 20" & 25" £2,100-£2,300 + vat



Greensmower 12-blade 20" & 25" £2,400-£2,600 + vat

...THINK AGAIN
THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO CHOOSE

PROTEA

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY,
UNBEATABLE VALUE

For further information contact Rivendell Projects

TEL: 01949 851420

www.rivendell-projects.co.uk



Dual drive Greensmower 25" 12-blade £2,700 + vat



Dual drive Teesmower 25" 9-blade £2,700 + vat



Multi-reel Scarifier-Verticutter Groomer £1,950 + vat



Greensmower 6 or 9-blade 20" & 25" £2,000-£2,200 + vat



Heavy Duty Mower 8-blade 24", 30" & 36" £4,600-£6,100 + vat

2-year parts and labour warranty. All spares available next day

ASK ABOUT OUR FINANCE OPTIONS



What's in the shed?

- Iseki TH4295 tractor
- Bomag 2 tonne roller
- Toro Reelmaster triple mower
- Dennis FT610 cylinder mowers x 2
- Sisis TM1000 Rotorake scarifier
- Sisis topdresser
- Pedestrian fertiliser spreader
- Tractor mounted fertiliser spreader
- John Deere rotary mower
- Bowdry water removers x 2
- Sisis hand rake

the next game. It will then usually be a cut and possibly a light roll and play the next game and so on until I'm finished with that pitch."

"I generally try and repair the ends, although, to look at it now you, you would say some of them haven't been repaired, which they haven't. But let me explain. What I find is that repairing ends with the amount of cricket I have means it is sometimes difficult to get the moisture in. So I find it a lot easier to repair ends up to about the second or third week in June as, usually, there is enough moisture around to get the grass germinated again. I find, as we get into July and August, which is a hectic time for me, that it is tough work to get grass to germinate in amongst everything that is happening."

"Then, if you do try and flood the pitch, the square has a 3mm slope on it from side

to side, which equates to a 70mm slope from one end to the other. This means there is only so much water you can apply before it starts running off onto the next lot of pitches, so it can take two to three days until I can get enough moisture in."

The club has recently invested in a new Toro Reelmaster from local supplier Russells in Malton, replacing the twelve-year-old John Deere triple ride on mower. "It was still working alright, but was starting to come to the end of its life. What I do like about our new Toro is I can cut the outfield when there is moisture on it, and I don't get reams of grass laid behind me."



scarborough
cricketclub



NEW HOLLAND T5 LAWN AND ORDER.



New Holland prefers Arissa Lubricants

btsadv.com

With its outstanding cab comfort, powerful and responsive Common Rail F5C engine, and a transmission choice with Powershuttle, Dual Command™ and Electro Command™ with Creeper options also available, the T5 always makes working easier.



- Site maintenance
- On site medium haulage
- Rollers and sweeping equipment



- Forwarding and timber handling
- Track maintenance
- Chipping and brush clearance



- Fine turf maintenance
- General maintenance duties
- Loader and transport duties
- Schools, colleges and universities



- Parks and open area maintenance
- Hedge and verge maintenance
- Sweeping and winter maintenance

NEW HOLLAND TOP SERVICE 00800 64 111 111 24/7 SUPPORT AND INFORMATION.
The call is free from a land line. Check in advance with your Mobile Operator if you will be charged.

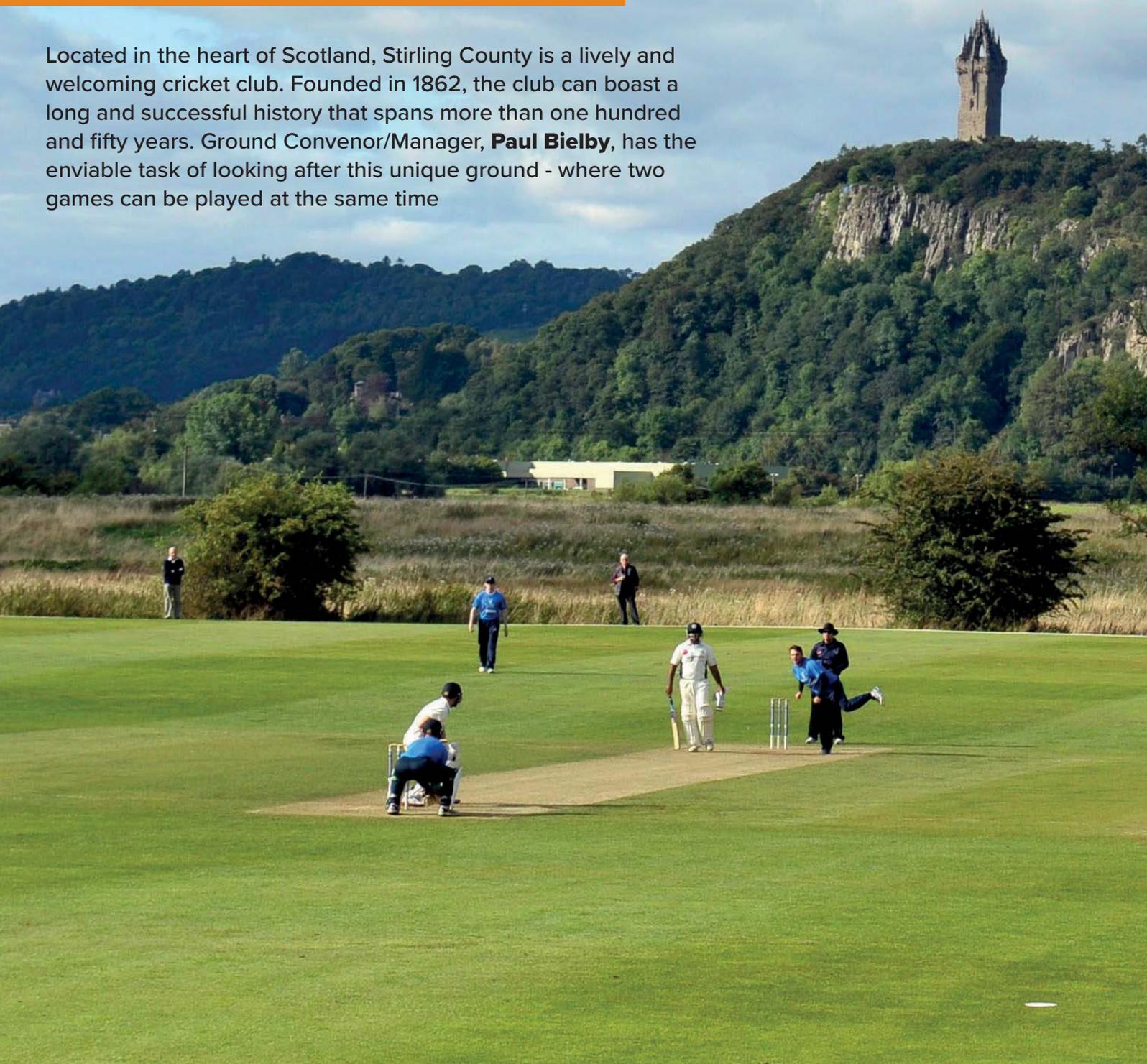
www.newholland.com/uk  Join us on Facebook!



Stirling County Cricket Club

Two can play that game

Located in the heart of Scotland, Stirling County is a lively and welcoming cricket club. Founded in 1862, the club can boast a long and successful history that spans more than one hundred and fifty years. Ground Convenor/Manager, **Paul Bielby**, has the enviable task of looking after this unique ground - where two games can be played at the same time





Presentation is very important to us, but how the surfaces perform in cricket is the most important aspect I believe. However, presentation and how the surfaces perform often go hand-in-hand



Paul Bielby

Stirling County Cricket Club had been at their old ground, known to all as Williamfield, for one hundred years (based at the Bannockburn side of the city in the Torbrex area adjacent to the Stirling High School). In 2005, the club took a monumental step of accepting an offer from Stirling Council to move from the site, allowing the new Stirling High School to be built on the old ground.

In exchange for this, the club developed a new facility in the Springkerse area of the city, just behind the Stirling Albion stadium near the new St. Modan's School, adjacent to the river and overlooking the fabulous Ochil Hills and the William Wallace monument.

Ground Convenor/Manager (volunteer), Paul Bielby, is in charge of the two full-size ovals separated by a sloping bank; the lower ground being fit for international matches, whilst the upper ground is suitable for first-class cricket. This allows two games to be played at the same time, and can also offer grass and artificial practice areas.

As Paul commenced our interview with Lee Williams, he said: "Since acquiring the new facility, we have hosted the Women's World Cup qualifiers in 2010, an under-15 international event in 2011 and we anticipate more representative use of the facilities as the ground matures."

How long have you worked here?

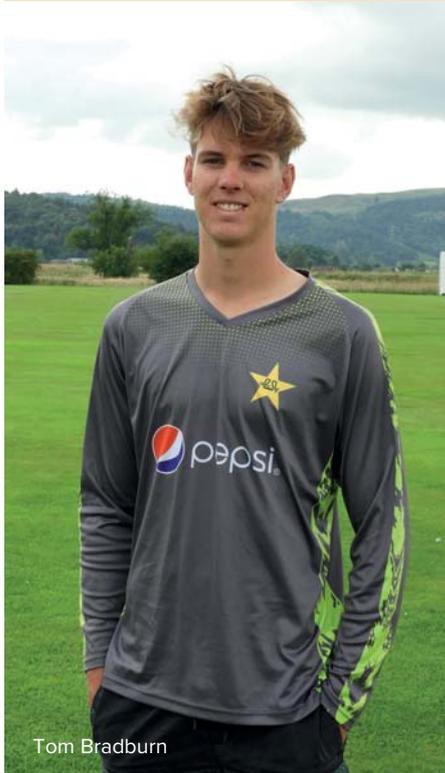
I first helped/worked on the ground between 2012-2014. After two years away from the area, I have been on the committee as Grounds Convenor from 2017 to present.

How did you get into the industry, and where did you work prior to Stirling?

I started working part-time whilst studying. Prior to returning to my current volunteer role, I worked for two years at the Rose Bowl.

What's in the shed

Toro triple mower
 Kubota tractor
 Allett Shaver
 Lloyds Paladin cassette mower
 Pedestrian rotary mower
 Groundsman turf aerator
 Tractor-mounted verti-drainer
 SISIS pedestrian scarifier
 Top soil spreader
 Various hand machinery
 (e.g. blower, strimmer,
 hedgetrimmer, etc.)



Tom Bradburn

What training and education did you undertake?

I have little formal education when it comes to groundsmanhip. I have attended various courses along the way and gained my knapsack spraying qualification PA1 and PA6.

Are you responsible for budgets?

Part of my role as grounds convenor is to manage the total budgets and expenditure for the club.

What is the club's history?

We moved to our current facility in 2006, after well over a century at our old ground in the centre of Stirling. The facility was built for us by the council, in consultation with Alan Simpson, in part of a deal that allowed them to build a new school on the site of our old ground.

What additional staff do you have?

Due to the sort of budget restraints that no doubt affects many an amateur club,

we rely on a mix of part-time paid staff and volunteers from club members. Those who contribute to the ground maintenance include myself, Tom Bradburn, Brian Hambly, Ally Morton and Jasper Davidson.

How would you describe the soil profile?

The cricket squares are made up of Boughton County Loam. There is minimal thatch but it's reasonably compacted. The outfield is pure clay which poses many issues with drainage throughout the year.

Does it require any special maintenance?

In light of these issues, we are currently looking to verti-drain in the off-season. The club is also hoping to purchase a tractor-mounted scarifier to aid in the removal of moss etc. which will also improve drainage. My aim is to aerate the squares in the off-season, to reduce compaction and help with root growth.

Do you have any additional equipment/systems at your disposal?

We do have some covers and flat sheets



Whilst volunteers and paid workers can often carry out most tasks as and when required, there is a broad demarcation of tasks





Better education and understanding of the challenges involved in the industry and the importance of this

available for use.

Are your pitches used by the community or hired out to outside agencies?

This season, we hired the ground out to two clubs on a Saturday. Usually, a Stirling team will play on the main ground, whilst one of the two outside clubs will play on the second ground. Then, one club will play on Sundays and Wednesdays. We also occasionally hire the facility for use by Cricket Scotland for

various events and games.

Does the facility suffer from any regular natural occurrences?

Being close to the river, and due to the clay content of our outfields, we do experience waterlogged ground and puddles forming during heavy rainfall. This can take some time to drain away. The site is also quite exposed, and we can experience high winds. Being in Scotland, frosts and snow in the

winter is quite common. As this is out of season, it has minimal impact on our fixtures.

How do you cope with these?

Verti-draining and scarifying help with drainage issues on the outfields. Two years ago, we had a ring drain installed around the main square to help combat a persistent flooding issue. This has drastically reduced the instances of water pooling at the square edge.

Sisis Auto Rotorake Mk5
Heavy duty power and
effortless performance

For more information on our full range or a no obligation demonstration call **01332 824777** or alternatively visit **www.sisis.com**



sisis

World class turf maintenance equipment



PROUDLY BRITISH

Getting Personal

Paul Bielby - I'm unsure what he's got against fluffy puppies

Who are you?

Paul Bielby - Ground Convenor/Manager (Volunteer) at Stirling County Cricket Club, New Williamsfield.



Family status?

Single.

What's been the highlight of your grounds career so far?

Working at the Rose Bowl.

Which famous people wind you up?

Professional footballers who fall over at the merest threat of contact.

What is your favourite film?

Once Upon a Time in the West.

What scares you?

A Boris Johnson Premiership.

What is your favourite sport?

Cricket.

What would you cast into Room 101?

Literary interpretation: fluffy puppies, TV interpretation: all betting ads.

Which historical time and place would you most like to visit?

California in the 1960s, when genuine change was thought possible.

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?

David Hume, JMW Turner and Mike Brearley.

What's your favourite piece of trivia?

A Venusian day lasts longer than a Venusian year.

Which three albums would you take to a desert island?

Beethoven - 9th Symphony, Bob Dylan - Blood on the tracks and Tom Waits - Closing Time.

What's your favourite piece of kit?

Scag rotary cutter.

What is the single most useful thing you could tell a 16-year-old groundsperson/greenkeeper?

Listen and learn from those with decades of experience ... if possible.

What talent would you like to have?

The ability to paint.



Are there any artificial surfaces at your facility?

We have two artificial practice strips surrounded by permanent netting which we occasionally roll.

Tell us about your weekly/monthly maintenance regimes

The weekly tasks undertaken are those usually associated with cricket pitch preparation. We cut squares with a Lloyds Paladin mower, roll the wickets, cut the outfield using our Toro triple mower, cut wickets before a game using the Allett Shaver and, finally, mark out the creases. The club's rough grass areas are also cut once a week (weather permitting) with a rotary deck on our Kubota tractor. More infrequent tasks include repairing pitch ends around once per month; we scarify the squares with a hand-operated SISIS; fertilise the squares two to three times during the season, and once or twice during off-season, as well as spraying for weeds on the squares once a year. Off-season involves

verti-draining and scarifying (once we have purchased the machine).

Do you have specific tasks for specific staff, or is it an 'all hands to the pump' approach?

Whilst volunteers and paid workers can often carry out most tasks as and when required, there is a broad demarcation of tasks. Paid staff tend to focus on the pitch and outfield preparation, particularly on the main ground, whilst volunteers will mostly concentrate on rough cutting and general maintenance of the hedges, flower beds, etc.

Where does presentation rank?

Presentation is very important to us, but how the surfaces perform in cricket is the most important aspect I believe. However, presentation and how the surfaces perform often go hand-in-hand.

What end of season renovations do you undertake?

At the end of the year, we cut and scarify the squares multiple times before using a



Practice strips



Groundsman aerator and then apply seed and an autumn/winter fertiliser. Finally, Boughton County Loam is applied at about six bags per pitch.

Are renovations affected by budgets?

As much as possible, we aim to use high-quality products during renovations. However, I do endeavour to source the materials as cheaply as I can, without ultimately sacrificing the quality.

Are renovations affected by outside pressures?

Not normally. The cricket season extending too far into September can have a negative impact, given the latitude of the club.

How have changing weather patterns affected what you do?

Climate change hasn't had too significant an impact on the weather in Scotland - it has always been unpredictable!

Do you take regular soil samples to ascertain what work is required?

Whilst this is not something that we do on a regular basis, this is definitely something I want to incorporate into the regime to help us improve the surfaces.

What projects have been undertaken in recent years?



Since acquiring the new facility, we have hosted the Women's World Cup qualifiers in 2010, an under-15 international event in 2011

Recently, the most significant project we have undertaken was the installation of a ring drain around the main square, to combat the accumulation of water in that area after heavy rainfall. We hired a contractor to carry out this work for us.

How do you purchase machinery and are you loyal to one manufacturer?

Due to budget restraints, we buy all our machinery second-hand and, where possible, we will use a local dealer to source the machinery we require. We aim to purchase appropriate machinery in a cost-effective manner - regardless of the manufacturer.

Do you hire in any machinery for specific tasks?

We used to hire in a scarifier for the outfielders once a year, but we are hopeful we can

NEW



vitax
Amenity

Supaturf[®]

EVENSPREY
PROFESSIONAL
SPRAYER

- ✓ 50 litre Tank
- ✓ 5 Spray Heads
- ✓ Spray Head Isolator Function
- ✓ Multi Nozzle Head
- ✓ Return to Tank Agitator
- ✓ Folding Boom

For full details visit www.vitaxamenity.co.uk or call 01530 510060



purchase our own. This will give us more flexibility when it comes to timings.

What would your wishlist include?

A Dennis G860 interchangeable cassette mower, tractor-mounted scarifier, tractor-mounted sprayer and SISIS pitch brush.

How do you undertake pest and weed control?

Where possible, we mainly use mechanical methods to control these factors by scarifying, fertilising, maintaining mowers after use. We will spray when needed and if it is appropriate to do so.

Are rabbits, badgers, foxes, geese, chafer grubs, worms etc. a problem?

Worms present a small but manageable problem. Weed and moss control pose our biggest headache, due to the open situation of ground with uncultivated fields surrounding it and high levels of rainfall respectively.

How do you control these?

Downcast has been recommended to us for worm control. We will scarify and apply sulphate of iron to control the moss.

How important do you consider the local flora and fauna?

Whilst we have no specific policies regarding wild flora and fauna, we aim to minimise the club's impact on these.

What would you consider to be the state of our industry?

I believe the tightening of budgets and the closing down of sports clubs is unnecessarily placing a strain on the industry.

Are we undervalued?

In most cases, yes.

How would you raise our profile?

Better education and understanding of the challenges involved in the industry and the importance of this. Even if this was done at base level, it would have an impact due to expectations of players and supporters that surfaces essentially 'magically appear'.

Thank you for your time.



Climate change hasn't had too significant an impact on the weather in Scotland - it has always been unpredictable!



Innovative turf care machinery that's setting new standards



Campey™ Uni-Scratch



Air2G2



KORO® FTM®



Imants SandCat

At Campey Turf Care we supply exclusive turf care machinery that is regularly used on some of the worlds finest natural sports surfaces. Creating high quality, award winning, healthy surfaces that are ready for play, talk to Campey today.

For more information visit www.campeyturfcare.com

 CampeyTurfCare  Campeys  CampeyMachinery  CampeyTurfCare





Groundcare operations at SAS UK headquarters

Who dares wins

No, not the Special Forces training ground in the Brecon Beacons, but the 110-acre estate that's home to the UK headquarters of SAS at Medmenham, near Marlow in Buckinghamshire. We sent freelance journalist **Peter Driver** to visit earlier this year



Founded in 1976 by current CEO James Goodnight and other faculty members from North Carolina State University, SAS is the leader in analytics software and services with global headquarters in Cary, North Carolina. Its solutions help businesses to access, manage, analyse and interpret data to aid decision-making. The company is one of the world's largest privately held software businesses and its customers include most of the Fortune 100 companies.

Their estate is an amalgamation of two previous sites - Wittington House, a former mansion which is now used as the company's meeting and conference centre and an old MOD premises, which was purchased and demolished to make way for modern offices. It consists of formal gardens and lawns, a unique arboretum, a cricket pitch for staff use as well as the local village team, a 3-hole pitch-and-putt course, 5-a-side football pitch, wildflower meadow, river frontage to the Thames and staff allotments.

Landscaping manager George Reeder joined SAS as a gardener in 2005 and is the man tasked with the job of managing the grounds. He studied at Sparsholt College in Hampshire before joining Countrywide Grounds Maintenance as part of the team maintaining the green spaces of various hotels in the south of England. He has a team of five specialist gardeners to maintain the extensive grounds.

"It's an amazing place to work," he said, "we are extremely lucky to have inherited such a wonderful landscape and we continue to work hard to improve it. The flora and fauna are very diverse; deer, badgers, voles, stoats, ferrets, rabbits and bats - the latter being carefully removed then reinstated during building work at the Stable Block. Feathered residents include barn owls, buzzards, red kites and

a family of geese that, oddly, nested high in a 400-year-old oak, and in the summer, swallows that nest in our machinery sheds."

"Recent projects have included new herbaceous borders at the rear of Wittington House, construction of a three-hole golf course and probably our most ambitious, transplanting lime trees from other parts of the estate to form a new avenue to the house. We hired the largest tree spade in England to complete the task and it was well worth it."

"We are located in south Buckinghamshire, by the Thames, within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north. This region is characterised by quiet valleys, magnificent beech woods and a rolling chalk landscape; our riverside has one of only two sets of chalk cliffs on the Thames."

"Historical records show that Lord Devonport was very proud of the garden he created. It was nothing but poor agricultural land, gravel and chalky soil typical of the Chilterns back then, and the fields were literally covered with thousands and thousands of flints. To clear the estate, he engaged hundreds of men as stone-pickers, which provided major employment for the local community at a time of serious unemployment following the Boer War."

One of Lord Devonport's proudest achievements was the building of the Rock Garden, constructed in 1912 with stone imported from Derbyshire. It was purchased at the amazing cost of a shilling (5p) per ton and shipped to Brentford by rail, then transported 40 miles up the Thames by barge to eventually be unloaded and positioned by two huge cranes.

Other work included the bold planting of herbaceous borders, a rose garden, kitchen garden, planting rare trees, a golden privet hedge believed to be the longest of its kind in England, water meadows, and the





Avenue of Limes



There are many environmental benefits to be realised from these changes such as less pollution, less noise, lighter as well as cheaper to run and maintain

informal Undercliff Garden with its curious Smuggler's cave.

"After being famous for so long then spending years in decline, the last three decades have seen the gardens make a significant comeback," George added. "We have renovated and replanted herbaceous borders, rhododendron beds, lawns, an 18-acre nature meadow, initiated tree-planting to fill gaps, replaced Victorian irrigation, and completed the restoration of the magnificent Rose Garden that had totally disappeared."

"We have re-established the Devonport arboretum, which had become wild woodland. With the help of generous benefactors associated with the Weston family and working with the National Tree Council, Kew Gardens and local universities, we have sympathetically planted a selection of trees to represent the huge migratory journey of the Monarch butterfly - south from Canada through North America to Mexico - as well as installing specially-commissioned wood sculptures.

Allowing the site to rest after clearance revealed unusual small orchids. The arboretum also features a totem pole sculpture featuring hundreds of butterflies."

"The wildflower meadow, which came to fruition in 2008, also attracts insects and rare butterflies. Natural processes continue to shape the landscape and we are especially wary of river erosion: repairing banks as soon as they are damaged to minimise loss of our precious riverfront."

There's an atmosphere of professionalism around the estate, plus a sense of community. From its days as an Iron Age fort, through its years as a country house and right up to the hundreds of SAS specialists now based here, Wittington has been always been a community in some shape or form.

The house was regularly used for entertaining and there are evocative images from 1936 showing the Weston family entertaining staff from their Slough biscuit factory. Visit these days, and you may see



Wittington House



Hurley Weir Capstan

Hurley weir capstan

The Hurley weir capstan is historically important as the only remaining example on the Thames of capstans that once hauled boats upstream when there were only 'flash' locks, similar to dams and not like the locks of today found on canals. The men who provided the manual power to turn the capstan wheel, usually rough individuals, were known as 'tow rags' which gives rise to one explanation for the unflattering description 'toe rag' meaning a scoundrel.

The capstan had survived until the 20th century because of the efforts of Viscount Devonport who pledged to preserve it and donated oak from his estate to replace decayed timbers. The capstan wheel was then restored in the 1980s by two men, David Empringham and Christopher Barnes-Wallis, the son of the man who invented the famous 'bouncing bomb' used in the WWII 'Dam Buster' raids.

social events like the SAS UK Summer Party, Bonfire Night celebrations or the Hurley Classic freestyle kayak and paddle boarding event. Given the beautiful surroundings, it's no wonder walkers have visited the area for decades; a public right of way runs through the gardens, with a four-mile path leading from the main road to the Thames and riverside before re-joining the road.

Wanting privacy and to protect his property, Lord Devonport built a 150-metre

tunnel that, to this day, runs directly beneath the lawns. While the public still doesn't have unfettered access, SAS are delighted that local schools and charities use the grounds for fund-raising and educational activities.

"Our staff enjoy the grounds, especially during lunch hour, when you'll often see an informal football match or the keen golfers using the short course we constructed recently. We have also built a new cricket pavilion, renovated the



SCAN TO VIEW
THE RANGE

DOUBLE THE CUT FOR TOTAL TURF CARE...

Made for professionals and designed in every detail to achieve the best performance on any terrain with minimal effort.

With a double-edged Twinclip blade doubling mowing efficiency and the added advantage of BBC these mowers easily offer the perfect cut.



XC SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY

Double blade specifically shaped to perform a double cut and make grass clippings smaller.
Special deck design improving the airflow and overall collecting performance.
Extrashield protecting mechanical parts against dirt and bumps.



ONE MOTION SYSTEM

Plug-in-grassbag in just one easy movement.
Button-handle system to regulate to the desired cutting height in just one movement.
Overinjected levers to adjust the Pro handlebar in height by means of a single motion.



STRONG CONSTRUCTION

Hybrid deck combining the strength of galvanized steel with the rigidity of aluminium.
Stronger chassis with four moulding steps to double the rigidity.
Heavy Duty transmission, self adjusting with aluminium heavy duty casing for increased durability.



CONTROL

Blade Brake Clutch for disengaging the blade without turning off the engine for walking over paths, gravel or emptying the grassbag.



SECURITY

1 year Commercial Warranty



STIGA
stigalawnmowers.co.uk



Monarch butterfly



Rock garden

cricket square and this is used by employees, local cricket teams and local scout group. SAS UK is a community in itself and we're proud of the role we also play in our local and wider community."

"We are an official partner of British Rowing and back in 2018, ahead of the Glasgow European Championships, we organised a 'Job Swap' between two golfers on the Ladies' European Tour and two athletes from the GB Rowing team."

"With both sports being represented at the inaugural European Championships, British golfers Amy Boulden and Annabel Dimmock changed places with athletes from the GB Rowing Team, Tom George and Alan Sinclair. After splitting into teams, the pairs battled it out in double scull boats over 150m down the River Thames in Marlow. After that, they came to us for a series of golf challenges on our course. It was a fun day for all involved and even made the local

Operation Crossbow

Operation Crossbow was the codename for a vital military operation to find V1 and V2 bases in northern Europe, primarily in northern France. Located at RAF Medmenham, 60 miles to the west of London, it was here that RAF personnel interpreted reconnaissance photographs and passed on their findings to higher authorities.

Reconnaissance pilots flew modified unarmed Spitfires that were fitted with five powerful cameras, which reduced their weight and increased their speed. They were painted a grey-blue colour so that they blended in with the sky, as their optimum flight height was 30,000 feet. If by chance they were attacked, it was generally considered that the Spitfires had the necessary speed to escape any attacker, until the introduction of the Nazi's ME-262 jet fighter.

Once a reconnaissance Spitfire had landed, the cameras were taken off and the stills processed and studied. The photographs were put into three categories depending on whether they were of value. They were studied by highly skilled Photographic Interpreters (PI's) at RAF Medmenham and it was up to them to sort the images into the various categories.

If a photo was deemed to be of great interest, a further reconnaissance flight was ordered so that a collection of more detailed photographs could be taken. Overlapping images allowed the PI's to build up a 3D image of what it was that had interested them in the first place. These types of images gave accurate heights and widths – both vital in trying to work out the content of the photographs.

The campaign against the V1 and V2s started when an inquisitive pilot noticed what to him were odd buildings and curious shapes on the ground at a place called Peenemünde, which up to that time was unknown to British intelligence. This was compounded by French resistance information that notified the British of a number of newly built complexes or building projects near to the north French coast.

These were investigated by the reconnaissance pilots, who now had to fly in at a very low level putting themselves in danger of intense anti-aircraft gunfire, which convinced them that what they were photographing was of great importance. In fact, they had discovered the existence of the V1 and the work done at RAF Medmenham led to a major attack on Peenemünde on August 17-18, 1943.



The V2 was also identified by the PIs, but because it was a weapon that could be moved and was invariably launched in woodland, bombing raids would not work. Peenemünde had been virtually destroyed but this resulted in the factories being rebuilt inside of mountains near Nördhausen where they were safe from bombing. The threat from the V2s remained until Nördhausen was overrun by the Americans. It was only then that the brutality behind the V2 was observed as the labourers at Nördhausen came from the nearby Dora concentration camp, where thousands of inmates died during the war.

There can be no doubt that the work done by the reconnaissance pilots and the PIs at RAF Medmenham was vital to the war effort.



Wittington Court

“
It’s an amazing place to work. We are extremely lucky to have inherited such a wonderful landscape and we continue to work hard to improve it

BBC TV news bulletin.

“Interestingly, this sense of community did not extend to Lord Devonport back in the 1890s. The estate includes the riverside strip below the cliffs, which he bought to annoy his next-door neighbour, Robert Hudson of Sunlight Soap fame, who had acquired the adjoining Danesfield estate. This effectively denied Hudson access to the river resulting in a situation that still exists today.”

SAS has long been an innovator in providing technology that helps organisations perform better and this continues a tradition from the 1930s when a Pelton wheel ran at Hurley Weir to power bankside batteries, with a 110-volt current piped to the house. This meant Wittington was the first house locally to have an electric washing machine. Stories remain of household staff having to traipse down to the river late at night to start up the wheel, powering the washing machine to the delight of late-night revellers in the main house.

A stroll around the grounds is a fascinating journey through time. Visitors at the gates are presented with open

lawns and wild meadows running down to the sweeping galleries and curves of the modern offices on the Upper Wittington site, opened in 2002. Walk for two minutes and you reach Wittington Court, an elegant fusion of old and new. This single-storey building inside the original house’s walled garden includes training facilities and offices and has won a prestigious design award.

Close by is the Stable Block, a Grade II building sensitively remodelled and enlarged as a restaurant and offices, including a large glazed extension and freestanding gallery. Finally, you arrive at the old house, only 150 metres from the Thames. Carefully restored since 1985 without major external alteration, this remains the heart of SAS UK.

A sprig of tea carved in the crest over the main door is an immediate reminder of original owner Lord Devonport, who made his fortune in tea. Numerous notable features in the house include an amazing chimneypiece from the former home of William Wilberforce, the member of Parliament who led the abolition of slavery. Visible in the library is the coat of arms of



Specimen trees



Upper Wittington



Hart's-tongue Fern



Staff enjoying a lunchtime cricket match

second owner Garfield Weston, along with elaborate panelling and unusual carvings of people both famous and infamous - including George Bernard Shaw and Adolf Hitler.

"We continue to improve the riverside aspect of the estate and a typical example is

the Fern Dell, created in 2017. A year earlier, during one of our donor's regular visits, this area was walked after the team cleared an entrance to this previously inaccessible site. What we revealed was a woodland floor covered in Wild Garlic and Hart's-tongue Fern. Seeing the naturally growing fern, the donor suggested that we clear the existing canopy of Ash and create a dedicated fern garden. Seventy self-seeded Ash were cleared and the branches chipped to be used as pathways. Alder, which are also present in the area have been retained as have some of the better shaped Ash trees. This is an ongoing project and will be expanded over time. We recently added a selection of Tree Ferns."

Obviously, an estate of this magnitude requires a significant amount of equipment and located within the machinery sheds is an eclectic mix of machinery. From the large Kubota L5030 tractors to a selection of Club Car and RTV buggies down to the smaller pedestrian equipment including a fleet Hayter Harrier 56s, Dennis Razor Ultra, Lloyds Paladin and SISIS Rotorake Mk5. Every item has to prove its worth within the small team of landscape personnel.

"We are in a process to change the



Ventrac compact tractor



After being famous for so long then spending years in decline, the last three decades have seen the gardens make a significant comeback



Natural processes continue to shape the landscape and we are especially wary of river erosion: repairing banks as soon as they are damaged

machinery from petrol and diesel to electric and this began when we purchased the electric STIHL hedge cutters. Electric buggies will be next and mowers to follow as technology continues to advance. There are many environmental benefits to be realised from these changes such as less pollution, less noise, lighter as well as cheaper to run and maintain."

"We recently took delivery of our latest machine; a Ventrac compact tractor and three different mowing decks. Our mid-mounted rotary mower was nearing the end of its working life and we were in the market for a replacement machine. We were considering an out-front flail, but then attended an RT Machinery open day and saw the Ventrac with its Contour deck. It looked to be a very innovative machine so we organised a demonstration. It worked exceptionally well, producing great stripes and has now replaced our cylinder mower as well. Rye stalks, which are problematic for a cylinder machine, are no longer an issue as it deals with them admirably. This versatility has enabled us to replace two machines with one."

"We have also purchased a Finishing deck and ToughCut deck and there's scope to purchase additional implements in the future. Its compact nature means we can now access and maintain areas on banks and under trees and we have saved considerable man-hours on strimming due to its out-front design and manoeuvrability. All in all, a great addition to our fleet here at Medmenham."

On the long drive down to Cornwall for my next assignment, I had time to contemplate the history of the site and the continued investment that SAS has committed to reviving the fortunes of this magnificent estate. I'm sure that the original owner, Hudson Kearley, would be delighted that they are now the custodians of the land and that it will continue to prosper under their stewardship.

"It leaves a striped finish at precisely the right height of cut, every time."

Phil Cole, Cotswold Turf Care Ltd



MAJOR Trailed Swift Roller Mower

Delivers an exceptional quality of cut, even in the most challenging conditions. **4.0m to 7.3m** working widths.

- ✓ Gearbox driveline eliminates the problems associated with belt-driven mowers
- ✓ Hot-dipped galvanised to extend the working life of the mower
- ✓ 60mm blade overlap for an impeccable finish
- ✓ Simple height adjustment from 10-130mm
- ✓ 3-year warranty



Call 01524 850501 or visit www.major-equipment.com

History

The area around the Wittington estate has been occupied since the Iron Age; Danesfield Hill Fort, built over 2,000 years ago, is on the estate's western edge. Numerous Roman coins and artefacts have also been dredged from the adjacent river Thames. According to the house's first owner, Hudson Ewebank Kearley, there was evidence of a Saxon settlement and the Wittington name - which had many variants down the centuries, such as Wydendon and Whittington - is Saxon in origin.

Over the intervening centuries activities such as chalk quarrying were carried out, providing materials for the 13th century Medmenham Abbey, and the Thames was an important freight route. The remains of a flash-lock capstan, unique in England and used to haul barges upriver by Hurley weir, were discovered in the 1970s. It was fully restored in 1999 and today is maintained by SAS. (see separate panel).

More modern developments began in



1897 when the aforementioned Hudson Kearley MP, Lord Devonport and later Minister for Food during the Great War, bought the land from Oxford University. He commissioned celebrated architect Sir Reginald Blomfield to design Wittington House in 1897, asking him in 1908 to completely remodel and enlarge the building.

In the 35 years following, work in the grounds employed hundreds of local men, particularly important with high unemployment after the Boer Wars. The fame of the gardens spread, so much so that Queen Mary, the present Queen's grandmother, paid a visit in 1931.

In 1934, the Canadian industrialist Garfield Weston bought the site. Branches of the family are based in Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom and they are a family of prominent business people with global interests in food and clothing businesses. The family operations began with the founding of a bakery in Toronto,

Ontario by George Weston and in 2018 they were named Ireland's richest family for the tenth year running with a wealth of €11.42bn.

The main holding company of the British branch of the family is Wittington Investments, with the majority of these shares held in a charitable trust - the Garfield Weston Foundation, with the balance owned by family members. Wittington Investments owns a majority stake in Associated British Foods, which itself owns the discount clothing chain Primark, and 100% of upmarket retailers Fortnum & Mason and Heal & Son.

The Salvation Army took the house from 1948 for a peppercorn rent, running an Eventide House for elderly ladies. Over the period of this tenancy, the grounds became overgrown and the house fell into disrepair. However, a new chapter in Wittington's history began in 1987 when SAS UK arrived with just 11 employees.

SAS bought the land next door in 1997 to support its continued growth and added an additional 34 acres to the estate. Acquired from the Ministry of Defence, it was the former RAF Medmenham base, home to Operation Crossbow, the codename for a vital military operation to locate V1 and V2 rocket bases in northern Europe in World War II. Ammunition and ordnance has been found in this area, including a large casing for a prototype of Barnes Wallis' bouncing bomb.

In 2002, on the Upper Wittington site of the former MOD land, a gleaming energy-efficient 10,000 square metre UK headquarters building was constructed, with a futuristic design centred around a three-storey atrium with dramatic open spaces and eco-friendly features that include grey water recycling. Less than 20 years on, this remarkable building is being totally refurbished to future-proof the company's development requirements over the coming decades.



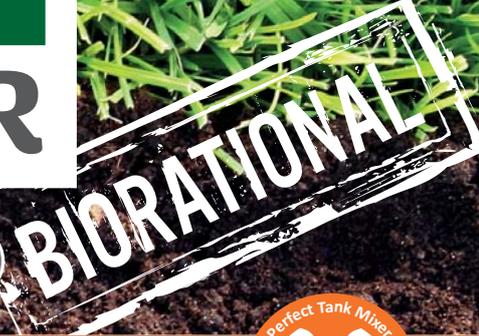


MAXWELL

ADVANCED CHELATED CALCIUM FORMULATION STRENGTHENS TURF AND INCREASES ABILITY TO WITHSTAND STRESS AND DISEASE.



TURF HARDENER



TURF HARDENER PACKAGES



COLOUR & PREVENT

Maxwell Turf Hardener 20 L, Maxwell Bullet Phosphite 10 L
Maxwell Bullet Chelated Iron 20 L OR Bullet Magnesium 5 L

MAXIMISE RESILIENCE

Maxwell Turf Hardener 20 L, Maxwell Bullet Phosphite 10 L
Maxwell Bullet Potassium Silicate 5 L



MAXWELL

is distributed exclusively by



Wycombe Abbey School

The four seasons

Wycombe Abbey is an independent girls' boarding school in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Its history and grandness are apparent as soon as you enter the grounds and, at the time of my visit, **Daniel Davy**, Head of Grounds and Gardens has been there a year to the day. Having experienced all four seasons, he talks to Kerry Haywood about the challenges during his first year



Founded on the day of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1896, Wycombe Abbey made history by promoting equal opportunities for girls in the Victorian age.

The school's present capacity is just over 600, whose offering of sports include: five lacrosse pitches, a grass athletics track, three rounders pitches, a floodlit astroturf pitch, a full-sized football pitch, indoor and outdoor netball courts and twenty tennis courts. As well as this, the Davies Sports Centre includes a 25-metre six-lane indoor swimming pool with touchpad timing and water polo scoring facilities, multi-use sports hall, dance studio, fitness suite, four glass-backed squash courts, fencing

piste and climbing wall.

Daniel Davy has been in charge of the extensive outdoor facilities for a year now and has a pretty extensive career of his own. Like many people in this industry, Dan had family in the industry (his elder brother Russell was a greenkeeper) and he encouraged him to go for the apprentice position at a club close to their family home. "Straight from leaving school, I started at Wycombe Heights Golf Club (which is literally just down the road from the Abbey) and, during the eighteen months there, I learnt the basics of turf maintenance. Then, I moved to the Buckinghamshire Golf Club as an assistant greenkeeper where I stayed for three years and got my NVQ Level 2

in Amenity Horticulture Sports Turf before moving to South Buckinghamshire Golf Club and went on to become the deputy course manager. There I completed my HNC in Golf Course Management and Sports Turf (through Elmwood college) and I enjoyed the challenge of that course for ten years, before applying for this job. I had put in my application for this position, I was offered the role and I actually nearly turned it down. Throughout the application process, I realised how happy I was at South Buckinghamshire and I didn't want to make the wrong decision. I'm so glad that I made the decision I did, as it is so clear to me now that it was the right one and I really do enjoy working here - it's been a new challenge



Lacrosse pitch

and a big learning curve away from the golf course “Grass is what I like to think I’m good at and, obviously coming here, there’s so much more to think about in terms of ornamental gardens. I’m also lucky to have

lead gardener Joseph Fletcher (46), whose qualifications include RHS Level 2 Diploma in Horticulture, CS30 and CS31 chainsaw, PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates and IOSH Management certificate. He looks

after the bulk of the gardening side of things and needless to say, he knows the site really well, and has been a massive help.”

“Not to single Joseph out, I’m very lucky to have such a good hard-working team.” Neil Smith, Deputy Head Groundsman (54) has helped me massively also during my settling in period, he has his Chainsaw CS30 and CS31; We have four groundspersons; Ian Wright, Groundsman (56) - CS30 Chainsaw, Martyn Speck (37) - spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6, CS30 Chainsaw and currently studying Winter Sports Pitch Maintenance with Grounds Training, Jake Barrett (20) - PA1 and PA6 and Jason Jones (36) - Level 2 Amenity Horticulture Sports Turf, Level 3 in Work based Horticulture (Sports turf) PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates and last, but certainly not least, Catherine Andrews (38) - Groundsperson and Gardener. Catherine moved into this profession eighteen months ago, following seventeen years with the MOD. Although she doesn’t hold any qualifications to date, she has plenty of experience and good knowledge for someone who has only just recently



Head of Grounds and Gardens, Daniel Davy



We have suffered a lot from worms - especially with Carbendazim being removed from the market - and that continues to give us a headache



made a massive career change.

“As well as these eight full-time staff, I also have one volunteer, Jane Beaton who typically comes in once a week on a Tuesday and is a big help around the gardens. I’m also just in the process of recruiting two apprentices, which will certainly help alleviate some of the pressure for everyone.”

“There is a vast amount of woodland

and large trees, so I contract some of this work out. My brother now co-runs his own company, R&R Estates Management, who carry out all the tree works that we are unable to undertake in-house, also any other required work such as help with cutting hedges, and even box mowing when I’m really up against it.”

After a life in the golf sector, Dan had to get to grips with pitches and sports he

THE BEFORE AND AFTER OF ONE METRE DEEP AERATION

COMPACTION AND WATERLOGGING STOP PLAY. DOWNTIME COSTS MONEY.

Terrain Aeration’s long-term treatment reaches one metre deep where compressed air blasts the compaction. The soil is opened up for good drainage and a healthy sward with minimum disruption. We have been successfully aerating sports turf, bowling greens, golf courses, parks, trees and gardens for over twenty-five years.



See us at work:

www.terrainaeration.co.uk

Call us for a quotation 01449 673 783





Left to right: Joseph Fletcher, Jake Barrett, Catherine Andrews, Daniel Davy, Jason Jones, Martyn Speck, Ian Wright and Neil Smith



I love my job and think it's the best one in the world. I feel very valued in this position, as do all my team and we appreciate how lucky we all are to be in this position

describes as foreign - mainly lacrosse. "When I took over, it was quite tricky getting to grips with all that, but the team here have helped a lot and I would like to think it's been a pretty smooth transition."

The 170-acre site is mainly a chalk base which can mean the soil and surface is quite heavy. "During winter, we struggle a lot with surface water and, when I started, thatch content in the top inch of the soil profile was extremely vast. We have recently purchased an Amazone Smart Cut 1500, which I use to vacuum up the grass clippings and debris, to control the amount of organic material returned back to the surface. With hard renovations, which typically consists of a

double pass with the Graden, 250 tonnes of sand dressing and then the continued use of the Amazone, this will obviously help greatly with reducing the high thatch levels we once had. Last year we did renovations twice but, this year, we've only needed to do it once as we're currently now in a healthy place regarding grass density on the pitches. I have three guys who concentrate on aerating the pitches using a multitude of machines and equipment including the SISiS Maxi Slit, Toro ProCore 648 for micro-tining (to 6-7 inches) and a Wiedenmann Terra Spike for all the verti-draining. Because of the chalk, we can only go down around 9.5 inches to avoid hitting





What's in the shed

- Kubota L5740-II tractor
- John Deere 3720 tractor
- Barroness LM281 triple cylinder mower
- Trimax Striker 190 rotary deck
- Amazone Smart Cut 1500
- Gambetti tractor-mounted sprayer
- Can AM Traxter utility vehicle
- SISIS Maxi Slit
- Wiedenmann Terra Spike
- SnowEx snow plough
- Tornado TM 300 tractor-mounted blower
- Sitrex FS 500 tractor-mounted spreader
- Honda HRD 536 self-propelled 21" mowers x 4
- Hayter Harrier 48 Pro
- Allen 450 Pro Flymo
- Stihl FS90 trimmers x 5
- Stihl BR600 backpack blowers x 6
- Stihl MS260 chainsaws x 2
- Stihl MS 460 chainsaw
- Stihl HT131 Pole Pruner chainsaw
- Husqvarna 562 XP chainsaw
- Landrover Defender
- Ford Transit vehicles x 2

this and causing problems with pH values. The verti-drain helps with compaction, but generally it's not too bad."

Dan continued: "The 100% rye grass sports pitches consist of three hectares and these are cut at a height of 24-25mm with a Trimax Striker 190 rotary deck followed by the Amazone to collect the clippings. As the weather deteriorates, I will take that up a fraction, but the summer is reduced to 18-19mm. We will apply fifty bags of rye seed per spring and autumn renovation and this is used solely down to its hard-wearing and fast regeneration qualities. The Honda walk-behind mowers are used for all the ornamental lawns."

"On occasion, I have soil samples taken as part of the fertiliser programme scheduled with Phil Garrod of AGS Supplies. When I first started, we were using up to 4-5 granular fertiliser applications across the pitches, however now, aside from renovations when I might use a granular, (so once or twice a year) we're pretty much down to using the monthly liquid feeds alone which is working really well. Disease is minimal, as we're not cutting at such short heights, but we do have a little red thread after excessive rain which we tend to just feed out. I've probably only used one

fungicide all year - which is a lot different from my golf course days."

"Weed control was carried out using a selective herbicide before the girls returned, which seems to have done its job. We have suffered a lot from worms - especially with Carbendazim being removed from the market - and that continues to give us a headache. I'm hoping that through all the aeration we're carrying out it will deter them, but I'm also bracing myself for the winter months."

The girls are only around for half of the year, which means the pitches do get a good rest and they're not under constant use. There are a number of outside lettings during the summer months on the pitches and leisure facilities, but these don't hinder the surface too much. Summer sports consists mainly of athletics which obviously requires a lot of marking out and winter sports is predominantly lacrosse. This runs from September through to March, with alternate use on a weekly basis for home and away games.

The AstroTurf pitch is two years old and was installed by S&C Slatter. "They come back every couple of months to carry out deep cleaning maintenance, but we do weekly brushing and over marking in-house.



As well as the banks to deal with, we're also up on a hillside so we suffer with high winds

whiptec

- Twin-walled tree shelter
- Flared rim • Photodegradable
- Pre-fitted releasable ties

AVAILABLE IN STANDARD OR VENTILATED



We struggle a lot with surface water and, when I started, thatch content in the top inch of the soil profile was extremely vast

One of my team, Ian, has been here for forty years and does all the marking out using a 50-50 mix.” Dan and the team, along with the rest of the schools staff, recently held a ceremony to congratulate Ian on his forty years and joked that the line marker was probably that old too - but it obviously still does the job.”

It’s clear to see the site has a lot of banks and these can cause issues with cutting and strimming, but health and safety is paramount, and Dan doesn’t take any risks. “Robotic mowers are something that I hope we will invest in pretty soon. The new Bursar, Nick Edwards, shows

great interest in the school grounds and is completely on board with the need to purchase new machinery and equipment to bring the grounds on even further. We have purchased a lot in twelve months including the Amazone, a Can AM Traxter utility vehicle, four new Honda hand mowers, a SISIS Maxi Slit and we’re currently looking at new rotary mowers. We purchase everything outright and have brought a lot through our local dealer Turney Groundcare.”

“As well as the banks to deal with, we’re also up on a hillside so we suffer with high winds and, as a result, the many mature



3G pitches



Everyone has been hugely impressed with the development of the pitches and grounds over the past year

specimen trees drop a lot of leaves and debris and cause hazardous conditions underfoot. If the wind conditions get up too high, I have to close the internal roads in fear of any fallen branches etc.”

It sounds as though Dan has his work cut out, but he’s certainly made a big impression. “Everyone has been hugely impressed with the development of the * grounds over the past year. Come rain, sleet or shine, everything used to be cut

with a cylinder mower and there were areas with barely any blades of grass. Not only have the sports surfaces improved, but I wanted to create that lasting impression when people enter the grounds, so I have concentrated a lot on the entrance to give visitors that wow factor. General feedback from the staff and visitors alike has been really good, which is nice to hear.”

In terms of future projects, Dan would like to introduce wildflower beds around the

site. “There are plenty of areas where this would work and create a big impression, so this is certainly a priority over the next few months. As well as this, every two years we have a report which identifies what needs to be done to each tree and, this autumn, we have a big project involving dead wooding and thinning out. There are a lot of trees that succumbed to last year’s drought which still need to be removed, so it’s going to be a fairly major project this winter.”

3 YEAR WARRANTY AS STANDARD
Finance options available via GreenMech Finance

SCARIFYING - FERTILISING

Woodland management completes the annual maintenance cycle

AERATING - OVERSEEDING

See us at Saltex 2019 Stand J052

GreenMech
The Professionals' Choice

Pedestrian | Road Tow | Tracked | Tractor Mounted

www.greenmech.co.uk | 01789 400044

History

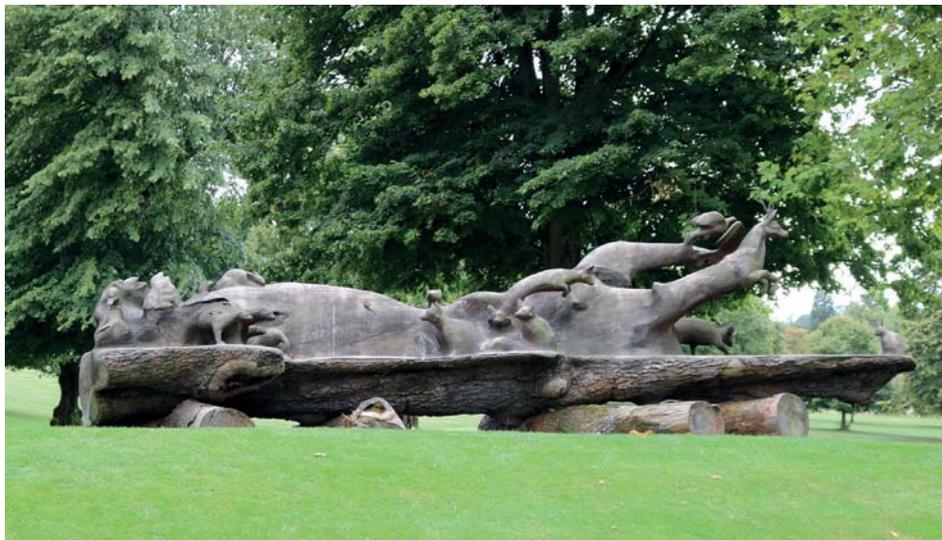
On the site of the present Wycombe Abbey was a large manor house known as 'Loakes House' which was the seat of the Archdale family, until 1700, when Thomas Archdale sold it to Henry Petty, 1st Earl of Shelburne. The earl in turn bequeathed the estate to his grandnephew, William Petty, (who inherited a different Earldom of Shelburne in 1761 and became Prime Minister in 1782). The Shelburnes, though, had a far larger and grander residence at Bowood House in the Savernake Forest and spent little time at Loakes House.

In 1896, the first cohort of girls numbered only 40 but, in just three years, the school was full with 210 pupils. The underlying principle of Dame Frances' educational thinking was education for citizenship. She argued that women should be taught corporate virtues, and that to be good citizens it was essential to have wide interests and a sense of discipline, as well as an esprit de corps.

The School continued to grow in strength through its early years. Girls increasingly won places at Oxford and Cambridge. In 1929, the School purchased the old Carrington family home, Daws Hill, and its 200 acres of land.

All activity was suspended with the arrival of the Second World War. For the next four years Wycombe Abbey became 'Pinetree', home to the US Army Eighth Air Force and the largest telephone switchboard in England. 'Pinetree' welcomed a number of high profile guests at this time. King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, Winston Churchill and Glen Miller and his band all visited the Abbey.

In May 1946, Wycombe Abbey re-opened with 170 arrivals. Of these girls only six were former pupils. After the School received a thorough cleaning it enjoyed a truly 'fresh start'. Further expansion took place in the 1950s with the addition of the Walpole Wing and the refurbishing of the Dove Library. In the 1960s and 1970s, the School launched a number of building projects including the gymnasium, the art block and the front wall and gates, as well as a separate house for the UVI, Clarence House. Thanks to numerous generous donations in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, the Lancaster Arts Centre and Archer Recital Hall were built and The Davies Sports Centre opened in 2004. More recently, in 2017 the School opened an atrium café, named The Courtyard, and two new Boarding Houses for Pitt and Rubens.



The site has a variety of wildlife including deer, badgers, herons etc. but it's birds (particularly crows and magpies) that give Dan the biggest problem. "At first, I was convinced that it was badgers causing the vast amount of damage, but soon realised that it was birds. Due to the lack of chemicals to hand now, I had to try and think outside the box and went as far as putting out scarecrows, fake birds of prey etc. Thankfully, they seem to have disappeared and I'm keeping my fingers crossed that's the end of it."

Whilst driving around the site on the Can Am, Dan showed me the many beehives. The school, and girls alike, place a great amount of emphasis on ecology and the hives and bug hotels etc. are something they want to develop further over the next few years.

Dan concluded by giving me his thoughts on the industry. "I think on the whole, we're certainly undervalued, particularly in the

golf sector. A lot of time you tell people what you do, and they think you're just a grass cutter - that's going to take a lot of education to stop receiving that label. Wages are a big issue and I don't know how we encourage youngsters into the industry, when it's not an attractive salary and considering what's involved. That said, I love my job and think it's the best one in the world. I feel very valued in this position by the school, as do all my team and we appreciate how lucky we all are to be in this position, in this great environment."



**WYCOMBE
ABBEY**



STAY WARM, DRY AND COMFORTABLE



HH[®]
work/wear

FREE DELIVERY

No. 1 Choice for Waterproofs

- Helly Tech[®] Protection
- Waterproof, windproof and breathable
- Full taped construction
- Matching Gent trousers



EN 343
+A1:2007



Winter Insulated Jacket

- Helly Tech[®] Protection
- Waterproof, windproof and breathable
- Full taped construction
- Matching Gent trousers



EN 343
+A1:2007



EN 342:2017



IN STOCK NOW CALL 01902 440250

Helly Hansen workwear is distributed in the UK to the golf and sports turf sectors by Pitchcare.com and amenity.co.uk

HH[®]
work/wear

Terms and Conditions: Offer limited to one per customer with products being purchased at published prices. Prices correct at time of printing. Errors and Omissions Excepted.

Down Royal Racecourse

Turf trotting

It's no secret the Irish enjoy a flutter or two on the horses, hence why racecourses across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are thriving sports venues. One of the big name racing venues in Northern Ireland is undoubtedly the Down Royal racecourse sited near Lisburn and just fourteen miles from the centre of Belfast. **Chris McCullough** reports

Steeped in horseracing history Down Royal can trace its form back to 1685, and although there have been a few changes of aesthetics and owners since then, the core racing ethos of the track continues.

Now under the ownership of the Merrion Property Group, and a fresh team of staff managed by new Chief Executive Emma Meehan, the track has shown steady growth and has big plans for the future.

There are 12 race meets at Down Royal per year with the most valuable being the Kauto Star Champion Chase, run at the Northern Ireland Festival of racing in November. The most valuable flat race to be run there annually is the Ulster Derby.

Delving into the history books, racing at the current course has been going on since the early 18th Century on land donated by Arthur Hill, the 1st Marquis of Downshire.

However, the history of Down Royal can be traced back even further to 1685 when King James II issued a Royal Charter and formed the Down Royal Corporation of Horse Breeders.

In 1750, King George II donated £100 to run King's Plate and, to the present day, a race named Her Majesty's Plate is run in July over one mile and five furlongs with the prize money contributed to by the Privy Purse.

Although the racecourse is actually based in the United Kingdom, racing at Down Royal comes under the authority of Horse Racing Ireland as horse-racing in the British Isles is divided on a Great Britain and an all Ireland basis.

Back in October 2018, a dispute arose between the owners, Merrion Property Group, and the track operators, Down Royal Corporation of Horse Breeders. The corporation announced that it would cease



Chief Executive Emma Meehan





I was more or less reared on the Curragh Racecourse where my dad is the head groundsman. I worked there all through school and college





operations at the end of 2018 while Merrion, who had met criteria set by a land tribunal to evict the tenants, stated that they would run the course from January 1, 2019.

Some media reports suggested that the course would close, but in January 2019 the operation of the course passed to the Merrion Property Group.

One of the first key staff members that Emma needed to source was a head groundsman and that person was Shane Webb, who is no stranger to racecourses.

Shane's father Pat is the head groundsman at the Curragh Racecourse in County Kildare and is one of the people who encouraged Shane into the industry.

With this connection, Shane has an excellent racing pedigree bringing with him over nine years' experience in the industry, having worked as racetrack groundsman at the Curragh Racecourse and assistant track manager at Leopardstown Racecourse, as

well as completing a short stint at Royal Ascot before moving to Ballydoyle Racing.

Shane has overall responsibility for the preparation of the race track for Down Royal's year round schedule. Amongst his duties, he will be responsible for the ongoing management of the track's maintenance programme and course inspections, liaising with the clerk of the course on repairing, setting out and realigning of the running rail as well as purchasing and budgetary control.

Emma said: "I am delighted to welcome Shane to the team at Down Royal Racecourse. It's an exciting time in the history of the racecourse and I know Shane will help me and the team ensure Down Royal is the benchmark of standards into the future."

Shane has been in the post for the past four months at Down Royal and settled in there very quickly, getting to know his grounds team and the course.



Awareness has increased and the range of education and products on offer are high. I think everyone that works in this industry would say we are undervalued, but that's the easy answer



Down Royal Park Golf Course nestled in the centre of the racecourse



Presentation is ranked very highly at Down Royal Racecourse as there is only one chance to make a first impression

Down Royal Racecourse is quite unique as it has a golf course nestled in the centre of it called the Down Royal Park Golf Course, also owned by the Merrion Property Group.

Widely recognised as one of the driest golf courses in Northern Ireland, with the most natural layout, Down Royal Park is playable all year round and includes both an 18 hole classic course and a nine hole valley course and a driving range.

The fact there is a golf course near to the

racecourse can be quite an advantage for Shane and his team, but can also bring with it some challenges too.

Looking back over his career experience, Shane said: "I was more or less reared on the Curragh Racecourse where my dad is the head groundsman. I worked there all through school and college."

"I became assistant head groundsman at Leopardstown before working for Royal Ascot and then Ballydoyle Racing."

"In this job, I look after the grounds operating budget and report to the chief executive Emma Meehan. My qualifications with a business degree help me with that," he said.

"There are three other groundcare staff that work with me here at Down Royal Racecourse. The golf course also has a team of groundcare staff which I can call on when I need extra help."

"And in return, I can send some of our



ROLL WITH IT

WORLD CLASS AMENITY MOWERS

SPEARHEAD

Spearhead Machinery Ltd. Station Road, Salford Priors, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 8SW, England

+44 (0)1789 491860 enquiries@spearheadmachinery.com spearheadmachinery.com SpearheadWorld



designed and built in
GREAT BRITAIN

Getting Personal

Shane Webb - with the best advice to date

Who are you?

Shane Webb - Head Groundsman, Down Royal Racecourse.



Family status? I come from a family of five - two brothers and two sisters.

Who's your hero and why? In a sporting sense there's the obvious likes of Brian O'Driscoll. Then, being from Carlow, I'm lucky to have people like Paul Broderick (football) and Marcus Lawler (athletics) to look up to. My dad Pat also deserves a big mention as I've been looking up to him for a long time ... and still do!

What's been the highlight of your grounds career so far? Taking on the role of head groundsman at Down Royal this year is no doubt the highlight.

If your younger self saw you now, what would he think? I'd like to think he would be pleased.

What job would you love, other than your own? Airline pilot.

Brexit or Remain? Remain.

What is your favourite film? Harry Potter.

What is your favourite sport? Gaelic football.

Do you have a lifetime ambition? Take life one day at a time, whilst trying to improve and learn every day.

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party? Elvis, Emily Ratajkowski and David Attenborough.

What's the best advice you have ever been given? A pat on the back is only six inches from a kick in the backside!

What's your favourite smell? Freshly cut grass.

Which three albums would you take to a desert island? I'd bring Spotify and a portable charger!

What's the daftest work-related question you have ever been asked? Do you just cut grass?

What's your favourite piece of kit? The Major grass lifter finishing mower and I also couldn't survive without the verti-drain.

What three words would you use to describe yourself? Impulsive, persistent and hard-working.

What is the single most useful thing you could tell a 16-year-old groundsman/greenkeeper? Don't be afraid to move around when you're young. Try different things in different places.



team and equipment to the golf course when they require it, so it works very well for us all," he said.

The soil profile at the Down Royal Racecourse is predominantly sandy which can dry out quickly. This was a huge issue last year when there were drought weather conditions in Northern Ireland.

Shane said: "It dries quickly and needs to be put back very quickly after racing. However, thanks to a water system we can pump water from rainwater tanks in the yard to the course via underwater piping when conditions get very dry. The course also benefits from regular verti-draining and aeration," he added.

Down Royal Racecourse extends to almost two miles of track set in 40 acres just outside Lisburn and runs alongside the River Lagan.

Shane said: "The River Lagan can encroach on the rear of the course which will be a problem, but thankfully

one I haven't had to deal with yet. Shade and air flow are not major problems with us really, but the five furlong chute can become shaded. However, for the most part the track receives the required light."

"Walking back, rolling, divoting and aeration all form part of our maintenance regime. Weed spraying is a regular occurrence, especially this time of the year."

"We also regularly use the verti-drain, spiker, mower, fertiliser spreader and sprayer. Fertiliser use depends upon soil test results. Marking out is done by myself and we all put up the rail as a team."

"All the staff carry out any of the jobs. All hands in, the more versatile everyone is, the better. Presentation is ranked very highly at Down Royal Racecourse as there is only one chance to make a first impression," said Shane.

Changing weather patterns can affect





John Deere 1565 mower



In the future, I'd like to see the course investing in a self driven forward drive mower that is more efficient and perhaps one that collects the grass too

the going on the racecourse for the horses very quickly and this is a challenge Shane and his team have to be prepared for.

"This summer has been kind to us, unlike last," said Shane. "You just need to be ready to adapt to whatever the sky throws at you. The weather is both your best friend and the worst enemy," he said.

Taking regular monthly soil samples is a good management tool for Shane as it tells him exactly what the soil needs.

"There is roughly one race meet each month," said Shane. "We must get the ground in shape after each race for the next one. I normally cut the grass to four inches in height, but in mid August, the grass growth was high so I cut it to three and a half inches."

"A soil sample was also taken at that time and it found the soil to be lacking in potassium. With that in mind, we will cut the grass again in three days' time and apply around 30 grams per square metre of fertiliser that is higher in potassium to

compensate," he added. "The more you know about the soil and its condition, the more informed decisions you can make."

"Also at the moment, one of the other main jobs is inspecting the railing. We have taken most of it down and are replacing the inner wooden pegs that support the PVC railing."

"Some of them are loose and others are showing signs of rot, so we need to replace them to ensure the fencing is sturdy and secure," he said.

Shane has already formulated a management plan for the end of the main season to further improve soil condition and overall track condition.

"This will be my first end of the season but I aim to scarify, top dress and over seed to improve the course. The grass already grows well in most of the course but some areas are slower to recover than others," he said.

Shane has a number of machines available to use in the garage and has a wish list of new equipment he would like to see arrive at



We work with our partners Duralock and Watt Plastics to supply and install a full range of PVC products suitable for any occasion.



Crowd Barriers



Post & Rail



Picket Fencing



Running Rail

WEBSITE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

www.wattfences.com 01748822666 bill@wattfences.com



Vicon fertiliser sower



Charterhouse Verti-Drain

What's in the shed

New Holland T5060 tractors x 2
 Charterhouse Verti-Drain
 Land rollers x 2
 Trailing mower
 Major grass lifter
 Fleming grass spiker
 John Deere Gator
 John Deere 1565 mower
 Vicon fertiliser sower

Down Royal.

"We have two New Holland T5060 tractors fitted with oversize BKT tyres to run the machines on the course," Shane said. "One of them is fitted with a loader which is really handy."

"There is also a verti-drain, two land rollers, a trailing mower, a Major grass lifter, spiker, top dresser, trailers, a new John Deere Gator, a buggy and two other tractors."

"One of the best pieces of equipment we have is the grass lifter. We use a trailed mower that leaves the grass on the course so it needs to be gathered up after mowing

and the lifter does exactly that."

"In the future, I'd like to see the course investing in a self driven forward drive mower that is more efficient and perhaps one that collects the grass too," he said.

Some chores on the course need the help of outside contractors and this includes bringing in equipment to spray weeds and cut the hedges.

There are a number of pests and let's say 'foreign objects' that Shane and the team must keep a close eye out for.

"There is a lot of cleaning up to do after birds," said Shane. "They are a real pest on the track. There are also a few rabbits but they haven't caused much harm to date."

"We also suffer from small amounts of poa annua and trifolium, otherwise, we are quite lucky."

"There are some other issues we have to monitor and this includes dog fouling on the course. We allow locals to walk their dogs along the tracks at the side of the course, but sometimes they stray onto the course and leave a mess that we have to clean up. Of course, there are also a lot of golf balls to clean up too all the time," he added.



//

You just need to be ready to adapt to whatever the sky throws at you. The weather is both your best friend and the worst enemy



It's an exciting time in the history of the racecourse and I know Shane will help me and the team ensure Down Royal is the benchmark of standards into the future

"There are a couple of public roads that go through the main course so, on race days, we have to ensure staff are present to stop any traffic that comes along. It usually works well, but it's a hard job maintaining these intersections."

When it comes to the state of the groundcare industry, Shane is quite positive about how it is perceived by the general public.

"I think it's on an upward curve," he said. "Awareness has increased and the range of education and products on offer are high. I think everyone that works in this industry would say we are undervalued, but that's the easy answer."

"Personally, I've got a great employer that enables our team to work well. Obviously, there are a lot of hours and responsibility that nobody else sees."

"I think it can be sometimes seen from the outside as a job that 'non academics' take up as a result of leaving school early."

"Although this may be some people's case, the reality is that everyone in this job is probably skilled, hard-working and knowledgeable, no less than any other

profession and should be rewarded accordingly."

"In Ireland, perhaps we could have more awards and recognition for grounds teams as they do across the pond. I think the IRGA has been good to help groundsmen in Ireland to meet, take part in demos and to share knowledge," he said.

Shane has a Business Management Degree from Dublin City University and IT Carlow combined. He also holds several groundsmanship qualifications including Racecourse Groundsmanship Certification from Cheltenham Racecourse, Racecourse Management Skills Certification from York Racecourse, Professional Certificate and Diploma in Turf Surface Management, as well as a Botany Certification from Oregon State University.



Sand in turf management

Gold dust

Over the past decade, no other material has taken on such a prevalent role in the management of sports turf than sand. The material is now incorporated into a multitude of maintenance practices, with technology allowing greater volumes to be applied with reduced disruption in condensed time frames



Fig. 4: Topdressing with a spinning disc spreader



In this article, **Derek Fullerton** (Murrayfield Golf Club) aims to look at the differing characteristics of this precious material and the practical implications these may have in the management of your turf. It also seeks to discuss whether an over reliance on sand may hinder the industry's ability to fulfil its responsibilities in meeting future environmental challenges

To begin, let's take a closer look at the material itself. Sand is formed by biochemical processes involving both physical disintegration and chemical decomposition over many millennia. Originating from molten magma igneous rocks and sedimentary rocks, which cover about 75% of the Earth's surface, the material you use will most likely have a long and varied history. Where glacial waters were able to flow freely, sediments accumulated in valleys and plains, whilst minerals were carried away. When exposed to calcium or iron in the water, quartz sand weathered from igneous rocks such as granite, cemented to form solid masses known as sandstone. As in the case of sand dunes, wind was a natural vehicle to transport material over vast distances. By whatever means the sand that you use arrived at its destination, there is a good chance it began its formation in a very different geographical location.

The destructive nature of weathering plays a key role in regulating the size, shape and uniformity of the material, with the origins of the parent material influencing its chemical composition. To be classified as sand it must fall within a size range between 0.063mm-2mm. Grains originating from

glacial and transported material tend to be more rounded and uniform in shape, with those originating from residual sandstone deposits more angular and irregular (Fig. 1); all characteristics that are key to how your sand functions. Sand for industrial use is mainly sourced through three forms of extraction, these being mines, quarries and river bed dredging. For it to be suitable for use in sports turf, 'hydro classification' washing removes impurities whilst also allowing the material to be separated into grades depending on size category. This process enables companies to provide products that meet specific particle size distribution (PSD) criteria.

Technology has provided turf managers with the means of incorporating increased volumes of sand into their maintenance programmes. Examples of this include Graden and Dry Ject sand injection practices (Figs. 2 and 3), these allowing for the removal of organic matter (OM) whilst incorporating sand into various depths of the profile. More efficient disc spreaders (Fig. 4) and brushes also allow for higher quantities to be applied through top dressing, whilst techniques such as sand banding are often used to address drainage issues. Whether its addressing problematic OM levels, water retention or surface performance characteristics, sand is



Derek Fullerton BSc (Hons)

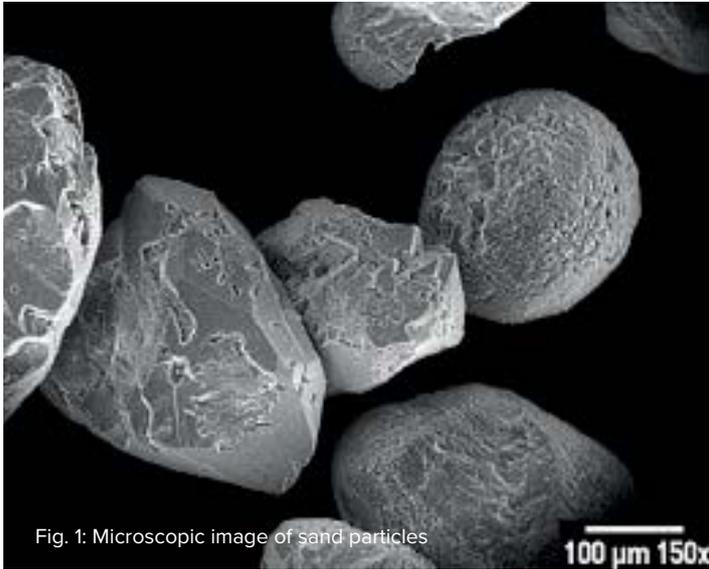


Fig. 1: Microscopic image of sand particles



Fig. 2: Kiln dried sand incorporated into sand injection process



Fig. 3: Graden sand injection practice

often now the 'go to' material.

An example of the integration between sand and technology can be seen at the BT Murrayfield stadium in Edinburgh, the home of Scottish Rugby. Head groundsman Jim Dawson, and his team of five, are responsible for maintaining three turf training pitches and the main stadium Desso Sportsmaster hybrid pitch. The hybrid pitch construction specification is a relatively new technology involving the incorporation of synthetic fibres into the natural grass sward, the aim of this being to increase surface stability and sward durability for high impact sports such as rugby and football. The success of this was highlighted by the fact that over the last season BT Murrayfield's hybrid pitch was able to host to up to 75 games, almost a 50% increase on the previous pitch. This increased resilience also allows for the venue to be utilised for concerts and other sporting events, important financial revenue streams.

The yearly maintenance programme consists of the top 8-15mm of the pitch being removed with only the synthetic fibres remaining, these having a life span

of roughly 8 years (Fig. 5). On average, 90 tonnes of Leavenseat LV25 sand are then applied whilst a specialist machine creates a seed bed for overseeding (Fig. 6). The annual removal of this top layer is crucial in the success of a pitch of this nature, in part due to the inert nature of sand. The sand provides the perfect environment for transmitting surface water and allowing initial strong root development, but at a cost. The pitch is thirsty and nutrient hungry, with slow decomposition of OM, this being quick to accumulate due to the top growth required for high performance pitches. If allowed to go unchecked over a period of time, pitch performance would soon be impaired.

One practice implemented by Jim to help negate the sterile nature of sand is in the use of compost teas. These liquid 'brews' are a source of highly valuable microbes that constitutes the microbial community that enables a growing medium to support life. Be this decomposition, nutrient recycling or pathogen suppression, soil microbes are at the heart of it all. Increasing the volume of sand in your growing medium will make it a more hostile environment for microbes to



This source of organic nutrients is always available to you, creating the correct environment for it to be utilised is key



Fig. 5: Synthetic fibres remain following sward removal



Fig. 6: Overseeding following application of LV25 sand



The conversation relating to how the turf sector is meeting its environmental responsibilities requires and deserves far greater scope than this article provides

inhabit. This area is of particular relevance to Jim and the team due to previous experience of the pitch performance being detrimentally affected by root eating nematodes. The use of bio controls such as compost teas can help maintain equilibrium in the soil food web and act as a preventative measure against such issues.

The hybrid pitch specification and subsequent maintenance requirements is a costly investment, but in the case of BT

Murrayfield the investment is an astute one due to the enhanced pitch performance and additional income generated. The properties of sand play a crucial role in the success of this modern concept, but care must be taken to avoid the pitfalls of creating a sterile growing environment.

Sand also plays an integral role in the maintenance programme of Scott Corrigan, course manager of Cawder Golf Club in the west of Scotland. Utilising the material

in practices such as sand injection, deep veemo slitting and post coring top dressing has allowed Scott to refine surface playing performance, aid the movement of water in the upper profile and re-establish surfaces following disruptive maintenance practices. Annual target rates range from 100-120 tonnes, with Leavenseat LV20 one of the products previously used.

Over time, Scott has come to recognise the additional pressures, both financial and



Aeration and Decompaction Services

- Unparalleled reliability
- Latest specialist machinery
- Qualified, trusted staff
- Nationwide service

Trusted by the best because we work to the highest standards

30
Experienced Team

Punctual & Reliable

Customer Satisfaction

Early Start

Contact the team on 01952 898518/9 or email enquiries@alscontracts.co.uk • alscontracts.co.uk



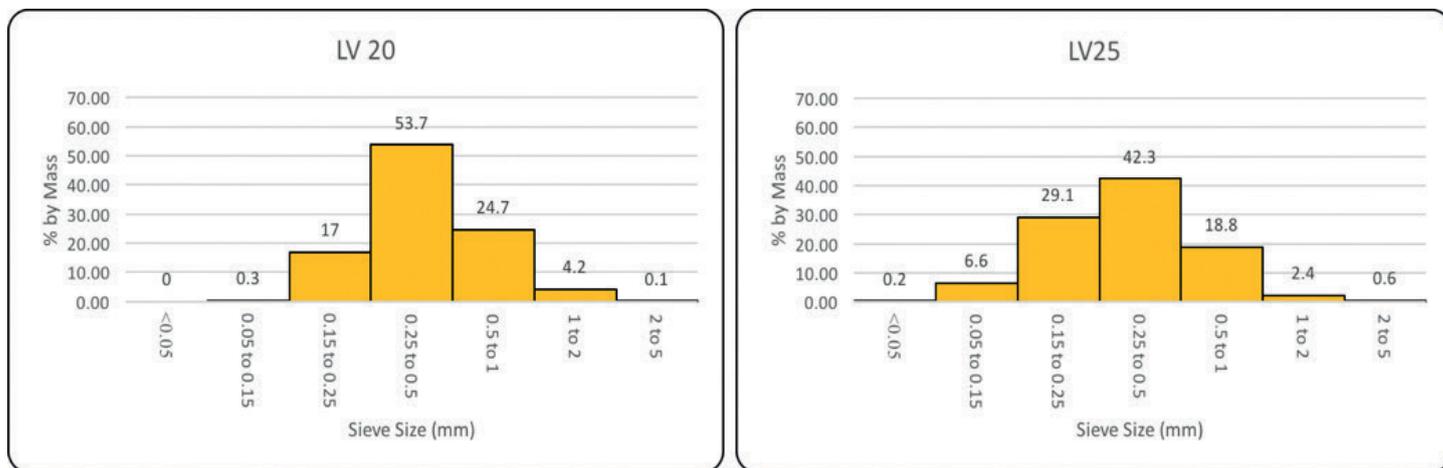


Fig. 7: LV20 & LV25 sand PSD graphs



Fig. 8: Aggregate formation on root hairs



Fig. 9: Biologically active profile showing high level of OM humification ©SYMBIO 2019

agronomical, that high inputs of sand can have. Wear and tear on machinery and cutting units can put pressure on budgets, particularly when in-house grinding is not an option. High annual application targets can eat into labour demands when staffing numbers are limited. From an agronomy point, the potential adverse impact that high application rates can have on disease pressure is one that Scott gives careful consideration to. Reduced available leaf blade exposure to sunlight, surface pH fluctuations and uneven leaf blade incision from blunt cutting units will all contribute to putting the grass plant under increased stress, making it less able to fend off attacks from harmful pathogens.

Material cost and consistency is also an area Scott believes to be problematic. With the abundance of sand reducing globally, whilst demand and carriage costs increase, these issues will only continue to manifest themselves in an upward trajectory, one which is outwith your control. Scott also includes a biological element as part of his maintenance programme. As well as the addition of organic acids such as humic and fulvic acids, compost teas are applied monthly over a ten month period. This again being an example of biological inputs playing a pivotal role.

The use of the Leavenseat LV20 and LV25 by Scott and Jim provides a good opportunity to quickly highlight the relevance that PSD can have depending on the objective. Due to the fact that the top layer of the profile at BT Murrayfield is being replaced on an annual basis, Jim has less concerns regarding the migration of fine particles over time. As can be seen in Fig. 7, the LV25 has a more uniform PSD with 35.9% falling within the fine/very fine category compared to 17.3% of the LV20. Whilst the coarseness of the LV20 may bring with it some issues for Scott in respect of working the topdressing into the sward and wear on cutting units, it minimizes the potential of 'capping' issues in the profile. This situation occurs when fine particles 'interpack' and 'bridge' the pore spaces created by coarser particles, this hindering the free movement of water. If allowed to develop over a period of time due to

incompatible rootzone/topdressing materials, this can have drastic consequences on turf performance, particularly in golf greens. The use of material PSD data sheets and 'D' value graphs should always be used to guard against this.

You may well have noticed a common thread forming in the article with regards sand and soil biology. The dependable attributes that make sand beneficial can also prove to be problematic in a growing medium, with its simplicity and inert nature being both an asset and a liability. An area I will attempt to expand on next.

When evaluating any growing medium, it is important to recognise it as a living entity, a continually evolving dynamic of inputs and outputs, nutrients and energy, providing you with a foundation to manipulate for your individual requirements. The value of aggregate formation is now increasingly recognised in the agriculture sector for maintaining the long term health of a soil. The macro and micro pores that are created by soil aggregates are recognised as the biological reactors for the multitude of microbial processes that underpin the health of a soil (Fig. 8). Agriculture has learned the hard way, with an over reliance on synthetic fertilisers for crop nutrition resulting in infertile soils lacking in OM and structure, which are prone to erosion.

This shift in mindset has led to a term referred to as 'light farming', which recognises the benefits of harnessing the energy of solar radiation through photosynthesis. This approach enables atmospheric Carbon (C) to be incorporated into the biomass of plant material through the process of fixation. Increased emphasis on organic nutrient inputs (slurry, crop residues, legume cover crops, rotation cycles) has enhanced subsequent soil C levels through OM decomposition and liquid C root exudates. This availability of organic C is a source of energy to soil microbes and crucial to particle bonding, allowing aggregate formation.

Can the turf industry learn from agriculture?

Well, something similar is already possible through utilising biological programmes.



Fig. 10: Soil profile showing high levels of sand in upper layer

This allows for the manipulation of soil microbes and the humification of OM (Fig. 9), with this expediting the conversion of organic nutrients (thatch) into plant available inorganic form. This source of organic nutrients is always available to you, creating the correct environment for it to be utilised is key. Excessive levels of sand in your soil profile may well inhibit the development of the biological community you are dependent on (Fig. 10).

With the government recently committing the UK to achieving a net zero Carbon balance by 2050, all sectors will inevitably come under increased pressure to implement change. Rightly or wrongly, the



The destructive nature of weathering plays a key role in regulating the size, shape and uniformity of the material, with the origins of the parent material influencing its chemical composition

turf industry and in particular golf has been seen as one of consumption, often leaving a large environmental footprint. Moving forward, does the continued reliance on a finite material such as sand help to address this image? And does it help to robustly position clubs and facilities to withstand future pressures, be these financial or legislatively, that are inevitably coming their way?

The conversation relating to how the turf sector is meeting its environmental responsibilities requires and deserves far greater scope than this article provides. However, it is fairly self-evident that the continued consumption of any material in large volumes, that often requires carriage over large distances, will not aid in reducing an organisation's Carbon footprint. Regulating inputs of external consumable materials to sustainable levels whilst maintaining playing performance levels must be the long term goal. At times, the balance may not be easy to achieve, but in doing so the industry can position itself and its stakeholders on a path that is more aligned to that of other forward thinking sectors.

So to summarize, sand does and will continue to play an important role in turf management. From enabling the utilisation of cutting edge technology to produce high quality pitches (Fig. 11) to refining surface

playing performance attributes, the value of sand is undeniable. In recognising its weaknesses as well as its strengths, you will utilise the material to its maximum. Excessive use over time will only aid in creating a biologically sterile growing environment. The incorporation of biological and organic inputs into your maintenance programme can help maintain equilibrium, one which allows you to harness the benefits of biological processes that have been the foundation of growing mediums throughout the evolution of the planet. At a time when the public's awareness in the value of our natural world is growing and consequences of its degradation more widely understood, it is in the industry's own interest to adapt and take a holistic approach to environmental stewardship. By utilising sand at a sustainable level, not only will it assist you in meeting your objectives, you will also be making your contribution to safeguarding the environment. One which will hopefully preserve this precious resource for future generations.

Thank you to Jim Dawson at Scottish Rugby and Scott Corrigan at Cawder Golf Club for their assistance in researching this article.

Derek is currently undertaking Post Graduate study at the University College Dublin in Environmental Sustainability



Fig. 11: BT Murrayfield stadium

Machinery training

Why it's important

In our last article we spoke about how training is a shared responsibility and becoming a necessity in a fast moving and ever-changing industry. Here, training and development manager **Neil Adams** at Reesink Turfcare discusses the importance and benefits of training in today's industry and speaks to customers who have recently undertaken some training and the benefits they attribute to that



I apply what I've learned from training on a daily basis - whether that's when using the computer to run diagnostics or testing hydraulics. The training I have undertaken means I've developed the skills I need to carry out my job to the best of my ability

Whether just starting out and needing training on all the basics, or someone looking to take their skill set to the next level and push their technical abilities to the limit, training has a part to play every step of the way.

What the customers say

Glen McVittie, groundcare service manager at Lloyd Ltd in Newcastle, completed Reesink Training Level (RTL) 2 and RTL 3 designed as entry level qualifications. Successfully completing these qualifications has now allowed him to enter the Master Technician Programme in hopes of achieving RTL 4 and becoming a Master Technician.

Reesink's Master Service Technician Programme is specifically designed to take experienced technicians' training to the ultimate level, ensuring a technician's skill set is updated and meets the demands of the continuous evolution in the industry. Consisting of several advanced modules, everything from First Aid Safety Training to Advanced Sprayer Service is covered.

For Glen, this training has proved to be incredibly important. Not only is it applicable on a daily basis in his role, but it has also helped him to progress his career.

Glen comments: "I apply what I've learned from training on a daily basis - whether that's when using the computer to run diagnostics or testing hydraulics. The training I have undertaken means I've developed the skills I need to carry out my job to the best of my ability. In this industry, it's important to get it right the first time. If you're working on a machine and you don't know exactly what

you're looking for, that guesswork means wasted time and leaves room for error. A small misjudgement could damage the machine, which is a costly mistake to make."

"It's not just on a day-to-day basis that I've benefitted from training. Two years ago I was working as a supervisor at Lloyd Ltd before I moved into my current role as groundcare service manager. My training really helped me to gain that promotion as it provided me with the extra skills I needed to take that next step in my career and take on more responsibilities. It's been incredibly beneficial both to my career progression and, more importantly, to our customers."

With more and more technology being introduced in the professional turfcare market, staying up to date with these advancements is essential to keeping your career progression on track.

David Hunt, mechanic greenkeeper at Sandmartins Golf Club, completed several training courses, including Turfcare Mechanic Course, Basic Electrics and Hydraulics Mechanic Training and Cutting Technology and Aftercut Appearance.

These courses cover troubleshooting machinery, routine servicing, machinery maintenance, diagnostics and more. David also gained nationally recognised PA1, PA2 and PA6 qualifications in the safe use of pesticide applications alongside the Reesink Sprayer Calibrations Technique Course. With these training courses developed specifically for greenkeepers and mechanics, for David they presented the perfect way to get back into the industry and stay up to date with modern advancements.

David comments: "I've been involved in



The Outcross 9060 super duty utility vehicle towing the Groundsmaster 1200 across undulating terrain

the industry on and off since 1979. I came into my current job after a break from the industry and decided to make use of the training Reesink offered to get myself up to date. Things have moved on and advanced a huge amount since I started as an apprentice in the seventies, and it's something that has vastly benefitted me. I'm more confident and competent in my role and it's definitely improved my productivity."

"You can spend a lot of time as a mechanic doing investigative work to identify problems. But, if you have training, that's not the case. You're able to recognise what needs work or, alternatively, the quickest way to find out what needs work, and that can save you a huge amount of time. Having my knowledge and skills up to date has not only helped me, in that I am now more efficient and productive in my role, but it has in turn vastly benefitted the club for the same reasons."

Why training is important

For many turfcare professionals, the phrase 'time is money' couldn't be truer. When turfcare equipment breaks down or is out of use for maintenance or repair, it's always a top priority to get it back up and running as soon as possible. Whether you're a mechanic or a course manager for a golf club, you have people relying on you and the service you provide. The longer a customer goes without their machinery, the less likely they are to recommend your service or stay a loyal customer.

Similarly, if machines aren't being used properly or efficiently when maintaining your golf course, sports or grounds facility, the quality of finish may take a hit and potentially affect customers. You could also see machines developing faults and requiring maintenance more often, which could prove costly and reduce productivity.

However, with the right training, machinery maintenance can be quick and efficient whilst still providing high quality

results, and improved user operation will help machines to perform better and last longer.

It's clear that, to maximise the investment you make in your machinery, you have to also invest in the correct training. The needs of the industry are constantly changing, and the technology used is doing the same in reaction to that. Relying on what you may have learned five or ten years ago doesn't provide the same support that it might have once done and, in today's world with a more competitive industry, there's no room for error.

Training courses are more than just a certificate or an extra qualification for your CV. In fact, most training courses will be specifically designed so that what you learn can be applied to your work on a daily basis.

As an operator, knowing how to correctly operate machinery in different conditions and in different applications means you can be confident and prepared for every day in your job. As such, you will soon see the difference it can make with performance and productivity increasing. It's not just beneficial for the individual either, it can also be hugely helpful for a business.

Reesink training

Here at Reesink, we've spent years working to introduce more training that's affordable and accessible. With flexible dates and the choice to have training delivered on customer premises, there are now more options than ever to meet the needs of our customers.

We have a dedicated team, with strong ambitions to continuously improve standards in the industry. In partnership with Toro, we have created and developed the biggest range of vocational training in the industry, with eleven courses for turf professionals to date. From training that caters to the novice, all the way to more advanced courses for the seasoned

professional. We're always listening to customers to try and improve our offering of training and, as such, we continuously bring to the industry new and improved courses.

To help provide strategic career pathway for technicians within the dealer, service centre and Reesink workshop locations, we have developed our Master Service Technician programme. This is just one of our developments that showcases our investment in the people who deal with the customer, and part of our drive to ensure the best possible training service.

For further information on Reesink's training call 01480 226800 or browse through the range which includes Machine Operator Training for greenkeepers and groundsmen to Compact Tractor Driving Award and Turfcare Mechanic Training online at www.reesinkturfcare.co.uk. Booking can be done through the website.



Neil Adams, training and development manager at Reesink Turfcare





**GROUNDS
TRAINING**

www.groundstraining.com

**THE GO-TO TRAINING PROVIDER
FOR THE TURFCARE INDUSTRY**

Do You Have The Appropriate Training?



Grounds Training offer a variety of machinery courses, all of which can be delivered either as Lantra or City and Guilds.

- All-Terrain Vehicles
- Tractor Driving
- Compact Tractor Driving
- Ride-On Mowers
- Pedestrian Operated Mowers
- Remote Control Mowers



For further details and prices please contact **Carol Smith** on **01902 440251**
or email: info@groundstraining.com

 info@groundstraining.com  groundstraining.com

Grounds Training, Allscott Park, Allscott, Telford TF6 5DY

Upwards, Sideways and Down: Part 1

Transforming Performance

Trainer and Conference Speaker **Frank Newberry** wonders if you are a one-dimensional person at work. Alone in your own comfort zone - or are you working with people from different parts of the organisation to transform work performance? In this article, Frank indicates WHY you should, and then suggests (in Part 2) HOW to start transforming performance upwards, sideways and down



We should spend more time managing upwards

I recently turned up some research that suggests we should, in addition to managing our team members, spend more time managing upwards. That would mean finding the time to 'manage' our bosses, board members and committees.

The research findings I found also suggest we are not doing enough managing 'sideways'. That would mean finding some time to set up and manage a better relationship with colleagues in different departments in the organisation, not forgetting our customers and/or service users.

Evidence suggests that better relationships bring better work performance across the organisation. The evidence also suggests that our being able to get greater engagement from customers and service users has benefits for everyone involved.

Well, you might be thinking - where will I find the time to do all this? I am up to my ears just managing my team, let alone managing upwards and sideways as well. Anyway, it is surely my manager's job to manage me, not my job to manage him or her?

A wonderful boss who is good at everything

Fair point, and if you have a great salary and a wonderful boss who is good at everything, including motivating and developing you to your maximum potential, then read no further.

In my case - I was not so fortunate with bosses. Not all, but several of my bosses could barely cope with their own jobs let alone help me make the most of mine.

A while back, many of the delegates who came on my management training courses had the same problem to some extent.

Evidence of this occurred when I offered a dozen trainees a choice of sessions one day.

It happened when we ran an ageing management development course (for experienced supervisors) for the very last time. Once my co-tutor had left the room, I quietly explained to the group that, as this was the last time the course would be run, I wanted them to have a choice.

Twice as important for career success

I did not want to influence them unduly, but they could have the scheduled two hours on 'Basic Statistics at Work', or two hours on a new module I had developed called 'Managing the Boss'. I then offered to leave the room so that they could discuss their choice privately. Twelve smiling faces quickly showed that they wanted to know how to manage upwards.

Now, the aforementioned research does not emanate from our sector, but there may be some truth in it for us. The researchers gathered enough data to be able to calibrate some powerful numbers. Taken together, over time, as far as business success is concerned, these upward and horizontal activities by the likes of you and me, are about fifty percent MORE important than managing downwards (team members), and well over TWICE as important for career success (development, advancement, promotion opportunities etc.).

Perfect at self-promotion

Certainty, from a personal perspective, I can agree totally with the idea that we should spend more time managing upwards and sideways. I found out the hard way when a younger and more worldly individual joined our team and quickly ingratiated himself with management. This person was promoted within months, when my perspective was that it should take years to get advancement in

the organisation. Looking back, I am pretty sure that the individual also stole my ideas and passed them off as his own. The person was far from perfect at the job, but was perfect at self-promotion.

I learned quickly after that experience and was not surprised when the individual concerned moved on to another job in another outfit within the year.

In Part 2, we will look at how you can manage upwards and sideways for the benefit of yourself and your employer.

First, of course you will have to want to do this and I wish you all the best with that. May you always be happy in your work and, as such, be a great example for others to follow.

© 2019 Frank Newberry

NEW DATES RELEASED

A great place to learn more about leading your team to a higher level of performance and morale is on Grounds Training's popular, proven and unique suite of four LANTRA Accredited Supervisory Essentials Seminars this coming winter.

Take any one, two, three or all four stand-alone one-day seminars:

Getting Better Results
Thursday 28 November 2019

Enhanced Communication Skills
Thursday 27 February 2020

Problem Solving and Decision Making
Thursday 26 March 2020

Taking Charge
October 2020

Venue: Allscott Park, Telford, Shropshire TF6 5DY.

For more details on each seminar contact Carol on 01902 440251 or visit www.groundstraining.com





Next Day
Delivery



Qualified &
Experienced Staff



Independent
Feedback

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

NUTRITION

Lebanon Country Club MD 8-4-24

A low nitrogen, high potassium autumn/winter feed that helps harden turf, feeds gently over a longer period of time with slow release nitrogen.

£35.85 per 22.7 kg

ICL Sierraform GT K-Step 6-0-27

A high performance micro granular fertiliser designed for use in fine turf throughout the year. Contains slow release nitrogen and potassium for sustained performance.

£40.70 per 20 kg

Green Solutions 0-0-32

Green Solutions 0-0-32 is a liquid fertiliser containing 32% potassium, trace elements, cold pressed seaweed and humates. It is designed for use during the autumn, winter and early spring. Suitable for all turf surfaces.

£59.85 per 10 L

Dualitas

A Contact and Systemic Dual Action Fungicide

From **£152.50** per 250 ml

Mapp No. 18000 AS: 200 g/L Tebuconazole and 100 g/L Trifloxystrobin

Use plant protection products safely. Always read the label and product information before use.

MAXWELL

MAX LINE

PAINTS

PLATINUM PRO INSTANT
COLOUR PRO LAZER ONE SHOT

SUPERB BRIGHTNESS | LONGEVITY VALUE

From **£14.25** per 250 ml

BIOSTIMULANTS

Maxwell Turf Hardener

An advanced chelated calcium formulation designed to strengthen turf and increase the plant's ability to withstand stress and pathogens.

£37.40 per 10 L

Maxwell Bullet Phosphite

A super-concentrated form of stabilised phosphite that provides protection for new and existing growth by assisting the plant in periods of stress, thereby aiding disease resistance.

NEW SIZE
£115.40 per 10 L

IN STOCK NOW

Perfect breathable, insulated under garment.

From **£19.75**
RRP £25.00

Crewneck and Trousers sold separately

DON'T GET CAUGHT OUT THIS WINTER

WE STOCK A FULL RANGE OF SNOW AND FROST SOLUTIONS AVAILABLE AT COMPETITIVE PRICES.



Call the sales team for more information or to place an order 01902 440250

www.pitchcare.com/shop - Order now on 01902 440250 or email us at sales@pitchcare.com

Please note, prices displayed may exclude VAT and delivery, if applicable. Prices correct at time of printing but may change due to manufacturers increases, please check when ordering. Errors and omissions excepted. Offers are subject to availability and products being purchased at published prices. Use plant protection products safely. Always read the label and product information before use.

MOTIVATION

Motivated by the odds

Carlos Arraya, CGCS, Director of Grounds and Agronomy at Bellerive Country Club in St. Louis, USA, believes that greenkeepers beat the odds every single day

Waking up each morning obviously is the most critical part of our everyday routine. For many of us, this routine consists of occasional drowsiness, workouts, a weather forecast check, a good breakfast, walking the dog, reading the news and, of course, consumption of a full cup of some sort of caffeinated drink. (It is a point of contention for me that waking up is taken for granted by many, but I'll leave that for another time.)

The caffeine is a jump-start to get our blood pumping through our veins but, for some of us, caffeine is simply not enough. Our mind, body and soul require something a bit more potent than caffeine, like a good old-fashioned "fix" to really get our blood flowing and passions fuelled. No, I'm not referring to a bloody mary or Red Bull, but rather a good old-fashioned "turf fix." I'm referring specifically to the scent of freshly cut grass mixed together with the aroma of a two-cycle petrol exhaust.

Is there a better smell in the world? Would you believe me if I told you that, prior to this mixture reaching your neurological passageways, you had already beaten several odds of life? Probably not, but it is true.

From the moment your morning routine started, you were unknowingly overcoming long odds. You beat them by completing your morning routine, by simply not being burned by your coffee. You even were able to overcome the odds associated with the lack of morning motivation. Multiply these with the odds associated with an entire day of leading people, managing turf and outcompeting the weather to produce a finely tuned golf course and, phew, that's some serious butt-kicking taking place!

From my perspective, it's much easier to appreciate each day's professional success when you can value odds of all sizes. No matter how things are going on or off the golf course, we are all overcoming odds and are destined to continue doing just that. Heck, the odds of you reading this article were one in 400 quadrillion. Those are the exact odds of the both of us being alive at the same time, on the same planet, in the same country, writing and reading the same column. Okay, maybe those odds are a bit exaggerated, but you get my drift.

You're living proof that winners must overcome the odds. In fact, I'd go so far as to say you are a risk taker - not the risk taker who sits at the casino table rolling the dice, but a risk taker forging new paths in our golf industry.

Each one of your professional choices is associated with great risk. You think about your own risk, all while you clearly understand that, as a turf manager, you also affect the risks and odds of so many other people. The players who enjoy your course are affected by the risks you take to brave the environmental challenges we face every day. The people who work with you are trusting that the odds are high that you will keep them safe and will assist them in achieving operational as well as professional success. We



Bellerive Country Club; host to three majors

are responsible for so many people, so many risks and have such great odds to overcome, it's a wonder we can sleep at night.

As we professionally mature, there is aspiration for three things: liberation (freedom), inspiration (support) and motivation (passion). How are odds even relevant in today's golf course superintendent world? For starters, do not allow the odds to be camouflaged in your routine. Second, appreciating the odds will fuel your freedom, support and passion.

My hope is that highlighting these odds will truly inspire you not to be intimidated by them, but rather to be "motivated by the odds." Remember, a great superintendent does not fear the odds. Rather, he/she prepares for, anticipates and embraces them.

Carlos Arraya, CGCS, is Director of Grounds and Agronomy at Bellerive Country Club in St. Louis. The course has hosted three major championships: the U.S. Open in 1965, and the PGA Championship in 1992 and 2018.

This article first appeared on *Golfdom* (Volume 75-8) and is reproduced by kind permission.



Carlos Arraya

AERATION

ALS
ALS Contract Services
KEEPING THE BALL ROLLING

AERATION & DECOMPACTION

- EARTHQUAKE DECOMPACTION
- WIEDENMANN TERRASPIKE SOLID TINE AERATOR
- VERTIDRAIN AERATION
- HOLLOW CORING
- MICRO TINING
- SANDMASTER

Ensure Your Booking Call
01952 259281/3 or
E: janharvey@amenity.co.uk

TERRAIN AERATION

Turf and Trees

- 10" drill aeration
- 1m air injection
- 1m soil coring
- Air excavation

Tel: 01449 673783
www.terrainaeration.com
terrainaeration@aol.com

BOWSERS

Technet TANKS .co.uk

Diesel Bowser

220L Ex VAT **£399**

- Manufactured in the UK
- 12 month warranty
- 12v 40L/min pump
- 440l & 220L options
- AdBlue option available

01353 862044

www.pitchcare.com

DRAINAGE

MJ ABBOTT LIMITED

Drainage experts

- Design & installation
- Primary pipe systems
- Sand slitting
- Gravel banding
- Ground breaking

Call 01722 716361
www.mjabbott.co.uk

DRAINAGE

Philip Dixon Contractors Ltd
Established 1978
Sportsturf Drainage Specialist
Drainage Construction Renovation

Slitting Banding Maintenance
Tel 01772 877289 (Preston, Lancs)
Email: info@dixondrainage.co.uk
www.dixondrainage.co.uk

DESIGN : CONSTRUCTION : RENOVATION

duncanross LTD
Sportsturf | Land Drainage | Greenhouse

Pitch Construction : Piped Drainage Systems : Sand Slitting : Blec Vibro Sand Banding : Koro Surfacing : Vertidrainage : Topdressing : Overseeding : Koro Scarify : Weed Control : Landscaping

01257 255321
office@duncanrossltd.co.uk
www.duncanrossltd.co.uk

MILES

Miles Drainage Limited

Quality Land Drainage Systems for Sports Pitches, Golf Courses and other Amenity Areas

- Advice, design and installation
- Piped systems • Sand Slitting • Gravel Banding

Tel: 01359 259424 Fax: 01359 258073
Web: www.milesdrainage.co.uk
Email: trenchers@milesdrainage.co.uk

Speed...
Versatility...
Efficiency...

Sports Turf Drainage
Sand Slitting & Banding
Construction
Maintenance
Renovation

PEARL

ONGAR, ESSEX
T: 01277 890274
www.hughpearl.co.uk

Est. 62 years

Blec Sandmaster
Sports Pitches, Fairways, Parks & Large Grass Areas

Whizz Wheel
Tees & Greens

Blec Sand Injector
Golf Greens, Tees & High Grade Lawns

DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS **ALS**
ALS Contract Services

Ensure Your Booking Call
01952 259281/3 or
E: janharvey@amenity.co.uk

Turfdry
Sports turf drainage consultants

SPORTS TURF DRAINAGE AND CONSTRUCTION
NATIONWIDE SERVICE
www.turfdry.com

Contact: Melvyn Taylor
Office: 01283 551417 Mobile: 07836 259133
Email: melvyn@turfdry.com

IRRIGATION

OCMIS

Irrigation Systems
Design
Supply
Installation
Maintenance

Tel: 01460 241 939
Web: www.Ocmis.com

Visit our online Buyers Guide
www.pitchcare.com

01903 278240
www.ttirrigation.co.uk

Topturf IRRIGATION

FULL SERVICE SUPPORT
SYSTEM DESIGN, SUPPLY & BUILD

OTTERBINE LAKE & POND AERATOR FOUNTAINS

LINEMARKING

INTELLIGENT ONE FULLY AUTONOMOUS LINE MARKING ROBOT

www.intelligentmarking.com Tel: 07779 270501 www.prosportukltd.com

IRRIGATION

MJ ABBOTT LIMITED

Irrigation experts

- Design & installation
- Maintenance & repairs
- Remote system support
- Online shop for spares
- Water storage reservoirs

Call 01722 716361
www.mjabbott.co.uk

For rates and media information visit:
www.pitchcare.com/pitchcare/marketing_opportunities.php

lwsirrigation
YOUR ONE STOP SHOP

For all your golf, sportsturf and landscape irrigation needs.

Buy online at www.lws.uk.com

Telephone 0345 230 9697
www.lws.uk.com **RAIN BIRD**

BOOK REVIEW

Life's a Pitch when you're a groundsman

Ian Darler has won just about every award the groundsperson industry has to offer, managed his stadium through tempestuous and terrific times and dealt with as many life-and-death situations as some paramedics

Now Head Groundsman at Cambridge United for forty years, Ian recently released his autobiography 'Life's a Pitch: The Groundsman's Tale' where he looks back on an eventful career - recollecting the highs and lows at the Abbey Stadium. Kerry Haywood reviews.

As I'm sure many of us can relate to, my quest for finding a suitable book for my pending holiday was an important decision. The pressure of making the right choice is enormous, and my goodness did I make the right choice!

From the outset, Ian's personality shines through as he tells the story of a life that has seen him rub shoulders with some of the greatest and funniest characters in football, turn out the kind of surfaces players dream of, cross swords with the occasional manager and cope with catastrophes that would have floored a lesser mortal.

Ian's loyalty and commitment to his club is apparent. Through the good and bad times, Ian has given his soul and, on occasion, his own money to ensure the pitch, aka 'his baby', is in excellent condition - all on a shoestring budget.

Throughout the book, Ian relates tales of how he started his career, what it's really like behind the scenes and the vast amount of skills and determination required to stay at a club for forty years. There are also funny stories such as his relationship with police officers, who thought it would be hilarious to arrest him whilst on a shopping trip with his wife Lisa.

But, there is one section that really strikes a chord - Chapter 11: Life Changing. Ian speaks about the life-threatening incident that nearly ended his career and plunged him into a very dark place. Ian describes the incident in such detail and explains the intensive surgery and recovery process he faced. He does this with such emotion that his courage and honesty really made me reflect on a time in my life when I questioned everything - and his words and relatability made it okay to do that.

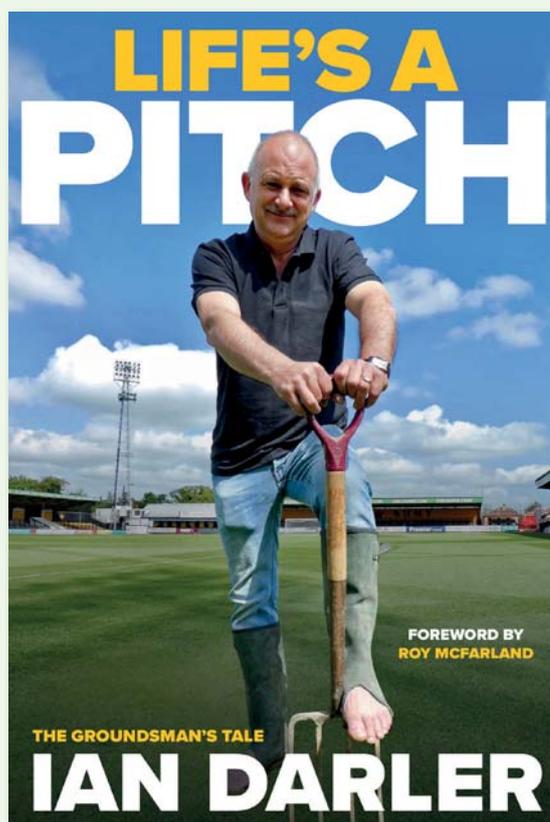
The chapter describes how he went through years of not knowing what was wrong. And then he was diagnosed with Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and got the support he needed through therapy and, most importantly, the understanding from the club about what he was going through.



Ian says: "My request for help met with no response whatsoever and, at one point, I was even put under pressure to return to work when I was clearly unfit. That caused a lot of stress and worry and disgusted my clinical team."

Whether you have an affiliation with Cambridge FC or not, this book is so much more than that. I'm sure many of you will find comfort in the similarity of your own day to day struggles and enjoy it for the enthralling rollercoaster ride that it is. Like the reviews, I found it hard to put this book down and I found it a real insight into the problems and responsibilities Ian has faced across his career.

Life's a Pitch is published by sports and special interest publisher G2 Entertainment and you can purchase it from Amazon.co.uk



Reviews

Club 'legend' is a term sometimes banded around for players and managers, but few have spent so long at one club, given so much time, money and commitment at no small cost to his personal life for so many years. (Not to mention his fundraising for other local charities). A thoroughly decent bloke. This book is a fascinating, moving and humorous insight into, not just the club, but Ian as a person too.

D. York

This book represents a rare opportunity. An opportunity to read the experiences of somebody who has forty years service in a job and is still doing that job today. The ups and downs, rewards and challenges of being an integral part in the functioning of a small football club are all vividly told in this book.

Neil Weston

This is one of the best books I've read - full of anecdotes; some funny, some serious. Whether you are a Cambridge supporter or not, I would fully recommend buying this as it's a real page turner. It's a welcome change from the normal run of the mill autobiographies. Overall a great read.

A Burge

Ian Darler has seen it all. You get to laugh out loud and also cry with empathy throughout the book. You must read it. Do not miss this chance to see how football REALLY works!

Graham Daniels

I don't read many books and when I do it takes me a lifetime to read, but I read Life's a Pitch in three days straight. The guy is an amazing groundsman and his stories keep you on the edge of your seat. I can't recommend this book enough! The guy has been head-hunted so many times, from Wembley to the Etihad stadium, but he has stayed loyal to Cambridge. A true legend.

Amazon Customer

Brilliant life story of a true gentleman. Loyal and hardworking for forty years. Many very funny and also a few sad tales. Couldn't put it down. Have never read a book so fast.

M. Coulson

LINEMARKING

WWW.**SPORTSMARK**.NET



A LINEMARKER TO SUIT ALL BUDGETS

LINE MARKING EQUIPMENT AND PAINT IN ONE PLACE!

CALL JULIE NOW ON 0800 0197733
SALES@SPORTSMARK.NET

ROLLERS



Manufacturers of the

AUTO-ROLLER

Delivering the highest standards with no added extras!



4ft and 3ft Auto-Rollers, as well as the popular Re-Power Kit.

01380 850885 www.autoroller.co.uk

POWERROLL

CRICKET WICKET ROLLERS FOR VILLAGE CLUBS TO COUNTY GROUNDS



(AND ALL OTHER SPORTS SURFACES) NEW AND REFURBISHED
PHONE 01822 832608
WWW.POWERROLL.COM

Swillington Rollers

A good selection of reconditioned rollers always in stock



Contact us on:
Phone: 01132 287 5318
Mobile: 07762 631297

MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

BLADE Machinery Limited Professional Lawn & Turf Care Equipment

BANNERMAN Lawn Treatment Equipment
Used by many UK Lawn Treatment Professionals

Fracture Tine Aeration:
No nuisance plugs to collect
Plus:
It relieves heavy soil compaction

Call: 01260 278 798
www.blademachinery.co.uk

Fixed Blade De-Thatcher / Scarifier

Professional Machines for a Professional Finish

Invicta Groundcare Equipment Limited

Used Groundcare Equipment Supplier

T: 01474 874 120 E: info@invicta-groundcare.co.uk
www.invicta-groundcare.co.uk

SYNERGY MOWING DECK

MAJOR WWW.MAJOR-EQUIPMENT.COM

Tel: 01524 850501 WWW.MAJOR-EQUIPMENT.COM

RT MACHINERY Covering all mowing requirements

A comprehensive range of machines and services:
Hire or Buy
New and Used
Demonstration
After sales support
Installation and Training
Routine servicing
Main dealers for SISIS and DENNIS mowers

Specialists in Hire & Used Gang Mowing & Sportsfield equipment

T: 01844 299037
E: sales@rtmachinery.co.uk
W: www.rtmachinery.co.uk

sisis DENNIS

“Linking value with service”

Why not visit our online Buyers Guide for direct links to suppliers websites and email addresses -
www.pitchcare.com

GROUNDSMAN Leading by design

• Turf Cutters
• Turf Aerators
• Core Collectors

info@groundsmanindustries.com
www.groundsmanindustries.com

REPLACEMENT & SPARE PARTS

STEELMASTER PRODUCTS

Tines & Wear Parts
Precision Engineered in the U.K.

T: 01241 853639
ORDER ONLINE AT
www.steelmaster.co.uk

www.pitchcare.com

SHOP ONLINE FOR REPLACEMENT TINES
BLADES, BRUSHES & QUALITY ACCESSORIES
FREE CARRIAGE ON ORDERS OVER £100

TINES DIRECT www.tinesdirect.com

SAFETY FOOTWEAR

HAIX BLACK EAGLE SAFETY 50
Slip resistant safety boot

www.haix.co.uk

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Pat Fadden - Westport



Pat Fadden, Head Greenkeeper,
Westport Golf Club, Co. Mayo

Westport Golf Club's Head Greenkeeper Pat Fadden talks about his work at the club

Normally, I would start work at 7.00am, but the week before the Cups and Shields national finals recently it was 5.30am or 6.00am and we'd work straight through to 3.00pm.

We get the hole changing and pin positioning out of the way first, before cutting the greens, which needs to be done before the golfers go out, but the longer you can leave that the better, as they grow very fast.

If you cut the greens at 6.00am, they'll have a half day's growth by 6.00pm, and that could be quite a lot because it's such a fine cut. We cut them seven days a week. We also double cut the fairways leading up to the championship.

On other weeks, my mornings usually start with mechanical work on all our machinery. We have so much that there's always something breaking down. Other morning work would include checking the course to see what needs to be done - drainage work, raking bunkers and general repair work.

Westport Golf Course is 270 acres of parkland, so it's very 'growthy' compared to a links course. We've a team of seven; five full-time and two lads for the summer.

The weather is everything for us. It's an uphill battle when it's raining because the course always needs to be cut and maintained. Bad weather means you sometimes have to do jobs twice.

I first started as a greenkeeper at Westport Golf Course in 1974 and have been here ever since. It took ten years to receive a greenkeeper certificate back then.

The whole job has changed an awful lot now. When we started back then, we were tipping out sand and soil mix on the greens by shovel and trailer. All cutting machines were pedestrian too

- there was no such thing as a ride-on mower! Back then, it took four men over four hours to cut the eighteen greens, whereas now, one person can do it in less than three. Standards back then were not as high as they are now though.

I've seen over the years the standard we're able to have the course at. It's all down to money and having a good committee, like we have at the moment. They give you what you need in terms of machinery, and when you have the committee and staff pulling together, it makes a huge difference.

I really enjoy the outdoor work. I could never see myself working inside. What you see at 7.00am on a nice morning at Westport is just beautiful scenery; you couldn't find a nicer place in the world. Mind you, you don't get an awful lot of beautiful mornings, but when you do it makes up for the bad ones.

I played golf myself for a few years, but I found it hard to go back on the course when you've finished a hard day's work. At the time I was playing, I was also working seven days a week so it was hard to find time in the evenings and weekends. I always enjoyed it and meant to go back, but I'm also doing a bit of farming and landscaping and I don't have much time other than that.

One of my main hobbies is playing music and I have done it in the pubs all my life. Myself and a friend, Mick McLoughlin, used to do it together but not anymore. I play the banjo and guitar and it was all session stuff in the pubs.

It was very enjoyable and I loved it, but we always said that, if it ever became work, we would pack it up and, in the end, it did because the atmosphere in the pubs changed through the years.

One of the more satisfying parts of my job is when you get nice comments about the course from complete strangers. They might come up to you, tourists, and tell you that they've played such and such a course recently, some of which would be Irish Open courses, and you might hear that they think Westport is actually better.

Quick questions

Tell us something about yourself we don't know?

I love fishing. I have a boat and I like to take it out on Clew Bay. Unfortunately, I don't get enough time to do as much as I would like.

Favourite place in the world?

Probably Westport. I've been in a lot of places and they're lovely to visit but, overall, I don't think you will improve on Westport.

What do you miss most about being a child?

I had a good childhood. I can't say I particularly miss anything, apart from the way of life and the pace of it. It was a lot easier and more relaxing when times were slower, but now, the more technology that comes in, the less time we have to do other things.

What's the best advice you were ever given?

As regards work, I remember we heard one time that someone was complaining about the course. I remember saying to the late John Hanlon that there's no thanks for the work we do, and he said: "If you're looking for thanks, you will never get it." It stuck with me.

Who was your first hero?

A lot of mine would be in music. I was never into big sporting heroes. Music was my thing. I remember seeing Roy Orbison when he was huge in the Starlight in Westport, people often can't believe that. It was amazing to see at the time.

Most famous person you ever met?

I was very friendly with Matt Molloy from The Chieftains and his late wife, Geraldine, so I met a lot of musicians through them in the bar. The favourite I met was John Prine. I played a few songs with him. Real down to earth, genuine gentleman. For a man who wrote so many songs for so many famous people, all he wanted to do was sit down and hear me singing something. He was very generous.

Three things always in fridge?

Red meat usually I'm afraid, cheese and probably fish of some kind.

What makes you nervous?

I don't tend to get too nervous if I can help it. I don't think I get nerves with anything to do with work. I just like to take life as it comes. I try not to worry about things; if they don't work out, there is a reason.

Whats your most prized possession?

If I was to save something if everything else was going, it would be my guitar.

If money was no object what would you do?

I always loved to travel. It was great to come home, but I love seeing other places; how the ordinary way of live music and golf courses is done in other places. One of my favourite places is New Orleans.

There was a great feeling in the club when Westport won the Junior Cup recently. It very easily could happen that a club was hosting the tournament and might not have a team in it, so to win it on your home course meant a lot.

Gar Golden, past president of the Golfing Union of Ireland [who passed away on 20th September] was heavily involved in the club for years and I dealt with him a lot. He was a gentleman to deal with at all times and no doubt he would have loved to have been part of it.

Pat Fadden was in conversation with Ger Flanagan, Mayo News

RAKES & SHOVELS



CHELWOOD RAKES

For a wider range of specialist tools visit www.chelwoodrakes.com

We offer a large range of rakes for all reasons, in sizes ranging from 35cm to 100cm wide, with a variety of tooth gaps.

+44 (0)1409 220230 sales@chelwoodrakes.com

SPRAYERS

TEAM VIXEN & TEAMDEMOUNTpro
JUST 2 OF OUR WINNING DESIGNS

From the super quiet, powered Vixen to compact push alongs and demountables with anti-drift covers, Team Sprayers have the lot!

new design features

British designed and proud of it.

team-sprayers.com Tel. +44(0)1353 661 211

REDUCE YOUR WEED CONTROL COSTS WITH MANKAR
ULV SPRAYING SYSTEM

Apply Roundup ProBiaactive 450L neat at 2L hectare.

Save Labour, Half your pesticide Usage and Help Save the Environment.

T: 01952 641949 - www.mantis-ulv.eu
ALWAYS READ THE LABEL: USE PESTICIDES SAFELY

Roundup and Biactive are registered trademarks of Monsanto LLC.
Roundup ProBiaactive 450 contains glyphosate

Martin Lishman



Compact Spraying Systems

www.martinlishman.com

Visit our online Buyers Guide
www.pitchcare.com

SPORTS SURFACE CONTRACTORS



CHAPPELOW SPORTS TURF LTD

Construction. Maintenance. Performance.

01924 493359 info@chappelowsportsturf.co.uk
WWW.CHAPPELOWSPORTSTURF.CO.UK

Football Rugby Cricket Golf Bowling Equestrian Schools & Colleges Local Authorities

SELL YOUR UNWANTED MACHINES OR SEARCH FOR A USED ONE.

You can advertise a machine for up to 8 weeks for just £30 plus VAT.

Call :01952 924201

SPORTS SURFACE CONTRACTORS



Fineturf

- Sports Pitch Construction
- Golf Course Construction & Shaping
- Bulk Earthworks
- Maintenance & Renovation
- Land Drainage
- Irrigation & Water Management

01400 251605 info@fine-turf.co.uk www.fine-turf.co.uk

PCpitchcare.com™
Serving The Turfcare Industry

Advertising in this section costs as little as £200 a year.

Contact:
Peter Britton on:
01952 898516

Philip Dixon Contractors Ltd
Established 1978
Sportsturf Drainage Specialist
Drainage Construction Renovation



Slitting Banding Maintenance
Tel 01772 877289 (Preston, Lancs)
Email: info@dixondrainage.co.uk
www.dixondrainage.co.uk

TT TECHNICAL TURF
The choice for turf care



Sports pitch construction
Natural & Artificial pitches
Maintenance and renovation
Land drainage
Bulk earthwork
Sports fencing & floodlighting

Plus Air-2G2
The ultimate decompactor and aeration system

NATIONWIDE
www.technicalturf.co.uk
Tel: 01664 444001

Turfdry
Sports turf drainage consultants

SPORTS TURF DRAINAGE AND CONSTRUCTION
NATIONWIDE SERVICE
www.turfdry.com
Contact: Melvyn Taylor
Office: 01283 551417 Mobile: 07836 259133
Email: melvyn@turfdry.com

MJ ABBOTT LIMITED



Sports turf experts

- Sports turf construction
- Natural & artificial surfaces
- Drainage & irrigation
- Hard & soft landscaping
- Renovation & maintenance

Call 01722 716361
www.mjabbott.co.uk

ECOSOL TURFCARE

Ecosol Turfcare



Construction:
Sports pitches, Cricket squares, Artificial/MUGA & Equestrian arenas

Renovation:
KORO, fraise mow, laser-grade

Maintenance:
Top-dress, over-seed, aerate

Drainage:
Primary piped system, Secondary gravel bands & sand grooving

Golf:
Drill n Fill, Graden Sand Injection, GKB Sand-filler

01666 861250 info@ecosolve.co.uk www.ecosolve.co.uk

Machinery and Supplies

Product Update

A round-up of the latest product news announced in recent weeks



Offering best in class performance with an emphasis on a modern, clean power source, the INFINICUT® SM34 rotary mower can be used to mow in the traditional sense or, alternatively, it can operate as a stand-alone vacuum.

It takes its mode of traction from the INFINICUT® reel mower, paired with a deck constructed using MTD's state-of-the-art stamp tooling equipment and years of rotary experience. The result is a technologically advanced unit that exceeds all necessary safety compliance that is demanded of rotary decks.

Incorporating both a front roller and rear traction roller means the SM34 delivers a striping effect usually only achieved with a professional reel mower, no matter the turf conditions. In line with the rest of the INFINICUT® fleet, it offers the operator a number of parameters which can be tailored to their particular requirements, including paralleling and deck pitch adjustment features as standard. It is also user programmable via the proprietary Android or iOS InfiniApp®.

www.cubcadetturf.com

Agria UK is a new sister company to Wiedenmann UK and it has introduced two unique hybrid remote-controlled rotary mulching mowers, an exciting development that will be the specific focus for Agria UK.

Both Agria machines offer Hybrid-Drive-Concept, making them more efficient and environmentally friendly than hydraulic concepts.

The agria 9600 (pictured right), with its low centre of gravity and rubber tracks, powers safely through heavy duty work on steep slopes to 50°. In two widths, 112cm and 80cm, it cuts and mulches in two directions and is effortless on a variety of applications, including fine turf.



The exceptional double-wing design of the new MAJOR Swift MJ71-730T increases productivity and efficiency without compromising on the quality of cut. The front and rear rollers ensure a level and striped finish at precisely the right height of cut, every time.

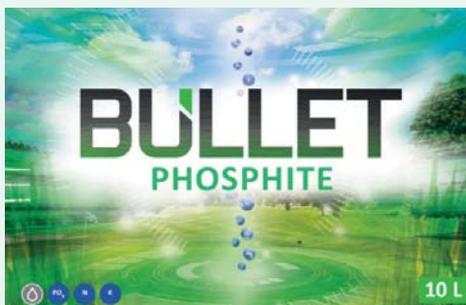
Because it's made of high-strength Strenx® steel, it's lightweight and avoids compaction, which is beneficial to maintain the best ground conditions.

The 7.3m Swift wings fold to 2.6m, making it ideal for safe road transportation between multiple sites. It's about the largest make available that can be safely transported on the road.

The trailed versions display the MAJOR qualities of durability and low maintenance. There are no belts - just a strong and simple, heavy-duty driveline with a shear-bolt in the PTO drive, and it is galvanised for a longer life.

The larger units also have rubber encasing the hinges of each arm. This protects the joints while adding mobility for each wing over uneven ground for a more consistent cut.

www.major-equipment.com



Maxwell Amenity have launched new 10 litre packaging sizes for both Maxwell SeaAction and Maxwell Bullet Phosphite with the

King Feeders UK have launched their new Ecogreen compact mobile screener - a real breakthrough for landscaping and contracting grounds care businesses requiring compost and woodchip screening on the move.

The screener can be legally towed behind a typical 4x4 pick-up, or similar vehicle, with a 3.5 tonne capacity.

It can be built to be trailer loaded, or with its own axle and draw bar. The innovative design offers the option of standard legs, where it can be easily moved by a fork-lift, or the screener can be supplied with hydraulic legs.

The Ecogreen screener offers a simple, reliable and economic solution to a wide range of requirements, with a quick release screening drum and choice of meshes. The aggressive drum ensures fast, efficient operation with low running cost per tonne. The machine is easily driven by the PTO of a small compact tractor and is available with diesel or electric drive.

The hopper comes with a steel feed conveyor, so there is no need for the continual adjustment required with a rubber belt. The screener is compact for easy access into confined spaces, robust in construction, and suitable for one-man operation.

www.ecogreencomposting.co.uk



primary aim of reducing plastic wastage output.

As turf managers increasingly adopt integrated pest management nutritional strategies, phosphite has established itself as a popular component within the armoury. Maxwell Bullet Phosphite (37%) is a super concentrated form of stabilised phosphite formulated to aid the plant in periods of stress.

For customers wishing to adopt the new packaging, Pitchcare pledge to donate the difference in packing and label saving of approximately £3 when buying a single 10 litre option compared to 2 x 5 litre, to a plastic waste focused charity and initiative.

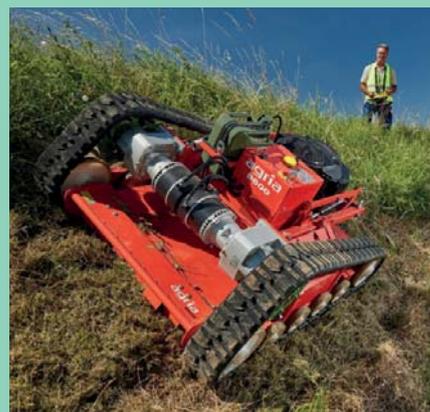
www.pitchcare.com/shop

The agria 9500 is a remote controlled compact mower which performs to a very capable 45°. With brushless motors and electromechanical braking it takes manoeuvrability to a new level. Zero turn, it has a working width of 70 cm and takes problem areas in its stride.

Remote controlled units lead the way for safe technology. These new units are perfect for purpose. Build quality and ease of use are exceptional.

Agria UK will operate through a network of stocking dealers across the UK and Ireland supported by Jason Bristow, Chas Ayres, Michael James and Andy Kerr.

www.wiedenmann.co.uk



SPORTS EQUIPMENT

WWW.**SPORTSMARK.NET**

ALL YOUR SPORTS EQUIPMENT IN ONE PLACE!



**CALL JULIE NOW!
T 0800 0197733**

SALES@SPORTSMARK.NET



Leaders in covering all sports ground surfaces from cricket, tennis, football, rugby and much more

www.stuartcanvas.co.uk
sales@stuartcanvas.co.uk
(01925) 814525

TREE TIES & SUPPORTS

Rubberloc®

Supporting Britain's Young Trees

Shop Online 24/7

Tree Ties and Supports T: 01952 641949 W: www.rubberloc.co.uk



Request your **FREE** Catalogue today

TOPDRESSING & LOAM



Ongar Loam cricket dressing and top quality golf and bowls dressings

Order direct from the manufacturer and our distributors

Moreton, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0HY

Tel: 01277 890246 Fax: 01277 890105

www.binderloams.co.uk Email: sales@binderloams.co.uk

www.gostd.com

"THE ORIGINAL" Surrey Loams Ltd

Growing Solutions From The Soil Specialists

GOSTD™

Graded Organic Sports Turf Dressings
Freephone 0800 500 3900
www.gostd.com



For rates and media information visit:
www.pitchcare.com/pitchcare/marketing_opportunities.php

Contact Peter Britton on: 01952 898516

TRAINING

BCA Land Based Apprenticeships

- Sports Turf (Groundsperson)
- Golf Greenkeeper
- Horticultural Operative
- Landscaper
- Arboriculture and more

Call **01628 827438** or view our website:
www.bca.ac.uk/courses/apprenticeships



Why not visit our online Buyers Guide for direct links to suppliers websites and email addresses - www.pitchcare.com

OAKLANDS COLLEGE DELIVERS WORK-BASED LEARNING IN THE SOUTH EAST OF ENGLAND.

It has delivered Golf and Sports-turf courses for over 30 years.

COURSES OFFERED INCLUDE:

- Level 2 Golf Greenkeeping Apprenticeship
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Amenity Horticulture
- Level 2 Work Based Diploma in Golf Greenkeeping
- Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship in Amenity Horticulture/Greenkeeping
- Level 3 Work Based Diploma in Amenity Horticulture/Greenkeeping
- ILM Level 4 Management Award/Certificate and Diploma.
- Pesticides application modules PA1, 2 and 6.

For advice on funding and apprenticeship grants available for work based training contact andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk or call 01727 737735 or visit www.oaklands.ac.uk

Oaklands College, St Albans Smallford Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0JA

OAKLANDS COLLEGE
www.oaklands.ac.uk



www.groundstraining.com

Pitchcare's Education division offer open courses on ground care machinery and equipment, sports turf maintenance and pesticide spraying

The go-to training provider for Turf Care Professionals

Online Pitch Maintenance Courses

- ✓ Bowls ✓ Cricket
- ✓ Winter Sports

☎ 01902 440251 ✉ info@groundstraining.com

SELL YOUR UNWANTED MACHINES OR SEARCH FOR A USED ONE

Contact Laura O'Keefe on 01952 924201

www.pitchcare.com/used_machinery

TURF SUPPLIERS



Growers of natural, rootzone and hybrid sports turf using the very best STRI cultivars to create the perfect playing surface.

- ✓ Innovative Hybrid Turf Systems
- ✓ Custom grown turf
- ✓ 'Instant Play' sports pitch turf
- ✓ Golf and retvetting turf
- ✓ Washed turf available in all grades

Tel: 01724 855000
www.countyturf.co.uk

Machinery and Supplies

Product Update

A round-up of the latest product news announced in recent weeks



The FPT1200P/ATE2 is the newest edition to the SCH waterer & pressure washer range. As the name suggests, this machine features a 1200 litre capacity polyethylene tank, which is internally baffled to safely minimise surge when braking and turning corners.

The trailer's twin-axle road-legal steel chassis is fully galvanised with over-run brakes, lights and a jockey wheel. Two trailer supports are fitted to the rear, to stabilise the trailer when it is unhitched from the towing vehicle.

The standard model features a choice between a petrol and an electric powered pump. The 12V DC electric pump has a flow rate of 18 litres per minute, and is powered by the towing vehicles power supply. The petrol option features a reliable 2" centrifugal Honda pump, with an adjustable flow rate up to an impressive 450 litres per minute.

This waterer features a short hand lance for tubs and beds, and a telescopic lance which can reach up to 6 metres. Two steel stands are mounted to the side of the trailer, which can be used to transport a significant length of additional hose, if required.

There are a huge number of variations to this product, including single or twin axle, 900L, 1200L, 1500L or 2000L tank capacities and engine types. As the machine is built in the UK, SCH can customise to your exact specifications.

www.schsupplies.co.uk

John Deere is launching its first commercial electric battery powered walk-behind rotary mower.

The new PRO 43B not only produces zero emissions, but also offers intuitive handling, fast charging and a high level of operator comfort. It is designed to enable professional users to easily cut smaller grass areas and clean up edges in public spaces, without the disturbance and nuisance caused by noise and fumes.



Built around an aluminium mower deck with steel reinforcement and alloy wheels for extra durability and reliability, the PRO 43B has shown impressive cutting and bagging performance in pre-production field tests, says John Deere, with no compromise in performance compared with petrol engine driven mowers.

The 36V mower's new Powerhead carries two rechargeable lithium-ion batteries and switches automatically to the second battery when the first one is empty. Charging capacity is 6Ah as standard, with a full electric charge taking 2 hours 20 minutes and providing up to 500m² mowing capacity. A spring-loaded battery release system adds to the ease of operation.

Cutting width of the PRO 43B is 43cm and there is a choice of seven cutting heights from 22mm to 80mm, easily set by a central lever. The mower comes with a 45-litre capacity grass bagger that features a simple TurboStar 'bag full' indicator flag, and a height adjustable handlebar that can be folded for storage. Overall weight with an empty bagger is 32kg.

The new John Deere PRO 43B commercial battery mower will be sold with a two-year warranty (one year on the batteries), and will be available from UK and Irish dealers in 2020.

www.JohnDeere.co.uk



New to Reesink Turfcare's product lineup are two outfront rotary mowers from Toro's next-generation GM3000 series for 2020.

The new machines are being called the next generation of outfront rotary mowers and have all the benefits outfront rotaries are known for, but with significant performance enhancements.

There are two engine models - a 24.7hp and a 37.4hp, both Stage V emissions compliant, with options of 152cm (60ins) or 183cm (72ins) rear, side, recycling and flail cutting decks. Both benefit from a transport speed of 22km/h to move between sites efficiently and a large 45.4 litre fuel capacity to maximize mowing time between refueling. Also, Toro's CrossTrax all-wheel drive system provides automatic traction

The Hunter TTS-800 rotors provide maximum uniformity and longevity. The high-torque gear drives are the strongest in the industry, so the challenges of reclaimed water use or poor water quality are mitigated.

An extra-large, fast-access flange compartment comfortably accommodates wire connections and other components.

The new 800 series feature Hunter's patented TTS (Total-Top-Service) technology which allows for every serviceable element of the rotor to be accessed through the top. Mechanical and electrical, big and small, you can get to every component without disturbing the playing surface. That means there's no more digging, no more unsightly scars and, more importantly, one less item on a busy turf manager's schedule.

www.karuk.com or www.hunterindustries.com



Full details are being kept under wraps until the show opens on 30th October at the NEC Birmingham, but visitors will be excited to hear that a new pedestrian mower and ULiB will be two of the new products to join the portfolio.

A forerunner when it comes to lithium-ion technology and high efficiency 'brushless' motors, Pellenc has established itself as the number one choice in the 'zero emission' professional power tools market for the maintenance of urban and green-spaces. The combination of these two technologies makes it possible to eliminate direct emission of greenhouse gases and significantly reduce noise and vibration. It meets the users' requirements for comfort and sustainability while offering excellent cost efficiency.

All Pellenc batteries and tools come complete with a three-year commercial warranty as standard - the first manufacturer to offer this on battery-powered tools.

www.pellencuk.com



control, shifting power to the wheels in slippery conditions.

Toro has focused particular attention on the durability of the deck in the design of this new series. With 4.5mm high strength steel decks, rugged spindles, a bullnose bumper and reinforced sideskirts, the improvements made are aimed at longevity and reduced downtime. And with rotary and flail cutting deck options providing flexibility and value, it's easy to see why Toro believes this to be the next generation of the outfront rotary.

The new Toro GM3000 series will be revealed on stand H010 at Saltex 2019.

www.reesinkturfcare.co.uk

TURF SUPPLIERS

Tillers Turf
Specialist Growers of Turf for Golf and Amenity

Rootzone Turf For Greens
Grown on a USGA rootzone
Top dressed throughout the year
Mown at 6mm
Predominantly Bent sward

NEW FOR 2016
Poa/Bent greens turf, mown at 4mm

Tees, Surrounds, Approaches, Fairways
Grown on a sandy loam topsoil
Mixtures including Ryegrass/Fescue,
100% Fescue and Fescue/Bent

Bunker Revetting Turf 40mm thick

www.tillersturf.co.uk
01522 704949

Lindum
taking grass a step further

Specialist growers of sports and golf turf with a wide range of grades including washed and fibre reinforced Lokturf. Also Low Maintenance and Wildflower turf.

Tel: 01904 448675
lindum@turf.co.uk
www.turf.co.uk

USED MACHINERY

www.pilimited.co.uk

SELL YOUR UNWANTED MACHINES OR SEARCH FOR A USED ONE.

You can advertise a machine for up to 8 weeks for just £30 plus VAT.

Contact
Laura O'Keefe on
01952 924201

USED MACHINERY

ACORN Tractors & Machinery Ltd
The very best in New & Used Groundcare Equipment

Formerly the machinery division of Boughton Loam & Turf Management, Acorn Tractors are proud of their enviable reputation of supplying quality new and used groundcare equipment

Website: www.acorntractors.co.uk
Telephone: 01283 704664 • Mobile: 07774 746083
Email: jsimpson@acorntractors.co.uk

Why not visit our online Buyers Guide for direct links to suppliers websites and email addresses - **www.pitchcare.com**

Campey
TURF CARE SYSTEMS
QUALITY GROUND CARE EQUIPMENT

Always a good selection of used equipment
Tel: 01260 224568 Email: info@campeyturfcare.com
www.campeyturfcare.com

UPSONS
Specialists in Sportsfield Machinery

UPSONS RECONDITIONED MACHINERY
ROLLERS • MOWERS • TRACTORS • SCARIFIERS
100's of mowers in stock, trade prices, warranty



Tel: 01621 892907 Email: upsonsales@outlook.com
www.upsonmowers.co.uk

WATER MANAGEMENT

01903 278240
www.ttirrigation.co.uk

Topturf
IRRIGATION

FULL SERVICE SUPPORT
SYSTEM DESIGN, SUPPLY & BUILD
OTTERBINE LAKE & POND AERATOR FOUNTAINS



WASHDOWN SYSTEMS

ByWater wash down/recycling systems

Removes grass clippings, sand, stones, oil, fuel, pesticides and more

- low cost
- low maintenance
- Built in the UK
- 100% tax relief
- finance available
- WFD conforming

GM-MKII
From £7600+VAT

Genuine Zero Discharge
with our unique rain separation system
NO TREATED WATER EVER DISCHARGED
even after rainfall or a spillage!
(treated water discharge requires an EA B6 permit by law)

Above & below ground options to suit customer requirements

t: 01530 833469 e: sales@bywaterservices.co.uk w: www.bywaterservices.co.uk





PCpitchcare.com™
Serving The Turfcare Industry

For rates and media information visit:
www.pitchcare.com/pitchcare/marketing_opportunities.php

Contact Peter Britton on: 01952 898516

OFFSIDE

The not so serious side
of the industry

Man charged £55k for a single beer

An Australian cricket journalist was mistakenly charged £55,000 for a single bottle of beer in a Manchester hotel.

Peter Lalor ordered the £5.50 Deuchers IPA at the city's Malmaison hotel before being stunned to discover he had been charged £55,315.12 (A\$99,983.64).



Mr Lalor, who was in the city to cover the Ashes series, now believes he drank "the most expensive beer in history".

"I didn't have my reading glasses when she presented me with a bill. I said I didn't want a receipt and she went to leave."

"Something, however, made me ask: 'How much did I just pay for that beer?' She checked, covered her mouth, started to giggle and refused to tell me, saying there had been a mistake and she would fix it.

A spokesman for Visa said the "unusual" case shows how important it is to always check details of payments and receipts.

Hole in one - at 81

It's been over seventy years in the making, but great grandad Edward Grierson has finally achieved golf's holy grail.

East Kilbride golfer, Edward Grierson, used a driver on the 174-yard 15th hole at Torrance House Golf Course recently during a white medal match.

And the great grandad of three was left stunned to see his effort find the cup.

Edward commented: "After so many disappointments down the years, it was quite amazing. What I can't get over with



the hole in one is that I hit what I can only call the perfect shot. It came off the club perfectly."

Match fees donated to groundstaff

Indian batsman Sanju Samson showed his appreciation for all the work the groundstaff had to do to get the India



A-South Africa A ODIs going, by donating his match fees of Rupees 1.5 lakh (approximately £1,700) to them.

"We have to give credit to the groundsmen. Because of them, we were able to play. If there was some wetness here or there, then the match officials would not have allowed matches to happen. We really have to thank them. So I have decided to give my match fees to the groundsmen."

Sanju played two of the five ODIs - all of them rain-shortened - and made his highest List A score of 91 in the final game that India A won by 36 runs to take the series 4-1.

Ellyse's spooning partner!

If the 10,000 hours of practice puts you off your dream of becoming an elite batsman, maybe you could try giving your bat some TLC and see where that gets you.

Ellyse Perry, the world's leading all-rounder in women's cricket, who has been pretty unbeatable for a few years now, carries her bat around everywhere with her and even sleeps with it.

"It's a really good spooning partner at night," she said, soon after scoring a series-clinching ODI century in Antigua. "We're pretty close, my bat and I."

As seen on social media ...



Pitchcare
@Pitchcare

This customer #review of the Grey Anvil Nozzle put a smile on our team's faces a few months ago and it still makes us laugh! 😄



If you spot anything to give our readers a chuckle send it to: kerry@pitchcare.com

DIARY DATES

NOVEMBER

1st: Cricket - New Zealand v England, first T20, Christchurch (ecb.co.uk)

2nd: Rugby Union - World Cup final, Yokohama (englandrugby.com)

2nd: Rugby League - Great Britain v New Zealand, first Test, Auckland (rugby-league.com)

2nd: Horseracing - Fireworks spectacular family day, Ascot (ascot.co.uk)

3rd: Cricket - New Zealand v England, second T20, Wellington (ecb.co.uk)

9th: Football - Women's friendly, England v Germany, Wembley Stadium (thefa.com/england)

2nd: Rugby League - Great Britain v New Zealand, second Test, Christchurch (rugby-league.com)

2nd: Horseracing - Autumn Raceday, Aintree (thejockeyclub.co.uk/aintree)

5th: Cricket - New Zealand v England, third T20, Nelson (ecb.co.uk)

8th: Cricket - New Zealand v England, fourth T20, Napier (ecb.co.uk)

10th: Cricket - New Zealand v England, fifth T20, Auckland (ecb.co.uk)

14th: Football - Euro 2020 qualifying, England v Montenegro, Wembley Stadium (uefa.com)

15th: Rugby Union - European Champions Cup starts (englandrugby.com)

15th-17th: Horseracing - November meeting, Cheltenham (thejockeyclub.co.uk/cheltenham)

16th: Rugby League - Great Britain v Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby (rugby-league.com)

16th: Football - Euro 2020 qualifying, Northern Ireland v Netherlands; Azerbaijan v Wales; Cyprus v Scotland (uefa.com)

17th: Football - Euro 2020 qualifying, Kosovo v England (uefa.com)

18th: Football - Euro 2020 qualifying, Republic of Ireland v Denmark (uefa.com)

19th: Football - Euro 2020 qualifying, Germany v Northern Ireland; Wales v Hungary; Scotland v Kazakhstan (uefa.com)

20-25th: Cricket - New Zealand v England, first Test, Mount Maunganui (icc-cricket.com)

21st-24th: Golf - DP World Tour Championship, Dubai (dpwtc.com)

29th: Horseracing - Floodlit racing, Kempton Park (thejockeyclub.co.uk/kempton)

12th: Rugby Union - The Varsity Match, Twickenham (thevarsitymatch.com)

12th-15th: Golf - Presidents Cup, Melbourne (presidentscup.com)

13-14th: Horseracing - The International, Cheltenham (thejockeyclub.co.uk/cheltenham)

17th-16th Feb 2020: Cricket - England tour of South Africa 2019/20 (ecb.co.uk)

19th-21st: Tennis - Mubadala World Tennis Championship, Abu Dhabi (mubadalawtc.com)

21st: Horseracing - Christmas family day, Ascot (ascot.co.uk)

26th: Horseracing - King George VI Chase, Kempton (kinggeorgechase.co.uk)

26th-30th: Cricket - South Africa v England, First Test, Centurion (ecb.co.uk)

1st: Happy New Year

1st: Horseracing - New Year's racing, Cheltenham (thejockeyclub.co.uk/cheltenham)

10th: Horseracing - All weather racing, Dunstall Park, Wolverhampton (wolverhampton-racecourse.co.uk)

19th-22nd: Industry - BIGGA, Continue to Learn at BTME 2019, Harrogate Convention Centre (btme.org.uk/education/seminars)

20th-2nd Feb: Tennis - Australia Open Melbourne, Australia (ausopen.com)

21st-23rd: Industry - BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition 2019, Harrogate Convention Centre (btme.org.uk)

25th: Horseracing - Festival Trials Day, Cheltenham (thejockeyclub.co.uk/cheltenham)

DECEMBER

JANUARY

To have your event included in this magazine diary section, please email details to kerry.haywood@pitchcare.com

QUOTE ME HAPPY

"People reckon they nip it down the hill, people reckon they nip it up the hill. I've got no idea." **Pat Cummins gets his head around the famous Lord's slope.**

"England's batting begins to resemble a Rubik's cube in the hands of a novice. You move one part and another goes wrong. You twist it this way to solve one puzzle and another problem presents itself." **The media spoke out at the start of England's second Test campaign.**

"It's either going to be 2-0 or 1-1 next." Sky Sports' **Gary Neville's astute observation as Man City led Everton 1-0.**

"She has become a powerful voice within women's sport and I'm sure she will make a success of the next stage of her professional life." **Clare Connor, ECB Managing Director of Women's Cricket joins the praise for the retiring Sarah Taylor.**

"In my opinion he has it all – he can give assists, he can dribble, he's strong, he's fast, he can score. But I think for him, for the coach, for everyone, it's important to choose a position. If he's a No.8, judge him on that." **Robin van Persie fires warning to Paul Pogba after Manchester United's draw against Arsenal.**



Raheem Sterling

"I don't tackle high, so it's not something I'm really worried about. I'm going to go about my business and let the bigwigs decide on whatever rules they want to." **England's Courtney Lawes on Rugby's new tackling rules.**

"He's not in the wrong for me but at the same time I can see where people think it's wrong and we just need to be smarter on social media." **Raheem Sterling defends his team-mate Bernardo Silva after an alleged racist tweet.**

"We went over there knowing everyone was going to hate us, that we were going to have 2,000 Aussies in the crowd and our families, but everyone else hates us and wants to see us lose." **Australia star Nathan Lyon spoke after England lifted the men's ICC cricket World Cup for the first time in history.**

"North London is RED!!!" **Former Arsenal man Serge Gnabry rubs salt in Tottenham's gaping wounds by taunting his old rivals after scoring four times in Bayern Munich's 7-2 demolition of Spurs.**

Experience
EGO AT SALTEx
 30 - 31 Oct 2019, Stand No. J062

WHEN CHOOSING BETWEEN A, B, OR C, MAY WE SUGGEST D?

$$P = \frac{F \times D}{T}$$

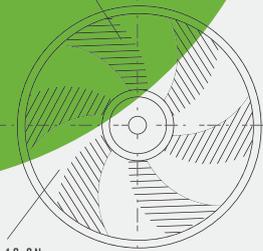
56V
 15.68 Wh

VIBRATION **1.7m/s²**
 NOISE **LpA 80dB(A)**



1014m³/h
 AIR VOLUME

AIR SPEED: 212km/h



FORCE: 19.2N

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	BOOST
350mins	210mins	140mins	100mins	70mins

Times have changed. So have tools. And our new commercial range is all the proof you need.

Take the EGO Power+ blower. It's powered by the most technologically advanced, petrol-matching, Lithium-ion battery system out there. It's built tough to withstand all-day use in any weather. Its impressive airflow beats every other handheld blower on the market, and while it packs all the power of petrol, it's significantly quieter, vibrates less and gives off zero fumes.

So don't stick to what you know. Switch to the power of EGO.

**THE NEW EGO 56V COMMERCIAL RANGE.
 THERE'S NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT.**

#powerreimagined



Visit egopowerplus.co.uk to find out more.

EGO
 POWER BEYOND BELIEF™