

# TURF MATTERS

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**Paying for kit**  
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**The right height of cut for you**  
Working it out, page 30



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# TURF MATTERS

## A real sporting nation

Since the last issue of Turf Matters we have enjoyed the thrills of the Rio Olympics and seen the football and rugby seasons start again – the never ending cycle of sport! There is always another sporting event around the corner about and one just past, which enables us to share our well considered opinions with friends.

It reconfirms my believe that sport, more than any other facet of our lives, has the ability to raise an entire nation's morale or – in the case of England's performance in the Euros – witness self flagellation on an industrial scale. The much maligned John Major recognised that fact and he launched the Lottery to generate the funding necessary to compete with the best and our medal hauls have multiplied as a result.

It even gave me the opportunity to have a little bit of fun with an Australian tourist I met recently. I told him that we were in the very fortunate position with regard to Olympic success, as we were a sporting nation. I won't say what he said in return. To ensure we can continue to hold the whip hand over our Australian – and, even, Chinese cousins – funding must be found to ensure sports facilities are available in both quantity and quality.

Thanks and best wishes go to two well known industry figures who have recently retired. David Golding, of the GTC, has been an eloquent advocate for greenkeeper education since the mid 1980s and he can look back with pride on the achievements that have been made since then – his fingerprints are on a great many of them. Peter Driver has been Ransomes Jacobsen's PR man and a wonderful ambassador for the company and a huge help to the industry's press since then.

I wish both gentlemen long and rewarding retirements and hope we will be able to share a drink again in more relaxed circumstances than we have perhaps had previously.

**Scott MacCallum, Editor**

 You can follow me on Twitter @TurfMatters



Impressive: Rise of the multi-purpose stadium – pages 21-25

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# Four Toros go for gold at site of London Olympics

London Stadium 185, the company in charge of managing the Stadium at London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, has welcomed four new Toro machines to its fleet, as the venue permanently reopens as new home to West Ham United.

A subsidiary of VINCI Stadium, the operating company saw the new Toros delivered around the same time London Stadium officially re-opened.

The venue was temporarily re-open to the public during the summer of 2015, hosting major sporting events such as the Rugby World Cup and the Diamond League Meeting. This year, the arena has been transformed into a multi-use venue, becoming the new home of West Ham and the National Competition Centre for athletics.

With lots of activity going on, Greg Bolton, Head Groundsman at London Stadium 185, says he's been busy putting his new Toro Reelmaster 3100 mower, Multi Pro 1750 sprayer, ProCore 648 aerator and Workman GTX utility vehicle to good use.

Working around what's been a big transitional phase at the Stadium, Greg and his team of three groundsman have two grass pitches to maintain; a community pitch with a running track and the main pitch.

"When I joined the company it was



Greg Bolton, Head Groundsman at London Stadium 185, with colleagues

still a building site and the pitches weren't able to be seeded until June, after we'd hosted a big AC/DC concert," says Greg, who joined London Stadium 185 in April this year.

"At the end of July we then hosted the London Anniversary Games, which saw the likes of Usain Bolt training here in preparation for the Rio Olympic Games 2016. And then we had West Ham's UEFA Europa League qualifying round in August. So there's been plenty to prepare for!" he adds.

Of all the machines, Greg says the

Multi Pro has particularly impressed him. "It's easy to use, speedy to spray and offers fantastic flexibility. We use it for spraying a multitude of chemicals and there have been no issues with it blocking up," he notes.

"The ProCore is also great and a machine that I've actually used before in previous roles. I've used the ProCore at the last three venues I've worked at. It's a simple-to-use machine that's equally effective for spot areas and the entire pitch."

■ See also pages 21-25

## Replay ensures Sports Village is back on track



The International Sports Village at Swansea University is home to premier indoor and outdoor facilities including two all-weather Astro surfaces, natural turf pitches, tennis courts, 50m swimming pool, sports hall and gym. The gem of the outdoor facilities is the Class A, International Standard 8-lane athletics track that hosts the university's athletes, external community and athletics clubs as well as top-level sporting events.

Continuing their relationship, Replay Maintenance has carried out its Aquatrax process on the track, to bring it back to an 'as new' condition.

Athletics Facilities Manager, Andrew Griffiths, is supported by a team of grounds staff who help in the maintenance of both the natural and

artificial surfaces on the site.

"Our in-house team are great at staying on top of the general maintenance of the facilities but a few years ago we decided to bring in a specialist company to deep clean the athletics surface."

Andrew spoke to a few local tracks as well as the facilities team at the Alexandra Stadium in Birmingham, and after hearing good things about Replay, called them in.

"Our track is in quite a leafy area so the debris from the trees, as well as its daily usage means it does get quite dirty. We aim to give the track a deep clean every two years. Replay's visit in March was the third time they've cleaned it with the Aquatrax unit."

Aquatrax combines pressure washing

and vacuum extraction. The machine applies pressure water jets to dislodge the dirt before a vacuum extraction system removes the dirty water to a tank on the machine leaving a clean surface, free of contaminants.

Replay have used the Aquatrax machine on the two water-based Astro pitches at Swansea University, most recently in November 2015.

"Each pitch took two and a half days to clean and it was four days to transform the track and all ancillary areas such as the long jump approach and pole vault run-up. Having worked with Replay for a few years now we know we're going to get good quality results. The work they do makes a significant difference – it looks like a new track again!" said Andrew.

# Education stalwart leaves a proud greenkeeping legacy

David Golding has retired as Education Director of the Greenkeepers Training Committee after 23 years having presided over an industry that has been transformed thanks to his dedication, vision and persuasive example.

Speaking at a lunch to celebrate his near quarter century of service to the GTC Chairman, Donald Steel, paid tribute to David.

“Greenkeeping has always been hard graft and David’s practical background as a greenkeeper meant he could speak from experience. To me, greenkeepers are on a par as a willing and unselfish brotherhood – or now sisterhood – with our lifeboat men and National Hunt jockeys. They never complain about their plight, they deal with the unexpected, they keep unsocial hours, and are driven to help others but David belonged to a generation of greenkeepers that wanted something better and, more poignantly, fought hard to achieve it,” said Donald who also added that David was also one of the key campaigners in the creation of BIGGA in the mid 1980s.

“Today, greenkeeping has become the job of a lifetime – for a lifetime. Many have never thought of doing anything else, eager to learn their trade and to have the qualifications to enable them to master the



Picture this: Donald Steel, left, presents a parting gift to David Golding

responsibilities they face. And they are very good at it and, what is more, are delightful people.

“I am happy that we are celebrating the fact that David leaves behind a highly distinguished working legacy for training greenkeepers in which we have all, directly or indirectly, been fortunate to have played some part,” said Donald.

“In the 60 years or so of my involvement in golf, greenkeeping has scaled the heights rather in the way that the playing of the game has done. There have never been more good greenkeepers or more good players and, watching the thrilling final round of The Open made me reflect that, in that time, the first prize in the Open

has risen from under a thousand pounds to over a million.

“Greenkeeping salaries haven’t quite kept pace but they are getting there. I wish I could be handing over a cheque for a similar sizable amount to David but, instead, the GTC would like to present David with a print of St Andrews where he and I first met at one of the R&A’s Golf Course Committee meetings.

“It is with pride and delight that I present this print to David, to wish him a happy birthday and a long and happy retirement and to thank him on behalf of the game and several thousand greenkeepers for his supreme contribution to its welfare, enjoyment and efficiency.”

## Tractor is ‘great value for money’

When their existing tractor was nearing the end of its useful life Dave Holmes of Deeping Rangers Football Club knew to whom they should turn for advice

regarding a replacement – Glen Bellamy of Fentons of Bourne.

Rather than sell them one, Glen persuaded the club to have a 35hp

Branson 3625h on trial before making a decision. Dave, the treasurer, Kevin Davenport, were so impressed, they bought it!

Having

always used a 30hp machine Dave was unsure about a slightly bigger tractor as specified by the FA – but is now convinced that it was the right choice. Dave thoroughly researched all the tractors currently available and sounded out other owners of Branson tractors.

Using it with a Wessex mower on the four pitches Dave is impressed with the power from the 3 cylinder 1741cc diesel engine, the hydrostatic transmission and the front axle 52° turn angle plus its stability with a bucket on the front. He concludes,

“This is a cracking tractor, great value for money plus excellent advice and after sales service from Glen at Fentons of Bourne,” said Dave.



# Duncan Ross to the rescue at Edenhall & Langwathby



Duncan Ross has carried out essential turf rejuvenation work at Edenhall and Langwathby Cricket and Football Club, after severe flooding rendered the site unplayable.

The sports field, which is based in the Cumbrian village of Edenhall, is run by three trustees, and provides an area for villagers to play cricket, football, archery and croquet, as well as hosting athletics in the summer for a local school.

At the beginning of December 2015 the entire field was submerged in water for only the second time in over 100 years, leading to a build-up of silt on the pitches that needed professional work carried out to remove it.

After a tendering process Duncan Ross were chosen to carry out the essential maintenance on the site, which was recommended by the English Cricket Board and The Football Foundation, with their professionalism, planning and hands on appraising of the situation

**“I was impressed with the excellent quality of their equipment.”**

cited among the reasons behind them getting the

job. A grant was obtained from the ECB and Football Foundation to pay for the work, after their pitch advisors reports had stated that no activity should take place on the site before the silt that was left over from the flood was thoroughly removed.

Edenhall Cricket Club chairman and sports field trustee, Graham Monk, explains the impact of the flood and the process of recruiting Duncan Ross.

“I had Duncan Ross recommended to me by the Course Manager at Penrith Golf Club, he spoke highly of them and that’s why we decided to include them in the tendering process,” he explained.

“We sent them a copy of the report that had been drawn up by the pitch advisors from the ECB and Football Foundation, and they sent a member of their team down to look at the field before providing us with a quote, and to make sure we were definitely going to carry out the work that we needed.

“There was then a further visit to make a second assessment, and from there we decided to go with Duncan Ross because of their attention to detail in terms of the

fact that they had made the journey twice to make sure that everything was in place, and they were very easy to deal with.

“With the money coming from a grant we had to be careful in that we needed to carry out the stipulated work whilst also making sure it was done right, and the planning process with Duncan Ross gave us confidence in that.

“As soon as the conditions were right they arrived and from the off I was impressed with the excellent quality of their equipment.”

Over the three days on site work was carried out on the cricket and football pitches using the Koro Field Top Maker from Campey Turf Care Systems.

The machine was used to Koro scarify the cricket outfield before verti-draining it, whilst the Koro was also used to scarify the square before top dressing with loam and over-seeding took place.

The senior football pitch was fraise mowed to remove the organic matter that had built up on the surface because of the laying water, including the silt, vertidraind and a layer of sand was applied before grass seed was drilled.

# Success ...with a little help from my friend

Colin Prentice and his dog, Archie, have beaten hundreds of other social media users to become the winner of Kubota UK's #MyKubota 2016 competition.

Colin uploaded a photo demonstrating 'a day in the life of his Kubota' on his farm and was selected by a judging panel of experts as one of the top five entries. The finalists were then whittled down by a competitive public vote and Colin achieved hundreds of nominations due to his creative snap.

Colin can now reap his rewards with £500 worth of Virgin Experience Days vouchers from Kubota.

Colin and his 6-year-old Jack Russell Terrier, Archie, from Aberdeen, have been using a 1986 B7100D compact tractor for two years for every day tasks such as mowing, ploughing and trailer pulling on the farm.

"I happened to see the competition on Facebook and thought, why not? I was chuffed to receive the beanie hat for being one of the first 50 entries and



I couldn't believe it when I received the notification that I was shortlisted in the second round and then when I went on to win it," said Colin.

"It was easy to get the snap of Archie with the machine because he loves to be driven around by the tractor on the farm. Any excuse not use his legs!"

Dave Roberts, Kubota UK's MD, said: "We'd like to thank everyone who

entered the #MyKubota campaign this year, whether it was submitting photos or voting for your favourite finalist. It's been fantastic to build such a strong gallery of machinery in use and reward loyal users in this way.

"The team at Kubota love the photo of Colin and Archie and think that the title of #MyKubota 2016 champion is well deserved!"

**Faithful: Archie, the Jack Russell terrier, atop the Kubota compact tractor**

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For more information about Kubota's diverse range of world-class groundcare machines and aftersales support service, visit [www.kubota.co.uk](http://www.kubota.co.uk) or call 01844 873190.

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# Achieving the impossible: Improving an already world class golf course

The key role played by Hugh King & Co in one of the most ambitious renovation projects ever undertaken on an Open Championship course has been highlighted by Turnberry's Courses and Estates Manager, Allan Patterson. The family run business was an integral supplier during the exciting resurgence of Trump Turnberry's Ailsa Course, delivering bunker and top-dressing sand to the famous course during the eight-month overhaul.

During the £200 million investment in the Ayrshire resort which affected 16 hectares of the championship Alisa Course, Hugh King & Co supplied around 1,000 tonnes of its Bunker 8 and Washed Dune Sand to aid the rebuilding of 87 bunkers and 18 championship greens. It was an epic project defined by an equally heroic timescale.

"It is by far the biggest renovation of any course on the Open Championship rota and probably the biggest undertaking in the UK this year," explained Allan.

"It was an ambitious turnaround from closing to full renovation within eight months. So between everybody - the constructor, the architect, the team on the ground - everyone worked incredibly hard and did a fantastic job. Everyone involved was part of a huge puzzle and Hugh King and the sand they supplied was an important part of that puzzle."

Trump Turnberry, which has hosted The Open Championship four times, closed its doors in September 2015 and reopened again in June 2016. For the man in charge of returning the famous course to its famed condition, the project demanded a monumental team effort. "What helped during the construction was our relationship with Hugh King. If



a weather window appeared and we phoned them up out of the blue to get a delivery, nine times out of 10 they would accommodate that request. They knew the significance of the project. If we didn't have that kind of relationship with them to maximise those opportunities - if you miss your windows of opportunity - we would have delayed the growing process. It's as simple as that," explained Allan.

Hugh King & Co, which supplies sands to over 120 golf courses including all Open Championship venues in Scotland, was already stocking the Ayrshire resort with sands prior to the audacious revamp. As Allan explained, it made sense to stick with a supplier and sands they already knew.

"In 2014, we started using Hugh King's Bunker 8 sand. It performed very well after heavy rain and the feedback from members and guests was very positive regarding its consistency. It is an extremely good

sand, so we didn't look at any other products."

Hugh King & Co has been delivering top-grade materials to key industry sectors for over 150 years. As one of the country's leading suppliers of sports sands, being involved in the delivery of such a daring redesign and renovation was a momentous undertaking.

"It has been an extremely exciting project, especially given the history of the venue and the universal affection felt towards it within the world of golf," said Graeme King, Hugh King & Co's Managing Director.

"From a professional point of view, it tested everyone with all the bunkers and greens being rebuilt in a tight eight-month period, never mind the extensive redesign by Martin Ebert. It was an incredible job by Allan and his team and all the contractors involved. They've done the impossible and improved one of the world's top golf courses."

## Minimum surface disturbance from Procore 648



Winning over so many UK greenkeepers is the Toro ProCore 648 pedestrian aerator.

Whether hollow- or solid-tining, the ProCore 648, as with all Toro aerators, leaves a clean, even finish that allows operation on fine turf with the absolute minimum of disturbance and gets

surfaces back into play quickly.

Fitted with a head drive system that uses precision balancing weights, similar to those found on a six-cylinder engine, on each coring head, this configuration eliminates hopping, rocking and uncomfortable vibration.

From the innovative wheels within the

coring path, to the large 122cm aeration swath, the Toro ProCore 648 is one of the most efficient aerators on the market.

Toro's ProCore 648 can aerate an 18-hole golf course in about seven hours. Even though it's small the ProCore 648 has an impressive reach with a coring width of 48 inches.

# ICL support independent school groundsmen in their work

Groundsmen from independent schools across the country recently visited Haberdasher's Aske's Boys' School in Hertfordshire to attend the annual turf care seminar staged specifically for the sector by ICL.

Delegates were welcomed to Haberdashers by grounds manager Mike Kemmett who leads a team of eight groundstaff maintaining the extensive sporting facilities of three cricket pitches as well as 12 rugby/football pitches, two all-weather hockey pitches, three artificial cricket pitches as well as indoor cricket, swimming and athletic facilities.

Emma Kilby, ICL Area Sales Manager for the Midlands and West, who organised and ran the event for the fourth year running began the seminar with an outline of the day before handing over to Grounds Manager, Mike Kemmett, to give an insight into the school's sports facilities and his daily routines.

Henry Bechelet, ICL's Technical Sales Manager then gave a presentation on 'sports pitch renovation tactics' and the importance of nutrition including using the correct products, applying at the right rates and at the right time.

Simon Hedley, Managing Director of Boughton Loam, took to the stage next to discuss cricket loams and the manufacturing processes involved in



**Splendour:** Independent school groundsmen at Haberdasher's Aske's boys' school

the company producing over 150,000 bags of dressing annually. From surveying sites to sending out cricket loams and dressings to sporting venues across the country ensuring a quality, hard and consistent pitch with good bounce and carry.

This was followed by Nick Martin, ICL Technical Area Sales Manager for the South West and West London, who gave a presentation on cricket table renovation, establishment and maintenance fertilising.

Nick discussed the essential nutrients for healthy grass growth and during the growing-in period, consistent release of fertilisers being

crucial and the importance of end of season renovation before detailing the benefits of the newly updated ICL iTurf Programme. This interactive web-based application allows ICL Area Managers to design a fully integrated turf programme to your own specific requirements.

Concluding the morning session, Dan Lightfoot, Syngenta's Business Manager, gave an illustrated talk on the challenges of moving from summer to winter sports and the effects of wetting agents, and in particular the germination success of using Qualibra – the wetting and water conservation agent.

## MM60 success at the Madejski Stadium

Adam Grantham, Grounds Manager for Reading FC, believes that Limagrain's MM60 grass seed has helped him achieve a pitch which can stand up to the rigours of a multitude of both rugby and football games.

The Madejski Stadium is home of Reading FC, who ply their trade in the Football League Championship, and also the rugby union club London Irish. With Reading playing 23 league games at home, as well as cup competitions, in addition to London Irish fixtures, the stadium sees more action than most.

"Quite often we will get a 'double whammy' with Reading playing on a Saturday afternoon and the London Irish playing rugby on a Sunday. If there is

a midweek game, which is quite often on a Tuesday, then you can have three games in just four days. It can prove to be difficult with such a congested fixture list and the main challenge are the scrum areas. These can take their toll especially when the weather is against us but fortunately we've got a strong and sturdy pitch, which is easily repaired. It also plays really well," says Adam.

This is in part thanks to Limagrain's MM60 grass seed which is renowned for producing an excellent playing surface in a stadium environment. The MM60 grass seed is a 100% Ryegrass formula which is perfect for renovation and divot repair – making Adam's job that much easier when it comes to the scrum

areas. Renowned for its extremely fast germination, MM60 has a high disease resistance.

Adam first became familiar with MM60 when Head Groundsman at Reading's training ground. "I've been a big fan of the MM60 seed for a long time. I first started using it in my previous role over at the training ground and it is still used over there. We've got nine pitches at the training ground and around two thirds of the site consists of MM60."



# First-time fleet for Chessington

With over 40 rides in 10 themed lands, a zoo with over 1000 animals and a Sea Life centre, plus daily live shows and seasonal events, Chessington World of Adventures Resort in Surrey offers a host of attractions for all ages throughout the summer months.

New for 2016 are the Pandamonium live show, a brand new Explorer Glamping accommodation site and the UK's 30th Go Ape Adventure – the first ever to launch at a UK theme park. The Tree Top Junior course allows children to swing through the trees and unleash their inner Tarzan.

Behind the scenes, Estates Manager Alan Soutar, Team Leader Lee Harper and Chessington's grounds staff keep the whole resort clean and tidy. In addition to two hotels, the zoo, the rides areas, formal gardens, large grassland areas and car parks, the team is responsible for all the trees on site and conservation in the surrounding (some of it ancient) woodland.

To help maintain the site, Chessington's owner Merlin Entertainments Group has invested for the first time in a John Deere fleet supplied by local dealer Godfreys Golf & Turf at Wokingham.

The fleet includes three HPX 4x4 Gator utility vehicles, a 1550 front rotary mower with 72in deck and a 4066R compact tractor with H180 front loader. Additional ancillary equipment includes a JCB digger, a GreenMech chipper for use with the tractor, and SnowEx rear-mounted salt spreaders for the Gators.



Estates Manager Alan Soutar and Team Leader Lee Harper with the kit

“We worked out the equipment list with Godfreys’ Area Sales Manager, Dave Searles,” said Alan.

“Lee used to work for Reigate & Banstead Council, who used John Deere equipment, so he was familiar with the kit. I originally bought a 1026R compact tractor when I started here in 2013, as it was a good size for getting into the animal enclosures for example.

“It is now used constantly, and suits the size of the resort really well. Attachments such as a grass spiker for this tractor would also extend its usefulness.

“Our new 4066R does the meatier jobs, and we use the loader constantly on this machine. It’s a real benefit that the tractor takes both front and rear attachments, including the chipper.

We also bought a rear-mounted cutting deck for this model, which we use on the larger grass areas in the car parks.

“In addition, the 1550 ride-on rotary mower is used on the picnic areas and larger grass areas within the park. We have to cover over 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of grass in total, so the mowers are kept very busy in the growing season. The chipper gets a lot of use too, as we do most of our own tree work in-house. We also carry out extensive recycling and re-use the chipped material in the animal enclosures and shrubberies.

“The Gator is a really handy piece of kit as well. Our HPXs are always buzzing around the site every day loaded up with materials and tools, or equipped with the gritters for winter road and path clearance.”

## Top marks at top school for SISIS Brush-Pro

Garry Watson, Head Groundsman at King Edward's School in Birmingham, has chosen the SISIS Brush-Pro ride-on brushing system, for all his synthetic surface maintenance.

Situated on a beautiful 50 acre site in Edgbaston Park Road Birmingham, lies two esteemed independent schools. The boys' school, which was founded by King Edward VI in 1552, and the girls' school which was established in 1883. The two schools boast extremely high academic standards and are both consistently placed with the leading schools in national league tables.

The schools also pride themselves



on the wide variety of opportunities they provide for enrichment outside the curriculum, which includes a number of sports. Facilities for rugby, cricket, football, hockey, tennis and athletics are all included at King Edward's School and overseeing the maintenance of all of

these pitches is Garry along with eight members of staff.

Among these facilities are three synthetic surfaces which are solely used for hockey. Two are situated at the girls' school and quite recently the boys' school had a sand based pitch constructed. All of these pitches see a tremendous amount of usage with school teams playing on them throughout the day and local hockey clubs hiring them out in the evening.

Garry needed an improvement on his previous machine to keep his synthetic surfaces at the highest possible standard – and this led him to the SISIS Brush-Pro.

# Royal Aberdeen go for Jacobsen

Royal Aberdeen Golf Club has taken delivery of two Jacobsen Eclipse 322 diesel-electric hybrid mowers to maintain the greens on their two 18-hole golf courses, the Balgownie and Silverburn. Local Ransomes Jacobsen dealer Fairways GM delivered the mowers.

The greens were previously maintained by a competitor brand, but the club has since chosen Jacobsen equipment following a review by Robert Patterson, who has been the Course Manager at Royal Aberdeen for the past 18 years.

The club has hosted many prestigious competitions, including the Senior Open Championship in 2005, the Walker Cup match between Great Britain & Ireland and USA in 2011 and the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open in 2014; it is due to host the Amateur Championship in 2018.

“We were reluctant to make the change at first, because we have a very good relationship with our current supplier, but ultimately, we needed to improve the quality of cut on our greens, which is why



**'I couldn't be more pleased with the results,' says Course Manager Robert Patterson**

we bought the Eclipse 322 mowers, and I couldn't be more pleased with the results,” said Robert. “We are currently using Jacobsen's 15-blade cylinder and have a cutting height of 4mm in the summer and 5.5mm in the winter, which works well for us. We also have Jacobsen's bi-directional groomer and brush fitted to both machines. That's a decision I made

after seeing a demonstration by Dr Thom Nikolai, Turfgrass Professor at Michigan State University, on brushing greens whilst I was over in the United States. Jacobsen has shown that it is clearly up-to-date with the latest research and technology, so we have chosen this set up, which reduces stress on the turf and further improves the finish on our greens.”

## SALTEX to address Brexit impact

SALTEX 2016's all-encompassing and free-to-attend LEARNING LIVE programme is set to explore what impact leaving the European Union will have on the industry, when the exhibition opens its doors at the NEC, Birmingham on 2 and 3 November.

Designed to cater to all visitors that maintain or manage pitches, estates, grounds, landscapes, play areas and parks, LEARNING LIVE will play a major role at SALTEX and will offer an extensive information-sharing experience, an incredible line-up of guest speakers and will focus on key issues that surround the industry – Brexit being one of them.

In an organised panel debate, the implications of leaving the EU will be discussed. Professor John Moverley, Chairman of the Amenity Forum has been confirmed as a panel member and will seek to specifically address the implications for weed, pest and disease control, as well as the amenity sector as a whole.

Commenting on the debate, John said: “At this moment in time we are at a very early stage but, as well



as posing a challenge, it is a time of opportunity to influence future decision making and represent the sector's interests. I look forward to a lively debate.”

Other panel members include Managing Director of Turfcare Technologies David Cole from the industry supplier sector and Chair of the IOG's Young Board of Directors, Will Graves, who will discuss the impact of the Brexit decision for young people in the industry.

More high profile panelists will be confirmed shortly.

SALTEX 2015 featured 1,655 minutes of free seminars through the LEARNING LIVE programme and, off the back of its success, this year show organisers have commissioned an additional fourth lecture theatre to expand the number of presentations across the two-day event – to offer an even more exciting programme featuring a greater depth of content and quality.

# John Deere in festival mood



A new John Deere 7700A PrecisionCut ride-on cylinder mower supplied by dealer Tallis Amos Group has been presenting players and spectators at the Brewin Dolphin Cheltenham Cricket Festival with a perfectly mown and presented outfield on Cheltenham College first XI's pitch.

This annual event, which is organised by Gloucestershire Cricket Club, is the world's longest running cricket festival on an outfield and has taken place against the picturesque backdrop of Cheltenham College since its inception in 1872.

The two-week long festival has been sponsored by Brewin Dolphin for the past 15 years and the 2016 tournament was one of the most

exciting yet – for the first time international cricket was played at this historic ground. Spectators were treated to two Specsavers County Championship matches, one NatWest T20 Blast, two tourist matches including England Lions, and one Royal London One-Day Cup match.

It was a programme that put a lot of pressure on Christian Brain, Cheltenham College's Head Groundsman, and his six staff; pressure that has been alleviated with the purchase of the John Deere 7700A mower.

"We can mow only at the end of the day's play, which can be late in the evening," said Christian. "Our previous ride-on was a three-cylinder model and we always

struggled to get round the outfield in the time available, plus it was old and there were breakdown issues. The five-cylinder 7700A enables us to mow the area within an hour rather than an hour-and-a-half."

"John Deere has an excellent reputation for quality of cut and reliability, and we have a good relationship with the local dealer Tallis Amos Group (TAG), who are on our doorstep in Evesham.

"We knew that their back-up would be good if there were any issues and they were extremely accommodating. They let us have a 7700A on trial for the whole fortnight of last year's Festival, so we had plenty of time to evaluate the mower and give it a good workout under practical conditions."

## Toro gives cleaner cut to Easingwold's greens

Following the arrival of two new Toro mowers, Easingwold Golf Club has reported a cleaner cut across its 18 hole,

Par 72 SSS 72 course, set in woodland and heath just south of Easingwold, North Yorkshire.

Course Manager, Andre Erlah, who's been at Easingwold for 15 years, took

delivery of a Toro Greensmaster TriFlex 3400 greens mower and a Reelmaster 5510-D fairway mower recently.

With his favourite of the two being the Greensmaster, Andre comments on the machine's main pros:

"Alongside increased reliability and decreased fuel consumption, the primary benefit for us has to be the quality of cut. We're getting a cleaner cut, a better pace on the greens, and can now cut at 4mm instead of 3mm; being able to have

longer blades means there is less stress on the grass."

The cleaner cut noted at the club can be attributed to the 3400's precision manufactured cutting units, which maintain adjustment for longer periods of time to provide superior cutting performance.

"Paul Nichols at Russell Groundcare, the local Toro dealer, is also great and very supportive. If there are any issues, he's on it straight away."



## New mid-range McCormick X6 tractors

The new mid-range McCormick tractors are ideal for turf applications and have replaced two of the famous marque's best-selling ranges with increased power and torque from new engines, and a broader range of features to give added performance, fuel economy and driver comfort.

Each of the three models in the McCormick X6 line-up comes in 'standard' and higher-spec 'LS' versions, main differences being in the hydraulics, wheel equipment, transmission speeds and availability of suspension for the front axle and driver's cab.

"The X6 Series covers applications previously met by the McCormick MC tractors and the top end of the McCormick X60 line," noted Ray Spinks, Sales Director and General Manager at McCormick distributor AgriArgo UK. The X6 models are in many respects more advanced, with features not previously available, while higher power and torque outputs deliver increased performance."



# Rigby Taylor products enable grounds team to exceed expectations

As Grounds Manager at Bloxham School, with around 70 acres of sports fields and open spaces in his charge, Glenn Davies and his grounds team need to know that each amenity consumable product they use, as well as every turf maintenance machine and item of sports equipment, will always do 'what it says on the can' – consistently year-in, year-out.

"We really don't have time to gamble with our maintenance routines," said 54-year-old Glenn who, for the past four years since joining the school, has led a grounds care team of four full-timers.

"Our workload is seven-days-a-week all year round. This is to ensure the surfaces are at their very best to not only meet the needs of the pupils but also those of 'outside' users such as local teams for football and tennis, as well as county and local cricket teams. Indeed, in season, the site regularly hosts up to 12 cricket games each week. In addition, the England Ladies lacrosse team also use the facilities.

"That means we have to use and depend on ultra-reliable amenity supplies, and I must say I've been using the same set of products – from Rigby Taylor – since I started in the

business as a 16-year-old apprentice."

With around 40 acres of sports surfaces including four cricket squares, seven rugby pitches and one football pitch (all natural grass), to tend, plus 18 hard/astro surfaces for tennis and hockey/football, as well as a running track, Glenn and his Bloxham team also care for all the associated gardens and grounds including landscaping and fencing.

School schedules mean that the team usually work on the sports surfaces in the mornings during term times, having them ready for use in the afternoons when attention switches to the amenity areas.

Their remit also covers the annual renovations of the sports surfaces – "we have the appropriate machinery for this, of course, and I feel that carrying this out in-house really does give us a more 'rounded' view of the playing surfaces and what's needed from them," added Glenn.

So, there is no let-up in the team's workload – hence the need for dependable products. Glenn is convinced that his team's work ethic is also boosted by a proper training programme, which includes Institute of Groundsmanship courses.



"The County has now recognised our improvement which has played its part in helping the school team reach the semi-finals of the NatWest Cup. The autumn and spring are the key periods for establishing the quality of the wickets, and we try and start our pre-season rolling (in a Union Jack direction/pattern) as early as possible."

**Glenn Davies and his grounds team at Bloxham School**

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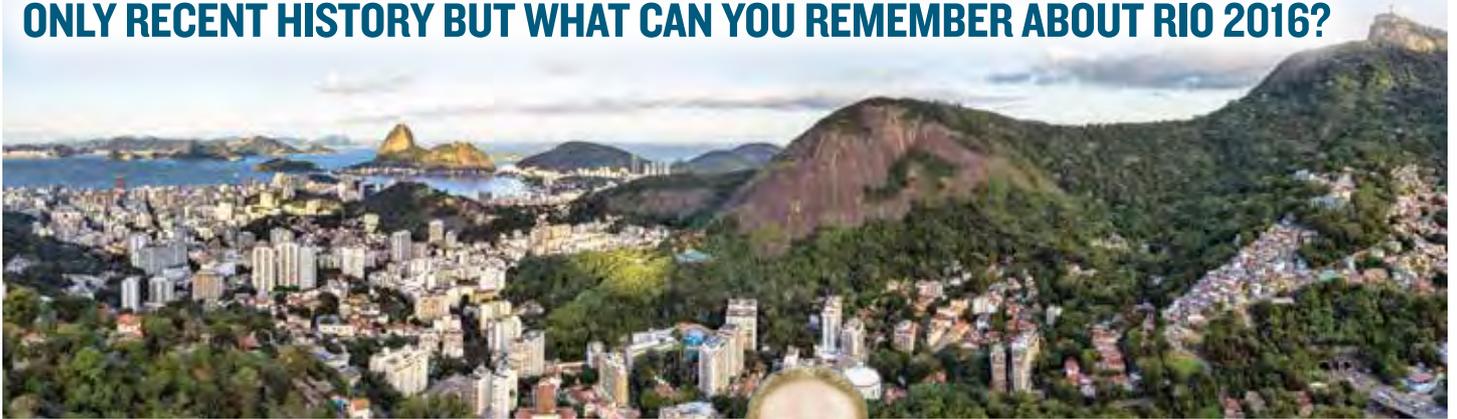
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# Tea Break Teaser

ONLY RECENT HISTORY BUT WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER ABOUT RIO 2016?



1. Who was a break of serve up in the third set of the quarter final against Andy Murray?
2. Who won Team GB's first Gold Medal?
3. Name the Team GB Men's Sprint cycle Gold Medal winning team.
4. Who was Kathy Grainger's partner in the bronze winning double sculls?
5. In which event did Max Whitlock win his bronze medal?
6. Justin Rose won an historic Golf Gold Medal but who won the Silver?
7. Where are the next Summer Olympics to be held?
8. Who won the Women's Singles Tennis title?
9. Who won Team GB's first women's field event medal since Fatima Whitbread in 1988?
10. What nationality was the man who broke Michael Johnson's world 400 metre record in the final?
11. How many medals did Team GB win in Rio
12. In which discipline did Bryony Page with a Silver medal for Team GB?
13. Which Welsh swimmer won two Silver medals in the 400 and 800 metre freestyle?
14. How many Olympic medals does Michael Phelps now have?
15. Which British sportsman holds the most Olympic Medals?

■ *Answers on Page 35.*



# OLYMPICS

A  
to  
Z



We've reintroduced the famous Turf Matters A-Zs to commemorate the Rio Olympic Games which gave so much relief to insomniacs across the country and meant so many of us were late for work as we caught up on the action over breakfast.



**A**thens. Where it all started. Also hosted the Games in 2004, although it very nearly (or did) bankrupt the entire country.

**B**ronze. Third place. For some it means that they missed out on the 1st or 2nd but for others getting an Olympic Medal is the pinnacle of their ambitions and they are over the moon.

**C**hris (Sir) Hoy. Recently joined by Jason Kenny as the only Brit with six gold medals.

**D**rugs. Oh dear. The elephant in the room of the Olympic movement.

**E**ric Liddell. Won the 400 yards in Paris 2024 when he discovered that his favoured event, the 100 yards, had heats on a Sunday. Made famous from the Oscar-winning film Chariots of Fire.

**F**lame. Carried by torch from Olympia every four years to reach the Olympic Stadium and illuminate proceedings for the 17 days of competition.

**G**old. What they are all after and blows the "It's all about taking part." baloney right out of the water. Winning a gold changes lives and marks people out as special – although there are now so many Gold Medal winners in the country now they might not be what they once were.

**H**arold Abrahams. Did win the 100 yards in Paris 2024 also was "co-star" of Chariots of Fire. Became a very well respected sports journalist.

**I**OC. International Olympic Committee. Charged with protecting the Olympic ideal – something they may have dropped the baton over in recent times!

**J**ason Kenny. Six Golds and a Silver, with power to add. Four years is a long time away but he is favourite to become Britain's most Golden Olympian.

**K**yaking. Do you know the difference between this and canoeing? All in the sitting position and the number of blades on the paddle, silly!

**L**aura. The other half of the Golden Couple with Jason Kenny. Four out of four in two Olympics and the already the most British Golden Olympian female.

**M**o Farah. Britain's best ever track and field athlete. Two double doubles over the 5,000 and 10,000 metres at London and Rio. Fell over in the 10,000 but still got up to win.

**N**ick Skelton. Hurrah for this 58 year old who won his first individual Gold at his seventh Olympics.

**O**pening ceremony. Not quite a lavish at Rio as it was at Beijing or London but got the Games off to a decent start at a fraction of the cost nonetheless.

**P**helps (Michael). 23 Gold Medals, three Silver and two Bronze. Wow! Many countries haven't won that many medals in their history. A record which will never be beaten

**Q**uality. The quality of sport on offer at Rio was extremely high. Some



**Rio.** Put on some fine Games in difficult circumstances and proved to be the stage for some wonderful sport

**Silver.** The drop between Gold and Silver is so much greater than the drop between Silver and Bronze. That said the drop between Bronze and fourth is enormous.

**Tokyo.** The next port of call in 2020. Japanese will embrace the Games in a similar fashion to London and we can look forward to Tokyo 2020 with great enthusiasm.

**Usain.** The Greatest! A complete phenomenon – Nine out of nine Golds and supplying some of the most memorable moments in Olympic history. A wonderful ambassador for the sport and someone with whom you'd like to go to the pub.

**Victory.** So important these days - everyone strives for it but it only goes to one person or team, per event. All about the taking part? Don't think so in this performance driven world.

**Wiggins (Sir) Bradley.** Now has more medals than any other British sportsman – plus a Tour de France. What a man!

**Xposed** (Sorry!) The ineffective nature of the IOC, in comparison with their Paralympic cousins, when it came to dealing with the Russian situation was there for all to see.

**Your favourite?** We all have our favourite moment from these Olympic Games. Mine? I'm glad you asked. It was the moment Bryony Page realised she'd won a medal (Silver) in the trampolining. And I wouldn't know one trampolining bounce from the next one!

**Zika virus.** The reason so many golfers didn't go to Rio but not really a factor once the Games got under way.



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# THE SWISS ARMY KNIVES OF STADIUMS



We look at the development of the all-purpose, multi-use stadium, and how they have become part of the fabric of modern day society.

The vast majority of stadiums in this country were built for football clubs to enable spectators to watch the country's most popular game. The football calendar wasn't quite so crowded in days gone by and most matches were played on Saturday at 3pm with the odd cup replay, or European tie for those few clubs involved, slotted into a Wednesday evening.

What that meant was the invariably the biggest stadiums in the country were only really used every other Saturday and, then, only during the football season which ran from August to May.

Big stadiums require big upkeep and that requires resources which require funding and so the ability to use stadiums more than for just the 25 times a year, became imperative.

And so the multi use stadium was born and we could all enjoy traveling to our favourite stadiums (or even those of our deadliest footballing rivals) to watch a diverse range of events.

Wembley Stadium was one of the early adopters of such a policy and there are two events which stand head and shoulders above others in highlighting how well Wembley, in particular, and multiuse ▶



## “Stadiums are now built with multi-use in mind and, to maximise the number of days a stadium is in use, is a key element of balancing vast budgets at the end of the year.”

- ▶ stadia in general can be utilised.

In 1963 Wembley was the venue for a boxing match between the great British hope, Henry Cooper, and the American superstar, Cassius Clay – soon to become Muhammad Ali in front of 35,000 fans. Henry downed Clay with a thunderbolt left hook and, many say that it was only a controversial delay in the start of the next round to repair a split glove (rumoured to have been done deliberately by his corner) which bought Clay time to recover his senses.

The other iconic “alternative” event at Wembley was Live Aid, the charity concert in 1985, which saw all the music superstars of the time performing, either at Wembley or simultaneously in Philadelphia in the States, to raise money and awareness for the Ethiopian famine. Organised by Bob Geldoff, acts including Queen, U2, Phil Collins, David Bowie, Paul McCartney and The Who. It was the first of what has

become many charity inspired music events all over the world which have raised millions for diverse causes. Without Wembley there is a fair chance that it may have not been possible to stage an event – at such short notice – and that the large scale charity concert concept may not have been given such a wonderful start.

Since then stadiums have been the option of choice for many concerts and George Michael, Bon Jovi, Madonna, Coldplay, Oasis, Take That, Ed Sheeran and AC/DC, as well as the charity Concert for Diana and Live Earth events, have graced Wembley while similar events and big names have become regular attractions at national stadia and club stadia up and down the country.

On a sporting front boxing has been joined by as diverse pursuits as American Football; Baseball; Speedway; Greyhound Racing; WWF Wrestling Formula 1 – turning Wembley into a short, exciting racing

circuit Race of Champions would you believe Ski Jumping? While not forgetting of course, perhaps the most diverse use of Wembley of all time – Evil Knievel’s attempt to jump over 13 London Buses in 1975

Stadiums are now built with multi-use in mind and, to maximise the number of days a stadium is in use, is a key element of balancing vast budgets at the end of the year.

The Millennium Stadium – now Principality Stadium – in Cardiff opened in 1999 and is another example of a stadium built to ensure that it doesn’t sit idle for most of the time. In addition to being the National Stadium for both the Wales football and rugby teams, its retractable roof gives added adaptability which has been embraced by so many different events and disciplines.

More recently the Olympic Park has also shown its genuine adaptability and has now just begun its new life as home to West Ham United.

**Falmer Stadium, known for sponsorship purposes as the American Express Community Stadium, or simply The Amex, is a football stadium near the village of Falmer in Brighton and Hove and is the home of Brighton & Hove Albion F.C.**



While the Hammers' fans may feel they are a little further away from the action than at their beloved Upton Park, because of the famous athletics track, the upside is a large capacity, state-of-the-art stadium the like of which the Gold brothers and Dame Karen Brady could not have dreamt of funding from scratch.

From day one the Olympic Park showed its versatility with the mind blowing 2012 Opening Ceremony, complete with giant chimney stacks and parachuting monarchs, preparing the way for Usain Bolt and his colleagues to showcase their sporting prowess to the world. With spectator seats equipped with flashing lights a stadium is now expected to play a full interactive role in proceedings and the Olympic Park did that.

It has since gone on to host the annual Anniversary Games, international football matches; hosting games in the Rugby World Cup on 2015 and has added immensely

to London's stable of outstanding multi-use sporting venues, to which you can add Twickenham, and the top football venues in the city at Arsenal, Chelsea, Tottenham, not to mention those slightly further afield in the shape of the Madejski Stadium in Reading and Stadium MK in Milton Keynes – new modern, sensibly sized stadiums.

Around the country new stadiums are being built of existing ones

adapted to ensure that they are kept busy all year round and if it is not for events on the playing area it is in lavish new corporate entertainment facilities overlooking the playing surface. Companies can hold seminars and conferences knowing that the attraction of a Stadium Tour will bring in the normally reticent client. Wedding receptions are also on the increase with supporter couples keen to mark their nuptials with never to

**Top, the Macron Stadium, for Bolton Wanderers, and above, the Ricoh Arena, Coventry**



# “Every part of the county is now catered for.”

**Pride Park Stadium, officially known as the iPro Stadium, is an all-seater football stadium on the Pride Park business park on the outskirts of Derby**

► be forgotten pictures featuring the club logo and pitch as a backdrop. Indeed the proportion of top flight football clubs in England to have moved to new stadia since the Taylor Report proposed all seater stadiums following the Hillsborough Disaster in 1995, given the odd change as a result of promotion and relegation, is around 50%. Every part of the county is now catered for and the names, if not exactly tripping off the tongue, becoming more and more familiar to us. The Riverside Stadium; The Ricoh Arena; The Amex Stadium; the Macron Stadium; the Vitality

Stadium; the Ipro Stadium; the Keepmoat Stadium; the KC Stadium; the King Power Stadium; the Etihad Stadium; the Kassam Stadium; St Mary’s Stadium; the Britannia Stadium; the Stadium of Light and the DW Stadium are just a few, and all in England. Add to that those in other parts of the UK – Murrayfield, in Edinburgh, to name but one – and add in the cricket grounds which are now authentic options for rock concerts and, in the case of Lords, wonderful archery venues, and you have a plethora of multi use venues which didn’t exist 20 years ago (excluding Lords, of course!).

But the elephant in the room is always that major events outside of the core use of the stadium can impact on the playing surface and it is the job of the Head Groundsman or Facilities Manager to avoid the headlines, or pundit’s critique, when the quality of the pitch for the next home game is not what they have come to expect. It says much for the fact that despite the increase in usage of pitches for alternative sporting, and entertainment events, the quality of pitches in the UK has continued to improve and the skill of the professionals tasked with ensuring top quality playing conditions remain in place all of the time.



Pitch lighting; the emergence of the DESSO Grassmaster pitch; the ability to relay an entire pitch, and have it playable in weeks rather than months and new pitch covering methods have all become reality in recent history, but without the highly developed skills of those who have to implement the new techniques we would still be facing issues.

So let us applaud the fact that just a short time after 30,000 Bruce Springsteen fans were “Dancing in the Dark” on the Etihad pitch earlier this year, that Sergio Aguero could very easily have been finishing off a sweeping Manchester City move to send the light blue fans into raptures.



Manchester City's Etihad stadium



# Compact solutions

The compact tractor has continued to grow in popularity within the sports turf arena in the last three decades, establishing itself as one of the essential pieces of kit for many golf, football, rugby and cricket clubs across the UK.

In order to get the most bang for your buck, understanding what makes a good, reliable compact is vital. Whatever the application, the balance between being tough and powerful yet also light and nimble is a must. Crucially, the tractor must also be able to minimise the impact it has on the turf, to avoid the tyres undoing the good work of the team.

Enjoying a slice of over 40% of the groundcare market, Kubota has become a trusted brand for turf professionals, and its best selling product line remains its compact tractors, with many of the UK's leading venues such as the Principality Stadium, The Grove and the Etihad Stadium all boasting Kubota fleets.

So, if you're in the market for new compact, what factors should be considered? Ensure that the chosen model can minimise turf damage, and won't compact the soil or inhibit drainage. Another key element is operator satisfaction. Choose a machine that operators are happy with, that is simple to use and is

## Kubota is synonymous with the compact tractor. Learn what they are up to currently.

comfortable for extended periods in seat, particularly in times of high frequency maintenance.

These factors are just a starter for ten and there are many more elements to consider when looking at a compact tractor, which will depend on individual aspects such as the size of facility, the power-to-weight ratio needed to undertake the range of jobs, whether a front loader is needed and the compatibility of relevant cutting desks.

For those looking for a compact tractor with the agility of a ride-on-mower should look at Kubota's BX2350, which boasts a high power-to-weight ratio, meaning purchasers can spend less on a smaller model but benefit from levels of power more commonly associated with larger horsepower tractors. From mowing and landscaping to heavy-duty front loader work, the Kubota BX2350 is rugged and versatile, boasting the power and performance needed for demanding applications, but also one that is agile and light on foot,

perfect for navigating obstacles or undulations.

Powered by Kubota's 23HP, 3-cylinder indirect injected, liquid cooled diesel engine, the BX2350 is meticulously engineered to deliver long hours of demanding, continuous work, which is why they're a firm favourite with many turf professionals looking for a smaller model that pack a punch above competitors in similar weight categories.

If extra power is top of the wish list then Kubota's B20 Series could be another option. Available in 16, 18 and 24HP models (B1620, B1820 & B2420), the series is fitted with the robust and fuel-efficient Kubota ETVCSS engine and prides itself on a good balance of power, versatility and comfort.

The B1620 and B1820 models include the addition of a mid PTO shaft drive, which can be teamed with Kubota's 48-inch mid-mount deck, to deliver superb consistency of cut in long or wet grass.

If there are calls for a larger

# Ways to pay

**Adrian Langmead outlines the virtues of finance for machinery purchase and highlights some considerations to be aware of before deciding which model is best for your business.**

compact model, which will likely be the case if there is a heavy demand for loader work and multiple implement use then Kubota's B50 Series could be the model for you. The B50 is the biggest and most powerful in Kubota's compact tractor range, and since its introduction to the market in 2014 it has fast become one of its most popular lines.

The B50 Series possesses one of Kubota's secret weapons, its unique hydraulic bi-speed turn, which automatically activates when the front wheel turning angle exceeds 35°, ensuring smoother, faster and tighter turns for operators. As the only model on the market in its class to feature this functionality, the Kubota range goes further than any other brand in minimising turf damage.

The B50 also features a selectable 4WD with HST or manual transmission as standard, alongside multi-stage cruise control for optimum working speed and control. The manual gearbox version and features Kubota's shuttle shift system. The complete B50 Series is available in four variants ranging from 21-31HP, so there's something for everyone.

The Kubota range is also helped by the commitment to tailor its purchasing options to the individual customers, which is vital in today's market as finance managers are always looking for practical and flexible buying options. Good residual value is another factor to take into account prior to purchase, to ensure that purchasers get a good return on their investment over the long term.

To help make purchase simple for customers Kubota this year launched an improved Kubota Finance package, designed to make year-round buying more straightforward. Finance options are now available across Kubota's full product range with flexible payment options and terms available throughout its nationwide dealer network.

The notion of purchasing one, or a fleet of machines, via any other means than capital investment would historically have been looked upon unfavourably by customers, particularly those in certain sports turf markets.

In much the same way that car finance is now commonplace for personal and business purchases, the shift in buying habits is evolving in our industry too. Today, flexibility and the whole life cost approach to machinery are considered high priority factors when comparing to an outright purchase. Approximately 20-25% of our (Kubota UK) groundcare customers now use finance as a means of purchase; a figure that we expect will increase this year and in the future.

The virtues of finance for large nationwide contractors, who may require fleets of hundreds of machines, are clear to be seen, yet the breadth in customers benefiting from finance has widened markedly, with private users, small contractors and sports clubs increasingly looking at a raft of options for purchase, rather than simply raiding the coffers.

Not all options will be right for every customer, though, so it's important to thoroughly research and understand all the options available before making the right choice for you. Essentially, customers can choose between four finance packages: Hire Purchase, Operating Lease, Contract Hire and Finance Lease.

Hire Purchase is designed to put the customer in complete control. They decide how much deposit to set down (there will likely be a minimum amount), the length of the contract and how much their monthly payments will be. Importantly, at the end of the contract, customers own the machinery.

Hire Purchase is a practical option for the owner operator as it allows them to spread the cost of purchase, whilst still owning the machine. The desire for ownership is still important in the industry, so factors such as residual value will also factor into the decision-making process too. For example, our compact tractor range continues to lead the market, not just because of the quality and reliability that customers expect with Kubota, but also because the resale value of our machines are strong. This means the end user is safe in the knowledge that they have a good asset once the finance agreement has been met.

The second option open to customers is Finance Lease. This is popular if the customer wants to keep rental payments low. It also negates the need to stump up potentially large upfront deposits by allowing customers to spread the VAT cost over the term of an agreement. These payments can also normally be offset against taxable profits, making it a cost efficient and practical option.

Arguably the most risk and hassle free purchase options are Operating Lease or Contract Hire agreements. Both options reduce the risk to the customer if they don't wish to own the machinery at the end of their agreement, which ultimately minimises the upfront and total costs.

Finance lease is a popular option for large contractors as it allows them to keep a tight control on costs and monthly expenditure. In both cases, a fixed sum will be paid each month and, for Contract Hire only, will include regular servicing, maintenance, and any required repairs. This means contractors can keep track of exactly what's spent on each vehicle each month and that their fleet will be updated at regular intervals to ensure they have the most up to date kit.

Where the manufacturer is concerned, Contract Hire is beneficial because it allows them to closely monitor the cost of ownership. For example, usage hours and service intervals will often be agreed up front, so calculations can be made from the outset regarding the value of machines at the end of the agreement. ▶



# Ways to pay

► These options aren't only beneficial for contractors with multiple fleets; they can also be beneficial for smaller operators too. A modest contracting firm for example can keep a tight rein on outgoings through Contract Hire, which is key if they are being paid based on a 'metres mown' or 'volume of grass cut' rate.

By entering into a Contract Hire agreement, the contractor can accurately calculate how much work is required to pay the operator and make money for the business, as the running costs will be fixed and any repairs, breakdowns or subsequent downtime

will be accommodated for. Monthly payments may come at a premium, but for peace of mind and accurate budgeting, many small

businesses find this to be a practical solution.

For some, the desire to own the machinery outright from the outset will still be preferable over any finance agreement. If money is set aside on an annual basis for machinery replacement then outright purchase does have its benefits.

That said, even if funds are available to cover the initial costs, finance should be considered into the mix, for the reasons outlined. With finance, customers benefit from a far reduced initial capital outlay, monthly payments can be agreed to suits budgets and often customers can get a higher profile model up front, which may not be possible with outright payment. Finance is also beneficial for customers who carry out seasonal work, as finance gives them the option of aligning their solution to their income across the seasons.

Whatever the choice, making a decision in consultation with your local dealer is recommended, as they will likely be able to tailor a solution to the specific needs of your business.

■ *Adrian Langmead is Kubota UK's Groundcare Business Development Manager.*



## Innovative features on latest Terra Spike

The eleventh aerator in the Terra Spike range arrives in the UK this month after being launched in the US. Wiedenmann UK's new Terra Spike SL can tine down to 210 mm on fine turf making it more than twice the match for some shallow aerators.

The SL introduces a built-in tine return system and additional shock absorbing facility never seen before. The engineering development helps keep the SL's weight to just 470 kg even though the aerator is a handsome 1.4 m wide. Suited to compact tractors from 20 hp with 600 kg lift capacity, it has a very light footprint and will decompact greens and tees.

In keeping with other Terra Spikes, it features much of the patented class-leading technology synonymous with

the Wiedenmann brand: VibraStop which prevents vibration travelling to the operator or the machine and tractor; QuickSet which enables tool free adjustment of both tine depth and heave with settings visible on a large scale; QuickChange which allows tine heads to be exchanged with only one screw and TwinDrive where the crankshaft is powered from two symmetrical sides and impact is absorbed by the special v-ribbed belt on either side.

Exceptionally quiet and smooth, fewer moving parts mean less wear, less maintenance and fewer greasing points. The new machine will be on show at the STRI's Research Open Days on Sept 21 & 22 in Bingley and at Stand A080 at Saltex, NEC Birmingham Nov 2 & 3, 2016.

## Mats increase use and protects as well

Nice Lie artificial mats have been launched by Yorkshire-based golf accessory entrepreneur, Rob Goodman, offering golf clubs and golfers the ideal way of playing enjoyable winter golf, or on recently built courses, without causing any damage.

"The mats are made from quality Astro turf providing perfect club face to ball blade height with a tether system stability, handy clip, and name/club tag," explained Rob, who also produced the

Tuff-Tees, the impossible to break golf tees.

Rob actually appeared on Dragon's Den to sell the idea of his tees but he is keen that his new product line will prove equally successful.

"The response has been fantastic and I have recently secured Snainton Golf to sell the mats on line for me," he added.

"I am 100% confident it will increase the use of and protect the course at the same time, A Win Win for all," said Rob.





## Worthy addition to Workman range

The Toro Workman GTX, a turf and grounds crossover utility vehicle, has more power, improved steering, and an exclusive suspension and braking system, making it the most versatile, practical and comfortable in its class.

"The GTX is an exceptionally versatile and powerful machine, a host of additional features means the new model meets high power and performance standards, while also being incredibly comfortable to drive. And while more compact and lightweight, meaning it's kind to turf, power hasn't been substituted for a light tread; this machine has both," explained Lely's National Sales Manager, Jeff Anguige.

Available in petrol or electric versions, the adaptable Workman GTX features over 300 configuration options, including front and rear attachments, a flat bed and a four-seat option.

"This model is first in the range to offer the option to seat four, working as a personnel carrier as well as materials carrier, and does so without compromising on power, comfort or control," says Jeff.

The Workman MDX-D now has a two horsepower increase over the previous MDX.

# Membership up after Jacobsen brought in

The Royal Burgess Golfing Society, on the outskirts of Edinburgh, has seen vast improvements in the quality of its golf course, resulting in an increase in membership figures, after purchasing a range of equipment from Jacobsen.

Head Greenkeeper Chris Yeaman has been at the club since 2009, and brought more than 40 years greenkeeping experience to The Royal Burgess. "When I first arrived, the course was not in the best shape. This was partly due to an ageing fleet of machinery and equipment that was just not doing the job," said Chris.

Chris previously had experience with Jacobsen equipment and encouraged the club to invest in high-quality machinery for the greenkeeping team to use and raise the standards of the golf course. With the club's blessing, Chris invested in two Cushman Turf Truckster utility vehicles with topdressers, two

TR-3 triplex cylinder mowers, an AR522 for rough, an 11-blade Eclipse 322 ride-on greens mower, two LF570 lightweight fairway mowers and two Iseki 546 tractors.

"The Eclipse 322 is the best greens mower available on the market. I

know a few people in the industry who say that the new technology scares them, but when it gives you results good enough for the US Open, the Scottish Open and the French Open... there's really no argument.

"It is a surprisingly simple machine to use and the swing-out centre unit makes it extremely easy to maintain, which our mechanic is thankful for!

"At The Royal Burgess, we have a signature 11th hole where there is a hill that has been notoriously difficult to maintain. The AR522 is a powerful machine which negotiates the hill perfectly and hugs the contours without any signs of strain on the engine; a feat that no other mower has been able to achieve.

"I have a fairly small team here of seven, plus one mechanic, to maintain an area of 100 acres. While this is manageable, I know that if we didn't have the right equipment, our working days would be a lot longer, and the quality of the course would be compromised. As it stands, I'm extremely happy with the improvements we have seen on the course, and the club is also seeing a return in the form of increasing membership figures."

The Royal Burgess Golfing Society traces its origins back to the 18th century with the first reference to its existence in 1735. In a 19th-century edition of the Edinburgh Almanac.

Left, Head Greenkeeper Chris Yeaman



## Rigby Taylor R9 overseeding transforms greens

When Richard Mullen arrived at Banchory Golf Club as Course Manager in June last year he was met by bare greens. But he immediately knew what to do – overseed with Rigby Taylor's R9 perennial ryegrass.

"I'd used R9 before, and knew about the seed's leaf quality and its ability to recover quickly," he says. "But now I also needed a very speedy growth response to overcome a disastrous situation."

Sowed in August/September during a few weeks of "agreeable" temperatures, complemented by a thorough irrigation programme, R9 responded magnificently, says Richard, on a course characterised by Highland Bents and poa.

"There was fantastic germination

within just seven to nine days – the growth was easy to see since the greens were so bare! We never looked back."

And that success, he adds, was no surprise, based on his past experience with the seed when R9's fine leaf quality and quick recovery were obvious.

R9 is a 100% fine ryegrass and part of the 'iCON' programme of seeds from Rigby Taylor, the company at the forefront of supplying innovative products for the successful management and maintenance of turf surfaces.

It is one of a comprehensive portfolio of Rigby Taylor seeds which reduce mowing frequency but offer a host of advanced and unique specialised

characteristics for high tolerance to wear, and drought and disease tolerance, for example.

With 25 years' greenkeeping experience, most recently 10 years as Head Greenkeeper at Meldrum House Country Hotel & Golf Club near Aberdeen, 41-year-old Richard joined Banchory Golf Club, an 18-hole, par 69 course in Aberdeenshire, in June 2015.

Now, following the success of R9, Richard plans to regularly overseed with the perennial ryegrass, to gradually replace the bents – and the poa – and achieve immaculate greens that are playable in any weather and at all times of the year.



# A cut above

Mowing may seem to be a fairly easy task to carry-out – work out the height of cut (HOC) you want; adjust the machine and away you go! But what is the right HOC? Now that we are coming up to autumn, what is the right/wrong way of cutting during these months – should we be cutting less?

The correct height of cut (HOC) of any grass sward is a subjective issue and dependent on a vast number of variables. To postulate what the correct HOC actually is would necessitate a measurable conclusion; but the question arises as to what variables would the result be measured against? If we look at just two different aspects of greens management, sward pace and plant health, then one can see that both of these are measured in different ways and are affected by HOC. A lower HOC will undoubtedly increase pace, a positive effect if that is the intention, but the effect on plant health may be negative.

It's probably fair to say that the best Course Managers are those that manage this continual trade off in the most effective way. The demands of the golfer for fast smooth greens needs to be considered against overall plant health, putting surface consistency, sustainability, amount of player traffic, cost etc. The conclusion

here therefore is that there is no actual overall "right height" but rather a "right height" for a given circumstance.

There are of course some fundamental guidelines with respect to HOC. A less vigorously growing plant is not able to recover from the stresses of a lower HOC and hence during the colder months the HOC is increased and the frequency of mowing is also reduced. Similarly, other forms of plant stress such as wilt, drought, excessively wet periods or an occurrence of disease may necessitate an increase in HOC. The reason increasing the HOC helps to combat plant stress is simply due to the fact that the increased HOC means more leaf is left on the plant and thus a greater surface area is available for photosynthesis.

When discussing changing the HOC it is important to consider how the HOC is mechanically altered as this in itself can have an effect in the way the leaf blade is cut. The HOC is changed by moving the roller up or down – only one for micro adjustments, and the other for macro adjustments. Using either the front or rear roller for daily adjustment is fine, but each will alter the attitude angle of the unit differently. The aggressiveness of cut is progressively increased when lowering the HOC using the front roller, and decreased when lowering via the

rear roller. A plant that is under stress should not be cut with a cutting unit set with a very aggressive attitude angle as this will further compound the stress problem. In this scenario the HOC may be correct for the situation but the unit set-up is nullifying any positive effects.

As we move in to the autumn period the slower growing conditions will necessitate an increase in the HOC. A common issue encountered here in the UK may also be soft greens caused by water retentive surfaces. When a green is soft the "effective" HOC will be much less than the bench setting due to the weight of the unit pressing in to the turf. To lessen this effect it is a good idea to use mowers with a lower ground pressure. Floating head walk mowers are probably the best solution here.

Mowing with a floating head pedestrian mower – like the ATT INFINiSystem™ – is more discretionary as the operator can select areas of turf that are weaker and 'lift back' on the unit and the 'clean-up cut' is also far less stressful on the plant. It is no coincidence that quite often the origin of disease affected greens begins on the clean-up cut where stress on the plant is much higher. The INFINiSystem™ doubles as a complete maintenance system where the SMARTCut™ cassette can be replaced with any other cassette in the system.

# Mulch mowing

A big question mark remains over the merits of this type of grass cutting. Les Malin from Etesia UK – a brand synonymous with the DuoCut system – cut, collect or mulch, takes a closer look at the pros and cons.

Mulch mowing saw a resurgence of interest when we enjoyed a few dry summers in a row in the late 1990s. Despite more companies now offering mowers that can mulch, acceptance of mulching remains low. There are a whole host of reasons why, ranging from mowing frequencies to dealing with long wet grass. So should we just accept it is of limited value in the UK?

Anyone who has looked at the way rotary mowing has evolved over the past five years will be struck by the increased availability of what can broadly be termed mulch mowers.

On the pedestrian mower front, the term should really be broadened to suggest more manufacturers are offering mowers that can mulch. Dedicated mulchers are now sold alongside 3-in-1 units that can also bag clippings.

## Sward Absorption

It is this trend to multi-role machines that perhaps answers the whole issue surrounding mulching. There is nothing wrong with the idea of chopping grass clippings so small that they are readily absorbed into the sward. Gang cylinder mowers have proven this approach works well.

Where rotary mulch mowers have perhaps been at a disadvantage is in the way in which they are expected to operate. Instead of being used like a gang in little-and-often mowing, they are used like a conventional rotary, and expected to reduce grass of 6 or more inches to perhaps an inch in a single pass.

A rotary mulcher works by both re-chopping the grass to produce small clippings and to then blow these down into the sward.

The aim is to leave the resultant finish

free of surface clippings. This can only be achieved when the sward to clipping ratio is correct.

## Mush and Mud

Add excess moisture, and accumulated mush of wet grass and mud that can result has led many to believe that mulching just does not work.

It is perhaps worth taking a side step when looking at mulching and to consider the whole technique as an ally, as opposed to an alternative, to conventional rotary mowing.

Rotary mowers, particularly for ride-on commercial machines, have evolved from units designed essentially to 'knock' grass down, to machines capable of producing a good finish. Remove the resultant clippings, and there are those who argue commercial cylinder mowers have no real advantage in terms of actual finish.

It is this quality of cut issue that has taken the emphasis away from mulching. In terms of appearance, grass regularly mown with a good rear discharge rotary will give little away, in terms of appearance, to that cut with a cylinder gang.

The aim is to allow users to mulch and so reduce the amount of clippings left on the surface when conditions allow. This enhances the appearance of the turf post mowing but without compromising wet weather cutting ability.

This brings us back to 3-in-1 pedestrian mowers. With a 'bung' or similar device closing off the mowers outlet, the clippings are mulched. Take out the bung and the clippings can either be discharged to the ground or a bag. Versatility is again the key.

Many feel this is the approach needed to allow some form of mulching to gain a



firmer foothold.

There are those, however, who are already strong advocates of mulching, and they suggest we all need to rethink how mowing is carried out, particularly where grass is collected.

In a typical wet spring and early summer, grass growth will typically outstrip any mowing regime's ability to keep it trimmed effectively to summer heights.

## Evaporation Help

But, as the season progresses, warmer conditions allow faster evaporation and with it the chance that grass can be mown when it is dry or at least moist.

Shorter grass also loses water faster so wet mowing can be avoided more easily.

A side effect, however, is the well-understood result that relatively high levels of summer rain are required to keep and sward lush and green.

Come late June (apart from this year!) and many areas will see non-irrigated turf starting to dry or even brown. It is here where a switch in early June from conventional cut and collect mowing to mulching can have a place.

The returned clippings will help retain moisture and also return nutrients to the sward. As long as the regime allows the sward to be maintained to a moisture loss resistant inch or so, this and regular mulch mowing can help keep the grass greener for longer.

There is also the issue of not needing to remove clippings. Clipping disposal is a hot topic at present, so it may be that mulch mowing starts to become recognised as an alternative in regimes that currently call for cut and collect mowing. The secret is to keep an open mind and give mulch mowing a chance.

■ More on mowing on page 33

# MAKING THE MOST OF..

# WATER SOLUBLES

Water-soluble fertilisers have become a key component of many nutritional regimes, due to their simplicity of application, cost-efficiency and rapid agronomic response. However, while they can easily be overcome, there are issues sometimes with preparation that can create problems for the uninitiated. Wendy Windscheffel, Technical Support Manager for Headland Amenity, says it's worth noting some of the features that are common to all water-soluble products when using them for the first time.

Each water-soluble fertiliser has a maximum solubility potential - a maximum amount of product that will solubilise in a given amount of water - before

no more will dissolve. When this maximum amount has been reached, the solution is said to be 'saturated' and further addition only results in un-dissolved crystals, destined to block nozzles and filters. This is one of the most common issues encountered whilst preparing a water soluble fertiliser, particularly if a small vessel like a bucket is utilised to dissolve the product. For example, we know that at 10°C water temperature, the maximum amount of potassium nitrate that can be physically dissolved is 200g per litre. If we are using a 10L bucket of water, this means that we can dissolve 2,000g (2kg). At this point, the solution is 'saturated'. If you were to add 5kg into the 10L bucket, 2kg would dissolve and 3kg will remain un-dissolved.

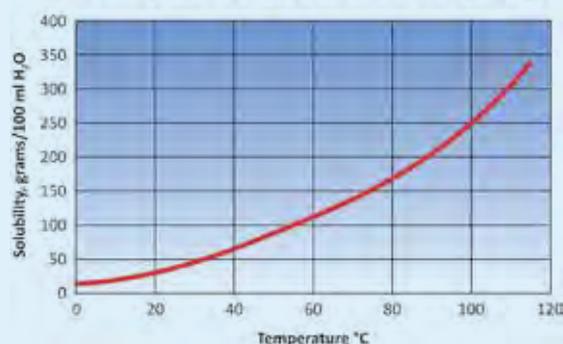
It is important not to exceed the manufacturer's application directions as these will have been set within the maximum solubility potential. Temperature also has an effect on how much product will dissolve (see below).

### Water-soluble fertilisers are endothermic

Soluble fertilisers remove energy from the water in the spray tank as they solubilise. The practical consequence of this is that the temperature of the spray tank solution will decrease as the product is dissolving into solution. The lower the temperature of the spray tank solution, the slower the rate of solubility and the lower the actual amount of material that can be solubilised as explained above.

The solubility of potassium nitrate, for example, doubles with every 10°C change in water

Solubility curve for potassium nitrate (KNO<sub>3</sub>)



temperature, so wherever possible, use warm water to aid solubility.

### How many products in a tank-mix?

The greater the number of products being mixed in the spray tank, the lower the overall solubility potential. Always add water-soluble fertilisers to the spray tank water first and allow to dissolve fully (typically 10-15 minutes under agitation) before adding any other tank-mix partners.

### Check your filters

Even the best water soluble fertilisers can leave traces of insoluble components, especially when mixed with other products. 30 mesh filters (0.6mm) are recommended and allow solutions to move freely without the risk of blocked nozzles, but 50 (0.3mm) or 100 mesh (0.15mm) can sometimes collect tiny, more-slowly dissolving components and lead to blocked re-circulation systems.

Understanding these few simple rules will help to ensure a pain-free experience when using these most versatile of turf fertiliser products.



# Groundsman of year praises Dennis fleet

The 2015/16 Sky Bet Championship Groundsman of the Season, Nathan Scarff, has praised his fleet of Dennis cylinder mowers.

As a leading British manufacturer of innovative professional grounds maintenance equipment, Dennis helps groundsmen, greenkeepers and gardeners all over the world to create their ultimate natural turf surface.

Nathan, head groundsman at the iPro Stadium – home to Derby County FC, is certainly an advocate of the company's range of mowers.

"I've only really been using Dennis mowers for three or four years now, but immediately I fell in love with them. Personally, I think Dennis manufactures the best pedestrian mowers in the world," he said.

Nathan's claim comes after he purchased five new Dennis mowers – two Dennis Premier's and three Dennis G860's complete with a range of interchangeable cassettes.

The Dennis Premier is available in 30" and 36" cutting widths. A three section rear roller and steering brakes make it easy to manoeuvre giving an excellent stripe pattern and rolling characteristics. Complete with a large diameter

grooved front roller with adjustable scraper, for precise height of cut control, the machine is easy to adjust on both sides with the use of a single spanner.

Many groundsmen around the world have chosen the Dennis Premier for its presentation qualities and Nathan is no exception.

"I purchased two Dennis Premier 36" mowers with front rollers and 8 blade cutting cylinders. I wanted them for the final cut building up to match day for firming the pitch up and to get that fantastic aesthetic finish that the mowers provide.

"The Premier is ideal for presentation – especially when your pitch is in front of a worldwide television audience on a regular basis. They really do set the pitch off with that renowned Dennis stripe finish."

Nathan also relies on his new Dennis G860's which is arguably the number one choice for groundsmen working in sports stadia. Often referred to as the 'World Cup mower' after being selected as the official mower at the two most recent FIFA World Cup's in South Africa and Brazil, the G860's are renowned for their quality of cut, performance, reliability and versatility –

thanks to its interchangeable cassette system.

"The G860 gives us regular day-to-day mowing. It's a lightweight and versatile machine which we also use for verti-cutting and brushing to help keep the pitch as clean as possible.

"The best feature on the G860 is being able to take the cassettes out and put other maintenance operations into it, utilising things like the verti-cutting cassette, the brush cassettes and so on. It's all the little things that you get with it and you can tailor it to exactly what you want from a mower."

"Overall, we went for the Dennis machines because of their build quality. They're superb machines; really robust, really well made and very reliable."

As well as praising the quality of the equipment, Nathan was also quick to compliment the company's level of customer service.

"In terms of dealing with Dennis as a company, the support we get is absolutely superb. We can ring up and ask for a demo and the machine will be here the very next day. If we ever need any assistance they are always available and easy to get hold of which ideal for us," he said.



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# Golfing Nobody's Blog

I spoke a few blogs ago about my ambition to represent Team GB in the golf at Rio 2016. Regrettably my "Come and get me" plea to the selectors went unheeded and it was left to Justin and Danny to carry the flag for the country.

Now as we know Justin did

ok. You can't really complain about a Gold Medal but Danny. He may be Masters Champion but I'm sure, with a few straight drives and a hot putter I would have put in a better effort than Danny, especially off full handicap. But you are not going to find me heading off to the "Red Tops" to complain like some disgruntled out of favour footballer – or worst still to leave it to a "close friend" or "insider" to do it for me. I did ask Binky if he would drop them an

anonymous call but he told me where to go.

No. It's all water under the bridge for me and I'm not setting my sights on Tokyo 2020. I'm trying to find out about the course which will be used so I can start to tailor my practice to the type of shot I'll need to make an impact.

My suspicion is that it will be 320 yard drives so I'm already renewing my membership of the gym so I can get some weight training in.

There are a couple of things which came out of the Olympics golf which I'd like to address with you.

How come those little guys who sit in one end of the boats in the rowing and do diddlyquat

other than bawl out a few encouraging pointers like "Faster!"; "Stroke... Stroke...Stroke" and "Are we nearly there yet?" get medals, but the caddies in the golf don't. Caddies work extremely hard – they are listeners as well as advisers, which immediately mark the out from the little boat guys with microphones stuck to their heads. They carry the bag so are being of real practical help to their players unlike the little boat guys who don't help at all.

You'd think with little else to do they could use a little boat guy-sized oar to help the cause – you can hardly say they are there for the steering. Have you seen just how straight these courses are and you do have, I believe, coxless pairs and fours which suggests the little boat guys who do hitch a ride are neither use nor ornament.

I think we should start a campaign for caddies to receive medals, the same as the players. If nothing else it would have helped Justin with the singing of the National Anthem.

The other thing is. Can't we all agree that the best format for the Olympics is the one which most of us employ every Saturday morning – three or fourball teams with two scores counting. It would introduce a true team element to the Olympic Golf and encourage much more attacking golf. Can you imagine a team of Justin (as defending Champion he would deserve his place), Beef Johnson, me and Ian Poulter (he might suit those hideous Team GB shirts)? We'd take a bit of beating, as I could specialise in the shorter holes where, with a shot, I can be mighty dangerous.

I'm counting down the days to Tokyo already!

*\*As told to Scott MacCallum*





as seen on  
**TWITTER**



**Wimbledon Groundsman** @AELTCGroundsman Flying through court 18, great example of how much the paint leaches through the surface too #renovations

**Pitchcare** @Pitchcare If you have @instagram check out our page: [https://www.instagram.com/pitchcare\\_hq/](https://www.instagram.com/pitchcare_hq/) for a behind the scenes look at what we get up to! #instagram #turf

**IOG SALTEX** @IOG\_SALTEX We are delighted to announce that Turfcare will be returning to @the\_iog #SALTEX16!



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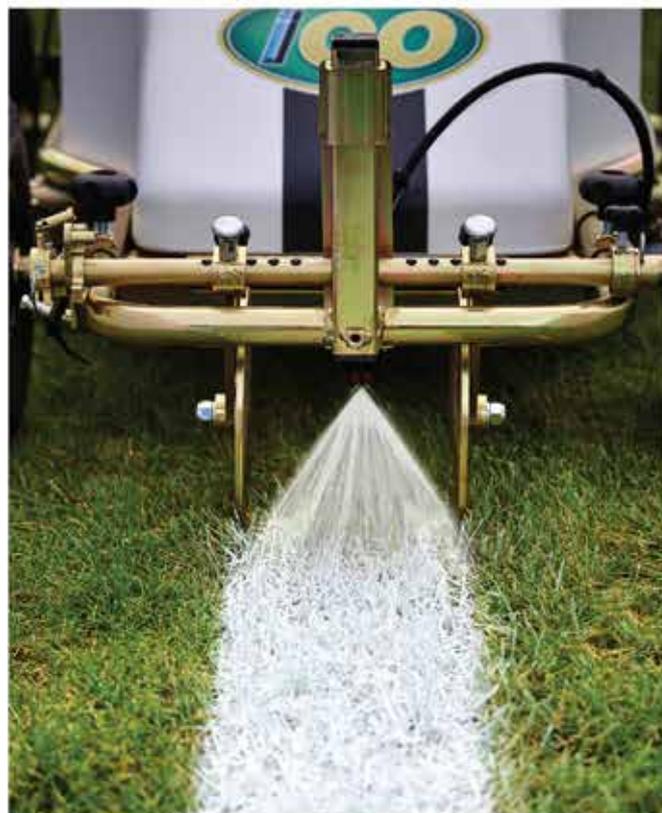
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**Tea Break Teaser answers**

1. Steve Johnson; 2. Adam Peaty; 3. Phillip Hindes, Jason Kenny, Callum Skinner; 4. SVicky Thornley; 5. Men's All Around; 6. Henrik Stenson; 7. Tokyo; 8. Monica Puig, of Puerto Rico; 9. Sophie Hitchon; 10. South African; 11. 68; 12. Trampoline; 13. Jazz Carlin; 14. 28, 23 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze; 15. Bradley Wiggins.



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