

# TURF MATTERS

For all sports turf professionals in golf, football, rugby, cricket, horse racing, independent schools, universities and local authorities

December 2015-January 2016 | £3.95

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# TURF MATTERS

## A breakthrough year?

Welcome to a brand new year. This is the third January in which Turf Matters has been around to wish you all the best for the coming 12 months and I hope all your troubles give you the chance to come up with solutions which make you look good! Every cloud offers the chance of a silver lining don't you think?

So what does 2016 have in store? Well, there is the European Football Championships, but being from north of the border the less said about them the better, and the Olympics where Rio will have the chance to showcase itself to the world in the manner London did in 2012.

Sport has come in for quite a battering over the last 12 months or so with the FIFA scandals/on-going investigations and the IAAF issues coming to the fore but I hope we never lose sight of the fact that sport, at its best, is a wonderfully unifying influence for everyone. Going back to European Football Championships and Olympics, can you recall the real buzz that the country experienced during Euro 96 (can you believe that is now 20 years ago) and London 2012? The whole country was on a high and showed just what a positive, galvanising influence sport has.

And it wouldn't be possible without the superb efforts of sports turf professionals who ensure those iconic sporting events are playing in the best conditions possible.

That has been overlooked for too long but now, I believe, the powers-that-be are beginning to appreciate that increased effort must be made to ensure sporting facilities are 1. Retained and 2. Maintained at the best possible standard whether they be natural or artificial surfaces.

That can only be excellent news for our fine industry as who knows what will be achieved if sufficient resource is directed towards improving playing surfaces. It means that 2016 might just be a breakthrough year for the sports turf industry.

On behalf of all at Turf Matters I wish you an excellent 2016.

**Scott MacCallum, Editor**

 You can follow me on Twitter @TurfMatters

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[www.turfatters.co.uk](http://www.turfatters.co.uk)

Next magazine distributed March 2016

# Bring out the Branson: Five ranges of compact tractors

Branson Tractors are the latest company to enter the compact tractor market offering five ranges of excellently manufactured South Korean models from 21 horsepower up to 74 horsepower

Branson Tractors UK made an excellent impression at Saltex with Managing Director, Nathan Walker, who has many year's experience of the UK compact tractor market, signing up a dealer for his UK network while at the show.

Dealers had the opportunity to see the new tractors in their natural environment at a special Dealers' Day held at Arrow Mill, near Stratford on Avon in December. During the day the dealers were able to test the tractors for themselves and experience the qualities which Branson UK are expecting will make the new red machines a big hit with customers.

Branson uses its own fuel efficient, eco-friendly engines while high spec, factory-fitted cabs are available on most models. Indeed the entire tractor is engineered "in-house".



Check this out: Dealers get to grips with compact tractors from Branson

## Rigby Taylor on the ball with The FA



Rigby Taylor has signed an agreement with The FA to be their Official Supplier to the FA Pitch Improvement Programme.

The four year agreement will see the supply of Rigby Taylor grass seed, fertilisers, line marking paints and machines, and other consumable products being made available to clubs with the objective of achieving a common quality standard of pitch presentation.

The programme is aimed at improving the quality of natural turf pitches across

all levels of the game with specialist advice and guidance via site visits, with the opportunity to obtain grants and discounted rates off the recommended machinery required to improve pitches. A website has also been developed with the aim of supporting local groundsmen and volunteers.

The contract was won after stiff competition and Rigby Taylor has been selected as the preferred materials partner signing a four year contract. The programme aims to get more people playing football on better pitches, this key initiative has been detailed in The FA's National Facilities Strategy, and will support the delivery of the new FA National Game Strategy.

The support available to clubs and leagues will help to ensure better facilities are available for both training and matches.

"This Pitch Improvement Programme is an exciting initiative. As a company, we are proud to have been selected as an

official supplier to the FA and to support them in helping achieve the development of an improved level of football pitch quality and sustainability throughout England," said Richard Fry, Rigby Taylor's Marketing Director.

Commenting on the initiative, Mark Pover, FA National Facilities and Investment Manager said, "The Pitch Improvement Programme was established in direct response to a growing call from local clubs for help with pitch improvements.

"The project directly supports grassroots clubs by providing support and guidance along with harnessing expertise from specialists such as Rigby Taylor and providing the materials that clubs need.

"The expertise and quality of the products offered will be invaluable and offers a genuinely sustainable solution for those clubs seeking to improve the quality of their pitches."



# Greg's consultancy expands into rugby union

Golf Course Consultant Greg Evans MG has built a strong following for his unique approach to golf course agronomy in recent years but the skills he has developed to ensure high quality, all year around putting surfaces has now been transferred to a sport with completely different demands altogether – rugby union.

Aviva Premiership Club, Wasps, wanted to improve the quality of their training pitch, in Acton and so First Team Manager, Kevin Harman, contacted Greg to ask if he could oversee its renovation and on-going maintenance for a year, prior to the club moving its entire operation from London to Coventry. Wasps have recently started to play their home games at the 32,600 seater Ricoh Arena in the city.

"I was delighted to be asked to become involved by Kevin and believed that my knowledge and expertise would be able to produce the type of playing surface that could cope with the huge athletes the modern day rugby player has become," said Greg, who plays off a 1 golfing handicap.

"The grow-in took a total of 12 weeks. Ecosolve stripped off the top of the old surface with a Koro Rotovate and we then seeded with Rye

grass. We used regular applications of nitrogen-based granular fertiliser, combined with foliar feeding," explained Greg, who has grown his advisory service from his base at Ealing Golf Club, in West London, where he developed his brand of turf maintenance, to the extent that he is now one of the most successful and talked about turf professionals in the country.

"Since then Martin Williams, from Complete Weed Control, has sprayed the pitch with nitrogen, iron and the growth suppressant Trinexapac-Ethyl on a fortnightly basis, while local sportsturf contractor, Adam Rowlands, has rolled, brushed and marked out the pitch prior to training sessions," he explained.

"The foundations for a successful season are built on the training pitch so it needs to be of the highest possible quality. The work that Greg Evans has done, together with the other contractors who worked on the pitch, has ensured that our players have had the best possible conditions in which to prepare for this very important season," said Kevin Harman.

While golf will always remain the foundation of Greg's consultancy business the fact that he has shown



that his knowledge can be transferred to other sports opens the door to an expansion of his advisory company.

**In the swing: Greg Evans MG**

"I was delighted to be able to help Wasps with their training pitch and now know that if I can produce playing surfaces for a sport as demanding on turf as rugby union there are many more sports in which I can assist with the quality of playing conditions."

## Dennis and SISIS – back in the USA

Dennis and SISIS have confirmed their attendance at the Sports Turf Managers Association conference & exhibition in San Diego and will be bringing a number of market leading products to their joint stand – number 749.

Last year, the event, held in Denver, saw a record 200 exhibitors and 1,200 attendees from nine different countries, and this year, show organisers will be hoping to beat records yet again. With a great line up of exhibitors and powerful education programmes, the event is a great way to discover how to maintain sports fields.

Dennis and SISIS' machines are used at high profile international stadia around the world. A visit to the joint stand will provide visitors with a fabulous

insight into the array of world-class turf maintenance products manufactured by the British innovators.

In an impressive line-up, Dennis will be showcasing its G860 dedicated cylinder mower, complete with range of interchangeable cassettes. This mower has become the number one choice for groundsman around the world and was used at the last two FIFA World Cups.

SISIS products on display include the Quadraplay and Towed Implement Frame systems. The SISIS Quadraplay is a single pass maintenance system which incorporates a mounted frame for up to four implements such as grooming rakes, spikers, slitters, rollers and brushes, which means that it can be used for fine and outfield turf to perform a range of tasks.



**The Dennis and SISIS team prepare for America**

# Toro brought in to help club achieve its new ambitions



**Jim Duncan, left of centre, from IOM Farmers shakes hands with Fred Gray, Rowany GC. Also in the photo from left: Simon Miller, head greenkeeper, Mike Kewley, Rowany GC, Mike Atherton, IOM Farmers and Scott Howarth, greenkeeper**

At 125 years old Rowany Golf Club in Port Erin on the Isle of Man is steeped in history, but with a recently appointed management committee it's full of new ambition.

First on the agenda for the committee was tackling the aging machinery fleet and significant repair bills, which is where Toro comes in. With Nigel Lovatt, from Lely UK, and Mike Atherton, from service dealer Isle of Man Farmers, both on hand offering agronomic consultations and guidance on equipment procurement and service agreements, the club has brought in a Toro Reelmaster 5410-D and a Groundsmaster 4000-D.

"We were approached by the club

following a complete review of their machinery fleet which was aging and incurring significant repair bills to keep it operational. There was a new focus going forward and they wished for our help to procure new machinery. The brief was simple: they wanted to secure the most up-to-date, highest quality equipment on the market today, with efficiency and productivity being at the centre of all discussions," explained Mike.

The 18-hole course provides the usual challenges of any heathland course for Simon Miller, Head Greenkeeper, with the last holes of the course cut through gorse and rough, which can make precise cutting difficult. Simon however, has

been impressed with the capabilities of the GM4000-D.

"The quality of the machines is outstanding. I have been pleasantly surprised at the capability of the 4000-D. The three individual decks mean we can now access previously inaccessible areas by having one, two or all three decks engaged, plus its zero turn capability saves significant amounts of time which aids with our mowing schedules and makes us far more productive."

Fred Gray, Director at Rowany Golf Club, spoke on behalf of the board when he said that the investment and the improvements it was making on the course was a massive step forward for the club which has experienced a difficult spell in the last few years.

"The condition and appearance of a golf course is key to bringing in new players and keeping existing members happy. Toro is helping us make a real difference in this area. The level of support pre-purchase by Isle of Man Farmers and Lely, was a key factor in Rowany choosing the new units, and we have been delighted with their performance."

With the introduction of Toro at Rowany and a proactive board determining the way for this historical golf club, it looks like there's a bright new future ahead.

## Putting ECHO power blower to the test



**Easily controlled: The ECHO PB-251**

The prevailing weather conditions leading up to this autumn, with a hot summer and mild autumn, brought a spectacular tapestry of colour to the trees. One they seemed to hold on to longer than usual until that moment came when they dropped in great swathes.

The ideal time, therefore, to put the ECHO PB-251 power blower through its paces, with the additional challenge of some heavy rain making hard work of clearing the leaves across a 60 by 20 metre outdoor equestrian manège. The problem here being the rubber crumb surface and the trick of blowing the leaves without removing rubber and leaving great patches of sand to be

patched over. The first impression was that the PB-251 felt quite heavy and how was that going to feel with sustained use? Time to power it up and find out.

It was quite a cold day but the ECHO started easily and quickly ran up to speed. Once the blower was operating the weight was no longer an issue, so well balanced is the machine under power, in fact the 4.5kg counters the sheer speed of the blower. The 24.5cc stage 2 compliant low emission engine, with an output of 0.70kW, belts out a maximum air speed of 71m/s. Wet leaves were effectively lifted and quickly driven into piles and yet the blower was so easily controlled at an angle that it had little effect on the rubber surface.

What had at first appeared to be a long task ahead was swiftly dealt with and fatigue was minimum, so much so that the work moved on to other areas to be blown and quickly tidied, all within an hour.

A neat feature is the Cruise Control which locks the throttle in position so you don't need to keep your finger on it. The exhaust is at the front so even the low emissions are directed away from you, and there is an EZ lock system for securing and disconnecting the blower pipe. A see-through fuel tank makes it easier to keep an eye on the fuel level. In all a high-powered, well-balanced and easy to use blower that made short work of a mountain of leaves.





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# Upgrade for McCormick tractors



As part of a wholesale upgrade of the McCormick tractor range, seven new models have been developed for sports and amenity grounds care applications with new transmission and engine combinations plus a spacious cab that will appeal to operators and owner-drivers alike.

The McCormick X4 Series is a small full-size tractor design with power outputs from 64hp to 107hp and a wide choice of specifications to suit different applications and budgets.

Notable features include optional creeper gears and ground drive power take-off for specialist turf maintenance machinery; a low-revs Eco 40kph transmission option for

more fuel-efficient road travel; and a new cab design that is spacious yet compact.

"The designers at Argo Tractors have given the McCormick X4 Series cab a lot of attention to ensure it provides a comfortable and practical workplace," explained Paul Wade, Product Specialist at GB distributor AgriArgo UK. "It's quite a challenge making a cab to fit a small tractor that's in proportion but gives the operator plenty of space and good visibility – but the X4 designers have achieved that."

The novel idea of housing the cab air filters in the rear pillars makes them easy to reach for cleaning and

results in a slim roof panel for low overall height.

Mechanical control of the 3.4-3.9 tonne lift capacity rear linkage can be upgraded to electronic operation on the 90hp X4.50, 99hp X4.60 and 107hp X4.70, with a 1.75 tonne front linkage and pto also available on these models for added productivity by operating front- and rear-mounted implements simultaneously.

"This new McCormick tractor design is unlike anything we've had in the range before and it readily complements our bigger tractors, which have also undergone significant upgrades and new features," said Paul.

## New Germinal brand for new initiatives

Germinal has launched a new brand which represents the heralding of a number of new initiatives from the company. Aimed at improving amenity and sports pitch grass sward quality, the new brand will focus on understanding customer needs and combining knowledge to meet those needs through research, development and innovation.

Alongside a new company logo, website and product support materials, the company has also stated its intention to offer added expertise and knowledge sharing to the amenity sector.

"A strong brand identity is more than a



new logo and is more than a clever marketing campaign," explains Richard Brown, Amenity Manager for Germinal.

"Germinal's heritage is our strength, and our knowledge is the company's platform for future success. The new brand therefore reflects our willingness to listen, understand and evolve alongside our industry."

"We care about how our industry moves forward and strive to provide first

class products and services which will make a difference to our customers. We see our role as extending a long way beyond the supply of quality grass and wildflower seeds. Innovation, expertise and the sharing of essential knowledge will therefore feature more and more in Germinal's future support of the amenity and sports sectors.

"The new, invigorated Germinal brand will ultimately influence our culture and the way we do business, and will serve as a source of inspiration, excitement and pride. We believe it is a benchmark for the industry," said Richard.





# Two new dealers for Etesia

Etesia UK has added to its ever-growing network of dealers after announcing two new dealerships for Somerset and Northumberland.

Etesia has been leading the way in building high quality grass cutting machinery for both the professional and domestic market since 1989. Over the years the company has grown rapidly and now offers a wide range of products that include a variety of walk-behind, ride-on mowers and the popular Attila range of brush cutters.

With the products in such high demand, Etesia boasts a large dealership network who all provide their customers with innovative solutions to their landscaping requirements. The company has also become a key supplier to local authorities and landscape contractors throughout Europe, and it is for this reason that new dealer Northumbrian

Garden Machinery decided to join the vast network.

"We wanted to work with Etesia because we needed a product that was a commercial brand," said Managing Director, George Aspin.

"I first came across Etesia at a previous SALTEX exhibition and then I spoke to a few other dealerships who said that the products were really popular. Then by chance, a contractor came in looking to replace his Etesia pedestrian mower and that's when I saw an opportunity."

George seized the chance and will now sell, service and repair the vast range of Etesia products from his showroom and workshop in Alnwick, where he does a great deal of business in the domestic market, but he has seen an increasing amount of business in the commercial sector, and believes he now has the perfect brand

to meet their requirements.

Tom Williams Garden & Estate Machinery, previous winner of New Etesia Dealer of Year, has also returned to the dealership network after a short absence. Established in 1997, the company specialises in sales, hire, repairs and servicing of garden and estate machinery. Owner Tom Williams is looking forward to building upon a successful first spell.

"It's good coming back into the Etesia camp after being away for a little while. I've always liked the products as they do exactly what they say they will do and will cut and collect in any condition – that's what makes them stand out for me. There are a lot of products that are all in the same ball park in terms of price but you could argue that the Etesia products are a lot better than the rest out there."

**Welcome aboard:**  
Garden Machinery,  
in Northumberland  
left and Tom  
Williams, Somerset

## The new, serious sod cutter from Classen

Classen have taken their sod cutter and made it more compact, lighter and more productive, with the new Classen PRO Sod Cutter. The compact size and integrated rear swivel wheel offer easier turning and superior manoeuvrability, in what is a simplified machine. No less effective for that, this is a self propelled, hydrostatic sod cutter that offers a smooth, consistent power flow and you'll immediately notice the speed which at 4.7mph/7.5kmh is, say Classen, the fastest in the industry. For operator

comfort there is an advanced vibration dampening system and for ease of use the integrated throttle and clutch control on the handle goes idle and stops the machine when released.

What you're looking for in a sod cutter is a clean, smooth result and on this Classen the blade is placed at the centre of the machine to ensure a more consistent cutting depth, adjusting to cut sods up to 2.5"/6.3cm deep. The cutting blade makes twenty cutting strokes per second/1,200 per minute, to ensure you

get that smooth result and increased sod cutting productivity.

The standard 18" wide blade can be replaced with 12", 16", 20" or 24" optional blade assemblies in a matter of minutes (the 24" blade is available for HSC188 models only).



# More than just a mower...



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Malcolm Taylor, Maintenance & Ground Service Manager  
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# Tea Break Teaser

How much do you know about the Greatest Show on Earth? Test yourself with Turf Matters' quiz



1. Mo Farah won double Gold medals at London 2012 but who was the last British athlete before him to win Double Gold on the track at an Olympics?
2. What are the missing cities in this sequence? Tokyo; Mexico City; \_\_\_\_\_; Montreal; Moscow; \_\_\_\_\_; Seoul; Barcelona; \_\_\_\_\_; Sydney; Athens; \_\_\_\_\_; London.
3. In which sport was the first medal for Team GB achieved at the London Games?
4. Sir Chris Hoy became GB&I's all time leading medal winner at London. How many medals does he have in his collection?
5. In which Games did Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams win their Gold Medals as portrayed in the film Chariots of Fire?
6. Why was Russian Modern Pentathlete, Boris Onishchenko, disqualified during the 1976 Olympics?
7. Who was the nationality of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who was the father of the modern Olympics?
8. How many rings are there on the Olympic symbol?
9. How many sports are now included in the Summer Games – 25, 30 or 35?
10. In which Olympics was the first positive sample for performance enhancing drugs found?
11. Since the start of the Modern Games Great Britain has won how many Gold Medals – more than 250 or less than 250?
12. How many medals in total has Michael Phelps, the most successful Olympian ever, won?
13. Linford Christie won the 100 metres final in 1992 but who was the last Brit before him to win the Blue Ribbon event of the Games?
14. How many Olympic Gold Medals has Sir Ben Ainslie won?
15. Partnered by whom did Andy Murray win Silver in the London Olympic Tennis Mixed Doubles?

■ Answers on Page 35.



# Olympics





# Here's Turf Matters' A-Z Guide to the Olympics to prepare you for the Greatest Show on Earth.



Well, we're in Olympic year once again with Rio de Janeiro taking on the baton handed to it by the great Boris of London. Will be a little different from London, perhaps with a little more sunshine and views of Copacabana rather than Docklands but its sure to create as much excitement as usual.

**A Athens.** Athens kicked off the Modern Games and returned for more in 2004.

**B Bolt. (Usain)** My hero. What a man. Carrying the whole of the sport of athletics virtually single handed and keeping a massive stride ahead of all others, including the former drug cheats. If only he could lighten up a bit.

**C Coe (Lord).** Not only a two time Gold Medalist in the 1500 metres in Moscow and Los Angeles, the man who masterminded London's 2012 bid. Now the big wig in the IAAF.

**D Dressage.** only time we watch it is Olympic Games time but now Charlotte Du Jardin is a role model for so many young equestrian fans.

**E Equestrian.** See above but add in Show jumping and Three Day Eventing. We're actually not bad at it all. Scott Brash should have been a SPOTY nominee.

**F Farah (Mo).** Britain's finest middle distance runner and virtually unbeatable over 5,000 and 10,000 – two Gold Medals and power to win more.

**G Gold medals.** We'd all love one, even a Bronze would do. Heck, I'd even turn up as a Games Maker if it meant I could call myself an Olympian.

**H Hoy. (Sir Chris).** Britain's most decorated Olympian with six Gold Medals and a Silver. Took away his best event but he reinvented himself and kept on winning.

**I International Olympic Committee** The organisation created in 1894 by Pierre de Coubertin to pull the whole thing together. Done a pretty good job so far compared to some other organising bodies.

**J Johnson (Ben).** Athletics was never so soiled as when Ben

Johnson scorched over the line in the blue ribbon 100 metres at Seoul, only for us all to feel so let down by the drugs cheat.

**K orbut (Olga).** One of the first to bring gymnastics to the masses with superb technique and plenty of personality

**L London 2012.** Could not have gone any better and showed off us Brits at our very best. Imagine the Queen ski-diving!

**M Munich 1972.** Games remembered for all the wrong reasons and reminds us sadly that terrorism is not a modern phenomenon.

**N Nadia (Comaneci).** The Romanian gymnastic who was the star of the Montreal Games in 1976 with some perfect 10s at the age of just 14.

**O Owens (Jesse).** Who were you kidding Mr Hitler, Jesse took on Adolf's Master Race at the Berlin Games in the sprints and long jump and made his point very eloquently. Great Man!

**Mo Farah, top and Usain Bolt, bottom left**

olympics

A  
to  
Z



Steffen Peters

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► **P Phelps (Michael)** 18 Gold Medals. Even in a sport which allows you to rack up wins, that takes some doing.

**Q Qualifying.** That's what it is all about. Whether it is reaching the qualifying time, distance or height for the Games themselves and then qualifying from one round to the next. Pressure!

**R Redgrave (Sir Steven)** Five consecutive Games, five consecutive Gold Medals. An individual star in a sport which requires the ultimate teamwork.

**S Spitz (Mark).** Those seven Gold Medals in Munich. Never to be forgotten. Neither is that fine moustache. Phelps beat the record but did it clean shaven so doesn't really count.

**T Taking Part** – More important than winning according to the Olympic Ideal but perhaps not so much in the modern era!

**U Usain (Bolt).** I know. But he's so good I had to list him twice.

**V Volleyball** (Beach of course) Horse Guards parade turned into Bondi Beach for the London Olympics and sports lovers everywhere were thrilled.

**W Wrestling** (Freestyle and Greco-Roman not WWF) is, like Dressage, is a sport for the aficionado the finer points being alien to the rest of us.

**X Xbox.** With so many new sports being admitted to the Games how long will it be until we have a Gold Medal for this particular pursuit?

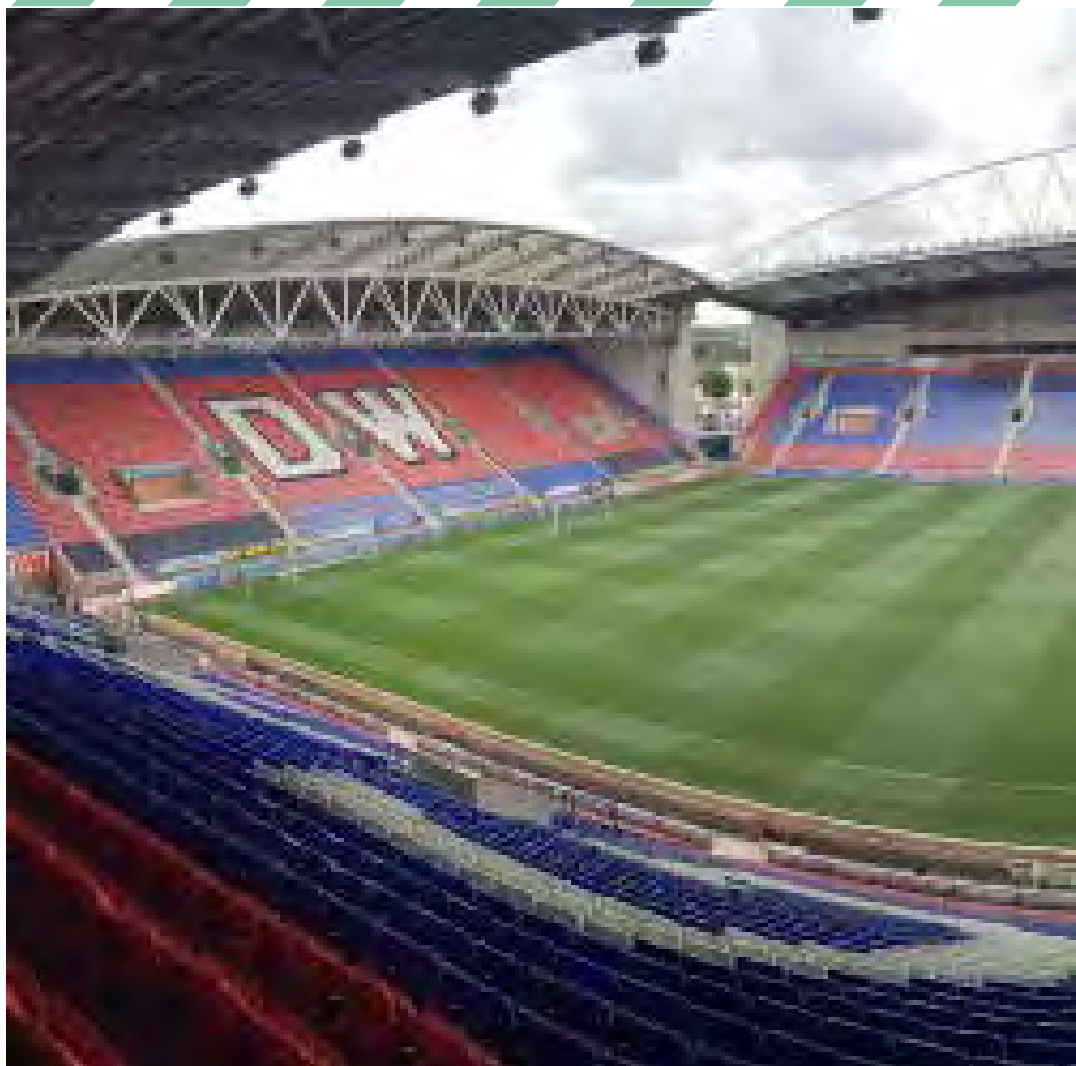
**Y Youth Olympics.** First summer version held in Singapore in 2010 for athletes aged 14 – 18. February sees the next Winter Youth Games in Lillehammer in Norway in February 2016.

**Z Zeus.** The Greek God for whom the very first Games were dedicated. Isn't it great to have a bone fide "Z" to finish with?

Ben Johnson, right



**Thirteen  
week old  
pitch breaks  
new ground  
at Wigan  
DW Stadium.  
Five rugby  
matches in  
and the grass  
is pristine...**



# Wigan's per

Ian Forshaw is Head Groundsman at the £30m Wigan DW Stadium. He spent 16 years in horticulture before moving into the amenity sector, and has been using his considerable knowledge to tend to the stadium's turf, for close to 17 years.

He is responsible for ensuring the 25,000 capacity venue meets the standards of Rugby Super League and a football division which has seen its fair share of ups and downs, including a good run in the FA Cup—which Wigan Athletic memorably won in 2014.

"I work for both Wigan Athletic FC and Wigan Warriors Rugby with steady fixtures of 23 and 15 games a year, plus training and cup games to contend with, the challenges of managing a dual

purpose stadium are many.

"My biggest bug over the years, has been the challenges of winter playing surfaces. We're not blessed with a lot of light rigs and we don't have the budget of other bigger clubs. So, we have to work hard to maintain a wear-free quality surface. Which is why we recently decided to look for a really top-class seed that could meet our growing demands."

So when Ian got the chance to visit Cropvle, Barenbrug's Research and Development facility, it didn't take him long to decide he wanted to try Barenbrug's new dedicated stadia cultivar—Stadium RPR.

"Within three minutes of chatting to Dr Dave Greenshields, Barenbrug Research and Development Manager, I knew Stadium RPR was right

for us. I was blown away. The technical knowhow that has gone into its development is incredible. It outperforms almost any other mix on wear, recovery and leaf spot tolerance and —by a significant margin—colour. Unsurprisingly Stadium RPR is the number one ranked STRI mixture this year."

"It took roughly a week for the grass to poke its head through. Amazing considering the temperatures back in May. Fast germination is critical to my job. We only have six weeks to turn the pitch around. If we don't do it, we lose too much revenue. And, that can't happen.

"Incredibly, we'd had five games on the pitch and the grass was still only 13 weeks old. It was practically





# Perfect pitch

undamaged and in pristine condition. Stadium RPR has already drastically reduced the amount of time we have to spend repairing the grass. Great for our small team of three.”

On colour, a key performance indicator of any successful stadium, Ian was delighted.

“A lot of people go for the darker coloured cultivars, which we learnt from the team can be more prone to disease. So we valued the inclusion of Bar Crystal and Bar Orlando, which provide exactly the right balance of colour and performance. This helps me ensure the stadium looks as good as it plays and maintains.

Last week, we were able to put it to the test during a visit from Sky TV and the results were great—we had true camera-ready grass.”

What advice can Ian offer others in a similar position?

“Make sure your surface is very clean before the seed is applied. This will give it the best possible chance to get going. Ensure the ground is well fed. A good steady fertiliser programme is essential for getting the top in quick and helping the roots deepen into the autumn months.

“We’re also applying a fungicide on a monthly basis, to make sure no disease starts setting in. In a stadium environment, we get a lot of dew settling and of course we don’t have huge amounts of air flow. So using Stadium RPR, which has superior leaf spot tolerance, adds an extra level of security and confidence.”

When Ian started renovating with Stadium RPR he applied 260 tonnes

of fibre sand, power harrowing it to a depth of eight inches, with four passes to ensure an even spread.

“This will give the pitch better drainage and stability, with better percolation rates. When water holds it can end up postponing games.”

To sum up Ian is delighted that his new surfaces have coped with the unique demands of a dual sport stadium.

“Our goal is to keep the grass surface as long as we can. In November, this year, we’re hosting a rugby international game, with two captains runs the day before. That’s quite a pummelling for the grass to take. But, from what I’ve seen of Stadium RPR, I’m confident the pitch is going to look and perform the best we’ve seen yet.”



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# Harrogate time again!

BTME 2016 will feature well over 200 hours of education, the Turf Managers' Conference, over 100 exhibitors showcasing the latest products and innovations plus unrivaled networking opportunities.

Last year's exhibition saw nearly 9,000 turf managers, golf club owners, managers and industry decision-makers pack



Exhibitor	Location
2CL Communications Ltd	Q40
Acorn Tractors & Machinery Ltd	C22
AEBI Schmidt UK	Q7
Agonomic Services	A1
Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd	A55
Allett Mowers	Q6
Amenity Sales	A28
AMS	Q66
Aqua Aid Europe	A15
Aqua-Terra Europe	Q33
Aquarille	A29
Aquatrols	A19
Askham Bryan College	B19
Avonmore Associates	B18
Bailoy Products	C54
Barcham Trees Plc	C49
Barenbrug UK Ltd	A41
Baroness	C62
Bayer	A46
Belchim Crop Protection	C11
Bernhard & Co Ltd	B44
Better Billy Bunker	A54
Blec Global Ltd	A16
BMS	C13
Border Sports Services Ltd	C4
BIGGA	B23
Bunn Fertiliser Ltd	Q34
Campey Turf Care Systems	B58
Central Spares Ltd	Q16
Charterhouse	B48
Chic Teak Ltd	Q59
City Golf Europe AB	Q61
CLS Sports	Q25
Club Car / Ingersollrand	A6
Complete Weed Control	C48
Compo Expert UK Ltd	A58
Countrywide Farmers	A60
County Sport Surfaces	C8
County Turf & Mansfield Sands	B38
CRL - Clive Richardson Ltd	Q23
Crocodile Precision	A30
Delta-T Devices	B30
Dennis & Sisis	A5
Duncan Ross Ltd	Q41
Durabunker Ltd	Q40A
E-Z-GO	Q62
Eagle	B50
Ecobunker Ltd	A59
Ecosolve Ltd	A10
Engelbert Strauss	Q14
European Turfgrass Laboratories	A22
Farmura Ltd	A18
Foresight Sports Europe	Q52
Gambetti UK	A61
Garfitts International	B42
GBR Technology Limited	C35
GCSAA	B25
GEO & FEGGA	B28
Germinal GB Ltd	A45
GKB Machines	A12
Global Turf Equipment UK Ltd	C42
Golf Club Managers Association	Q38
Green-Tech Ltd	A63
Greenacres Artificial Grass	A17
Greener Grounds	Q39
GreenFields UK	Q1
GTC	B29
Greentech Sportsturf Ltd	B20
Grillo Agrigarden Ltd	B1
GRN-OGRO	Q32
Groundsman Industries Ltd	A56
Headland Amenity Ltd	B39
Highspeed Group Ltd	C12

# Be sure not to miss th

► into the Harrogate International Centre.

Continue to Learn runs from Sunday 17 January–Thursday 21 January with the Turf Managers' Conference on Monday 18 January.

## Opening times for BTME 2016:

**Tuesday 19 January 8.30am–5pm**

**Wednesday 20 January 8.30am–5.30pm**

**Thursday 21 January 8.30am–2.30pm**

The exhibition covers everything from artificial grass to course furniture, irrigation to fertilisers – for

more on who's at the show see the exhibitor list on these pages.

Artificial turf manufacturers, mower manufacturers and seed providers mix with colleges and other education providers during three days which kickstart the industry's new year.

It's also the place to be for unrivalled networking opportunities as turf managers from across the UK, Europe and the world, from every facility imaginable, mingle in Harrogate.

*See you there!*

## COME AND VISIT...



**A new service from Complete Weed Control. below right, Terafirm from Headland Amenity**

### Complete Weed Control C48

Complete Weed Control has launched a new service – Complete Grounds Maintenance, and visitors to the stand will get the opportunity to discover how beneficial this all-encompassing service could prove to be.

Visitors will also be able to learn more about Complete Ice Control – a reliable and trusted local gritting service to deal with snow and ice worries, along with Complete Invasives Control and Complete Moss Control. These services were all launched in response to huge demand.

“Many of our customers are already benefiting from a number of additional services such as clearance, repair works to gates and fences, grass cutting and pruning etc. Now is a great time for growth and we are responding to this by formalising the offering of new services. We wanted an all-round solution where we've got a

service provision covered from top to bottom. We now have this with Complete Grounds Maintenance,” said Managing Director Ian Graham.

Complete Grounds Maintenance is a new service that delivers a comprehensive range of grounds maintenance services on a national scale including grass cutting and grass growth control; selective, invasive and total weed control; moss control; shrub pruning; winter maintenance – such as grit spreading and snow clearance; litter picking and Baseguard – a unique solution for rubber crumb surfaces.

### Headland Amenity B39

Headland Amenity will be showcasing two new products. Visitors will be able to see Terafirm, a new technology, soil penetrant product, as well as the latest addition to the C-Complex range of fertilisers: C-Complex Sport.

New Terafirm is a soil penetrant formulated to improve the downward movement of water through the soil, helping to achieve a firmer playing surface. Taking its name from the Latin terra firma (firm earth), Terafirm works by reducing the surface tension of water,

minimising lateral water movement and facilitating drainage.

C-Complex Sport 14-2-5+MgO is an outfield fertiliser designed for use on coarse turf areas such as sports pitches, golf tees and fairways, racecourses, lawns and general amenity turf. The homogenous, regular





# is year's BTME



granule breaks down easily and is formulated to provide good growth even at low soil temperatures. Just like the highly successful C-Complex fine turf range, C-Complex Sport is formulated using Naturvigor, a combination of aerobically-composted cow manure and high levels of humic acid.

Both C-Complex Sport and Terafirm will be shown alongside a range of Headland's innovative turf nutrition, health and management products on their stand in a new position in Hall B.

## Charterhouse Turf Machinery B48

Being shown in the UK for the first time at BTME 2016 will be the latest addition to the Redexim Core Collector range. Designated the 1200SP, visitors to the stand will be able to see this alongside other popular Redexim and Graden machines and see how the Pedestrian Carrier can be a viable alternative power source.

The Redexim Core Collector 1200SP is a pedestrian machine to collect cores and debris. This new model features a 1.2m working width, increased hopper capacity and hydrostatic drive. Window boards at the front of the machine move the cores into a line, which is then presented to a stainless steel blade to scoop them up before a conveyor transfers them to a 0.3m<sup>3</sup> hopper. The hopper is then able to be lifted to a height where the collected material can be tipped into a trailer or utility vehicle.

In a sea of 'red' will be the 'green' Contour Sand Injector (CSI) unit from the Graden range of verticutters. This scarifier/aerator has the ability

to scarify to any depth between 1mm- 40mm, while simultaneously backfilling the grooves with either sand or a combination of sand and seed. A one-pass operation means downtime is reduced without causing any detrimental effect to the firmness of the ground.

## DLF/Johnsons Sports Seed A20

'New, new, new' is DLF/Johnsons Sports Seed's motto at BTME 2016. Stand A20 will see a major launch of what is being considered as the next generation seed technology, a new cultivar and a number of new mixture formulations.

The big news is the introduction of ProNitro – the latest seed technology development from DLF in their aim of delivering better quality results for Greenkeepers and Groundsmen alike. ProNitro will see the launch of a number of JNitro mixtures. This will promise even faster germination and establishment, faster leaf and root growth and ultimately improved value.

Another announcement at BTME 2016 will be Nigella, slender creeping red fescue. This cultivar is ideal for use on tees and fairways, and has been rated as No.1 for tee and fairway renovation in the 2016 turfgrass seed booklet. It will be included exclusively in the Johnsons Sports Seed range for the first time in 2016.

DLF will also be announcing a number of new mixture formulations across the Masterline and Johnsons ranges, with the focus as ever on further improving turf quality. Visit the DLF/Johnsons stand. The team will be able to offer advice on mixture selection or to answer any questions.

## The Redexim Core Collector from Charterhouse Turf Machinery

Exhibitor	Location
Hugh King & Co	A23
Humber Palmers Fertilisers	B10
Hunter Industries	C27
Hurrells & McLean Seeds Ltd	A32
Huxley Golf	C1
ICL	B54
Indigrow Ltd	B43
Institute of Groundsmanship	Q44
Inturf	A57
Jac. Uittenbogaard & Zonen BV	Q18
John Deere	M3
Johnsons Sports Seed	A20
KAR UK Limited	C23
King Feeders UK	Q27
Kubota	Q22
KUHN Amenity Pro	C53
Lastec UK	C55
Limagrain UK	C39
Lindum Turf	B9
Lloyds / Hunters	B56
LS Systems	C50
Maxicrop UK	A27
Maxstim	B2
Merrist Wood College	B12
MJ Abbott Ltd	A49
Myerscough College	B13
Nomix Enviro	B37
Oilean Glas Teo	B31
Pan Publicity Ltd	Q30
Perennial	Q65
Perrot	C2
Profusion Environmental	C52
Rain Bird Europe	A9
Ransomes Jacobsen	M1
RECO	C34
Rigby Taylor Ltd	B60
Sheltons Sportsturf Drainage Ltd	B11
Sherriff Amenity	B34
Sibelco	C20
SIS Pitches	A14
Soil Harmony	Q19
Spearhead Machinery Ltd	Q12
Spectrum Technologies	A52
Sports Metals	C9
Srixon	Q63
SRUC Elmwood	B17
STRI	B36
Swan Golf Designs	A31
Symbio	B7
Syngenta	B52
Tacit	C30
Talbot Farm	C28
Tarmac Topsport	A34
The Grass Group	A35
Tillers Turf	A51
Toro - Lely (UK) Ltd	M2
Tree Poppers	Q54
Trilo	Q24
Trimax Mowing Systems	B59
Tru-Turf / Double A	C56
True Surface by Turflite	C41
TurfCare	C38
Turfkeeper.com	B32
Turflynx	Q26
Ultra Soil Solutions Ltd	C10
Verde Sports Ltd	C5
Vitax Amenity	A2
Waste2Water Europe Ltd	B46
Wessex International	C61
Whitemoss Specialist Products	A11
Wiedenmann UK Ltd	C58
XL Horticulture Ltd	C47
Yamaha Motor Europe N.V., Branch UK	C6

# GREEN





# BY NAME BY NATURE

Forest Green Rovers is dedicated to becoming the world's first fully sustainable football club. **Scott MacCallum** spoke with the man leading this exciting initiative, from the ground up...

**F**orest Green Rovers is a National League team, based in Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, with a rich history behind it and aspirations of promotion to the Football League ahead.

The club boasts a loyal fan following, and has ambitions of moving to a new, larger ground in the next few years. However, none of this is what makes Forest Green Rovers unique.

Forest Green Rovers is dedicated to becoming the world's first fully sustainable football club and no stone is left unturned in ensuring that every aspect of the club's business is conducted in an environmentally sustainable manner. The staff and players have use of electric cars for example, while only locally produced organic food is fed to the players and sold to the fans on match day – the club no longer serves meat. It's the world's first vegan football club!

Much of the ground is powered by a solar panel system, including a robotic lawn mower known as ET-MOW and the "recycled" LED lighting which assists turf growth.

The club harvests all water that falls on the playing surface and re-uses it as pitch irrigation, which has saved the club up to £5,000 and counting.

Head Groundsman is Matt Rainey who is one of the key elements in the overall Forest Green Rovers ethos. He works hard to ensure that he keeps abreast of every new breakthrough in the fast moving world of environmental sustainability, and adopts those that he feels is suitable.

Forest Green Rovers really is a trail blazer in the football world and where the club leads the way, other clubs will undoubtedly follow.

Think about it. When it comes to the environment, 30 years ago you had to look hard to find a filling station which sold unleaded petrol, 10 years ago you didn't have the recycling bins supplied by the council and only recently have you seen electric cars on the road. In the last few months we've all learned another skill – how to fold a bag for life back into itself!

In 10 years' time Forest Green Rovers may be the model of how things work in football and Matt may be seen as the Godfather of environmentally friendly turf management. ►

► **Turf Matters** How does day to day routine differ from that of other groundsmen at more conventional football clubs?

**Matt Rainey** The actual groundsmanship is pretty similar, the only real difference is the ethos we work to, as we embrace new green technology and focus on soil biology and organic methodology. We apply a pedestrian footprint wherever we can, using battery and electric hand mowers from Etesia and the Infinity System mower from ATT.

We also carry out a lot of planning – daily, monthly and annual – while we record lots of data. You could say the modern Head Groundsman is a scientist, an accountant and an artist.

As soon as any new piece of machinery or product comes on the market we take a look at it and see if it fits into what we are trying to do. We've become a testbed for many suppliers to trial new items as they know now that we do things differently.

Before the arrival of the new battery and electric machines we were using more traditional techniques but now as soon as the new technology becomes available we would be foolish not to give them a go. A lot of the technology we've brought in has been absolutely superb because there are no emissions and it lessens our carbon footprint.

We've put solar panels on one of the stands and on our maintenance block and, although the installation costs are considerable, you start to make a return on the initial investment after five years so now we're saving loads on our electricity bills, which makes the running cost of the machines virtually zero.

The money we save from this off-sets some of the other expenditure and means that we can spend more on the pitch.

We've also got biodegradable football nets, which are supplied by Huck's. They are no different than normal nets, but they rot down within 10 weeks rather than the normal 10 years like those sent to landfill.

**TM** When you do move to your new ground within the next five years will the pitch be an all singing and dancing DESSO style, or will you be going down the more organic route when it comes to a new pitch, albeit with a sand-based construction?



**MR** We're pretty early on in the planning stage for the new ground but one thing we've considered is the new SIS pitch, which has a recyclable thread woven into the natural sward.

Whatever decision we make, it will be done in close discussions with the Chairman, Dale Vince. He runs the green energy company Ecotricity and every decision is based on his vision to revolutionise the game's ecological credentials.

We already use the current stadium already to do outreach to schools and talk to them about green energy, so there's no doubt we'll want to build on that work in the new ground.

**TM** On the current pitch, when you do get disease what methods do you use to get rid of it as quickly as possible?

**MR** Our current pitch is built on clay and limestone which does cause us problems and is time consuming to maintain. We use Carbon Gold soil improver, which is 90% biochar with 10% seaweed, worm casts and mycorrhizal fungi and also low nitrogen feed 8-0-0 to give it that little bit of a push to grow it out. But realistically if you have selected a good grass seed to start with it is very rare that you will pick up major disease, as we create a healthy soil bed with organic bug feeds. This year, however, because of a few changes we have picked up a lot of leaf spot. So next season we are looking into grass seed with the organic mycorrhizal already into it to give it that kick start.

**TM** How do your maintenance facilities differ from most others?





**MR** We've got a lot more power cords than in most other sheds! The main way that our maintenance block is different from your average is because we've got a solar panel on the roof and a compost heap in the corner. We mix our own compost here so that we can add healthy bacteria and phase out pesticides and chemicals.

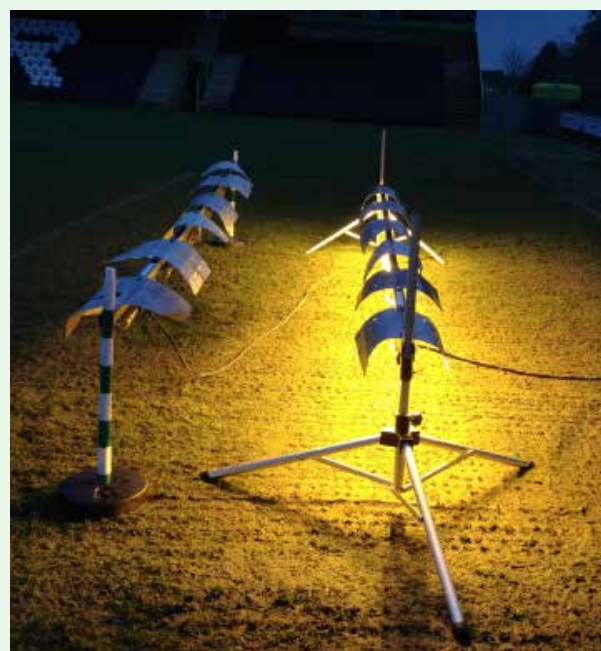
**TM** Do you sometimes feel prevented from doing something because of the environmental ethos at the club? Are your hands tied in anyway?

**MR** I wouldn't say my hands are tied, I'd just say that it encourages me to look more deeply at a problem to find creative solutions. I don't see it as an issue as there is always someone out there willing to

give you advice and the benefits far outweigh the negatives.

**TM** So from a quality point of view you don't think that what you are producing for a Saturday afternoon is not comprised because of the route you have gone down?

**MR** Absolutely not. The current pitch is the best organic pitch we have ever produced at FGRFC and that has been achieved by following our organic programme and amending it slightly when necessary. For example we use coconut wetting agent, rather than a regular agent, which works well, while another organic product we use is Carbon Gold, which is a key element of what we do to lock in nutrients, alongside seaweeds and carbohydrates, trace elements, mag, humic, fulvic



Our award-winning pitch is going organic. No pesticides or artificial chemicals being used to produce a quality playing surface. We're keen to develop towards the certification of organic sports pitches – this would be a world first.

#### The dirt on soil

- Scientists know more about the surface of the moon than they do about soil
- Soil makes up the outermost layer of the planet and is formed from rocks and decaying plants and animals
- An average soil sample is 45 per cent minerals, 25 per cent water, 25 per cent air and 5 per cent organic matter. Mineral particles, such as sand and clay, give soil its texture
- Natural processes can take more than 500 years to form two centimetres of topsoil
- Earthworms dig up organic matter, recycle nutrients and make the soil more active

#### How we keep our pitch healthy

1. We grow a special 'seed' mixture of grasses and clover by taking soil samples and testing them to see if they are healthy.
2. They will be able to take in nutrients and water, and help to keep the soil healthy and active.
3. We use a mix of organic products which will help to keep the soil healthy and active.

acids and other fungal additives.

Obviously you do see the grass sward thin itself out in November and that's because of the soil DNA that we've got here, and, perhaps a little bit, because of the organics, but we know now what we need to do differently to try to counteract that. If you wanted to go part-organic, of course you could, but we do believe in the benefits of what we are doing here.

**TM** It must be quite exciting being set a problem and having to come up with a solution, so it must increase your knowledge base.

**MR** Every day. I am proud to be in a position where we can promote what we do and share our experience. Hopefully we can encourage more ground staff to work more sustainability. ►

**GREEN MACHINE:** Head Groundsman, Matt Rainey is one of the key elements in the overall Forest Green Rovers ethos. Continual research and information (above right) are key factors in Forest Green Rovers' ambition of becoming the world's first fully sustainable football club

**“I am proud to be in a position where we can promote what we do and share our experience. Hopefully we can encourage more ground staff to work more sustainability.”** Matt Rainey

**TM** How do you keep up to date with developments within the field? Are there gurus to whom you turn for advice?

**MR** Yes absolutely. We have relationships and partnerships with quite a few companies such as Rigby Taylor, Everris, Symbio, AT Bio, Severn amenity services, Etesia, ATT, Charterhouse SISIS/Dennis, who are all at the forefront of producing environmentally friendly products. We do refer to them. If we've got a problem we ask them what they might have to help us with it.

**TM** With so much development now being carried out towards improving what is available do you think you would have been able to choose this route 10 years ago?

**MR** When we started this project five years ago it was very new and there wasn't that much information available so it certainly would have been difficult a decade ago, but in the last few years we've really helped to push things along. It is a bit more advanced abroad – especially in Germany,

**TM** How do you cope when you've got three home matches within the space of 10 days and you want the pitch to be as good for game three as it was for the first one?

**MR** The key is preparation. If you get your pre-season works right you are going to be able to take on three matches in 10 days and be fine. In reality there is not an awful lot of difference between what we are doing and a Championship club or a Football League club – it's all about preparation and planning.

**TM** The general quality of pitches now is superb and thinking back to the likes of the Baseball Ground in the 1970s you obviously have no qualms about producing a fine finished product without some of the well known chemicals which have been the mainstay of many a turf professionals armoury.

**MR** No hindrance whatsoever. A lot of clubs spend large amounts of money on a chemical budget to check grass diseases but we are saving that money because we are producing and applying healthy bacteria for a cost of around £75 per application. People are fearful of the unknown but it is all about re-education and being open minded to other methods.

**TM** Would it be more difficult to do what you are doing if it was a pitch surrounded by three tier stands and fully enclosed?

**MR** Yes, definitely, but we'd be able to find a way to counteract that without losing our sustainability credentials. We'd use our solar panels to power more LED lighting which would support growth, without adding to our carbon footprint.

We've got some home-made lighting rigs here. Police seized them on a cannabis raid and we asked if we could have the lights and they said yes. We have them rigged up in our goalmouths at the moment.



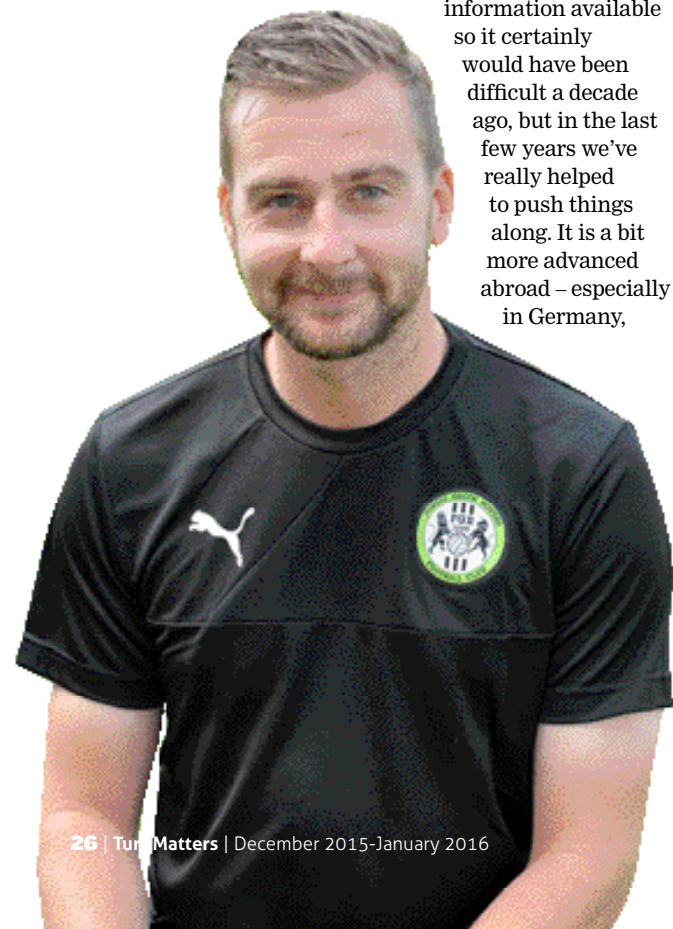
You could say that it is recycling! It sounds extreme but they do the job.

**TM** I just hope none of your supporters recognised the lights where they are at the game! What has the future got in store for you and Forest Green Rovers?

**MR** We are due to move to a new ground within the next five years called ecopark. At the moment we're waiting for all the reports to be completed and the green light to be given. The ground is going to be a 5,000 all-seater and with the potential to expand up to 10,000 as the club progresses. The development will also include new training facilities, a wildlife and conservation area and an eco-business park run by the club's big sister Ecotricity.

**TM** Are you finding that what you are doing is being picked up by other clubs or organisations?

**MR** We do get a few phone calls from people or organisations asking if they can come along and take a look. I bore them for about four







hours showing them what we do and then the go away enthused. We get emails back saying that we are doing is really quite simple in a way and we are now going to adopt it at our college or school. As for other football clubs you need a motivated forward thinking board to make it happen. Many football clubs are very traditional and want instant results. The main goal at many football clubs is saving money, but you'd be surprised to know that we are actually saving money compared to the more traditional route.

**TM** Is it not the case that the first time a shot comes in from an opposing striker, it hits a divot and bounces over your keeper into the net questions would be asked about the maintenance regime?

**MR** (Laughing) We don't get bad divots, and again that all comes full circle to ensuring that the pitch gets the right feed and maintenance at the right time.

**TM** But the point being that you are a football club and the quality of

the pitch should be more important than any other single aspect...

**MR** I totally agree and so it should be. The pitch is and should be the number one priority but we know ourselves that we are producing an excellent pitch using the methods we adopt.

**TM** Have you yourself always been motivated by the environment or have you been a more recent disciple?

**MR** I had worked at Forest Green Rovers for six years before moving into the Football League at Cheltenham Town but, being local, I was aware of the project as it developed and was free to pop in and see how it was progressing. I then got an email from the owner, Dale Vince, saying that their Head Groundsman was moving on and would I come in for a chat.

I do strongly support the owner's ethos and believe we all need to re-assess and take reasonability as the world is running out of natural resources, so why not join a project where we can make a difference?



Being a groundsman, it has always been second nature for me to recycle and to look at different methods when you're doing things. But we take that to the extreme here, and always looking for new and innovative approaches that we can take to lead football out of the dark ages and into a more sustainable future. Some people think we're preaching but we're not, we just do things differently and people are interested in it.

**FLUID DYNAMICS:** The club harvests all water that falls on the playing surface and re-uses it as pitch irrigation, which has saved the club up to £5,000



# Year-round playability

To cope with increased demand for year-round playability, maintenance practices have had to adapt to keep turf in top condition – including changes to many established practices.

## **Caring for your Desso**

Demand for the use of sports turf surfaces has risen exponentially over the years with year-round playability becoming the norm. No more so than in the area of semi-synthetic or hybrid turf surfaces – like the Desso Grassmaster system widely used in professional football stadia. This playing surface is susceptible to ground pressure and in a direct response Charterhouse Turf Machinery introduced the Redexim Pedestrian Carrier which is helping Burnley FC take care of their Desso pitch.

Paul Bradshaw, Head Groundsman at Burnley FC, took delivery of a Carrier and Verti-

Drain 1513 earlier this year.

“The Desso pitch we have is now into its sixth season and was starting to get quite firm and tight in the top few inches. The aerator we were using was beginning to struggle and we were getting reliability issues, which didn’t help us to achieve the uniform aeration we needed. When looking to replace it the problem of weight came into play. To get a machine man enough for the job came with a power source problem – a high HP tractor carrying lots of weight. Charterhouse came along to demo the Verti-Drain 1513 hooked up to their pedestrian Carrier and it was clear that the combination was more than powerful enough to do the job, at full depth, with no problems. It’s





**Pictured: The amazing Home Park stadium, Plymouth Argyle's ground**

Argyle Football Club's Home Park Stadium, has recently been awarded the 'League 2 Groundsman of the Year' for the 2014/15 season. The Home Park pitch was inspected by Dr Stephen Baker of the STRI and Billy was chosen as the worthy winner, after being highly commended in category last year.

Billy has been working at the club since he was 16, starting out as a match day divoter, and has been in this full-time position for the last five years. With only one other groundsman on the team, and a fairly limited machinery fleet at their disposal, the win is even more impressive. Headland Amenity's Richard Shapland has worked closely with Billy on a nutritional programme that has been instrumental in the award-winning pitch condition.

"Our main aim is to keep the playing surface up to scratch and provide the best surfaces possible with the resources we have available. With the fairly limited budget we have to work with, Richard has been great in assessing our requirements and creating a succinct programme that works," explained Billy.

This consists fundamentally of Headland's Multigreen temperature controlled release fertiliser and Blaukorn quick-release fertiliser.

"We applied Multigreen following our May renovation work and then once again at the end of September to see us through the winter. A final application is planned in January which will last us until the end of the season."

With the pitch at Plymouth Argyle being sand based and of fibre elastic construction, it is very free draining meaning any product that is applied doesn't last as long as it should. This issue is further compounded by players' requests for a fast running surface meaning they're watering a lot which leads to leaching. To keep the nutrient base topped up, a low rate of Blaukorn 15-3-20 is applied every three to four weeks.

Billy says he gets good feedback on the quality of the surface from the team members every week, but also regularly gets compliments from away teams, referees and linesmen.

"The support from Headland has been great. Richard pops in at least once a month to check everything is going okay and we know he is always at the end of the phone if we need him."

simple to operate and quick too – we can cover a full size pitch in just two to three hours. We are having three new Desso pitches installed at the training ground shortly, and with their popularity in the industry, I can say that more clubs need machinery like this."

The Carrier is a pedestrian controlled, three wheeled hydrostatic implement carrier powered by a 32hp V-Twin petrol engine. It has its own three point linkage and PTO and is capable of carrying a wide range of Redexim implements. It can be supplied with either treaded or smooth turf tyres; keeps ground pressure to a minimum and allows the turf professional to carry out the required maintenance.

Other popular combinations see the Carrier teamed up with the Redexim SpeedSeed 1200 and the Redexim Verti-Top 1200, or indeed any other manufacturers machine which falls within its lift capacity.

The high-speed Verti-Drain 1513 is a popular choice for use with the Carrier and this combination really comes into its own when used on the naturally dense and harder hybrid surfaces. The well-known abilities of the Verti-Drain of penetrating tougher soil profiles whilst leaving an undisturbed surface are put to good effect on this type of pitch.

**Billy is a Whizz at Home Park**  
Billy White, Groundsman at Plymouth



The decision to move SALTEX from its traditional slot of early September at Windsor Racecourse to NEC Birmingham in November looks to have paid off. The two day event was busy, dynamic and extremely professionally run and there is no doubt that the IOG must be delighted with the their efforts.



# Saltex success

It is always tricky to assess the success of a Show. Is it visitor numbers? Is it visitor quality? Is it number of exhibitors – or any exhibitor absentees? Is it the quality of the Show Dinner? Is it standard and take up on the education programmes? Is it the intangible Show buzz?

In reality it is all of the above and by that criteria Saltex 2015 was a winner.

Geoff Webb, who gave an assured

performance throughout including taking a cheeky selfie of himself on the stage of the lavish Show and Award Dinner, also had the opportunity to outline a new and structure pathway for those youngsters keen to enter the profession.

It all smacked of a firm hand on the tiller and a clear focus on where the sports turf intends to go, something which perhaps has not

always been the case in the past.

The success of Saltex 2015 will certainly sharpen the minds of everyone within BIGGA, whose own show has set the standards for indoor turf shows in recent years. Whether the industry can carry two similar indoor shows within a couple of months of each other is a mute point and it may come to a point where two into one will have to go.

NEC Birmingham and Harrogate





A busy exhibition arena and packed education programme helped secure success for Saltex 2015

International Centre, each have pluses – the single hall of NEC and the attractions of Harrogate within walking distance being one each – but ultimately it will come down to hard nosed decisions by the trade as to which produces the greater amount of business for them, or if two shows, with slightly different visitor bases, actually do work.

# Winning formula for IOG Awards

More than 640 of the UK's and Europe's leading groundscape experts from both the professional and volunteer sector, as well as dignitaries from the governing bodies of sport and influential sports administrators, have honoured the expertise, dedication and passion of the country's grounds profession at the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) annual Industry Awards. Now in its seventh year, the sell-out event at the Birmingham Metropole hotel hosted by talkSPORT Radio presenter Mark Sagers, recognised leadership, innovation and outstanding achievement across every aspect of groundscape – from grassroots pitches to professional stadia. The prestigious awards ceremony also celebrated the quality standards of groundscape achieved in public and private sports venues, and highlighted the progress of young/student grounds professionals as well as entrants' environmental considerations. **The winners of the 2015 IOG Industry Awards are:**

## **IOG Campey/Imants Football Grounds Team of the Year – Leicester City FC**

With eight members, the club's grounds team maintains the King Power Stadium pitch as well as the training ground, where there are the equivalent to seven natural grass pitches.

## **IOG Headland Amenity Cricket Grounds Team of the Year – Sussex CCC**

With 12 full-time members, including five apprentices, the club's grounds team works across seven cricket grounds on four sites, including 1.6 hectares of playing surface at the Hove County Ground.

## **IOG John Deere Horse Racing Grounds Team of the Year – Nottingham Racecourse**

In addition to producing and maintaining the best possible racing surface, the grounds team at Nottingham Racecourse also look after the paddock and grandstand areas where there are fine turf lawn areas surrounded by trees and flowers plus the stables and saddling/treatment boxes at the 293-acre Cowlick Park racecourse.

## **IOG Kubota Rugby Union Grounds Team of the Year – BT Murrayfield Stadium**

As well as the stadium pitch, three practice pitches, an Astroturf surface and all other grass within the BT Murrayfield stadium grounds, the four-strong grounds team is also charged with tasks at external stadia, depending on the schedule.

## **IOG Mansfield Sand Rugby League Grounds Team of the Year – Leeds Rhinos (Leeds Rugby)**

The Leeds Rugby team is charged with not only maintaining the Headingley Carnegie Stadium pitch, which hosts both codes of rugby but also the nearby Kirkstall Academy ground (two natural turf pitches and a synthetic surface), plus the adjacent Abbey Fields training area (four turf pitches) and the pitch at Stanningley ARLFC which is home to the amateur Rugby League club.

## **IOG Tennis Grounds Team of the Year – The Queen's Club, London**

With eight members – who between them have more than 100 years' service at the club – the grounds team has 13 acres in their charge and a main part of their responsibilities is to ensure the 45 tennis courts are maintained to the highest standards to meet the demands of the club's 4,000 members as well as the competitors in tournaments such as the Aegon Championships and Davis Cup.

## **IOG Bowling Green Groundsman/Team of the Year – St Ives Bowls Club, Cambridge**

Working to a very tight annual budget of just £1,000, the six volunteer greenkeepers at St Ives Bowls Club consistently maintain the greens to a high standard – accommodating more than 150 matches between April to September.

## **IOG Souters Sports Independent School/ University Sports Ground Team of the Year – Whitgift School, Croydon**

The school's 16-strong groundscape team have 45 acres in their charge – incorporating playing surfaces for rugby, football, cricket, tennis, hockey, softball and golf, as well as gardens, livestock, lakes, traffic thoroughfares and car parks.

## **IOG National Governing Bodies Grassroots Sports Grounds Team of the Year – Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne, Wiltshire**

Beversbrook's 94 acres host an incredible 75 home football teams, seven lacrosse teams, three athletics clubs, ten cricket teams plus archery and running clubs, for example. Usage levels at the facility are also bolstered by the Wiltshire Cricket Academy and Cricket Firsts, plus Gloucester Cricket's firsts and seconds, as well as its use by Swindon Town FC for training.

## **IOG National Governing Bodies Professional Sports Ground of the Year – St George's Park, Burton upon Trent, Staffs**

The grounds team at St George's Park, home of the National Football Centre at Burton upon Trent, is responsible for the upkeep of 15 different playing surfaces and they have been instrumental in upgrading and adding to the pitch group to enable the Park to meet its obligations. In the second year of operation, the site recorded 7,200 hours of play. ▶

# IOG Awards continued

## ▶ **IOG Rigby Taylor/Top Green Young Groundsman of the Year – Ryan Powell, Everton FC**

24-year-old Ryan, one of Everton FC's 11-strong grounds team, says his main responsibilities at the club revolve around the maintenance and development of the playing surfaces – and the surrounding wildlife conservation areas at the club's Finch Farm training ground.

## **IOG Toro Most Promising Sports Turf Student of the Year – Michael Crew, The Hurlingham Club, London**

19-year-old Michael is a member of the 28-strong grounds team at The Hurlingham Club, a venue for tennis and multi-sports. As well as playing a key and enthusiastic role in the club's groundscare routines – "he has a seemingly insatiable quest for knowledge and his passion for turf management appears to have no boundaries", says one of his teammates.

## **IOG Briggs & Stratton Unsung Hero of the Year – Ian Darler, Cambridge United**

Ian has been working at Cambridge United for an amazing 37 years; when he started at the Abbey Stadium in 1979 he was the youngest head groundsman in the country.

## **IOG Ransomes Jacobsen Environmental Project of the Year – St George's Park, Burton upon Trent, Staffs**

For their second award of the evening the grounds staff at St George's Park also collected the Ransomes Jacobsen Environmental Project/Innovation of the Year Award.

## **IOG Charterhouse/ Kubota Best Maintained Artificial Pitch of the Year – Manchester City FC**

In addition to 13.5 grass pitches, the 14-strong Manchester City FC grounds team has to also maintain three artificial turf surfaces at the City Football Academy – two outdoors and one indoors, all compliant to FIFA 2 star standards.

## **IOG International Ambassador of the Year – Philip Sharples, Azerbaijan**

Currently director of pitches for Gabala FC in Azerbaijan, 45-year-old Phil has dedicated his life to producing first-class turf grass surfaces for sport, with 28 years' experience within the field of turf grass management and the last five years managing high profile football pitches around Europe and Eastern Europe including Gabala FC, Galatasaray FC, Kasimpasa Spor FC, Bunyodkor FC (Uz) and Trabzonspor FC.

## **IOG Volunteer Groundsman of the Year – Loucas Xenophontos, Hertford Town FC, Herts**

Loucas is one of three volunteer groundsman at the club's Hertingfordbury Park ground. The full-size football pitch, plus half-size training pitch, host matches and training for a number of club teams plus other users.

## **IOG Alex R Millar DLF/ Ransomes Jacobsen Groundsman's Groundsman of the Year Award – Jim Dawson, BT Murrayfield Stadium**

The award – which acknowledges the role of an individual groundsman from within all the relevant professional grounds team award categories – recognises Jim's expertise in leading a grounds team that is not only tasked with maintaining the stadium pitch plus three practice pitches, an Astroturf surface and all other grass within the stadium grounds, but they also undertake various roles external stadia.

## **IOG ICL Everris Syngenta Lifetime Achievement Award – Bob Smith, formerly head groundsman at Derby County FC's Baseball Ground**

Now 73 years of age and still an active IOG member, Bob joined Derby County when he was 24 years of age, having previously worked at a British Rail cricket ground for two years.

# NEW PRODUCTS



## **Vitax Amenity's new linemarker on the right track**

GPS is transforming the world of linemarking with the Supaturf SWOZI linemarking system – introducing heightened accuracy to one of the most fundamental groundcare duties. Launched to wide acclaim at Saltex, the specially developed linemarking machine carries an onboard computer that can be uploaded with software for marking areas for whichever sports are required. A GPS receptor positioned on the pitch talks to the onboard computer via Bluetooth, which triangulates Swozi's position with help from its own GPS unit, directing the linemarking machine to the appropriate line selected.

## **STIHL blowing strong at Saltex**

STIHL presented Saltex visitors with the much anticipated new BGA 100 blower, AR 3000 battery backpack and FSA 90 and 90R brushcutters – the newest additions to STIHL's cordless range.

The new BGA 100 backpack blower boasts the highest blowing force of all STIHL hand-held blowers, blowing

14N at its most powerful; approximately 70% higher than its predecessor the BGA 85. The innovative new machine is extremely light at a mere 2.5kg (excluding battery) and incredibly quiet thanks to a sound power level of 90dB (A), a 10 dB(A) sound power reduction from the BGA 85. Other key features include a powerful EC motor for optimum blowing performance, three distinct power stages plus a 'power boost' feature and 36V Lithium-Ion PRO battery technology.

## **Charterhouse plans for the future announced**

The Redexim Group in Holland announced its plans for the future of the Blec range of products for the UK and Export markets. Production is currently being set up by Redexim for the latest range of Blec machines with initial supply starting in April/May this year.

The Group has also entered into an exclusive agreement with Garry Mumby and his new business, Greenworld Equipment Limited, to work full time with Redexim giving design, technical, application and sales support to the future Redexim Blec business.





# LAUNCHED AT SALTEx 2015

KUBOTA



## Kubota's new Grand L40-II Series Deluxe Tractor

Market leading tractor and groundcare equipment solutions provider, Kubota, exhibited its new Grand L40-II Series deluxe tractors at Saltex for the first time.

The new innovative Grand L40-II model features an integrated cab, designed specifically for operator comfort and increased productivity. Kubota's newly branded HST Plus hydrostatic transmission advanced technology also features; delivering enhanced power, performance and durability.

The tractor has been developed to suit a wide range of user requirements, ideally suited for use by golf clubs, landscaping professionals, local authority maintenance and for the management of professional sports facilities.

## ATT bring fine turf quality to Saltex 2015

The new ATT INFiNiSystem™30 launched at Saltex 2015 brings 'fine turf quality' to 'sports turf' and provides new flexibility and performance for

sports facilities. Configured as a mower it provides an unsurpassed level of cut quality – but coupled with a range of SMART cassettes, for a range of turf management activities, it provides much more functionality than any other 30" wide pitch mower.

The ability to work in complete battery mode not only helps with noise pollution, having lower than any noise regulation legislative limits, but also with Hand-Arm vibration (HAV) where it betters any legislative limits. But it is on an annual fuel bill that massive amounts of savings can be made. A whole football pitch can be cut with dual DCLA batteries or a single LiPo battery costing no more than 50p in electricity to re-charge them. The unit is not only hassle free with no travelling to collect fuel, but truly 'Plug-and-Play' as it can be charged overnight and used in the morning.

## Polaris at Saltex 2015

Polaris, the No1 global small vehicle manufacturer was represented at Saltex

2015 by Polaris Work and Transportation, the commercial business to business division. Hosting the growing number of versatile, economic and environmental vehicle solutions for groundscape operations, the 4x4 off-road vehicles on show included models from the Polaris Ranger and Sportsman ranges.

The world's first true electric 4x4, the Polaris Ranger EV combines the advantages of near silent operation with the rugged off-road features of petrol and diesel Rangers. With enhanced styling and Pro-Fit accessory integration, the Ranger EV is a go-everywhere vehicle that needs no fuel and requires very little maintenance.

POLARIS



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# Golfing Nobody's Blog

Well, as we enter the new year you find me in full training. You see it has just dawned on me that life might be passing me by and that my last possible chance of becoming an Olympian may be to qualify for Team GB's Golf Team.

I'm not deluded and I know it's a long shot. I am hampered by poor technique and a weak mind, but I have been playing the game for about 45 years, probably a lot longer than many of those others who have ring fenced the Olympic Golf event in their 2016 diaries. I also believe that Rory has decided to play for the Republic of Ireland so the competition for places is slightly easier.

I'm really going for it and, despite my well know aversion to practice - which I am on record as believing is cheating, and unfair on the rest of us who rock up each Saturday with the remnants of divots still attached to our wedges from the previous week - I have been down at the driving range a couple of times a week.

By the time I've had my bacon roll and found the change for the ball dispenser it has eaten into quite a bit of my day and I've even missed the start of Countdown on a couple of occasions. But you won't hear me complaining,

nobody got anywhere in this country without some sacrifice.

And I think the work is beginning to pay off. I've been smoking it off the tee. The accuracy is there too as I dented the 150 yard sign on the full a couple of times last Thursday.

With a good running golf course, and I'm hoping the Brazilian's will produce a short mown, firm surface, it should bring most of the par 4s into range for two good blows and a smart wedge shot. So, if my short game is on I'd like to think I'd be guaranteed some putts at par nett birdie, and a few three pointers.

I'm not under any allusions though. The Olympics will bring out the Bandits - the Games does seem to attract its fair share of the wrong sort, look at Ben Johnson, that Marion Jones

woman and all those Russians and East Germans - and the winning score is likely to be in the mid 40s. But if I get on a roll I'm sure I could have an outside chance of a podium and bring a medal home for Britain.

But let's not run before I can take a buggy. I have







# as seen on TWITTER



to get there first and I'm still waiting for the ad in the paper announcing the first club qualifier, to be followed by the regional event (I've played just about every course in the area so I won't be going in blind) and the grand final somewhere in sunny Spain, televised by Sky. I do have a track record of success in these formats. I got within half a dozen points of qualifying for a Trilby Tour televised event and I've still got my paisley patterned hat as a souvenir, so I know what to do to succeed. It is just a case of getting out early, having one of my good days in each of the qualifying events and hoping for a dramatic change of weather when I get back to the clubhouse.

So, pulling on that Team GM top is still quite a bit away but at least I've got hope. Let's face it my chances of doing it on the track or in the velodrome went about 30 years ago. No, I reckon golf is my final chance to join the pantheon of British Sporting Greats and I'm not prepared to let this one last hurrah pass me by. Some people think I'm mad even to have made this public but I think the shame of not making the team, having announced how much of a dream it would be for me, is driving me on – my hands don't exactly bleed after all my additional practice, but I have picked up a little blister.

No pain no gain!

*\*As told to Scott MacCallum*

**ECB** @ECB\_cricket Advice and support is available from the ECB for clubs affected by the recent flooding: <http://the-ecb.co.uk/2rzL1y>

**Steven Connolly** @myrenaissance I'll be damned, we've had more hours of sunlight in December than we did in April...

**Bayer CropScience** @Bayer4Crops Demand for #wheat is set to outpace production. Our 2015 #CropFutureForum focused further on the topic. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYL7ezWBENk...>

**Syngenta Turf** @SyngentaTurf Identify factors that impact course conditions through a performance review: <http://ow.ly/VSw4L> @USGA

**Myerscough College** @MyerscoughColl Residential Students: We have a qualified nurse on site during term time. Call into The Core to arrange an appointment. 01995 642348

**Wives of Turf** @wivesofturf Question of the Day: What was the highlight of 2015 for you and your family?

**Fusion Media** @FusionMediaEU We've had a great year in 2015. Thanks to our customers, the publications we deal with & all our suppliers.

**Dean Hardman** @DHardman77 Giving the greens a breath of fresh air today @SustainturfAg

**Lickey Hills golf** @LickeyHillsGolf Course open 6 winter greens very very wet in places there for only £10 a round Come on up #golf

**gregevans** @gregevanmsg Young Stan Murphy giving the 6th green his first hand cut this morning @EalingGolfClub another generation starts

**Renishaw Greens** @Mark\_Nelson01 Sunny spells, dry & still quite mild. Greens brushed. Electric trolleys with winter wheels, pull trolleys&carrying only @michaelramsden

**Hughkingsand** @Hughkingsand December's course manager's calendar is now ready to read – [http://hughking.co.uk/sands/the-cour...](http://hughking.co.uk/sands/the-cour...#monthbymonth) #monthbymonth #greenkeeping

**Follow Scott MacCallum on Twitter @TurfMatters**

## Tea Break Teaser answers

1. Dame Kelly Holmes in the 800 metres and 1500 metres at Athens in 2004;
2. Munich; Los Angeles; Atlanta and Beijing;
3. Women's cycling;
4. Six Golds and a Silver;
5. Paris in 1924;
6. He modified his fencing epee with an electrical device to record hits he hadn't actually made;
7. French;
8. Five;
9. 35;
10. Mexico in 1968 – a Swedish pentathlete who had won a Bronze Medal but was then disqualified;
11. Less than 250 – 236 in total;
12. 22 – 18 Golds, 2 Silvers and 2 Bronze;
13. Allan Wells, Moscow 1980;
14. Four, plus one Silver;
15. Laura Robson.





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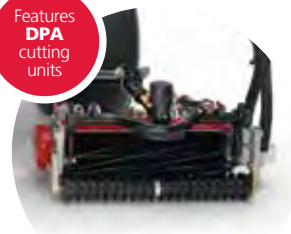
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