

greenside



The Value of the Course Superintendent

Bunker Design

Also In This Issue

- Looking at Large Tractors • Regional Round-Up • Trade News • The Irish Abroad
- Beech Park Golf Club • Disease Management • Greenkeeping Awards



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All in Perspective



While waiting in the reception area of the Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin, after attending the Greenkeeping awards there earlier, I noticed a large object in the corner.

I went over to have a look only to find out that it was a section of a giant redwood tree felled in 1892. The tree was 1330 years old when it was cut down and was a sapling when the Irish monk St. Columba founded the church on the Scottish island of Iona in 562. Marked along some of the tree rings were significant dates in Irish history when the tree was alive, including the Viking raids in 795, the Spanish Armada in 1588, the 1798 rising and finishing with the building of the Irish History museum in 1890.

This tree section was installed in the Irish History Museum in 1892 where it remained until 1970 when it was transferred to the Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin. Perhaps a more appropriate place for it to be shown.

I was in awe at the wedge-shaped 9 feet specimen. Rubbing my finger along the rings, (I could only start at the battle of Clontarf in 1014 as I was not tall

enough to reach the top) each ring representing a year in the life of the tree, I could not help but wonder what stories the tree could tell if it could speak.

Then my curiosity got the better of me. Why was the tree cut down in the first place? Was it already dead? Or was it simply in the way of a man-made project such as a new road, or building? Whatever the reason for its demise, I will never know.

One thing for certain, though, is that it made me realise how little time we are allowed to spend on this planet of ours. If I am fortunate enough to live to be a hundred it would have represented only 8 inches of growth on the tree. That means I have only just over 4 inches left to live. Better make the most of it.

Finally, I would like to wish our readers and their families a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year and may it indeed be prosperous.

Alan Mahon

Thank You

Greenside would like to thank all those who supported the magazine throughout the year, particularly to our advertisers many of whom are experiencing trying times right now. Please support them. A special "thank you" also to those who contributed articles which brought much valuable insight to the turf profession.

REMINDER

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

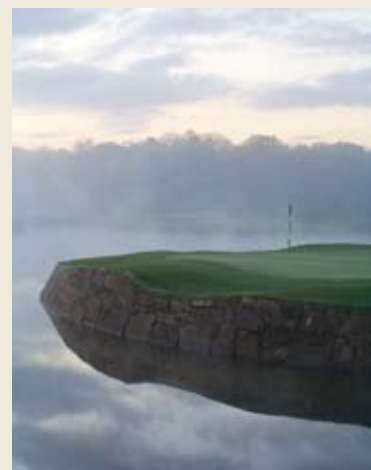
January 22nd 2010

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

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Front Cover: Early morning at the 11th Green at Castleknock Golf Club

Photo: Alan Mahon



Green Pass Update

Health & Safety Services -
Training & Consultancy Ltd.

In the last edition of **Greenside**, we reported that the initial "pilot programs" of The Green Pass had just taken place in Naas. The running of the pilot programs has allowed the H.S.S. Group and the GCSAI to consider the content and format and adjust the programs where necessary.

The feedback from the attendees to date is very positive. The fact that the programs are interactive, informative and fun to learn has led to very positive feedback from those that have attended so far.

Though the uptake of training so far has not been as high as had been hoped, the GCSAI and Health & Safety Services are happy with the ongoing number of courses which are being run, as well as increasing number of inquiries.

As we have been listening to the feedback from the participants, course workers, GCSAI members, Secretary/Managers and other club management, one area we feel we had to make a change to is Price.

As a result, all costs as originally outlined have been reduced by 20%. So if you wish to book a course, give H.S.S. a call or e-mail for more details.

Golf Course Death

In the last edition we also reported on an accident in which one man died after he fell from his ride-on-mower, which then rolled over on top of him.

Unfortunately, in a similar accident, also in the UK, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have successfully prosecuted an employer for allowing the ride-on-lawnmower driver to operate on a gradient, far in excess of the limit recommended by the manufacturer. The employer did not have a risk assessment, nor was training provided. The employer was fined £18,000, has costs in the region of £23,000 and must also pay compensation to the employee who, unfortunately, was not seriously injured when he fell from the ride-on-mower.

Would training have helped prevent this?

If you would like any further information regarding The Green Pass, contact the HSS Group on 1890 600 666 or e-mail info@thegreenpass.ie or check out the website on www.greenpass.ie.



Vacancies

The Dutch is a 36 hole Golf Complex situated in the heart of the Netherlands and has currently completed 11 holes of its first championship course designed in conjunction with Colin Montgomerie & European Golf Design. Construction of the Sam Torrance course will begin, midsummer 2010 following the completion of the Montgomerie & Academy. We are looking for well motivated applicants.

Team spirit is key, as well as "getting the job done". This is a rare opportunity to be involved in the construction/ grow-in, and on-going care and maintenance of this exciting new project.

Positions available.

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Greenkeepers - With relative qualifications and in depth experience.

Trainee/assist greenkeepers - Ambition & attention to detail will be preferred above experience.

Information www.thedutch.nl

Interested? Please send your letter of application/ passport photo & resume, before the 10th January 2010, to:

The Dutch, N. Richardson, Haarweg 1
4212 KJ Spijk, The Netherlands.

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Keeping up with the Competition

At a computer expo, Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer with the auto industry and stated: "If GM had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving twenty-five dollar cars that got 1000 miles/gal." General Motors addressed this comment by releasing the statement:

"Yes, but would you want your car to crash twice a day?"



**Bobby
McDermott**

Foxrock
Golf Club

As you already know Sportsturf Ireland had to be cancelled in November due to various reasons. The show was planned to have an educational side to it and this also had to be postponed.

It really was disappointing for those involved in the preparation of the show that it could not go ahead. At this point I would like to thank Maria Behan, the event organiser and Damien McLaverty, the executive liaison for Sportsturf Ireland, for their unbelievable efforts in trying to get the show on the road.

In these challenging times I do wonder what Course Superintendents would like to hear about - technical turf talk, communications, or the business side to golf? Perhaps it is all the above and if so then you should book your place at the 2010 GCSAI conference which will take place in the Radisson SAS Hotel, Limerick. A host of home-grown and international speakers will cover a lot of very topical issues that concern the golf business industry.

On the 9th November last I had the privilege of attending the National Botanic Gardens where the current crop of budding green-keepers had their graduation ceremony. I was in attendance to present the GCSAI Student of the Year Award which was won by Noel Brady from Parnell Park GAA grounds. Congratulations to Noel who does a wonderful job in maintaining the famous old grounds to a very high standard. If you would like to contact me please do so:

PH; 086 2627839/01 2065136 E-mail **bobandmart@eircom.net** or
fgcsuperintendent@eircom.net



**Noel Brady (left) receiving the GCSAI
Student of the Year Award**

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Big Tractors on the Golf Course



Chris Smyth

by Chris Smyth (Massey Ferguson Area Sales Manager,
Ireland - North)

& Colin Gleeson (Massey Ferguson Area Sales Manager,
Ireland – South)



Colin Gleeson

Big tractors have been a familiar sight on golf courses for 40 years and more. In the early days, many of the large tractors that found their way onto golf courses did so by way of farm auctions, machinery sales and dealers' yards, having already worked long and hard for a farmer or for a local authority parks or highways department.

Although this route is not so commonplace now, it is still possible to pick up a pre-owned, and not too elderly, bargain if you are willing to accept that the tractor is likely to have seen better days and was not designed originally to work on a golf course . . . or any other maintained turf surface, for that matter.

Indeed, prior to the introduction of compact tractors in the late 1970s, the only tractors that were readily available to turf professionals were those built and equipped to agricultural or industrial specifications. These tractors were not described as "large" or "big" because they had a particularly high power output, but more because of their hefty size and weight.

Any golf course looking to buy a large tractor, even 25 years ago, would have been fortunate to have found a model of appropriate dimensions or weight with an engine size much bigger than a current top-of-the-range compact tractor.

Although a number of higher horsepower eastern bloc tractors did find their way into the golf market, these were considerably bigger, and more cumbersome, than the well-known brands that dominated the agricultural tractor market then – and still do today.

Fitted with round profile diamond pattern tyres, the original large golf course tractor would have had a power output typically between 40hp and 60hp, a non-synchromesh mechanical gearbox, manual steering and a fairly basic weather cab, if you were lucky. Such a tractor was fine for hauling a trailer, pulling a gang mower or slitting a fairway, but not that suitable as an all-round, go-anywhere, all-season work horse, unlike the "large tractors" now available to the golf course manager and superintendent.

The fundamental difference between the big tractors being bought new today to assist with golf course maintenance and their farm or council-type predecessors is the improved power-to-weight ratio of the modern tractor.

Instead of expending a lot of energy moving a large amount of bulk and weight across the ground, today's large golf course tractors deliver a respectable power output within a lighter and more compact frame, resulting in a higher



Times have moved on from the days when farm sales were a major source of big tractors.

and far more desirable power-to-weight ratio from the turf professionals' viewpoint. In a nutshell, more useable power, and less dead weight. As a result, defining what is meant now by a "large" golf course tractor has become both easier and more straightforward. From the end-user's viewpoint, it will include just about any tractor that delivers more power than a compact tractor, the latter being widely recognised as a tractor of scaled-down dimensions with a power output of up to 50hp, a rear three-point linkage and 540rpm rear power take-off.

Although there are one or two exceptions to the rule, for the purpose of this article a large golf course tractor is regarded as a four-wheeled tractor of conventional design with a diesel engine rated at more than 50hp. That said, the majority of golf courses setting out to buy a large tractor



today will be aiming for a model that has sufficient power in hand for the various course tasks in mind and is neither too big nor too heavy for all of the areas around the course where it may be asked to work.

As stated previously, achieving an optimum power-to-weight ratio is key! For example, if a big tractor is to be used primarily with a front-end loader and a trailer, then it should be feasible to get away with a less powerful and less bulky model than one that will be employed additionally for turf drainage, turf renovation or deep aeration. In such a case, it is very important to ensure also that the optimum transmission system is specified for the chosen tractor.

Drivers of a dedicated loader tractor will derive considerably more benefit from a shuttle gearbox - enabling single lever or push button changes from forward to reverse and back again - than from creep gear speeds, a feature of major importance to those carrying out deep-tine aeration, reseeding or drainage operations.

There is no doubt that the big tractors being bought now for golf course maintenance have benefited greatly from the developments seen on agricultural tractors over the past 25 years, in particular, those produced specifically for the livestock sector. Farmers growing and harvesting grass do not need the sheer power nor build strength required by their arable counterparts. Instead, good manoeuvrability, high visibility and simplicity of use are three of the most important factors demanded by dairy farmers for tractors whose work is usually divided between the farmyard and the field.



Deep aeration on sports grounds will require the use of large tractors

The result has seen great strides made in the design, efficiency and capabilities of tractors spanning the 60hp to 90hp power band - a band which fortunately covers also the vast majority of large tractors being bought for use on the golf course, playing field or sports stadium.

Delivering a high power-to-weight ratio, such tractors are much better suited than their predecessors to working effectively and efficiently across a wide range of maintained turf surfaces, negotiating soft and sensitive ground without excessive marking or compaction.

Thirty years ago, you had to be brave or foolhardy to drive a large tractor anywhere near a golf green or tee, or even across a fairway after a moderate rainstorm. Today, big tractors can be seen at work right across the course in all weathers and seasons thanks to the major advances that have been made in tractor design, materials and ancillary equipment over the past three decades.

Such advances include the use of lighter, more compact engines that produce considerably more power than their predecessors thanks to turbo-charging, enhanced fuel injection equipment and high-efficiency combustion systems.

The increased adoption of oil as a means of effectively transmitting power has resulted also in significant reductions in weight being achieved within the transmission, braking and steering systems of modern tractors. In the latter case, it has also made steering the tractor a pleasure, thanks to the universal uptake of hydraulic power assistance.

Similar improvements have been made also in other areas, a good example being the adoption of lightweight, robust plastics in place of metal used



Consider your tractor choice when you have wide areas of mowing



Keep in mind also tractor specifications for front loader attachment used for materials handling



Typical golf course tasks for a big tractor include land preparation ready for seeding

to produce cabs, bonnets, fuel tanks and controls. Tyres should not be overlooked, either, with the choice of tyre now available to the golf course superintendent being far superior to that of even 15 years ago. The standard turf tyres offered today by tractor manufacturers in place of cleated agricultural tyres combine good grip and low marking with the capacity to work quite happily off turf when the need arises. If you are looking for additional flotation for work across particularly sensitive or soft areas, then specialist wide-profile, low-ground pressure tyres are available from a number of well-known suppliers – your local tractor or tyre dealer will be able to advise on the appropriate size and tread pattern for your particular needs. On the other hand, there are those who will want a bit of extra grip to maximise the capabilities of the four-wheel drive systems that are now an almost universal feature of the modern golf course tractor – big and small. For them, suitable tyres can be obtained that combine low ground pressure capabilities with a “grippy” tread pattern that does not mark the turf excessively when carrying out operations that do require a degree of traction.

The end result of all the above advances is to enable large tractors to make light work of a wide variety of course

tasks ranging from trailer towing, top dressing, spraying and mowing to front-end loading/off-loading, turf drainage, deep aeration and re-seeding.

There will no doubt be a number of additional important jobs on and off the golf course for which a large tractor will be needed at some point during the working year. As a consequence, such tractors are being chosen with far greater care and deliberation than was the case just a few short years ago.

The benefits of this approach will be greatly appreciated by those who have to use the tractor in all weathers on all surfaces with a growing number of different attachments and implements.

To help prospective purchasers with the selection process, take a look at the check list below.

Happy big tractor hunting!

CHOOSING THE RIGHT BIG TRACTOR FOR YOUR GOLF COURSE

- List all of the jobs for which the tractor could be used – essential and occasional.
- List all of the equipment/attachments with which the tractor might be used – existing and potential.
- Talk with manufacturers, dealers, advisors and existing users to ensure that the tractor is suitable for all equipment/attachments with which it will or might be used.
- Assess the proposed tractor(s) on a range of typical course tasks to ensure that it has the necessary power, transmission, rear linkage lift capacity and oil flow/pressure for the work.
- Let all appropriate course maintenance staff assess the proposed tractor(s). Ask for their feedback on driveability, visibility, comfort and ease of maintenance.
- Speak with existing users of the proposed tractor(s) and obtain their opinions on the product, the supplier and the after-sales support.
- Ensure that price quotations include all essential equipment, accessories and attachments such as appropriate tyres, automatic pick-up hitch, auxiliary spool valves and extra lights.
- Choice made! Now will it fit in the shed?

Colin Gleeson can be contacted on **087 9950623**

Email: **colingleeson@uk.agcocorp.com**

Chris Smyth can be contacted at **+44 (0)7711 095287**

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Dates For Your Diary

Sports Turf 2010

On Tuesday 12th Jan 2010 Sports Turf 2010 takes place at La Mon Hotel & Country Club, Belfast from 9.00am to 5.00pm. This show will bring you up to date with the latest products and technologies available today.

Sports Turf 2010 is an exhibition for those involved in maintenance or construction of golf courses, sports fields, bowling greens, cricket squares, aquatic weed and algae control and also for council parks superintendents and landscape architects. The show is organised by John Lindsay Professional Sports Turf and includes over 20 exhibitors. For more information telephone **048 38339229 (ROI) 028 38339229 (NI)**

You can also visit **www.lindsayturfcare.com**

Harrogate Week

This takes place from January 17 – 21, 2010. Discover what's new in an ever changing, growing market. If your business is in Turf Management, the Groundscare Industry or Club Facility Management then make it your business to attend Harrogate Week.

With innovative product ideas at Harrogate Week it's your best opportunity to meet all the players in the groundscare industry under one roof.

Harrogate Week 2010 is on course to be another successful event with a host of familiar names returning to the Show, as well as a large number of companies who will be exhibiting for the first time. For general enquiries about Harrogate Week.

Tel: 0044 1347 833830

Email: pauline@bigga.co.uk

GIS Show

Make plans to be in San Diego from Feb. 8-12th, 2010 for the world's largest golf course, club, and facility management industry trade show – the Golf Industry Show (GIS)

GIS provides the golf and club management industries with a dynamic, progressive trade show event that provides networking opportunities and hands-on access to golf course and facility management solutions for the professional members that GCSAA, NGCOA, CMAA, GCBAA, ASGCA, NGF and USGA serve.

You can join news makers, including golf course superintendents, owners/operators, general managers and chief operating officers, architects and builders under one roof in New Orleans.

To book or register visit **www.gcsaa.org**

GCSAI Annual Conference

Keep March 3rd & 4th 2010 free in your calendar to attend the GCSAI Annual Conference. It takes place in the Radisson SAS Hotel in Limerick and, judging by the line up of speakers, promises to be the best ever conference. This year's conference is once again generously sponsored by Toro and Lely Ireland Ltd.

Booking forms will be soon posted out to all GCSAI members and golf clubs and it is advisable to book early to avoid disappointment.

Contact Maria Behan on **087 7917789** for more information or email her at **maria.behan@gmail.com**

New Sports Institute Formed

The Irish Institute of Sport Surfaces (IISS) has recently been formed and consists of many of the former IOG Ireland committee. The IISS are widely supported by the sport surface industry in Ireland. The demand for an Irish based and owned organisation has been the catalyst for the establishment of this institution.

They specialise in providing training and education in the management of sport surfaces in Ireland. Through training and education the Institute will strive to promote 'Best Practice' for standards of excellence in sport surface management.

Their Industry Advisory Panel consists of those with many years of experience and qualifications in the Irish sport surface industry. They have been enrolled to the Irish Institute of Sport Surfaces to provide direction and advice to the industry in Ireland. The standard and quality of training courses is approved by them, to ensure that the industry is being served well.

The IISS Managing Director, Mr. Donal Kearney, is accredited with a MSc in Sports Surface Technology, a BSc in Turf Science & Golf Course Management and a Diploma of Sportsturf Management. Donal brings to the role an extensive background of golf course construction and maintenance, and turfgrass expertise. His experience in the sports turf sectors began at apprentice level and continued right up to management on some of the finest golf courses in Ireland, the UK and in the USA. His 'hands on' practical experience complements his technical knowledge gained at University, and, most recently, as Regional Advisor for the Institute of Groundsmanship in Ireland.

To find out more about the Irish Institute of Sport Surfaces visit www.irishsportsturf.ie

GCSAI Meet the Trade

A special meeting took place in Carton House recently between the GCSAI and GCSAI Trade Members to discuss issues that are concerning both groups. With the GCSAI having to cancel this year's Sportsturf Ireland trade show, the need to re-evaluate commercial direction within the sportsturf industry was the main topic of discussion.

Maria Behan of Calibre Support Ltd chaired the meeting which saw twenty-three companies representing the chemical, machinery, landscape, irrigation, sand supplier, consultancy and turf grower sector in attendance.

Michael Loughran, President GCSAI, Michael McFeely, GCSAI Secretary and Paddy Holohan, GTC representative were the delegates representing the GCSAI.

A follow-up meeting is planned to take place in 2010.



Greenside Publisher Dies Unexpectedly

The GCSAI were saddened to hear of the recent untimely death of Andrew Longwill, MD and founder of LW Associates, the company that publishes Greenside magazine.

Andrew, a native of Cambridgeshire, first came to Ireland in 1992, as a result of his career in the Animal Health industry. In 1998, another difficult economic period, he very quickly realised the potential of the rapidly growing World Wide Web and the internet - setting up Magenta Direct he launched the first Online Farming Catalogue in Ireland, selling direct to farmers. This was quickly followed by the formation of LW Associates, a company to provide high quality, informed marketing support to companies operating in the Agri sector.

One of his earliest clients were Lely Ireland, who also operate in the Turfcare sector. Andrew's "can do" attitude quickly saw LWA adapt to provide the same quality service and support to other industry sectors.

Over the last eleven years he developed LW Associates into one of the leading Marketing Service companies in Ireland, now supporting a diverse range of clients from the Construction, Pharmaceutical, Medical, I.T., Motor, Finance and of course, Agriculture and Amenity sectors.

The GCSAI would like to extend its sympathy to his wife Ros Longwill and her family in this difficult time.

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Discipline and Dismissal Procedures

By Fiona Brown Johnson - Profile Training and Development

While it is always important to adopt fair and reasonable procedures when disciplining a member of staff, during times of economic strain it is even more important. Should the outcome of a disciplinary meeting end in the dismissal of an employee, there is considerable evidence to show that employees are often not prepared to accept this outcome and are increasingly using protective legislation, particularly the Unfair Dismissals Acts to appeal their dismissal.

What employers and managers do not always appreciate is the importance of following fair and reasonable procedures prior to sanction or dismissal of an employee. The Employment Appeals Tribunal will concentrate on whether legislation was complied with vis-a-vis fair dismissal and will not specifically concern themselves with whether or not the dismissal was warranted. They will look for fair procedure in the decision-making process no matter how compelling the action leading to dismissal was.

Should an employer find his/herself in a situation where they have a need to discipline or indeed dismiss a staff member, it is very important that they would behave reasonably and operate the principles of natural justice.

The Employment Appeals Tribunal will look at whether the following procedures were adhered to when determining whether or not an employee was fairly dismissed;

- The right of an employee to know the nature of the allegations made against them
- The right to representation
- The right of reply
- The right to an impartial hearing
- The right of appeal

In order to ensure compliance, the following procedures should always be followed;

- Any issue which may lead to a disciplinary hearing must be fully investigated
- You must state the reason for the meeting in advance
- You must prepare yourself by having all relevant documentation in front of you
- You must outline the offence or departure from standards
- You must ask for an explanation/listen to employee's side of the story
- You must make every effort to ensure you understand what is being said to you
- You should not reach an immediate decision, but consider what has been said and revert when you have made your considered decision

Fiona Brown Johnson is a HR/Employment Legislation Consultant specialising in the provision of Training Workshops, mentoring and consultation to SME's on any area of HR/Employment Legislation. She provides the HR helpline support services to the GCSAI. She can be contacted at Profile Training and Development 086-8551369 or email fiona@profiletraining.ie



**Fiona
Browne
Johnson**

Profile Training
& Development

Philosophical

*"If life is a waste of time, and time is a waste of life, then let's all get wasted together and have the time of our lives".
Graffiti on the wall of a pizzeria*



Join the GCSAI Online

With the increased demand for joining the GCSAI using credit card payment, the Association has now made this possible. Using PayPal, you can log on to the GCSAI website and join or renew your membership securely and safely. There is even a facility where you can join using the subscription option. This means that your membership is renewed automatically every year without the hassle of filling out and posting membership forms.

Visit www.gcsai.org

Sam's Homecoming

Being a Kerryman true and true, Michael F. O'Connor could not resist this photo opportunity with the Sam Maguire Trophy. Kerry won the 2009 All Ireland Football Championship and enjoyed a momentous homecoming.

"My only regret is that the Presidents Cup trophy, which the Southwest region won, was not in the same picture. Now that would have been something else", said the Killarney Assistant. "Perhaps the opportunity will come again next year" he added.



A delighted Michael F. O'Connor with the Sam Maguire trophy.

Amendments Made to Entry Criteria Ahead of 2010 Open Championship

The R&A has announced changes to the entry criteria ahead of The Open Championship's 150th Anniversary, to be played at St Andrews from 11 – 18 July 2010.

A new exemption category has been introduced for the 2010 Open. Condition F(4) exempts from qualifying any past Open Champions who finished in the top 10 and ties in any of the previous five Open Championships, thus effectively providing them with a five year exemption into the Championship.

"We have introduced this exemption as a direct response to seeing two of our great Open Champions, both in their fifties, challenging to win our championship these last two years," explained Peter Dawson, Chief Executive of The R&A. "We rightly reduced the age of exemption for past champions from 65 to 60 two years ago and our intention was never to remove players still at the top of their game from competing in The Open."

Competitors at The Open Championship; International Final Qualifying - Australasia, Asia, America and Europe; and at Local Final Qualifying will be subject to the new clubface groove regulations as per Decision 4-1/1 of Decisions on the Rules of Golf.

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2010 Annual Conference Heads to Limerick



The Radisson Hotel Limerick

March 3rd & 4th 2010 are the dates for next year's GCSAI Annual Conference. It will be held at the Radisson Hotel, Limerick and will see Irish and International speakers talk about current topics that are relevant to the golf course and sports turf sector in Ireland.

Key speakers include former minister for finance and EU Commissioner, Charlie McCreevy, the CEO of the World Golf Foundation, Steve Mona and Jason Kruse, who is from the Environmental Horticulture Dept. of the University of Florida. There will of course be many more speakers who will tackle the realities of the situation that Irish golf is currently in,

focusing on the challenges Irish greenkeepers and groundsmen are facing and looking to what the future holds and what can be done to positively influence the future state of greenkeeping.



Charlie McCreevy will speak at the 2010 annual conference



**Left: Steve Mona
CEO World Golf Foundation**

The conference will focus on four key areas:

- 1. The economy**
- 2. The environment**
- 3. Employees**
- 4. The future**

Once again, Toro and Lely Ireland have generously committed to sponsoring the event.

If you want to keep abreast of what is happening in your profession, be it greenkeeping, landscaping, or sports grounds maintenance, then the GCSAI 2010 Annual Conference is the place to be.

Booking forms will be sent out very shortly and it is advisable to book early so as to avoid disappointment. For more information on the conference you can contact Maria Behan on **087 7917789** or email her at **maria.behan@gmail.com**



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Bunkers: Interested or Not?

"Bunkers are not intended to be pleasure grounds but places of repentance..." Philip A. Truett.



By Ken Kearney, Ken Kearney Golf Design

Bunkers provide the architect with the strongest visual constructed element of the golf course. Bunkers have an impact that is second only to water as a hazard. Bunkers offer the architect the most scope for dictating the manner in which the golfer will play the golf hole. There are no rules in bunker design. Bunkers are and should be a prominent feature of the golf course. They should be presented in the best possible condition (maybe debatable !!) and offer a consistent style throughout the golf course. This can only be done with good design, good construction techniques and good maintenance practices.

Bunker Design

"Bunkers, if they be good bunkers, and bunkers of strong character, refuse to be disregarded and insist on asserting themselves; they do not mind being avoided, but they decline to be ignored."

John Low, Concerning Golf, 1903

It is my opinion that bunkers have five essential elements that come together to make a bunker:

1. Bunker style
2. Form and function
3. Bunker sand
4. Bunker maintenance
5. Bunker placement

Bunker style

Most golfers expect perfectly presented bunkers with perfectly presented sand. Occasionally one plays a golf course where the bunkers are of a very organic nature.

What we find more in Ireland is bunkers of a formal nature and this is good, if and when they are designed and constructed in a sound fashion.

A consistent theme in design and construction is imperative for good golfing values. The golfer should play the round of golf and merely notice the bunkering. The bunkers should merge with the landscape and not interfere with it.

A bunker that "fits into" the landscape will always look better, play better, be easier to maintain and ultimately will enhance the profile of the golf club. Such a bunker will be fair and golfers

will enjoy the experience in a clean and consistent golfing environment...not a bunkering arrangement that might be disjointed and inconsistent.



Sand Hills Golf Club Nebraska with naturally shaped bunkers that 'fit into' the landscape.



The 2nd Green at Grange Golf Club remodelled in 2008 The bunkers were designed in the traditional parkland style.



A revetted bunker at Kilkee Golf Club, Co. Clare

Form and function

Bunkers are not strictly used as hazards as they may serve any one of five major functions:

1. Strategy – defines the strategy of the hole
2. Retaining – keeps balls from running into sensitive areas of the course
3. Safety – stop the stray shot in a safety problem area of the course
4. Directional – signpost the proposed direction of play on the golf hole
5. Aesthetic – enhance the “look” of the course

If a bunker serves any one of those purposes, it should have the proper form that best serves the purpose. The skill is for the architect to perfectly place the bunker but also to know the scale and slope it needs to be presented to the golfer for its intended function.

It is important that the golfer can recognise the bunker when it is presented as such. I like the golfer to see the bunker so that he / she can calculate the risk of going in or taking avoiding action if it is felt the challenge is too risky. I like to see some sand in the bunkers and the slightest flash of sand, showing the colour difference between grass and sand, will usually be enough. Occasionally this is not possible and in such instances the grass bank will help to indicate the bunker’s presence.

Bunker styles will differ greatly from course to course and region to region but the skill for the architect is to fit the bunker “into” the landscape in a form that best suits the function.

Bunker sand

It is inevitable that over the years with golf clubs falling under the control of many different committees, greenkeepers and in some cases designers, that many different types of sands will be used over time.

The correct choice of sand is critical to the performance and playability of sand bunkers. Every aspect should be considered from sand colour to sand particle size distribution.

Another important issue regarding the choice of sand is the pH which may

cause issues where sand splash occurs.

The choice of sand will also affect the green surfaces as sand with too many larger particles will cause damage to mower blades where it is splashed onto the green. I try to keep greenside bunkers at least 2m from the green edge to avoid sand migrating onto the putting surface. Although this may seem to make the hole easier, it is possible to design the bunker in a way that it gathers the ball and has the effect of a larger bunker which is closer to the green.

Of course the guarantee of a long term supply from the quarry where it is sourced is critical in the selection process of sand for your bunkers

Bunker Maintenance

Bunker performance is a function of architectural design, the physical properties of the sand and the intensity of bunker maintenance.

Bunker maintenance is an ongoing headache for green staff – particularly when they are trying to present a golf course to exacting standards and the quality of design or construction prohibits such.

In many cases the golfer does not realise that it is nearly entirely impossible to present the bunker in a fashion that both the staff and the golfer would like and this is where a qualified architect can help in identifying the issues that affect the presentation / maintenance of the bunker.

Golfers are very demanding today and demand perfect surfaces in all aspects of the golf course features...greens, tees and bunkers.

I suggest that each Superintendent design a maintenance schedule but the most important issue to address is that a “Best Practice” document be drawn up. This document should be drawn up in conjunction with the course chairman, the superintendent and the architect. All staff should be familiar with the document and know the procedures put in place and to be followed.



The sand profile of a recently surveyed bunker. Note the layering in the sand with many different types of sand used over the years



Bunker placement

"It is much too large a subject to go into the question of placing the hazards, but I would like to emphasize a fundamental principle. It is that no hazard is unfair wherever it is placed. A hazard placed in the exact position where a player would naturally go is frequently the most interesting situation, as then a special effort is needed to get over or avoid it."

Alister Mackenzie, Golf Architecture, 1920.

Bunkers are placed and built for a variety of purposes. The most interesting bunkers are located close to the line of play where a player must decide to carry them or take an alternative route to the hole – Hell bunker at St. Andrews, the Cardinal at Prestwick for example.

This is the principal value of a bunker: to influence the golfer's choice in how he / she play the hole and to dole out punishment if they fail to heed the hazard. However, it is important to qualify the statement with the fact that different players hit the ball different distances. Bunkers placed at the same locations and presenting similar strategies on every hole would give a boring golf course.

The lesser golfer should be able to negotiate the golf course as the impact of shorter hitting is in itself sufficient liability to any golfer.

The most natural looking bunkers are set into the crest of a rise or a facing slope, wherever it falls in the hole, to look as if they are created by the natural elements.



Hell Bunker - on the 14th at St. Andrews, situated directly on the preferred line of play

“ In many instances, bunkers are removed, relocated and the original styles are lost in time.”

Bunker remodel

In considering a bunker remodel program the club needs to consider all of the above elements that influence the design, playability, maintenance and performance of a bunker. Of course one of the most important factors in bunkers is maintenance. It is obvious throughout the country that bunkers

are an emotive issue. Golfers become emotional because of inconsistencies in presentation and playability. What golfers do not realise is that in most cases the maintenance staff are doing the very best and trying to present the "sow's lug" as a "silk purse"... sometimes this is not achievable...

The starting point for clubs that are suffering with poor bunkers is to invite the qualified architect to assess the bunkers and propose recommendations. I like to present this in a "Bunker Audit" document. The "Bunker Audit" document will assess the current bunkers on the golf course and as well as offering the bunker remodel proposal will include digitised images of the proposed bunkering arrangement, which members find very helpful in assessing the impact of new bunkers... "a picture speaks a thousand words..."

Bunker restoration

In many instances I find myself talking more about "restoration" than "remodel". To understand bunker restoration of a "classic" course (Colt, Braid etc) one must have a great knowledge and understanding of the original architect. A great deal of research is involved and the use of early photographs and aerial images,



It is difficult to maintain and present a bunker with poor drainage, poor design and poor construction



if available will be critical to giving an effective restoration of the original bunkers. I find that older members are a great source of information and are never to be underestimated in their knowledge and understanding of the original layouts.

In many instances, bunkers are removed, relocated and the original styles are lost in time. Once the research is complete I always like to restore all of the original bunkers but this is sometimes difficult to implement, for various reasons.

The process must start with an audit of the current bunkers and I will offer an assessment of the current arrangement, how it has evolved and a proposal document that will recognise the influence of the original architect and offer my proposal for the restoration of the original bunkers.

In most restoration programs the appetite has to be with the club and the architect... and then the most critical aspect is to get the right people involved in the process...superintendent, contractor, course committee and architect. There is no doubt that the enthusiasm for the job will grow and if sensitively carried out the results will be dramatic. Why should we



Poor design, poor construction, water run-off, contaminated sand....all add up to an impossible situation for the maintenance staff.

second guess Harry Colt, James Braid or Alister MacKenzie... Let's do the right thing from now on...

Conclusion

Bunkers should not come in moulds. They should be unique, as Mother Nature had designed the first bunkers on the linksland hundreds of years ago. We should treasure the unpredictability of bunkers which makes the game of golf altogether more interesting.

At the end of the day, bunkers are meant to be hazards and punish the errant shot. Bunkers play an integral role in the golf course and how the golfer plays each hole. They should be memorable ... but for all the right reasons...

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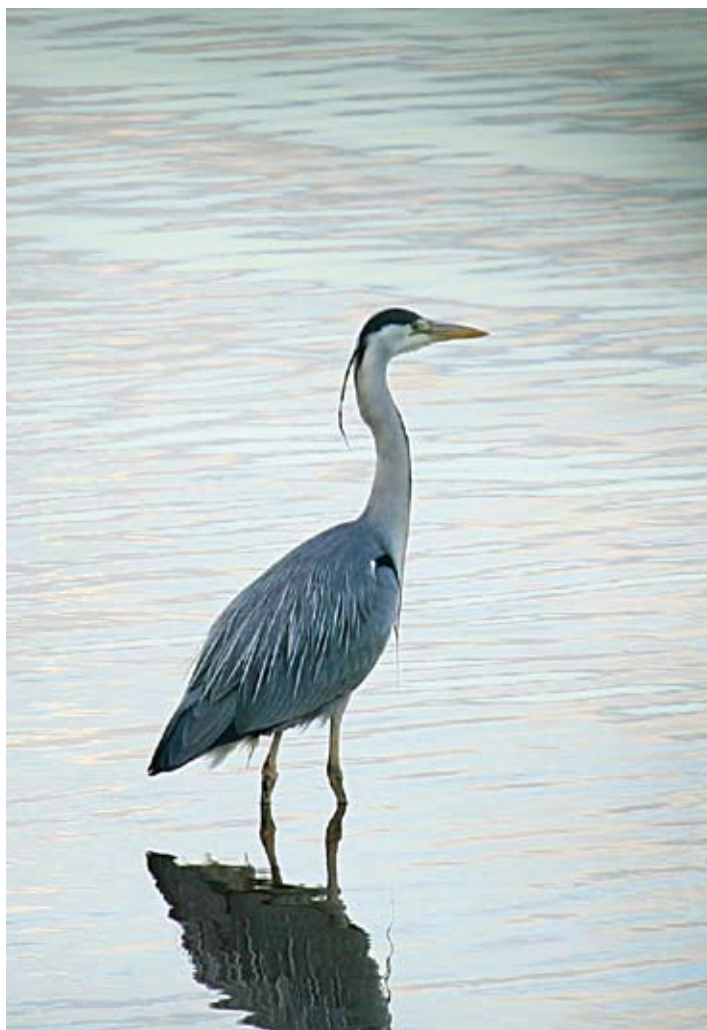
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The Grey Heron

- our shy and elusive wader

Held aloft by the slow motion beat of its huge rounded wings, the heron flies with a languid grace that belies its speed as it searches out fish on which to feed.

Many golf courses in Ireland incorporate water features within their design. Some courses even have rivers or streams running through them. These features offer great opportunities for encouraging wildlife on to the golf course.

One such creature that is often seen in our golf courses is the grey heron. They are Ireland's largest waders. They are typically seen standing still, waiting patiently at the water's edge, peering into the water, with their neck cocked like a spring, as they wait for a fish to come within range of their spear-like yellow bill. They are members of the family Ardeidae, in which there are 62 species. Ardeidae are large wading birds, including the bittern and egret.

The grey heron cannot tolerate human presence. If you want to get close to this bird, then you either have to keep something between you and it or, if on open ground, shuffle directly towards it, very slowly. If the heron sees two legs, more likely than not it will take flight.

The grey heron is tall, with long legs and neck. Its plumage is grey and white, with a long black crest in adult birds. It may have a long snowy plume on its head, breast, and back. The bird has yellowish legs and bill, which become redder during the breeding season. It is between 90cm and 98cm tall and its wingspan can reach 1.75 metres.

Though feeding chiefly on freshwater fish, the grey heron is also found wading and feeding on salt marshes and river estuaries. Its favoured habitat is still or slow-moving shallow water in lowland areas where there are plenty of trees nearby. A large bird, with a large appetite, an adult heron can consume

well over a pound of fish a day. Not surprisingly, therefore, herons are reviled by fish farmers and anglers alike, as well as gardeners who have garden ponds that contain goldfish. It is a visual hunter. It uses stealth and its ability to stand immobile for long periods as its key weapons in the search for food. Its beak is sharp and serrated, enabling it to stab or grasp and hold its prey before swallowing it whole.

Breeding begins early in the year, when adult males return to colony sites called heronries. These are usually in tall deciduous or coniferous trees and the nests may be up to 25 metres above ground. If such sites are unavailable, they will also nest in low trees and bushes, on cliffs, and among reed beds. In a mild winter, the first males arrive at the colony from late January to early February, roosting in treetops at night and advertising their presence with harsh calls. Usually the oldest nests are the prime sites, lodged securely in a fork of a tree sheltered from the wind. Because of the heron's habit of adding twigs annually, these nests are often huge affairs, sometimes up to a metre across and occasionally smaller birds may be found nesting in the 'basement'. The oldest established pairs normally lay claim to these prime sites, the male repelling intruders with much neck-arching, lunging and bill-snapping.

Newcomers to the heronry must start from scratch and build on less secure sites on the fringes of the colony. The new nests are easily recognised as they are often little more than see-through platforms with only a few crossed branches and twigs to support the eggs. Adding twigs to such a nest has obvious



practical benefits, but clearly it is also part of a bonding ritual, with the male collecting the twigs, leaves and grass and the female interweaving them. Later, after courtship has ceased, three or four eggs are laid between late February and March. The blue eggs take around a month to hatch. The young herons remain in the nest for up to two months and are cared for by both parents.

Harsh winters can take a huge toll on numbers but they can recover within a few years following a mild winter such as we have been having recently. The current population of grey herons in Ireland is estimated to be almost 4,000.

To encourage the grey heron to live on the golf course, there must be a shallow area of the lake or a gentle slope on the river bank to allow the bird to wade or stalk. Having a stand of large trees growing in a remote area nearby may even encourage them to nest there. Water features which have sheer drops around the edges would not be ideal to entice these elegant birds.



A grey heron waiting for its meal beside a water hazard

Back to the Future

With rainfall amounts ever increasing in Ireland, it might be a case of learning from the past when it comes to rain gear as the photo below shows. It was taken in 1911 of a man called Tom Delaney. He was a local man who tended the garden of the Hewat family estate in Rosslare, Co. Wexford. The garden was eventually to become part of Rosslare golf links which was established in 1905.

As you can see, Tom did not let the rain get in the way of his work with his ingenious method of staying dry.



Irish Open Returns to Killarney



Killarney Golf & Fishing Club will once again be hosting the 2010 3 Irish Open, after a gap of eighteen years. It will be played on the Killeen Course where it previously held the tournament back in 1991 and 1992 where Nick Faldo won on both occasions. The Killeen course, which is the jewel in the crown of the three-course Killarney Golf Complex, was originally designed in 1969 by Eddie Hackett and Dr. Billy O'Sullivan. The Killarney lakes and The Magillicuddy Reeks high mountain range (Ireland's highest) provide a stunning backdrop to this Championship course. The course was redesigned by Tom McKenzie in 2005 and re-opened in June 2006, the course is slightly longer with faster greens that have been brought closer to the water hazards around the course. At 6564 metres it will challenge long hitters with accuracy being vital as there is water on many of its holes.

The date of the tournament has been moved to July 29th – August 1st. This new date should offer a greater chance of fairer weather as the previous tournaments held in May proved unlucky when heavy rain, gale force winds and low temperatures were experienced.

With the 3 Irish Open just over a month ahead of the Ryder Cup in Wales, this year's tournament will no doubt attract Europe's top golfers as the race to secure a place on the European team will have already begun.

David MacIndoe, Course Manager at Killarney, is ready for the challenge in setting up the course for the championship and preparations are already under way. "To ensure good playing conditions for the tournament the real work has to start now. For the course to perform at the highest level an intensified aeration programme to greens, tees, green surrounds and fairways has already started. This will set the foundation of how the course will perform through the summer" said David. He went on to say "Our maintenance regime will be intensified come spring. We will also be tidying up all the scrub and dead trees in the woodlands as well as cleaning along the shores of Loch Leane. This will enhance our beautiful setting of the lakes and woodlands".



Value Your Superintendent



By

Eddie Connaughton B. Sc. Agronomist.

Eddie Connaughton talks about the crucial role that the Golf Course Superintendent has in managing the course and its budgets during tough economic times.

I began my career as a trainee Greenkeeper in 1978 at Royal Dublin Golf Club and was the first candidate in Ireland to study for the City & Guilds of London Greenkeeping Certificate. At that time the Irish Greenkeepers Association was instrumental in promoting this new education policy and Dr. Harry Spain and Mr. Jim Byrne from Elm Park Golf Club were the guiding lights for this new initiative. In fact I finished my practical training under the supervision of Jim Byrne at Elm Park with Dr. Spain taking me through the syllabus to complete the theory part of the examination.

Back then there were no formal training institutions for Greenkeepers in Ireland and I had to travel to Myerscough

College in Lancashire to sit the exams in 1981. Dr. Spain and Jim Byrne trained a number of other young aspiring Greenkeepers at Elm Park, until the system was formalised and the Botanic Gardens became the lead teaching institution. How everything has moved on from that time with a fully comprehensive training system in place for all young Greenkeepers and even now degree programmes in turf management for Superintendents who have the desire to raise their education to a higher level. All of these advances in education and training have been supported by the golf clubs where the Greenkeepers trained and by the Golfing Union of Ireland providing the necessary backing along with the other home unions on the Greenkeeper Training Committee.

There was an understanding in the golf world back then that Greenkeepers needed education and training to meet the demands of managing golf courses for a whole new generation of players that were about to embark on playing the great game of golf. The early graduates of those greenkeeping training programmes arrived in time

for the start of the boom in golf course development across Ireland. They in turn, with the support of their clubs and employers, have continued the education and training of Greenkeepers to provide them with the necessary skills to manage golf courses to a high standard. I recount this because it is so important now to have an educated and experienced Superintendent in charge of the golf course who can adapt to the current economic climate while maintaining suitably high standards for golfers to enjoy.

The Superintendent is the best placed person in any golf

course operation to evaluate the operating procedures and budgets and to make recommendations where savings can be made (if any) without affecting overall playing conditions.

This is so important today with claims of course expenditure reductions of up to 50% if clubs outsource course maintenance operations to a third party.

Such claims can seem very attractive to owners or management committees but they should be carefully scrutinised before leaping into the unknown. What we do know is that "golf course management is a full time job, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year". The on-site course Superintendent with their staff of trained/qualified Greenkeepers provide clubs with the best overall service for all members to enjoy.

“...golf course management is a full time job, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year”



The Superintendent brings a wide range of skills and management qualities to the golf club for example:

- Managing a diverse pool of labour that must be co-ordinated to prepare and present the golf course 7 days a week
- Provide necessary training and health & safety in the use of machines, chemicals etc throughout the course.
- Have a sound agronomic background that can identify pests and diseases which can affect the playing conditions as well as knowledge to apply the correct pesticides as and when necessary.
- Have a knowledge of all the machinery needed to maintain the course and be able to carry out basic repairs to ensure jobs are completed even if breakdowns occur.
- Be an astute purchaser of all materials for running the course and have the ability to seek quotations and assess the quality of materials offered.
- Be a good communicator to deal with the club management, professional and members to outline all the work involved in managing the course and staff. This is so important now when clear goals have to be set down and agreed for yearly maintenance.
- Be a sound environmentalist to promote wildlife throughout the course and ensure the safe use and storage of all pesticides applied to the turf.

When all these responsibilities are rolled into an overall management role it is very clear that the Superintendent is a critical link in ensuring the smooth running of any golf course facility. As with any business during recessionary times cutbacks are unavoidable, however the qualified and experienced Superintendent is the best person to advise of where savings can be made in expenditure without affecting the long term condition of the golf course.

I have witnessed fantastic changes in our industry over the last 30 years with advances in all areas of course maintenance, from agronomic practises to the construction of U.S.G.A. greens. The desire to produce better playing conditions throughout the year has been driven by the Superintendent and this will continue!! Just as the original founders of the Irish Greenkeepers Association saw the need to educate young Greenkeepers, the current Superintendents have the management skills to guide their clubs through the economic downturn and beyond to ensure the high standards currently enjoyed on all golf courses are maintained for future generations of Superintendents and golfers to enjoy.

Eddie Connaughton B.Sc. is one of Ireland's most experienced golf course consultants specialising in offering golf clubs independent agronomic course evaluations, drainage assessments, construction specifications and course design/remodelling services.

Old Course Road Hole to be lengthened ahead of 2010 open championship at St Andrews

The 17th hole of the Old Course will be lengthened ahead of the 150th Anniversary of The Open Championship at St Andrews. The 'Road Hole', which has remained the same length for more than 100 years, will increase in length by some 35 yards to 490 yards. A new Championship tee will be constructed on the practice range of St Andrews Links Trust.

It has long been suggested that the 17th hole would benefit from additional length to restore the original challenge of the hole. In advance of the 1964 St Andrews Open, three-time Open Champion, Henry Cotton, recommended the alteration stating: "I would make a tee just beyond the railway line on the other course [he was referring to the Eden Course which is now the practice range]. It would restore this drive to its former value."

An increased premium will be placed on an accurate drive of sufficient length over the sheds, encouraging players to take driver from the tee. The fairway will be widened slightly on the left hand side to ensure that the tee shot remains fair. Crucially, the difficulty of the second shot will be re-established, making it more difficult to hold the approach on the putting surface and increasing the threat posed by both the road behind the green and the Road Bunker.

"The 17th was played at the same yardage in 1900 as it was in 2005 and this fuelled our belief that the formidable challenge of this iconic hole should be returned for The Open Championship," said Peter Dawson, Chief Executive of The R&A.

"Over the years, we have seen the threat from the road behind the green, and to a lesser extent the Road Bunker, diminished as players have been hitting shorter irons for their approach shots allowing them to avoid these hazards more easily. This change will ensure that the hole plays as it was originally intended."

"We have spent some time discussing this with The R&A and I know they have carefully considered making this change for The Open Championship," said Alan McGregor, Chief Executive of St Andrews Links Trust.

"The Road Hole is the most famous hole in world golf and we believe the changes will increase the challenge of the hole whilst remaining true to its spirit."

Work on the new Championship tee will commence in the coming weeks. The lengthening of the 'Road Hole' is the only significant change planned for the Old Course ahead of the 2010 Open Championship.



Baltimore Country Club - A Tale of two Courses

By Darren Cuddihy



I am a Wexford native and a Foundation degree Sportsturf Science graduate from Myerscough College in England. I am currently in the U.S.A on the Ohio State International Intern Programme. I had been told of the internship while I was studying at Myerscough but decided that the opportunity to work under Mr David Behan at Naas Golf Club for my first internship was a way of getting a solid grounding in the Irish turf industry.

So, after I graduated, I enquired from my lecturers at Myerscough as to whether I could still go on to the Ohio State programme and they set me up with a Mr Mike O'Keeffe. He placed me at Baltimore Country Club (BCC for short), where the last Senior Major of the year (The Constellation Senior Players Championship) was played in 2007.

I must talk a little about BCC's history. It was founded in 1898. It was such a great success early on that it had the privilege of hosting the 5th US Open in 1899 only a year after it had opened. As BCC expanded its reputation and membership, it was decided to build a second course further north of the city at Five Farms. It was designed by the legendary golf course architect A.W Tillinghast, who also has the Black Course at Bethpage Park, Baltusol Golf Club and Winged Foot Golf Club to his credit. The East Course (as it is now known) was opened in 1926. The original course was closed in 1962 and a second course at the Five Farms location was opened in the same year (now known as the West Course).

So today there are two golf courses to maintain, the West course and the East course. With a lot of tradition attached to the East Course and the fact that it is ranked within the top 50 classic golf courses in America by Golf Week magazine, it is the first choice for the membership. Hence the East has a larger crew to cope with the demand put upon the course.

BCC is maintained by Head Superintendent Mr. Tim Kennelly, who oversees the running of both courses under the guidance from BCC's General Manager Mr. Michael Stott. Each course has a Superintendent under Mr. Kennelly. The West Course Superintendent is Mr. Jason Snyder and the East Course Superintendent is Mr. Pete Bozeman. The East Course has one Assistant Superintendent, a spray technician and a set up technician. While the West Course has one Assistant Superintendent and a spray technician. Then there is also an irrigation technician and a mechanic who work on the two courses. The general staff is then divided between the two courses with the majority working on the East Course.

I was sent to work on the West Course for the first three and a half months. It has tight fairways that undulate to a large extent with sand based greens. Grass species include ryegrass tees and fairways with bentgrass in the greens.

The course has seen more work carried out on it in recent years since the arrival of new Superintendent Jason Snyder in 2008, such as extensive verticutting and aeration programmes, which have resulted in the greens improving greatly.

The first month for me was like a training month. Everything from fairway mowing to setting up the course, to rolling greens, to grooming greens to spraying greens was covered, and looking back now I learned so many things in such a short space of time. My main jobs while on the West Course were spraying greens and setting up the course. The only way I had seen greens sprayed in Ireland was with booms, however here they spray hawked, which involved someone walking behind a no. 8 nozzle sprayer that they controlled with a pressure gun. In one instance we actually had to spray hawk the 12th fairway as it was too wet to put a boom sprayer on it.



Spray hawking, which involves someone walking behind an 8 nozzle sprayer that they control with a pressure gun.



Aerating and cleaning up cores on the 5th hole on the East Course

Shortly after aeration was completed there were two extreme thunderstorms that passed through. From July 26th up to the tournament we were hit with 22 inches of rain, which is an incredible amount of rainfall for the region. Unfortunately after these storms came higher temperatures (ideal disease weather) and low lying parts of some of our fairways and parts of our rough were hit with Pythium. The next few weeks would involve getting those disease hit areas healthy again.

We then proceeded to dry the worse affected areas out by aeration and then overseed with ryegrass in the fairways and ryegrass/tall fescue in the rough. All in all there were 8,000 lbs of Ryegrass and 6,000 lbs of Tall Fescue used while over seeding in the lead up to the tournament.

Set up was more detailed than at home and was carried out daily. Cups were changed every day with a white paint used on the inch or so of soil above the placed cup. I loved this job as you could decide yourself where the pins were going, except on tournament days where you would be given a pin sheet.

While working on the West Course, I was told that things are done differently on the East Course and that it will be like starting over again in terms of training. The warning proved correct.

The difference between the two courses is something that surprised me. The East Course greens consist of bentgrass but they are clay push up and are known for their severity of slope. Some greens in previous years actually had to be shaved at the top to reduce the severity of the green. The tees also consist of a bentgrass mix compared to ryegrass used on the West Course. The fairways are smooth and wide. The bunkers are known as the best bunkers to play out of on the Senior's Tour and are steep in nature.

When I started working on the East Course, temperatures were rising, so my main job, while working there, was hand watering tees, fairways, collars, bunker banks and greens. This took a while for me to settle into, as the East Course was often full of golfers and you would still have to get the correct amount of water down. To do so you would have to work in and around golfers, pulling the hose here and there, connecting in one connector and then moving behind the golfers as they played the hole, and then connecting in another connector. It was quite often a high pressured job, but looking back it was most rewarding, just to see the grass still alive after a day of 35 degrees heat was an incredible feeling.

There was something different each day at BCC, and on a few occasions I had to do set up when the set up technician was off and help to repair irrigation leaks. This process was quite interesting. Everything from draining the line to applying the primer and glue on the new section of pipe was new to me.

Once the middle of August rolled around we started to prepare for the Seniors Players Championship that we were hosting at the end of September. The East course was closed for three days so that we could carry out extensive aeration. All 18 greens were cored and cleaned off in one day. It was amazing to see so much work done in such a short period of time. After the greens were completed the tees and fairways were then cored.



Water logging on the course after extreme thunderstorms



Pythium damage on the 11th fairway on the East Course



As the course dried we had to make sure that the seed bed stayed moist so it could germinate, so an intense hand watering programme was followed to ensure the seed had the best possible growing conditions for quick germination.

This was a little too successful as we were starting to grow the seed in too densely, resulting in seed growing on top of seed, with the seed then dying and killing off any established seed that had germinated already. Hence, to alleviate the problem, we went out to aerate these areas again so as to remove some of the new seed and give some space for the older healthy seed.

It wasn't long before the tournament came around. Things were obviously done differently during tournament week. We had an additional 25 volunteers working with the 45 strong staff.

In the morning I was assigned to roll approaches. I had a colleague with me dew whipping where I couldn't reach on the roller as I wasn't allowed to flatten the rough. Even where I entered under the ropes to get to the approach we had to take a leaf rake and fluff the rough back up. I had to roll 9 holes and follow an exact order while doing so.

When this job was completed, I would often go back out and check the fairways for any clippings left over from the cut the



I got the opportunity of rolling the approaches on Wednesday morning of tournament week

previous night, but once that was done, the afternoon was my own. I went and watched the golf every day. I even got the opportunity of having my picture taken with one of the game's greats, Bernhard Langer.

After our free time in the afternoon it was time to get back to work. I was assigned the job of mowing the semi rough and walk paths of the front nine, as well as cut the semi rough on 9th hole of the course as this was providing extra driving range space for the week. At the start we double cut them to get the quality of cut just right, then on Wednesday we switched to alternate direction each day. After this job was completed I would join the driving range crew in divoting the driving range.

Also during advance week and tournament week odd jobs would need to be carried out on the West Course

and the driving range. During these two weeks I had to spray fairways, cut the driving range, help slit the greens and brush in top dressing on the greens.

The whole week flew by and all the hard work paid off just to hear the comments from the golfers. The eventual winner, Jay Haas, even went on to say in his winning speech that our fairways were just perfect, and when you consider all the work that went into getting them back in shape after the disease

outbreak, it was a very pleasing moment. After tournament week was finished and all the shacks and buildings started to be taken apart, I had time to reflect on my internship at BCC. In terms of a learning experience I honestly don't think I could have gone to a better place. I got to see how a course prepares for a professional tournament and also had the privilege to work on two very different courses under three different management styles. In finishing, I would like to thank Mr. Stott, Mr. Kennelly, Mr. Bozeman, Mr. Snyder and all the staff at BCC for their support and assistance, both on and off the course, during my internship, it was greatly appreciated.

My next port of call is the sunshine state and the beautiful city of Miami. I will be working at the Doral Golf Resort as they prepare for the CA Championship and a certain Tiger Woods in March 2010. Finally I would like to say that if anyone has any further questions feel free to send me an email at darrencuddihy@hotmail.co.uk



Bernhard Langer and myself behind the 9th green



Celebrating with the winner Jay Haas on the 18th green, from l to r: Darren Cuddihy, Tim Kennelly, Jay Haas, Pete Bozeman, Jared Milner (West Course Assistant) and Cathy Wagner (BCC Horticulturalist)



As I write this article I am travelling home from attending the Spanish Greenkeeper Conference, held in the beautiful city of Granada. The Conference was a great success, with some 250 Greenkeepers attending, which represents nearly 50% of their membership.

I have worked with the Spanish Greenkeeper's Association for some 13 years now and I have seen their association grow and become truly recognised for its valuable work in serving some 300,000 Spanish golfers, along with a demanding golf tourism market. Spain, like many other countries, has suffered from the economic downturn and in particular from the mass building that has been a major part of Spain's strategy for many years. Along with an excellent education programme, the Conference provided the ideal gathering for greenkeepers to discuss the pressures that exist during this stressful time, and also to learn how others are dealing with these pressures. The Spanish are a very passionate nation and the Greenkeeper Association and its members reflect this perfectly with both their attitude to learning and to supporting each other; they also play the perfect host.

Whilst on my recent travels I was able to meet up with Gyorgy Major, President of the Hungarian Greenkeepers Association and we finally reached an agreement whereby they have now become members of FEGGA, which brings our membership total to 23 countries. This very much reflects the work we are doing and shows how new golf developing countries can gain from our expertise and experience. Hungary at present only has seven golf courses, and has, so far, produced some quality layouts which appear to be maintained to a good standard. It is always rewarding to be part of the excitement of seeing a country take those new steps and to be a part of assisting in their development. It becomes such an important process in supporting the growth of what is a new game to them. We look forward to welcoming them to our Conference next February.

During my recent visit to Spain, I took the opportunity to attend the Professional Golf Association of Europe's (PGA-E) Conference, held in Los Alcázares in the area of Murcia. We work very closely with the PGA-E and have done so for many years now. They are a mirror image of FEGGA for the PGA professionals throughout Europe and do some excellent work in many aspects, including education. It is always interesting to spend some time listening to their seminars and to gain further understanding of the other



From left: Fransico Carrajal (President, Spanish Greenkeepers Association) Linda and Dean Cleaver (FEGGA) Emma Villaceros (Past President, Spanish Golf Association) Kate Entwistle (The Turf Disease Centre) Kay and Jim Moore (USGA Green Section)

areas of the golf industry, such as the building of training programmes, and assisting new countries in the development of the game. This year they also invited the National Golf Federations to the Conference, along with ourselves. Part of their programme looked at working together, asking if enough is being done to serve the game and many other aspects that are key to improving the game of golf in the future. It is vital that we are part of these discussions and therefore it was good to be in attendance.

Finally I was very saddened to hear that the GCSAI had to cancel their scheduled Trade Show. I am sure this was a difficult decision to make for many different reasons, but that it was in the best interests of the GCSAI and its Members.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and to hope that the New Year brings the start of a more positive era.



Relaxing during the Spanish Conference



Venue of Spanish Greenkeeper Conference

Irish Links Initiative Calls on Clubs to Become 'Owners' of the Initiative



Co. Sligo Golf Links

The Irish Links Initiative (ILI) which was set up to 'preserve, protect and promote' Links golf in Ireland, has called on Ireland's links clubs to give their full support to the initiative by each becoming a part owner of the scheme. The ILI, the brainchild of Brian Coburn, Greens Convenor of Royal County Down, is a not-for-profit organisation set up in 2008.

Since its creation the Irish Links Initiative has held three major seminars on links golf courses in different parts of Ireland. The latest of these events was held during October in Co Sligo Golf Club, Rosses Point. The seminar, which attracted over one hundred delegates from 30 links clubs, was held over two days. The mix of delegates included club captains, club secretaries, greens convenors and course superintendents. It is the third such venture following successful seminars in Royal Co Down and Portmarnock Hotel and Links.

The seminar at Rosses Point consisted of a series of practical sessions highlighting new techniques to help preserve and protect links courses.

The Irish Links Initiative has the backing of the R&A, the GUI, Failte

Ireland and the Toro Company, all of which have agreed to continue backing the initiative in 2010.

Speaking in relation to the overall initiative Mr Brian Coburn, the founder, said that while it was wonderful to have the backing of these major organisations that the ILI still needed further funding. It was proposed at the seminar that further funding might come by asking all of Ireland's links clubs to take ownership of the Initiative.



Hugh Cassidy, Donegal GC; Eddie Donlon and PJ Dolan, Rush GC; Hugh Gallagher, Donegal GC



Onlookers at one of the on course stations



All present were unanimous that this was the way forward and it was agreed that all clubs would be written to.

Speaking in relation to the initiative Mr Coburn once again stressed the unique nature of links golf and the need to share knowledge and experience amongst those involved with this form of golf. He reminded everyone that Ireland has almost a third of all true links courses in the world. He believed that Irish links golf had a unique body of knowledge and experience and it was essential that this information was shared.

Brian concluded by saying that while currently the emphasis is on networking and sharing of information that part of the remit of the ILI was to promote Irish links golf on a worldwide stage.

For further information on the Irish Links Initiative you can contact Brian Coburn

Tel: + 44 7968 976115

or Tracy Coburn

Tel: +44 7803 237247



Left: Eamon Reynolds and Stephen Hoey, Laytown & Bettystown GC; Terence McShea, Bundoran GC; Pat O'Dwyer, Convenor with the Greenkeeping Training Committee (GTC) of the GUI

Renovation Seminar at Old Conna GC

Old Conna Golf Club in Bray was the venue for a seminar on renovation of golf courses held by Swan Golf Designs, professional golf course architects, on 26th November last. Representatives – owners, managers, greenkeepers – of local clubs attended the morning's event which focused on the need to maintain the structure of the golf course, its design, its technical and golfing performance, by and commitment to a long term plan to update it, but doing so by sensible, realizable programming of the renovation works.

Delegates heard from Howard Swan, Principal Architect at SGD, about the opportunity to take an holistic view of the course, its overall design, its rhythm, its routing, its safety as well as the condition and performance of its components – greens, tees, and particularly bunkers, together with the course's presentation and its setting in the natural landscape.

The renovation work, currently being undertaken at Old Conna, was viewed in the company of the contractors – Bremur Sportsturf and Turfcare - and the work to the

bunkering on three of the holes was discussed in the context of Old Conna's long term plan, being undertaken over a ten year programme to raise the bar of the course at the Club and to improve its competitive position in the region.

Swan Golf Designs now take the seminar to the north, to Donaghadee Golf Club, County Down, on 10th December. The course is presently in its third year of a renovation programme which this year is being supplemented by a project, funded by Sport Northern Ireland, to develop its practice facilities into an Academy and Junior golf course.



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Beech Park Golf Club

Beech Park Golf Club is only a forty minute drive from the busy city of Dublin, but when you are there you would think you were in the middle of rural Ireland, such is the peace and tranquillity of the place.

**Course Feature
by Alan Mahon**



The 10th hole - the start of Amen Corner

Beech Park is aptly named as it contains many mature trees mostly comprising of beech trees. But there are also fine specimens of oak, ash and lime. I was fortunate to visit the course on an October day when the trees were boasting their autumnal colours.

The land was formerly part of the Johnstown Kennedy Estate located just two miles from Rathcoole. Those of you who are old enough will remember the popular TV drama series in the 1980's, *The Irish RM*. Scenes from the programme were shot at the 14th hole, where the Kennedy three storey Georgian manor house was situated before it was demolished. In 1983, 110 acres of this estate were purchased by former members of nearby Bodinstown Golf Club. Eddie Hackett, one of Ireland's most respected golf architects, was hired to design the new course and in 1984, the 400 member club had its 6400 yard par 72 course open for play. Back in 1984 the greens were

constructed using soil but in 1992 the club took on the services of Eddie Connaughton for advice on converting these soil based greens to sand, using USGA specifications and by 1994 all the greens had been converted. In 1995, Eddie advised the club to start a fairway sanding programme which it did and is still doing so up to the present day. The club was so impressed with Eddie's advice that it has used him as the club's agronomist ever since.

Today, the club has almost 1000 members. Beech Park is probably one of the last 'Member' golf clubs established in Ireland as the Resort and Country Club would soon dominate the scene of Irish golf course construction. Beech Park's General Manager is Karl Young and he was one of the founder members of the club back in 1983.

Holes 9 – 13 are known as Amen Corner and, like Augusta National, it is a most beautiful part of the course with mature trees and lakes dominating



The 9th Green

**David Callanan**

the landscape. The 11th hole is a short par four, measuring only 282 metres from the back tees, but don't be fooled into thinking that this is the easiest hole on the course - it has a stroke index of 10.

Course Staff

The Course Superintendent at Beech Park is David Callanan. He has been there for almost four years now but he gained much of his experience from other

courses he worked on such as The K Club, Powerscourt and Whistling Straits in Wisconsin, USA (as part of the Ohio State University greenkeeping programme).

With so many trees on the course, David gets them checked by a tree surgeon every two to three years just to make sure that there are no dangerous branches waiting to fall on the unsuspecting golfer. David told me that in twenty-five years only forty mature trees fell. All of the mature beech trees appear on an 1830 map of the area. This gives an idea of their great age.

David has eight staff members working on the course, two of which are on a unique FAS scheme, tailor made for greenkeeping in which other clubs within the region are also participating. David's Assistant is Robert Kilduff. He too started his greenkeeping career on a FAS course but at Naas Golf Club back in 2000. He continued working at Naas until 2007 when he took up his current position as Assistant to David at Beech Park. Robert is a very keen golfer and regularly plays at

the GCSAI Southeast regional golf outings. He was a member of this year's Southeast team that took part in the President's Cup at Castleknock Golf Club.

I met the longest serving course staff member, Joe Kennedy, who was also another founding member of Beech Park Golf Club. Joe has fond memories of the late Eddie Hackett. "When Eddie would visit the green field site we would meet with him to discuss his design. Nothing was drawn or written down but he had a wonderful way of describing each hole so eloquently. It was like as if he was painting a beautiful picture of the hole in your mind" recalls Joe.

**Joe Kennedy has fond memories of Eddie Hackett**

David is very fortunate in having a full time mechanic, Denis Doherty. "Since employing Denis the occurrence of machinery breakdowns has been eliminated, machines do not leave the premises and the health of the turf has improved no end, particularly on the putting surfaces due to the regular grinding and sharpening of our mowers. The occurrence of diseases has reduced considerably" says David. "I would encourage every club to employ their own full time mechanic. They will get a return on their investment almost immediately" he added.

The club steward is John Nolan who worked on the Kennedy Estate since he was a boy. Now John has many stories to tell about days of old on the estate but it would take a separate article to write about them all.

The staff moved in to their new maintenance facility only last May and there is no comparison between the old and the new. "We have a modern chemical storage facility, a recycling wash-down area, dry storage for sand, modern canteen facilities, my own office, and a mechanic workshop. It's fantastic and the staff are delighted with the facility" says David.



Left: Joe Kennedy, David Callanan, Robert Kilduff, Stephen Cummins, Gary Duffy, Denis Doherty, Sean Moore. Missing from photo are Tara Langan and Shay Hammond.



Maintenance

Because of the storage facilities available to him David buys his liquid feeds in bulk. For example he would buy a 1000litre barrel of liquid seaweed and a 200litre barrel of liquid Nitrogen. Buying in large quantities like this saves the club money. The chemical store has a heater installed which keeps the air temperature in the store just above freezing point.

David mows the greens at 3mm in Summer and raises this to 5mm during the Winter. He verti cuts regularly throughout the summer especially during poa seed head formation and would not think twice about doing a triple pass with the verti cutter - not going too deep with the blade settings.

Sanding is carried out lightly every 14 – 21 days on the greens and he applies around 450 tonnes each year to the fairways when he hires a contractor to do this. This year he applied an extra 100 tonnes of sand to selected areas of rough.

When hollow coring is carried out at the start and end of the growing season, he takes advantage of the tractor mounted leaf blowers to get the sand into the holes. A staff member would drive around the perimeter of the green with the blower, and drive up and down the centre of the green until all the holes are filled. Each green takes about twenty minutes to do. "A trick I learned while working in America. What I really like about it is that the grass does not suffer from physical damage from the sand such as a tractor mounted brush would do" said David.

The greens are pencil tined between 10 – 12 times per year – mostly in the winter months at a depth of 3" while a once off verti draining at 10" is carried out every January.

A five year plan was drawn up in 2008 which concentrated on upgrading all the bunkers and rectifying localised drainage problems, particularly behind the 2nd green and 3rd tee. Converting some of the tee boxes to a sand rootzone is also part of this five year plan as well as an ongoing tree planting programme. The first stages of the plan have already started this year. Most of the work will be done in house with the exception of the larger projects such as drainage and water feature restoration (which will be mentioned later on).



The staff at Beech Park have been rewarded with a new maintenance facility



Mole drainage being carried out on the 2nd rough



Work has already started on the bunker programme



Features

There are some old features out on the course which date back to the time of the Kennedy Estate. For example there is a granite scratching post positioned in the middle of the 1st fairway. The club uses this post as an indicator to close the course or not. This is not as bizarre as it sounds. If, for example during fog, while standing on the first tee, you cannot see the scratching post, then the course is closed until such time as the old scratcher is visible again.

Another feature running through the 5th, 14th and 16th fairways is a Ha Ha. For those of you who do not know what that is, it is a cleverly made stone wall constructed on one side of a dyke to prevent livestock from trespassing onto the estate's crops or lawn. It was built on many wealthy estates throughout Ireland.

The 'Ha ha' will be restored to its former glory as part of the five year plan mentioned earlier.

In 1812 two ponds were dug on the estate and in 1830 the owner built a canal connecting these two ponds. The canal is approximately 1,000 yards long, starting at the 13th green and finishing on the right-hand-side of the 11th fairway where a boat house was built and remains in good condition today. The depth of the canal varies from about 3 ft. to 6 ft. This canal was left abandoned and derelict for many years. When work on the construction of the golf course began, the canal was cleaned out and water began to fill up the banks once again (there are many springs which feed the canal a steady flow of clean water). The water from the canal is used to irrigate all around the course.

Legend has it that the favourite daughter of the Kennedy household was granted her wish to have an avenue of 16 lime trees planted to commemorate her sixteenth birthday. The trees were planted along what was the main entrance

avenue to the demesne, leading to the house. This avenue ran between what is now the 11th green and 12th tee, and then over the stone bridge to the main area of the course. It is said that on her death in 1939, one tree fell. The gap where one tree is missing is clearly visible.

Legend or no legend, Beech Park Golf Club is a magical place to play golf, excellently maintained by David Callanan and his magnificent staff.

You can be sure that the club is in safe hands.

Right: The Ha Ha, seen on some wealthy estates in Ireland



The scratching post in the middle of the 1st fairway





Winter scene on the 13th fairway captured by David Callanan

Machinery Used at Beech Park

John Deere 220A Pedestrian Greens Mower x 3
 Toro 1600 Pedestrian Tees Mower x 2
 John Deere 2500A Greens Mower
 Toro 3250 Approach Mower
 John Deere 2500 Tees Mower
 John Deere 3235C Fairway Mower
 Jacobsen HR 5111 Rough Mower
 Toro Side Winder 3100D x 2

John Deere Gator 4x4 x 2
 John Deere Gator 6x4
 John Deere Progator

John Deere 4100 Compact Tractor
 John Deere 4310 Compact Tractor
 John Deere 5300 Tractor

Toro Pro Core 648
 John Deere Aercore 1500
 Sisis Fairway Slit Tine Aerator
 Sisis Greens Slit Tine Aerator

Gambetti 450lt Sprayer
 Ultra Plant Disk Top Dresser
 Charterhouse Brush Top Dresser

Smithco Super Star Bunker Rake
 Takeuchi TB 125 Mini Digger
 Buffalo Vac Debris Collector
 Buffalo Debris Blower
 Agri Metal Pto Debris Blower
 Ruscon Water Tanker

Berhnard Dual Express Grinder/Blade Grinder
 Rotary lift



The majestic lime trees guarding the old avenue



The old avenue bridge with ferns growing in the cracks



Hello to our members in the North-East region. As I write this article Autumn has already passed us by and we are now in the middle of Winter. Hopefully we can all look forward to a good time at Christmas and make plans for the New Year.

We have to thank our trade members who supported us this year and who were able to attend our golf outings in such numbers. It is always good to see the regular faces and new ones as well.

We always welcome, and are glad to see, our members attend our outings and I know it is not always easy to get time off to go and play golf. With cutbacks on many courses it may get more difficult for Greenstaff to attend these functions.

Autumn Trophy

It was our great pleasure to have Rathfarnham host this annual competition, which always draws a large crowd and this year was no exception. Everybody had a great day and it was a cracker of a day for October.

Rathfarnham was founded in 1899 and the original course was on land near the village of Rathfarnham in South County Dublin. In 1965 it moved to its present site, nestling in the foothills of the Dublin mountains. Originally a 9 hole course, it has been successfully developed to a 15 hole course. Without a doubt, Rathfarnham is a wonderful parkland course and much praise must go to Eddie Walsh, the Course Superintendent, and his team for presenting the course to such a high standard on the day. A special thanks also to his deputy, John Egan, who organised the day from start to finish. I would also like to pay tribute to the club themselves and the catering staff for looking after us so well.



Left: Bobby McDermott, Gerry Byrne (winner of the Autumn Trophy) and John Egan



On the first tee at Rosslare

Wexford on Thursday and Friday night with an enjoyable meal together there on Friday evening. Pat Murphy of Anthony D'Arcy Sand once again came up with the generous sponsorship with some outstanding prizes on offer. A sincere 'thank you' to John Hanrick, Secretary Manager of Rosslare Golf Club, for allowing us to play the course. Andrew Doyle, the Links Superintendent and his staff have to be commended on the super work they are doing at Rosslare. It was a pleasure playing golf there. It was a revelation to see some of the course staff constructing revetted bunkers around the 18th green. Keep up the good work guys.



Left: Paddy Holohan, Jim Gorman and Stephen Daly

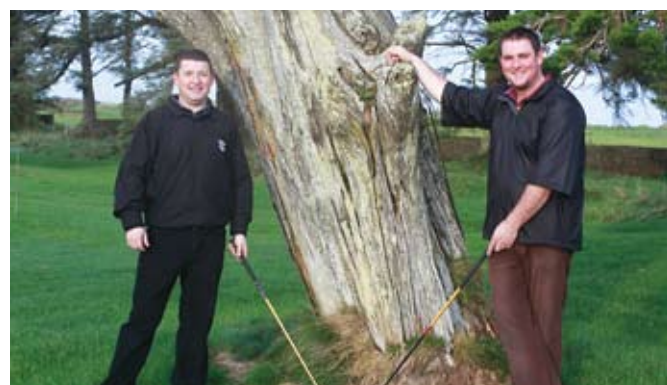
Autumn Trophy Results

1st Gerry Byrne 33pts
2nd Paul Fitzgerald 30pts.
3rd Jason Whelan 28pts

Trade Prize - Frank Byrne
Longest Drive - Gavin Dillon
Nearest The Pin - Pdraig Burke

Rosslare outing

The annual weekend away to Rosslare (Nov 26th to 28th) again proved successful as we enjoyed a dry pleasant day on the links course on the Friday. We stayed in the Talbot Hotel,



Left: Robin Twinem and Barry Carpenter from Co. Louth G.C.



Once again we face a tough time throughout our region with the consistent rainfall. There does not seem to be any let up and, after comparing 2008 to 2009 until the end of October, here in Woodenbridge golf club we were 150mm up from last year.

I am not feeling hard done by as I have talked to many Superintendents around the country and I seem to have got off lightly.

This is now the time to be calling up old friends or making new ones as we go further into the winter period and golfers go into hibernation. Let's check out and compare rounds of golf, keep up to date with staffing levels, budget adjustments and the general course practices of our neighbours and other regions. There is a lot of spin by committees, members and staff of what the guy down the road is doing. Be prepared, it's going to be a long winter. Fiona Brown is always available to talk or help with any enquiries.

I would like to thank Donal Shine from New Forest Golf Club for his excellent welcome and presentation of his course at our last outing.

New Forest Results

- 1st Pdraig Lynch 43pts.
- 2nd Barry Crosbie 42pts.
- 3rd Steve Martin 37pts.
- 4th Paul Smyth 37pts.
- 5th Barry Kavanagh 37pts.

Trade Prize
Frank Byrne (JFB Golf Supplies)

Congratulations have to go to the South West region for winning the Presidents Cup, well done and we look forward to doing battle with you next year.

Well done to all the Greenkeepers who recently passed their exams and are now qualified. The very best of luck to them in the future.

Our next outing is on the 10th of December in Arklow Golf Club and it is also our A.G.M. If you have any proposals etc and cannot be there on the day please contact me by e mail on trevordargan@inbox.com.

Finally I would like to thank Roy Butler for his hard work on the committee over the last few years. Also to all the committee members, it was great working with you and let's hope the coming year is better in all aspects.

Enjoy your Christmas.

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Battle of the "Two Johns" at Dromoland

It was a case of the battle of the "Two Johns" for the overall prize at Dromoland Golf and Country Club, with John Tierney of Nenagh and John Fitzgerald from Tralee both scoring an excellent thirty-five points

The "Two Johns" are fine consistent competitors and both had superb back nines (John T. with twenty points and John F. with nineteen points). Hot on their heels was Seamus Lyons of Charleville who is seldom out of the final shake-up.

The course was in pristine condition with all holes playing to maximum length, with fast greens and we looked forward to a great day's golf. Low scoring on the day showed how challenging a course it was.

Conor Egan of Spraychem Golf, won the Trade Prize with twenty nine points playing off twenty-three handicap and just edging out Ken McManmon who had twenty-eight points playing off sixteen handicap.



Paul Coleman, Dromoland and Simon O'Hara, Fota Island relaxing during the game.

What a variety of weather conditions we have had during the past year! When we should have been having Summer conditions it was like Winter and during the Autumn it was more like an Indian Summer, especially late September and early October. We had planned our Autumn outing to Dromoland Golf and Country Club for Tuesday 1st September and we really looked forward to playing this excellent venue with enthusiasm but we had to call it off at the last minute due to the atrocious weather conditions. So without any further delay, Head Superintendent Paul Coleman and I set about organising a new date for our outing. In achieving this we have to thank Secretary Manager John O'Halloran and the management Committee most sincerely for their courtesy and flexibility as always. It is most appreciated.

Tuesday 6th October was the new date arranged for the outing and what a mixture of elements we encountered! Early morning arrived with, surprise, surprise, lashing rain.



The beautiful setting of Dromoland Castle



But those who took the chance that the day might change were greatly rewarded as approximately a half an hour after arriving at Dromoland the clouds rolled back and gave way to one of the best days we've had this year. Anyway that's enough about the weather so let's get back to the business in hand!

Our grateful thanks go to Paul Coleman, his Assistant Tim O'Sullivan and their conscientious staff for having the course in superb order. Also we cannot forget all who were involved in the catering department for the fine food served up to us afterwards. A great day was had by one and all. Well done to everyone concerned!

Dromoland Castle Results

		Overall	
1st	John Tierney.	Nenagh	16 h'cap 35pts.
2nd	John Fitzgerald.	Tralee	13 h'cap 35pts.
3rd	Seamus Lyons.	Charleville	15 h'cap 33pts.
		Category 1	
1st	Michael Leahy.	Tralee	8 h'cap 32pts.
		Category 2	
1st	Simon O'Hara.	Fota Island	10 h'cap 31pts.
2nd	Paudie Horan.	Killarney.	12 h'cap 31pts.
		Category 3	
1st	Denis McCarthy	Tipperary	25 h'cap 31pts.
		Trade Prize	
1st	Conor Egan.	Spraychem Golf	23h'cap 29pts.
2nd	Ken McMenaman.	Martyns Lawns	16h'cap 28pts.

New Appointment

On behalf of the Committee and members of the South West Region I would like to congratulate Seamus Lyons on his appointment as the new Head Superintendent at Charleville Golf Club. Seamus is one of the most down to earth people you could ever wish to meet anywhere and a fine golfer as well. I also take this opportunity to wish him the very best of luck in his new position.

Sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors most sincerely for their undying support as always. We appreciate their help at all times especially during the negativity of the current economic climate. But hopefully before too long we will have turned the corner and can look forward to better times ahead. Even in these difficult times try to give our sponsors all the support you can. They surely deserve it.

Mile buiochas diabh go léir!

End of Year 2009

The curtain is coming down on another year which I suppose was not one of our best. Golf courses as well as other businesses were hit badly by the downturn in the economy. Many people involved in the turfgrass business became unemployed while others had their employment reduced to a three day week etc. Still we can get over this hiccup in our industry and look forward to a more positive future where we can get some job satisfaction from our profession and get on with the task in hand.



Conor Egan - Trade Prize Winner



Seamus Lyons - 3rd Prize Overall



John Tierney - 1st. Overall

Thanks

Although the turfgrass business suffered financially during the year it was not all doom and gloom. On the social side it was a very successful year! We had some very enjoyable golf outings as well as winning the President's Cup and the Turfnet Invitational Challenge. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the golf courses who made their top class facilities available to us during the year namely: Lahinch, Waterville, Dromoland and Lee Valley. Gura mile maith agaibh go leir.



Annual Conference 2010

The 2010 Annual Conference is due to take place in the Radisson Hotel in Limerick on Wednesday 3rd. and Thursday 4th. March. The South West would have preferred either Cork or Kerry, but the sponsors opted for Limerick. Anyway we have a very fine selection of speakers, dealing with a wide variety of subjects, has been lined up for the event, for what promises to be a very informative and interesting couple of days. Although times are not the best on the economic front, I think a special effort should be made to attend this educational event, as we need to look ahead to better times. We have to educate ourselves to be ready for the future, as there is always light at the end of the tunnel, so start saving your pennies for Limerick 2010.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

President's Cup "Dream Team"

It was a case of third time lucky for the South West when we emerged victorious from the Regional Team Championships held on the sixth of October last at Castleknock Golf and Country Club, County Dublin. The previous two years we had to be content with second place. It was as if "we were always the bridesmaid, but never the bride" so this year we decided to put in a major effort and what a team it turned out to be! This year we left everybody in no doubt as to who the winners were, having a massive thirteen points to spare over our nearest rivals. Justice comes to those who wait!

After the qualification outing to a very challenging Waterville in July I knew that, with the group that emerged from there, we would be major contenders for the 2009 Title. This team put their hearts and souls into playing their very best as one unit and to give credit where credit is due, they were superb. And so with Michael F. O'Connor as Captain, our pairings were as follows:



Michael Leahy putts while team-mate Michael O'Sullivan watches on during the Presidents Cup tournament at Castleknock

Pairing No. 1. Ger O'Neill (Cobh) 5h'cap. And Colman Fitzpatrick (Kanturk) 21h'cap. scoring 41pts.

Pairing No. 2. Michael Leahy (Tralee) 8h'cap. and Michael J. O'Sullivan (Killarney) Scoring 50pts.

Pairing No. 3. Tommy Barrett (Charleville) 14h'cap and David MacIndoe Jnr. (Killarney) 14h'cap. Scoring 42pts.

Total Score was a massive 133points. "A Dream Team Supreme". Though all our team performed superbly, I have to mention pairing No. 2, who had no fewer than four birdies and a 'hole in one' on their card. Michael Leahy scored the 'hole in one' on the long par three ninth hole. He had to carry almost two hundred yards over water to the green with no room for error. Fantastique! Magnifico! Supremo!

Last but not least we would like to compliment Head Superintendent John Jennings on the immaculate condition of the course and also to Colman Ward and Scotts for sponsoring a tremendous couple of days.

With the Sam Maguire back in its rightful home and the President's Cup to keep it company, sure it might get attached to the South West as well.

Advice to the non winners. Keep trying and your day will come!

New Year 2010

So ends another year and as this is the last issue of Greenside before Christmas I would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody involved in the turfgrass business and their families A HAPPY, HOLY AND ENJOYABLE CHRISTMAS, THE VERY BEST OF GOOD HEALTH AND A MORE POSITIVE NEW YEAR 2010 !



Superb Par 3. ... the 11th. hole at Castleknock



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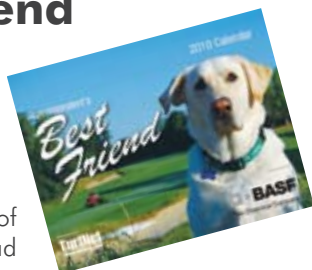
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Man's Best Friend

For the first time in its nine year history the TurfNet Superintendent's Best Friend calendar features a dog from outside the US. The lucky dog and owner are Allie, the pride of Paul O'Mahony at the Old Head Golf Links. Allie appears on the May 2010 calendar dog. The calendar is distributed to most golf courses in the US by TurfNet and is sponsored by BASF. This year the competition to appear on the calendar was as fierce as a pit bull as 179 photos came in for fourteen available spots.



TurfNet's Jon Kiger reports that most courses display the calendar all year long in their shops and many ask for additional copies for others in the department. "When we started this project nine years ago, we knew there was a special bond between Course Managers and their canine companions. Over the years we've heard some great stories about the role of the golf course dog and how much it means to the crew and members at the course."

Another dog with Irish ties appears on the calendar in July. Jess, who makes her home at LedgeRock Golf Club is owned by Assistant Superintendent John Dale, but the course is managed by GCSAI member and Co. Kilkenny native Alan Fitzgerald. To see all the dogs submitted for the calendar, visit www.turfnet.com.



Paul O'Mahony's dog Allie which appears on the 2010 TurfNet calendar

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Out and About



Paddy Carey, Jason Corscadon and George Eastwood at the Information and Demonstration Day at Knightsbrook



Michael Loughran, John Jennings, Damien McLaverty and Greg Collins at the Presidents Cup in Castleknock G.C.



The November Floods

Flooding in Gort Golf Club: Photo courtesy of Peadair Grealish

Relentless torrential rain in November resulted in the worst flooding in living memory in the West of Ireland, with Galway, Limerick, Clare, Cork and Kerry being the hardest hit. Seeing the television pictures of families being marooned, isolated and left homeless was a depressing sight. Many towns and villages were inaccessible for days and, in some cases, even weeks.

There are many theories as to why we are having so much rain lately. Global warming is of course the main reason. The unprecedented high sea temperatures during November resulted in more than normal water vapour being produced, which led to increased precipitation activity.



Photo courtesy of Gerry Dunning

Flooding in Athlone

To give you an idea of the situation, Galway Bay Golf Club recorded 301mm of rain during November. To put this into context, in the five day period from 16th to 20th November they recorded 100mm of rain (almost four inches). Killarney Golf & Fishing Club recorded a staggering 420.5mm of rain for November. Michael F. O'Connor, Assistant at Killarney, reported that the 18th green on the Mahony course was submerged by over 3 feet of water for over a week. The Assistant at Athlone Golf Club, Gerry Dunning, said "We have been closed due to flooding since the 19th of November and there is no sign of opening before Christmas. Two years ago we raised the 6th green by four feet due to previous flooding and it's now under water.

The pumps on the 1st and 18th fairways are unable to pump the water into the Shannon, so they are flooded too."

How will this flooding affect these golf clubs in the long term? The most obvious result is loss of revenue due to course closures – some may remain closed up to Christmas. The health of the course will also be a problem. With so much grass underwater, many Superintendents will be desperately battling to control disease outbreaks, if they get the opportunity to reach the affected areas. Even when the waters recede, ground conditions will be so bad that vehicle access to the affected areas will be almost impossible. Winter renovation programmes are also going to be severely curtailed. Add these problems to the depressing state of the economy and you have indeed a dire situation. It doesn't rain but it pours!



Photo courtesy of Michael F. O'Connor

Clean up operation of the Flooding in Killarney

So how did the golf clubs fare out? They also got their share of flooding with Ballinasloe, Gort, Athlone, Killarney and Galway Bay in particular, being badly affected. What is remarkable is that the flooding got worse days after the rain fell. Why was this? When rainwater makes its way to the rivers, it causes them to rise, resulting in immediate flooding. In the case of the River Shannon - Ireland's largest river, it has hundreds of tributaries feeding into it, each one bursting at the seams with floodwater. Those areas on the northern areas of the Shannon will flood first but it takes a few days for this water to reach the southern part of the river. Areas in the southern region already flooded will get this extra water, many days after the rain has stopped, which invariably leads to more flooding.



Weather Doesn't Stop Information and Demonstration Day at Knightsbrook

The dreadful weather, or the public sector strike, didn't stop a successful Information & Demonstration day going ahead on Tuesday 24th November which was held at the golf club at the Knightsbrook Hotel and Golf Resort in Trim, Co. Meath.

The day, which was organised by Tracy Coburn, had 13 exhibitors who had a wide range of machinery and products on display and attracted over 70 delegates from 40 local golf clubs. This was a networking opportunity for companies and superintendents as the recent weather has hampered many activities on the golf course.



On site demonstrations being carried out at Knightsbrook Hotel & Golf Resort

Tracy Coburn commented "I would like to thank all those who attended the day, the exhibitors who took part and braved the weather and a special thanks to Ronan Carey, Course Superintendent and Gavin Hunt, Golf Director at the Knightsbrook Hotel & Golf Resort, for hosting the event."

Exhibitors who took part were:

- Campey Turf Care Services
- Dublin Grass Machinery
- Groundsman Industries
- Horta Soils
- Irish Farm & Garden Machinery
- Jeff Howes Golf Design
- Leinster Turf Equipment
- Neutrog Fertilisers
- Reel-Tech
- STRI
- Summerhill Lawns
- Ultra Spreader
- Water Detox Solutions



Left: Jeff Sheridan, Ollie Smith, Jim McElroy and Stephen McKeever all from Royal Tara Golf Club.

Useful Publications

An Irishman's Cuttings

Cost: €29.99

Length: 214 pages

Published: 2009

ISBN: 13-9781848890053

Author: E. Charles Nelson

Describes tales of Irish gardens and gardeners, plants and plant hunters. There are stories of eccentric, opinionated Irish gardeners and the plants they cherished, propagated and passed on. Each essay is an Irishman's cutting in another way, having been first published in The Irish Garden magazine, for which Charles Nelson has written since 1992. They are all well rooted. Available in most Irish bookshops.



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Closing date for the next issue is January 22nd 2010

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Turfgrass Culture and Disease Management

By

Gordon Kauffman III, Ph.D. and Matt Nelson Grigg Brothers

Do you know what optimum turfgrass health looks like? Relying on the visual observation of too few factors may not provide the best overall picture. 'Health' reflects the state of soundness or physical condition of a plant, however, vigour reflects its competitive strength and the extent of robust, forceful, or energetic growth.

Direct observation is critical to assess colour and growth, response to fertilisers, recuperative capacity from mechanical or environmental stress, and competitiveness with other plant species and pathogens. Healthy and vigorous plants are more resistant to disease pressure than weakened or less vigorous plants. Maximise plant health with a strong foundation using basic agronomic principles and careful consideration of factors in your control including fertiliser programmes, mechanical cultivation, sand topdressing, turfgrass species selection, improving air flow and sunlight penetration to the turf, mowing strategies, careful selection of pest control products, nozzles and dilution rates, and irrigation management, in addition to the use of innovative and science-based technologies (Fig. 1).

Turfgrass Nutrition and Plant Health

Maintaining an adequate status of all essential mineral nutrients in plant tissues remains the foundation for plant health. Turfgrass species have different optimum fertiliser requirements that must be considered prior to finalising a fertiliser programme. Maximise nutrient uptake and utilisation by selecting the appropriate formulation and application timing. For example, granular fertilisers are available in slow-release or quickly-available sources and are often applied at higher rates (3.6-4.8 kg N/1000 m²) and during periods of increased plant shoot and root growth. For cool season grasses, this occurs typically during spring and fall or establishment. Conversely, foliar fertilisers designed for leaf absorption are best applied frequently and at lower rates (0.5-1.2 kg N/1000 m²) prior to and during times of environmental stress (ie. drought, heat), and/or when root growth and nutrient uptake become compromised. Spoon feeding with foliar absorbed formulations will most efficiently provide essential plant nutrients to turfgrasses growing in soils with low cation exchange capacity (CEC), or chemical imbalances such as extreme pH, saline, sodic, or saline/sodic conditions. Research data suggests that the use of both granular and foliar fertilisers as part of a fertility programme will maximise turf colour, quality and vigour.

Disease Management

The best disease management programmes utilise an integrated approach.

Factors to consider when developing disease management programmes as illustrated by the 'Disease Triangle' (Fig.2).

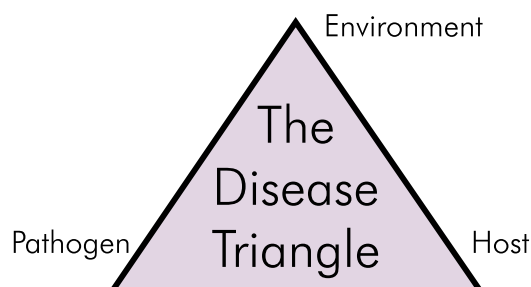


Fig. 1. Make sure product claims and new technologies are backed by good science and always ask for supportive research data (Courtesy G.L. Kauffman III)

These include:

- Improving plant health (Host)
- Evaluate the growing environment for shade and air circulation (Environment)
- Employing proper cultivation (Host/Environment)
- Maintaining adequate irrigation (Environment)
- Utilising an appropriate mowing strategy (Host)
- Selecting the best turfgrass species (Host)
- Correct pathogen identification (Pathogen)
- Correct fungicide selection and use (Pathogen)
- Establishing disease thresholds (Pathogen)
- Maintaining environmental safety (Environment)
- Providing proper drainage (Environment)
- Employing proper fertilisation (Host)

Fig. 2





Factors Affecting Pathogen Development

In general, pathogen development is favoured by weakened turf due to mechanical or environmental stress, poor drainage and/or compacted soils, incorrect or unbalanced soil and plant nutrient status, shade, poor air circulation, and excessive thatch. Many pathogens are favoured by high day/night temperatures and humidity. These and other environmental conditions (low temperatures, drought, salinity) can create conditions conducive for disease development. History remains the best guide to develop programmes (ie. pesticide, fertiliser, irrigation) and strategies (cultural practices) to use leading up to and when conditions are most conducive to disease development.

Better manage turf pathogens by implementing correct cultural practices, turfgrass species selection, pest scouting practices, mapping, and proper pesticide use (Figure 3). Improve plant health by correcting major soil drainage or chemical problems, managing thatch, limiting shade, maintaining good air flow and providing adequate turfgrass nutrition. Maintaining optimum plant nutrient status and understanding key nutrient pathogen interactions will reduce the potential for disease. Fine tuning fungicide programmes can have a dramatic impact on disease suppression. Correctly identifying the target pathogen, selecting a fungicide with the effective mode of action, and correct placement of the active ingredient is essential. Proper equipment calibration and selection of the best nozzles and water volume carrier will maximize fungicide efficacy. Establish and maintain tolerable disease thresholds with scouting, mapping, and meticulous record keeping. Develop a spray programme using historical data and maintain environmental safety by developing fertiliser and pesticide programmes safe for ground and surface water, animals, and humans.



Fig. 3. Use mechanical cultivation and regular topdressing to manage thatch and promote adequate soil gas exchange (photo courtesy G.L. Kauffman III)

Importance of Cultural Practices

Cultural practices such as mechanical cultivation, sand topdressing, fertilisation, mowing, and irrigation management form the foundation for maintaining adequate turfgrass health and maximizing plant vigour. These practices are critical for promoting soil gas exchange, thatch management, maximizing soil nutrient availability, and promoting the correct ratio of air, soil, and water within the rhizosphere, or soil-root interface (Fig. 4). Thatch management will be largely a function of turfgrass species morphology, climate, soil conditions, and cultivation strategies. Heavy thatch producers require more aggressive cultural practices.

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Recall that managing thatch remains a balance between removing and diluting organic matter deposition (biomass accumulation). Therefore, proper fertilisation practices, including the use of spoon feeding nitrogen (N) and other essential plant nutrients, will help to limit biomass production while also increasing overall turfgrass colour and quality.



Fig. 4. Less aggressive core cultivation using 6.25 mm tines to promote soil gas exchange (photo courtesy S. McDonald)

Forms of mechanical cultivation include core aeration (hollow or solid tine), verticutting, spiking, scarification, water injection, and sand injection, which can be performed more, or less, aggressively depending on the size, spacing, and depth of the tines and/or blades (Fig. 5). Developing the most appropriate cultivation programme for the site depends on agronomic conditions, playing surface objectives, climate, water quality, resources and the golf schedule. Utilise a comprehensive approach to develop the most effective cultivation strategy including empirical observation, soil testing, experience and the use of consultants. Many options exist currently to enable the turf manager to refine the cultivation programme to meet agronomic objectives while minimizing inconvenience to the golfer.



Fig. 5. Aggressive deep groove verticutting and sand topdressing with a Graden GBS 1200 (photo courtesy G.L. Kauffman III)

growing season enables the turf manager to match the rate of organic matter deposition with sand, thereby maintaining sand as the dominant component of the soil/organic matter matrix and providing a balance between air-filled and water-filled pore space in the soil. Pathogens thrive with ample water and nutrients, and often reside in the thatch. Optimum thatch decomposition occurs during higher temperatures with adequate water, nitrogen, and slightly acidic soil pH. Sand applications also help maintain a smooth playing surface and the short term inconvenience to golfers or damage to mowing units is outweighed by the long term agronomic benefits and improved playing quality. A good topdressing programme will help safeguard turf quality over winter in maritime climates where growth is slowed but some golf is still being played by increasing surface firmness and water infiltration.

Mechanical Cultivation

Forms of mechanical cultivation include core aeration (hollow or solid tine), verticutting, spiking, scarification, water injection, and sand injection, which can be performed more, or less, aggressively

Topdressing

Topdressing dilutes thatch and organic matter accumulation and promotes a smooth playing surface. Filling aerification holes with sand over time will amend the soil where poor drainage exists. Regular applications of sand during the

Fertilisers

Apply fertiliser in the appropriate form and at the correct time, based on turf species requirements, soil nutrient status, and chemical and physical properties. Correct fertilisation will promote growth, produce a desirable colour, maximize plant vigour, increase primary metabolism, promote energy storage, and may limit disease severity. Develop the most appropriate programme based on soil test results, agronomic and playability objectives, soil conditions, climate, time of year, volume of play and historical concerns (experience). Utilise available technologies and best management practices to refine the programme for any specific site.

Water Management

Soil water will influence the growth of plants and other organisms living in the soil. Excess water will increase turfgrass canopy humidity and can lead to root dysfunction and diseases such as *Pythium* and *Fusarium* spp. Conversely, drought causes turf tissues to become more susceptible to pathogen attack, and can reduce the activity of natural microbial competitors. Generally speaking, too little water is better than too much because the turf manager has a higher degree of control. When a lack of natural rainfall exists and a suitable water source exists, irrigate to field capacity when necessary or at the first sign of wilt. Research has shown that too little water (irrigating below 80% replacement ET) can lead to increased incidence of anthracnose.

Mowing

Diseases are often favoured by low mowing heights because the photosynthetic tissues that produce carbohydrates are removed, rootzone temperatures increase, rooting becomes shallower, and wounding can occur to plant tissues. Wounding from mowing may allow pathogens to gain a competitive advantage by unfavorably affecting tissue moisture content and causing plants to unnecessarily expend energy for hormone production to make physiological repairs. Sharp mowers are imperative to minimize tissue damage and help manage diseases. Fungi that infect leaves may be transported by mowers. Mowing on poorly drained areas can lead to severe disease infestations, usually as a result of effectively lowering the height of cut due to surface softness. Research from Rutgers University has clearly identified that lower mowing significantly increases the incidence of anthracnose. Raising the height of cut during anticipated periods of disease can be very beneficial. Rolling may be used to manage ball roll without increasing disease or necessitating too low of a cutting height. Switching to smooth, out front rollers on the mowers can be an effective means of reducing stress and avoiding mechanical injury, especially when conditions are wet and soft.

Disease and Nitrogen Interactions

Nitrogen (N) fertilisation, whether too high or low, can impact disease development. For example, an increased incidence of anthracnose (*Colletotrichum cereale*) and dollar spot (*Sclerotinia homeocarpa*) may occur under N limiting conditions. Conversely, brown patch (*Rhizoctonia solani*) and snow mold [*microdochium patch* (*Microdochium nivale*) and typhula blight] incidence might increase from high tissue N concentrations and excessive N applied in late fall prior to winter dormancy. Using the correct N source applied at the



appropriate time and understanding key nutrient-pathogen interactions will reduce the potential for disease.

Use of Phosphonates

Not to be confused with phosphate (H_2PO_4^-), current research exists to substantiate the benefits of fertilisers that contain phosphite (H_2PO_3^-) as one component of an integrated approach to disease management, specifically for anthracnose (*Colletotrichum cereale*) and pythium blight (*Pythium* spp.) (Fig. 6). Contact your local university turfgrass extension specialist or consultancy service to obtain additional research data. The active ingredient, phosphite (H_2PO_3^-), functions as an elicitor and works both directly and indirectly to enhance disease suppression and should be used exclusively as one component of a preventive disease management programme.

Foliar Fertiliser and Fungicide Synergy

Recent research protocols assess the use of foliar fertilisers applied in combination with fungicides for enhanced turf quality and disease suppression. The objective is to determine whether highly efficient foliar fertilisers, including those that contain phosphite (H_2PO_3^-), tank-mixed with low label fungicide rates will achieve adequate disease control. In comparison to traditional pesticide programmes, applied results from 2007 indicate that foliar phosphite (14% phosphite) applied in combination with 5.5 kg ha⁻¹ of chlorothalonil



Fig. 6. *Pythium* blight (*Pythium* spp.) and anthracnose (*Colletotrichum graminicola*) on an annual bluegrass (*Poa annua* L.) putting green. (Courtesy G. L. Kauffman III)

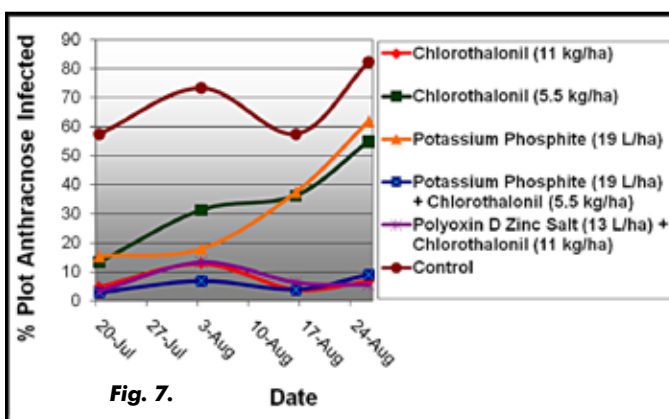
provided the same anthracnose suppression as 11 kg ha⁻¹ of chlorothalonil combined with 13 L ha⁻¹ of Polyoxin D zinc salt (Fig. 7). In addition, foliar fertilisers applied

in combination with fungicides improved overall turf quality compared to fungicides or foliar fertiliser treatments

applied separately. This was likely due to the low dose frequent N application combined with potassium phosphite. The data provides tools for turf managers to better optimize plant health and lessen their reliance on pesticides and offers scientifically based options to consider when planning and implementing best disease management and fertility practices.

Conclusion

Optimize plant health and manage turf diseases by using the correct cultural practices to promote turf vigour. In conjunction, use history as your guide to determine the times of the year and/or environmental conditions that are most favorable for disease development. Implement a proper pesticide programme, particularly under moderate or severe pressure. Use soil and/or tissue testing as a monitoring approach to determine necessary nutrient inputs and assess



problems that exist. Implement programmes to correct major soil chemical and/or physical problems immediately. Of equal importance is the direct and careful observation of the many factors associated with turf performance, and meticulous record keeping that will be helpful for developing fertiliser and pest management programmes. Utilise an integrated approach, including new technologies that have been put through the rigors of science. Careful assessment of turfgrass vigour before, during, and after environmental stress or moderate disease pressure will provide a good overall indication of plant health.

Common Diseases and Cultural Management Strategies

Anthracnose (*Colletotrichum cereale*) – Maintain optimum overall fertility and raise mowing heights to ≥ 3.175 mm when environmental conditions are conducive to disease development. Utilise rolling and plant growth regulator applications to maintain desirable ball roll characteristics. Maintain a light and frequent sand topdressing programme to develop a firm, supportive surface for mowing equipment. Apply ≥ 14.5 kg nitrogen (N)/1000 m²/yr. Avoid deficiencies of phosphorus and potassium. Apply nitrogen in low doses and frequently to help reduce disease symptoms. Utilize fertilisers that contain potassium phosphite (KH_2PO_3) on a preventative basis to lessen the severity of disease.

Summer Patch (*Magnaporthe poae*) – Use slow release nitrogen sources and acidifying fertilisers to maintain a soil pH ≤ 6.3 , if possible. Avoid nitrate nitrogen fertilisers. Maintaining optimum levels of manganese (Mn) has been associated with a reduction in summer patch incidence but a cause effect relationship has not been confirmed. Further research is needed.

Take-all-Patch (*Gaeumannomyces graminis*) – Disease favoured by soils with high sand, low organic matter, low or unbalanced soil fertility, low manganese availability (Mn deficiency), or high pH. Use acidifying fertilisers such as ammonium sulphate in cool weather and avoid alkaline topdressing materials. Optimize root development with aeration, irrigation, and fertilisation. Supplement with adequate and efficient manganese (Mn) fertilisation, including foliar applications of chelated Mn.

Dollar Spot (*Sclerotinia homeocarpa*) – Use frequent and higher dose (1-1.2 kg N/1000 m²) foliar nitrogen applications when dollar spot is active. Minimize leaf wetness, however maintain adequate soil moisture.



Students Awarded Greenke

9th November 2009 saw Europe celebrate the 20th anniversary of the falling of The Berlin Wall but other celebrations were happening nearer to home as thirty nine students from the Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin, Co. Dublin received their FETAC Level 6 Certificates in Greenkeeping.

It was a proud moment for the students, as family and friends were present to watch the presentation of certificates in the pleasant surrounds of the college. There was an international flavour to the proceedings as students, originally from New Zealand, Poland and the Estonia, but now working in Ireland, also received their certificates.

Pat O'Dwyer, Convenor with the Greenkeeping Training Committee (GTC) with the GUI, presented the certificates to each of the students and commented on how the standard of Irish greenkeeping has improved over the years. This, he said, is due to the training Teagasc provides, now in its 27th year, and also to the promotion of the turf profession by the GCSAI.

Pat Suttle, course facilitator, praised the golf clubs for sending candidates to the course. "It is heartening to see that, despite the financial difficulties some clubs are experiencing, they still see the importance of greenkeeper education and are willing to send their employees to attend college" he said. "Some clubs have even sent two students for training," he added. The future indeed looks promising as already over



Left: Pat Canning, Teagasc, Noel Brady, Parnell Park (Student of the Year), Ciaran Clarke Teagasc



Left: Pat O'Dwyer, GUI, Pat Suttle, Teagasc, Noel Brady, Parnell Park and Bobby McDermott, GCSAI



eping Certs.

twenty students have enrolled for next year's course.

One of the highlights of the day was the announcement of the Student of the Year by Pat Suttle. This year's honour went to Noel Brady, Groundsman at Parnell Park GAA Club. Bobby McDermott, Education Officer with the GCSAI, was on hand to present Noel with the GCSAI Student of the Year Award.



Left: Noel Broderick, Kevin Broderick Grass Machinery and Pat O'Dwyer, GUI

2009 Recipients of FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Greenkeeping

Thomas Benn (Lahinch GC)
 Noel Brady (Parnell Park sports ground)
 Seamus Byrne (Donabate GC)
 Adrian Campbell (Roganstown)
 William Carry (Cork GC)
 Martin Clancy (Royal Dublin GC)
 Mark Connor (Oscar Traynor Coaching Centre)
 Richard Cosgrave (Knightsbrook GC)
 Graham Crookes (Howth GC)
 Dorota Cwil (Portmarnock Links)
 Pdraig Dineen (Lissellane)
 Vladimirs Drosdeckis (South County GC)
 Daniel Dunne (Hollywood Lakes GC)
 Bernard Dutton (Moyvalley GC)
 Charles Gillis (Cork GC)
 Jason Hickey (Knockanally GC)
 Peter Humphreys (Killeen GC)
 Barry Kavanagh (Naas GC)
 Damien Kearney (Kanturk GC)
 Robert Lett (Blainroe GC)
 Octavius Mantilla (Castleknock GC)
 Alan McArdle (Newlands GC)
 Colm McCarthy (Rathbane GC)
 Allen McDonagh (Hermitage GC)
 Brian McMahon (Dublin Corporation - St. Annes Park)
 Niall Mulvey (Elm Park GC)
 Jason Murphy (Portmarnock GC)
 Rafal Muzyk (Portmarnock Links)
 Lawrence Noctor (Courtown GC)
 Charlie Nolan (Seafeld GC)
 Patrick O'Dwyer (Lahinch GC)
 Thomas O'Rourke (Castlebarna GC)
 Gerard Rowlands (Royal Dublin GC)
 Tomás Rowley (Moyvalley GC)
 Michael Shaw (Turvey GC)
 Paul Taplin (Old Conna GC)
 Mathew Tiernan (Headfort GC)
 Anthony Wemyss (Mountain View GC)
 Marek Zubert (Mount Juliet GC)

Right Answer?

Extract from a student's exam paper: "Water is composed of two gins, Oxygen and Hydrogin. Oxygen is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water."



Back Left: Michael McFeely, Michael Loughran, Ger O'Neill, David MacIndoe Jr., Coleman Ward, Michael F. O'Connor, Coleman Fitzpatrick.
Front: Tommy Barrett, Michael Leehy and Michael O'Sullivan

Presidents Cup Goes to the Southwest

After knocking on the door for many years, the Southwest team received its just rewards when it won the 2009 GCSAI Presidents Cup.

The competition was played on the magnificent Castleknock Golf Course, which is part of the Castleknock Hotel & Country Club. The course was in excellent condition, thanks to Course Superintendent John Jennings and his greenkeeping staff. The weather started with a slight drizzle but temperatures were exceptionally high for the time of year and when the sun eventually did shine in the early afternoon, it was like a summer's day.

The course proved a difficult but fair challenge for the teams, where fast greens and some tough pin positions were the order of the day. Coming away with a par on the par 3 11th green would have been a good achievement and yet there were a few birdies made on that hole, such was the high level of play.

The story of the day though must go to the 'hole in one' made by Michael Leahy of Tralee Golf Club which he achieved on the ninth green. "I completely miss-hit the shot with my six iron. I half bladed the ball and fortunately it scrambled onto the green and the next thing I knew it was in the hole" said the delighted Michael. To rub salt into the wounds of the opposition, Michael went on to birdie the par three 18th.



The team captains: Bobby McDermott (NE), Michael Loughran (GCSAI President), Colman Warde (Scotts Professional), Michael F. O'Connor (SW), Tom Carew (SE). Missing from photo is Jason Podris (NW)



John Jennings (centre) receives a presentation in appreciation for the work he and his staff put into preparing the Castleknock course

Colman Warde of The Scotts Company presented the prizes after a fabulous meal in the clubhouse. Michael Loughran, President of the GCSAI thanked Colman and The Scotts Company for their generous sponsorship of the tournament. "In these times of economic difficulties it is wonderful to see that Scotts are still willing to support the GCSAI Presidents Cup" he said. Michael F. O'Connor was the team captain of the Southwest team and he accepted the Claret Jug on behalf of his team amidst cheers and jubilation. "We are delighted to have won the Presidents Cup this year after trying so hard on previous occasions. Sponsorship works both ways" he added. "Remember those companies that support the GCSAI when deciding on buying products. Keeping them in business means keeping sponsorship alive".

The runners up were the Southeast team captained by Tom Carew.

Course Superintendent at Castleknock, John Jennings, was given a special presentation as a 'Thank You' for the way he and his staff presented the course.

Already the regions are preparing for next year's tournament with qualifiers taking place during early next year.

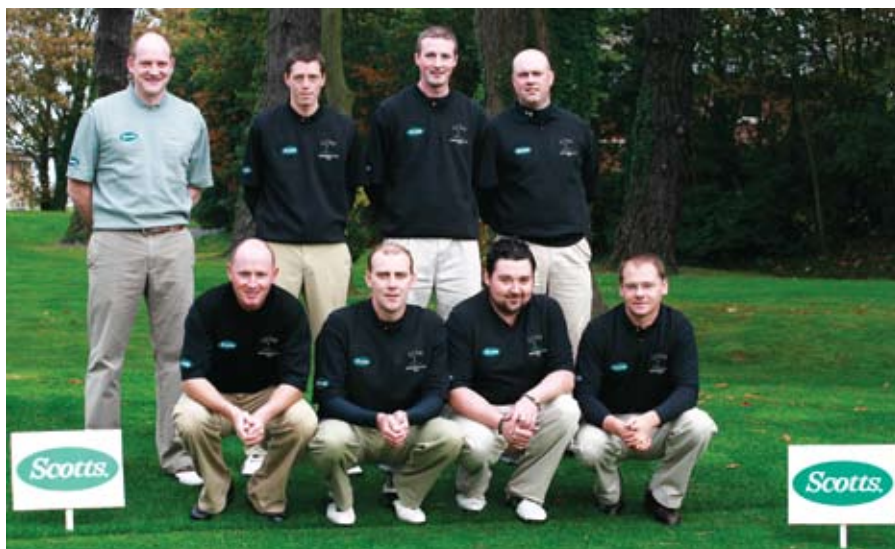
The Southeast team.
Back row left: Colman Warde (Scotts), Barry Crosbie, Paul Smyth, Mark Rowland.
Front row left:
Tom Carew (team captain), Mark Murphy, Robert Kilduff Roy Butler



The Northeast team. Back row left: Colman Warde (Scotts), John Mahony, Paul Whelan, Paul Fitzgerald. Front row left: Alan McArdle, Dean Brock, Bobby McDermott (team captain), Paddy Holohan.

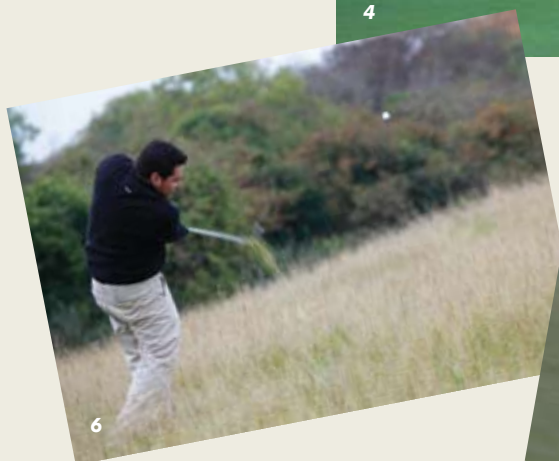


The Northwest team. Back row left: Colman Warde (Scotts), Jason Podris (team captain), Tommy McHugh, Ciaran Sweeney. Front row left: Billy Connell, John Joyce, John Moran, Michael Ryan.



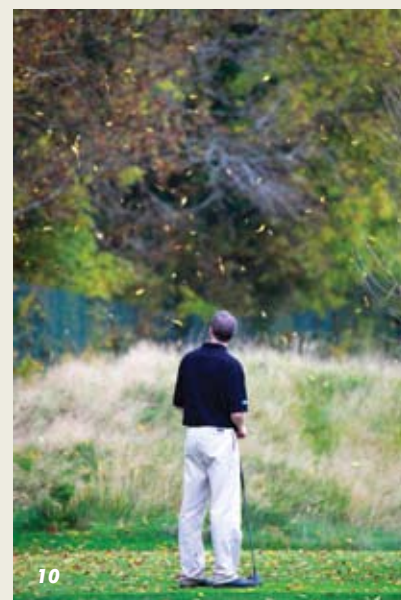


The Presidents Cup - Out and about on the Course



Captions

- 1 Coleman Fitzpatrick Tees off at the first.
- 2 Michael F. and David MacIndoe Jr. discuss tactics.
- 3 Teamwork. John Joyce and Billy Connell line up a putt.
- 4 Heartbreak. Mike Ryan feels the pain of missing a vital putt.
- 5 Master of ceremonies Eddie Donlon.
- 6 Robert Kilduff hacks his way out of deep rough.
- 7 John Jennings is out early getting the greens in good shape.
- 8 What are they looking at?
- 9 Dean Brock finds himself in a bit of bother.
- 10 Autumn arrives early as Paul Smyth is showered with leaves.



NEW



Disease protection that sticks and stays



SuperWeatherStik®

New DACTONIL WEATHER STIK gives complete protection from major turf diseases, even in the most difficult weather conditions.

The formulation of new DACTONIL WEATHER STIK ensures strong bonding of the powerful fungicide to the leaf surface - ensuring it will not be washed off by rain and giving longer lasting protection from disease infection - and it is rainfast within an hour.

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Peter Races to Victory

When not demonstrating bunker blasters, servicing machines or loading equipment for delivery, Peter Drennan of Reel-Tech spends most of his spare time racing the top circuits in Ireland and the UK on his 600cc motorbike or his Global GT Light racing car, which also has the same 600cc engine as the bike. In fact Peter emphatically won the 2009 Global GT Light Championship in Mondello last September over 12 races which began last March and saw him compete on world famous tracks such as Silverstone and Brands Hatch.



Victory salute by Peter Drennan after winning the 2009 Irish Global GT Light Championships in Mondello



Peter competing in the pre-97 600cc Superbike class

car event (Global GT Light) which he won. He even managed to persuade his brother Barry to put the Reel-Tech logo on both vehicles.

Peter will move up a class in 2010 when he hopes to compete in the Fireblade 701 – 1010 championships (701 to 1010cc category).

By the way, Peter's 600cc bike is up for sale should anyone be interested in buying it. Phone him on **086 1741217**

He finished in 3rd place in the pre-97 600cc Superbike class but would have finished much better had it not been for a crash, last August, on the final bend of one of the races he was trying to win, which left him on crutches. Undeterred, the following week, he left the crutches in the garage and competed in the racing

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

We at Greenside magazine, would like to wish our readers and their families a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

& A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

Barenbrug 2010 Catalogue

Grass seed breeder Barenbrug is showcasing its brand new Sports & Amenity Grass Seeds 2010 catalogue at Harrogate Week.

The 40-page catalogue has expert technical advice and information on subjects such as optimising overseeding, Barenbrug's golf green differential input trial at the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) in Bingley and a comprehensive species guide. It also includes full details of their BAR Range, spanning close-mown and medium-fine turf, heavy-duty turf, equestrian, landscaping, wildflower and turf production mixtures.

The range has been joined by five new mixtures – BAR Rubra, BAR GT Turf, BAR GT Sport, BAR OC and BAR Duo.

A 100 percent fescue offering, BAR Rubra is part of a range of 100 percent fescue mixtures designed to help greenkeepers increase or re-introduce highly desirable fescues to all areas of the golf course. This fast-establishing red fescue blend promises to produce attractive, open deep roughs that do not impede play, plus offers fast-establishment when overseeding semi-roughs to introduce finer grasses with improved disease tolerance and persistency.

And in an innovative new approach to mixtures for turf production and for new sowings for golf and sports turf applications, BAR GT Turf and Sport, and BAR OC have been designed to compete against the ingress of annual meadowgrass (*Poa annua*) in the sward.

BAR GT Turf and BAR GT Sport are non-GMO Glyphosate tolerant mixtures that harness ER 2703, a unique new cultivar of perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) from the same breeding programme as Bargold, that will help produce a fine- or hard-wearing turf.



BAR OC, meanwhile, contains recently introduced cultivars Barhelene smooth-stalked meadowgrass (*Poa pratensis*) and Barmalia slender creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra trichophylla*), both of which are extremely fast establishing for their species and help to out-compete *Poa annua* ingress during the early stages of establishment.

REMINDER

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

January 22nd 2010



Ransomes Jacobsen Launch Hybrid Greens Mower

Ransomes Jacobsen is delighted to be back at BTME after a year's absence. The main focus on their stand will be the all-new Jacobsen Eclipse 322, a hybrid ride-on greens mower, featuring the latest technological advances and powered by a small diesel engine with electric drive to the cutting cylinders and drive wheels.



Find out more about the Eclipse 322 at BTME

The Eclipse 322 meets the requirements of the operator, technician, course manager and golf club owner. It has a host of features which can reduce operating costs, increase productivity and provide cutting consistency on all types of greens.

Also on display is the refreshed Jacobsen G-Plex III complete with joystick cutting cylinder lift and lower and an automotive style hand operated parking brake.

Returning following its successful launch at the 2008 show is the E-Z-GO RVX golf car. Powered by an AC electric drivetrain, the RVX has many technological features.

You can view these machines and more on stand M22.

New Grass Varieties from BSH

British Seed Houses will be launching new grass varieties at BTME on stand A15. The three varieties each bring benefits to different markets, from golf to summer sports and turf growing to landscaping.

With their strong performance on golf courses, Creeping Bents are on every greenkeeper's shopping list, the 007 variety was developed from no less than 24 parent plants, eliminates winter stress discolouration and is highly competitive against poa annua.

007 is suitable for use on greens, tees and fairways, as a complete reseed or for overseeding - has enhanced Dollar Spot resistance, and offers vigorous, uniform growth. Moderate density allows fertiliser and top dressings to be incorporated, but BSH claim that this variety also cuts maintenance bills due to lower fertiliser requirements and reduced need for fungicides. It also adapts well to close mowing on greens.

British Seed Houses has a brand new amenity Perennial Ryegrass for spring 2010, called Escapade. It has a high shoot density and a very fine leaf which blends well with fescues, giving an attractive sward.

Offering rapid recovery from wear and a reduced requirement for repair after a major tournament or public event, Escapade can also help turf growers to improve the saleability of their products. Low maintenance costs are also part of the package, with excellent resistance to Red Thread.

Turf managers looking for a low maintenance variety can avail of AberFleece Sheeps Fescue, developed for landscaping, ornamental lawns and even golf roughs. Giving a natural grassland appearance, AberFleece is very fine leaved in texture, slow growing and tolerant of poor soil condition.

It is ideal for highways, verges and embankments, and it is also drought tolerant, cutting the workload and water bills in a dry summer. AberFleece is also resistance to common turf diseases.



Stephen Bernhard Takes a Back Seat

When Stephen Bernhard started his business over 38 years ago he had amassed almost four million air miles. During that time, the Company has grown and developed from a small enterprise pioneering new concepts of spin grinding around the globe, into the organisation it is today. Stephen is not getting any younger and he is looking to the future development and growth of the Company.



Bob Buckingham

With this in mind, it is now the right time to implement a carefully planned and progressive exit strategy that reflects the interests of employees and of the Company, while also providing him with a life style change as he moves toward retirement. Part of that strategy is to ensure the stability and growth of the business in the foreseeable future.

Bernhard & Co. are, therefore, pleased to announce that Bob Buckingham has recently agreed to join them, replacing Stephen in many of the activities where he is presently engaged. He brings with him more than thirty years of experience in the industry, having held positions with Toro where he was responsible for business development in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Bob Buckingham will present the external face of the business as Chief Executive Officer while Peter Wood will continue to manage the business as Chief Operating Officer. Stephen Bernhard will become Executive Chairman of the Bernhard Group, continuing to be active in many areas of the business as a resource and as an advisor, remaining in touch with their many business partners around the world, fostering education and promoting their interests where needed.



Club Managers Association of America Announces Partnership with Golf Environment Organisation

The Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) reenergized its environmental commitment with a landmark announcement that will both elevate the reputation of professional club managers, and support them in continually improving their environmental performance.

During a cutting edge sustainable business session at the BMI International Conference for Club Management in Stockholm, a gathering of international club managers and association representatives witnessed the announcement of a new partnership with the Golf Environment Organisation (GEO), an international NGO working across the global golf community to raise standards, provide productive solutions and objectively appraise and recognize performance.

Following the production of the CMAA Environmental Policy, the two bodies will hold a strategic planning session with the CMAA Board, undertake consultation with CMAA Members on the support they would most value, develop an official CMAA Environmental Policy, and integrate GEO coordinated environmental education into the CMAA Programme of the Golf Industry Show in San Diego.



Left: Jonathan Smith, Chief Executive, Golf Environment Organisation; Jim Singerling, Chief Executive Officer, Club Managers Association of America; Björn Nordberg, Chairman, Golf Environment Organisation; Mike Leemhuis - President, Club Managers Association of America, and Chief Operating Officer of The Congressional Country Club, Washington DC, USA.

Magnus Enell, former adviser to the United Nations on climate change and member of the GEO Advisory Council was on hand at the BMI Conference to support the announcement:

For more information about the CMAA go to www.cmaa.org
More information on the Golf Environment Organisation, including details of how to enroll in their online certification programme, is at www.golfenvironment.org

New 0% Finance Programme Aimed at all Golf & Bowls Clubs in Ireland

This interest free credit scheme from Permanent TSB covers John Deere's full range of fine turf mowers, Aercore aerators, bunker rakes and Pro Gator utility vehicles, plus the HD200 SelectSpray turf sprayer and TD100 top dresser attachments. It also includes demonstration machines and the company's new golf equipment range, such as the E-Cut hybrid mowers featuring John Deere's unique Quick Adjust cutting cylinders, as launched at IOG Saltex

Clubs can order the equipment from John Deere dealers at any time from now up to 31 January 2010, and then pay two half-yearly instalments starting in May 2010. Finance is available for up to 60 per cent of the retail list price of the equipment, with availability subject to status and to the usual terms and conditions (visit www.johndeerecredit.co.uk for details).

"In the current economic climate, golf clubs are being forced to manage their costs more effectively and aggressively," says Henry Bredin, John Deere Limited's product marketing manager, turf equipment. "Fixing their machinery and maintenance budgets, or even deferring payments until membership subscriptions and green fees come in, allows them to do just this.

"With this new John Deere 0% offer, clubs can manage their budgets by deferring their first payment until after the annual subs have come in, and deferring the second until the season's green fees have been received. Alternatively, tailor made repayment schedules can always be arranged to match a club's cash flow or other business objectives."

Further information on this new finance programme is available from John Deere's Irish dealers, or by calling Permanent TSB Finance on **1850 211811**.

Greens Turf Available From Evergreen Lawns

Up to now Evergreen Lawns has been concentrating its efforts on turf for tees, fairway, and green surround.

Greens turf is now available due to production methods improving over the years, combined with suitable soil type similar to U.S.G.A. specification. Evergreen Lawns has introduced greens turf to complement their existing products, and are now able to allocate time and machinery to establishing and maintaining this new product.

Because of the intense and specialised nature of growing fine turf, Evergreen Lawns now employs the services of an agronomist to advise the correct growing procedure, prior to sowing the seed, during establishment and prior to delivery. They will also be able to enhance the quality of their existing range using the agronomy service.

Artificial Turf products and Sedum Turf (Enviromat) are also available from Evergreen Lawns.

Course Managers are welcome to come and see the production facilities for themselves, or contact Evergreen Lawns on **+44 (0) 28 7181 0225** www.evergreenlawns.ie





TY-CROP acquired by TORO

The Toro Company has recently acquired the TY-CROP topdressing and material handling range product base. TY-CROPs product line of topdressers Pro Pass 180 and 200 and material handler MH 400, will now be marketed under the Toro brand.

TY-CROPs topdressers complements Toros existing line of application and cultivation equipment. Equally this acquisition provides Toro customers with a more comprehensive offering to meet their maintenance needs. While primarily used on golf course greens and fairways to improve turf health, control thatch and provide optimal playing conditions, topdressing and material handling equipment is gaining increased acceptance on sports fields. Sports turf managers will use these machines to evenly apply a variety of materials like topsoil, fertiliser, sand, lime and even crumb rubber.

SQRL 600 Collector

The self propelled SQRL 600 collector is ideal for the removal of hollow cores, scarified material and other light loose debris from fine turf surfaces. This brush-type sweeper has a 60cm wide contour following collection head and a high dump hopper.

Clearing up following turf scarifying and hollow coring has always been a very labour intensive job; huge savings in both time and labour can now be achieved with a clean up using the SQRL 600.

For more information on the SQRL 600 and Ty-CROP products contact Lely Ireland, Co. Kildare. + 353 (0) 45 526170



TY-CROP - Sand Spreader



SQRL 600 Collector

Osmo Organic Based Fertiliser Now Available In Greens Grade From Whites Agri

Whites Agri have been supplying Osmo Organic Based Fertiliser to golf courses, pitches and other amenity surfaces in Ireland for the past two years. Produced in Belgium, Osmo is a range of slow release fertilisers that work on the principle that a healthy soil produces a healthy turf/playing surface.

The combination of mineral and organic material combine to produce the complete fertiliser, with the mineral element first to break down followed by the Organic side which feeds the plant in months two and three. The composition of the fertiliser is such that each granule contains the same level of n.p.k.

The organic material (comprising of seaweed, blood meal, rock phosphate etc) contains no poultry/animal manures whatsoever and this explains the slow gradual release of nutrients and means the dreaded flush of growth is avoided.

Until now Osmo has been restricted predominately to fairways, tees and approaches due to the prill size. From January 2010 however the entire Osmo range will be available in a greens grade sized particle. This will allow the product to be used anywhere on the course, including greens and will ensure that there will be a significant reduction in fertiliser picked up when cutting.

More information on Osmo is available from Whites-Agri www.whitesagri.com / 01-8438521, the Osmo website www.osmo-international.com Or from Noel Walsh on 086-0494836



Triplex Greens Brush Helps Maintain Quality of Greens

Campey Turfcare have introduced the Raycam Triplex Brush as an attachment to the front of the top manufacturers of triplex greens mowers. It can help tackle the build-up of thatch and reduce the stress placed on the grass through excessive verti-cutting. The Triplex Brush converts a two man, two pass operation into a one pass action, saving time and money. This allows for a better cut, lifting course bentgrass up to cut cleanly, producing a much tighter surface. This in turn helps smooth and speed up the surfaces. It was found that, during this year's wet summer, depending on growth, brushing was possible twice a month compared to once every two months in dry times.



The Raycam Triplex Greens Brush lifts lateral growth allowing it to be boxed off, preventing the building up of thatch and leaving a firm, healthy surface with vertical growth. It also reduces the grain and the need for verticutting by mechanical means.

For more information call Brian O'Shaughnessy Area Sales Manager in Ireland for Campey Turfcare on 087 9274521 or visit the Campey website on www.campeyturfcare.com



Congratulations to the Southwest region on their victory at the Presidents Cup. The tournament was once again an intensely fought occasion and all the regions were, without exception, very well represented. I would personally like to thank Scotts Professional for their continued sponsorship and support for our annual national event.

Details of our 2010 conference are also in this edition. There will be a line up of speakers talking on topics relevant to the situation that a lot of us find ourselves having to negotiate with on a daily basis. Hopefully, we will soon return to normality and, with the information at our disposal from the conference, make great progress in our profession.

The New Year is creeping up on us once again, and I, for one, am finding it a little upsetting that we are already entering the second decade of the new millennia. The oldest of my three kids was born in April 1999 and I'm sure that the next 10 years will pass even quicker.

We have had all the expected developments within this ten year spell - computers are more powerful and faster, wireless broadband now readily available, and massive steps have been made with mobile technology. Cars, I am told, have progressed well. My own model pre-dates this period so I feel unqualified to comment. Also, with the usual rotational nature of things and people's memories generally being rose tinted, the fashion of the 80's is apparently about to come back, in force, which proves just how long ago it has been since The A Team, Miami Vice and Knight Rider were on prime time TV.

The last couple of years of this decade have brought a lot of uncertainty and varying degrees of change to the industry and absolutely everyone has had to alter and contort their perception of what is normal.

Facing the necessity of reassessing your management and maintenance options, while trying to maintain your objectives and targets and meeting everyone's expectations, is a very daunting task. This is best achieved with as much help and assistance as possible. It goes without saying that this help and assistance is potentially only a phone call away, sometimes suitable solutions are possible with a couple of calls and another person's perspective.

I heard a story recently of a young newly wed who was preparing a roast for herself and her husband. After observing for a brief period, he hesitantly, for fear of causing a serious domestic incident, asked her why she cut the ends of the roast, wasting so much of the meat before even putting it into the oven. She replied that she didn't know why, but that her mother had always done it like that. She promised to explain later, in detail, with the answer. Later that evening she phoned her mother and asked her why she had always cut the ends off the roast before cooking. There was silence for a few minutes and then her mother replied, "You know I'm not sure but your grandmother always did it when cooking a roast. I never thought to ask her myself. Maybe you should check with her." She phoned her grandmother the following day, but to her great surprise the grandmother said that her mother, now in a care home, always prepared the roast the same way, cutting both ends off before placing in the oven. The young bride decides to visit her great grandmother in the care home the following day to ascertain the details. When she asked her great grandmother this seemingly unanswerable question, a look of concentration covered her wise face for about 30 seconds and then she casually said "because our oven was too small."

Which goes to show that, before you undertake a task, you should always ask why!

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GCSAI Website: www.gcsai.org

Irrigation.



DT Series sprinklers.
Designed for the highs and lows of rough and fairway.

TORO

Ballyliffin (main image) uses Toro Irrigation, but currently operates no DT Series sprinklers.

Turf maintenance.

**REDUCED
TO
CLEAR***



Turfmech SQRL 600.
Self-propelled debris collector for greens and tees.

**TURF
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* Includes full manufacturer's warranty.

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ProPass from Toro.
If you're looking for a single top-dresser to do it all – ProPass is the only one.

TORO

Aeration.



ProCore SR Series.
Highly efficient deep aeration for all sports surfaces.

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Reverse-thrust cooling, a breath of fresh air from Toro.



SmartCool™ auto-reversing cooling fan

Even in temperate climates like ours, a heavy workload is hard on engines. Hot machines need time to cool off, slowing cutting performance and lengthening the working day.

Maximising your machinery investment means optimising uptime performance, because every downtime minute saved is money in the bank – a fact that we at Toro never forget as we constantly push the boundaries of machine technology and performance.

Take our new Groundsmaster series, now fitted with the **SmartCool™** auto-reversing cooling fan. It's programmed to briefly reverse-thrust and regularly blow debris off the air intake, keeping the engine cooler and working efficiently even under extreme conditions.

Now is the time to be planning for the warmer weather and taking a closer look at the Groundsmaster series, a classic design that keeps getting cooler.

For more details call 00 353 (0)45 526170 today.



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