

MARCH 2007

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SUPERINTENDENTS
ASSOCIATION
OF IRELAND



***Conference
Preview***

***Using Nitrate
and Ammonium
Fertilisers***

***Blarney Golf
Resort***

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**Nature on the Golf Course • Regional Round-up • Landsdowne Road Rugby Club
Pick-ups and 4 x 4's • The Irish Abroad**



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From the Editor



We hear about it on tv and radio.
 We read about it in newspapers.
 The subject? Global warming! A
 single day doesn't go by but it is mentioned
 in the media.

How will global warming affect Irish course superintendents and what can we do to slow it down? Already we can see the signs of it - dry summers, wet and windy winters. Now doesn't that ring a bell with the year that has gone by? 2006 was the warmest year since records began over one hundred years ago. In fact, 11 of the last 12 years were the warmest on record. Predictions are that 2007 will beat that record.

Dry summers and wet winters are probably the worst case scenario for Irish greenkeeping. I suppose that all we can do is to conserve energy as best we can, but to be honest, if larger nations are not doing their bit, then any efforts made by smaller countries, such as Ireland, will be of little benefit in slowing down global warming. It looks like Global Warming is unavoidable. The best we can hope for is to try and prevent its acceleration.

More importance will be given to legislation during 2007. Topics of interest to Superintendents include: Health and Safety, and Environmental Matters. Greenside will be keeping you up to date on these subjects in future editions.

Thank you for your comments during the past year. I have received many requests to include a wildlife section in the magazine and in this issue we start with amphibians. There will be seasonal wildlife features in every issue from now on.

Your suggestions are very much appreciated. Keep sending them in.

Alan Mahon



Photo courtesy of Michael F. O'Connor

This was how the 18th green on Killarney's Mahony's Point course looked when the lower lake reached a new high and completely covered the green with water and debris. The lake rose even further after this photograph was taken.

Contents

- Letters to the Editor.....4
- Education Report.....5
- Conference Preview.....6
- Pick-ups and 4x4's10
- Visit to Ransomes Jacobsen16
- Nature on the Golf Course.....18
- Using Ammonium and Nitrate Fertilisers ..25
- Course feature - Blarney Golf Resort.....28
- Regional Reports.....33
- The Irish Abroad.....42
- Landsdowne Road.....48
- FEGGA report.....50
- Manual Handling.....53
- Trade News.....55
- Presidents Report.....58

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Back issues of Greenside can now be seen on the GCSAI website.
 Visit www.gcsai.org

Reminder
*The deadline for receiving
 advertising and editorial
 for the next issue of
 Greenside is
 APRIL 27TH 2007*



Front cover pic: The 18th green at Carton House

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I read with interest the plea from 'Frustrated Superintendent' (Dec. 06 issue) for guidance on a wash-off area. I have to declare an interest, before I offer suggestions, as my company produces the ClearWater washpad water recycling systems but here are some ideas and observations that should prove of assistance;

It is increasingly apparent that environmental issues are being taken seriously in Ireland and many anti-pollution measures are being encouraged. As far as wash-off of golf machinery is concerned all new installations must be built to prevent pollution.

Many courses are now reviewing their current facilities too, which a number consider woefully inadequate, and are approaching companies such as my own for help to upgrade or rebuild facilities.

The main priority when considering, is to prevent wash-off water going to ground, entering drains or a watercourse. The solution is to build a 'dedicated' washpad on which all wash-off should take place. This will vary in size depending on the size of the course, the number of machines to be washed and how many need to be washed at the same time. If say, there needs to be provision for two machines side by side, a pad between 6 - 8 metres wide and 5 - 6 metres deep should suffice. This should have a low curb surround to prevent any washings leaving the pad.

This, preferably round topped curb, should be around 40 mm high except where machines enter and there, a height of 25 mm is usually sufficient to stop water but allow greens machines and the like to access the pad without damage. The pad should incorporate a slope to the back where, rather than a simple drain, a grass trap / sand filter would be preferable.

This allows only the contaminated water out rather than grass clippings, sand etc. The water leaving the pad should then either enter 1) a Class 1 Separator (interceptor) prior to discharge to soakaway, drain or watercourse (usually requiring a consent to discharge) or 2) a water recycling system.

The advantages of a recycling system are that, unlike separators, you do not consume water as it is biologically treated and recycled. As water is becoming an expensive commodity, this could well be an important point. Here in the UK, whilst a Class 1 Separator is deemed acceptable (at present!), it is not considered 'future proof'. This is why many golf courses and others in grounds care are going for recycling. EU legislation may well mean that Ireland will adopt a similar stance.

David Mears
Joint Managing Director
Course Care

Dear Editor

I read with great interest the article on Health and Safety regarding Safety Statements in your December 2006 issue. I have for many years now advocated the use of Safety Statements, while play is in progress for greenstaff. I still cannot understand why they are not used. Maybe you would put this to your members in their interest.

Sincerely,
Paddy Murphy
Past President G.U.I. (2000)

PS. I really enjoy your magazine.

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Education Report

By David Behan, Naas Golf Club



This is my final report as educational officer. I can look back over the last couple of years with a lot of satisfaction and good memories.

I hope to see a lot of fellow colleagues at our National Conference in Mount Wolseley Hilton Hotel on 7th & 8th of March. The speaker line up has a strong construction flavour to it but hopefully there will be something of interest for everyone: Our own John Rouine on 'The Restored McKenzie Experience'; on design and construction David Oatis USGA, Eddie Connaughton; Michael O'Leary 'SOL' and Andy Browne on Irrigation Technology; Turf Technical Talk from Simon Barnaby and Stuart Staples and Stiofan Nutty on Financial Management and Human Resources. Trevor Myles from the Department of Agriculture Pesticide Control Services will make a guest appearance. The conference will give everybody a chance to talk to the speakers and network with fellow colleagues and trade members alike. I would like to thank Tracy Coburn for the professional manner in which the conference is organised.

Recap over the last 2 years

The Bachelor of Science in Turfgrass Management has, I feel given our industry an identity and a standard with a level 7 HETAC Degree. The 1st year is now completed and those candidates who fast tracked into 3rd year will have completed the course in May of this year. I would like to congratulate the students for their hard work and thank Colm Dockerel for his continued support to the Golf Course industry. If you are thinking of furthering your education contact ITB now as places are filling up fast. I also attended the National FETAC Awards in Greenkeeping at the National Botanic Gardens.

I would like to wish everyone who qualified every success in their future careers.

The GCSAI would like to thank NAD, GUI, ITB, Colm Dockerel and Warrenstown College for bringing Dr. Karl Danneberger and Mike Hurtzan to Ireland last May. Other events and companies who gave the GCSAI support with their educational days.

- ▲ Race Against Waste educational day in Grange Castle
- ▲ Spraychem - Jim Turner of Aqua Aid
- ▲ Cropcare - Mark Hunt, Colm Flemming and Jeff Borger
- ▲ Bord Bia - Personnel Development Day organized by Karl Marks and delivered by Kevin McEntagert.
- ▲ Coillte - spraying and chainsaw courses organized by Alan Mahon and Eugene Doyle.
- ▲ SportsTurf Ireland 2005 - 9 education seminars.
- ▲ Irish School of Golf Course Mechanics - Barry Drennan ran Courses in Warrenstown College in January
- ▲ Golf Safe - Provided, Survey, Safety Statements and Training Legislation.
- ▲ Website - which is been continually been improved. Check the Website for any new training courses and dates.

I am looking forward to working with my fellow professionals in the golf industry; greenkeepers must work together to achieve a higher recognition for our profession. I would like to wish Damien McLaverty all the best as incoming Education Officer. I know he will bring great drive and enthusiasm to this position. I would like to thank Paddy Holohan, Tracy, Alan and the executive committee for their continued hard work. I would also like to thank our members and the GUI for their support.

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12th Annual GCSAI Conference

in association with Toro 'Count On It'



Count on it

This year we are back to the south-east region and the conference will be held in the four star Mount Wolseley Hilton Hotel in Tullow, Co. Carlow on 7th & 8th March

Speaker Profiles (In Alphabetical Order)

Mr Simon Barnaby, Technical Manager, Syngenta

Simon has worked in the turf grass industry for over 20 years. Initially in golf course management, including top golf courses such as The Wentworth Club, and for a short time working in a golf course architects practice. Following this, Simon gained a B.Sc. Degree in Horticulture and from here went to work for STRI as a Turfgrass Agronomist.

After working in the practical side of the industry, Simon moved to the commercial side, working for the Scotts Company as Technical Manager for over 7 years. Recently Simon has joined Syngenta as Technical Manager for the UK and Ireland.



Mr Andrew Brown, Toro

Andy joined Toro in 1999 as European Corporate Accounts Manager and Irrigation Sales Manager for N. Europe. Andy qualified as an Irrigation Engineer in 1990 and spent the intervening years working in the Middle East and in the UK. He was chairman of the UK Irrigation Association for 4 years and currently sits on the Executive Council.



Mr Eddie B Connaughton, B.Sc, Eddie B. Connaughton Ltd.

Eddie has been involved in the golf course industry for over 25 years. He began his career in 1978 as a trainee Greenkeeper in Royal Dublin and Elm Park Golf courses in Dublin. He became the first person in Ireland to be awarded a City & Guilds Certificate in Greenkeeping in 1981. He then continued his studies at Purdue University, Indiana, USA obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture specialising in turfgrass management in 1985. After graduation he worked as a construction and technical specialist with a golf course construction firm in Scotland for 3 years. In 1989 he formed a partnership in Grass Technology International specialising in golf course design and agronomy and began consultancy work in Ireland in 1990. Luttrellstown Castle, Corrstown and Roscommon were early design projects in the 90s with extensive remodeling works following on over the next 10 years throughout Ireland.



Eddie set up his own company in 1997, Eddie B. Connaughton Ltd, specialising in golf course design, remodeling and agronomy consultancy services. He is currently involved in projects which include design, remodeling, re-location advice and construction specifications throughout Ireland and the UK.

Mr Stiofán Nutty, Business Consultant

Graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 1983 with an honours business degree and a higher diploma in education, Stiofán founded a garden centre adjacent to the family wholesale nursery business in 1984.



As Managing Director, he redeveloped the site with a purpose built thatched garden shop in 1990 and doubled the turnover within 3 years. During this period he helped found both the Garden Centre Association (GCAI) and the garden centre buying group (GIO).

He became Chairperson of the GCAI and was a board member of the International Garden Centre Association 1996 - 1998. Also at this time he had begun to do some radio broadcasting.

By 1998 Stiofán was developing both a horticulture consultancy business and a TV broadcasting career. Commissions from individual garden centres and industry bodies such as Bord Bia followed. In 2000 he was commissioned to bring the different strands of the amenity horticulture industry together to form the Amenity Horticulture Council and was its first Chairman. Among the media achievements in this period were 4 gardening series, 2 live television magazine series and a radio gardening series both in English and as gaeilge.

Having been a member of the Green Party for 13 years, Stiofán acted as Trevor Sargent's Director of Elections for the 2002 General Election. The subsequent election success led to opportunities and he became the party's first General Secretary.

In 2005 he re-launched his business consultancy and broadened his consultancy to general business and the political world. He has just completed a Higher Diploma in Mediation and Conflict Resolution in UCD.

He now performs project management commissions, general business advice including financial and HR consultancy, mediation and facilitation services.

In 2000, Stiofán was approached by Pat Suttle of Teagasc to devise the Financial Management module for the Certificate in Golf Course Management. This year he has also begun to lecture in Human Resources for the same course. Although he plays little golf, his interaction with superintendents and aspiring superintendents over the past 6 years has proved to be both educational and enjoyable.

Mr David Oatis, United States Golf Association (USGA), Green Section

David Oatis is the Director of the North Eastern Region of the USGA Green Section and has held the position since February 1990. He joined the staff early in 1988 as an agronomist in the Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region.



A native of Indianapolis, David attended California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, California, where he received a B.Sc. degree in Ornamental Horticulture with special emphasis in turfgrass management.

David came to the USGA Green Section from the Rio Hondo Country Club in Downey, California, where he had been the Golf Course Superintendent for three years. Prior to his work at Rio Hondo, he served as Assistant Golf Course Superintendent at Mesa Verde Country Club, Costa Mesa, California, for five years.

In addition to conducting more than 100 TAS visits annually and coordinating the activities of three regional agronomists, he has authored numerous articles on turfgrass management and has lectured extensively in both the United States and internationally.

Mr Michael O'Leary, SOL Golf Course Construction Ltd

Michael O'Leary, Managing Director of SOL Golf, comes from an agricultural and plant and machinery background.



Michael started SOL Golf Course Construction Limited ('SOL Golf') in 1998. The company is based in Ballinahulla, Ballydesmond, on the Cork/Kerry border. Under Michael's stewardship, the company has been involved in both the construction of new, and the renovation of existing, golf courses, in accordance with designs and specifications provided by architects and consultants, many of whom are 'household' names in the industry.

In a very short space of time, the company has achieved a high reputation in the golf industry in Ireland and is also gaining strong recognition in the UK market. Over the past 8 years, SOL Golf has worked on over 60 golf courses, both links and parkland, in Ireland, many of which have hosted highly prestigious events such as the Ryder Cup, British Open, Irish Open, Curtis Cup and Walker Cup and many other events.

Mr John Rouine, Course Superintendent, Lahinch Golf Club

John began his work in the Parks Department in Dublin Corporation and studied Amenity Horticulture and Greenkeeping at the National Botanic Gardens. Following this, he worked as a gardener for Dublin Corporation at St Anne's Park, Raheny and Herbert Park, Ballsbridge and then as a greenkeeper at Sillogue Park and Golf Course, Dublin.



On his appointment as head greenkeeper at Lahinch Golf Club in 1988, he continued his greenkeeping and golf course management studies at Elmwood College in Fife in Scotland and also completed a course in Golf Course Management for Golf Course Superintendents in 2001.

In 1999, John was part of the team involved in major architectural changes and development in Lahinch under architect Martin Hawtree and SOL Golf Course Construction along with STRI Advisory Service. This development was to see Lahinch as a 'restored MacKenzie Course'.

The Old Course at Lahinch has been the home of the oldest provincial championship in Ireland- the South of Ireland Amateur Open Championship since its inception in 1895.

Previous winners and finalists of the 'South' have gone on to great heights in the professional ranks. Names like John O'Leary, Pdraig Harrington, Paul McGinley and Darren Clarke spring to mind.

Mr Stuart Staples, International Technical Manager, Turf and Amenity, Scotts

Stuart has worked for Scotts for 10 years. He was initially involved in Research & Development and is now within the Technical Department.



He is responsible for the management and implementation of the technical strategy within the international group with regards to the Turf & Amenity product portfolio.

Stuart is also involved in new product development for international business and provides technical support for the international turf market within Europe, Middle East, Africa and Japan.



Brendan Savage, Comedian and After Dinner Speaker

One of Ireland's best comedians, Brendan Savage, will be performing as the after dinner speaker at the banquet on Wednesday 7th March. Brendan has appeared with some of Ireland's top artists including Joe Dolan, Dickie Rock, The Wolfe Tones, The Dubliners and Red Hurley.

Brendan has also appeared on the 'Late Late Show' on RTE and more recently on Joe Duffy's 'Live Line' on RTE radio.



Count on it

Provisional Programme

Tuesday 6th March 2007

1.00-2.30pm Complimentary nine hole golf competition at the Mount Wolseley Golf Club. Only open to delegates attending the full conference. Numbers are limited and tee times will be allocated. Groups will be in the form of three balls and will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis at the time of your booking. If you wish to play with a particular person(s) then please state this on the booking form.

Wednesday 7th March 2007

8.00-9.15am Registration

9.15-9.20am Introduction and Welcome
Mr Paddy Holohan, President, GCSAI

9.20-9.25am Mr Richard Harris, Lely Ireland Ltd

9.25-9.30am Official Opening
Mr Fintan Buckley, Chairman Leinster Branch, Golfing Union of Ireland

9.30-10.20am Mr Eddie Connaughton, Eddie B Connaughton Ltd
'Golf Course Design, Master Planning And Remodeling'

10.20-11.10am Mr John Rouine, Course Superintendent, Lahinch Golf Club
'The Restored MacKenzie Experience, Environmental Issues And Maintenance At Lahinch Golf Course'

11.10am-11.40am Tea/Coffee

11.40-11.55am Mr Trevor Myles, Pesticide Control Service, Dept. of Agriculture & Food
'Pesticide Regulations - An Amenity Perspective'

11.55am-12.45pm Mr Simon Barnaby, Technical Manager, Syngenta
'Plant Growth Regulators - Everything You Need To Know About Plant Growth Regulators (and probably more!).'

12.45-1.00pm Questions and Answers

1.00-2.00pm Lunch

2.00-2.50pm Mr Stiofán Nutty, Business Consultant
'The Financial Management And Human Resources Tools Required In The Toolbox Of The 2007 Golf Course Superintendent'

2.50-3.40pm Mr Michael O'Leary, Managing Director, SOL Golf Course Construction Ltd
'Golf Course Construction'

3.40-4.10pm Tea/Coffee Break

4.10-5.00pm Mr David Oatis, Director, United States Golf Association, Green Section
'Avoiding The Pitfalls Of Golf Course Renovation'

5.00pm Questions and Answers
GCSAI Annual General Meeting

8.00pm Conference Banquet With Comedian
Brendan Savage

Thursday 8th March 2007

10.00-10.05am Introduction - President, GCSAI

10.05-10.45am Mr Eddie Connaughton, Eddie B Connaughton Ltd
'Construction Specifications, Selection Of Materials And Grow-in Problems And Solutions'

10.45-11.25am Mr Andrew Brown
'Developments In Golf Course Irrigation Technology And Management'

11.25-11.50am Tea/Coffee Break

11.50-12.30pm Mr Stuart Staples, International Technical Manager - Turf & Amenity Scotts
'Moss And Algae: Control Strategies'

12.30-1.10pm Mr David Oatis, Director, United States Golf Association, Green Section
'Rebuilding One Green On An Old Course'

1.10pm Questions and Answers
Closing Address
Lunch

Conference Chairman: Mr Eddie Donlon, Rush Golf Club



Tracy Coburn

Tracy has organised the conference for many years now and its thanks to her great efforts and expertise that we have a conference that is of a world class standard. If you have any queries relating to the conference do not hesitate in contacting Tracy at 048 406 22655 (ROI) or 028 406 22655 (NI).



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Choosing the Right Vehicle for the Superintendent

By Michael Moroney, Motoring and Farm Machinery Motorist

Irish drivers have a growing preference for 4x4's as the market seems to expand in terms of volume and choice each month. 4x4 sales are rising as the range on offer can be tailored to suit individual farm and family needs.

Taking the off-road buying route

They go up mountains, and down your main road. They bounce across dusty barren plains, and sit shining outside your farmhouse door. They are 4x4 vehicles, and they are now almost everywhere. The 4x4 started life as a practical yet austere beast of burden for those working around farmers and other more difficult to reach locations. Yet since appearing as the Jeep and the Land Rover during the 1940s, the 4x4 has come a long way, and is now popular as a main form of transport, even among those who never drive off-road.

For many 4x4 enthusiasts, it's not really an issue of go-anywhere ability that's the appeal, it's a combination of strength, power and a feeling of security. The growth in sales indicate that only a small proportion of the 4x4's bought ever tackle a serious off-road challenge. That does not take away from their ability when called into action.

The new issue for 4x4 drivers is envy. There is a growing resentment to 4x4 use in urban areas from among other road users. The green lobby has joined the 4x4 bashing wagon and there is a concern that those with genuine 4x4 needs, which include Golf Course Superintendents, will be under threat from such publicity attacks.

The 4x4 was originally designed with a military mission in mind and its use in farming quickly followed. Farmers will tend to opt for a 4x4 for its towing ability as these heavier vehicles have far better towing power and ratings.

Other rural dwellers tend to have outdoor sporting and other interests, where the scope of the 4x4 is well exercised. Granted, price and fuel economy may be barriers to wider use, but the flexibility of the 4x4 in dealing with a range of motoring challenges has to be appreciated.

The additional bonus features for 4x4 buyers include better road visibility due to the high seating position. The higher ground clearance also ensures good ability to cope with smaller uneven roads. And lastly there is that feeling of safety, which many 4x4 drivers experience as they can anticipate the actions of other road users from their better position. This latter point is not to be confused with stability.

If you're searching out a 4x4 for your family make sure that it has an electronic stability programme (ESP) system included. US tests have shown that where younger and inexperienced drivers are using 4x4's, the ESP system will ensure less accidents.

So if you are planning on a 4x4 purchase where on-road ability is as important as rugged wild terrain travel, then you'll have plenty to choose from. In this supplement we look at some of the latest models and discuss the impact options for the growing numbers of 4x4 drivers.

Ford

Ford has delivered the new and more powerful version of the Ranger pick-up truck. The new model has more engine power, improved styling and the double cab is the priority model for Ireland. The Ranger uses a 2.5 litre diesel engine. The Ranger is built side by side with the Mazda B Series pick-up, but the Ford styling is more impressive.

Honda

Honda's new CR-V is now available with Honda's award winning 2.2 litre turbo-diesel engine and its good. The diesel powered CR-V is a bit pricey for what you get and with diesel prices jumping ahead of petrol, that extra price may be difficult to justify. Honda in Ireland is also offering the 4x4 version of the HR-V model on its price list with a 1.6 litre petrol engine. This model uses a similar wheel-slip engaged 4x4 system that is claimed to be more economical as the 4x4 system is only engaged automatically on demand.

Hyundai

Hyundai aims to continue its winning run with the introduction in recent weeks of the new Santa Fe model. The new Santa Fe is bigger than before and while prices have risen a little, it still continues to offer value. The Hyundai Tuscon is proving popular as an entry level 4x4, as its more affordable pricing is a real bonus and there is a 4x4 option from the Tuscon. For heavier use, Hyundai retains the bigger Terracan, which has good economy ratings and a reasonable 2.8 tonne towing capacity.

Isuzu

We are still waiting for the upgrade for the Trooper models, which are sold under other brand names in some European markets. The D-Max 4x4 pick-up is a popular choice with its 3.0 litre engine and good towing rating. Isuzu is offering a range of customised kits for the D-Max, enhancing its on-road looks and appeal, while perhaps confining its true off-road ability.



Ford Ranger

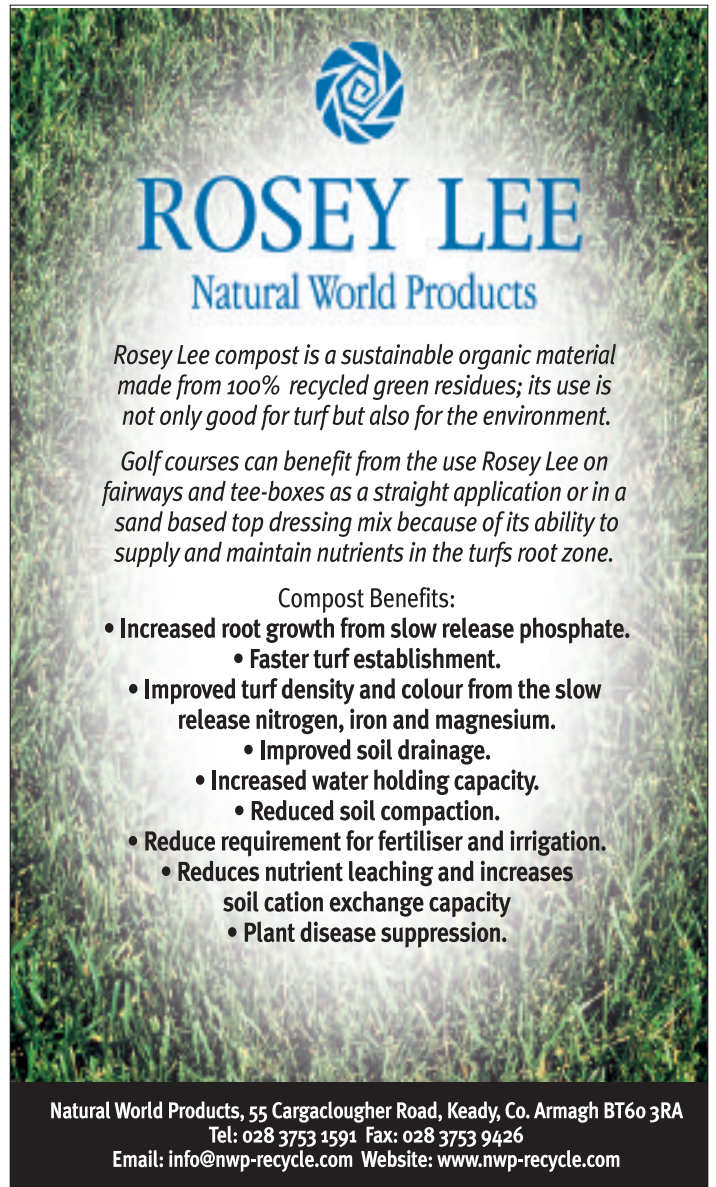
4x4's - Lets look at the offers

The motor industry doesn't sleep and that's characterised by the range of new model 4x4's that are hitting the market on a monthly basis. Over the past 12 months there have been a host of new models hitting the market and there's more to come.

That can make choosing the model for you a little confusing. The first move has to be to break down your choices based on size, engine type, petrol or diesel, off-road ability and of course price. There is a growing element of style in the 4x4 market. The latest models are mirroring the US market where 4x4 style has been a feature for years. And the pick-up market is also growing, another North American phenomenon, with some interesting model introductions due later this year.

Fuel economy coming higher up on the priority scale as diesel prices rise and especially as we hear rumours of shortages. This feature needs to be closely examined when buyers prepare for their 4x4 choices. Up to now economy and 4x4's have not gone hand in hand in the minds of 4x4 drivers. Bio-fuel use is also growing in significant and 4x4 drivers could be beneficiaries of such technology.

Let's take a brief look at what's been happening among the 4x4 suppliers. Here we give some comments on the ranges of 4x4's available on the Irish market.



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Jeep

There are a number of new additions to the Jeep line-up, now part of the Chrysler family. The big news is the use of the Mercedes Benz design engine which gives more power and torque to the range than before. This has boosted the Cherokee and Grand Cherokee appeal factors along with the Jeep off-road pedigree that remains an impressive feature of all models in the range. For those with big pulling power ambitions the Jeep Grand Cherokee is the most definite choice. The Jeep range has enhanced build quality features, better fuel economy than in the past and they are more competitive at the quality end of the market than before.

Land Rover

The Land Rover Discovery is well established as a superb 4x4 choice, most especially due to the super new V6 turbo-diesel engine. The Discovery does all; it behaves well on the road, performs well in the mud and has good towing ability. The new Discovery is the best of the bigger 4x4's that I've driven for some time. Land Rover upgraded the Freelander last year with a significant overhaul of the model. Land Rover has maintained its Defender as being true to its heritage as a hard working off-road range with more power for 2007. At the top end, Land Rover keeps on improving the Range Rover. The newer Range Rover Sport is a truly impressive 4x4 to drive plus it has the extra badge of being more competitive than the larger Range Rover models, but who'll know!

Mazda

When Ford upgrades the Range, expect to see a revised version of the Mazda B-Series in the shadows. The new version has arrived on the Irish market, with similar features and performance to the Ford Ranger. The Mazda Tribute has not made an impression on the Irish market and there is an update overdue here too.



Mazda BT-50

So could a 4x4 be a good investment? Many people think so as 4x4 vehicles are good for the winter months, but they are also practical all year-round.

The wide range of prices within the 4x4 market means that there will be a vehicle to suit those working on a range of budgets. The sector goes from the height of luxury to the more basic and practical models.

Four-wheel drive vehicles have a number of common features, to which their continuing success has been attributed:

- ❖ optimum safety features
- ❖ comfortable and easy to drive
- ❖ high driving position, allowing greater all-round visibility and extra space
- ❖ power distributed between four wheels - can be permanent or selected by a switch, making it ideal for erratic conditions.

The range of vehicles available is very wide. The only real limit will be how much the prospective buyer wishes to spend.

Buying New

There are three sectors to the market, the smaller or soft roaders, the hard working and tough off-road machines and the luxury end of the market.

Popular models in the soft road end which are currently available include the Honda CR-V, Nissan X-Trail, Suzuki Grand Vitara and Toyota RAV-4. Hyundai's diesel powered Santa Fe is proving especially popular in Ireland for value, reliability and economy.

For the hard working crew, the Toyota Land Cruiser, Mitsubishi Pajero and Land Rover Discovery have been popular. But there is shortage of power under the bonnet of options, which include the Nissan Terrano and Patrol models and the Isuzu Troopers.

At the luxury end the Volvo XC90 D5S provides a combination of on-road handling and off-road muscle, and includes an array of safety features. And it's not the most expensive to own or run, and doubles well as an estate car.

Porsche, previously known for its on road sports cars, now offers its own take on the 4x4 in the Cayenne.

Other premium manufacturers offering a luxury take on the segment include BMW with its X5 as well as the new X3, and of course Range Rover and Land Rover, whose Freelander and Discovery both remain very popular while continuing to evolve.

Once you have bought the 4x4, you should have peace of mind through a warranty. Newly registered cars usually come with a two-year warranty.



Mitsubishi L200

Nissan

Nissan's Pathfinder and Navara models are making a big impression on the Irish market. Both are built around the same chassis structure and use similar engines. The end result is a powerful 4x4 package. Nissan has the most comprehensive 4x4 offering on the market at present, starting with the X-Trail and including the Pathfinder, Navara and Patrol, all worthy off-road performers in each of their sectors. The Navara leads the pick-up market with size and power, while the Patrol is a strong and serious puller with a 3.5 tonne towing capacity.

Mitsubishi

The Mitsubishi 4x4 range has always been popular in Ireland from the Pajero to the L200 pick-up and the Pajero Sport and Pinin thrown in for good measure. The Pajero remains one of the hard working 4x4's and has two engine options. The entry model Pajero Sport comes with a 2.5 litre turbo-diesel engine, while those with more power needs can choose the bigger engine 3.2 litre version with over 30% more power and not much between them when it comes to fuel economy. The big news from Mitsubishi comes in the shape of the new L200. The new L200 comes with more engine power, better turning circle, extended service intervals plus a range of safety features from the specification listing.



Mitsubishi Pajero

Buying Used

The used four-wheel drive market is very healthy, so if your budget does not stretch to one of the more expensive models, there is still plenty of choice. If you are buying a second hand vehicle, and there is a warranty it will be provided by the dealer, or a third party. Such a warranty can last for between three and 12 months, depending on the age and condition of the vehicle. Registered dealers are obliged to give a minimum level of warranty.

Of course, this is not the end. The vehicle will need both servicing and occasional maintenance, for which you will need a reputable garage. If the supplying garage is too far away for such jobs, your local dealer will be happy to support you with service. Experienced 4x4 dealers will be able to advise you on the type of service you need, and will be able to point out potential problem areas before they arise, or become serious.

Five tips for 4x4 buyers

- ❖ What are your 4x4 needs? Spend some time on your decision before you start to talk about the exact models.
- ❖ Work out your budget. Decide on how much you can afford to pay each month or quarter and don't forget to include running costs, which can be high with some 4x4's.
- ❖ Decide on the type of fuel that you want to use, petrol or diesel. Petrol is only a choice for the smaller soft roaders. Diesel costs more day one, but has lower running costs.
- ❖ Take a long test drive in the vehicle of your choice and if your buying a secondhand one, try to test a new model of the same unit to give you some comparisons on quality.
- ❖ Unless you are absolutely positive about the 4x4 that you want test drive a few of them.

Toyota

The arrival of the new RAV4 at the start of 2006 was the big news at Toyota. The new version has Corolla like looks and retains some of the feature of the older popular model. Toyota has kept prices under control for the new models, with competitive entry versions. Toyota still dominates the bigger end with the ever popular Land Cruiser models. Hand in hand with these, Toyota has upgrade the Hi-Lux 4x4 pick-ups but they lack the power to lead the sector. Power is not in short supply for the large Land Cruiser VX models which use an impressive six-cylinder turbo-diesel engine.



Toyota Hi-Lux

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News in Brief

Publications from Comhairle

Booklets dealing with welfare, civil and employment matters are available from Comhairle, the national agency responsible for supporting the provision of information, advice and advocacy services to members of the public on a wide range of social and civil services. Many of these publications are free of charge and cover a wide range of topics such as Employment Rights, Medical care, Pensions and many more. To get a full list on what is available log on to www.oasi.gov.ie and also www.comhairle.ie Comhairle also supports the national Citizens Information Phone Service Lo-call 1890 777 121 Comhairle Head Office: 7th Floor, Hume House, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4



Death of Tom Mulqueen

The death occurred on New Years Day of Tom Mulqueen. Tom was the retired Course Superintendent at Mahon Golf Club and was a member of the GCSAI right up to the time of his passing. He is survived by his wife Bridie, his three daughters and three sons.

Tom studied horticulture in the Botanic Gardens in the early fifties. After finishing his studies there he started work with the Parks Dept. of Dublin Corporation until 1966 when he then moved back to his native Cork to work for the then Cork Corporation Parks Dept. In 1979 a new municipal golf course at Mahon was under construction and Tom was involved with this project from the very start. He remained with Mahon Golf Club until his retirement in 1997.

Indeed the club had so much respect for Tom that they gave him a guard of honour at his funeral. It is worth mentioning that Tom was diagnosed with cancer in 1979, the year he started with Mahon G.C., but amazingly was given the all clear two years later. He had given much hope for many cancer sufferers. Unfortunately it was in June of last year that the cancer came back.

Tom was an active member of the GCSAI within the southwest region and was a regular attendant at their golf outings, winning on several occasions. In his early days he played hurling. He had a love of Irish music and was a talented fiddle player. He often boasted that years ago, while aboard the Jesus boat on the Sea of Gallilee, he played An Chulan on the fiddle.

Tom will be sadly missed by all his family, friends and colleagues but in particular by his wife and best friend Bridie.

May he Rest In Peace

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Superintendents Visit Ransomes Jacobsen

by Alan Mahon

A two day trip for Irish Superintendents to see the newly upgraded Ransomes Jacobsen factory in Ipswich was organised by Kevin Broderick of Kevin Broderick Ltd last November.

Superintendents travelled in two groups, with Kevin Broderick and Robert Foley, to see the impressive set up that is Europe's largest golf machinery manufacturing plant, covering 100,000 ft² of floor area.

The factory is located on the original site of Robert Ransomes iron foundry established in Ipswich in 1789. With the passing of time the Ransomes name still lives but is under the umbrella of the American Textron Company, now known as Ransomes Jacobsen.

A walk around the factory floor, led by area sales manager Ian Bridges, was very impressive. Before any one got a peek inside, health and safety was the first priority with the handing out of safety goggles and ear plugs.

Inside, Ian led the troops to the start of the production line, the metal frames of which will be either one of many machines manufactured on the premises - a greens triplex or a fairway mower perhaps, depending on which aisle you take. But, as mentioned before, health and safety in the workplace is all important and everyone had to stick together, no wandering sheep allowed.

One of the things that impressed the delegates was how neat and tidy everything was. Everything in its proper place, ensuring a safer place to work.



An employee puts the finishing touches to this rotary mower.



Finished mowers ready for dispatch



Left: Paul Malone (Co. Louth G.C.), Dan Davis (Newcastle West G.C.), Michael Loughran (Hilton Templepatrick), Robert Foley (Kevin Broderick Ltd), Michael F. O'Connor (Killarney Golf and Fishing Club), Damian McLaverty (Ballinasloe G.C.) and Kevin Broderick (Kevin Broderick Ltd)

There was so much to take in, the laser metal cutter, the paint room, the cylinder and bottom blade furnaces, the multiple assembly lines and the impressive despatch section, where spare parts are stored in multi story compartments and sent out all over the world.

The second day brought the Irish group to Ipswich Town FC training ground and its stadium on Portman Road. It was here that head groundsman Alan Ferguson treated us to a wealth of knowledge. Alan has won four Football League Groundsman of the Year awards, one F.A. Premiership Groundsman of the Year award and two Institute of Groundsmanship awards since arriving at Ipswich in 1996. He is responsible for maintaining 20 pitches at the club. He has five full time and two part time staff, similar to a normal eighteen hole golf course. Work goes on seven days a week 365 days a year. Given the group were made up of golf course superintendents, one could not but be impressed with the knowledge Alan shared with them.



Alan Ferguson, Head Groundsman at Ipswich F.C.

He had everyone's attention from start to finish and his frankness about the highs and lows he experienced during last season was appreciated by all. Incidentally, two Irish hopefuls train with Ipswich Town F.C., Alan Lee and Ben Clarke.

It was an intensive two days for the delegates but a lot was learned. Kevin Broderick, Robert Foley and Ian Bridges have to be commended for sharing their time with the group. They certainly pulled out all the stops and their enthusiasm in passing on information to all those around them was very much appreciated.



Alan shows the group a soil sample from one of the training pitches



The visitors are given the tour of Ipswich F.C. maintenance facility



Not an act of vandalism but after a match, Alan and his crew repair the pitch using plugs from a nearby nursery



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Nature on the Golf Course

A Haven for Amphibians

By Gillian Stewart, Wicklow Mountains National Park

As every school child knows, frogs are amphibians and are equally at home on land as in water. The preferred habitat for frogs is most damp places and areas of shallow slow or still water. In deep water, such as the middle of a lake, they are not so adept, and an easy meal for a pike or an otter. Fast rivers are also too challenging for a frog.

Frogs have always been common in Ireland, presumably because of their love of wet, boggy places. You may be surprised to learn that frogs are considered in need of protection these days, and it is illegal to intentionally harm them or to keep frogs, tadpoles or spawn in captivity without a permit from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Throughout Europe, amphibian numbers have declined drastically and many species are threatened. Habitat destruction is a major factor, as is pollution. The soft damp skin of amphibians is particularly sensitive to pollution. Luckily Ireland is still a relatively clean place, and we still have healthy frog populations. Because of this we have been charged by Europe with protecting the Common Frog. We may become their last stronghold.



A young frog

Whilst frogs are still common in Ireland, over 50% of their habitats have been lost in the past 100 years through drainage, pollution, land reclamation and landscape management. Frogs will lay their spawn in almost any patch of shallow still or slow water, but many sites prove unsuitable and the tadpoles do not make it through their metamorphosis.

Here in Wicklow, many drains and puddles will have spawn in late January or February, but as the weeks progress, many dry up leaving the hapless tadpoles crowded into a smaller and smaller area, and eventually high and dry.



The Common Newt

This is where golf courses may, intentionally or unintentionally, become the saviours of our amphibians. Many golf courses have ponds and rough areas that are ideal frog habitat. Ponds need to have shallow edges and plenty of water plants. Steep sides and goldfish, as are often found in garden ponds, are not good for frogs. Irish golf courses may yet have a major role to play in saving the Common Frog. And not just the Common Frog. We have three amphibian species in Ireland. The Common Frog is our only species of frog, but we also have one newt - the Smooth Newt, and one toad - the Natterjack.

Newts are met far less often than frogs, despite being widespread. This may be because they are quiet and secretive and spend more time in the water. In Ireland, newts were once believed to swim down your throat if you drank pond water, and hence they were nick-named 'man-crawlers'. I can think of many reasons not to drink pond water, but fear of man-crawlers has never been one of them! Like frogs, newts like well vegetated ponds and ditches, and are an ideal candidate for golf course ponds. In fact, the first newts that I ever saw as a child were in a pond on a golf course.



The Natterjack Toad

Photo courtesy of Chris Wilson

Nature on the Golf Course

The Natterjack Toad is the rarest Irish amphibian and is restricted to a few sites in west Kerry and in Wexford. In fact it was introduced to Wexford by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the 1990's in an effort to increase its range and thereby help to protect it. Unlike our frog and our newt, the Natterjack likes areas of sandy soil, with shallow sandy ponds. Should you ever be lucky enough to see a Natterjack, it is easily recognised by its warty skin and its distinctive yellow stripe down its back.

Sadly, there has been some controversy in the past where construction of new golf courses has destroyed precious habitat of these very rare toads. In fact, if any existing golf courses are lucky enough to share their space with Natterjacks, it is very possible for them to actually manage areas for this wonderful creature. For example, Dooks Golf Links in Co. Kerry has received a European environmental award for the new specially constructed Natterjack ponds at hole 15. Natterjack requirements are slightly different than those for frogs and newts so if you would like to help them, I suggest that you contact your local National Parks & Wildlife Service ranger for advice.

All three of our amphibians undergo a metamorphosis from spawn to tadpole to legged tadpole to adult. Male frogs croak from late January onwards to attract a female. Male Natterjacks also croak, but do so later in the year, from March onwards.

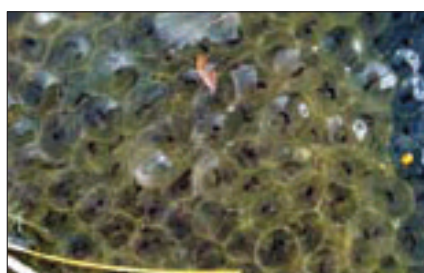
Newts prefer dancing to singing; the male develops a colourful patterned skin and dances underwater in front of a potential mate. The spawn of the three species also differ. Common frogs lay clumps of spawn, toads lay long strings of spawn, and newts lay their eggs singly in the vegetation. All three species feed on invertebrates, and rely on a healthy ecosystem.



Toadspawn. The eggs are laid in strings



Newts lay their eggs singly under a leaf



Frogspawn

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Sportsturf IRELAND Dates

The Sportsturf Ireland Trade Show will be held at the R.D.S., Simonscourt Pavilion on 28th and 29th November 2007.

This is Ireland's only Trade event specifically for the golf industry and is always popular with greenkeepers, landscapers, local authorities and indeed anyone associated with the turfgrass industry.

As well as seeing the latest equipment and products, there will also be many seminars taking place during the event.

Interested parties wishing to avail of a trade stand should contact Tracy Coburn on 048 406 22655 (ROI) or 028 406 22655 (NI & UK) but hurry, stands are booking fast.



Joe Vargas Honour

Joe Vargas Jr., a renowned turfgrass scientist and a professor at Michigan State University in the department of Plant Pathology for the past 38 years, has been recognized as the winner of the 2007 Green Section Award by the United States Golf Association. Vargas is no stranger to the golf scene in Ireland having spoken at a past GCSAI Conference.

The award is given for contributions to golf through work with turfgrass and is determined annually by a distinguished panel of experts in the field of turfgrass research. Vargas received the award at the USGA Green Section Education Conference in Anaheim, California.

Chainsaw and Spraying Courses

Due to the exceptional demand for the GCSAI/Coillte Chainsaw and Spraying courses, more have been organised for November and December. The dates are as follows.

Basic Chainsaw Course: 12th - 16th November 2007
Spraying Course: 19th - 27th November 2007
Spraying Course: 28th Nov. - 6th Dec. 2007
Spraying Course: 7th - 17th December 2007

To date six spraying and two chainsaw courses have taken place. Early booking is strongly advised so as to avoid disappointment. Places are limited to six participants per course. The spraying course lasts seven days and cover PA1, PA2 and PA6 modules. The basic chainsaw course lasts five days. Venues will be decided when places are filled.

For application forms and cost of courses contact Alan Mahon on 053 9158606 or 087 6260889

Blanchardstown Degree Course Going Well

Those students taking part in the Bachelor of Science in Horticulture/Turfgrass Science & Management are more than half way through their studies. Seventy First Year and twelve Third Year students have been attending all day Saturday lectures in Blanchardstown I.T. since 7th October last and will finish on 19th May.

As part of their training, students have also attended three, one week lectures at Warrenstown College during December, January and February.

Subjects covered include Marketing Principles, Customer Services, Financial Management & Taxation, Horticulture Business Management, Arboriculture, Turfgrass Science & Management.

Enrolment is now open for First Year places starting on 17th September and Third Year places, starting end October or early November 2007. Contact ITB on 01 8851023 for more information or visit the Blanchardstown IT website www.itb.ie



Third Year students attending lectures at Blanchardstown IT

FETAC Awards



Students proudly showing their Level 6 Certificates in Greenkeeping at the National Botanic Gardens

Sixty six students received their FETAC Level Six Advanced Certificate in Greenkeeping awards at the National Botanic Gardens on 13th November last. Mr. Albert Lee, Honorary Secretary of the Golfing Union of Ireland presented the awards to each of the candidates. Many of those receiving their certificates were young, up and coming hopefuls setting out in their greenkeeping careers, but there were also many mature students, with years of practical experience behind them, getting formal education in greenkeeping, which goes to show that one is never too old to learn.

David Reid from Mount Juliet received the Student of the Year award. Dr. Paul Cusack, College Principal, commented 'After two years of studies, these students have finally received their hard earned qualifications'. Dave Behan and Joe Bedford were present representing the GCSAI. Present also was Joe Morgan, Chairperson of the Republic of Ireland branch of the Institute of Groundsmanship, and Eamon O'Connor, Chairman of the Greenkeeping Training and Ecology Committee of the GUI.

Course facilitator Pat Suttle said that the amount of golf courses still being constructed in Ireland is phenomenal and that this was by far the largest single group of students to receive the FETAC certificates.

After the award ceremony, students and their families were treated to light refreshments in the college with background entertainment provided by well known pianist Jim Doherty.



Left, Dr. Paul Cusack - Principal National Botanic Gardens, David Behan - GCSAI, Albert Lee - Hon. Sec. GUI, Eamon O'Connor - GUI, Pat Suttle - Teagasc, and Joe Bedford - GCSAI at the FETAC awards National Botanic Gardens

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 <p>MASSANO RSG Stoneburier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  One pass stone and debris burying system  1M, 1.25M or 1.45M Working width  Twisted Blade for easier surface penetration  Spring Tine debris screen <p>RSG100.....€4280.00 RSG125.....€4450.00 RSG145.....€4800.00</p> <p>All Prices subject to VAT @ 21%</p>

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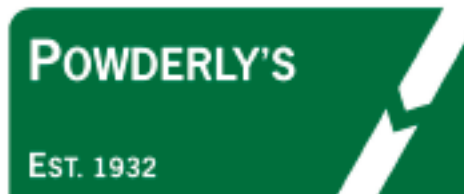
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When Turf gets out of its (Winter) Dormancy



By Maurice Evers of Melspring International

When winter ends, nature awakes. Grass starts to grow and microbial life in the soil is activated. Both need to be fed and so the competition for nutrients starts. In the Irish market many fertilizers are offered for this period of the year. They all have one thing in common: they have nitrogen as the most important element.

Nitrogen is offered in various forms to the soil, but only two forms are really taken up by the roots in such quantities that they support growth: nitrate and ammonium and they differ very much from each other in the way they are taken up. As a result grass grows different as well, but nitrogen is not what all turf needs in this period. In this article we provide you with a bit of background to be able to make a balanced choice for the proper turf food in this crucial period.

End of the winter

Ireland is blessed with a very mild winter. The moderating influence of the Atlantic is felt throughout the country. Inland regions show more variation than the coastal regions. But even inland there are only some days per year with day temperatures below zero. Grass keeps growing very slowly during wintertime. The energy that is needed for this growth is stored in the plant during fall. At the end of the winter period the grass is running out of energy and new energy needs to be made.

Turning sunlight into usable energy packages in the grass plant is called photosynthesis. For that process, not only does the air temperature have to be above 8 to 10°C, but also the light intensity and the light hours per day need to be sufficient. This is not the case during the winter months or very early in spring. Nevertheless Superintendants feel pressure from course secretaries and the pro-shop to vitalize their greens.

In this period temperatures may still be so low that the processes in the plant hardly take place, but during occasional sunny days turf can green-up provided certain building blocks are available in sufficient quantities, viz: magnesium, iron and some trace elements.

Tillering at this stage of the year is also important too for dense sods, as the good weather will attract many golfers. Tillering is a process driven by certain plant hormones, a touch of nitrate can have a beneficial effect on the production of these plant hormones. At the same time the amount of nitrate should be limited as otherwise soft growth results.

As the soil is still too cold, nutrient release from the soil is still inadequate. Therefore we need to fertilize. As this sunny spell may be followed by rainy and cold weather the N:K ratio is best set at 1:2. To harden the turf against diseases, whereby the nitrogen should not be in the nitrate form only.

Springtime

All growing conditions (temperature, moisture, light) together are roughly reached at the end of February / beginning of March in the coastal areas. Inland the conditions are reached early April or at the end of April/beginning of May in the mountains. This change from only energy use to also energy production by the plant is the start of Spring for grass.

At the same time as grass growth starts, the soil microbial life awakes. Mean soil temperatures during winter are below mean air temperatures in Ireland. Together with a high water content in the soil the microbial activity is low. In March/end of April the soil temperature and air temperature are equal. Together with the start of an intense aeration of greens and tees, the soil microbial life is stimulated.

‘Mean soil temperatures during winter are below mean air temperatures in Ireland.’

Building plant structures

During the winter period we can only try to keep the damage from wear and tear as small as possible. The growth rate of turf grass is too low for optimal recovery. Besides, higher growth rate is unwanted, as it makes the grass weaker and more susceptible to diseases. During spring circumstances are ideal for building new plant structures and repairing the sward.

Plant structures are built from water, nutrients and energy. Energy is either coming from sugars that are stored in the plant or from photosynthesis. This process makes green plants turn light energy into sugars. For photosynthesis to take place, nitrogen, magnesium and iron play an important role in chlorophyll production. Phosphates act as an energy regulator.

Furthermore sulphur, manganese and copper are also needed in this energy process. Making plant cells and building plant structure of plant cells requires nitrogen, calcium, sulfur and again trace elements like Manganese and Zinc. Potassium acts as an osmo-regulator. Its accumulation in cells is responsible for cell turgor and regulates the breathing of plants. Phosphates are required to stimulate root growth and to regulate energy transformation.

Nitrogen in Spring

Nitrogen is a very important nutrient, some people say it is even the most important nutrient in plant nutrition and microbial feeding. The nitrogen form can influence plant growth almost as much as the rate of application. Turf grass roots absorb nitrogen mainly as nitrate (NO₃⁻) or ammonium (NH₄⁺) whereas microbes prefer ureic nitrogen (CO(NH₂)₂) or organic nitrogen. (Nitrate can even kill microbes like certain bacteria).

The nitrate route

Certainly at lower temperatures, nitrate is taken up by the roots much faster than ammonium, but at what cost. After take-up nitrate is transported inside the plant to the leaves. The transformation of nitrate into ammonium and further to amino-structures (the building blocks of plant cells) cost a lot of energy. If temperatures and/or light intensity is low, nitrates will not be transformed but stored in leaf cells as nitrate.

The high salt concentration in the cell induces increase of cell moisture giving cell elongation and results in turf grass plant with thinner cell walls. This can make turf grass more susceptible to diseases, especially when in April a warmer period is followed by one or two nights of frost. To avoid that risk, nitrates must be given in small portions to the turf grass.

Another argument for small applications is the danger of leaching of nitrates. In the rainy climate of Ireland mineral fertilisers based on nitrate and / or ammonium leaching of nutrients is extremely high.

Even though the results of the fertilizer application may be visible very fast, some nutrients will pollute ground water and the nutrient effect is only short, with flushes of soft growth.

The ammonium route

Ammonium is taken up by the roots and it is transformed directly in just one step into amino-structures. Even though the take-up of ammonium consumes more energy than the take-up of nitrate, the further conversions from nitrate to amino-acids uses far more energy. The amino-structures, formed when taking up ammonium, are transported through the whole plant and can be used for cell division (tillering, hair root formation, growing cell by cell rather than elongation of cells). Ammonium is buffered in the root zone to clay or organic matter and therefore has less leaching. However ammonium is converted to nitrate in the soil and with rising temperatures this is a matter of days.

Other forms of nitrogen

Urea in the soil is more complex. One part of the urea is transformed into ammonium and ready for plant uptake another part is incorporated in microbial structures. Later on, when the microbes die, nitrogen is released mainly as ammonium. This process of immobilizing nitrogen by microbial life and mobilizing nitrogen again is called 'the priming effect'. This effect is very useful in preventing nitrogen from being washed out of the root zone. Complexed urea forms like MU, IBDU are found in different chain length. The more complex the more difficult to be broken down to ammonium and the slower the reaction to the turf.

The advertisement features a large, stylized word 'Awake' in a purple font at the top. Below it, a list of fertilizer products is shown in a vertical column: Marathon, Matrix, Forza, Awake (highlighted in a darker purple), Sprinter, Melstar, and Aqua-Zorb. To the right of this list, a purple box contains four bullet points: 'fast green-up', 'stimulates tillering', 'activates dormant turf', and 'hardens turf'. At the bottom, the Melspring logo is centered, with the Goldcrop logo and contact information for Technical Advice & Sales on the right.

Awake

- Marathon
- Matrix
- Forza
- Awake**
- Sprinter
- Melstar
- Aqua-Zorb

- fast green-up
- stimulates tillering
- activates dormant turf
- hardens turf

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E-mail: denis.collins@goldcrop.ie

Keith Boland
Mobile: +353 (0) 87 254 6795
E-mail: keith.boland@goldcrop.ie

Ammonium

- ◆ Good response.
- ◆ Converted in the roots to amino-acids, the mobile building blocks for cell division.
- ◆ Less mobile, does not leach easily.
- ◆ Converts to nitrate relatively fast.
- ◆ High ammonium concentrations in root zone are toxic.
- ◆ Uptake and conversion to nitrate lowers soil pH.
- ◆ Induces (hair) root development.

Nitrate

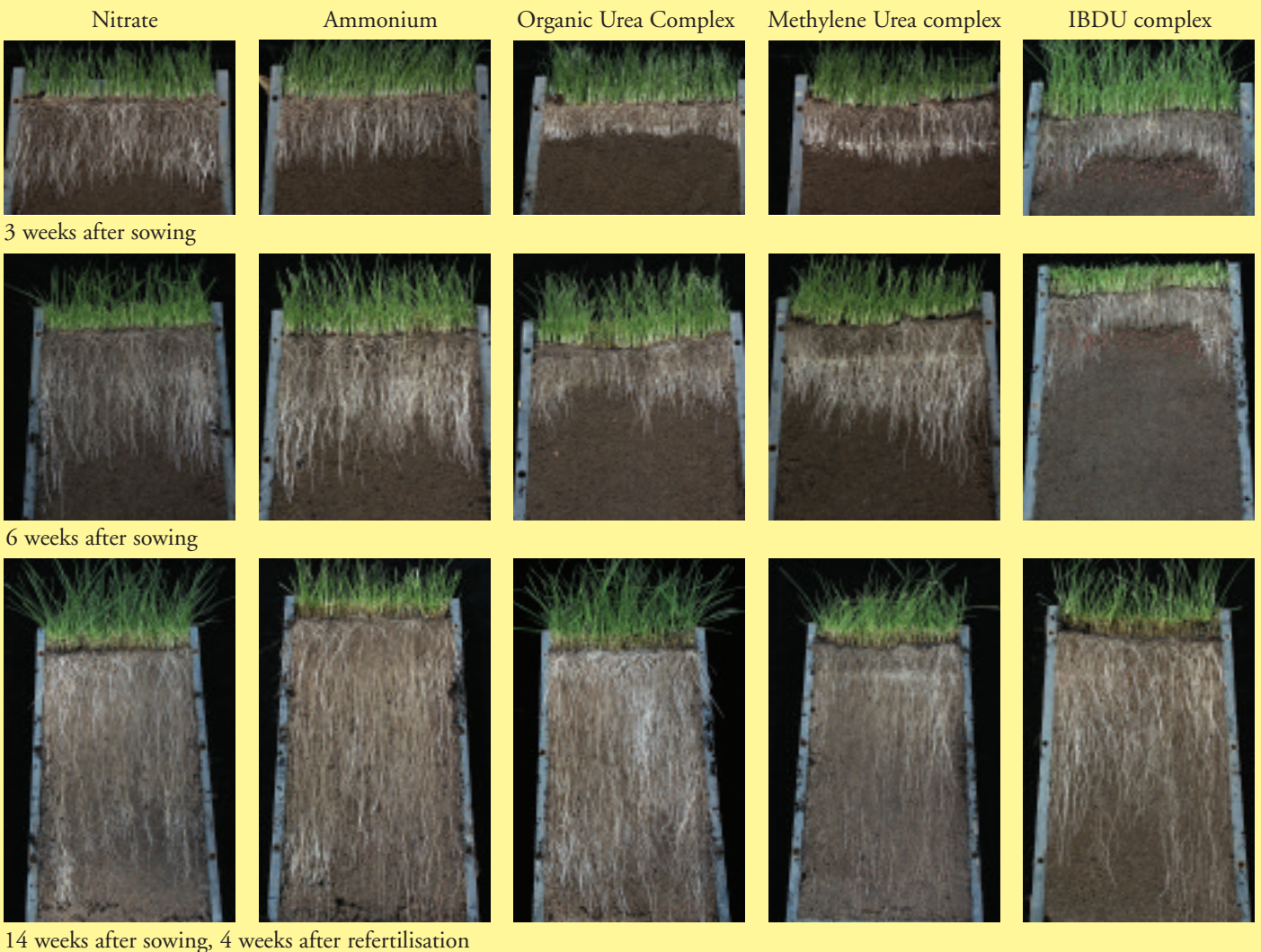
- ◆ Quick response.
- ◆ Stored in leaf cell moisture until sufficient energy from sunlight for conversion to ammonium is available.
- ◆ Responsible for cell elongation.
- ◆ Very mobile, leaches quickly.
- ◆ Higher salt levels in cell moisture attracts more water, weaker cells.
- ◆ Uptake increases soil pH.
- ◆ Induces feeder root extension.

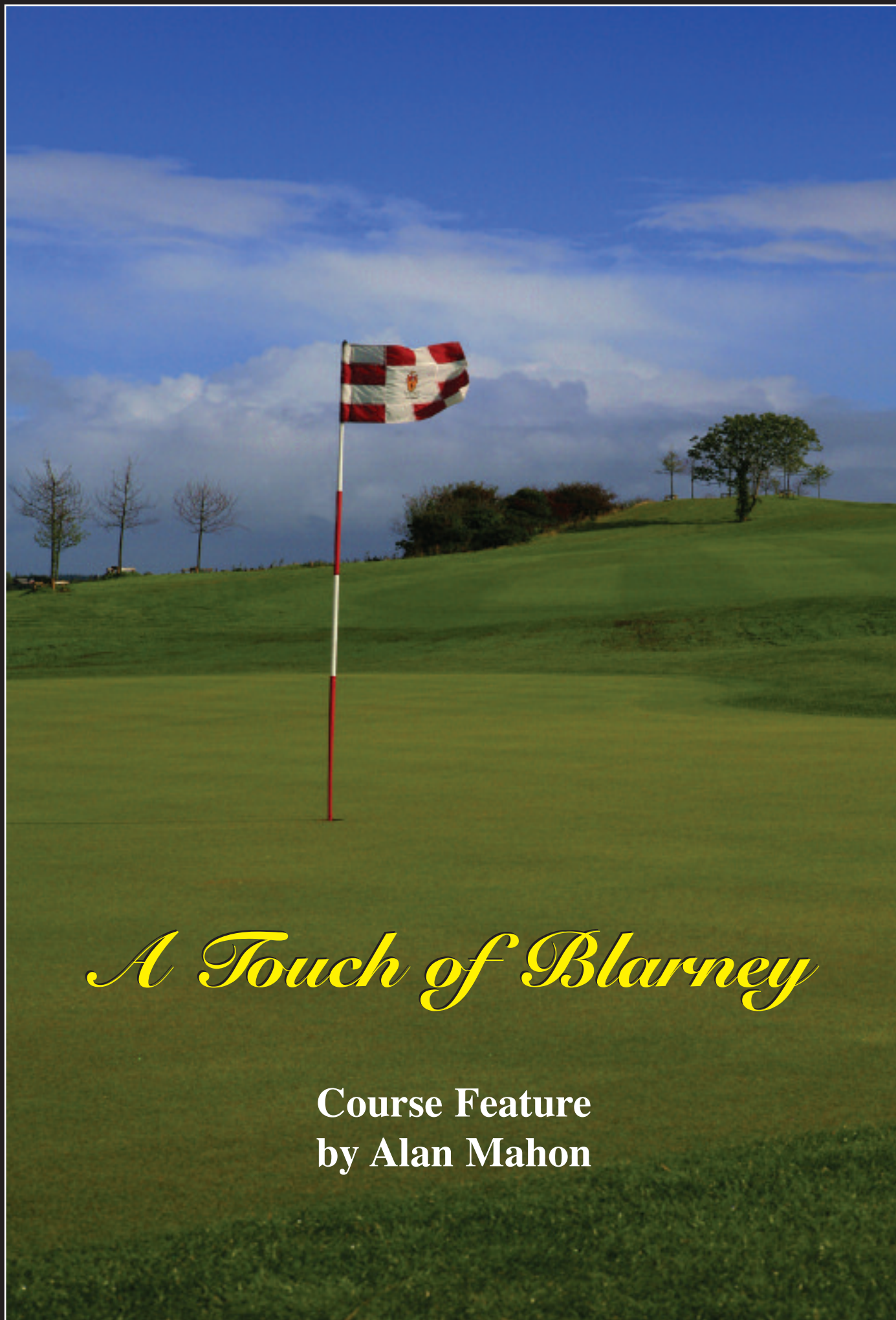
Coated fertilisers are normally water soluble fertilisers with a coating around them to prevent leaching.

Organic nitrogen from composted organic matter should be avoided at this point in time as the soil microbes, that can digest this type of organic matter, perform best towards the end of the summer.

Below are some photos from a rhizobox study carried out by the University of Hohenheim. It demonstrates the effect fertilisers have on turf development in low soil temperatures (10-12°C). Visible is the speed at which roots grow after fertilisation, following the nutrients, under a very moderate water regime.

Hohenheim Rhizobox photo's taken at various moments in the trial





A Touch of Blarney

**Course Feature
by Alan Mahon**

Course Feature

Located along the beautiful Shournagh Valley, Blarney Golf Resort is a new golf course only opened last July. It is situated 600 feet above sea level overlooking the Cork countryside. Even though it is a course in its infancy, there is mystery and legend associated with the area.



Posing with American golfer John Daly (in white) from left: Jason Abern, Eoin Fitzgerald, Sean O'Donoghue, James Rowan (Asst. Superintendent), John Daly, John Murray (Superintendent), Gavin Barry, Mark O'Mahony Front: John Griffin, Tom Worobiow

Photo courtesy of John Murray

The 15th century Blarney Castle with its famous kissing stone is only a few miles away and there are ancient standing stones and a Mass rock within the course itself. It would not be surprising to learn that perhaps Cuchulain, that famous man of Gaelic legend, practised his long distance smashing of the sliotar with his hurl, as one can see for miles around the stunning views of the Cork countryside.

The superintendent in charge of this splendid course is John Murray. John has been at Blarney since April 2005 after coming from Liselan Golf Club in Clonakilty.

He studied for three years at Myerscough College and during this time he got work placements at Mount Juliet and Fota Island where he was involved with the preparation of the 2001 Irish Open. John has four full time and two casual staff. His staff increases to twelve during the summer. John's assistant at Blarney is James Rowan who worked with Billy Connell at Galway Golf Club prior to coming to Blarney.

'James is a great help' says John. 'During construction, grow-in and up to opening day all the staff here worked long hours and James took on a lot of the responsibilities.'



Blarney Golf Resort boasts a spacious, state of the art clubhouse set in the beautiful Cork countryside.

Construction at Blarney started in February 2005 and the first seeding of the greens was carried out in July of the same year. The greens are USGA constructed and the seed used was a 60:40 mix of A4 and G6 creeping bentgrass.

The last green was sown as late as November 2005 and the following July it was in play for the opening ceremony. The fairways and tees were sown during the end of August and early September 2005.

The seed mix used for these areas consisted of 20% smooth stalked meadow grass, 20% chewings fescue, 46% creeping red fescue, and 14% creeping bentgrass.

Course Feature *continued*

There are plans for a state of the art maintenance facility to be built this year and John has had a major input into the size and facilities that will be included in the new building.

There are some wet areas on the course, particularly the 18th fairway. Sanding and verti draining were carried out during the summer of 2006 and already has improved ground conditions.

'In winter 2005 you could not walk across the 18th fairway due to the water but last summer we verti drained and sanded the fairways and since doing this we have noticed a huge improvement in these areas. We plan to continue with this practice along with sand slitting priority areas', says John.

American Professional golfer John Daly was the course designer. This is Daly's fourth course design and his first in Europe.



This standing stone is one of many different types of ancient stones found throughout the course.



Course Feature *continued*

It was Daly who officially opened the course last July. He played a round of golf on the course that day and some of his shots are still talked about within the club. Having a name like Daly might imply that there is an Irish connection somewhere. Who knows, perhaps he is a distant relation to the fore mentioned Cuchulain.

The way Daly played golf on that opening day one would be forgiven for thinking that he was indeed related to our Gaelic hero. The way he played the 7th hole in particular is worth mentioning.

This is a 601 yard par five hole slightly uphill. The pin was placed at the back of the green that day so the actual length of the hole was nearer to 615 yards.



Daly's drive off the tee landed 345 yards down the middle of the fairway.

He used a three wood for his second shot which travelled 288 yards landing just past the back of the green. He then chipped back towards the flag and holed out for a birdie.

There is a marker on the 7th fairway indicating the spot where Daly's drive landed.

The 9th hole is an unusual par four. It's not what you would call a dog-leg but rather a hairpin hole. You tee off slightly right and for your second shot you turn around and play back down towards the pin. A huge mound and lake divide tee and green. It would take a very brave man to carry across both of these. With that mound so close to the tee my guess is that you would not get the elevation from a driver to reach the green. Cleverly designed by Daly.



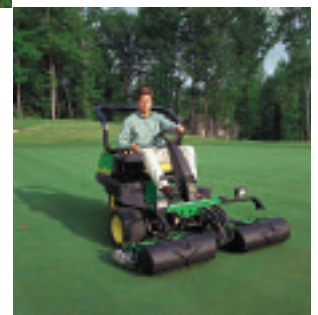
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Best wishes to Blarney Golf Resort



At 600 feet above sea level, Blarney Golf Club Resort enjoys splendid views of the Cork countryside.

As mentioned earlier there are historic stones located on the golf course. Fuileach Fias are found in the rough on the 1st hole. These are stones used as ovens for cooking in ancient times.

On the 16th hole there is the remains of a Mass rock which reminds us of the times in Ireland when Mass had to be celebrated in secret. The director of golf at Blarney is David O Sullivan. He showed me the houses and apartments around the resort that have been tastefully built using local stone. The clubhouse itself is very impressive and spacious.

Blarney Golf Resort is a magnificent place to stay and play golf. But don't take my word. You will have to make a visit for yourself.

Machinery Inventory

- 5 x 220B greensmowers
- 2 x 260B tee's mowers
- 2 x 3225C fairway mowers
- 1 x 2653 ride on tee's mower
- 1 x 1600 rough mower
- 1 x 3245C rough mower
- 2 x 6x4 diesel gators
- 1 x pro-gator
- 1 x aercore 800
- 1 x 1200A bunker rake
- 1 x 5315 tractor
- 1 x 3320 tractor with front loader

Attachments:

- 2 x trailers for greensmowers
- Wiedenmann 2.1m verti drainer
- Pro cast fairway topdresser
- 400ltr gambetti sprayer with walk behind wind foil for greens
- Ultra high lift trailer
- Sulky fairway fertilizer spreader
- Dakota topdresser for pro gator.



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Regional Round-up

North East Region Report



By Michael McFeely, Westmanstown Golf Club

2006 round up

Hello to all members of the North East region. We are well into 2007 and we can look back and remind ourselves of all the memorable golfing days that were organized last year. 2006 started with a links challenge up in County Louth, at the popular Seapoint G.C. On this occasion we held our AGM.

In springtime we held the Shamie Kelly Trophy in Newlands G.C. Castleknock G.C was to hold its first GCSAI competition and this event attracted over forty golfers. A few weeks later we moved onto Stackstown G.C with its beautiful views of Dublin.

The annual Philip O'Callaghan Memorial Cup was held in Good Counsel Pitch and Putt club. In September we returned to County Louth to play Dundalk and the South County G.C was to host the Autumn Trophy in October.

To finish the year, in November, a group of us headed to sunny Portugal to play a couple of courses. We hope to have even more great outings in 2007 and that we get even greater support for these events.

Portugal golf trip

Last November, fifteen members of the NE region headed to Vilamora, Portugal, to play two of the regions finest courses. Golf in this up market region is big business, with golfers from all over Europe playing throughout the year.

Even in November, popular courses can be fully booked out. The majority of these courses have no full time members, unlike Ireland, but rely solely on the visiting golfing trade. The two courses we played were called "The Millennium Course" and "The Old Course" These were kept to a very high standard boasting excellent clubhouse facilities. The Old Course is a beautiful mature parkland course, with fairways lined with huge pine trees, a tough course for all - well me anyway!

The Millennium Course was built in 2000 and was everybody's favourite by far, probably because we all rented golf buggies for the day.



Peter O'Callaghan - NAD, Jack Collins - Ballcarrig G.C., Eddie Madden - The Island G.C., and Stephen Kells - Royal Tara G.C. at the Rush Christmas outing

We had plenty of sunshine, lots of laughs and the whole trip went like clockwork - thanks to the good work of our travel agent. The only problem was on arrival back in Dublin we were met with torrential rain - time to start planning for next year I think!

Rush Christmas golf outing

A large crowd turned up to this yearly event on the day despite the heavy rainfall. The Rush outing has been played every year for as long as I can remember, and has a special place in the GCSAI calendar. The GCSAI, have to commend and thank the Captain and Committee of the club for makingg their club available to us on an annual basis. Our past president and Rush G.C Superintendent, Eddie Donlon and his staff, had the course in superb shape upon our arrival. It was nice to see our old friend, Jim Byrne, in attendance. We look forward to next year's event.

Results at Rush	
1stDonal Curtis
2ndAlan McCardle
3rdEddie Donlon

Future Outing Dates	
April 10th	- Carton House
4th July	- PGA National
27th September	- Royal Tara Golf Club

Exact times and details to follow



The Irish have arrived in Portugal.



"My my, the Irish are a small nation." Thinks Hennis Kraft from Germany at the Rush Christmas outing.

Regional Round-up

North East Region Report

Baltray outing

On the 25th January, we held our annual links competition in County Louth G.C, commonly known as Baltray. We were treated to kind weather, with only a slight breeze. Without doubt all golfers who competed had an enjoyable day out. The links course was in pristine condition with fast greens which were challenging to all. In the NE region, we are lucky to have so many top class links courses on the East coast, and there is no doubt that Baltray G.C has once again proved to be one of the best.



From left: Bobby McDermott, Stephen Kelly and Daniel Mooney at the Baltray Golf outing.

We would like to give many thanks to Paul Malone, Course Superintendent, his staff and the course committee for providing the use of their course to us once again.

After the round of golf, the annual NE region AGM was held. The committee will remain the same as last year. However we are delighted to have the assistance of Stephen Kells, Royal Tara G.C, and Robin Twinem, Baltray G.C.

The Treasurer's report was proposed by John Egan and seconded by Bobby Mc Dermott. Michael Mc Feely gave his Secretary's report to all in attendance, with the meeting ending on a good note.

Baltray G.C. results

Val Sheridan	.36 pts
Owen O'Connor	.35 pts
Ollie English	.35 pts
Eddie Mahony	.35 pts

Trade prize	John Cribbin
Longest drive	Jain Ritchie
Nearest pin	G Breheny



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North West Region Report



By John Joyce, Mulranny Golf Club

Since our last report, the weather has settled into its usual pattern for this time of year; high winds coupled with heavy rainfall. This has restricted work programmes planned for the winter months and has also limited the amount of play. Hopefully, by March, it will have improved and it will be 'full steam ahead' with the spring/summer programmes.

Personal Development Course

A Personal Development course took place at Tuam Golf Club last November 21st with fourteen people participating. The course was called 'Human Resource Communication' and Kevin McEnteggart was the course facilitator. The main topics covered were:

- ❖ Interviews and Promotion
- ❖ Salary Scales

The salary scales provided much discussion. A GCSAI review committee is to draw up a questionnaire which will be sent to all members. This should be filled and returned which hopefully will provide guidelines for a national pay scale within the industry. Our thanks to all at Tuam Golf Club for hosting the day. Thanks also to Kevin McEnteggart for his presentation of this Development Course.

Christmas outing

Due to the severe weather, the Christmas outing scheduled for 13th December last was postponed to the following week (20th Dec.), but due to the death of Tom Walsh of Oughterard Golf Club, this outing was cancelled as a mark of respect.

Tom Walsh 1946 - 2006

Tom Walsh was held in very high esteem by the members of Oughterard Golf Club for his dedication to the Club as their much loved Head Greenkeeper. To his greenkeeping peers he was an experienced colleague and friend, who could be relied upon for good advice, or help, in time of need. To the people in his parish of Kilannin, he was their former 'All Star' and team Captain.

In 1972 Tom took on a similar role in Joyce's of Oughterard, where as a company director he helped establish a thriving business and many of his former footballing foes from Connemara were his best customers.

In 1985, Oughterard Golf Club had just annexed a 2nd nine holes and the voluntary input of members, which was the practice up to that time, was no longer adequate. A new approach was necessary and Tom Walsh stepped into the breach. Starting a new career at nearly 40 years of age didn't faze Tom, as he quietly and efficiently set about nurturing newly laid greens and shaping machine ravaged ground into fairways. He devoured the theories of grass management, while employing best greenkeeping practices in his daily work, and not surprisingly, he quickly acquired his greenkeeping certificates.



TOM WALSH

In 1998 he oversaw the switch from managing clay based greens to sand based ones. This was a new and bigger challenge for him. For someone of Tom's vintage this was akin to re-learning the art of greenkeeping all over again. Never one to shirk responsibility or back away from a challenge, Tom and his team set about it in a professional manner and handed over a course of a very high standard on his retirement in 2004.

On December 16th Tom Joined up with some of his golfing neighbours and best friends to play golf in the local Lake golf society. As always, he was full of fun and mischief, and thoroughly enjoyed himself. At the presentation, Tom, was a proud winner of a bottle of Jack Daniels. Arriving home before 9 pm, he recalled the day's adventures to his beloved wife, Theresa, before retiring to bed. Sometime during the night, he died as he lived, quietly and without fuss or attention.

In life, Tom was a GAA man, a footballer and a referee. He was a store manager, a leader and a team player. He was a company director who made tough decisions mindful of the needs of his customers. As a greenkeeper he was a visionary and a planner, always striving for perfection to suit the occasion. He was meticulous and mindful of the needs of discerning golfers and he perceived problems as challenges.

Tom Walsh was known by a great many people and across generations due to the public nature of his playing days and working duties. Everyone knew a different Tom, but Theresa and their six children knew him lovingly as Tom the family man. To him, they were what really mattered, his absolute pride and joy and to whom he devoted his life's toils and achievements.

The huge crowds who attended his removal and funeral all remembered him differently, but all were in agreement that Tom Walsh enjoyed every minute of his 60+ years on this earth.

We extend our sympathy to his wife Theresa and family.

Paschal McDonagh, Oughterard Golf Club



Participants who took part in the Personal Development Course at Tuam Golf Club

South East Region Report

By Dave Colley, Rosslare Golf Links



Another winter is well under way, and as was thought after the dry summer, the rain has started and someone forgot to turn off the tap....

Since October it has been very quiet. The region had it's Christmas outing in Carton House Estate Golf and Country Club. The spraying and chainsaw courses have been very well attended, everyone involved must be highly commended. These courses are being run again in conjunction with Coillte, and anyone interested should contact Alan Mahon on 087 6260889

Sponsors

On behalf of all the members I would like to extend a huge thanks to all our sponsors for their continued support. 17 companies sponsored the Region last year. It has helped the region greatly in organising outings, mini seminars, educational days and so on.

Thanks are due to:

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Martyn's Turfgrass
Quinns of Baltinglass
Roadstone
Sanrose
Sea Nymph - Galway Bay
Marine Ltd.
Spraychem
Turfcare Group

Christmas Outing:

Everyone had a wonderful day out at Carton House Demesne Golf and Country Club for the Christmas outing. As usual the time sheet was almost full before the texts went out. There was a very good turn out for this outing. It is great to see the region being so well represented. A big thanks is due to all the staff for a very warm welcome, and in particular to Mr. Johnny Plummer and his staff for an extremely well presented course.



Sean Dowling and Andy Phelan from Kilkenny Golf Club on the 18th Green at Carton House

Though the going was soft in places it was quite amazing to experience lightning fast greens in the middle of December. As is the norm for this outing no-one went home empty handed, and the winners on the day took home some excellent prizes. Well done to the committee for increasing the prize fund for this outing.

Rosslare Outing

Rosslare Golf Links hosted our outing on 7th February last. We were extremely fortunate in that Rosslare was probably the only course in Ireland not closed that day as Ireland was covered in a severe frost. The morning started good but a raw easterly wind started in the afternoon. The Irish Stew laid on when we all arrived into the clubhouse after the golf, was exactly what all the troops needed. The course had never played better for this time of year mainly due to the refurbishment program we are on. Twelve bunkers have been revetted so far this year, many of which would rival some of the more renowned bunkers in the world. With lightning fast greens, and the bitterly cold wind, scores were kept low.



Prizewinners at the Christmas outing at Carton House proudly displaying their new banner

Regional Round-up

South East Region Report

Results from Carton House:

Overall Results

1st	Tony Quinn	(40)
2nd	Patrick Ryan	(37)
3rd	Roy Butler	(36)

Class 1

1st	Mike Ryan	(33)
2nd	Chris Doyle	(33)
3rd	David Behan	(32)

Class 2

1st	Pat Kelly	(35)
2nd	Michael Doran	(35)
3rd	David Garland	(33)

Class 3

1st	Robert Kilduff	(33)
2nd	Barry Kavanagh	(32)
3rd	Oisin Brennan	(30)

Trade Winner

David Casburn

Visitors

Michael Byrne

Nearest to Pin

Chris Doyle

Longest Drive

Sean Dowling

Results from Rosslare:

Overall Results

1st	Pat Kelly
2nd	Sean Gorman
3rd	Tony Quinn

Class 1

1st	Andy Mooney
2nd	Chris Doyle
3rd	Mike Ryan

Class 2

1st	Roy Butler
2nd	Sony Lynch
3rd	John Guiney

Class 3

1st	Ned Brown
2nd	Mike Doran
3rd	Robert Kilduff

Trade Prize Trevor Prestige NAD



One of the new revetted bunkers currently under construction at Rosslare.



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STRI Ireland

Regional Round-up

South West Regional Report



by Michael F. O'Connor, Killarney Golf & Fishing Club

Outing to Fota Golf Club

For about a month or so previous to this outing, our members were really looking forward to sampling the changes and alterations which had been carried out on this already excellent course since our last visit. But nobody knows what the weather may have in store during the winter months. 2006 was one of our driest years until early November after which the rain really made up for lost time with four inches falling in the last five days of the month.

It looked like as if the outing might have to be cancelled, but what a surprise we got when a clear sky, with the sun shining brightly, greeted us at Fota on Friday morning on December 1st. It was unbelievable how quickly all the water had disappeared from the course and playing conditions were excellent.

Although some people cancelled out of the competition due to the uncertainty of the weather, those who took the chance were duly rewarded with a fabulous day out. More than forty members competed for the fine selection of hampers on display and all those who did would not have missed it for anything.

Some excellent scores were returned with no fewer than nine players scoring 36 points or better. Barry Healy of Harbour Point had the best score of the day with a superb 42 pts. but was not eligible to win first prize as he had not competed in the required amount of competitions during the year. This left the door open for your's truly to take top spot with 40 pts. leaving Barry to take second place.

We would like to thank the management committee most sincerely for the use of the course, which was in excellent condition, especially when the rainfall in the Southwest ranged between 32mm and 52mm during the previous day.

We appreciate the great work done by course superintendent Con O'Driscoll, his assistants Simon O'Hara and Shane Deane and all his staff for having the place in such great order. We were very glad we were able to play at all. Well done to everyone concerned.

Due to the fact that the clubhouse is being extended, food was not available, so, when the golf was concluded, we headed down the road to The Elm Tree bar and restaurant in Glounthane. Here we were served the most scrumptious of food. Our compliments to Proprietor Derek Walsh and to Karen and all her staff for the courtesy and help on the day.

Golfer of the Year

We offer our congratulations to Dermoy Jones of Raffeen Creek Golf Club who has won golfer of the year for the second year in a row. There were at least three others in contention right up to the Fota outing but none of those concerned featured in the final competition. Well done Dermoy.



Relaxing after the game. Con O'Driscoll (Fota G.C.), Brian Cullimore (Garyduff Sports Club), and Simon O'Hara (Fota G.C.)

Sympathy

The region would like to extend its sympathy to the family of the late Tom Mulqueen, former Superintendent at Mahon Golf Club. Tom was a regular player on our previous outings and he will be sadly missed. May he Rest In Peace.

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Regional Round-up

South West Regional Report

Results of Christmas Hamper at Fota G.C.

		Overall	
1st	Ml. F. O'Connor	Killarney G.C.	19 h'cap 40pts.
2nd	Barry Healy	Harbour Point	10 h'cap 42pts.
3rd	Pat Murphy	Gold Coast G.C.	12 h'cap 39pts.

		Category 1	
1st	Jimmy Quirke	Cork G.C.	4 h'cap 34pts.
2nd	Kevin McCarthy	Monkstown G.C.	8 h'cap 33pts.

		Category 2	
1st	Padraig Crowley	Fermoy G.C.	18 h'cap 39pts.
2nd	Simon O'Hara	Fota G.C.	12 h'cap 38pts.
3rd	Brendan Hanley	Castletownbere	18 h'cap 37pts.

		Category 3	
1st	Con O'Driscoll	Fota G.C.	19 h'cap 36pts.
2nd	Colman Fitzpatrick	Kanturk G.C.	19 h'cap 30pts.

		Best Gross	
	James Burns	Bandon G.C.	6 h'cap 26pts.

		Trade Prize	
1st	Frank Coniry	Coniry Golf Services	10h'cap 36pts.
2nd	Denis Collins	Goldcrop	17 h'cap 33pts.

		Guest Prize	
	David Quinn	Skibereen G.C.	12 h'cap 37pts.

		Golfer of the year	
	Dermj Jones	Raffeen Creek G.C.	



Michael F. O'Connor from Killarney G.C., the proud winner of the overall prize

REMINDER

The deadline for receiving advertising and editorial for the next issue of Greenside is

April 27th, 2007

President

Our Christmas outing was attended by our outgoing President Paddy Holohan and Vice President David Behan. As David is also our incoming President we would like to take this opportunity to wish him the very best in the year ahead.

Sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors for their undying support, as always, and look forward to their continued support in the future. We are extremely grateful. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.

Conference and AGM

Last but not least, we look forward to meeting you all at the Annual Conference in Mount Wolesey Hilton Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow on 7th & 8th March. It promises to be an interesting couple of days.

This year the AGM takes place on the evening of the first day of the conference so we do hope that everybody will make a special effort to attend. See you there!



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Regional Round-up

Northern Ireland Report

By Michael Loughran, Hilton Templepatrick

A welcome change of scenery

On Tuesday 9th of January I was kindly invited by John Lindsay Sportsturf Ltd to a one day trade show held at the La Mon Hotel and Country Club. John and his team had arranged for a variety of product suppliers to be represented at the venue, and put on a bite of lunch for all attendees.



Things getting started early in the day

It didn't take too long after the scheduled 9 o'clock opening for the room to start filling, and the couple of short but informative presentations through the morning helped to keep day running along very smoothly.

I would like to thank John and his team for the opportunity to place a GCSAI stand at the show, giving me an excellent chance to chat with and also be ridiculed and harassed by both our current and hopefully some new members.



The person who enters the best caption (no more than 15 words) will be mentioned in the next edition



Discussing the finer details

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New Appointments

Appointment of Iain Ritchie as Irrigation Sales Executive



Lely Ireland Ltd., distributors for Toro Commercial and Irrigation products and Otterbine products in Ireland are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Iain Ritchie as Irrigation Sales Executive.

Iain will be well known to many as the Links Superintendent of Portmarnock GC, a position he held for over 16 years. In his time with the club he prepared the course for many prestigious competitions including two Irish Opens, the Walker Cup, the Irish Amateur Championship, the European Team Championships and the Boys Home Internationals, to name but a few.

Iain is a past President of the GCSAI, and was formerly on the Board of both the GCSAI and FEGGA. Over the years he has built up considerable contacts within the Golf Industry and he looks forward to working with these colleagues in his new position.

While at Portmarnock GC, Iain gained considerable hands-on experience with Toro irrigation equipment, having installed and operated a top spec Toro SitePro system.

When the position of Toro Irrigation Sales Executive with Lely Ireland Ltd. was advertised recently, Iain decided to take the opportunity to make a move he had been considering for sometime and apply for it.

Following a period of training and familiarisation with the Toro Irrigation and Otterbine product ranges, Iain now looks forward to building on his existing relationships within the industry and developing the business for both brands in the marketplace.

New Appointment at Unichem

Aidan Flood has recently joined Unichem Ltd., as Technical Sales Representative - Amenity Division.



Aidan has previously worked in Lucan Golf Club as Assistant Greenkeeper and spent nine years in Longford Golf Club, the last five years as Head Greenkeeper.

Aidan studied in Multyfarnham College and then completed his green keeping education in the College of Horticulture, Termonfeckin.

Aidan will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to Unichem Ltd., and is looking forward to working with Unichem and its customers.

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An Irishman in Bavaria

By Andrew Foyle, Golf Club Chieming, Germany



Waiting at a gate in Munich airport for a flight to Dublin around Christmas time is as good a way as any to realise how many Irish live and work in southern Germany. It's been 21 Christmases since I first started people watching in Munich airport.

In 1985 a Dutch golf architect, Dudok van Heel, offered me a position as Head Greenkeeper at Golfclub Chieming and within a few weeks I was landing in Munich to take up my new responsibilities.

As a youth greenkeeping was never on my list of possible jobs or interests. My family were all keen sailors with little or no exposure to golf. Horticulture however attracted my interest and by 1980 I had completed two years in Warrenstown Horticultural College with an intermediate year studying Horticultural Science at UCD. This year confirmed my preference for practical work and led me to return to Warrenstown. Nursery work and landscaping appealed to me in particular and were to prove of great benefit later.

On leaving Warrenstown I departed for Australia with a job offer at a nursery near Sydney. After one year working I extended my visa and set off to explore the country. Eventually my travels took me to New Zealand where a short stint on a dairy farm helped fill my wallet.

Two and a half years later I was back in Ireland and needing to decide on job plans. There were possibilities in landscaping and as a trainee greenkeeper at Elm Park Golf Club. Sport seemed to hold more promise and so began two years of intensive learning. The club pro, Seamus Greene, showed me how to swing a golf club while Dr. Harry Spain was instrumental in teaching greenkeeping. His enthusiasm and dedication were both inspiring and contagious as all who are lucky enough to have dealings with him can attest.

Having successfully sat the London City and Guilds exams the next step was a season in St. Andrews under the watchful eye of Walter Woods. This was greenkeeping in another dimension for me. At the end of the season the job offer in Germany came along. This fitted in well with my wish to work abroad and learn another language. While in Warrenstown I had been fortunate to spend a summer working on a nursery near Hamburg and picked up (and duly forgot) a little German vocabulary.

Golfclub Chieming was founded in 1982. A farmer interested in alternative land usage offered his land for golf development. Eventually five landowners with a total of 66 ha. of land were involved. Farms in this area are traditionally small and economically unviable. Land is rarely sold but is rented or leased. The golf club has a 33 year lease with the option on a further 33 years.

Golfclubs were few and far between in those days but eventually contact was established with a group of 12 individuals who founded a club. Of these twelve the majority had little or no experience of golf. Together with Dudok van Heel as architect and Southern Golf as construction firm these enterprising souls set about building an 18 hole course, a 9 hole par 3 course and driving range. The entire project opened for play 18 months later. The clubhouse was a tiny area within the farm buildings. Given that the course is situated in a rural area with little golfing tradition, at a time before golf became popular, it was little wonder that the membership list was rather short.

Today the highest density of courses per capita in Bavaria is in this area - and almost every club is looking for new members. The 'Landkreis' - equivalent to a county - has a population of 176,000 and 8 golf clubs competing for members. Statistically only 0.6% of Germans are members of golf clubs.



A view from the 6th tee.

The Irish Abroad

The golf course is situated 100km south east of Munich in the state of Bavaria. Within sight of the Alps and at an altitude of 560 m there is usually snow cover for a couple of months in winter.

Temperatures can vary from minus 10°C or occasionally lower to 35°C in summer. Annual rainfall is 1100mm with thunderstorms in summer often dumping 50 - 60mm in one deluge

A localized weather phenomenon is the 'Föhn'. This is a warm wind which blows from south to north over the Alps mostly pushing back rain clouds moving in from the north. The result is a warm dry area along the north side of the Alps in contrast to often bad weather further north. The down side is the low pressure associated with the Föhn which can cause headaches and fatigue.

In general winds are only very light. Coupled with relatively high humidity levels this can spell trouble. Turf diseases love it here.

Arriving at the course on a bleak December day the sight of a typical immature golf course with hundreds of freshly planted trees greeted me. Set on a mix of former grass and arable land there were previously only four large trees on the entire site.



The newly designed 11th hole.

All the staff were laid off for winter leaving me time to sift through records and information on technical support. To a large extent this meant translating it word for word. With at least two months before the next season I needed to work at my language skills to be able to communicate with the greenkeeping staff. As a young Head Greenkeeper it was important to gain the respect of the

mostly older staff. Much to the frustration of many I refused to talk English to speed up my learning curve. Phone conversations were difficult since using hands and feet on the phone is not exactly helpful. The local accent and dialect also take a while to understand and confront even many Germans from outside the area with a problem.

One of my greatest difficulties was sourcing good technical support. The golf industry was in its infancy at the time. With so few courses in the area, and a general lack of awareness of our requirements, the necessary information and backup were scarce. Networking among colleagues was not widespread as everyone struggled with their own problems. Thankfully all this has changed in a very positive manner with an abundance of expert knowledge and experience available.



Construction on the 12th hole in April 2005.

The German greenkeeping organisation (GVD) played a significant role in bringing about changes.

The first spring started well until a horrific hailstorm in May with egg sized hailstones totally destroying the course. The greens looked as though someone had hammered golf balls deep into the surface with no space between the balls. Not a single leaf remained on a tree and every bunker was totally washed out. With only a small budget and little equipment it was a month before the greens were playable again. During this time Tschernobyl, not so far away, melted down, so it was a pretty dismal month for me.

Gradually our fortunes increased and as membership picked up we could raise the total number of greenkeeping staff from four to five. In 1991 construction on a new club house began to cater for the rising expectations of members. As often happens machinery replacement plans suffered due to these new expenses. An increase in the number of clubs in the area led to stiffer competition and it was time to review our situation. We invested heavily in new machinery and started a 'quality offensive' to attract more members. Once again the greenkeeping team was increased in size. Finally it was necessary to review the high initial cost of becoming a member. Once this hurdle had been drastically reduced a gradual increase in membership began. However, to this day, our main problem is the lack of potential golfers in the area.

The greens were often a source of discontent among members. They were originally built to hold a perched water table. Given the high rainfall levels the roots were reluctant to go below the first few centimetres. The original Fescue/Browntop Bent mix changed rapidly to Poa annua. Most winters resulted in major outbreaks of snow mould with slow recovery in spring. Generally the golf season here is from mid March to mid November. Anything which further shortens the season means a serious loss of revenue.

We tried everything to rectify the situation. The greens were deep drilled three times and hollow tined intensively with only a marginal improvement. Irrigation was used sparingly to encourage the roots to go down. However the root mix became increasingly anaerobic with all the associated problems.

In 2003 we asked a consultant to assess the problem. He recommended rebuilding all the greens. A team of five was formed - a committee member, the club manager, myself, a golf architect and a member of the club team. The teams' task was to evaluate the idea and make recommendations to the committee.



Transplanting a 30 year old oak tree.

All the problems and deficiencies associated with the course and possible solutions were considered. With a clear financial framework we worked to produce a result which would secure the future of the club and offer the golfer an attractive and interesting course. Members suggestions were heard and feedback given.

The original layout involved five holes bordering mature forestry. Shade and resulting heavy frosts and snow cover caused these holes to be closed well into spring. We drew a 'no go' area on the plans and needed to reroute nine holes as a result. This meant having to lease more land and plan two holes outside the existing course.

The air circulation around all the greens was increased either by felling or transplanting trees. The newly acquired land was planted with 24 of these trees thus blending it into the original course.

A construction firm from northern Germany, Brehmer und Kooistra, was chosen. It was decided to rebuild in two stages with nine holes always available for play and a time frame of 30 months.

From November to April conditions rarely allow work or growth to take place, hence the long timeframe. Half the total proposed costs were to be financed through a members levy with a bank credit covering the rest. The members were well informed of our intentions and endorsed the plans at the next AGM. Construction started in September 2004.

The Irish Abroad

Despite above average rainfall throughout construction we finished the first stage on schedule. However few members were interested in playing only nine holes so the turnover in both the golf shop and the restaurant fell dramatically. It was decided to begin work on the second nine holes immediately leaving only nine winter greens in play.

Meanwhile the project had increased in size. Various members donated money for the construction of two additional lakes. Included in the original planning they had been shelved due to costs. My wish for fairway irrigation was also initially shelved but later accepted. Ultimately we completed the project within 18 months and were open for play in July 2006. A totally redesigned front nine holes with dramatic mountain views and a lengthened and more strategic back nine were enthusiastically acclaimed by members and guests alike.

The German Greenkeeper Association, GVD, is organised in 6 regions, each region holding a spring and autumn meeting. The Bavarian section regularly welcomes about 100 greenkeepers at these meetings. The annual GVD convention is held in a different region in October over two or three days with a golf championship beforehand. The GVD office is housed in the German Golf Union headquarters. A manager is employed half days, working otherwise for the golf union. A secretary is also employed part time to look after the needs of some 900 members.

My personal situation has also changed. For years I worked long hours on the course during the season and spent the winters travelling extensively. Now married to a Munich lady and a father of two young daughters I am settled in the area and enjoy the lifestyle.

The countryside here is magnificent with the possibility to pursue many outdoor activities. We live in a tiny village - no pub, no church!- where the children are safe to roam around. Perhaps one day we will move away although I suspect it will be to warmer parts.

For now I continue to seek new challenges and enjoy working in a motivated and closely knit team.

On the learning front I qualified under a new state scheme as a Head Greenkeeper. Courses were held in three blocks of 3 weeks over a 15 month period. The emphasis was on management, presentation and public speaking with course design, law and computing included.

I never expected to end up living in Germany for more than two decades but am fortunate to have been given the opportunity. As a greenkeeper there are many opportunities out there waiting to be grasped.

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Last Try for Lansdowne Road

By Alan Mahon

The turnstiles closed for the last time at the Lansdowne Road football grounds, after the rugby match between Leinster and Ulster, last New Year's Eve.

A major redevelopment of the stadium and pitch is now underway and by 2009 a new Lansdowne Road facility will be open.

Lansdowne Road was established in 1872 and is shared by Lansdowne and Wanderers Rugby Clubs. Majella Smith is the Head Groundsman here, and has been since 1993. Before coming to Lansdowne Road, Majella worked in Dun Laoghaire Golf Club with his uncle Mike Swan who was the Course Superintendent there at the time.

Majella's old office was situated at one of the best viewing and most idyllic locations in the stadium - the upstairs room of one of the old houses built in 1874 overlooking the famous pitch.

'It is a sad time for all of us working here, but we are looking forward to working in the new stadium and the challenges that it brings in creating a world class playing surface' says Majella who has one other full time helper, Pat Murphy, working with him.



Many will be saddened to see the old stadium demolished but Majella is looking forward to a new Lansdowne Road sports complex

Majella, who was born and reared in Cabinteely and still lives there, is a hands on man, and one would often find him mowing the pitch and doing other jobs around the stadium. As I was entering the grounds to meet up with Majella, he was mowing the pitch with his pedestrian mower.

Turf from the old pitch is being sold to raise money for charity. It is estimated that the new redevelopment will cost €365 million of which the Irish government will contribute €190 million. The

remainder will be paid by the IRFU and the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) after which a 50,000 all-seater soccer and rugby stadium will be created. The old stadium was capable of holding 49,000 spectators of which only 36,000 could be seated.

An agreement has been made with the GAA which will mean that all the rugby and soccer internationals will be played at Croke Park during Lansdowne's renovation. The first ever rugby match was played at Croke Park on February 11th last was the Six Nations between Ireland and France, which unfortunately Ireland narrowly lost.



Many will be saddened to see the old stadium demolished but Majella is looking forward to a new Lansdowne Road sports complex

I asked Majella if he gets the same pressure as that experienced by Golf Course Superintendents when preparing for important events.

'Hang around here a few days before an international and you will see what pressure I am under. I get visits by team managers having concerns about the playability of the pitch but despite their misgivings, the pitch is always perfect on the day. The pitch here is one of the best maintained in Europe and no matter how bad the weather is during a match, there is little, if any, mud produced,' says Majella.

One of Majella's heartbreaks is when a concert is being organised. 'The whole pitch has to be covered with Teraplast, which the concert promoters supply beforehand. Then there is the clean-up afterwards. The welfare of the pitch is top priority which is why we cover over the pitch' he says. The turf on the old pitch up to the time of closing was 95% dwarf ryegrass. The remaining 5% was poa annua. There is a small turf nursery that Majella uses to repair any damaged areas.

All of Ireland will be looking forward to the new state of the art stadium when it opens in 2009 but none more so than Majella himself. In the meantime, we go Northside to Croke to cheer on Ireland. Here's to the Six Nations, Triple Crown and Heineken Cup - with a Leinster v Munster final??



Majella's office was located on the upper floor of the Wanderers Football Club. It had great views of the pitch from the bay window.

Turfcare Roadshows

Turfcare organised three roadshows on 12th, 13th and 14th December last in South County, Mallow and Malone Golf Clubs respectively. The roadshows were very well attended despite the horrible weather which prevailed that week.

John Pope from Newark USA gave the talk on the advances in fertiliser technology, particularly with the new DG Pro range within the Anderson fertilisers.

Jim Holden of Turfcare thanked everyone for attending. When the seminars were over everyone was treated to lunch and there was also nine holes of golf for those that wanted to brave the elements.



From left: Conor O'Gorman, John Pope, Pdraig Burke, Frank Dargan and Michael Howe at the Turfcare seminar in South County Golf Club.

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FEGGA Report

By Dean Cleaver, FEGGA Executive Officer



Well first of all I wish you all a very happy New Year and hope that it brings health and prosperity.

It's certainly been a busy time during the last few months, but so rewarding with all the people and organisations that we have been fortunate to work with. I was very fortunate to attend and speak at the Danish Greenkeepers Association Conference last November; this was a tremendous event with some 350 people attending.

Just before Christmas we were in Helsinki where we hosted a Conference for lady Greenkeepers. We felt that this was a good initiative of support that allowed many ladies working in the industry to come together from many parts of Europe. We were able to put together an excellent education programme, much of which focused on the challenges that face ladies working in our industry today. For me personally it was very interesting to be part of the many discussions that took place and certainly feel that this will help them in becoming more successful in their chosen career. It also has provided many new contacts and friendship for them to benefit for many years to come.

Whilst in Finland we also took our Roadshow to Tahkovuori some 400 kilometres north of Helsinki. The Finnish Association celebrated their 20th anniversary during 2006 and we were very



Delegates at the Danish Greenkeepers Association

pleased to celebrate this with them in supporting their education needs. What was incredible was the weather. During our visit the temperature did not once, drop below 7°C. The average temperature for that time of year is -5°C. This certainly, worldwide, has become normal for us. I have recently been in Slovenia organising our forthcoming FEGGA Conference in February and experienced temperatures of 14°C, when this time last year, it was -20°C. This for me is quite worrying; especially when you consider that they have forecasted 2007 will be the warmest year on record, globally.

Our students on the FEGGA Scholarship Programme in association with Polaris and Ransomes Jacobsen continue to do well. It's great to see how they have changed during their time in Spain, becoming more rounded as potential Golf Course managers. We certainly have put them through their paces, combining the education programme and work experience together. They are also having the opportunity to experience giving presentations at some of our events. We are now starting to look for our intake students for this year, with a proposed start date of April. We have already received some applications for this year, and we are happy to receive yours if you feel this is an opportunity that could help you in your career development. You can view details of the programme on our website at www.fegga.org

As I attend numerous events over the coming weeks I hope that I will have met up with many of you by the time you are sitting down reading this. I wish you all a smooth run into the season and that results in happy members.



Time for a group photo. Lady greenkeepers attending the ladies greenkeeping conference in Helsinki.



At the FETAC awards in the National Botanic Gardens, Jason Gleeso (Fota G.C.), Billy O'Connor (The Heath G.C.), Morry Ferncombe (West Waterford G.C.), Eddie Burke (Balla G.C.)

Golf Clubs for Sale?

Members of Foxrock Golf Club await a written offer on a follow up from a verbal approach made to buy their club. Speculation has it that the 9-hole club was made an offer worth €400 million. With the sale and relocation of Dun Laoghaire and Bray Golf Clubs, this latest news has sparked off interest whether other Dublin Clubs will be approached by property developers.

Rumours abound that Forrest Little may be under pressure to sell, with major expansion plans by their neighbours the Dublin Airport Authority. There are also whispers that Killiney Golf Club has been approached, though with all that granite lying underneath, it would be an expensive and difficult undertaking for developers to prepare deep foundations for housing.

While the property boom continues, more pressure will be put on Dublin Golf Clubs, situated in urban areas, to pack their golf bags and move elsewhere.

Exceptional Rules of Golf

Rule 22:3 - 'Clutch Shot'

If a player is obliged to hit a shot on any hole where groundskeepers are operating grass-cutting machinery, or tending to greens or bunkers, or repairing or reseeding damaged turf, or are otherwise engaged in the grooming of the course, and that player makes an unsatisfactory shot, he may replay it once, without assessing a stroke, regardless of whether he mis-hit his original ball as a result of his nervous concern for the well-being of the course maintenance personnel or his morbid fear of their ridicule.

Henry Beard

Caddy Talk!!!

Sarazen: 'I'm sorry, Joe, I went to church last Sunday and I prayed and I prayed and I prayed that I should qualify for this championship just one more time.'

Caddy: 'Well, boss. I don't know how you folks pray when you go to church, but when I pray I keep my head down.'

Gene Sarazen after topping a drive to miss qualifying for the 1960 US Open

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Manual Handling in the Workplace

by Eugene Doyle, Coillte Training

The legal definition of Manual Handling is lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving of a load.

Legislation in this country states very clearly that every employee must be trained in good manual handling techniques regardless of their position.

The following are some statistics regarding the accident level of manual handling related incidents:

1. 33% of all accidents in the workplace are manual handling related.
2. Over 60% of these are associated with sprains and strains.
3. 45% of sprains and strains are associated with back injury.

Because of these high statistics it is imperative that employees are trained in good manual handling techniques and also trained in risk assessment in carrying out manual handling.

A manual handling course should consist of the following:

1. *Legislation.*
2. *Statistics.*
3. *The make up of the spine.*
4. *Base lifting techniques.*
5. *Dual lifting.*
6. *Practical sessions.*
7. *Summary.*



Lifting a load

Correct clothing: Ensure that you are wearing the suitable protective clothing required to do the job.

Feet Position: Always have one foot slightly ahead of the other, hip distance apart.

Drop down on load: In a slow, smooth movement.

Assess the load: Good grip of the load close to the body.

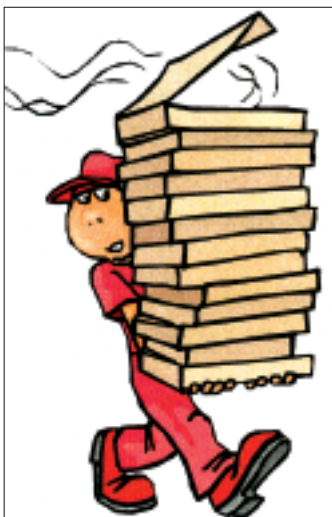
Raise head: Raise the body up slowly with no jerking movement.

Move away: Using feet to turn the body rather than twisting.

Summary: Good manual handling technique should not stop when you leave the workplace. Your back is with you 24 hours a day and people should make a conscious effort to look after their back at all times.

There are two main principles to be borne in mind regarding manual handling:

1. If you think you can't manage to move the load, get help.
2. You should always be in charge of the load, never the load in charge of you.



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Training Services

Coillte Training & Safety Courses are delivered by highly competent and professional staff. Coillte offers the following courses:

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- Manual Handling (Instructors)
- Manual Handling (Operators)
- Concrete Power cutters/Abrasive Wheels
- Tractor Safety
- Brushcutter/Strimmer
- Greenway Employment Scheme Training
- Pesticide Application (Hand-held/Tractor)
- Aerial Pruning Saw/Wedge trimmer
- Safety Representative Training

Coillte Training Service's client base stretches across the entire industrial spectrum including:

- Local Authorities
- Fire Services
- Sawmills
- FAS and the Department of Education
- Training Agencies
- Golf Clubs
- Emergency Organisations
- Agricultural Community
- General Industry
- Landscaping and Forestry Industry
- Many Others

Recruitment

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Interested applicants should send CV to:

**Tony Smyth
Irish Grass Machinery
Unit N2
North Ring Business Park
Santry
Dublin 9**

Or email to irishgrass@oceanfree.net

Mystery Photo

This old photo was kindly sent in by Ian Bridges of Ransomes Jacobsen. Not their latest range for 2007 I might add but this implement, a triple fairway mower, we think, dates back to early 1900.

We would love to know where this photo was taken. We also think it is somewhere in the UK, perhaps in front of a golf course clubhouse. Maybe some of our readers across the water may solve the mystery.

Notice the four slippers worn over the horses hooves so as to reduce marking on the turf.



HEAD GREENKEEPER- New 18 hole Golf Course at Marino Point

Cobh Golf Club will shortly commence construction of a new 18 hole course at Marino point in Cobh, Co. Cork. The elevated site has stunning panoramic views Northwards from Fota to Lough Mahon and from Passage West to Monkstown and the inner Cork Harbour to the south. The course has been designed by Hawtree Golf Course architects. The club management recognise the importance of the Greenkeeper's role and value their early involvement in the project.

This is a rare opportunity to be involved in the construction and growth, as well as the on-going care and maintenance of this magnificent development and member's owned club.

The successful candidate will have:

- ❖ At least 10 years relevant experience with experience and knowledge of USGA Greens
- ❖ A recognised greenkeeping/agronomy qualification to supervisory level with PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates.
- ❖ Sound Knowledge of turfgrass management fundamentals. Experience of managing creeping bent greens a bonus but not essential.
- ❖ Awareness of current Health & Safety requirements
- ❖ Strong organisational and communication skills are also a requirement as well as knowledge of budgetary control.

If you feel you have the qualification, experience and enthusiasm for this exciting but challenging role, please send Curriculum Vitae in confidence to:
**The Hon Secretary, Cobh Golf Club Management Committee,
Ballywilliam, Cobh, Co. Cork.** Closing Date for Applications: Mar. 31st 2007

Further details about the club available on www.cobhgolfclub.ie

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Please note that all of these roles are seasonal contracts from April to October 2007.

Candidates must speak fluent English.

In the golf and hotel industry, shift work is required. However, we offer excellent conditions of employment.

If you are interested in making the move of your career, please send a comprehensive CV in strictest confidence to:

**Liane Lynch, HR & Training Officer,
The K Club, Straffan, Co. Kildare.**

**Tel: 01 6017226 Fax: 01 6017289
Email: recruitment@kclub.ie**

Golf Environment Europe and European Tour's Sustainability Fund for Golf

Officials of Golf Environment Europe have announced the launch of a new Sustainability Fund for golf in Europe.

The fund will assist the golf sector in Europe to address the increasingly important issues of environmental sustainability. It will enable Golf Environment Europe, an independent, non profit body, to support and report on environmental achievements within European golf.

At a special reception to mark the occasion, Tom Garvey, Chairman of Golf Environment Europe said: 'Golf Environment Europe was launched by the European Commission in Brussels in June 2005. Since then we have garnered considerable support from within and out-with golf. Our key mechanism, the European Forum for Golf and Environment, has been received with enthusiasm by the entire sector.'

'We formally establish our sustainability fund - a fund that will enable GEE to work in partnership with many golf bodies, environmental organisations, government agencies and sponsors, towards the common goal of promoting environmental sustainability within European golf.'

Scott Kelly, Group Marketing Director with the PGA European Tour added: 'We believe Golf Environment Europe have the ideal platform, a solid strategy with many practical projects, and crucially, the support of stakeholders within and out with golf to make a significant impact on this issue'.

'Through the fund we are assisting GEE in securing the resources to deliver an exciting programme of activities over the coming years, part of which will be targeted towards golf events. This work will build on our recent successful initiatives at the 2006 Ryder Cup, and look forward to the Ryder Cup at Celtic Manor in Wales in 2010.'

For further information on the Fund and the work of Golf Environment Europe contact Jonathan Smith on 0044 7917 453147 or jonathan@golfenvironmenteurope.org

For information on the PGA European Tour's contribution and support of the Fund, contact Simon Cory-Wright on 0044 1344 840479.

For information on becoming a corporate partner of the Sustainability Fund, contact Thomas Godfrey, Spring Worldwide on 0044 7974 927878.

Rain Bird's Wind Tolerant Nozzles

Strong winds play havoc with watering, especially during hot dry summers when greens and tees can bake if water can't reach the playing surfaces due to the wind factor.

The summer of 2006 was just such a summer, and may be a typical of future weather patterns in the UK.

For courses where wind is a regular challenge to the normal watering needs, Rain Bird has developed the new EAGLE 700/750 Wind Tolerant nozzles.

These have been specially designed to combine a lower trajectory with innovative features that produce two essential factors:

- ❖ a larger water droplet size to counter the strength of the wind more effectively
- ❖ and a specially adapted spray pattern, the combination of which makes the resulting water curtain far more wind tolerant.

For further information, please contact Rain Bird's Golf Manager for the UK and Ireland, Kneale Diamond, on 01438 314583, or e-mail him at kdiamond@rainbird.fr



Scotts Unveils Fertilizer For Golf Greens

At this year's BTME, Scotts launched Sierraform GT, which the company says is the most powerful and well-balanced fertilizer available for golf greens. It is the first golf green fertilizer to contain both slow-release nitrogen and slow-release potassium, which creates a unique dual effect. Nitrogen is delivered slowly, which means no growth spurts after application and a plant that matures more evenly. The inclusion of potassium ensures a stronger plant which is more resilient to extreme stresses such as frost, heat, drought and wear - all year round.

The slow-release potassium is fully incorporated into the tiny uniform granules of Sierraform GT. It is therefore not a mixture of different components, but based on a synthetic matrix structure which breaks down gradually over time. After the application of Sierraform GT, the release process is triggered by the normal level of moisture in the soil, after which it is released continually over the effective period. The speed of this process is unaffected by rain or irrigation.

The product's small granules are easy to spread, and disperse quickly into the soil. Each granule has exactly the same quantity and combination of nutrients, which means even growth and an outstanding colour.

In tests, Sierraform GT has been shown to improve the health and vitality of grass by 20 per cent (compared with a normal golf green fertilizer without slow-release potassium). It has a longevity of 8-10 weeks and is available in six different formulations to match the specific time of application.

Fleetline's New Laser Line Markers

The advent of the laser-guided line marker will change line-marking forever, and has already set new standards for straightness and squareness on sports surfaces. BeamRider is a new laser-guided system developed by an Anglo-Swiss consortium headed by Fleet (LineMarkers) Ltd, which has its headquarters here in the UK, and Leica Geosystems, the world's leading manufacturer of laser surveying equipment.



Easy to use, and capable of marking perfectly straight and square pitches in a fraction of the time taken by traditional methods, BeamRider will revolutionise the way groundsmen think about linemarking, and also the way people think about groundsmen. Pitch marking has now been raised from the string-and-peg level to a truly high-tech skill, equipped with some of the most advanced electronics and laser technology in the world.

Irish Company Makes Great Tracks

Irish golf is on a roll and a revolutionary new product, described by one industry expert as being "the most important invention since the pneumatic tyre", is set to impact strongly on the maintenance and conditioning of courses nationwide.

The new Track-Tyre Wheel, which comes to the market following a number of years of research and development, has already been approved by a number of clubs who have conducted rigorous trials - Elm Park, Glen of the Downs, Bundoran, Slieve Russell and many others.

The Track-Tyre Wheel is an outstanding innovation and it has been designed to have same impact on off-road transport as the pneumatic tyre had on wheeled vehicles or the hover-craft principle on amphibious transport.

The Track-Tyre Wheel offers all the advantages of the pneumatic tyre with none of its disadvantages. The Track-Tyre Wheel is directly interchangeable with existing wheels, with no modification necessary and, of course, the chances of getting punctures is minimal. It does not cause ground damage during turning and it provides substantial extra traction and stability on slopes and inclines particularly in soft ground conditions after rain.

The pivot band allows the flexible pads to flex up and down and therefore the full width of the wheel follows the contours of the ground irrespective of the type of slope or angle the machine is at. The wide flexible pads allow for greater loadspread and reduce psi by 60%. This results in greatly reduced ground pressure which, in turn, enhances the turf's condition and appearance.

For full details concerning the Track-Tyre Wheel log-on to www.track-tyres.eu

Golf course owners and superintendents wishing to arrange a product demonstration can contact **Frank Byrne at Track-Tyres Ireland Ltd. Tel: (01) 2823674. Mobile: 086 6077346. Email: frank@track-tyres.eu. Or visit their website www.track-tyres.eu. Also check GCSAI website under Trade members**



TORO Irrigation Launches New Golf Controller

The company says it is the most powerful decoder system available for golf course irrigation.

The new system, also available for other applications, uses modern technology to provide a low-cost decoder system using a single 2-wire path. Its performance and flexibility enables irrigation consultants to design irrigation plans without the need for complicated calculations. The system is easy to install, simple to use, and flexible enough to meet contractor and greenkeeper needs.

Users can choose between two versions. The stand-alone system accommodates up to 200 stations and features a new easy-to-use programming interface whereas the PC-based system uses Toro's SitePro central computer system and can accommodate up to 3,200 stations, pump station integration and sensor input decoders.



Toro's new Golf Decoder Controller system will make it easier for golf courses to control their watering.

The new GDC system uses new low-power solenoids on both sprinkler heads and automatic valves.

This means that contractors can install decoders as far as 4.5km from the central unit using a single 2 x 2.5mm² cable. The system also supports up to 800 stations per wire path and up to 3,200 stations per system. This flexibility allows golf course designers to create beautiful, challenging holes with the confidence that the irrigation system can support watering needs. The ability to tap into the existing wire path also gives golf courses an option for future redesigns or expansion.

Greenkeepers will find the system's diagnostic and sensor features useful for troubleshooting and maintenance. Sensor input decoders are available to take advantage of flow metering and rain sensors. In addition, the system's ability to turn on 50 stations per wire path will shorten watering windows and allow shorter ramp-up periods during crucial watering times.

Contractors will also find the GDC system easy to install and simple to use. The system's decoder capacity and installation range will significantly reduce the amount and type of wiring used during installation. The decoders come in one-, two- and four-station models and include colour-coded wire to identify each station. Each decoder comes pre-addressed, so no programming is necessary on installation. The decoders also feature built-in surge protection to reduce system damage during lightning storms and will continue working even if one decoder is damaged.

The new Toro GDC system is available in early 2007.

Jacobsen Turf Groomers Improve Fairways at Waterville Golf Links

Mike Murphy, the Links Superintendent at Waterville Golf Links, has recently purchased two Jacobsen light fairway mowers complete with the manufacturer's patented turf groomer attachments, from his local Ransomes Jacobsen dealer, Kevin Broderick Ltd at Tipperary. Mike is very particular about his course believing that links should be true to their original concept and consist of wide fairways bordered by small areas of semi-rough.

In November 2005, while attending a family wedding in New York he played at Winged Foot Golf Club and saw a Jacobsen fairway mower with groomers out on the course. The fairways were in superb condition and on his return he contacted local dealer, Kevin Broderick, to have a look at what they could offer. Brodericks demonstrated a Jacobsen LF3400 with the groomer attachments and it was quickly apparent that this was the machine for him.

'The Jacobsen unit is a true turf groomer,' he said, 'it cuts the lateral growth of the coarser grasses and stands the blades up to ensure a very consistent height of cut. The Jacobsen cutting cylinders are only 13cm (5") in diameter and with 7 blades the cuts per metre is high, ensuring an excellent quality finish. One thing I would say is when using groomers it is absolutely essential to fit rear roller brushes. They keep the rollers clean and help maintain a consistent height of cut.'



To maintain the small boundaries of semi-rough that flank the fairways, Mike and his team of 12 use an Iseki SF303 power unit fitted with a Lastec articulated rotary cutting deck. This combination has proved ideal for following the undulations of the links.

'Brodericks modified the Lastec deck to accommodate it with the Iseki, but the end result is ideal here. With 30hp, the Iseki is a powerful unit and the articulating deck does exactly what we want it to,' Mike added.

Presidents' Report



Paddy Holohan, President G.C.S.A.I.

Greetings fellow members, I hope you had a very pleasant break over the Christmas period and your Golf Courses have wintered well.

I am sure, like me, you are all cranking up for another golfing season, but before that happens you have a chance to meet your colleagues in beautiful surroundings and hear the latest on Golf Course Maintenance. I speak, of course, of the 12th Annual Turfgrass Maintenance Conference which will be held at Mount Wolseley Hilton Hotel on March 7th and 8th. The topics for discussion will be re-modeling/re-construction, use of plant growth regulators, moss control, budgeting and pesticide legislation.

We have a range of speakers on these topics from our own shores, Europe, and the United State. The venue and topics will be the making of a very worthwhile few days. This event has grown over the years and this year we have added a new dimension, in the holding of a nine hole golf competition on the Tuesday.

AGM

On Wednesday evening the Association's A.G.M. takes place we hope the timing will lead to a good attendance. Remember this is your opportunity to let us know how you feel about how the Association is representing its members and how it can improve in playing that role. Input from members is always important and is also welcome, be that in attending the A.G.M., participating in the various golfing events or being a committee member of Regional or National Executive.

Farewell

My term as President will cease at the forthcoming Conference and it is with many fond memories that I pass on the baton to David Behan. Over the past number of years David has done tremendous work in developing the Educational opportunities open to members by seeing the Turf Grass Degree to fruition. I wish David all the best over the next two years.

I have had the privilege of representing the Association at many events both nationally and internationally and the highlight was attending the Ryder Cup this September. I would like to thank all the members for the welcome and courtesy shown to me. I wish to thank all the Regional and National Executive Committee Members for all their trojan work during a time of much change in our industry.

To the Trade I would like to thank you for your continued support and encouragement; your input is an integral part of the development of our Association. I would like to thank Dundalk Golf Club for giving me the support and encouragement and space to carry out my duties during the past two years. A special thanks to Tracy Coburn for her expertise in keeping the ship afloat, and in a healthy state despite my best efforts. To Alan Mahon who has settled into the role of Communication's Manager, many thanks for the professionalism you have brought to the position. I must thank my wife Patricia for her support and patience, I have run out of excuses for being away from her and the kids and now I am entirely at her mercy!

Finally, to you, the members, all the best for 2007 and enjoy the Conference. Good Greenkeeping.

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AGM TAKES PLACE ON 7th MARCH. ABOVE POSITIONS MAY CHANGE AFTER THIS DATE!

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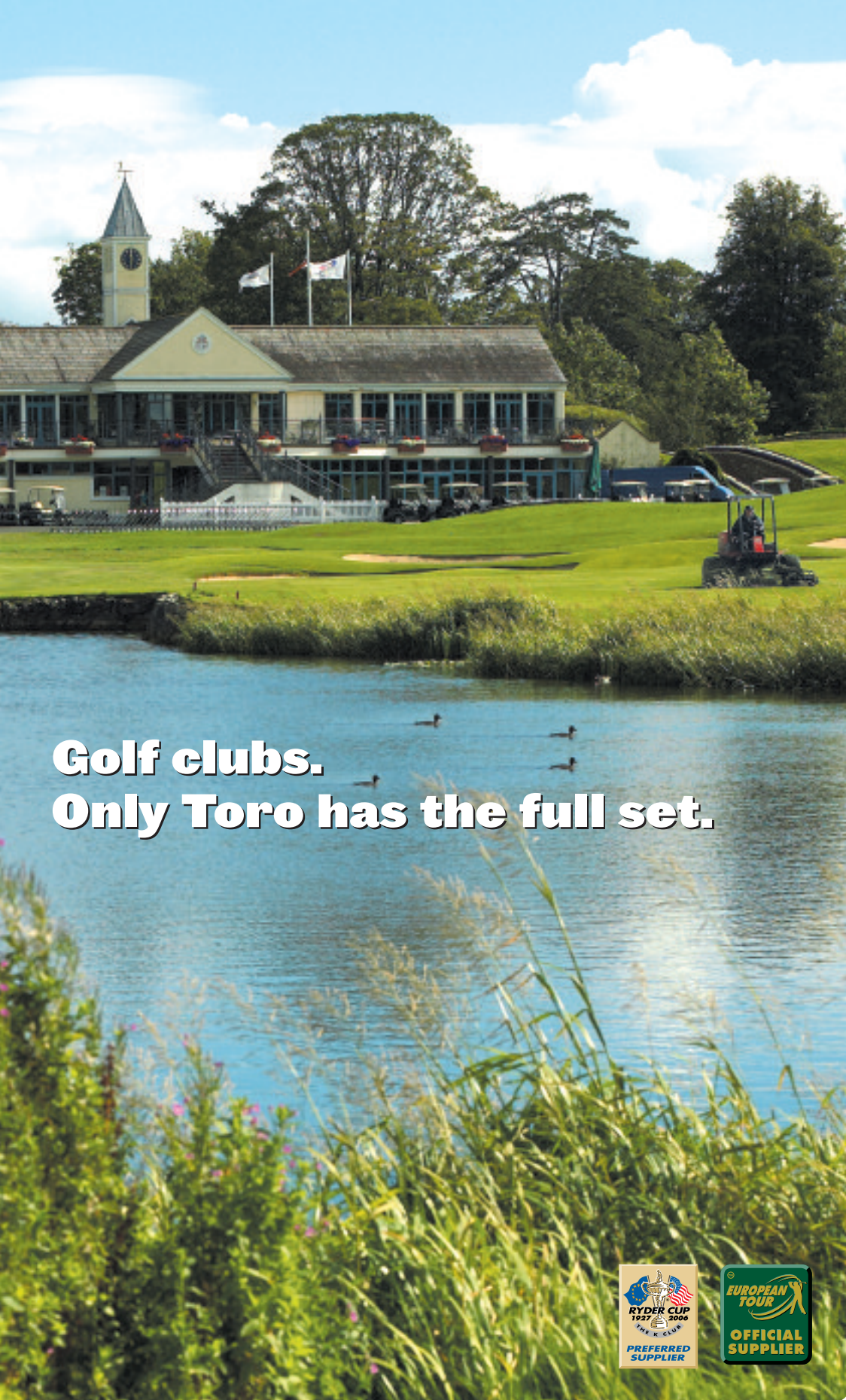
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TORO. Count on it.

Rain Bird's New Wind Tolerant Nozzles- the Intelligent Use of Water for Windy Courses

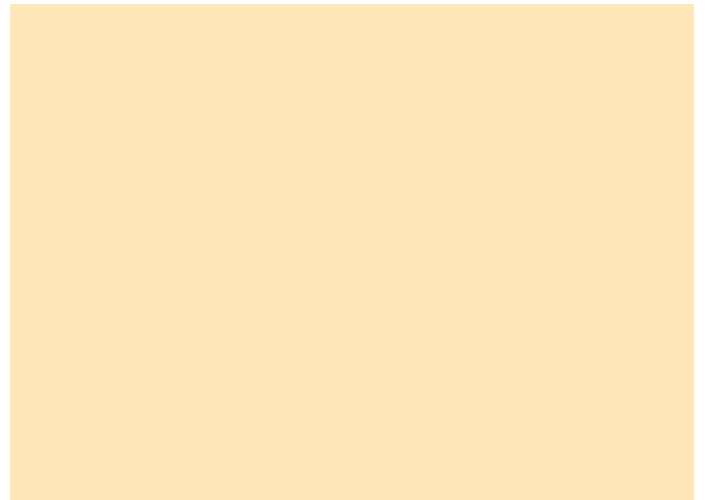
Windy conditions undoubtedly make things more interesting for the golfers, but as those responsible for looking after the courses know, strong winds can play havoc with the watering. For courses where wind is a regular factor, Rain Bird, the world's leading irrigation equipment manufacturer, has developed the new Eagle 700/750 Wind Tolerant nozzles.

Rain Bird's own research and development has proved that lowering the trajectory of the spray is only the first step to a fully effective solution. Making a sprinkler that performs consistently well in windy conditions requires a significantly deeper understanding of the issues involved, and better technology and design for the solutions required.

The new Rain Bird EAGLE 700/750 Wind Tolerant nozzles combine a lower trajectory with innovative design features that produce two essential factors:

- ▲ a larger water droplet size to counter the strength of the wind more effectively
- ▲ and a specially adapted spray pattern that make the sprinkler truly wind tolerant.

**For further information, please contact:
Rain Bird's Golf Manager for the UK and Ireland,
Kneale Diamond on 01438 314583,
or e-mail him at kdiamond@rainbird.fr**



New Sand Storm can Blow Away those Bunker Blues

The Sand Storm is an innovative, simple, but effective means to recycle sand and other materials. Principally aimed at the renovation of golf course bunkers, the sand storm can also handle other materials that may benefit from a screening process.

Ownership of a Sand Storm allows this bunker management tool to be used little and often and the processing of all course bunkers to take place conveniently, overtime, producing and maintaining a 'like new' bunker condition. This can eliminate the need for costly sand replacement and storage, while improving bunker playability and condition for members and visitors alike.

Vibrating screens on the Sand Storm work to remove debris such as leaves, twigs, needles, weeds, stone and clay particles. The screens will also trap silt deposits on their surface, allowing for wash off and removal. The process remixes the sand particles and 'fluffs' it to a like new condition. Eliminating settling and compaction as well as cleaning away unwelcome contamination.

The processing of materials other than sand provides for additional versatility, such as preparing greens and fairway mixes or topdressing, or separating aeration cores. Customising the sand storm for specific results is achievable through a range of screening accessories and a choice of models.

Choose from the trailed or tractor mounted models, depending on

your needs. The trailed model can be towed by virtually any power unit, including a garden tractor or golf buggy. The tractor 3-point linkage mounted model, can provide easier access to more difficult working areas such as small 'pot' bunkers, by overhanging the work area.

Other sand cleaning applications outside of golf include athletic fields, equestrian sand schools and dressage arenas, play areas and beach volleyball.

**The Sand Storm is exclusively distributed in the
UK & Republic of Ireland by:
JSM Distribution, Uckfield,
East Sussex
Tel: 01825 745326.**

Presidents' Report

Paddy Holohan, President G.C.S.A.I.

Greetings fellow members another golfing year is nearing the end of the frantic period, but while most of us are beginning to relax Gerry Byrne in the K Club will be cranking up operations to host the worlds third largest media event.

Ryder Cup

Yes the time is nearly upon when the eyes of the world will be focused upon the green keeping excellence of Ireland. The staging of the Ryder Cup here is an enormous opportunity to display the world class standards of our Irish Courses. We wish Gerry and all his staff the very best of luck in his preparations for the third weekend in September, and the hard work put in over the last eight years will be on view for all to see. Thanks to all the many volunteers who will give their services before and during the event and I hope you enjoy the part you play in this great spectacle.

Golf Environment Europe

The GCSAI is delighted to be associated with Golf Environment Europe, formerly known as the Committed to Green foundation, which is launching its Environmental programme for the Ryder Cup at the K Club. During the event information about this initiative will be on display on hoardings around the course and on all tournament shuttle buses. We wish Johnathon Smyth, the powerhouse behind this organisation, every success over Ryder Cup

weekend.

Website

The revised website is now up and running and I hope you take the time to look at the site and see what is currently happening, or also you can check articles from back issues. You will also have noticed that information on golfing and educational events as well as job vacancies are also sent by text message to all Members

Review

The review of the Association, which has been ongoing for the past 16 months, is now ready to be sent to all members in draft form. This is so that you can read the document, give your views for any changes you want to the final document. Make sure to avail of this opportunity to have your input and tell us the way you want your Association to be moulded to meet the challenges of the future.

Spraying and chainsaw Courses

The GCSAI in association with Coillte will be running training courses in the safe operation of chainsaws and sprayers over the autumn. The response has been excellent with places filling rapidly. The Association through David Behan our Educational Officer, will continue to organise and approve training courses that will

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