

# GreenKeeping

Keeping the industry on course

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## CALLING CALCOT

The course manager of Calcot Park GC in Berkshire, **Tom Jennings**, details the work the club put in to ensure the course bounced back following the 2018 drought and how he communicates with members





# ForeFront Greens

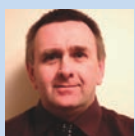
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## John Dempsey ends 33 year link with Royal Curragh

The course manager of Royal Curragh Golf Club, Dr John Dempsey, has been made redundant after 33 years at the venue.

Dempsey, who is also a member of *GreenKeeping's* editorial advisory panel, says he is now looking forward to new opportunities.

His wife Mary broke the news on social media that Ireland's oldest golf club had decided to dispense with the role of course manager.

'Royal Curragh Golf Club have

decided they no longer require a course manager, so, after 33 years of loyal and dedicated service, John was made redundant yesterday (June 6),' she stated.

'Three generations of service comes to an end, a sad day.'

Several people in the industry tweeted their support to Dr Dempsey and in response to this, he tweeted: 'Myself and Mrs Dempsey cannot believe the response we have received re my redundancy, the number of messages of support is heading for 300! This is amazing and

means so much to us, thanks.'

He added that as well as looking forward to new opportunities, his wife has a list of tasks for him to now do, including painting their house.

*Dr Dempsey has a first class honours degree in turfgrass science from Myerscough College and a PhD in turfgrass pathology at the University of the West of England's Centre for Research in Biosciences. His latest article for GreenKeeping, in which he*



*reviews the scientific data on available casting controls at a time when most chemical treatments are no longer legal, based on a seminar he delivered at this year's BTME, can be found on page 6*

## Just 1.5% of American greenkeepers are women

More female golf club managers, greenkeepers and course architects would drive greater profitability in the golf industry, says an expert on inclusion in business.



Liz Dimmock (pictured), founder and CEO of Women Ahead, a social impact organisation committed to female development, says there is now clear evidence from multiple international studies that businesses with more diverse management teams are more profitable.

However, women are not just under-represented as golf club members, where less than 15 per cent of the average UK golf club's memberships are adult females, the figures are even less inclusive for key staff roles. In the United States, for example, women make up less than nine per cent of general managers and only 1.5 per cent of greenkeepers. There have also only ever been four female members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

"What we are learning now is that people from different backgrounds and experiences will view the same problem in a different way and come up with different solutions," explains Dimmock, who is supporting The R&A's Women in Golf Charter.

"But it's not enough just to be diverse. It's about how inclusive is the culture within which the team operates. How do we reflect the

customers to whom we are trying to sell or serve?"

Dimmock's comments come in a new feature length multimedia editorial and podcast, *Changing the face of the golf business*, published by Syngenta Growing Golf.

The podcast features an interview with leading Canadian golf course superintendent and founder of the Ladies Leading Turf networking group Leasha Schwab, who tells how she was regularly asked at industry conferences: 'Whose wife are you?'

It also speaks to Jan Bel Jan, creator of Scoring Tees and only the second female to be elected president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

Liz Dimmock concludes: "It's about having leaders at the top, being inclusive, bringing new ideas and perspectives forward.

"I think golf has such an exciting platform ahead. We are not there yet and we shouldn't be apologetic for that, but it is building a pathway and by bringing in perspectives from the board right down to entry level colleagues, the face of the golf industry is set to positively change."





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## Golf architect Mark Parsinen passes away

The co-designer of both Castle Stuart Golf Links and Kingsbarns Golf Links, Mark Parsinen, has died, aged just 70, after suffering a stroke.

He passed away in California almost exactly ten years since the opening of the internationally-renowned Castle Stuart golf course he helped create, after suffering a stroke.

The championship course he designed with fellow American Gil Hanse opened in the summer of 2009 and within 18 months staged the European Tour's Scottish Open, the first time such a major golf event had been held in the Scottish Highlands.

The course, with spectacular views overlooking the Moray Firth, has so far held the prestigious tournament four times, from 2011 to 2013 and again in 2016. It has won widespread praise as a contemporary classic among Scotland's rich heritage of links courses, one that challenges the best players, but is enjoyable and playable for everyday golfers of all abilities.



His vision for the resort near Inverness included a par three course, which he designed, a second championship course, as well as hotels and on-site lodges for visiting golfers.

Grant Sword, a managing partner at Castle Stuart, said: "Mark was a friend first and a partner second. His knowledge of golf and

design was inspiring and his enthusiasm for his work highly infectious.

"He was immensely proud of what he achieved here, but his vision for the resort was much bigger.

"As difficult as it will be without him, we must continue his legacy and fulfill his ambitions for a place he held dear to his heart."



## Major course renovation for Prince's Golf Club



Prince's Golf Club, host of the 1932 Open Championship, has announced details of course renovation works to the Shore and Dunes nines at the 27-hole championship links facility.

Work commenced in October 2018 and much of the heavy machinery work and initial development has already been completed. Both nines will be finalised for spring 2020, but the course remains fully open for uninterrupted play throughout 2019.

The work will give the two loops a substantial lift, making use of the natural landscape to fully highlight the quality of the courses.

Spokesman Martin Ebert said: "Our research has shown that the greens used to be much larger so many of the surfaces have been restored in size simply by mowing them out.

"In terms of new features, the 5th hole on the Shore nine stands out. The carry over bare sand areas and the view towards the sea makes for a stunning hole and it also provides a welcome change in angle for the course.

"The 6th (existing 5th) has also benefited from the 5th hole

project with a new alignment from elevated tees in the dunes. The reconfigured tee complexes have added character to many of the holes, as have the restoration and creation of bare sand areas in many areas. Prince's really has three world class loops of nine holes."

A tactical reconfiguration of the bunkering on several holes, as well as the addition of several new tees will not only provide more balance between the back tees and members' yellow tees but increasing the length of some holes has brought the fairway bunkers back into play for elite golfers.

On the notable par three second hole of the Dunes, an attractive wooden sleeper path now weaves its way up the middle of the hole through a new bare sand area up to the green enhancing the visual from the tee dramatically.

A new short par three is under construction on the Shore, with a variety of tee positions allowing it to play between 110 and 155 yards.

The new hole sits with the backdrop of the sea, albeit at a slightly different angle, and will open for play in spring 2020.

## New £100k irrigation system for Montrose GL

Montrose Golf Links has announced details of one of the largest investments ever made in the celebrated east coast course.

The new, far-reaching irrigation project will enable significant improvements to be made across the links and coincides with Montrose receiving the most comprehensive sustainability award in golf, a spokeswoman has said.

The automated irrigation system addresses a swathe of issues that have affected the presentation of the course, which has twice hosted final qualifying for the Open Championship. It replaces the previous system that had been in situ for more than 30 years and suffered from insufficient pressure, poor and uneven water coverage and limited irrigation options.

"The new irrigation system is a significant improvement on what we had before," said Jason Boyd, PGA professional and operations manager at Montrose Golf Links. "It addresses a lot of on-course issues and will enable our greenkeeping team to present the 1562 course like never before. This is a massive investment that will have a huge impact."

The introduction of the £100,000 irrigation system follows the renaming of the world's fifth oldest golf course in 2018. More importantly, it will free up the Montrose greenkeepers to present the 450-year course to the highest possible standards.

"Because so much time was spent hand-watering greens, the new system will have a number of knock-on effects, especially for the greenkeepers," explained Boyd. "The time released by the new system will now be spent improving greens, tees, fairways and approaches as well as focussing on smaller, detailed jobs that are so important."

According to Darren McLaughlan, head greenkeeper at Montrose, the addition of the new irrigation system is hugely significant. "The need for a fully functioning irrigation system was overwhelming," he says. "The new system will not only allow greenstaff to concentrate on course improvements while reducing disruption to play, it will also provide the foundation for producing true and consistent putting conditions and a more sustainable approach due to using less water."







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Photo by Larry Lambrecht  
courtesy of Adare Manor Resort



# Preventing a can of worms

**Earthworms can and do benefit golf courses but excessive casting can have a detrimental effect on fine turf surfaces. Here, Dr John Dempsey PhD reviews the scientific data on available casting controls at a time when most chemical treatments are no longer legal**

**W**orm castings are causing significant problems for the majority of sportsturf managers throughout the UK and Ireland, with chemical controls no longer available, what means of control do greenkeepers and sportsturf managers have? This topic was the subject of a seminar at BTME in Harrogate in January 2019. In this article we mention the benefits of earthworm populations but also highlight the detrimental effect excessive casting can have on fine turf surfaces. We will explore the earthworm biology and importantly, review the scientific data on available casting controls.

Earthworms are a vital component of the natural ecosystem, they can modify soil properties via their burrowing, incorporation and breakdown of organic matter, and mixing of soils, they also create pores within the soils allowing for improved water percolation and increased aeration. Because of this, they are viewed as beneficial in most agricultural and managed systems.

## **There are 26 species of Earthworm found in the UK:**

- 18 species are non-casting
- Eight species are casting which can create problems in managed amenity and fine turf areas
- Life span depending on species can vary between four and eight years
- The main casting species are the lob worm (*lumbricus terrestris*), black headed worm (*aporrectodea longa*) and grey worm (*aporrectodea caliginosa*).

The **lob worm** lives in vertical burrows up to three metres deep and feeds on fallen leaves and decaying organic matter, with a population of approximately 20 to 40 per metre squared.

The **black headed worm** lives in open alkaline grassland and cultivated soil and has

a size of 12 cm long. It feeds on soil and its population is approximately five to 20 per metre squared.

The **grey earthworm** feeds on soil in mainly arable and pasture lands.

## **Ecological functions of earthworms**

Earthworms have many important ecological functions. In soils these include residue mixing, organic matter decomposition and nutrient recycling. Their burrowing activities allow for increased aeration and drainage, and nutrient and chemical movement through the soil profiles. Their casting helps with soil structure and fertility and, of course, worms are a food source for many birds and predators. As an example of the importance of earthworms in soil ecosystems, in the Netherlands, soils reclaimed from the sea at first did not have any earthworms. In these soils, the formation of topsoil with reasonable organic matter content did not take place, resulting in poor crop growth. Following a programme which introduced earthworms into these reclaimed soils, a dark topsoil layer was

formed, and crop growth increased significantly.

Earthworms have two primary requirements: moist soil and an organic-matter food source. Supplies of both are plentiful on the average golf course. Consequently, earthworms often populate greens, tees and fairways. The benefits of earthworms in turfgrass systems cannot be ignored either. Low populations can lead to thatch accumulation, slow organic matter decomposition and nutrient recycling, soil compaction and reduced water infiltration.

However, in amenity turfgrass systems, excessive surface worm casting negatively impacts many important areas of successful turfgrass management, these include: reduced surface playability, increased weed and disease ingression, reduced mower efficiency and a negative impact on the overall aesthetic appearance of the sports surfaces.

## **Worm control in the past**

Until recently, surface casting was controlled to some extent by the use of a number of chemical options, these options have been withdrawn leaving turf managers searching for viable alternative control strategies.

Earthworm control in the past, that is from the early 1900s, firstly relied on Mowrah Meal, derived from the seeds of *Bassia latifolia*, which, when watered into the soil, irritated the earthworms, causing them to come to the surface where they were physically removed. From the 1950s,





controls involved a number of highly toxic chemicals, which although highly effective in controlling surface casting, were extremely hazardous to the environment and humans. These included: copper sulphate, potassium permanganate, derris dust (an extremely poisonous chemical to invertebrates), lead arsenate, and mercuric chloride (extremely poisonous to humans and to other mammals).

In the more recent past: chlordane (organochlorine), was used from the 1960s to the early 1980s – very persistent in the soil lasting up to seven years or more in certain soil types such as heavy clay based soils, carbaryl and thiophanate methyl. Carbendazim, which was primarily sold as a fungicide, targeted casting species only, results were variable but it was the mainstay for cast suppression and remained in use until recently. It was the withdrawal of carbaryl that caused the current widespread concern among turfmanagers.

### What controls are available and are they effective?

A number of controls have over the past few years been suggested and been researched. Cultural controls have been studied as a means to suppress castings, these include grass clipping removal to reduce organic matter, thus reducing earthworms' food sources, acidifying fertilisers and topdressing with angular sands or abrasive aggregates.

Other methods which may have efficacy are the use 'soil conditioners'. As mentioned, the first successful means of cast control involved Mowrah Meal as an expellent, the active ingredient of this is a compound called saponin and recent research has provided results showing positive cast suppression leading to a number of products becoming available to turf managers.

There have been a number of studies into the removal of turfgrass clippings as a casting control, but these have to date provided no positive results. One such study, from Penn State University, looked at the effect of organic matter reduction and concluded this had no effect on casting volumes. A second study, conducted over two years to evaluate clipping

## Redemption for turf herbicide Redeem

Headland Amenity's popular selective turf herbicide Redeem has gained registration renewal and is again available to greenkeepers and groundsman alike.

Redeem's powerful triple active formulation controls a broad range of turf weeds and can be used on golf fairways, tees, sports pitches, lawns and other amenity grass areas.

Containing Clopyralid, 2,4-D and MCPA, Redeem is effective against many common weeds including daisy, clover and plantains. Control is achieved at low application rates – up to half the rate of many competitor products – ensuring a lower amount of active ingredient is required for efficient control. Redeem is packed in 3L containers and each pack will treat one hectare (3L/Ha application rate). Grass areas can then be re-seeded as early as six weeks after application. Importantly, Redeem can be applied using knapsack sprayers as well as boom-mounted equipment.

Redeem is an ideal product to use as a tank-mix partner with Elevate Fe and Xtend Soluble, to provide selective weed control alongside long-lasting iron and nitrogen application. Many liquid-applied iron products are unable to successfully mix with herbicides, but Elevate Fe is a unique, cost-effective, formulation for use on outfield turf.

XTEND Soluble 46-0-0 contains two slow release components in combination with soluble, micro-prilled urea, to form a stabilised nitrogen, slow release fertiliser. Loss of nitrogen by volatilisation and leaching is controlled by NBPT and DCD respectively and release takes place over two to three months, from one application, with excellent turf safety.



removal and hollow-core aeration as methods to reduce casting, concluded that both these procedures had no effect on casting reduction.

The Penn State study also included the effects of ferrous sulphate as a surface acidifier, sand topdressing and saponins. Preliminary results show that saponins produced best results, with no effect on castings from sand topdressing, in fact they observed increased casting after topdressing.

Rutgers University researchers have also studied methods to reduce casting. They looked at a range of options:

- Three categories of fertilisers.
- Liming.
- Sand topdressing.
- Elemental sulphur applications.
- Sand topdressing combined with sulphur applications.

They concluded that fertiliser effects were not evident until the third season of the trial, when organic fertilisers doubled the number of castings, while the synthetic fertilisers had little effect.

**Lime applications** were deemed to have little to no effect on casting activity.

**Sand topdressing** has been promoted for a number of years as a means to reduce surface casting, it is surmised that the abrasiveness of sand particles and their susceptibility to drought influences both species composition and earthworm numbers in the soil. However, research has produced contradictory results. This study from Rutgers found that topdressing had a notable impact, but only on courses where casting activity was already high, with casting being reduced by 50 per cent after three





## ► disease prevention



*The effect of excessive worm casting on maintenance machinery and fine turf surfaces*

seasons at some golf courses.

Paige Boyle is a presidential doctoral research fellow at Utah State University, studying turfgrass ecology. Her research into earthworm ecology and casting on fine turf surfaces concluded that, short term, sand topdressing made the casting problem worse, where past studies showed topdressing reduced casting. This appears to be the case in that a sustained topdressing programme is required for results to be positive. Research into the efficacy of the topdressing effect on casting from 1999 in the US and Canada indicates that topdressing requires a long-term commitment, and multiple applications are necessary in order to have a significant impact. A similar result was concluded by researchers at University of Connecticut in 2009, where sand topdressing produced significant reductions in casting, interestingly the texture of the sand particles had no impact on these results.

### Surface acidification

helps in reducing worm cast activity by reducing soil pH ... or does it? Surface acidification requires the application of compounds

## This is how Oswestry GC keeps worm casts at bay

Gary Barnfield, head greenkeeper at Oswestry Golf Club in Shropshire, claims the SISIS Flexibrush has proved to be an ideal solution for controlling worm casts.

Oswestry Golf Club is a mature parkland 18-hole course set in the glorious Shropshire countryside and Gary has been working at the club for an impressive 31 years after joining as an apprentice. Over the years he has worked his way up through the ranks and six years ago he was promoted to the position of head greenkeeper.

Since taking over as head greenkeeper Gary has implemented a number of changes to the maintenance regimes which has no doubt reinforced the club's reputation for being in an excellent condition all year round.

However, over recent years Gary claims that he has faced arguably his biggest challenge after a number of chemicals were removed from the turfcare market.

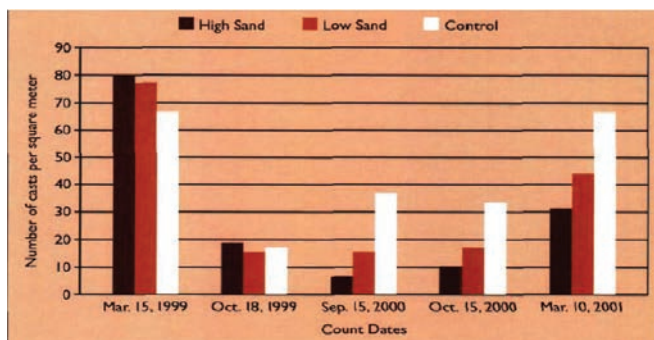
"With the ban of certain chemicals we have not been able to use what was once in our armoury," he said. "This proved to be problematic, as it no doubt did for every other greenkeeper, but the biggest loss was Carbenadazim. Unfortunately the worms came out and more and more casts were appearing so we had to come up with a solution.

"An STRI advisor came to visit us and recommended that we apply some sand to top dress to the areas and also to brush the worm casts and level them off before we cut. We needed to find ourselves a reliable machine that would give the worm casts a rigorous brush and we trialled four brushes from four different brands. The SISIS Flexibrush was the stand out machine."

The SISIS Flexibrush is a tractor mounted brush which is equally effective to disperse top dressing and remove excess material on natural turf and on synthetic surfaces. The versatile Flexibrush can also be used for dew dispersal and striping for improved presentation. It has a 5.35 metre working width, its brush sections float to follow ground contours and the outer sections fold for transport and storage.

"It's not only great for brushing the worm casts but it also stands the grass up before we cut – which improves the quality of the cut and gives us better presentation," said Gary. In fact, the Flexibrush has got multiple uses because we use it for knocking dew off in the mornings and also in the winter months when the turf is not growing so much we will brush instead of cutting to keep the presentation to a high standard.

"Ultimately, we had to do something about the worm casts and the Flexibrush has done a brilliant job. I think it is a great alternative to spraying the worms and I think more greenkeepers will go down this route. It has been a cost saving exercise for us too because we used to have contractors come in and spray the worms but the SISIS Flexibrush was a one off payment and we get to keep it for us long as we like."



*The effect of sand topdressing, applied over two years, on worm cast suppression*

such as sulphate of ammonia, ferrous sulphate and sulphur. The Rutgers study mentioned above produced interesting and relevant results in this area. They concluded that elemental sulphur applications had the most rapid and dramatic effect, reducing earthworm casting within the first season of application by as much as 97 per cent, compared to untreated plots. The potential to scorch turf was a concern with applications of elemental sulphur. Researchers initiated trials to identify the maximum rate that can be applied without risk to the turf rates of 146 kg/ha





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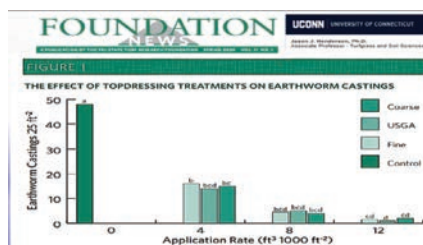



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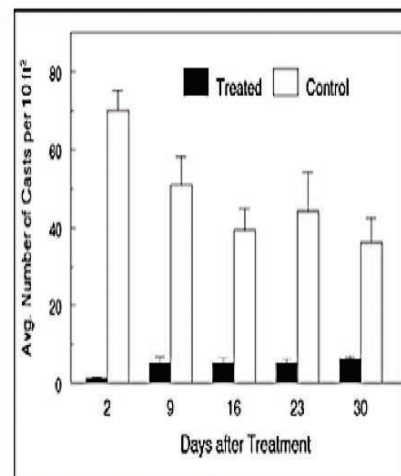
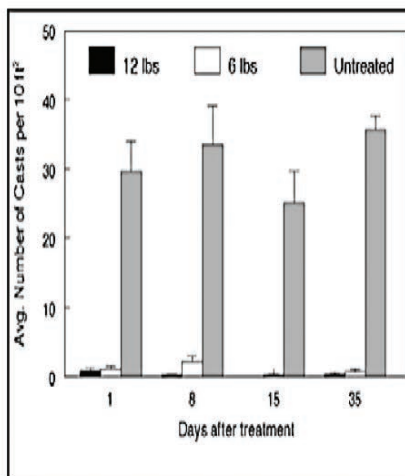
Research from University of Connecticut showing the effect of sand topdressing on worm cast suppression

elemental sulphur (90 per cent) in a single application during spring or late summer without damaging fairway turf. They found the combination of sand topdressing and elemental sulphur was the most effective treatment in their trials.

### Soil conditioners (saponins)

Mowrah Meal applied as expellents was successful in the past as it acted as an irritant to the earthworms, saponin compounds sourced from tea seed meal were the active

**EARTHWORMS HAVE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS ON SOIL BUT THERE ARE THREE UK SPECIES THAT CAN REDUCE SURFACE PLAYABILITY, INCREASE DISEASE INGRESSION AND REDUCE MOWER EFFICIENCY**



Left, reduction in earthworm casting on a creeping bent green, following treatment with saponin. Right, reduction in earthworm casting on a perennial rye fairway, following treatment with saponin.

component in this process. Natural saponin compounds are thought to disrupt the mucous coatings on earthworms, causing desiccation and death. Mowrah Meal is no longer commercially available, but earthworm-expelling fertilisers containing saponins derived from tea seed meal (a by-product of tea oil manufacture) are currently marketed for use on turf in a number of countries, including the UK and Ireland. There is some data supporting the suppression of casting following saponin treatments. Research carried out at the University of Kentucky determined a single tea seed meal application reduced castings in replicated plots by more than 95 per cent for at least five weeks. In a second trial at the same site, tea seed application reduced casts by 98 per cent after two days, and 83 per cent after 30 days. A sequence of laboratory trials confirmed that the chemical basis for tea seed meal's activity on earthworms is the natural triterpene saponins found in tea seeds.

Expellents such as saponins may not necessarily work on all earthworm species, *aporrrectodea* and *lumbricus spp* are susceptible but *amynthas spp* less so. Saponin treatments need to be well watered into the soil profile and repeated before each peak of casting activity because they have little or no residual activity. Also, earthworms hatching from cocoons are not affected and may repopulate the site over time.

### Conclusions

Earthworms are an important component of ecosystems – vital for healthy soils! They have beneficial effects on soil structure, organic matter recycling and provide food sources for many species. But of the 26 earthworm species found in the UK, three – the lob worm, black headed worm and grey worm – can cause significant disruption to fine turf surfaces reducing surface playability, increasing weed and disease ingress, reducing mower efficiency and negatively impacting the aesthetic appearance of sports surfaces.

With the withdrawal of all chemical controls a number of other options have been explored with a view to cast suppression. These include reduction of organic matter, sand topdressing, surface acidification and the use of saponins. Of these, long term sand topdressing combined with surface acidification with sulphur appears effective. The use of saponin-based products also appears to effectively suppress castings, but these treatments need to be applied frequently during peak activity.

*The seminar 'Disease suppression without fungicides – can it be done?' was presented during Continue to Learn, at BTME 2019.*

*Dr John Dempsey was course manager at Royal Curragh GC for 26 years. He has a degree in turfgrass science and a PhD in turfgrass pathology, and is a member of GreenKeeping's editorial advisory panel*



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## ► seeds, turf and fertilisers buyer's guide

### BIGGA

Six British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) members have achieved the 'Master Greenkeeper' certificate – the highest ever in one batch of examinations – and two of them are from British golf clubs.

The six have joined the ranks of course



managers, head greenkeepers and superintendents who can count themselves among the most highly-qualified and respected individuals within the industry.

First awarded in 1991, the Master Greenkeeper certificate is awarded to those BIGGA members who have reached the highest standards of greenkeeping and golf course management.

To be eligible, a BIGGA member must have spent at least 10 years working in green-

keeping, with a minimum of three in a head greenkeeper, course manager or superintendent role. They must also have been responsible for their current golf course or courses for a minimum of two years.

The six are: Bob Vaughey, Rolling Hills Country Club, California, USA; Sam Evans, Fulwell Golf Club, UK; Rob Clare, Brough Golf Club, UK; David McGregor, Westwood Country Club, Virginia, USA; Matthew Gourlay, Colbert Hill Golf Course, Kansas City, USA; and Andrew Sprunt, Florissant City Golf Course, Missouri, USA.

In achieving the certificate, Andy has become BIGGA's 80th Master Greenkeeper.

Sam Evans, course manager at Fulwell has achieved the accreditation aged just 30.

He said: "I wanted to do the Master Greenkeeper certificate as I believe there is always a next level to aspire to and push yourself to. I have been brought up to aim high and, to me, the Master Greenkeeper certificate is an unrivalled pinnacle of professional status, which I still can not believe I have achieved. I am over the moon to be awarded this and it is another example of how hard work really does pay off."

Web: [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

### Headland Amenity

The facilities at Leicester Tigers Rugby Club play host to a packed schedule of training and matches, with the Oval Park training ground alone hosting over 200 games last year. The high usage keeps head groundsman Ed Mowe and his maintenance team of three on their toes. Yet, despite this, the pitches are appearing to stay stronger for longer which Ed attributes to Headland Amenity's input into the club's nutritional programme.

When Ed took over as head groundsman in December 2016, he took a fresh look at the nutritional regime, with the aim of resolving a few key problems as well as improving overall plant health at both the Welford Road stadium pitch and the club's training ground. "Along with two soil-based pitches, we have one Desso surface at Oval Park, which was struggling to cope with the rigorous demands of winter training. Alex Hawkes, Headland's sports turf specialist, came in and conducted

some tests and following this we structured an overarching feeding programme, along with looking at some specific products to target the problems we faced."

To strengthen the plant and root development on the desso pitch, Alex recommended the Headland '20/20/30' tank-mix. This strategy combines Liquid Turf Hardener, Turfite® and Seamac® ProTurf Fe plant elicitors and protectants to maximise health and restrict the onset of disease. "This proactive approach has not only reduced our requirement for reactive fungicide applications, but together with aeration, has given us a noticeable improvement in wear tolerance and coverage. Where previously training would begin in November and the pitch would be virtually destroyed by January, we can now train from August right through to the end of the season" Ed explains.

"We've been using C-Complex® during renovations, which helps with microbial activity and root development and Terafirm™ soil penetrant which has improved the moisture draw-down on the soil-based surfaces. We've also achieved great all-round plant health with



Headland's Seamac® Ultra Plus. For a particularly waterlogged patch we had behind the dead-ball area on the stadium pitch, Alex suggested we try Xpedite® which dramatically improved water infiltration." Following the success here, Ed additionally applied Xpedite® on some of the line-out and scrummaging areas at the training ground to good effect.

Final word from Ed, "While I hadn't used Headland products previously, they have proved to be reliable and effective on their own or when used in combination with other products from the range. Alex has been a great help in formulating this programme and we will continue to work with him, fine-tuning





the regime, to achieve the quality surfaces we're looking for."

Web: [www.headlandamenity.com](http://www.headlandamenity.com)

### Rigby Taylor

Rigby Taylor has announced a range of Carbon4Grass grass seed mixtures that combine increased levels of carbon sequestration potential with desirable amenity characteristics for a range of sports and general amenity applications – enabling turf professionals to reduce their carbon footprints while maintaining high-class playing surfaces.

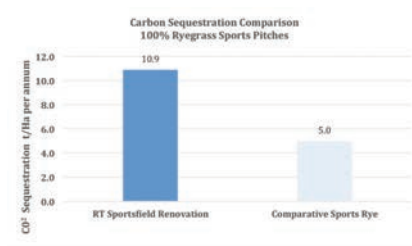
For example, the Carbon4Grass Sports Field Renovation and Super Root mixes demonstrate the potential to sequester at least double the amount of carbon over comparative mixes. Low Maintenance, which includes slower growing cultivars with higher carbon 'scores', have also been identified by Rigby Taylor to help decrease the frequency and therefore mitigate the impact of mowing.

With the extreme global weather events of recent years universally attributed to climate change and exacerbated by an increase in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, there are progressive choices and positive actions the groundscare industry can take to help develop and sustain a more enjoyable and healthy green infrastructure, says Rigby Taylor. One is the adoption of Carbon4Grass mixtures.

Grass absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> for use in photosynthesis and while it is known that one hectare of natural, open grassland can sequester (lock up) up to 2.5 tonnes of carbon per annum, these new amenity cultivars sequester relatively more carbon.

A Carbon4Grass study at the Top Green Breeding & Research Station in France commenced in 2005 with the initial aim of identifying differences in the carbon sequestration values of managed amenity grass species.

The study revealed significant differences between species in their capacity to store and sequester carbon under the same environmental conditions (depending on local environmental conditions and maintenance inputs). The study progressed to assess a range of cultivars within species and, over time, new cultivars from the breeding programme were entered into the study.



Rigby Taylor has used the knowledge gained to create a dedicated range of Carbon4Grass seed mixtures for sports, golf and landscape applications.

Web: [www.rigbytaylor.com](http://www.rigbytaylor.com)

### Scotland's Rural College

Mature students are being offered a helping hand to return to study with a £1,000 bursary from Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

The Change Your Path bursary is available to students aged 25 and over to help towards the costs of studying on an HNC, HND or degree course.

Up to 20 bursaries will be offered to new students enrolling on a course starting in September 2019.

"A significant proportion of SRUC's students are mature students, and many of these are returning to study in the hope of making a career or lifestyle change," said marketing and student recruitment manager Hannah D'Mellow.

"We know that returning to study as a mature student comes with challenges, and that finance is only one of these, but we hope that our new Change Your Path bursary will help some students manage the transition."

The bursary will be offered to both full and part-time students, with two lump sums of up to £500 paid at Christmas and Easter in the first year.

Applications must be submitted by 31 Au-



gust 2019 and will be ranked by a committee, with successful applicants notified in early September.

[www.sruc.ac.uk/info/20008/study\\_at\\_sruc](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/20008/study_at_sruc)

### DLF / Johnsons

If it ain't broken, then why fix it?! That's certainly the motto of Ian Lucas, head of grounds at AFC Bournemouth, when it comes to the choice of grass seed across both the Vitality Stadium and two pitches at King's Park training ground. When Ian joined the club 18 months ago, Johnsons J Premier Pitch mixture was the seed of choice across the two first-team facilities, and having delivered reliable coverage, colour and wear tolerance, it looks to be a decision that's set to stay.

Supported by a grounds team of seven, Ian is now into his third season of using J Premier Pitch. "I had obviously heard of the mixture but had not used it previously so when I inherited the seeding programme of my predecessor, it was my first real experience of the Johnsons Sports Seed mixture. It hasn't disappointed!" Ian oversows with J Premier Pitch at a rate of 45g/m<sup>2</sup> during renovations in April and at a lower rate of 15g/m<sup>2</sup> in October, depending on the weather conditions and how the pitch is wearing.

Through the season, they adopt a 'pre-germinated seed' strategy for ongoing recovery and repair of high wear areas. "It's a well-known-tactic but not one that seems to be frequently employed in the industry" he explains. "We fill a bucket ¾ full of Premier Pitch, then top it up with water and place it in a heated container for three to four days until it pops, before applying it to areas such as goal mouths and corner spots. This method shaves up to two weeks off germination, giving us a real advantage especially during the colder months."

"We've achieved good wear tolerance, dis-



## ► seeds, turf and fertilisers buyer's guide

DLF / Johnsons



ease resistance and the germination we need throughout the year. The colour is one of the main things for us, and the J Premier Pitch is unbeatable for this, backed up by the respective cultivar ratings in the STRI listings." Ian will discuss requirements with his local DLF technical support advisor Ian Barnett, who keeps him up to date on new developments and provides guidance on seed selection. "He'll always pop in at key times, such as renovations, and advise us on current supply to ensure we get delivery in time - vital to keeping us on track."

Web: [www.dlf.co.uk](http://www.dlf.co.uk)

### Kubota

Kubota has appointed two new dealer managers in the groundcare and parts business units. The new appointments demonstrate Kubota's continued commitment and investment to its dealer development aspirations and will provide additional support to the existing dealer and distributor network.

Phil Catley



The new groundcare dealer manager, Phil Catley, joins in the role of dealer manager – southern region for the tractor and groundcare division. Phil joins the company from Stiga, one of the largest European manufacturers of garden and groundcare machinery, where he was previously area sales manager.

Phil brings with him an impressive wealth

of experience, particularly in building and maintaining large dealer networks extending throughout the south west, south Wales, mid Wales and the West Midlands as well as skills in building strong relationships and maintaining excellent profit margins. Ahead of joining Kubota, Phil has also previously worked for Etesia, a European manufacturer of groundcare machinery and Sharnford Horticultural, a garden machinery and groundcare dealer in Leicestershire.

On his appointment, Phil commented: "Kubota has a prominent reputation as a market-leading manufacturer of groundcare, agri-

Rob Williams



cultural and construction equipment solutions and I am looking forward to putting my experience to good use at the company. I am excited to finally be a part of the team and look forward to using my knowledge and experience to further develop Kubota's dealer network."

In a new role for Kubota, Rob Williams has joined the company as northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland dealer manager, for parts. His prime responsibilities will be to support the Kubota dealer and distributor network specifically covering the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Rob has an extensive amount of experience and industry knowledge after holding previous roles at Ifor Williams Trailers, Saville Tractors and Landmec. Over the past five years, Rob has been working for the international agriculture equipment manufacturing company, Kverneland UK, developing a successful parts business for the company. His past experience also includes working for Morris Lubricants in the north of England, where Rob played a pivotal role in supporting and developing its oil and lubricant business.

Speaking about his new appointment Rob



Dennis

said: "I am looking forward to starting my new position at global manufacturer Kubota UK. My role will be to continue to support and develop the Parts dealer and distributor network, where my previous experience and established connections will be invaluable."

David Hart, managing director of Kubota UK commented: "We are delighted to welcome both new dealer managers to the business. Their expertise and industry knowledge will be instrumental to Kubota's commitment to continuing to invest and expand our existing dealer and distributor network and we are excited to have them on board".

Web: [www.kubota-global.net](http://www.kubota-global.net)

### Dennis

After a long-term search for the ultimate rotary mower, Andy Richards, grounds manager at Shrewsbury School, believes that he has finally found what he has been looking for in the Dennis PRO 34R.

Shrewsbury School has a world-class reputation for all-round excellence. As well as boasting fantastic academic results the school is also renowned for highly competitive sports teams. The pupils compete internationally in cricket and its football teams are considered to be some of the best in the UK.

In matching the reputation of its teams, the sports pitches are also highly regarded and there's a reason that the first team pitches at Shrewsbury School are on par with most Premier League football pitches or County Cricket pitches. That reason is grounds manager Andy Richards, who has been in his current position since 2010. Ever the perfectionist, Andy and his team arguably encounter some of the highest usage in sports turf, and even still he insists on leaving no stone unturned.

Andy demands the best in all aspects of his role and even more so when it comes to



turf maintenance equipment. After struggling to find a rotary mower which matched his expectations, Andy claims that the solution arrived in the newly launched Dennis PRO 34R.

"Over recent years we have struggled to find a rotary mower that actually ticked every box – they were either too fast or not fast enough; some were too heavy and some felt too light; and there were some that would not pick up the debris clean enough or produce a good enough cut.

"I saw the new rotary mower at SALTEX and knew it would be good because it is a Dennis mower and I already know the quality of cut from their cylinder mowers. It actually seemed to me that a rotary mower was something which was missing from their portfolio so when it did finally come to market I put my name down as soon as possible to get one. It is safe to say that it definitely hasn't let me down."

The Dennis PRO 34R is a 34" (860mm) rotary mower which has been designed to help groundsmen achieve an aesthetically pleasing appearance and desired playing surface. It is ideal for sports pitches and lawns producing the enviable 'Dennis Stripes' while a powerful vacuum flow collects debris quickly and efficiently.

The angle of the cutting deck and twin blades can be easily adjusted using a single 'click adjuster' ensuring the mower is suitable for changing conditions and meeting groundsmen's requirements.

"We bought two of them and I would say that they are easily our most used machines," said Andy.

"We originally just bought them to Hoover up the debris but we quickly found that the cut is comparable to a cylinder mower so we started mowing with them too. Our first team football pitch is surrounded by 30 trees so in autumn we used to come out in the morning of a match day and leaves would be all over it. We actually used to use a cut and collect ride-on mower and then follow up with a Dennis cylinder mower but now we just use the Pro 34 R. It does a brilliant job, saves us time, keeps the weight off the pitch and avoids wheel marks from the heavier ride-on machines.

"I had a feeling it would also work well on

our cricket pitches and it has. The amount of debris that is produced during the cricket season is huge. We blow it off with blowers from the surrounding wickets so they can get covered and then the morning after we just Hoover it all up with the PRO 34R.

"Maintenance wise, it has been completely trouble-free. It's my favourite machine at the moment and I think it will take some beating," said Andy.

Web: [www.dennisuk.com](http://www.dennisuk.com)

## SISIS

Head greenkeeper Michael Burgin has reported hugely successful results from using the SISIS TM1000 tractor mounted heavy duty scarifier to combat high levels of thatch on the greens at Normanby Hall Golf Club.

This delightful golf course in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, adjoins the picturesque Normanby Hall country park and is set in 117 stunning acres of mature woodland and parkland. The 18 hole, par 72 course is widely considered to be one of the toughest courses to play in the area, providing a challenge for players of all abilities.

Michael, who has been in the greenkeeping industry throughout his entire career, has been at Normanby Hall for eleven years. Two years ago, he was promoted to the position of head greenkeeper and one of his first tasks in charge was to tackle an abundance of thatch which had occurred on the greens.

"We established that we had a large layer of thatch on the top of our greens; it was on all of them throughout the whole course. This resulted in some drainage problems and I knew that we desperately needed a new piece of equipment which could help us solve the problem.

"I did a lot of research and came across a number of videos online of greenkeepers using the TM1000. I then read an article about the course manager at Greetham Valley Golf Club using it and what he said about the machine pretty much persuaded me to buy it."

The SISIS Rotorake TM1000 is a tractor mounted heavy duty scarifier and linear aerator and is unrivalled when it comes to removing and controlling thatch. It includes a collector box and floating unit to follow



ground contours and its contra-rotating reel throws debris forward ensuring a clean, consistent groove resulting in an excellent finish. The TM1000 also features interchangeable blades and a quick, simple depth setting without tools.

The fact that the TM1000 collects debris was a key factor in his decision and also something which was incredibly important to the greenkeeping team according to Michael.

"There were other machines on the market but the ones we looked at didn't collect. This would mean that you would require two or three guys going behind the machine clearing up.

The hydraulics on the back of the TM1000 means that the operator doesn't have to keep jumping in and out to empty the grass box – which would be very time consuming. For a small team, if you can get one man to do this job then it is a massive benefit.

"I also like the fact that the TM1000 can go down to 50mm deep. The SISIS TM1000 runs straight through the turf – like a knife through butter.

"We have found that the time of year doesn't really matter when it comes to using it. The first time we used the TM1000 was mid-February in winter conditions and we found that it did not phase the machine whatsoever.

"No matter what the weather you can't even tell that the TM1000 has been across the greens and that has really impressed me. It's a reliable machine with very little maintenance required.

"Overall it is just a fantastic piece of kit. There has been a big improvement in the greens and our soil samples have proved that the thatch levels have dropped dramatically since using the TM1000."

Web: [www.sisis.com](http://www.sisis.com)





## Two years interest free from Waste2Water

**With environmental awareness and recycling on the agenda, Tim Earley looks at how Waste2Water's cost effective course machinery wash-off system benefits golf clubs**

**W**hen we installed the first Waste2Water Recycling Wash System 19 years ago, the need to recycle was just being introduced. Now most households have a green bin / blue bin / brown bin / black bin and so on, and recycling is a big issue with large fines for non-compliance. Environmental awareness has come a long way since the turn of the millennium!

### **Environmental legislation**

Environmental stewardship is now a legal requirement enforced by legislation. With the

recent extensive publicity I'm sure that everyone is aware it is a criminal offence to allow certain substances including mineral oils, detergents and chemicals to enter surface drains, watercourses or soakaways, causing groundwater pollution. Large fines of up to £50,000 and even imprisonment can now be levied in the event of a serious pollution incident.

### **EU Water Framework Directive**

A raft of legislation has been recently introduced to reinforce this message, including the EU Water

Framework Directive which has now been fully implemented.

So, if you have not already installed a dedicated wash area to avoid the risk of pollution now is the time to act to ensure your course is environmentally compliant.

### **Waste2Water two-year interest-free finance**

Hundreds of golf courses have installed our system but what if you are keen to make sure you are compliant but are unsure about financing the investment? With investment in a recycling



wash system now an urgent priority to ensure environmental compliance, we are delighted to offer our in-house **two year interest-free finance package**. We fund the scheme ourselves so it couldn't be simpler!

- In-house scheme – so no finance to apply for or forms to fill in!
- Just 8 x quarterly payments!
- Spreads the investment cost over up to three accounting years!

### **Waste2Water ensures environmental compliance**

Installing a Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off System provides a superb equipment wash facility and ensures compliance with the environmental legislation.

Equipment wash-off, refueling, degreasing, chemical mixing and any other potentially polluting activities can all be undertaken on the pad, removing any risk of groundwater pollution from routine activities.

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### **Waste2Water Recycling Wash System approved on Water Technology List (WTL)**

Inclusion in the Water Technology List (WTL scheme) provides a very handy cash flow boost with a 100 per cent first year Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA).

This gives full 100 per cent tax relief against taxable profits in year one – instead of the standard reclaim period of eight years! It sounds a bit complicated but rest assured your accountant will be delighted!

### **Installing a Waste2Water Recycling Wash System**

Installing a Waste2Water system could not be easier, often easily retro-fitting into an existing area. The recycling system ensures environmental compliance, reduces water usage by a massive 90 per cent and tidies up one of the worst aspects of golf course maintenance.

Our above-ground system is very easy to maintain and you can see what's going on, ensuring there are no undetected underground leaks. The above-ground dirt settlement tank allows easy removal of the dirt from the recycling system at no cost! You don't need expensive specialist waste contractors to empty the tanks, as with underground systems!

*Tim Earley is the managing director of ESD Waste2Water. If you would like further information on the Waste2Water System or a copy of the Pollution Prevention Guidelines please call. Tel 01782 373 878 / E-mail: [info@waste2water.com](mailto:info@waste2water.com)*

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*The greenkeeping team at Calcot Park Golf Club*

# Calling Calcot

**The course manager of Calcot Park Golf Club in Berkshire, Tom Jennings, talks to *Greenkeeping* about adapting to an unpredictable climate, the work the club put in to ensure the course bounced back following the 2018 drought, educating members about the products he uses and the plans his team have for a new irrigation system**

**S**ituated on the Berkshire / Hampshire border, Calcot Park GC sits within an exclusive private estate. Its parkland setting enhances the ambience of the course and there is an abundance of wildlife including badgers, foxes and deer. The changing seasons are complemented by the colours of the mature trees and shrubs which abound on the course.

Designed by Harry Colt, 89-year-old Calcot Park is an 18-hole course where the seventh, the signature hole, is played across a lake to an elevated green.

*GreenKeeping* speaks to course manager, Tom Jennings, about his work and to find out more about this delightful golf course.

**GreenKeeping:** Can you give a description

of your background, your path to greenkeeping and how long have you now been at Calcot Park Golf Club?

**Tom Jennings:** I started my greenkeeping at Swinley Forest Golf Club after successful work experience placements. I worked at Swinley Forest for eight years under Lawson Bingham and John Band. I then took the job as first assistant at Sonning Golf Club and was





*Before and after images of recent overseeding works on the first fairway – which were shared on Instagram*

promoted to deputy course manager within a year. After seven years at Sonning golf club I then took the position at Calcot Park Golf Club as course manager. All of my training for my NVQs, for example chain sawing and spraying, were done at Swinley Forest. I started work at Calcot in October 2018.

**GreenKeeping:** What is the size of your team?

**Tom Jennings:** At Calcot Park we have seven green staff. My deputy course manager is Kirk Hall, the workshop manager is Andy Winchcombe, the first assistant is Bridget Brady and the other members of my team are Gary Boulton, Simon Mallock, Paul Knight and Bradley Tuckett. I go through my daily and weekly workload with Kirk and have weekly meetings with Andy to ensure that the machines are set and ready to go.

**GreenKeeping:** What would you say are the biggest challenges you currently face and how do these impact on the team?

**Tom Jennings:** Environmental challenges are my biggest challenges; trying to manage when aeration and top-dressing needs to be done to ensure the course stays consistent. Trying to work to the weather pattern which can affect my spray timings – and often sprays may be a last-minute decision due to the change in weather. I am very lucky that I have a flexible team and if we need to stay on to get work done they will keep working to ensure the job at hand is done.

**GreenKeeping:** You said you personally have had a very long standing relationship with Rigby Taylor throughout your career. Who do you work with, what are the things that matter to you about the relationship you have and how does it benefit you, the team and the course?

**Tom Jennings:** Most of the products I use are Rigby Taylor; I have a fantastic relationship with Gareth Acteson who I have known for over 10



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## ► Greenkeeper profile



*Above, the 15th fairway in October 2018, before it was treated with overseeding, aeration, wetting agents, feeding and sharp mowers.  
Below: The same fairway in June 2019*

years. Gareth's knowledge and advice is second to none. The after care and back up support that I get from Gareth gives me support in what I do and ensures all the products are used to their full potential which in turn boosts the course. The products speak for themselves and I have nothing but positive feedback from my directors and members at Calcot Park.

**GreenKeeping:** Which Rigby Taylor programmes do you use, how do you decide on the most beneficial products for the course and what results have you seen, especially following the particularly challenging 2018 summer?

**Tom Jennings:** I have a programme set in place for each area of the course from greens to tees to fairways. When I joined in October 2018 after the summer drought I decided it was a must that we overseed our fairways. Working with Gareth, we used a Rigby Taylor

R6CRT seed sown at 20 grams per square metre. As well as aerating fairways, scarifying fairways, using liquid feeds and applying a wetting agent programme, the fairways have come back.

**GreenKeeping:** You spend time communicating and introducing products such as those supplied by Rigby Taylor to the club's membership. Why do you do this, how do you feel it helps you, your team, the club management and the members?

**Tom Jennings:** Calcot Park is a members' club and I feel it is important to show the members what their money is being spent on.

Giving them an insight into the practices and products we use helps educate our membership.

Communication is extremely important to me in keeping the club's members informed that we are using the best products for their golf club.

**GreenKeeping:** Education is something you are passionate about. How do you ensure the value of your team is increased individually and as a whole, and what are you currently doing to further your own personal development?

**Tom Jennings:** Education and keeping my team fully trained is extremely important to me. I was given a chance at Swinley Forest by Lawson Bingham and John Band to go on as many courses and gain as much experience as I could. I will be forever grateful to them both. I am using their practices on my own team, putting my staff through college, chainsaw qualifications and spraying qualifications. I would like to keep learning myself and I am looking at doing my level 5. I think no matter what position in a greenkeeping team you are, you should always strive to be the best and keep learning every single day.

**GreenKeeping:** Albeit the club is looking to upgrade the irrigation system, how are you currently ensuring best water management practices and what tools are enabling you to deliver the best results?

**Tom Jennings:** The club recently purchased the POGO moisture meter; it is a water management tool that has enabled me to get the best out of my current water system. Using the POGO has allowed me to change the irrigation programme so I get better results and, more importantly, improve consistency throughout the course.







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The current irrigation system we have is coming to the end of its life; being able to use the POGO gives me data and results on how the system is performing daily.

We are currently using a Rainbird system and are looking to potentially invest in a new system.

**GreenKeeping:** Social media is something that you have really got to grips with. Please can you outline you use and how you use it, and what attitude changes you've experienced since you have invested your time and effort into this?

**Tom Jennings:** Since October I have set up an Instagram account called Calcot Park Greenkeepers.

I use Instagram because I want the members and other Instagram users to see what we do, how we do it and the benefits and results for them.

Before and after photos and videos are great



to look back on and show the users what practices we do and how often we do them. I have had fantastic feedback from my own membership, other golfers and other

greenkeepers in the industry.

I post daily so the page is consistent and gives people an insight into the work we have done for particular tournaments.



## ► Greenkeeper profile

**GreenKeeping:** What are the current major projects you are working on across the course and over what period will the work be done?

**Tom Jennings:** At this moment in time aeration, top-dressing, spraying and attention to detail work are our main focus. I already have a winter plan in place where I would like to carry on with improving our pathways, bunkers and woodland management programme.

This was all started last year (2018) and for

the winter months ahead we will be carrying on.

**GreenKeeping:** What do you think are the strengths that have carried you through your career and how do you look forward to ensuring the course keeps evolving?

**Tom Jennings:** I work extremely hard and have a fantastic work ethic that has been installed into me by my parents.

My desire and aim is to make Calcot Park

one of the best clubs around and I will drive my team and myself to achieve this.

I have worked at a top 100 course and I know what it takes and the different skills you need to have to achieve this.

Training my team in this philosophy will make Calcot Park Golf Club one of the best around.

**GreenKeeping:** What height of cut do you use across the course?





*Tom Jennings*



## ► Greenkeeper profile



*Gareth Acteson from Rigby Taylor and Tom taking moisture meter readings with the POGO moisture meter*



**Tom Jennings:** Greens, 2.5 to 4mm. Aprons, 7mm. Tees, 10mm. Fairways, 13 to 15mm. Rough, 2.5 inches. This takes 40 man hours per week.

**GreenKeeping:** You run a heavy aeration programme. What form does this take, what equipment do you use and how often?

**Tom Jennings:** Since joining Calcot Park Golf Club I have upped our aeration programme and we use all different practices to achieve these surfaces.

We Air2 G2, pencil tine, Soli tine, Dyno core, scarify, Verti cut and Sarrell roll.

We use our Greentech units weekly and other forms of aeration monthly depending on

our work load and weather conditions.

**GreenKeeping:** The greens are clay pop up. What challenges do these present and are you managing any issues of thatch?

**Tom Jennings:** The aeration programme in place is extremely aggressive, allowing us to hit different levels in the soil profile and reduce thatch. Increasing top-dressing levels and using a penetrate programme (Penetrate R) we are allowing moisture to move through the profile. Using good cultural practices and using the correct products, we are achieving this.

**GreenKeeping:** The course presentation by way of attention to detail looks stunning, complimented by a nice range of course furniture! How do you and the team achieve and maintain such a high standard?

**Tom Jennings:** Since joining in October I have put together a programme for the staff. Section work where two members of staff work on six holes each; this provides healthy competition and attention to detail. I am firm believer that the overall product of the golf course should be first class. Green speeds and firmness are important but so is having manicured bunkers, edged pathways and clean course furniture. For me, attention to detail is the most important part of keeping the course tidy and ensuring that we always go the extra mile.

**GreenKeeping:** The pressures on the course manager to deliver a better product are growing year on year and the level of professionalism is rising with this. What do you think are the qualities now needed to meet the requirements and demands of members / players by someone in your position and how does this help contribute to the business of golf?

**Tom Jennings:** The pressures on course managers are extremely high but using modern products, the best technology, social media and going to BTME, you can achieve this. Learning and training every year will help move your golf courses forward.

**GreenKeeping:** What currently gives you the greatest satisfaction from your job, how do you feel daily when you are moving around the



course looking at what you and the team have achieved and what do you feel are your biggest achievements to date?

**Tom Jennings:** Going through the Instagram page and looking back at jobs via before and after photos gives me great satisfaction to see how far we have come in such a short amount of time.

The pathway constructions, overseeding fairways, aeration programme and the greens' consistency is great to look back on.

One of my biggest achievements so far is looking how far as a team we have come with adding new staff to the existing team and how well we have jelled together. The team has been transformed and we now work together and this is showing in our work ethic and course presentation.

Attention to detail and surface consistency has been a huge factor in what we are achieving. It is also nice for us as a team to receive verbal feedback from members saying

how much they are enjoying the changes to the course and how much it has improved.

**GreenKeeping:** With your career experience, what advice would you give to youngsters starting out and wanting to pursue a career in the profession?

**Tom Jennings:** Get on as many courses and training days as you can, get your qualifications and do as much research as you can. I think playing golf, going to different courses and looking at how other courses are prepared will improve you as a person and a greenkeeper. Most importantly enjoy what you do; I wake up every morning and love going to work to do the job that I do.

**GreenKeeping:** What changes do you think need to be made to benefit the industry sector and profession of the greenkeeper?

**Tom Jennings:** I think that education programmes are very important and the



industry needs to ensure that they keep bringing out new courses in ways to test the green staff.

Courses also need to be made more affordable so more people can access them. I also think the golf clubs need to improve their relations with the green staff and should allow them to compete and be a part of their club. The club should do this so the staff are able to experience what they create to a higher standard.

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Topturf have now expanded to designing, building, supplying and installing single or multi-pump pump sets.

Topturf are the leading agents for the supply and installation of Otterbine Barebo decorative and industrial aerators, providing quality aeration for the water management of all lakes and ponds.







## ➤ Greenkeeper profile

**"I WOULD JUST LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS FOR ALL THE HELP ON THE DIVOTTING EVENINGS, IT'S REALLY HELPED WITH RECOVERY AND I FEEL THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEMBERS AND GREEN STAFF IS FANTASTIC. THE CLUB MEMBERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAVE REALLY BACKED ME WITH ALLOWING ME FUNDS TO IMPROVE COURSE FURNITURE AND NEW CUTTING MACHINES FOR THE COURSE"**







# The Toro Workman GTX



*In its entry level form, the two-seat Toro GTX offers affordable utility in a rear wheel drive package with a choice of petrol or electric power. Options include a four-seat model with the same cargo area or a two seater with a massive 1.80m long flat bed. Nominal platform capacity of 363kg allows for two people on board with up to 454kg in tow*

## More choice makes Toro GTX a versatile platform, reports **James de Havilland**

The Toro Workman GTX is a turf and grounds crossover utility vehicle and, with over 300 configurations, it's the industry's most versatile platform with more power, improved steering and an exclusive suspension and braking system, making it the most practical and comfortable in its mid-duty class.

The suspension system sees coil-over shacks placed all around the vehicle which means when using the GTX, it's not only comfortable, but the ride is smooth and operator fatigue is reduced. The hydraulic, rather than mechanical, disk brakes bring

reliable and consistent stopping power, eliminating the need for cable adjustment and meaning less pedal force is required.

Available in petrol or electric versions, the adaptable Workman GTX is first in the range to offer the option to seat four, working as a personnel as well as materials' carrier, and does so without compromising on power, comfort or control.

Reesink's national sales manager Jeff Anguige says of the GTX: "The GTX is an exceptionally versatile and powerful machine. A host of additional features means it meets high power and

performance standards, while also being incredibly comfortable to drive. It's also more compact and lightweight meaning it's kind to turf, power hasn't been substituted for a light tread, this machine has both."

But don't just take our word for it, freelance technical writer James de Havilland put the GTX through its paces and gives his verdict here.

### **It might be light but it offers loads of utility**

"The light utility vehicle market has quite a range of machines on offer, but when it





*The integral charger runs from a standard 13 amp single phase plug in cable. The charger is designed to either provide a quick top-up or be left hooked to the mains for an extended period*

comes to units that are better suited to working over golf courses, fine turf, sports fields and amenity areas, the choice starts to shrink. The best vehicles need to offer more than seating for two, with a bit of capacity behind the seats.

"The diminutive Toro GTX we look at here is, in its entry-level form, perhaps a good example of this. A two-wheel drive, two-seater with a load platform on the back is hardly a new concept, nor is the choice of petrol or electric power. But with the GTX there is a great deal more on offer to include short or long chassis models. This allows a Toro GTX to be specified as a four seater, complete with the same size load bay as the two-seat model, or as a two-seater with an extended 1.80m flat bed. This offers a completely flat cargo space, a massive six-foot length ensuring the Toro GTX is not from the 'seen something like this before' category.

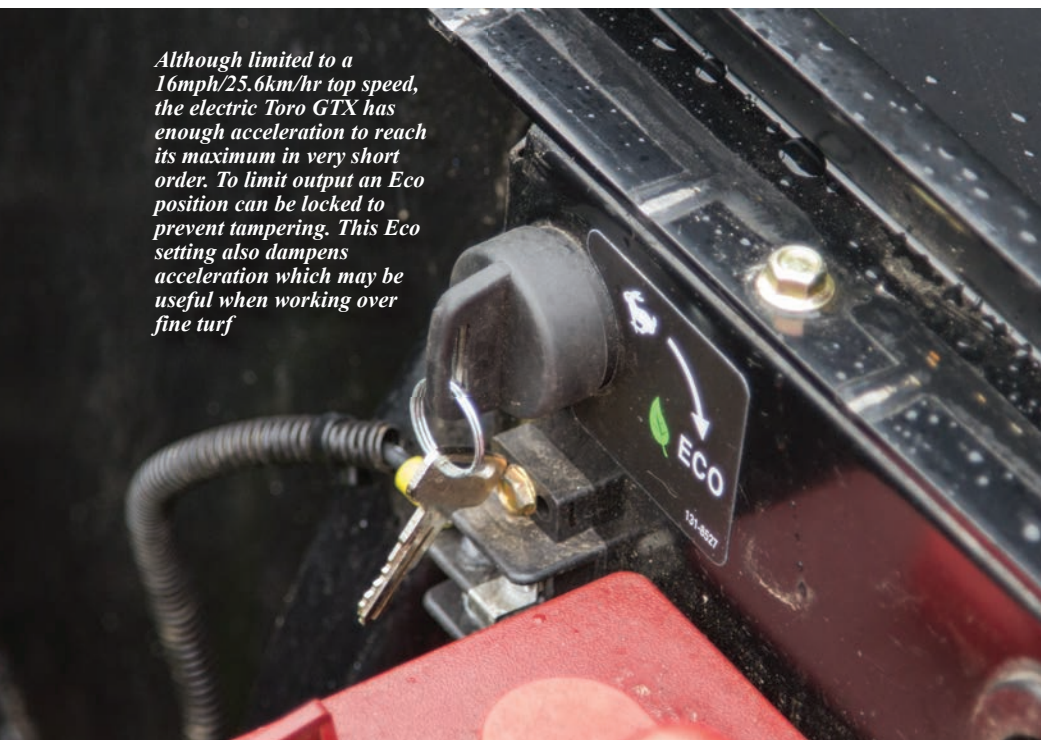
**"IT IS  
SMOOTH,  
COMFORTABLE  
AND RESPONSIVE  
THANKS TO  
THE SPEC  
SECRETS UP  
ITS SLEEVE"**

## **GTX highlights**

- **First in range to offer the option to seat four**
- **Better power-to-weight ratio boosts payload capacity**
- **Front and rear attachment points**
- **Steel and 6-foot flat beds available**
- **Manual rack and pinion steering (2.75 turns lock-to-lock)**
- **Available in petrol or electric versions**
- **Transport speed up to 16mph**



*Although limited to a 16mph/25.6km/hr top speed, the electric Toro GTX has enough acceleration to reach its maximum in very short order. To limit output an Eco position can be locked to prevent tampering. This Eco setting also dampens acceleration which may be useful when working over fine turf*



"Starting with the basics, a Toro GTX two seater is fitted as standard with a 1016mm long by 987mm wide cargo bay. Made from a tough polymer, and fitted with a drop down tailgate, the bed has 279mm high sides and can carry loads weighing up to 363kg. A huge choice of attachments can be added to this basic configuration to include side extensions and tool carriers plus mounting kits for both the front and rear of the vehicle. Add a very generous

## "THE GTX OFFERS AN AFFORDABLE UTILITY IN A VERSATILE PACKAGE"

454kg towing capacity and the Toro GTX starts to show its potential as a true amenity, golf and sports turf utility.

"Now add the chassis extension. This extra length can accommodate a second row of bench or individual seats and still retain the same rear cargo area as the two-seater. If cargo space is the priority, the chassis extension will allow the aforementioned flatbed to be specified. This choice adds a whole new raft of potential utility to the Toro Workman series. With the small entry-level GTX range you now have access to an affordable personnel carrier as well as a general tool to move machines and materials. A roof and screen are further options.

"As to power, neither the petrol or GTE electric options are designed to afford the GTX with the output for heavy-duty haulage or working a big sprayer. Toro has a Workman model to suit those applications. What the GTX offers is affordable utility in a versatile package to suit a really broad and diverse range of applications. The plug-in electric model has surprising acceleration too

## Machine spec

**Steering:** Manual rack and pinion (2.75 turns lock-to-lock)

**Turning clearance circle:** 6.30m. Inside turning radius: 1530mm

**Brakes:** Front- and rear-wheel hydraulic disc

**Suspension:** Front-modified MacPherson strut. Rear-articulating swing arm with adjustable coil springs

**Suspension travel:** Front 889mm. Rear 1016mm

**Fuel capacity (petrol):** 18.9 litres

**Transport speed:** Variable up to 16 mph/25.6km/h

**Ground clearance:** Front - 2160mm, rear - 1550mm

**Tyres:** Front and rear 20x8-10 4-ply turf tyres

### Outline dimensions:

Vehicle dimensions – width by length by wheelbase:

2-Seat with Bed: 1.20m x 3.00m x 2.20m

4-Seat with Bed: 1.20m x 3.60m x 2.90m

2-Seat with 1.80m flatbed: 1.20m x 3.00m x 2.90m

and, thanks to its on-board charger, can be topped up from any 13amp electric socket."

### Rest of the range

The GTX joins the Workman MDX-D in the mid-duty range. The trusted Workman MDX-D has a 600cc Kubota liquid-cooled diesel engine providing longer engine life than petrol models and a cargo-bed capacity of



750kg (1,650lbs) – one of the highest in its class. Not to be outdone in the boasting stakes, the Toro Workman HDX-D is the only one needed in the heavy-duty utility category. It has the highest total carrying load in the industry together with a towing capacity of up to 1,588kg/3,500lb, while its innovative automotive technology isolates the engine, transmission and main frame from all load forces, thereby eliminating potential overstress in these components.

For more information on the Toro Workman GTX and the rest of the mid-duty – and heavy-duty utility vehicles ranges – contact Reesink Turfcare, an official UK Toro distributor, on 01480 226800 or email [info@reesinkturfcare.co.uk](mailto:info@reesinkturfcare.co.uk) or visit [reesinkturfcare.co.uk](http://reesinkturfcare.co.uk)



*Four Trojan Advanced 'deep cycle' batteries, complete with a single port fill to top up the electrolyte with distilled water, provide the energy storage for the electric GTE*





## ► machinery and equipment buyer's guide



### Dennis and SISIS

Dennis and SISIS have completed another successful season of insightful seminars which welcomed over 500 attendees at various venues throughout the UK.

Dennis and SISIS have, for a number of years, hosted free-to-attend educational seminars designed to educate groundstaff on a variety of topics associated with sports turf maintenance. High quality speakers and interesting subjects have ensured these seminars have a reputation as 'must-attend' events with groundstaff travelling considerable distances to be in attendance.

While the seminars continue to go from strength to strength, Dennis and SISIS continue to evolve the seminars with the people of the industry in mind, and this year, the British manufacturers launched a new multi-sport groundcare seminar which featured a number of high quality speakers discussing subjects such as renovations, sports-turf construction, drainage, winter sports pitches and the future of groundcare maintenance.

This new event, which took place at St Albans School, Woollam Trust Playing Fields, saw an incredible 220 delegates in attendance and attracted grounds staff from all over the UK including volunteers and professionals representing schools, sports clubs, local authorities and contractors.

Nick Lockhart, cricket professional and head of grounds and gardens at Felsted School in Essex, attended the event and claimed that the Dennis and SISIS seminars are essential for anyone who wants to take their sports surfaces to the next level.

"It has been thoroughly enjoyable, informative and thought provoking," he said. "I would go as far as saying that it is a must-at-

tend event for people in this industry. It has been incredibly interesting listening to all of the speakers who have all raised great points that we can take away with us and put into practice. Speakers aside, the networking opportunities are also important because it gives us a chance to speak to other delegates, find out what they might be doing differently to us and hopefully learn from them too."

The ever popular Dennis and SISIS bowls seminars, which have been credited for improving the greens at numerous bowls clubs throughout the country, offered tips on topics such as early spring maintenance of bowling greens, grant funding support, and choosing the correct grass seed, chemicals and fertilizers.

Kev Brazier, a contract greenkeeper working in partnership with Harpenden Bowls Club, attended the seminar at the Herts Bowling Club in Watford and felt that it was a great opportunity to enhance his greenkeeping knowledge.

"It was an excellent and really informative seminar," he said. "The speakers had great knowledge and they presented it in a way in which everyone could understand. It was great for networking and there was a broad range of subjects. They were all incredibly relevant and I took a lot away from seminar."

As well as hosting their own events, Dennis and SISIS are committed to supporting sports turf education wherever possible and this year they also offered their expertise at eight Rugby Football Union (RFU) pitch maintenance seminars.

Web: [www.dennisuk.com](http://www.dennisuk.com) / [www.sisis.com](http://www.sisis.com)

### INFINICUT

Galashiels has become another bowling club to join a growing list of those to purchase a Cub Cadet INFINICUT® mower. This time a 22" floating head version, and club vice president and green ranger Steve Currie is delighted with the switch as it has already made significant improvements to green quality – not to mention reductions in noise and fuel cost.

Having taken over as green ranger two years ago without a greenkeeping background, Steve has turned to industry contacts

and nearby clubs for advice – which is where he first heard about the INFINICUT®. "Our previous mower was getting towards the end of its lifespan and was costing the club more to maintain than the service it was delivering" explains Steve. "We looked at all the usual petrol-powered models when Martin at Pro Turfcare, our green contractors, suggested we looked at the INFINICUT®. He and our friends at Largs Bowling Club use the INFINICUT® and have both been seriously impressed."

While Steve admits he was initially con-



cerned about the new technology and the overall cost of the purchase, a demonstration and a working out of the sums quickly put his mind to rest. "The INFINICUT® was not only easy to set-up and use, but in the long run it was going to be a good bet financially for the club. The quality of cut it and finish it delivers is fantastic. With it being battery-operated it means we can now mow earlier in the mornings and later into the evenings, which we were previously unable to do due to the restrictions of being located in a residential area. In addition, the battery makes it inexpensive to run, simply putting it on charge at the end of a day's work. The time and financial savings this will equate to when considering sourcing fuel, together with the insurance element of storing it, we estimate will be significant."

Keen to seal the deal, Steve purchased the mower the same day and took delivery in the summer of last year.

Web: [www.cubcadetturf.com](http://www.cubcadetturf.com)

### Bernhard and Co

The Bernhard Academy has been launched at





the company's factory facilities in Haverhill, Suffolk. The Bernhard Academy is set to become a hub of knowledge for the turf industry and a centre promoting learning and development across the globe. In addition to promoting education to UK turf specialists, the academy will develop a training programme for Bernhard's distributors from across the US, Asia and Europe to help enhance their knowledge of turf health solutions.

Working in partnership with Mow-Sure Training, the academy aims to train customers, technicians and distributors' sales team to promote turf health, cutting precision and superior playability and eventually to get the most out of Bernhard's product portfolio.

The accredited training will be delivered in several formats at the purpose-built facility at Haverhill, hands-on training, theory or via on-line learning. A wide range of modular and short courses is planned, with the two signature courses being a turf technician course and a turf manager's course.

*Web: Bernhard.co.uk*

### The Double A Trading Company

Largs Golf Club has taken delivery of a new Tru-Turf RB48-11A Greens Roller. This new roller replaces the club's existing Tru-Turf RS48-11C, which has been in service with the club for 10 years and when it came to replacement there was no need for course manager Iain Barr to



Largs GC's deputy course manager George Morrison with the new Tru-Turf RB48-11A Greens Roller

look any further than another Tru-Turf due to the great service and putting surfaces provided by the previous roller.

Established in 1891, Largs Golf Club, in north Ayrshire, enjoys spectacular views over the Clyde estuary and the neighbouring islands of Cumbrae, Bute and Arran.

*Web: www.doublea.co.uk*

### Dennis

Keith Porter, head groundsman at Leigh Sports Village in Greater Manchester, has added to his fleet of Dennis mowers by purchasing four G860 cylinder mowers and four PRO 34R rotary mowers.

To cut and prepare the pitches for match days he has long relied on the Dennis G860 cylinder mower. However, with games coming thick and fast, and armed with some rather ageing rotary mowers, Keith felt the time was right to add to his Dennis armoury.

"Quite often, we will have back-to-back games and have three games in a week – so we need good equipment for a quick turnaround," he said. "Our old rotaries were about four years old and had become unreliable. I've used lots of Dennis machines in my time and they have always been incredibly reliable so we decided to look at their new rotary mower.

"We had a PRO 34R on a demonstration and were really impressed with it so we decided to go ahead and purchase four. It was also the ideal opportunity to bring in more G860's because they have always given us great results.

"They are both light machines compared to competitors, so they are lighter on the pitch and therefore there is not as much compaction."

The new Dennis PRO 34R is a 34" (860mm) rotary mower which has been designed to help groundsmen achieve an aesthetically pleasing appearance and desired playing surface. It is ideal for sports pitches and lawns producing the enviable 'Dennis Stripes' while a powerful vacuum flow collects debris quickly and efficiently. The angle of the cutting deck and twin blades can be easily adjusted using a single 'click adjuster' ensuring the mower is suitable for changing conditions and meeting groundsmen's requirements.



Toro

Keith believes the two mowers perfectly complement one another and that both play a vital role in his maintenance programme.

"We use the G860's to cut the pitches for match preparation and then the day after the games the rotaries are used to clean up and present the pitches in time for the next game," he said. "The rotaries keep it free from debris and nicely stripes them up - in fact, the presentation on the PRO 34R is very comparable to a cylinder mower.

"The rotaries also save us so much time because before we had the PRO 34R's we used to have six rotary mowers out there at one time but now we just have four which do the job in a faster time. This is because there are two blades as opposed to one and a wider cut. A quick turnaround is essential here especially if you are going from rugby to football.

For a number of years now the Dennis G860 has been the number one choice for groundsmen like Keith. Lightweight at just 166kg; it is easy to manoeuvre and comfortable to operate. The handlebar console houses the controls for - throttle, parking brake, roller drive and cutting cylinder drive. The mower also features a large diameter front roller with an adjustable scraper which has been designed for a precise height of cut control, giving an excellent finish on every occasion. The Dennis G860 also features an interchangeable cassette system to assist with a wide range of tasks.

*Web: www.dennisuk.com*

### Toro

Dedicated to bringing you more, Reesink Turf-care has extended its Toro Parts range with Toro Reels+ and EdgeSeries Reels+, and with this introduction comes multiple plus points for machinery maintenance.

With Toro Reels+ and EdgeSeries Reels+, everything you need for replacing your cylinders is included and comes pre-assembled. You get the cylinder plus all the necessary



## ► machinery and equipment buyer's guide

bearings, flock seals and spacers, plus the benefit of having all the parts professionally assembled at the factory.

This means that all the bearings are already pressed on with the required low-drag flock seals and spacers. Therefore there's no need to install all the parts separately which results in a huge reduction in assembly time.

With the integration of the cylinder and all its components, the guesswork for technicians is removed, ensuring the recommended bearings are utilised which increases the product life of your cutting units. Less time on maintenance, and a longer life span means there's more time to focus on providing the best turf care possible.

Using Toro Reels+ and EdgeSeries Reels+ reduces installation time by approximately 15-20 minutes per cylinder which brings yet another plus point – less time and labour means your mowers are back in action faster, saving money and resources.

Plus, using genuine Toro parts means you'll always maintain Toro's legendary quality of cut.

Michael Hampton, parts manager at Reesink Turfcare, says: "Toro Reels+ and EdgeSeries Reels+ guarantee a fit which matches the exact engineering specifications of the mower. And as you might expect, a perfect fit produces a perfect cut.

"Both products will also see customers make real savings. As well as reducing maintenance time, by buying a cylinder that comes with the bearings, seals and spacers needed, customers actually get a discount from the individual part retail price. Added to the high-quality performance of the product, Reels+ and EdgeSeries Reels+ are a real game changer."

Tel: 01480 226800

### John Deere

A total of 31 young service technicians have formally graduated from the latest John Deere Ag Tech and Turf Tech advanced apprenticeship programmes, which are run in partnership with national training provider ProVQ at the purpose-built John Deere Apprentice Training Centre in Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire.



Apprentice of the Year for 2018 was Henry Smith of Cornthwaite Agricultural Ltd in Ormskirk, who received a crystal plaque, winner's certificate and a John Deere tool kit worth £500. The runners-up were Martyn Burnett of HRN Tractors Ltd, Inch and William Storr of Rea Valley Tractors, Sudbury, who each received a certificate and high street vouchers worth £250.

The annual apprentice graduation ceremony was held at the East Midlands Conference Centre on the University of Nottingham campus for the first time, with the students' parents and dealer representatives also invited to celebrate the occasion. John Deere Limited managing director Jonathan Henry presented the apprentices with their graduation certificates, while after-dinner guest speaker and TV presenter Guy Martin, together with ProVQ chairman Julian Lloyd, handed over the three apprentice of the year awards.

These awards are based on the trainees' consistently high standards of work, both at their dealerships and at the training centre, over the three years of the apprenticeship. In addition, all central government approved apprenticeships in England now require an end-point assessment, over and above the log of work progress that was kept for each apprentice before last year. The majority of the 2018 graduates were therefore the first John Deere technicians to qualify under the new EPA rules.

"With the new EPA tests, which were held at Langar in April, both John Deere and our dealers are now able to quantify more effectively the skills of the apprentices we are training," says John Deere Limited training centre manager Allan Cochran. "An EPA pass mark of above 90 per cent was required to earn a distinction and well over half the apprentices we tested achieved this, which was well above



our initial expectations, so we have got off to a great start with these new assessments."

John Deere's three-year Ag Tech and Turf Tech and two-year Parts Tech apprenticeships involve students being trained in engineering, electronics, hydraulics, diagnostics, communication skills, computing, sales and marketing. The programmes lead to IMI Level 2 & 3 Diplomas in Landbased Engineering and Vehicle Parts Competence, and registration at LTA Intermediate level in the industry's Land-based Training Accreditation scheme.

In subsequent years qualified technicians undergo further education and adult training within the John Deere University programme, on a career path that can ultimately lead to the highest possible LTA Master Technician accreditation.

New student intakes are in September each year; apprentices need to be resident in the UK, sponsored by a John Deere dealer and aged 16 or over. The standard programmes include on-the-job training and assessment as well as eight weeks each year at the John Deere Apprentice Training Centre.

Now in its 27th year, Ag Tech was the first such scheme to be introduced in the UK and won a National Training Award at the end of 1997, the only one ever made to an agricultural machinery apprenticeship programme. Since the first programme started in 1992, over 750 apprentices have graduated through the three main schemes and are now working in the company's nationwide dealer network. Web: [apprenticeshipfinder.co.uk/john-deere](http://apprenticeshipfinder.co.uk/john-deere)

### Wiedenmann

BTME and Saltex regular for the last 24 years, Karl Wiedenmann has retired. Even though his remit was heading up worldwide sales for Wiedenmann GmbH, Karl made it his business to make as many UK trade shows as possible. For the last two and a half decades



Karl has helped expand the Wiedenmann fleet beyond Terra Spike aerators into other areas such as collecting, sweeping, seeding and artificial turf maintenance.

At a special farewell at Wiedenmann UK's HQ, David Rae, Wiedenmann UK's managing director, said that Karl's influence was everywhere in the Wiedenmann brand. "Not only is he expert in logistic and technical matters, Karl's dependability to 'do the right thing' shines through. Dealers and customers up and down the UK got to know him and valued his opinion. Every business needs a Karl."

Even Karl's legendary reliability at client functions came in for special praise. David Rae quipped: "Karl could be last to leave the bar and put the lights off at 4am yet be first up, fresh and ready for breakfast at 6am. We, his colleagues, loved him for that alone. He was great to have on the team."

After accepting a presentation of an engraved quai ch and Scotch whisky, Karl acknowledged the UK has become like a second home. However he reserved his warmest tribute to Wiedenmann UK chairman, Alistair Rae, crediting him for generously passing on the education that enabled Karl's smooth transition from agriculture to sports turf in the 1990s, saying it was on Alistair's solid foundation he built his Wiedenmann career.

*Web: wiedenmann.co.uk*

## GreenMech

A GreenMech Arborist 130 has become a key tool in the armoury of Ryan Evans, owner of Edinburgh's Castle Trees. Having left a career in the army after 23 years, Ryan is embarking on a new venture, with his woodchipper delivering the versatility, manoeuvrability and reliability he needs for around-town tree work.

"When I knew I was approaching the end of my army career, I went and worked with another ex-army friend who had established his own tree surgery business - I knew straight away that the physicality and outdoor nature of the work was going to suit me," explains Ryan, who set up Castle Trees last year.

"I used a woodchipper during my time there and was going to invest in the same brand until I looked around, particularly on some online forums I found, and saw Green-



Mech machines often coming out on top."

Ryan had a demonstration of the Arborist 130 model with GreenMech's Peter Bagguley where he was instantly impressed with the chipper's capabilities. "I couldn't believe the size of some of the material they were putting in, that it was taking so easily in its stride. Had I not have seen this for myself, I think I would have been cautious processing similar material with a chipper of that size. That performance, combined with the price, meant the Arb 130 met my needs perfectly." The back-up service from local dealer Henderson's was the final factor to tip the balance for Ryan, taking delivery of his machine in March.

The chipper is now out most days, handling a variety of brash and woody waste from both large and small domestic projects. "The feed mechanism is great, and the buttons make it very user-friendly. As a small outfit, I can tow the chipper easily with my 4x4 getting in and around tight roads or restricted accesses without a problem. Importantly though, the size of the machine doesn't come at the detriment of the performance and to this date, it's had the power to process anything and everything we've put through it. It's truly compact without the compromise."

*Web: www.greenmech.co.uk*

## Capillary Concrete

The recent wet weather has yet again highlighted the benefits of lining bunkers with a quality and proven product such as Capillary Concrete.

Nearly all areas of the country received heavy and continuous rainfall in the recent weeks resulting in lots of flooded bunkers, contaminated sand, washed down faces and lots of work for the greenstaff to get the bunkers back into a presentable and playable state.



"Unless you have Capillary Concrete that is, then all you will be faced with is, at most, a small amount of sand movement that can easily be raked back into place in a matter of minutes, meaning your bunkers will be back in play in no time at all," said a spokesman.

"We have received feedback from customers all across the country praising the performance of Capillary Concrete and thankful for the amount of work that it has saved them.

"Capillary Concrete is quick and easy to install by the club's own staff or a contractor, all training is provided, it is supplied to site already mixed so just simply needs transporting to the bunkers and laying, a typical bunker of 100m<sup>2</sup> can be installed in under 90 minutes. There is no wastage as we can tailor the amount supplied to your requirements.

"Capillary Concrete is a cost effective, long term solution for your bunker issues that is backed up by our 10-year insurance backed guarantee for your peace of mind.

"Find out more and see how Capillary Concrete can benefit your course."

*Email: neil@bordersportsservices.co.uk*

## Charterhouse Turf Machinery

A Verti-Quake® and Rink Topdresser have become the latest additions to the machinery fleet of Oldham Council. The redevelopment of a number of sports pitches has seen the purchase of machinery necessary to meet the maintenance specifications. For District Supervisor David Barlow, the latest investment compliments his existing stable of Redexim Charterhouse equipment.

"We're very fortunate as a council to be investing not only in our facilities, but in the machinery needed to keep them at their best" explains David, who together with another Supervisor, head up a maintenance team of 40.



## ► machinery and equipment buyer's guide



"Over the last 10 years, 13 pitches mainly used for football, have been redeveloped and converted from soil to sand-based surfaces. This has changed the maintenance programme required to keep the pitches performing to a certain specification, and the machinery we had was struggling to do the job."

With an Overseeder, Carrier and Verti-Drain® from Charterhouse already in their fleet, David knows it's kit that can be relied on. "When funds became available, top of my list was equipment to assist with the tasks of slitting and topdressing the pitches, which we should be conducting at least once a year. I spoke with Richard Lucas of Charterhouse and Steve Massey at our local dealer Sharrocks and following impressive demonstrations, and ruling out other machines, we purchased a Rink DS3800 topdresser and Verti-Quake 3825 earlier this year."

"The Rink gives us a fantastic, even spread across the pitches, making the job much quicker and easier than it was with our previous spreader. It is also fitted with an agitator which prevents material sticking, ensuring a good flow of sand. This machine is already coming into its own as we undertake our football pitch renovations, helping us to fulfil the requirement of applying 50 tonnes of root-zone to each pitch, each year. The Verti-Quake meanwhile will become a key tool to help improve aeration not only of our new

sand-based pitches, but across a range of surfaces under our remit."

Web: [www.charterhouse-tm.co.uk](http://www.charterhouse-tm.co.uk)

### Toro

The family-managed duo of golf courses, Thorpe Wood Golf Course and Orton Meadows Golf Course in Peterborough, continues its joint ambition to switch to Toro with the arrival of its latest fleet.

Golf is in Simon Fitton's blood. Not only is he a fourth-generation golf professional, he's also the third generation of the Fitton family to be managing the two courses. Simon assumed the role of managing director of Nene Golf, the company managing both sites, in 2010 and has been adding more Toro to the shed on an annual basis – and has also added a rescue dog called Toro to the ranks!

Simon says: "I took over the company from my dad in 2010, but the first Toro arrived a decade before me. Since then, we've been on route to becoming all Toro and I foresee that being achieved in three to four years. Every year we switch more out and get one step closer."

The reason for this, Simon says, is the service from Reesink Turfcare and rep Julian Coping is "surprisingly good" and the quality and reliability from Toro is "sound".

"I met Julian pretty much as soon as I joined and the relationship was there straight away. It was all good, actually surprisingly

good – very natural – and as a result it has easily developed into what it is today. Julian continues to help us sort out what we need and makes the process very easy."

The machines delivered in this most recent order includes, among others, a Reelmaster 3100-D with Sidewinder, Workman HDX utility vehicle, ProPass 200 topdresser and an ex-demo SandPro 5040, which, with up to 17 attachments all of which can be changed in under a minute, is the perfect addition for two busy clubs.

So, with the machinery replacement programme taken care of, Simon can concentrate on the recent developments across both courses driven by the changing industry: "We're already unusual in that we're a business comprising two courses, in two locations offering our customers two great challenges. But the industry is changing and we're making updates to both courses to make sure we don't get left behind. These include a 23-bay covered floodlit driving range, the building of which meant we had to adjust parts of the course to accommodate it, a large putting green by the first tee and a chipping tee by the 10th. Meanwhile, Orton Meadows has an updated 12-hole Pitch and Putt course to introduce more people in the area to the game and provide somewhere for players in the area to perfect their shots."

With two 18-hole courses and all these new additions to the clubs, it is probably quite a challenging role for Toro? "You'd never notice," says Simon. "Toro takes everything we throw at it, whether it's course maintenance or more challenging build projects, in its stride. And you can really notice the difference as we get more Toro."

So how about Toro the dog, how does he fit into the story? "That's a story that was just meant to be," says Simon. "I already had a dog called Welly and although I wasn't looking for another, I'd heard of a rescue dog that needed a home. His name was Toro and as soon as I saw him I knew he was coming home with me! I don't know why he was given the name of Toro but it certainly suits us – he arrived and in the same week so did a new arrival of Toro machines!"

Web: [reesinkturfcare.co.uk](http://reesinkturfcare.co.uk)



# The end of an era

**After five decades in the greenkeeping industry, Nigel Church has retired from Ransomes Jacobsen. Here, former colleagues Ian Mitchell and Peter Driver look back on the career of an industry titan**

**T**he word 'legend' is an over-used term, especially in today's society, and looking up its meaning in the dictionary it says 'an extremely famous or notorious person, especially in a particular field.' Two of its synonyms are 'superstar' and 'icon'.

All of these words apply to one of the UK's most respected and valued members in the turf industry, Nigel Church, who retired at the end of June after almost 50 years in the sector. We had the pleasure of working closely with Nigel for decades and his knowledge, technical ability, eloquence and downright likeability has shone through in everything he does.

Nigel joined Ransomes Sims & Jeffries as an apprentice back in the 1970s along with other industry notables such as Bob Buckingham, Bob Bevan, Paul Watson, Richard Bishop, Richard Walne, Graham Dale, Jeff Anguige and Barry Beckett.

Readers of a similar age will recognise many of these names demonstrating that this generation of apprentices were the nucleus for the then new Toro European distribution – all built on the Ransomes skills they had been taught by John Wilson, Ken Buckledee and Guy Catchpole. In its day, Ransomes was considered the 'university' for the UK turf industry.

Nigel fulfilled many roles within the Ransomes business and the industry in general. In his time, he has been a demonstrator, a technical rep and an area rep; he has also had responsibility for export sales, national accounts, regional sales management and training.

Included in his impressive CV is an eight-

year sojourn, when he left Ransomes to work for one of its dealers, Kingston House Mowers, in a sales role. He was back at the company in 1998, when it was purchased by Textron, became Ransomes Jacobsen and played a significant part in providing continuity as the two businesses merged together.

Later in his career he joined the new Cutting Edge Training division at Ransomes Jacobsen with a remit to pass on his extensive knowledge and experience to the next generation of sales and technical professionals within the dealer network. This was another area where Nigel excelled and the quality of training delivered by him and his colleagues was arguably the most concise, detailed and effective across the entire industry.

In the past few years he has continued to expand this role, travelling to all points of the globe delivering training in his enthusiastic, effervescent manner and has recently returned from his final visit to the Far East.

Nigel 'on tour' is the stuff of legends. Many of us will never forget the long days and short nights at exhibitions and shows, where we enjoyed the camaraderie of a close-knit team in which 'Churchy' was often the pivotal point ... late into the evening, with a beer or gin and tonic in hand, he was always one of the last to leave the bar. Then, next morning, he was nearly always the first down to breakfast, bright-eyed and bushy tailed (well, sometimes), ready to prepare for the day's training seminar or long day on an exhibition stand. The man certainly has stamina.

Nigel has forgotten more than many people in this industry will ever know and he



will be sorely missed as he rides off into the sunset (probably on a Ransomes Highway 3). It has been an absolute pleasure to work with a man of this calibre – kind, knowledgeable, dedicated, humorous, affable – and who is instantly recognised across the industry. Just try walking with him across the halls at SALTEX, BTME, GIS and any other international event and see how long it takes to get from A to B!

As we said at the beginning of this appreciation, 'legend' is an over-used word in today's society, but not in Churchy's case.

The global turf industry's sincere best wishes go out to you Nigel, to Sylvia, your family and grandchildren, for a very long and happy retirement. It is well deserved.



## ► A day in the life

### Andy Brown

is the golf course manager at **Boundary Lakes Golf Course**. The parkland course is part of the Ageas Bowl – home to Hampshire Cricket



#### • What time do you arrive at the club?

I arrive by 5.30am so that I am ready for the team briefing at 5.45am.

#### • Can you describe your morning routine?

Every morning, and day, is different but we will always be cutting or rolling greens. Then, dependant on what is happening on that day, the weather and staff numbers, we will cut other playing areas such as tees, aprons, fairways and rough. We will always have at least one person on course set-up which includes jobs such as raking bunkers, moving tee markers, blowing any debris, checking bins and ball washers.

#### • How many people are there in your team and is it a fair number for your collective workload?

We are currently a team of six. We had seven last year and that was a good number. We have big greens and a decent amount of bunkers so ideally we will go back up to seven eventually but we do the best we can with the resources we have.

#### • Do you share tasks?

We always share tasks. I try to swap the jobs around every month or so, but I like all of my guys to be able to do as many jobs as possible as this makes my life easier. We have some members of the team who are less experienced than the others, so sharing the tasks out is a good

way to train them up and let them try to reach the standards of the experienced guys.

#### • How do you motivate your colleagues?

I treat them as I like to be treated. We also try to have fun – we have social events away from work which helps create a good team ethic. I always think a happy team is a productive team and people will do that little bit extra if they enjoy their work and respect their colleagues.

#### • What's your favourite season of the year and why?

I'm not sure what has happened to our seasons as they all seem to roll into one at the moment. I always like the idea of spring because you come out of a long winter and can then start to present the course to the standards we want again. Winter can be a battle with the weather and as a new course, we try to protect the course as much as we can from that.

#### • What aspects / functions of your job gives you the greatest satisfaction?

I love seeing improvements to the golf course made by the team – winter projects are great to get your teeth into. I also really enjoy seeing the younger lads improve their skills and knowledge, and progress in their careers.

#### • And what part of it gives you the least satisfaction?

Golfers' etiquette. This seems to be a problem everywhere in the country.

#### • Have you attended any courses recently?

I try to attend as many workshops, turf clubs and seminars as I can. These are a great opportunity to learn, network and catch up with guys who I may not have seen for a while.

#### • What seed mixtures and / or cultivars do you use for your greens, tees, fairways and roughs?

We use Masterline's ProMaster10 Traditional Green mixture on our greens and collars. We started sowing our green with fescue / bent in 2015/16 so we are trying to continue introducing these species. We then use PM36 Wicket on our tees, aprons and fairways. The perennial ryegrass gives us quick recovery from divots, is excellent on our shaded tees and is very cost effective.

#### • How would you improve the greenkeeping industry?

Somehow we need to improve greenkeepers' salaries and facilities. I see some clubs with more staff in the office than working out on the course. Some facilities are 20 to 30 years behind the times – we are expected to produce work to the highest standards with second rate facilities. There are lots of positives in the industry though in regards to products, machinery and 'can do' attitudes.

#### • Has a golfer ever deliberately directed a ball at you?

No, I don't think they have ever deliberately directed a ball at me but I've had a few near misses due to poor standard of play.

#### • Have you ever had any mishaps with lakes on the course or had to undertake a rescue of a daft golfer?

We had an incident not long after I started at Boundary Lakes where a dog went into one of the lakes and struggled to get out so its owner went in ... then she couldn't get out either! Luckily, one of the team was nearby and managed to help her and her dog out safely.



• **What is the most interesting animal you have seen on your course and how do you do support wildlife?**

Just recently we have had two Egyptian geese on the course which I've never seen before. We are really trying to improve our ecology on the course – lots of bug hotels, wood piles and wildflowers. We have a new bee hive on site and we are now working in conjunction with a local school to build some more bird boxes, which will be a great project to be involved in.

• **Are you seeing any evidence of climate change?**

Whether it is climate change, or not, I'm not sure but the weather patterns seem to be ever-changing. More frequent heavy downpours of rain and longer dry and hot spells. Last summer was a big challenge for us with no rain for eight weeks. I don't think these extremes are going to change anytime soon...

• **What advice would you give to a young greenkeeper starting out today?**

Learn as much as you can, work hard, ask questions, pay attention, smile and enjoy your work.

• **How do you spend your leisure time?**

I have a young family so that takes up much of my leisure time. I try and get some golf in when possible, but spending time with the family is very important to me.

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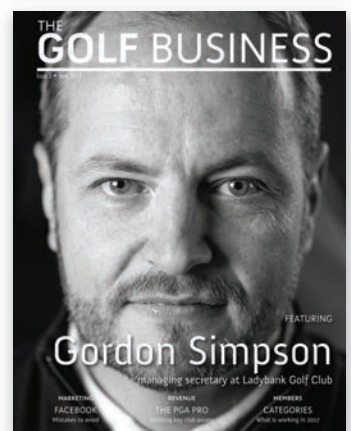
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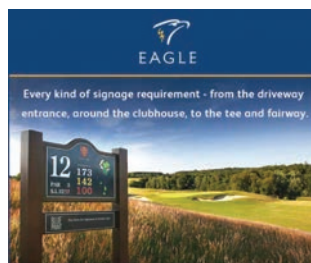
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- ✓ Natural resource management

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