GreenKeeping

Keeping the industry on course • March 2020

ISSUE: 167 • £8.00

ON THE CREST OF A WAVE

The course manager of Royal Dornoch Golf Club, **Eoin Riddell**, details how the world-famous venue recovered after the 2018 drought and why he's been a greenkeeper there since 1986

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EDITORIAL ADVISORY PANEL

DR JOHN DEMPSEY
BSc (Hons), PhD
Turfgrass scientist and former course manager at Royal Curragh Golf Club

PETER JONES
MSc, MBPR, RIPTA
Golf course consultant and former course manager
www.pja-golf.co.uk

NOEL MACKENZIE
BSc (Hons), MBPR
Turf agronomist and former golf course consultant and greenkeeper

JONATHAN SMITH
BSc (Hons) MA
Chief executive of the Golf Environment Organisation
www.golfenvironment.or

DR RUTH MANN
BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD, MBPR
Head of research at the STRI

DR KEITH DUFF
Advisory member of The R&A's Golf Course Committee and former chief scientist with English Nature

LAURENCE PITHIE MG
Europe's first Master Greenkeeper and golf course consultant
www.turfmasterone.co.u

DR KATE ENTWISTLE
CBiol, MIBiol, MBPR
Turfgrass pathologist and head of The Turf Disease Centre
www.theturfdiseasecentre.co.uk

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• Editor: Alistair Dunsmuir • Chief Sub Editor: Tania Longmire • Art Director: Alan MacKenzie-Morris
• Associate Publisher: Steve Eaves • Production: Tom Burnett-Godfree • Database Manager: Mile Budimir
• Publisher: David Rose • Chairman: Anthony Hawser • Email: greenkeeping@unionpress.co.uk

Published by Union Press, 69 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HH Tel: 020 7803 2453 Web: greenkeepingeu.com
Social media: @greenkeepingmag (Twitter) www.facebook.com/Greenkeeping www.linkedin.com/company/greenkeeping

Annual subscription: United Kingdom: £79.00 Europe: £122.00 Rest of World: £153.00
Recruitment and Subscription Enquiries: Lewis O'Sullivan, email: lewis@greenkeepingmagazine.com, tel: 020 7803 2427

We had an average of **24** greenkeeping vacancies per day in February.
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Printed by Buxton Press, Winner, *Print Week* 'Printing Company of the Year' 2015 to 2017

Reward for golf course butterfly project

A Scottish golf club that won 'Outstanding Environmental Project of the Year' at BTME in January has said it hopes to inspire pollen-rich sites to connect with each other around the UK.

Dundonald Links in Ayrshire set up the 'Nectar Network', a project that aims to establish connected nectar and pollen-rich sites along the Ayrshire coast, so they can share conservation ideas, implementation and policies. Initially the aim was to re-introduce the small blue butterfly, the UK's smallest butterfly, which was last seen in Ayrshire in 1982. It has since become the flagship species for the project, after habitat fragmentation and loss of its primary food source led to its extinction in the area.

The Nectar Network is now a working partnership steered by the golf club and the Scottish Wildlife Trust, featuring 40 other local golf courses and businesses. Its overall aim is to link Ayrshire's most important local wildlife sites, often by improving the quality of degraded land, in order to help pollinating insects colonise new areas. The project has provided opportunities for all involved to learn new skills that help them take ownership of protecting and enhancing the local environment.

Frank Clarkson, golf course superintendent for Darwin Escapes Group, which owns Dundonald Links, said: "The award will raise the profile of the project and hopefully inspire additional networks to establish

around the country. We are delighted to be recognised on behalf of the Nectar Network."

Bob Taylor, head of Ecology & Environment at the STRI, added: "Golf clubs represent more than the sport, they provide places for nature and people, the management of our golf courses enables clubs to secure a place within our diminishing countryside."

Dundonald Links manager, Ian Ferguson, said: "The team have worked exceptionally hard and have shown a great enthusiasm for working in collaboration with fellow golf clubs, wildlife groups and neighbouring businesses to create our Nectar Network."

Five UK greenkeepers fly out to Sawgrass

The seven international greenkeepers – five from the UK – who will be flown out by John Deere this month to Ponte Vedra Beach in Florida to join the agronomy team on the Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass for the duration of The Players Championship have been named.

The seven to join the John Deere TPC Sawgrass Volunteer Programme are: Ben Hunter, deputy course manager, The Richmond GC, Mark Tucker, head greenkeeper, Neath GC, Alex Brougham, deputy head greenkeeper, Trentham Park GC, Peter Lewis, greenkeeper, Royal Liverpool GC, Eddie Irvine, deputy head greenkeeper, Trump International Aberdeen, Dean O'Connell, greenkeeper, Grange Golf Club in Ireland and Yannick Weber, assistant superintendent, Cape Kidnappers, New Zealand.

Previous successful applicants of the scheme have described the experience as life changing and overwhelming. Welshpool Golf Club course manager, Jon Gamble, said: "TPC Sawgrass is an amazing venue and is out of this world. The presentation of the whole site is fabulous, from the condition of the course to the flowers and grandstands that sit very high on 17.

"They really do gear the tournament up so that everyone who goes has an awesome time, from a spectator point of view. Going to Sawgrass has made me want to go back every year now, just to get that buzz from what you experience.

"I would encourage and push anybody that wants to go there, to do so."

Mental health greenkeeping campaigner to retire

The greenkeeper who established the 'Greenkeepers mental health support group' on Facebook, which provides assistance for struggling turf managers, has announced he is going to retire.

Michael Davie, 59, the course manager at Hazel Grove Golf Club in Stockport, who was featured on the cover of *GreenKeeping* in December 2018 and won the 'Outstanding Contribution of the Year' award at BTME, said: "I'm retiring from greenkeeping in a few months and I hope the extra time that gives me will allow me to develop the mental health side of things, I'm looking into how I can try and help as many people as possible."

Having overcome periods of depression in his own life, Michael established the Facebook page, where turf industry professionals from all over the country can come together to support each other. In addition to this, Michael also hosts a regular meet-up in Manchester, where greenkeepers come together to discuss issues and provide a helping hand.

Davie (left) winning the 'Outstanding Contribution of the Year' award at BTME, and, far left, on the cover of the December 2018 issue of GreenKeeping

Yorkshire club plants 5,500 trees in 3 hours

A team of volunteers from Bingley St Ives Golf Club in Yorkshire planted nearly 6,000 trees and shrubs in less than three hours at the venue.

They originally expected the project, in partnership with the Woodland Trust and STRI, would take three days.

Their efforts have created one acre of new woodland and 1km of new hedgerow.

The majority of the cost has been funded by Woodland Trust, donating the cash for 85 per cent of the woodland and 75 per cent of the hedgerow trees, while the club funded the rest.

Adrian Weaver, club secretary for Bingley St Ives, told the *Telegraph & Argus*: "A lot of golf clubs and the industry as a whole are taking out trees in order to improve the playing conditions.

"A lot of the volunteers want to put something back into the same environment. The environment will benefit.

"If we're looking at the bigger picture in terms of climate change, it's easy to take, take, take.

"It's important, if we have the opportunity of putting something back into the natural world then do it. We wanted to do that.

"Everyone's had the right attitude. The conditions were good and working in teams of four we planted 6,000 trees and shrubs."

Rowan Rumball, ecological consultant for the STRI, added: "Bingley has started to renaturalise some of the areas on the course. They introduced shrubs from native species. Species which can really support our natural environment.

"STRI is working in conjunction with the Woodlands Trust in order to improve aspects of their course and I think this example proves how simple it is to renaturalise areas.

"They've permanently changed what the area's going to look like in a 100 years' time."

Jill Hewitt returns as CEO of the NAAC

Jill Hewitt has been appointed as chief executive of the National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC), following the retirement of Duncan Russell.

Jill previously ran the organisation from 2000 to 2013, before a family issue forced her to step down. However, she remained active in the organisation, and was retained as a consultant and led the NAAC's political and technical work in the interim.

Commenting, Jill said: "I am delighted to be back at the helm of the NAAC at such a critical time for the land-based industry. It is vital that the NAAC is at the forefront of political negotiations to ensure that we are properly recognised in a post-Brexit era.

"To make certain contractors have a bright future, we need the industry to be united and represent ourselves as professionals, demanding fair and equal treatment at government level to allow us to invest in the new technology and innovation coming our way.

"My aim is to retain a high political profile for the industry, whilst also making certain that members can rest easy at night, confident they have all the information and back-up they need to sustain a legally compliant, safe and professional business."

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The GKB Combiseeder

Seed merchants

Seeding and aeration are two of the most important tasks greenkeepers do. Here to outline what the latest offerings from the biggest suppliers in the market are, is Andy Waple

The present wet conditions are putting all forms of turf under a great deal of stress, which becomes more susceptible to attack from diseases; the primary ones being microdochium on bent, fescue and poa turfs, together with leaf spot on ryegrass surfaces.

These diseases need to be treated as soon as symptoms are spotted because curative fungicidal chemistry is no longer available – **Rigby Taylor** has a wide range of tank mix options to suit all surfaces all using Trimate or Option (formulations of surfactants, nutrients and bio stimulants). These products have been shown in STRI long-term trials to significantly enhance disease control compared to using only straight fungicides, thus assisting in plant damage recovery.

From initial autumn surveys, it appears that numbers of chafer and leatherjacket are much higher than normal, with a two-fold impact.

Firstly, if numbers of larvae are high, they will cause physical damage to the turf by grazing the root system. Depending on turf use (surface activity / wear / stress) such damage will become evident in spring.

Secondly, damage from third party predators (birds, foxes and badgers) may well occur during winter as food sources become short. Such pests will start to search out areas of larvae infestation and cause physical damage to the turf.

The environmental consultancy ADAS recently calculated the cost of chafer grubs

Chafer grub damage

alone is up to £85 million a year for UK golf courses from lost income and damage repair.

If areas of poor performing turf are noticed it is a good idea to sample for soil larvae – the only practical method to do this is to lift areas of turf down to 7-10cm and sieve out the larvae.

One answer to overcoming such infestation is to apply NemaTrident, a tricomponent solution incorporating a range of highly virulent insect-parasitic nematodes within the Heterorhabditis and Steinernema genera. The nematodes attack and destroy the larvae of the insect pests thus preventing future pests from developing.

The product is safe, non-toxic to users and consumers, decomposes rapidly. It can be targeted at specific pests to avoid harming beneficial insects – providing 70-100 per cent success rates in combating the pests.

Unlike quick-fix chemical controls, correct identification and timing are critical so users must work closely with the supplier to ensure

“For me the choice was easy, Johnsons J Premier Fairway along with J All Bent have moved our sward composition towards our ultimate goal of providing our members with the heathland characteristics we all aspire to.

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Course Manger Ipswich Golf Club
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Equipped with a fleet of **BLEC** machinery, Talbot Farm Landscapes and Talbot Sports Turf can tackle landscape and groundcare projects of all shapes and sizes. With the latest count standing at 21 machines from across the BLEC portfolio, director Sean Goodwin relies on the versatility and efficiency the range offers when it comes to groundworks and surface preparation.

"I know with such a range of BLEC equipment at my disposal, that no matter the type of surface we're dealing with, that we have the equipment we need to complete the job efficiently," says Sean. When it comes to seeding, Sean has a Cultipack seeder at his disposal, together with a Turfmaker, a Disc Seeder and Multi-Seeder.

"The Cultipack Seeder is a multi-functional tool that does more than just deliver seed into the ground. The front notched rollers aid in the preparation of surfaces and as a compact, pedestrian unit we can easily manoeuvre this into restricted access sites. To achieve optimal results, we can use the Cultipack in conjunction with other seeders, such as the Turfmaker, on larger scale projects."

The most recent addition for Sean was a Multi-Seeder 2100, the first machine purchased via Charterhouse Turf Machinery. "The BLEC build quality has always impressed me but under the guidance of Redexim it is now even better – well engineered and attention paid to every detail. With the resources available to Redexim, the manufacturing prowess and the ability to stock a wider range of parts through their dealer network, they will be able to take BLEC to the next level."

The BLEC Multi-Seeder 2100

If you're looking for a fast and efficient way to seed or overseed your golf course, the **GKB** Combiseeder offers both solutions, as well as the possibility to seed multiple types of grass. The two conical spiked rollers open up the soil and accurately spread seed across the full width of the machine, in and around the holes, whilst two drag brushes incorporate the seed into the holes. This method results in minimal surface disruption.

This accurate seeding machinery is also uniquely equipped with two water tanks that allow you to ballast the machine, to aid spike penetration on harder surfaces.

For full details and to arrange a demonstration of the Combiseeder, contact Tom Shinkins at GKB Machines Tom@gkbmachines.com on 07495883617.

GKB Machines is part of the GKB Group and is engaged with the development of innovative maintenance machines for golf courses and sports pitches.

One of its products, the GKB Sandspreader SP100, was recently acquired by Kingfishers Golf Club in Suffolk, through GKB's distributor Ernest Doe.

"Finding a machine that's compatible with our Jacobsen Truckster was essential to us and a main factor when choosing the GKB Sandspreader SP100," explained Matthew Thacker, managing director of Kingfishers, who added: "GKB machines are extremely well designed and built."

Kingfishers Golf Club will be mostly sanding their greens with the GKB Sandspreader SP100. Accurately applying sand and in varying quantities to keep golf courses in prime condition, this machine is ideal for both construction and maintenance.

Germinal has updated two of its greens-specific bentgrass blends by adding newly listed browntop cultivar, Musket, to its AberMajesty and ForeFront Greens seed mixtures.

Musket is one of three new browntop bentgrass cultivars to join the BSPB's Table G1 (greens, close mown 4-7mm trials) in 2020.

Germinal

It is also the latest addition to Germinal's extensive bentgrass portfolio which includes a range of high quality browntop and creeping bentgrass mixtures to suit every circumstance and budget.

"Musket was bred using germplasm that combines early spring green-up traits with improved summer performance," said Richard Brown, amenity sales manager for Germinal GB.

"As well as offering all the intrinsic benefits of a modern browntop bentgrass such as a prostrate growth habit, high shoot density, good wear tolerance and reduced input requirement, Musket also exhibits excellent resistance to fusarium.

"With the recent loss of several key fungicides already forcing greenkeepers to overseed more frequently in order to keep their greens disease-free, selecting a naturally resistant cultivar such as Musket is the logical way forward. We have therefore added Musket to two of our specialist golf greens seed mixtures, AberMajesty and ForeFront Greens, to bolster their varietal diversity and natural disease resistance so that greenkeepers can establish and maintain high quality, consistent greens with excellent year-round playability."

For 2020, Germinal's AberMajesty mixture will consist of 45 per cent AberRegal (browntop bent), 45 per cent AberRoyal (browntop bent) and 10 per cent Musket (browntop bent).

ForeFront Greens will be made up of 40 per cent 007 DSB (creeping bent), 25 per cent AberRegal (browntop bent), 25 per cent AberRoyal (browntop bent) and 10 per cent Musket (browntop bent).

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January's BTME in Harrogate signalled the start of a year of celebrations for the **Johnsons Sports Seed** team, as 2020 marks the company's 200th anniversary in the seed industry.

The event also launched the new ProNitro® Seed Coating from **DLF**, and a number of updated Johnsons Sports Seed formulations ready for the new season.

ProNitro® seed technology was launched to much acclaim in 2016 and has proven itself to achieve a stronger germination and faster establishment, without the need to apply pre-seed fertilisers – saving both time and money. The coating now features DLF's hydroactive water management technology which promotes sustainable water and nutrient availability through significantly improving the water distribution in the surrounding soil. Enhanced moisture availability during the early stages of plant growth gives each developing seedling the optimum conditions for strong root development and healthy, vigorous growth.

In trials, ProNitro® coated seed contributed to a 34 per cent increase in establishing plants and a 30 per cent improvement in root growth. In addition, the targeted nitrogen application system reduces the leaching of unutilised fertiliser into the environment by more than 50 per cent when compared to traditional chemical applications.

The new ProNitro® coating is available on a selection of mixtures across the Johnsons Sports Seed range, including J Premier Pitch and J Tee. Ideal for hard wearing, shaded golf tees and pathways, the 2020 formulation of J Tee now includes the new strong creeping red fescue Laverda. Laverda is the new number one rated fine fescue cultivar, that delivers unbeatable summer colour and shoot density.

DLF / Johnsons Sports Seed

AMIA

For golf, Laverda also features in the updated J Rye Fairway and J Premier Fairway mixtures.

For those turf managers with a focus on improving long-term sustainability, the brand-new J 4Turf 100 mixture will be of particular interest. A 100 per cent tetraploid ryegrass mixture, J 4Turf 100 is ideal for the rapid renovation of worn sports turf areas. The increased chlorophyll density and greater root mass of DLF's 4Turf ryegrasses optimise water and fertiliser inputs resulting in good looking turf that's cheaper to maintain and better for the environment.

Devon-based **AMIA**, with offices in Scotland and Ireland, is the exclusive distributor for the UK and Ireland of Selvatici Amenity Machinery, which has a range including the Aeroking Vertical Drainage Aerators and the Sandqueen Sand Dispensers.

Selvatici has been manufacturing in Italy for over 100 years and manufacturing professional Vertical Drainage Aerators for several decades. It is a common sight on golf courses in Europe and North America but Selvatici is now re-entering the UK and Irish golf markets through AMIA after originally selling a number of units during the 1990s and early 2000s. Since then there have been a lot of innovations and improvements to the machines, such as a new and more robust gearbox, completely renewed bodywork and a double lever for the front roller which ensures an easier lift.

AMIA's Selvatici product specialist Bethany Williams-Nichols said: "I'm delighted that Selvatici is re-entering the UK and Irish markets. Their machines are proving to be the perfect solution for golf clubs who have smaller budgets whilst still maintaining excellent performance, build quality and reliability."

The majority of the Selvatici Aeroking range is equipped with a fibre glass cover which has proven to be popular due to it being easily replaceable.

They come with a patented down stroke of the tines which consists of an irregular parallelogram which uses the spring only in the returning stroke of the tool and not during the down stroke. This permits less use of the springs because the revolution mechanism is totally defined by the irregular parallelogram and it means less mechanical wear and more reliability. The Aeroking aerator has the ability to work at 750rpm and 1000rpm (using hard spring in the 400.95 series). This increases hourly productivity and speeds up work. With self-lubricating bearings, the machines are very easy to maintain, therefore increasing the life of the machine. Having just sold a Selvatici Aeroking to Minehead Barbarians RFC in Somerset, a particular model which has proven popular has been the Selvatici Aeroking 300.50 1.65-metre model. This machine has a weight of 650kg and power requirements ranging anywhere from 30 to 50hp. The depth on this machine can reach

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anywhere from five to 30cm with a wide variety of tine options including pencil tines for golf greens and hollow tines for coring. There a good range of optional extras such as self-levelling conveyors for when greenkeepers have used a hollow tine option.

The Selvatici Aeroking range consists of eight different models ranging from 1.2 to 2.5 metres, with a requirement range of 20 to 95hp.

Pricing starts from just £9,995 plus VAT for the smallest 1.2m model and £17,950 plus VAT for a larger 2.5m Selvatici Aeroking model with eight model sizes in the range. This means the Selvatici Aeroking range is a feasible option for large professional sports clubs and golf courses as well as smaller clubs or golf courses who might not normally be able to consider owning their own machines, in return avoiding unnecessary amenity contractor costs.

For more information, contact Beth at beth@agrimarketia.com or visit www.agrimarketia.com.

Charterhouse Turf Machinery used BTME 2020 as a platform to launch what is considered to be the 'next generation' of its renowned Verti-Drain range. Offering a 1.9m working width, the new Verti-Drain 2519 is set to become the tool of choice for turf managers looking for a high-productivity aerator.

The 2519 model incorporates the very best of Redexim precision design and engineering to bring a new high-speed machine into the portfolio. Offering a PTO speed of up to 540rpm, it can cover up to 8,739 square metres per hour when spaced at 165mm. As standard, the Verti-Drain 2519 comes with 12mm solid tines but it can accept a range of solid tine options up to 19mm, and hollow tines for coring. This versatility, combined with a variable working depth of up to 250mm, makes it suitable for an array of end-users, across the full spectrum of the maintenance calendar.

Together with a new draw-rod system, it features an easy-to-adjust heave lever and slip clutch PTO drive. With practicality and finesse at the heart of the machine, the 2519 also features new livery and styling.

Ganton goes green with Deere

Head greenkeeper of one of the world's top 80 courses, Ganton Golf Club, Andrew West, says he has always had a vision of opening up more areas of the course to give it more of a links feel, and he is now beginning to achieve this more effectively since the club invested in a new set of John Deere hybrid electric E-Cut mowers. These were supplied by dealer F G Adamson & Son on a five-year finance lease deal with annual repayments from John Deere Financial.

"We've got some very challenging undulations here and around two hectares of aprons and collars altogether, which really can't be managed with triples," Andrew explains. "But with quite a low height of cut required at 7mm on these areas during the playing season, this was proving difficult to achieve with our previous five-gang mowers and we were always struggling to hold the cuts.

"However, I always felt we could do this job better and in a reasonable time frame with the right machine, so we spoke to our course consultant Gordon Irvine and he really influenced our thinking. Both he and the STRI's head of agronomy Alistair Beggs encouraged us to consider following Royal Birkdale's example, noting improvements to the course presentation and finish and complimenting the contribution John Deere's 8000AE PrecisionCut fairway mower had made there."

Following an extensive review and evaluation of the different manufacturers' machines, the club opted for a John Deere package deal from Adamsons and the new hybrid mower fleet now includes two 8000AEs as well as two 2500E triplex and three 220E walk-behind greens mowers. These were joined by a 4049R compact tractor with front loader, two HPX diesel and two TE electric Gator utility vehicles, as well as a Charterhouse Verti-Drain 7416 aerator and top dresser.

"The whole team was involved in the process and John Deere scored the best in our view," says Andrew. "The finance deal really helped a lot too."

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Top table

For greenkeepers looking for a top-performing perennial ryegrass with the very best fineness of leaf, there is still only one choice. That is according to Richard Brown of Germinal GB who explains that, for the fourth year running, Cabrio has been announced as the number one variety on the BSPB's Table L1 for perennial ryegrasses.

First introduced as a new cultivar in 2016, **Cabrio Ultra Fine Ryegrass** went straight to the top of Table L1 in 2017 with a fineness of leaf score of 8.8. It subsequently retained this position in 2018 (8.8) and 2019 (8.7) and holds the top spot again in the 2020 list thanks to another score of 8.7: a rating which puts it half a point clear of its nearest rivals at 8.2.

"Ever since its release in 2016, Cabrio has remained the top performing cultivar on the BSPB's list of perennial ryegrasses mown at 10-15mm," explains Richard Brown, Germinal Amenity sales manager.

"With good all-round scores for shoot density (7.8), visual merit (7.9), slow re-growth habit (7.2) and cleanness of cut (7.1), Cabrio is still the number one choice for greenkeepers who want to produce an exceptionally fine-leaved, hard wearing and aesthetically attractive sward that can not only tolerate a close mowing regime, but which will also give good ball roll or bounce."

Cabrio is recommended for use on golf tees and golf green aprons and is included in Germinal's A5 (cricket, tennis and tees), A10 (golf tees and divot tepairs) and A28 (ultrafine ryegolf) seed mixtures where it partners with other cultivars to provide enhanced sward density, wear tolerance and repair capability.

"For all of these seed mixtures plagiarism is the best form of flattery," Brown continues. "We are therefore pleased to see others within the industry responding by bringing their own fine-leaved offerings to the market.

"However, there are only seven ryegrass cultivars on Table L1 with a fineness of leaf score of 8.0 or above, two of which – Cabrio (8.7) and Escapade (8.1) – are exclusive to Germinal. As such, copycat mixtures are unable to match the performance of our Grade A mixtures."

Cabrio's exceptional fineness of leaf has placed it at the top of Table L1 for the fourth year running

Cabrio also ranks highly on Table G4 (perennial ryegrasses mown at 4-7mm) where it's 8.4 score for fineness of leaf is the highest.

"We use Germinal's A28 Ultrafine Ryegolf mixture to repair our tees and fairways.

"It always produces a fast-germinating sward, with the Cabrio element of the mixture producing a fine-leaved surface which is hard-wearing enough to be used all year round," said Mark Todd, course manager, The Wildernesse Club, Kent.

"We've used Germinal's A10 Tees and Divot repair mixture for the past five or six years.

"Its combination of fescues, ryegrasses and bentgrasses blends in well on our fairways and tees, with Cabrio adding extra fineness of leaf and wear tolerance," said Wes Saunders, course manager, Dunblane New Golf Club, Perthshire.

Visit germinalamenity.com

Cabrio: cultivar characteristics*

	Table L1 (mown at 10-15mm)	Table G4 (mown at 4-7mm)
Shoot density	7.8	7.3
Fineness of leaf	8.7	8.4
Slow regrowth	7.2	-
Visual merit	7.9	7.5
Mean	7.9	7.4
Resistance to Red Thread	3.8	4.8
Cleanness of cut	7.1	-
Winter greenness	5.2	5.4
Summer greenness	6.0	6.0

*Source: BSPB Turfgrass Seed booklet 2020

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2020 is going to be electric

Toro is well known for its innovation and dedication to new product development. Its global leadership as a manufacturer constantly bringing to market the very latest and greatest technology is renowned. Here we look at what's new from the company in 2020

With the industry's first lithium-ion battery powered unit, Toro's Greensmaster eTriFlex 3370 is the quietest ride-on greensmower on the market

The hot topic this year is without a doubt green technology. Responding to environmental concerns is a subject spanning the industries, and there simply has to be the optium for businesses to make the cleaner, greener choice.

Electric technology – the lithium-ion difference

Unveiled for the first time in the UK at the beginning of the year by Reesink Turfcare, the sole Toro distributor in the UK for golf and sports fields equipment and irrigation, was Toro's most eagerly anticipated technology, the most advanced on the market, the all-new all-electric Greensmaster eTriFlex 3370 ride-on mower.

With a careful eye on the development of this technology in the car industry, Toro was ready to bring its benefits to the turfcare industry and in particular to a triple ride-on. Specifically, the issue of power to weight ratio had been solved, with the company able to bring enough battery power to mow up to 22 average-sized greens on a single charge without increasing the weight of the mower.

With the industry's first lithium-ion battery powered unit, it also utilises all-electric components for traction, steering, lift and cutting unit drive and is the quietest ride-on greensmower on the market. It responds to customer demand for not only an environmentally-friendly mowing alternative but with the advantage of being able to more effectively manage business needs.

With electric mowing in particular and the significant reduction in noise incorporated into the eTriFlex 3370, work on the course can start earlier and meet local noise regulations and concerns from area residents. Plus, preventing delays to mowing certain greens early in the morning and getting greens ready sooner could enhance revenue by allowing earlier tee times.

Toro's entrance into the all-electric triplex greensmower market brings customers less emissions and more fuel savings, yet ample power to get the job done. It delivers operational cost savings and other meaningful improvements to complement the ever-important Toro enhancements in cutting performance. And of course, the fact that it carries no hydraulic fluid means it's cleaner cutting all-round.

Hybrid technology

With Toro leading the way, the greenkeeping industry has been heading towards electric power for the last few years and what its journey has resulted in is a fantastic range of hybrid mowers, which will come into its own this decade.

With smaller engines than their diesel counterparts, combining the benefits of hybrid technology with petrol power, Toro has created a hybrid range that means there is an environmentally-friendly machine for the greens, tees and fairways.

Right: Two power sources – an in-line motor generator and self-recharging battery pack – allow the RM5010-H to match the power generated to the power required for all cutting conditions. With over 40 horsepower available, but only when cutting conditions require it, this saves around 20 percent in fuel, improves operating costs and the vehicle's carbon footprint

Toro's Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360 hybrid is powered by a Kawasaki engine / generator and has all-electric components for traction, steering, lift and cutting

The hybrid drive system may be the most widely known form of hybrid technology, but it's not the only one from Toro. In fact, several Toro products use hybrid technology in different ways to gain advantages in power and efficiency. Here are three examples which are leading the way.

Hybrid Drive: The Toro Reelmaster 5010-H

Perfect for the fairways, the Reelmaster 5010-H was the golf industry's first fairway mower with a true hybrid drive system. This hybrid drive system is called PowerMatch and pairs a 24.8 hp Kubota stage 5B diesel engine with an inline motor generator and self-charging 48-volt battery pack.

In typical mowing conditions, the Reelmaster 5010-H has sufficient power from the diesel engine to support both traction and cutting. This allows for plenty of time to keep batteries charged and the system functioning optimally. However, when more challenging mowing conditions demand more power, the battery pack takes the load of the cutting units away from the engine, leaving more available horsepower for the traction circuit when cutting steeper inclines for example.

In more extreme situations where even more horsepower may be required for verticutting, the batteries take on the cutting unit load and send the reserve battery power back through the motor generator, boosting engine power to the equivalent of over 40 horsepower.

Depending on terrain and cutting conditions, you could see an average fuel saving of 20 percent over a conventional fairway mower, even more when you choose to run the machine in economy mode. In addition, the unique design also reduces maintenance time by eliminating all of the cutting units' hydraulic components, making it cleaner too.

All-electric cylinders: Toro Greensmaster TriFlex hybrid models

Toro's Greensmaster TriFlex hybrid series applies hybrid technology in a different way. These petrol- or diesel-powered greens mowers feature an all-electric cylinder circuit which was custom-designed for the most demanding applications on and off the green.

In addition to eliminating hydraulic leaks, each highly efficient cylinder motor has a nominal 1.5 horsepower (1.1 kW) that can increase up to 3hp (2.2 kW) during peak load periods. This translates into the power you need when you need it for the most challenging cutting or verticutting applications.

Toro's TriFlex hybrid models also operate efficiently in energy saving mode. While in this mode, engine RPMs are reduced and the all-electric cylinder drive maintains a constant cylinder speed. This results in reduced fuel consumption and noise while maintaining a high quality of cut, performance and productivity.

All-electric components for traction, steering, lift and cutting: Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360 hybrid

The Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360 is powered by a Kawasaki engine / generator and sits under Toro's EnergySmart range. It utilises all-electric components for traction, steering, lift and cutting units to deliver a much quieter performance than traditional engine-powered models.

Described by the company as a 'revolution in efficiency', its launch in 2019 presented one of finest examples of innovation in the industry, delivering outstanding cutting quality along with operational savings and consistent mowing.

Hybrid Drive cutting decks: Toro Groundsmaster 5900 and 4000

Toro's Groundsmaster 5900 and 4000 mowers, which can quite often be a good option for roughs and surrounds, are yet another example of combining two technologies in a 'hybrid' application. These models feature the Hybrid Drive cutting deck system, which combines a hydraulic motor to drive one spindle with the remaining spindles driven by individual B section Kevlar v-belts.

Belts transfer power more efficiently than hydraulic motors while adding a layer of protection against hydraulic failures. In addition, the large-diameter spindle housing dissipates impact loads and dual tapered roller bearings last up to six times longer than ball bearings. Together, these components are designed for unmatched reliability.

Conclusion

Put simply, if you want cleaner, greener, quieter mowing options without the compromises, Toro is the brand to choose and Reesink Turfcare is the UK distributor to call.

REESINK Turfcare

Reesink Turfcare is the sole Toro distributor in the UK for golf and sports fields equipment and irrigation products. It is based at 1 Station Road, St Neots PE19 1QH. Call **01480 226800**, *email* **info@reesinkturfcare.co.uk**, *or visit* **reesinkturfcare.co.uk**

John Deere

Following a strategic reorganisation of John Deere's professional turf business in Europe, Brian D'Arcy has been appointed as turf division sales manager for the company's newly created Region 2 Sales Division 1. This covers the UK and Ireland plus additional key markets in Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland.

As a result of the structural changes, Richard Charleton has been promoted to a new additional strategic account manager position for golf and turf covering the UK and Ireland, alongside Michael Grey (who replaced Brian D'Arcy in this role in 2018). Alongside this responsibility, Richard is also taking on the position of John Deere Limited turf territory

John Deere

manager for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Following his appointment, Joanne Gregory has replaced Richard Charleton as John Deere Limited's new turf territory manager for Scotland and the north of England. Joanne is a graduate of Harper Adams University, where she gained a BSc (Hons) in Agricultural Business Management, and she spent her student placement year with the marketing team at Langar.

Web: www.JohnDeere.co.uk

TYM

Reesink Turfcare is offering customers even more in 2020 with a new three-year 'bumper to bumper' warranty package on all new TYM tractors.

Reesink, the UK distributor of TYM, has long been known for offering more when it comes to its service, after-sales support, parts and warranties and 2020 starts as it means to go on with the brand extending its warranties on all TYM tractors to three years.

TYM

Reesink's TYM sales manager, Steven Haynes, says: "We're here to offer peace of mind to our customers that when they buy a tractor from us, we cover it for any unforeseen circumstances for three years or until 2,000 hours whichever comes first. These warranties demonstrate our confidence in the product and our dedication to offering our customers more."

It makes good business sense to ensure your tractor investment is cared for against any unforeseen expensive repair costs, and Reesink is offering protection on the whole tractor at no extra cost.

Compact tractors are ever popular in the turfcare industry due to their multi-functional capabilities, which make them the perfect addition for a busy golf club or sports stadium and TYM tractors in particular are powerful and versatile enough to tackle a wide range of jobs. From transporting and loading materials, hedge cutting, mowing, scarifying, aerating and various other specialist works including drainage, the wide range which extends from 19 to 100hp offers a solution for every turfcare need.

All TYM tractors benefit from powerful, liquid-cooled diesel engines, hydrostatic power-steering for effortless manoeuvrability and a tight turning circle, and a heavy-duty, four-wheel-drive front axle for greater traction where needed.

Plus, most can be upgraded with optional heated and air-conditioned cabs for maximum operator comfort. But models without cabs boast a handy feature as well – the ROPS roll bar can be folded down for compact, convenient storage under a low roof. They can also be fitted with an array of attachments such as front-end loaders and backhoes, and the warranty on TYM accessories such as loaders and mid mount mowers remains unchanged at 12 months from point of sale.

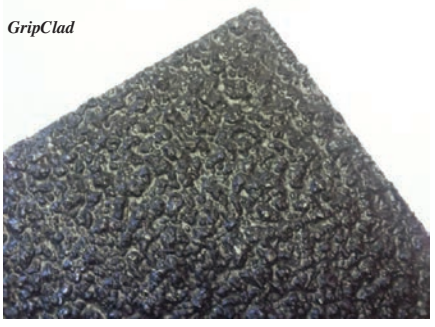
And now there's even more reason to invest in a TYM tractor, as Steven concludes: "Having a comprehensive warranty like this allows customers to safeguard their investment and means machines keep their value."

Tel: 01480 226800

GripClad

GripClad continues to receive the support from many clubs contributing to its experience of using its anti-slip sheets for both steps and footbridges.

"Just a few words on this extremely good product. I've been using GripClad on our bridges and steps at The Vale Golf Club since 2015. This product is totally accepted by our members and more importantly by our health



GripClad

and safety company," says The Vale Golf Club's course manager, Mark Heath.

"It is easy to install and looks great. We are currently replacing some bridges and upgrading others and GripClad is a must and first choice to prevent those slips in all conditions. I've never had any problems in purchasing this product – they are so helpful that they will cut it to the size you require. It's a really great product!"

Tel: 023 8040 6796

Web: gripclad.co.uk/industries/golf-industry

SISIS

Compaction related problems are common place on golf courses. Dry patch, black layer and excessive thatch all lead to an inconsis-

SISIS

tent course surface. Compaction reduces the air spaces between the soil particles; restricting the passage of air, water and nutrients through the rootzone. The patented SISIS Javelin Aer-Aid 1500 machine greatly increases the speed of the aeration process by directly injection air into the rootzone at a fast working rate, creating thousands of fissures.

The cam trigger mechanism ensures that the air is always expelled at the bottom of the tine penetration. The overall result is reduced compaction and a healthier root growth. The 10mm diameter 'tipped' tines are spaced at 75mm (3ins) with depth of penetration infinitely variable to a maximum of 127mm (5ins). The air injection tines are designed to use the maximum air available from the compressor and produce clean, fresh air. Surface disturbance is also kept to a minimum.

The Javelin Aer-Aid 1500 has a working width of 1.5 metres and is extremely quiet in operation. It can be powered by a compact tractor as little as 30hp which also keeps weight on the surface to a minimum. Used at the correct speed and depth, it can aerate an average green in under 20 minutes, whilst leaving an even finish that can be played on immediately afterwards.

Changing tines is simple and quick with very little maintenance needed on the machine. Alternative tines for other operations, such as hollow coring before top dressing, are available to make this SISIS a truly versatile aerator.

One club that has seen excellent results using the Javelin Aer-Aid is St Ives Golf Club. Rob Duff, Course Manager commented: "To start with we used the Aer-Aid twice a month and now we normally use it monthly from March until the start of November. Since using the machine, we have significantly eased compaction and the main accomplishment has been the reduction in thatch from 3 inches to being practically non-existent.

"It's always going to be an on-going battle because of the grass on the greens, so it is important that we continue to use the Aer-Aid as a preventative. It has been really good at getting the air into the surface and creating chambers for the roots. Root development has massively improved since we've been using it on a regular basis as has the density of the sward."

Web: www.sisis.com

Ventrac

Golf course maintenance presents many unique challenges and, traditionally in the UK and Europe, we are used to using dedicated equipment for the varied maintenance regimes on our golf courses.

However, with the introduction into the UK of the Ventrac multi-purpose tractor, there is now a machine that can be used for a multitude of groundscare operations. With over 30 attachments, the Ventrac provides year-round solutions for any golf course.

In a class of its own, this innovative design combines all-wheel drive, an articulating frame and a powerful 25hp Kubota diesel engine providing unmatched stability and control to get a wide range of jobs done.

When it comes to turf compaction, Ventrac has the ideal solution. The AERA-vator is designed to vibrate and loosen the soil beneath the grass without destroying the turf. It creates a hole without bringing a core to the surface, leaving the turf ready for use immediately following aeration.

With a working width of 1.52 metres and a depth of 70 mm, the vibrating heads create six holes every 300 mm (66 holes per square metre) with the hole size regulated by the drive speed. The slower the forward speed of the Ventrac tractor unit, the larger the hole.

Ventrac

The tines can be replaced individually or by quickly changing the entire mounting heads, giving you the versatility required for efficient operation. The AERA-vator is built with Ventrac Mount System, allowing for easy attachment changes, and comes with a standard jack stand for easy mounting. An optional overseeding kit is available.

The all-wheel-drive compact utility 4500 is rated for slopes of up to 30 degrees and is capable of handling various turf conditions allowing you to aerate areas previously inaccessible with other aeration tools.

Web: www.priceturfcare.com

Toro

After having completed the second of three phases of a complete irrigation installation and renovation, Cruden Bay Golf Club near Peterhead is now benefitting from cost and time effective irrigation from Toro.

Course manager Alister Matherson explains:

Toro

"Splitting the work into phases meant we could spread out the cost and minimise the amount of time works were disturbing customers, plus it gave us time to make informed decisions about the irrigation system we wanted.

"We're two thirds of the way through the installation and while it is a drawn out strategy it's been worth the wait so far. We had the first phase of the irrigation installation in 2014. This involved installing a new transfer pump, holding tank and replacing the old pump set."

And in 2019 came the cherry on the cake, with not only the addition of new pipework, cabling and Toro irrigation valves, but brand new Toro sprinklers across the greens, approaches and walkways, alongside Toro Lynx central control.

"We had a demonstration of Toro sprinklers

and used them on the course alongside competitor brands. Throughout extensive trials, we saw quite clearly that Toro performed better," says Alister. "The quality of performance of the heads and the quality of service from Reesink Turfcare was great.

"Added to that is Toro Lynx control, which is a great bit of kit. Easy to use software and very reliable, with features like the weather station which is fantastic. My favourite feature is probably the mobile app which allows us to control the irrigation from anywhere, which is superb!"

Despite the large installation and renovation, the process went smoothly with the work of OCMIS irrigation specialists and RH Associates consultancy. And since the second phase was completed, the course has certainly been seeing the benefits.

"Having a clearer plan for our irrigation means we can be more efficient and is the biggest plus," says Alister. "The quality of coverage as well has made a big difference to the course."

Renowned as one of the top golf courses in the world by Top 100 Golf Courses, Cruden Bay Golf Club's traditional Scottish links course benefits from stunning views out over the sea and of Slain Castle. But it's the unique topography and layout that makes it so popular, says Alister.

"With the course so well regarded, it's important for us to make the course maintenance the best it can be. Having Toro irrigation means we can keep standards high and improve the course."

Up next for the club is phase three in the irrigation installation, to cover the fairways. "We won't change from Toro now that we've seen what their irrigation can do," says Alister. "Although a few years off yet, we're looking forward to slotting in that last piece of the jigsaw, which will give us a completely modern, functional system across the course."
Web: reesinkturfcare.co.uk

Johnsons Sports Seed

The Johnsons Sports Seed team were joined by members of the press and over 30 distributors and customers as they toasted their 200th anniversary. At a special drinks reception that took place in Harrogate, the team celebrated the company's rich and varied history since it was founded by 17-year old William Wade Johnson in 1820.

Reflecting on the event, amenity sales and marketing manager Derek Smith said: "This was a fantastic platform for staff and key contacts to raise a glass to mark such a huge industry milestone. Their drive to raise industry standards reflects the position that Johnsons has in today's market, and this is very much testament to the passion of those involved with the brand over the years. We at DLF, look forward to continuing that ethos for many years to come."
Web: www.dlf.co.uk

Rigby Taylor

Rigby Taylor enjoyed a very successful BTME this year, with a constant stream of customers – existing and new – to its impressive stand.

Winner of the 'BIGGA Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year', sponsored by Rigby Taylor, was presented to course manager, Grant Peters, and his team at Parkstone Golf Club for hosting the European Ladies Amateur Championship.

Alan Ferguson, FIFA senior pitch management manager, was the special guest at the Rigby Taylor 'after show' event hosted together with Rain Bird, Tillers Turf and Top Green. Alan gave the audience of more than 100 grounds professionals an insight into his role and an update on the progress of the Qatar 2022 World Cup stadia where he and his team will have responsibility for pitch installation and management

The Rigby Taylor stand attracted a huge number of visitors and was constantly busy throughout the show. Richard Fry, Rigby Taylor's marketing director, commented: "This year's show was busy from the morning of the first day and it was notable for not just the quality but also the quality of visitors. In addition, a large number of overseas visitors provided an international dimension to the show."
Web: www.rigbytaylor.com

GreenMech

Thurlow Nunn Standen LTD (TNS) has become the latest pin in the dealer map of GreenMech, having been appointed as distributor for Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Operating out of three depots in Attleborough, Kennett and Melton, TNS will now be handling sales and support for Europe's leading range of woodchippers.

TNS is East Anglia's premier agricultural machinery dealer, as well as offering a wide selection of groundcare products from some of the industry's leading manufacturers. The breadth of range and depth of knowledge in the grounds division sees TNS well placed to offer product support across the GreenMech range which spans pedestrian, road-tow, tracked and tractor-mounted models. TNS's in-house parts and technical support also ensures that post-sales service meets the requirements of their varied client base.

Chris Tew, sales director at Thurlow Nunn Standen, said, "TNS are very pleased to be appointed as the new GreenMech dealer for East Anglia. We believe the range of quality products they offer will complement our existing portfolio and will suit both professional and domestic users. We look forward to promoting this range to our existing and new customers and working with this market leading British manufacturer".

GreenMech regional sales manager Julian

GreenMech

Cullis added, ""TNS have built a fantastic reputation on providing established products with excellent customer service. With so many years of experience and know-how under their belts, we look forward to working together with them to offer a more localised service across this area."

Web: www.greenmech.co.uk

GKB

Home to full sized AstroTurf, grass cricket wicket, a nine-hole golf course and an all-weather wicket, there was no better match than the GKB Rotobrush for Witham Hall Preparatory School.

Alex Exton, groundsman at Witham Hall Preparatory School, explains that the GKB Rotobrush perfectly fits his needs. "It is a compact and efficient machine that it is perfect for what I wanted it for. This machine was affordable too, which was a big appeal. It's rare you can get such an impressive machine for such a great price."

As your synthetic sport pitches get used, dirt becomes apparent. From moss and algae to general wear and tear, this ultimately can affect the technical characteristics and authentic appearance of the turf. The GKB Rotobrush restores this by tackling persistent contamination. Alex explains: "We use our GKB Rotorbrush to clean our AstroTurf. Due to the size of our grounds it can take a while however this machine is the best of the best!"

The GKB Rotobrush enables you to brush deeper and more effectively where needed. Thanks to the rotating brush disc that is provided with extra rigid bristles, your artificial pitch maintenance can be taken to the next level. When the functioning of normal brushing and cleaning stops, the GKB Rotobrush continues. Alex Exton said: "The GKB Rotobrush gets so close to the edges of the AstroTurf, especially where the carpet meets the

GKB

fence kickboard and also on the artificial for the cricket."

Web: www.gkbmachines.com

Toro

When it comes to golf course machinery, time is money, and as such efficient machines are fast becoming a must have for golf courses across the country. Which is exactly the reason Cotswold Hills opted for the Groundsmaster 5900-D in its first Toro fleet deal.

"We have a team of six here to maintain a 157 acre course," explains course manager Wayne Vincent. "Plus, with the course draining naturally because of its position on Limestone rock it's playable year-round, which means there's no let up on maintenance. That's why it's so important to have efficient machines that get the job done quickly to a high standard."

The 18-hole, 6,800-yard course at Cotswold Hills is situated at the top a hill 850 feet above sea level. With the club's impressive views and stunning tree-lined course, it's attracted a membership of near 1000, with member expectations for the course as high as they are above sea level.

With that in mind, updating the club's machinery fleet after years of replacing one machine at a time was of the utmost importance. And it's the Groundsmaster 5900-D, capable of mowing 17 acres an hour, that heads up the new fleet of efficient Toro machinery.

"We have a lot of rough to cover on the course and previously we were spending three days each week cutting it," says Wayne.

Toro

"It was obvious we needed a larger machine to get the job done quicker. Although our fleet was already predominantly Toro and had served us well, we looked into other brands for due diligence. But there wasn't another brand that had the size of machine we wanted available – no one could match the offering that Toro provided not only when it came to the spec of the GM5900-D, but the fleet too.

"The GM5900-D has cut our rough cutting time in half already," Wayne says. "With the increase in cutting width and speed, alongside its excellent contour following, we can now get the whole course done in a day and a half and the finish of cut is brilliant."

Joined by a new Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder, RM3575-D and a Greensmaster Flex 2120 pedestrian mower, the new Toro fleet has certainly made an impression.

"From experience I know that Toro machines are incredibly durable, which is why we've had a fleet of purchased Toro machines for so long. But having these four new machines with the latest upgrades and technological advancements has made a vast difference already.

"The Greensmaster Flex 2120 follows contours really well and is helping us extend the collar cut into the aprons and run offs and the Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder is giving us a cleaner cut, particularly in wet conditions."

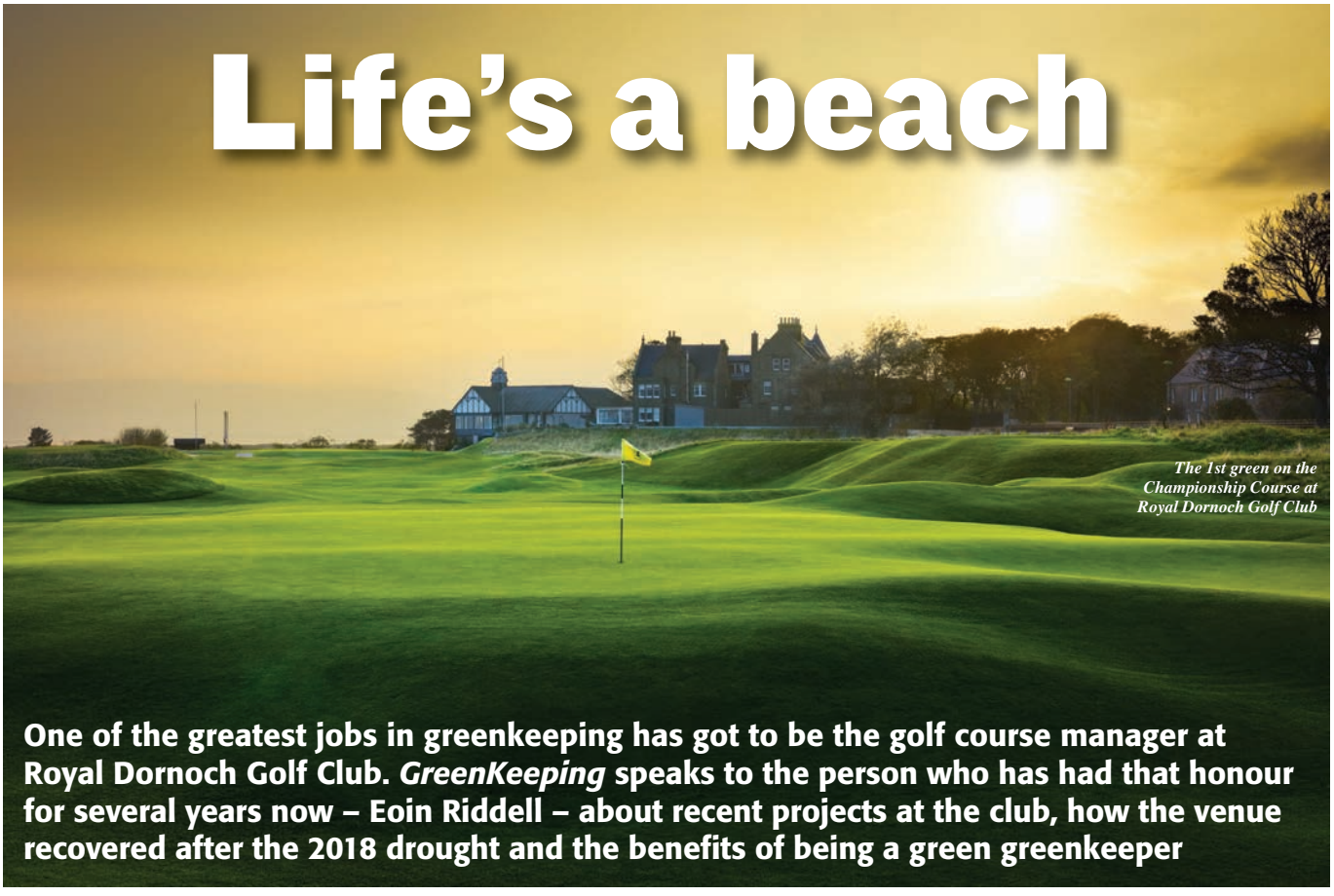
And going forward, this first lease deal with Toro is just the beginning of a longer term investment in the club's machinery to help improve the course.

"Continuing an agreement plan with Toro will mean that we can consistently bring to the course the newest technology and upgrades, while reducing machinery downtime. We've already seen the team's productivity increase after only having these new machines for a few months," concludes Wayne.

Tel: 01480 226800

ROYAL DORNOCH

Life's a beach



The 1st green on the Championship Course at Royal Dornoch Golf Club

One of the greatest jobs in greenkeeping has got to be the golf course manager at Royal Dornoch Golf Club. *GreenKeeping* speaks to the person who has had that honour for several years now – Eoin Riddell – about recent projects at the club, how the venue recovered after the 2018 drought and the benefits of being a green greenkeeper

Currently ranked at number five in *Britain and Ireland Top 100 Golf Courses*, Royal Dornoch's Championship Course on the curving bay of the Dornoch Firth is without doubt one of the greatest golfing facilities in the world. It sees white broad beaches backed by a narrow strip of softly contoured dune land rising in two distinctive levels, providing just enough room for parallel fairways. The ridges, hillocks, dunes and undulating links land have all the characters of the best of links courses, and most of the difficulties. The first eight holes follow the ridge and the remaining ten holes played in the opposite direction are bounded, except the 17th and 18th on the left by the sandy beaches of the firth.

Old Tom Morris was the architect responsible for extending the original nine-hole layout to 18 holes in 1886. He introduced the plateau greens which are the soul of the course, their uniqueness lies in their size and their inverted saucer shapes.

Royal Dornoch has a second course, Struie Course, which originally opened as a 12-hole facility for women in 1899, and was extended to 18 holes in 1999. The layout incorporates many of the unique Dornoch features and is widely regarded as an outstanding venue in its own right.

GreenKeeping caught up with the club's course manager, Eoin Riddell, who has been a greenkeeper at this extraordinary venue since 1986, to find out about the work that goes into maintaining these two courses.

GreenKeeping: Can you outline your career path and tell us how you became course manager of this venue?
Eoin Riddell: In 1986 I was approached by a committee member of Royal Dornoch – I was a junior golfing member at the time – and was offered an apprentice position. I did my levels two and three at Elmwood [today the Elmwood Campus of Scotland's Rural College]. I have been at the club all my working life, gaining promotion through my time and in 2005 I was offered the position of course manager.

GreenKeeping: What's the size of your team?
Eoin Riddell: We have 19 full-time staff and one seasonal. We are: Eoin Riddell, course manager (I've been at the club 34 years); Scott Aitchison, deputy course manager (22 years); Euan Macdonald, greenkeeper (18 years); Andrew Mackay, greenkeeper (17 years); Jamie Shepherd, greenkeeper (13 years); David Mackay, greenkeeper (13 years); Willie Nicholson, head mechanic (13 years); Alexander Richardson, greenkeeper (12 years); Andrew Rose, mechanic (six years); Steven Macleod, greenkeeper (six years); Stuart Gillies, greenkeeper (five years); Craig Mackay, greenkeeper (five years); Nick Turner, apprentice greenkeeper (three years);

TORO

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Greenkeeper profile

Craig Sutherland, greenkeeper (two years); Connor Mackay, greenkeeper (two years); John Leslie, apprentice greenkeeper (two years); Liam Kemmett, general worker (two years); Murray Lewis, general worker (one year); and Paul Rooney, greenkeeper (recently started).

We train all staff to do all tasks so no-one is specifically responsible for any one area and this gives some vary to their role. All staff are used on both courses, subject to the needs of the business.

GreenKeeping: You have a very solid team with a long service and high staff retention! What do you attribute this to and what support and training have you set in place for development and how would you describe your management style?

Eoin Riddell: Royal Dornoch is keen on staff development, they are a good employer with a healthy training budget. Staff are encouraged to better themselves, whether that be at the club or by moving on elsewhere. I see myself as a reasonably laid-back person but with high standards; I believe I am approachable but still respected by the team. I have learnt over the years that I need to be able to trust my team and delegate as necessary.

GreenKeeping: What would you say are the biggest challenges you face managing the two courses and what provisions have you put in place to overcome these?

Eoin Riddell: Expectations are very high to produce both courses to a high standard. They are quite different to each other and sometimes require different treatments but keeping the membership and the committees informed of this is helpful and makes life easier. I am fortunate that I have the full support from the committee and should a particular situation arise they normally would go with my recommendations.

GreenKeeping: Other than the two courses, what are you and your team responsible for managing and how do you ensure all is maintained to the highest standards?

Eoin Riddell: In total we look after just under 700 acres; the Championship Course is 80

The 11th green

acres, Struie Course is 70 acres, and grazing land is 250 acres, grass airstrip 10 acres, turf nurseries 25 acres, practice areas / driving range is 30 acres, three holes of teaching is 25 acres, SSSI dune land is 150 acres and the rest is made up in car parks and the land that has buildings such as the clubhouse, maintenance buildings and soil storage buildings.

With such a large area, time management and staff training are important.

GreenKeeping: You've recently undertaken work to the seventh tee on the Championship Course. What exactly has been done, what were the reasons, what results have you achieved and are the members happy?

Eoin Riddell: We started changing the seventh hole during the winter of 2017. This involved a construction of a new hole whilst the original was still in play. The final phase was to realign and reshape the seventh tee, which we completed this winter.

The idea behind changing the seventh hole is that we wished to maximise the views from that part of the course. We worked alongside Mackenzie & Ebert to achieve this. Our membership were consulted before the changes and we have kept them informed throughout. Early indications is that everyone is happy with the work that has been carried out – and the results.

GreenKeeping: There are plans for the eighth hole. What will you be doing, when will the work commence, what do you hope to achieve and will the work be undertaken in-house?

Eoin Riddell: We will be building new tees, and changing part of the fairway maximising the view, similar to the seventh hole. All work will again be done in-house.

GreenKeeping: How many bunkers do you have across the courses and what maintenance programme do you run for these?

Eoin Riddell: We have 82 bunkers. These are all re-vetted. The maintenance programme is that greenside bunkers are re-done every three years and fairways every five. All done with our own natural turf.

"I'VE BEEN A GREENKEEPER HERE FOR 34 YEARS AND ONE OF THE KEY STRENGTHS THAT HAS CARRIED ME THROUGH MY CAREER HAS BEEN LOCAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE COURSES"

The bunkers on the fifth and, below, an aerial view of the club

GreenKeeping: You have a relationship with Aquatrols and use some of its products. What is it about its distribution channel that you value?
Eoin Riddell: We have a great relationship with Aquatrols and are very happy with the products we use from them. The knowledge and information they have provided has been superb.

GreenKeeping: You've been using Attain, a bio-nutritional Aquatrols product. What are the benefits you're seeing from including this product in your management programme?
Eoin Riddell: We have been using Attain on our Championship Course fairways since the drought in 2018 and have been delighted with the results; good grass coverage with healthier rooting, we are happy with the product.

GreenKeeping: What was the situation before adding this product to your management programme? Did you have a challenge that Attain has helped you to overcome? If so, what was the problem? What prompted you to use Attain over other products available and what does it offer you that others do not?
Eoin Riddell: After the drought in 2018 our Championship Course's fairways, like many in the UK, were struggling for grass coverage. We started an intensive over-seeding programme to aid recovery. We did trials with Attain – and other products – to see what would help us recover quicker and get back to the standards we were looking for. We were delighted with the results from Attain compared to the competitors, with better grass coverage and healthier rooting. We are that happy with the product we are looking at using Attain on our second course's fairways after seeing the results.

GreenKeeping: What height of cut do you use across the course and what machinery do you use?
Eoin Riddell: Summer height for greens is 4mm, winter 6mm; we use Toro 1000 hand mowers for tournaments, the greens are brushed weekly, greens surrounds are cut at 6mm, tees also at 6mm, using a 3WD Toro TriFlex. For fairways, we cut to 10mm using a Toro 5410H, and the semi-rough is cut to 50mm with a Toro 4500.

GreenKeeping: What do you think are the strengths that have carried you through your career and current position at Royal Dornoch and how do you look forward to keeping your passion high and the courses evolving?
Eoin Riddell: Local knowledge of the courses, which has been built up over the years. An understanding of both the intricacies of the course and club. I am always keen to visit other courses and gain knowledge from other industry professionals.

GreenKeeping: You're running two turf nurseries, what size are these and what capacity do they deliver annually? What grass cultivars have you selected to use across the various areas of the course and what is it that you like about them?
Eoin Riddell: Total acreage is 25, split between 15 acres of coarse grasses for bunker revetment and the other is fine grasses fescue / bent mix for all other areas on the courses.

We had been overseeding all areas with pure fescue from the Aitkens Blade range. We are happy with the colour, density and strike rate.

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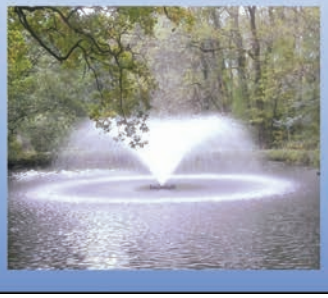

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report. What exactly was being looked at, what were the findings, what benefits has this delivered to you and how will this help moving forward?

Eoin Riddell: All areas on both courses were looked at; this included all plants and wildlife. They have given us recommendations on how to move forward and ways of implementing them and making sure we are benefiting the environment.

GreenKeeping: The courses are now GEO certified. What do you think you have learnt from the exercise, what have been the benefits, how will this continue to evolve and who in your team is responsible for driving this?

Eoin Riddell: Scott Aitchison, my deputy, has

The 8th hole

taken the lead in this initiative. It has made us more aware of our surroundings and the responsibility that we have to maintain it as naturally as possible.

We continue to review practices to minimise our footprint. This is very much a learning curve for the club but one we have become very passionate about.

GreenKeeping: The irrigation system is about to be upgraded. What's currently in place and what form will the upgrade take; how is this going to improve the system?

Eoin Riddell: At the moment we have a Toro Site Pro system which is about to be upgraded to the Toro Lynx system. This should help us maximise our water efficiency over the courses.

"THE GREATEST SATISFACTION I GET FROM MY JOB IS LOOKING AT WHAT THE TEAM PRODUCE ON A DAILY BASIS"

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 golfers by someone in your position and how does this help contribute to the business of golf?

Eoin Riddell: Whilst you have to be willing to listen to the members and staff, you also need to be able to help explain and, if necessary, help those not in the industry understand some of the complexities of greenkeeping that may not be initially apparent.

You need to keep abreast of all technology and equipment available to help maintain the courses. Maintain your enthusiasm for training and extending your knowledge.

At the end of the day, the golf industry will benefit from all courses being in the best condition they can be – dependent on budget and manpower.

GreenKeeping: What currently gives you the greatest satisfaction from your job; how do you feel daily when you are moving around the Royal Dornoch viewing what you and the team have accomplished?

Eoin Riddell: The greatest satisfaction I get from my job is looking at what the team produce on a daily basis and their attention to detail, also positive feedback from members and visitors helps.

I feel the biggest achievement to date is the relocating of our seventh hole, all done in-house.

GreenKeeping: What are the most memorable things you have been taught in your career and what advice would you give to youngsters starting out and wanting to pursue a career in the profession?

Eoin Riddell: I have been lucky to have worked under a few great greenkeepers and learnt many things. The one thing I always remember is 'take your time and do it right first time, you can't rush perfection'.

The advice I would give to youngsters starting in the profession is listen and learn as much as you can and never think you know everything, we will always learn something new every day, no matter what position you are in.

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

Eoin Riddell: I personally feel that the old days of being seen as a grass cutter have thankfully all but disappeared, there is a few out there that may still think it, but with the help of BIGGA and other associations we are now looked at as professionals with more respect for what greenkeepers do for their clubs.

The 5th and 11th holes

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‘Always wear sunscreen’

Dr John Dempsey PhD was a greenkeeper in Ireland from the early 1980s until last year. Here, he details how the industry evolved beyond recognition in that time, from using sheep and shovels to maintain venues to the technology that goes into course machinery today – and he details some of the most important lessons he learned in his career

Last June I parted ways with the golf club I had worked for after 35 years as a greenkeeper and course superintendent. So I thought this would be a good time to look back and put down on paper some of the experiences and observations of my time on the golf course, in particular, how things have changed and evolved over the last 35 years.

How did I get into the turfgrass business? Well, a friend of mine reckoned this was the advice I received in the early 80s: 'Get into grass John. They pay you to cut it, but it just keeps growing! Job's a good'un son ... and you can make stripes!' The idea of making stripes was attractive for sure, but the real reason I got into turfgrass was more basic – I didn't have a job! My father-in-law was a greenkeeper going back to the 1960s, so that was it, I started in the early 80s on a career path that provided a few lows, many challenges, but out balancing these were the numerous highs from job satisfaction and the people I met and worked with over the years.

I began my turfgrass career at Royal Curragh Golf Club, this is Ireland's oldest golf course and club; golf was first played there in 1852. It was established by members of a Scottish regiment of the British army based at a nearby garrison camp. It's a historic club in other ways too, the course is established on an open grassland, which has been continuously grazed by sheep since Neolithic times. There are numerous archaeological sites, such as burial rings and raths in the area and within the golf course itself. More recent historical remains are the trenches which surround the approach to the fifth and sixth fairways. These were dug out in 1915/16 during the First World War and used for training recruits before they were sent to the Battle of the Somme, something to consider as you worry about your sliced shot perhaps!

So, what was golf course maintenance like in Ireland back in the last century? Well, here's a clue – my first encounter with a golf green was when walking onto it for the first time and thinking, 'wow! how nice and soft this is, like walking on a mattress.' Oh dear, aeration and topdressing were not very frequent practices! Turf management operations were basic really, with minimal inputs and maintenance procedures. Well, the greens received the odd run of a pedestrian slitter, once a year … if they were lucky! Top-dressing was a screened topsoil, fine clay particles spread over the surface and worked in with birch brushes! I mentioned low inputs, this was true in most cases except for nitrogen. Poa dominated push-up greens in Ireland's climate receiving 450 kg/ha of N per year, no wonder they were soft! That was the early 80s, course upkeep consisted mostly of mowing greens; we had a ride-on triplex Toro, a tractor and gang mower to cut the grass and daisies on the fairways. We applied calcium ammonium nitrate, sulphate of ammonia and ferrous sulphate and used washing up liquid for dry patches on the greens ... the sheep maintained our rough!

By the start of the 1990s however, things began to change, we began to educate ourselves, read up on techniques; did greenkeeping courses. We purchased a Cushman and a ride-on fairway mower. We now had some tools, we could aerate regularly and top-dress, not with the surface sealing clay / soil, but with washed sand of a correct particle size, we could start to shape and present fairways. Our nutritional inputs were modified, our greens began to firm up and play well.

As the years rolled through the 90s and into the 21st century, golfer expectations increased – they wanted better playing surfaces, not just through summer, but year-round and they wanted presentation, the Augusta effect! So the greenkeepers workload increased, we had to understand the complex requirements of turfgrass nutrients and tailored inputs to the various areas of the course, to suit the surface playability targets and environmental conditions. New products and maintenance techniques made the biggest impact during this time. For me, the availability of fairway mowers, vertidrains and other aerators; top dressers, which replaced using shovels, integrated sprayers, instead of tractor mounted agricultural ones, all these produced significant impacts during these changing times.

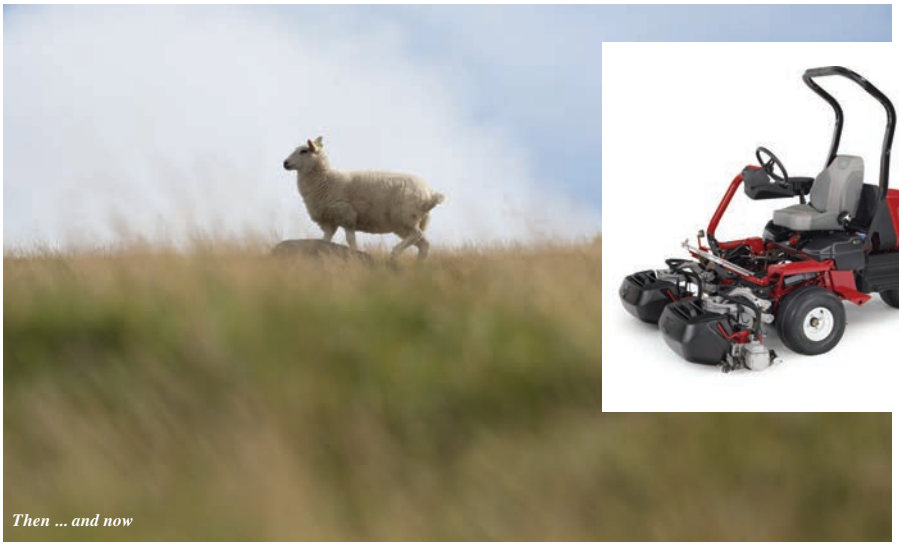
When I started, many years back, we had several mainstay fungicides: Iprodione, Chlorothalonil and Carbendazim, which we used though the autumn and winter. These were used to control fusarium patch - microdochium nivale (in the early 80s this

was know as Gerlachia nivale, but that's another story). We had heard of anthracnose, dollar spot, take all and red thread, but these were things we didn't deal with. We had Chlordane, which suppressed worm casting for seven or eight years ... that was quickly banned! We had granular fertilisers – no liquids or foliars to speak of and no seed-head suppression or PGRs. A different maintenance regime in those days!

As we moved into the 21st century there was a lot of new challenges, but also many new maintenance procedures and product availability. Fertiliser and chemical products have been the source of some of the greatest changes to course maintenance practices during my time. The range of fertilisers, both granular and liquid expanded, PGRs, wetting agents and new plant protectant chemistries became available. We now had the equipment and we had the products. We then had to make the correct choices and put together maintenance programmes to deliver what the modern golfer wanted. We were transforming from grass-cutters to professional turfgrass managers! Golf course playing conditions and presentation improved astronomically. Golfers still wanted more, that's something you learn quickly, to paraphrase the old saying 'you can please some of the golfers some of the time' ... you know the rest.

So, by this time we were really getting our act together, good products (some even had research to support them) good machines and good education and management practices. But one thing you learn in this business is there's always new challenges. Today we must deal with restrictions of plant protectants, environmental awareness, climate changes and, something that has really come to the fore recently, the pressures this lifestyle has on your wellbeing and family life.

We're dealing with chemical restrictions and climate changes as we have done with previous challenges, we're adapting, looking to research and education and new and improved methods to overcome them. With plant protectant restrictions for disease control and stress challenges to our turfgrasses, we



Then ... and now

are turning to a more integrated management approach. Learning how all the factors which affect plant health interact and how we can influence these factors. Managing cultural, nutritional, environmental and biological factors to ensure healthier more robust swards, whilst still producing excellent playing surfaces. The days of applying pesticides with long-term residual effect on our ecological partners are long gone. We are now very aware of how our courses are part of the bigger picture and we look to nurture and encourage biodiversity, and to protect our unique environments.

The pressures a turfgrass manager must deal with these days are coming much to the fore in the last couple of years. Effects this lifestyle has on your wellbeing and family life can be devastating. I didn't think I was under stress while working as a superintendent, but when I finished in that position, I quickly realised I was constantly thinking about the job, 24/7. Weather conditions, machine breakdowns, staff problems and dealing with members and committees all can take their toll. I'm no expert here, but I will say take advice and listen to the many people in the industry who are talking on this subject and deal with it.

What summary can I give after 35 years on the job? Well when I started, golf courses, certainly in Ireland, were mostly greens-orientated, with very little attention given to any other areas. Maintenance procedures were basic, with little understanding of the science behind turfgrass maintenance, golf club committees knew all and gave the instructions (450 kg/ha N)! Things have certainly changed, mostly for the better. Greenkeepers, who were once just grass-cutters, are now respected and well educated (some are even doctors – how did that happen?!) Would I recommend the job to others? Hmmm ... it's not easy, it requires dedication and acceptance of long hours and criticisms from people you know haven't a clue as to what they're talking about. But tremendous satisfaction can also be obtained when you survey your course, and everything comes together, and the place is shining.

I had many years in this job, made an awful lot of good friends; fellow workers, golfers and committee members, and had plenty of job satisfaction. I learned a lot, I set myself targets and progressed personally. Advice to young guys going into the business? Keep learning, not only from formal education, but talk to the old guys, they know an awful lot! I've met a lot of greenkeepers around the world and their knowledge is always outstanding, there's no end to what you can learn.

And sunscreen ... always wear sunscreen!

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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Toro

Following on from Toro's success at The Drift Golf Club in Surrey, Toro arrives at Badgemore Park Golf Club in Henley-on-Thames, its sister club, for the first time.

Since it was founded in 1972, Badgemore Park has operated a like-for-like machinery replacement plan and never benefitted from the advantages of having a comprehensive machinery fleet, until now.

For the last 20 years course manager Lindsay Anderson has wanted that to change and now's the time, with the club choosing Toro for its first ever fleet package deal.

"We've undergone a lot of development at the club recently," says Lindsay. "Making changes with new greens and tees and re-developing all the bunkers. Investing in a complete Toro machinery package is part of a massive investment in the club and another step in the right direction to improve the course, completing our five-year plan of course improvements in time for our 50th anniversary in 2022."

And it was a very thorough process for Lindsay when it came to choosing a new equipment provider. "We had demonstrations from a few brands and asked around other golf courses for recommendations," he says. "It became clear fairly soon that Toro was the way to go. Toro is renowned in the industry as being the best and the demonstration cemented that."

The machines entrusted with maintaining the beautiful parkland course include three Toro Greensmaster TriFlex 3400 mowers, two Groundsmaster 4300-D mowers, two Greensmaster 1000 pedestrian mowers, two Workman MDX-D utility vehicles, a Groundsmaster 4000-D and a ProCore 648 with quick tine change collars fitted, which Lindsay says is his favourite.

Toro

"It's just fantastic. We have a massive aeration programme proposed for the next six months so it's going to get a lot of use and I know it will be up to the task. It's a real quality piece of engineering built for ease of maintenance and ease of operation. Plus, it's durable and reliable.

"In fact, all the machines are, which makes my job easier on a daily basis. I'm no longer constantly answering the phone to members of the greenkeeping team and having to run to fix issues with the machines, and that's had an effect on us all. We've all got confidence in the machines and it's really boosted morale and productivity."

Of course, committing to one machinery brand usually means a change in dealer with Reesink being keen to demonstrate to Lindsay how it offers its customers more.

Reesink sales manager Robert Rees soon made the introductions for Lindsay with his local Toro service centre, CTH Engineering, which reassured Lindsay about the backup service available. He says: "I was unsure where we would go for our servicing if we switched brands, but Robert was great. He put me in touch with another local dealership that dealt with Toro machines and discussed the whole thing in detail which cleared up the concerns I had. And the backup to date – well there have been no issues."

But when it comes down to it, what has impressed the team and members of the club alike most are the results seen across the course.

"The quality of cut is incredible," concludes Lindsay. "Within a month members were commenting on the quality of the playing surfaces having improved."

This is no surprise considering The Drift experienced a similar improvement in both the aesthetics and quality of the playing surface too!

Web: reesinkturfcare.co.uk

EcoBunker

The Island GC outside Dublin, generally regarded as one of Ireland's finest courses, has rebuilt a large proportion of its revetted bunkers using a new solution from synthetic bunker solutions provider EcoBunker.

The course, which is currently undergoing a renovation, has adopted a new approach created by EcoBunker inventor and CEO Richard Allen, that sees the bottom six turf layers of the revetted wall built from synthetic turf, while the rest is natural.

"Revetted bunkers decay from the bottom up, which is only to be expected because it is the bottom of the wall that is most exposed to water," says Allen. "When the bottom of the wall fails, wind and rain get in behind the revet and remove sand, eventually causing the wall to collapse. With synthetic turf at the base, this will not happen, and the longevity of the wall will be significantly enhanced."

"Setting the base of a revetted bunker is the part of the build that takes the most time," says course manager Dave Edmondson. "With the EcoBunker base in place, all we will have to do when it comes to rebuilding the wall is to remove the natural revet with a spade and replace the turf. Six layers of artificial turf is a totally solid base on which to build the rest of the wall. It's not going to move. Our revetted bunkers normally last between three and five years – south facing ones degrade faster than others – so the improvement using this EcoBunker method could be quite substantial."

Edmondson says it is hard to see a downside of this new method. "We have to buy in my revetting turf, so putting in a synthetic base will actually make rebuilding cheaper in the future," he explains. "And there is absolutely zero aesthetic impact. When the sand is ready for play, the synthetic turf is all below the sand line. Everything you can see is natural; it looks just like a normal revetted bunker."

Web: ecobunker.co.uk

GreenMech

Tai Tarian are one of the largest social landlords in Wales, responsible for over 9,000 properties across the Neath Port Talbot County Borough. A dedicated arb team make up one of seven in-house grounds maintenance teams, looking after the borough's green spaces. With over 7,000 trees under their remit, a QuadChip 160 from GreenMech is keeping the team on track, providing ultimate flexibility for kerbside working.

Martyn Davies, senior neighbourhood co-ordinator, spearheads the team which was set up in 2012. "The very first job was to source the machinery we were going to need to cope with the variety of tasks of materials we were going to be handling. Access when turning up to narrow car-lined streets is one of our biggest headaches but having seen the full 360o turntable on the QuadChip 160, we quickly decided it was the right chipper for us."

GreenMech

With the majority of domestic tree works taking place in restricted-access and/or kerbside locations, the manoeuvrability and flexibility of the QuadChip sees it in use five days a week. "With the QuadChip, we can turn the chipper 90o to the road and bring brash from the gardens of properties and feed it straight into the chipper, with the chips going straight into the back of the tipper – it's brilliant! We then recycle this material around trees and put it to community use, creating pathways and borders."

So impressed with the versatility it delivers, Martyn has exchanged the chipper like-for-like three times, taking delivery of his newest model in January 2020 from their local dealer, Powercut (Wales). "The back-up support we get from them is fantastic and was another crucial factor in why we chose this machine." Final word from Martyn, "As we now embark on a new tree planting programme, the workload for the team is only going to increase, but we're safe in the knowledge that with the QuadChip we've got a robust and reliable chipper at our disposal to tackle the tasks at hand."
Web: www.greenmech.co.uk

Ventrac

Ventrac

Price Turfcare enjoyed an interesting BTME with the announcement that Toro had purchased Venture Products, the manufacturer of Ventrac all-terrain compact tractors.

"As the UK distributor of Ventrac, this came as quite a shock, so early on the first day of the show," said managing director, Rupert Price. "There was so much speculation as to what the implications might be, but I was overwhelmed with the level of support and goodwill from everyone who came onto the stand.

"Tuesday, the day of the announcement, was a bit of a blur, but our small team rallied around and over the course of the next couple of days we spoke to a lot of end-users and potential customers, coming away with plenty of demonstration requests.

"As we spoke with our American colleagues over the following days, the picture became significantly clearer and a lot of the doomsday scenarios began to evaporate. Many people assumed that Toro would acquire the company, rebrand and paint the machines red, as they have done with previous acquisitions in the past. However, if you look at what they did with Exmark, Boss and Ditch Witch, this is not always the case and Ventrac will be operated on a similar basis.

"Rick Olson, CEO of Toro stated publicly via a YouTube video that there is no intention of moving production out of Orrville in Ohio and that they would continue to build the Ventrac brand. At the Golf Industries Show in Orlando recently, I had the opportunity to speak with representatives from both Ventrac and Toro and they confirmed this. So, I see this as an excellent opportunity for Price Turfcare. Although we are a small team, we have taken a virtually unknown brand in the UK from zero sales in 2016 to over 100 machines sold by the end of 2019. We know that this did not go unnoticed within the Toro organisation.

"So, from hereon in, its business as usual; you'll see us out and about around the UK, redoubling our efforts and continuing to increase the footprint of a product that has impressed Rick Olson for its quality and one that complements the Toro brand."
Tel: 01284 827540

John Deere

John Deere's new premium XUV 865R Gator is the most comfortable model ever produced in the company's popular cross-over utility vehicle range. This 23hp diesel-powered model combines the established high performance of the XUV 865M with a wide range of additional operator friendly features, including a luxurious cab environment.

Standard specification includes a continuously variable transmission with on-demand

John Deere

four-wheel drive, power steering, fully independent suspension and an attachment-ready electrical system. The quiet, fully equipped cab provides comfortable car-style seating for up to three people when driving off-road, as well as easy-opening door handles, a fully opening windscreen and a proven, extremely efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning system.

In addition, the cab features an attractive tan-coloured interior that has been ergonomically redesigned, with the easy-to-use automotive-style controls now conveniently located in the centre of the dash. The streamlined roof moves water to the outside edges, and both the high-level front and rear lights are set below the roof line for better protection.

The R trim specification also provides the fully enclosed cab with a wide range of extra standard features, including an adjustable 40/60 bench seat, tiltable steering wheel, sun visors, a windshield wiper and washer plus electrical wiring for attachments, as well as high- and low-beam LED headlights.

The XUV 865R Gator is powered by an 854cc three-cylinder, liquid-cooled OHV diesel engine producing 23hp at 3600rpm, with a top speed of 31mph (50kph) in high range. The true 4WD system has an auto-locking front differential and dash-mounted electronic rocker switch for easy operation.

To complement the robust frame, the vehicle is equipped with four-wheel independent suspension.

This has been designed to provide a smooth ride and optimum load carrying ability over challenging terrain, without compromising ride quality or vehicle stability.

The versatile deluxe cargo box is made of a durable composite material that eliminates rust and dents and reduces noise. There is an automotive style tailgate handle and the rear lights are available with optional protectors. The cargo box can be easily converted to a flat-bed and has a load capacity of 454kg, while towing capacity is 900kg and total payload is 680kg.

For extra versatility the new John Deere XUV 865R Gator utility vehicle can be fitted with a wide range of attachments from snow blades to winches, and features a large 42-litre fuel tank for longer running between fill-ups.

Web: www.JohnDeere.co.uk

SISIS

SISIS

The Syn-Pro SSS1000 tractor mounted rotary brush sweeper by SISIS is providing Dylan Thompson, grounds maintenance manager, at Colliers Park, with a certain peace of mind.

Welsh football recently received a boost after a new training and development centre was opened in Wrexham. In a collaboration between the FAW and Glyndwr University, Colliers Park in Gresford boasts state-of-the-art facilities in a bid to promote, develop and protect football in Wales.

The impressive footballing centre also features a brand-new synthetic pitch which is kept in immaculate condition by the SISIS SSS1000 – a machine which instantly impressed Dylan.

"We trialled the SSS1000 before we purchased it and the amount it cleaned up the pitch was crazy," he said. "From the very start we realised what a great tool it was and in those early weeks after installation it was fantastic at picking up loose fibres."

The SISIS SSS1000 is a tractor mounted sweeper which can be pulled by any machine. The rotary brush has been designed for use on synthetic surfaces to remove surface debris, lift the carpet pile and redistribute sand or rubber crumb infill giving the surface maximum performance and extended life.

There are no tools required for the adjustment of the brush or the angle of the draw bar and to make storage easy the draw bar lifts to an upright position. With an aluminium hopper with stainless steel mesh, any infill that is collected when using the machine is returned back to the surface leaving it free from contamination of debris.

"It is peace of mind knowing that we have the SSS1000 in our armoury," said Dylan. "The site has a lot of trees and is very windy, so we do get a lot of debris on the pitch even in the summer. We use the SSS1000 on the back of a compact tractor – it is nice and easy to put on, reliable, easy to adjust and requires hardly any maintenance. It also saves staff a huge amount of time because we aren't having to go onto the pitch with rakes and blowers and put the debris into bags. The SSS1000 does the hard work for you."

Web: www.sisis.com

Dennis

The Dennis G860 cylinder mower is the most reliable cylinder mower on the market according to Dylan Thompson, grounds maintenance manager, at the all-new Colliers Park in Gresford, Wales.

Built to inspire a new generation of stars, Colliers Park is primarily used to deliver training, coach education and player development. The stunning new, multi-million-pound facility was opened in the summer of 2019 and Dylan is the man responsible for maintaining the standards of facilities and pitches.

Upon embarking on his new role, Dylan felt that the most important thing was to get the right turf maintenance equipment in place.

"The Dennis G860 was a machine I was very keen on using here at Colliers Park because it is something I've used in the past," he said. "With so much going on here it was peace of mind because it was something that I didn't have to worry about because I know just how good they are. It is reliable and the best mower out there in my opinion."

Dylan isn't the only groundsman to be of this opinion as many of his peers have long relied on the G860 to provide the perfect cut for sports turf. 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 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 such as including scarifying, verticutting, brushing, spiking, and slitting.

Dennis

Toro

"For our two G860s we have eight bladed cutting cassettes, brushing and verticutting cassettes and sorrel rollers," continued Dylan. "I can't believe how easy it is to change the cassette system - we are not having to waste time messing about finding different spanners or anything like that. It's all there ready to go."

"The G860 is the perfect mower to give the pitch that all important final cut. It gives you the best finish and it provides those lovely 'Dennis stripes' – which is another reason why we purchased them.

"When it comes to verticutting, we like to do it as often as we can so that we can keep the pitches under control especially when it comes to disease. It's important to keep the pitches as clean as possible and with the speed of the G860's it is done in no time at all.

"The brush comes in handy if we don't want to use the rotary mowers because we simply put the brushing cassette in to the G860. It's a great option to have because with the brush you can be a little more aggressive in the tidy-up and really give the pitch a deep clean.

"Ultimately, the G860 is an essential mower because it can be used for so many different operations."

Web: www.dennisuk.com

Toro

It's possible to make real and significant savings with Toro Reels+.

Everything you need for replacing your cylinders is included and comes pre-assembled and with the bearings already pressed on with required low-drag flock seals and spacers, you can save approximately 15-20 minutes of installation time per cylinder.

Michael Hampton, parts manager at Reesink Turfcare, the exclusive distributor in the UK and Ireland of Toro Parts, says: "Anytime Toro customers see the plus symbol next to Toro Reels, they know they're getting a fully-integrated cylinder assembly. Demand in the marketplace and customer feedback has been a key driver behind this product, which allow technicians to streamline their operations."

The additional bearings, seals and spacers are sold at a discount from the individual part retail price, making a very real and positive contribution to your business' bottom line, too.

Michael continues: "This makes a very real saving at the point of purchase, but the savings don't stop there. Less time and labour means your mowers are back in action faster, saving money and resources."

Plus, having all the parts professionally assembled at the factory removes the guesswork for technicians and by ensuring the recommended bearings are utilised increases the product life of the cutting units, as Michael explains: "Toro 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. Spending less time on maintenance and increasing the product life of the cutting units means there's more time to focus on providing the best turf care possible."

Make sure your business benefits from the muitiple plus points of easier machinery maintenance with Toro Reels+ and Reesink by visiting reesinkturfcare.co.uk today.

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Understanding pipe sizing in irrigation systems

Seemingly minor changes in your irrigation system's pipe diameter can lead to major changes in water coverage, potentially affecting disease on the course, writes Peter Robin

If you are planning to have some pipes replaced in your irrigation system, what do you do? How can you figure out what sized pipes you should install?

Here's a scenario: the greenkeeper knows that the existing pipe going down the 10th fairway is old two inch diameter PVC, so it makes sense to install a new two inches equivalent pipe ... doesn't it?

Well, not necessarily, and here's why: Pipes have rough internal surfaces, which 'burn' the water pressure via friction (this is called 'head-loss'). Head-loss in pipes is related to how fast the water travels through those pipes. The faster the water travels, the more pressure is lost through friction. The smaller the pipe diameter, the faster the water must travel to get through to the other end, so smaller diameter pipes 'burn up' more pressure than bigger pipes, and so there is less pressure left over for your sprinklers to use at the other end. Conversely, a bigger pipe diameter allows the water to travel slower, so it 'burns' less pressure and so there is more pressure left over.

'So what?' I hear you ask. Well many golf course irrigation systems suffer from inadequate water pressure. Pressure is the amount of energy in your water (provided by your pump); it provides the force to throw the sprinklers' water across to the other side of the green (or tee). Poor water pressure will lead to poor water coverage, resulting potentially in dry patch, wet areas, non-uniform playability, possibly weed and moss growth and so on.

Rain Bird golf sprinkler operating at excellent pressure capacity

Here's another point to consider. An increase in pipe diameter from, say, 63mm (that is black PE pipe) to 75mm diameter doesn't sound like much of a jump but this 20 per cent increase in diameter will increase the cross sectional area by 45 per cent, in other words the difference is not linear. This means that a small increase in pipe diameter will make a large difference in how much volume the pipe can hold, and therefore a massive difference in slowing the water down.

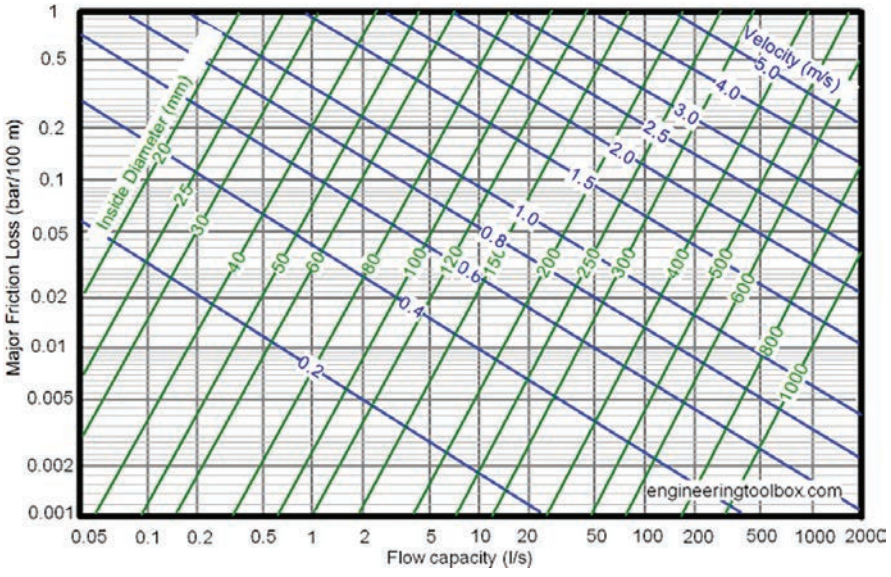
So, getting back to the stretch of replacement pipe on the 10th fairway. Firstly, forget about what the existing pipe size is. Instead, we need to know what its flow rate requirement will be. If its purpose is to feed the 10th green with five sprinklers to irrigate all at once, the pipe needs to be big enough to be able to transport the water with a minimal loss of pressure within your budgetary constraints.

So if each sprinkler has a 75 litre per minute nozzle, then the overall flow rate to the green will be 75 x 5 = 375 litres per minute; or 22.5 cubic metres per hour. You can get this info from the internet relating to your sprinklers and their existing nozzles.

If you use 63mm OD (two inches ID) pipe

Peter Robin

then the head-loss will be approximately 18 metres per 100 metres of pipe, and the velocity (speed) of the water traveling through it will be around three metres per second. This information is gained from a head-loss calculator. Incidentally, 10 metres in pressure-talk is the same as one bar, so that means you'll have potentially lost 1.8 bar of pressure over that 100 metres of mainline pipe down your 10th fairway if you stick with a 63mm (two inches) diameter pipe.



Head-loss calculator chart

If instead you install 90mm OD (three inches ID) pipe, then the head-loss will be just under two metres per 100 metres of pipe, and the velocity will be around 1.2 metres per second. So now you'll have lost just 0.2 bar of pressure down the same length of mainline.

This is a huge difference! We've gone from losing 1.8 bar of pressure over the 100 metres to now losing just 0.2 bar, just by using the bigger diameter pipe. If you started with five bar going into the new pipe, you'll have 3.2 bar at the end of it if you use 63mm pipe, but you'll have 4.8 bar at the end of it if you use 90mm pipe instead. Imagine the difference if you change more of the irrigation system to bigger pipes.

Dry patch potentially cased by poor water coverage

What happens in the real world is that the sprinklers will just use less water at lower pressures, so the system can even itself out to a certain extent, but to the detriment of the sprinkler's coverage; at lower pressures and flow rates the sprinklers will perform poorly. Uniformity will suffer and you'll get serious problems, including an ongoing problem with severe dry patch – every greenkeeper's worst nightmare.

A good irrigation contractor will be able to work out the best pipe diameters for your specific situation. If they simply suggest you replace like-for-like, feel free to question it. There are two references they should be able to provide you: (1) the velocity of the water through the pipe and (2) the head-loss (pressure-loss) of the new pipe. They should also be able to tell you what the same figures would be if you go up a diameter, which will give you the comparison you need.

Some professionals aim at a velocity of 1.5 metres per second maximum. This is the speed that the water will be traveling through your new pipe.

I personally prefer a lower velocity of around one metre per second; this lower velocity will save a huge amount of pressure because, as we have discussed, the water will be traveling slower. The bigger diameter pipe will be more expensive though, and this is why many contractors, worried about being competitive, will quote a smaller diameter pipe.

Head-loss, the other point of reference, is massively affected by pipe diameter, as previously described in the 10th fairway example. Your contractor should be able to show you the head-loss figure for each diameter pipe.

So next time you're thinking of installing any new pipe, be it in a new stretch or replacing an existing pipeline, make sure you ask the right questions and get some definitive answers. You are welcome to contact me if you'd like a second opinion: **peter.robin@rigbytaylor.com**

Peter Robin is the UK irrigation product manager at Rigby Taylor. For more information, visit **www.rigbytaylor.com**

Andy Copeland

is the course manager at **Mill Green Golf Club** in Hertfordshire. The 18-hole course was designed by both Peter Alliss and Clive Clark

• What time do you arrive at the club?

I arrive at the club 15 to 20 minutes before our scheduled start time of 7:00am in the winter and 6:00am in the summer months.

• Can you describe your morning routine?

Myself, or another team member, will check the rain gauge and we will make a decision on whether the golf course is open or shut, update the trolley and buggy status and post the course status both online and to the pro shop.

This winter we have taken each day as it comes. We then have a look at the white board, which is loaded with jobs we want to complete and, given the weather conditions that day, we will work our way through it. At every dry opportunity, we have either rolled or cut the greens and set up the golf course accordingly.

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

I have a team of six guys including myself and a mechanic. We also have 'artisan marshalls' who pick up smaller jobs such as emptying the bins, range ball collection and completing other details around the clubhouse.

To be honest, who would say they have enough staff?! I always try and set realistic goals and between us all, we try our best to deliver. My expectations are very high but that's what keeps me hungry to carry on pushing myself and the team.

• Do you share tasks?

I try my best to rotate all jobs on the golf course as long as the guys are trained and competent in the task required – I work on the basis that I'd rather have a team of good machine operators rather than one guy being a wizard in that particular task. Saying that – I'm very fortunate that I have five wizards!

• How do you motivate your colleagues?

I talk to people how I would like to be spoken to and I will only send them out to do a job that I'd be happy to do myself. We have a good laugh both on and off the course.

I also like the guys to play as much golf as they can – one to better their knowledge and two to see the golf course from a playing perspective. I like to think that with all of that combined, they become passionate about their workplace, they take pride in the work they do and deliver over and over again.

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

For me, it's a warm, spring morning. You've just endured six or seven months of tough conditions; you have bare areas on the golf course from traffic, machinery or project work and to then watch the course transition into spring is a great feeling.

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

Planning a project such as greens' maintenance. Everything from organising the machinery, sands, fertilisers and getting your staff in the right place at the right time, communicating the plans to the membership explaining how it is going to be, followed by finally executing the maintenance exactly how you want it. Sometimes you can be lucky and even have the weather for it!

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

For me it has to be going through a disciplinary process with a team member, for this reason I try my best to only recruit people who want

the job as their career. It's pointless to employ somebody who you don't see a future with, or it's evident that they are using the job as a steppingstone. I feel like I have failed if I have to go through this process.

• Have you attended any courses recently?

Yes, I was recently at BTME and I attended four seminars. I'm also very fortunate that I work for Crown Golf that holds multiple courses around the south / south west of England and we are all part of a WhatsApp group chat and share ideas that way. I have also been fortunate enough to go to TPC Sawgrass and I met some great guys there who share an abundance of knowledge from around the country and into Europe. You can never stop learning and never be afraid to ask questions!

• Do you have a feeding programme for your fairways?

Yes, we liquid feed our fairways. I use Headland Amenity's Xtend 46-0-0 slow-release soluble fertiliser, Prilled Urea 46-0-0 if we need to aggressively push the growth, combined with Elevate Fe in the spring. I then apply a wetting agent at the back end of the summer to help water penetrate the firm surfaces, which I apply together with a seaweed-based product – this has given me great results.

Around September I re-apply the Xtend 46-0-0 to help aid summer recovery and thicken up the surfaces before the winter and worms arrive.

• How do you ensure your greens have good colour?

I use a range of Headland Amenity products from seaweeds, irons, dew suppressants and penetrants. On the greens we apply the 20/20/30 tank-mix plus Mantle every four weeks to ensure we have strong, healthy plants throughout the winter months.

This year we added PPT114 to our mixes, Headland's new manganese, zinc, copper, iron and harpin combination, which kept us in control of the disease pressure at all times. I ran two trials in the last year – one on the main course with PPT114 used alongside applications of fungicide product, and PPT114 only on my par three. With all other factors kept the same, we did have some disease out on the par three but nowhere near the amount you'd expect to see, which is very encouraging. My main course is very clean, borderline disease free. .

• How would you improve the greenkeeping industry?

We are all great at communicating via social media, but social media is very false. I think that being able to go and visit other courses, and see how wet or dry other sites are, is a healthy thing to do. I'd like to see more 'on the course' seminars which would allow you to gain a real insight into each golf club and understand any relatable restraints they're under and how they're managing those.

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

Not that I'm aware of, but you never know ... Those stray balls were perhaps a little too far off line to be an accident ... must always keep your wits about you!

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

The only rescue I have had is myself! I was playing golf at Vila Sol Golf Course in Portugal, it was hot and I may have had a beer or two the night before, so we hired electric trolleys.

I've never had one before and I was pretty unfamiliar with the speeds, especially the on / off button. Playing a shot into a hole and I forgot to turn my trolley off and, of all the places, there was a lake straight ahead. FORE … playing in!

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

Last year I noticed more red kites in the sky, more than I have ever seen in the past.

They're really lovely to see and the noise they make is amazing. We are also very lucky at Mill Green to have a couple of local kingfishers that enjoy the lakes on the course. Out in America last year we were amazed to see bald eagles – I've only ever seen them on TV and it was a spectacle to see them in the flesh. Their wingspan was unbelievable!

One way we support wildlife is by stacking up any logs we get from fallen trees and putting them back into our long rough areas, to create a habitat for smaller creatures. If we can do something small to help the food chain, we will do so.

• Are you seeing any evidence of climate change?

Whether it's due to climate change, or sheer coincidence, but we definitely seem to be seeing higher rainfall quantities combined with warmer temperatures, as well as rainfall in bigger downpours instead of little and often. I read plenty of articles relating it back to climate change but we as course managers and head greenkeepers need to adjust the way we work. I don't work by the calendar anymore; I work with the weather.

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

The reasons I came into the golf industry was because I enjoyed the outdoor lifestyle; I was sporty and I was just getting interested in golf. I also had a weird obsession with mowing my parent's lawn and creating different patterns in the turf!

Let's be honest, the truth is we work in an industry that's unnecessarily stressful, it can be very cold, very wet and miserable. You're constantly thinking about different scenarios, the what ifs and buts, but if you want to succeed you have to love the job. I would advise young greenkeepers to have a connection with the industry whether you're a keen golfer and you want to help and improve your course, or you like jobs where you can see the difference of before and after. Remember there are more months in a year than just June, July and August – it's (unfortunately) not always sun and shorts weather!

• How do you spend your leisure time?

I have three children all under the age of 10 so my wife and I spend a lot of time travelling to various activities for them. My eldest daughter is a keen ballerina, she's in the London Royal Ballet School, Tring Park Ballet School and her local ballet school. We travel a lot to get her to these schools, as that's her passion.

I'm also an FA qualified coach and coach my son's football team. He also loves playing golf, which is great for me as we both can go out in the summer evenings and weekends to play. My youngest daughter is a mixed bag, she loves everything from ballet to football. Between me and my wife we devote our 'leisure' time to our kids, and I wouldn't have it any other way!

Stuart Taylor, course manager, Glasgow Killermont Golf Club

The golf club has purchased its second Tru-Turf greens' roller. How long have you been using a turf iron over the greens, what were the reasons you decided to invest in a greens' iron, what was the selection process that led you to decide Tru-Turf was the best option for you and who did you purchase this from?

Yes this is the second Tru-Turf machine I have bought. The first was 10 years ago – we used it consistently for eight years until replacing it with the present unit.

The reason for investing in this particular machine was specifically to reduce the cutting regime, increase greens speeds, improve the turf swards, reduce the stress on the sward, improve the trueness of putting surfaces and aid recovery after aeration processes.

During the selection process several other manufacturers' machines were trialled on the basis of ease of use, manual handling issues, speed of operation, performance after completion, damage to the surface, speed increase, transport issues, fuel usage and so on.

The machine was purchased from Double A as they were the agents at that time and their back-up has proved to be excellent.

How frequently do you use the Tru-Turf roller across the course and what results do you see across the course in terms of playability and presentation?

The Tru-Turf is used through the season; at least twice per week dependent on weather conditions and tournament schedule

The playing surfaces increase in speed on average by 18 inches (450mm), the sward quality has increased to 70 per cent bent, reduced stress on the plant, we have better surfaces after solid tine work as well as more consistent surfaces.

Please be aware this is all carried out in conjuction with a liquid feed and growth regulator programme as well as using bio-stimulants, which appears to be working extremely well.

Following a member suffering a heart attack, the Tru-Turf roller was instrumental in returning the green to its former glory after it had been damaged by an ambulance tyre; please can you detail what happened?

Some two years ago now I was busy finishing off changing holes in the afternoon when I noticed a helicopter hovering over the 8th and 13th greens but was unable to see why because the view from the 9th greens, where I was located, is blocked off by a hillside.

I then noticed the helicopter lowering as if to land, at which time I boarded my vehicle to investigate only to discover it had landed on the 16th tee, whereupon I also noticed an ambulance on the 8th green. I travelled down to the green to discover a member had had a heart attack and our clubhouse was called upon to use the defibrillator – eventually saving the member's life.

After the vehicle had vacated the course I used the Tru-Turf to roll the green and help eliminate the tyre grooves created by the ambulance.

How closely do you work with Sandy Armit and his team at Double A and what level of support do you get?

I have two annual visits from the company representative and usually meet them at different functions but they are John Deere agents for the east of Scotland, whereas we are located on the west side, they also supply Campey equipment and therefore demonstrate certain other equipment as required. They service the Tru-Turf annually and are excellent at after sales service.

I have recently purchased three tonne Dakota top-dresser which is proving to be a fantastic piece of kit.

A small selection of jobs available on the website:

Greenkeeper – Loch Lomond Golf Club

Assistant Greenkeeper – Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club

Assistant Greenkeeper – Wharton Park Golf & Country Club

Course Mechanic – Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club

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