

# TURF MATTERS

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The Grand National at Aintree

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# TURF MATTERS

## Investigate 3G concerns

Reports linking 3G pitches and their rubber crumb with cancer is something which has caused significant concern.

Studies have suggested that rubber crumb has been found to contain potentially damaging elements including arsenic, chromium and lead. A former NHS Manager has also revealed that his goalkeeper son had contracted Hodgkin's Lymphoma and expressed concern that there may have been a connection with his diving on a 3G pitch and his ingesting rubber crumb.

It goes without saying that more testing must be carried out. If, as we all hope, the results prove that there is no link between, it will allow local authorities and football clubs to continue to install pitches which allow the all year round participation, without the threat of a class action.


It will also allow those people who maintain the pitches to do so without any nagging doubts in the backs of their minds that they may be storing up health problems and free up parents to watch their offspring slide into tackles and produce full length goal saving dives without worrying about any potential long term consequences.

The technology is still relatively new and, while I may be wrong, I suspect that improving the playability of the surfaces was the primary concern of developers. Health issues, outside of the potential for burns, strains and sprains, had no reason to even be on their radar.

When I was a kid my first pet was a rabbit called Bilbo Baggins. He died and we got a second who I also called Bilbo Baggins, but he too died before reaching what a rabbit would consider to be ripe old age. We'd built what we thought was a fantastic hutch for Bilbo 1 and Bilbo 2 but it was only a few years later that we put two and two together. The hutch had been built out of asbestos...

It is now vital that proper testing is carried out, even if only to ensure that we are not inadvertently producing the sports pitch equivalent of asbestos rabbit hutches.

**Scott MacCallum, Editor**

 You can follow me on Twitter @TurfMatters

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: AINTREE RACECOURSE

Distributed every two months to sports turf professionals, independent schools, universities, local authorities and buyers of turfcare machinery and products.

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Turf Matters is published by Straight Down the Middle Communications Ltd.

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Printed by Warners Midlands PLC.



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Next magazine distributed May 2016

# Toro's agreement with the European Tour extended

Toro has renewed its multi-year partnership with the European Tour, which continues a successful 15-year relationship. The partnership includes the European Tour, Senior Tour and Challenge Tour across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

"After a full market analysis, we are proud to see Toro come out on top and be selected by the Tour as the best partner to meet their needs," said Andy Brown, Toro's Senior Sales Manager for Commercial Equipment, Golf Irrigation and Corporate Accounts, Europe, Middle East and Africa.

"There was, as always, significant competition, but the quality of Toro products combined with local dealer support and the fact that most venues are existing Toro customers, we believe was a key differentiator."

Toro turf equipment and irrigation products will continue to assist the European Tour in the presentation and playability of the courses to provide the best possible conditions for players, promoters, sponsors and the watching public. With a large



Toro turf and irrigation equipment will continue to assist the European Tour

majority of the European Tour venues already using Toro equipment and irrigation, most operators will be able to use additional machines without the need for extensive training.

"Having our golf courses prepared and presented to the highest standard is an essential part of providing the

best possible playing experience for our members, which is one of our key priorities. Toro's products play a vital role in us achieving this, so we are delighted to extend our relationship to help ensure these high standards continue to be met," said Keith Pelley, CEO of the European Tour.

## New mowers for St George's Park



Alan Ferguson, Group Head of Grounds and Estates at St George's Park, home for England's 24 national teams, needs little or no introduction. The former Ipswich Head Groundsman is responsible for all 12 pitches at the 330-acre National Football Centre in the Staffordshire countryside, as well as the wider estate.

His remit also includes over-seeing the playing surface at Wembley Stadium. That represents a lot of 'cleaning' to be done after games and training. Alan had watched carefully the development of

the Allett RM34 Stadium Mower as a potential solution to the centre's pitch cleaning problems.

"We had a trial with a demonstration machine on loan in August to September 2015 and were immediately impressed with the way the Allett performed," explained Alan.

"With the extra width - 34" - the roller and vacuum effect, it saves an immense amount of time and manpower in the clean-up process after matches. In fact we were so delighted with the Allett we ordered seven machines and took delivery in December. They really are the ideal solution and are in use on all the pitches."

Specifically developed with and for stadium groundsmen, the Allett RM34 has a twin-bladed high-lift system that cuts and vacuums quickly and efficiently to clean up after matches or mow higher during grow-in. There's a micro height adjustment between 15mm and 75mm for exact blade cut and a 5 gear speed

selection for precise control. Solid and substantial to use the RM 34 is surprisingly light and also has an optional front fixed brush strip available.

The primary role for the Allett machines at St. George's Park is to cut and remove the loose grass on the surface of the pitch which, if left to break down and decay, forms algae on the surface which is not only slippery but leaves the pitch open to risk of fungal attack, disease and a build up of thatch.

"There's the 'golden hour' after training or a game to clear this debris, and that is where the Allett RM 34 is so fast and effective, substantially cutting the time we used to spend getting the pitches back into shape," said Alan.

As well as the work done at St. George's Park, Alan's team will be relocating three of the Allett RM34 mowers to the training base in France as part of the national side's maintenance support on the training pitches for the European Championships in 2016.



# Reform dealers are A-rated



A number of delegates from the Reform Werk dealer network attended a training session at the company's Wels, Austria, factory.

Simon Richard, UK Agent for the Reform range, said: "The training was in support of the installation

at their premises of the very latest diagnostic equipment. Any downtime for contractors can prove costly and Reforms policy is to invest in provision of the best back-up service.

"In addition to the most up to date

equipment these 'A' rated dealerships now also have the support of a UK based Factory Product Technician.

The training programme was delivered by Reform staff assisted by staff from engine manufacturers VM."

**Delegates at the training session**

## Top mower for ATT

The INFiNiSystem30 from ATT has won the Horticulture Week What Kit? Pedestrian Mower of the Year award for 2015. The 30 inch pedestrian unit was chosen as the winner from a shortlist of eight machines.

The pedestrian award citation said that although the concept had been around for a few years, with the 22" and 26" models, "Building it in a bigger size is not as simple as just stretching the machine. It means new calculations and fresh engineering. ATT has done well to present a 30" unit that is ideal for pitches and large areas of grass. The machine is really well built and has the advantages of low vibration, low noise and no emissions when the battery is used. The way the head floats independently of the traction unit is brilliant. It is precision engineering

giving precision mowing. But it is also more than a mower – it's a complete system and very well thought out... they have thought of everything and yet it shouts simplicity."

The INFiNiSystem30 was developed to cater for the needs of the Groundsman. A 'true hybrid', it can be driven either fully electrically via a single or double battery module or by hybrid electric via an engine generator configuration. A recent study at a football club that uses a petrol mower found that fuel costs per mow were £3.52. Based on 10 cuts per week, for 49 weeks of the year, the total fuel expenditure worked out at £1,724.80 per mower. Mow the same pitch the same times with the electric ATT 30" INFiNiSystem™ and the club could save £1,592.50 a year per mower.



**ATT's 30-inch pedestrian mower**



★ A JCB Loadall telescopic handler played a leading role in Hollywood: at the Oscars. The 88th Academy Awards saw stars take to the red carpet for

the ceremony. Greeting them as they arrive on Hollywood Boulevard were giant versions of the statuette they all hope to go home with.

And lifting them into place around the theatre was a JCB 512-56 Loadall made for the North American market at JCB's World HQ in Staffordshire.



# ICL has the remedy for high tides at Newburgh Golf Course



**"We are quite exposed to the sea at Newburgh... so it has worked really well for us," says Course Manager Jim Peace**

Overlooking the North Sea, Newburgh on Ythan Golf Club in Aberdeenshire faces the wrath of the ocean's high tides from time to time. Fortunately for Course Manager Jim Peace, he has a range of ICL products on hand to help.

Newburgh may have the odd battle with the North Sea but it does however offer its members fabulous views which are accentuated by a backdrop of the nearby Forvie Nature Reserve.

As a long term user of ICL products, Jim believes that H2Pro Maximise has made the North Sea's resilience less problematic.

"I have been using H2Pro Maximise for two years now, and it is applied monthly from April to October. We mainly use it for keeping the surfaces of the greens

drier and firmer and it also helps wash salts from the root zone.

"We are quite exposed to the sea at Newburgh and some greens get flooded when tides are high so it has worked really well for us. It does what it says it will and also encourages deeper rooting," says Jim.

H2Pro Maximise is a penetrant wetting agent formulated to remove surface water. As Jim says, it is specifically formulated to encourage deep rooting and flush excess salts through the soil profile. Not only does it maximise the effectiveness of irrigation treatments but it helps maintain year-round playability too.

Jim also uses a variety of products from the SierraformGT range of micro-granular fertilisers which are ideal for improving the

turf on greens, tees and fairways. The formulation benefits from slow release nitrogen and potassium which in turn provides consistent and sustained results. Granules are broken down and dispersed extremely quickly and Jim says it has helped improve the greens at Newburgh.

"I started using SierraformGT last year, and I apply it to the greens in spring, summer and autumn.

"It really is a fantastic product to apply; it disappears into the sward quickly and does not affect the playability of the greens. I also like the fact that it offers you a nice even release and lasts around eight weeks which is great.

"Since I've been using it, SierraformGT has resulted in good healthy turf on the greens."

Jim is also a fan of Primo Maxx too, and was also quick to compliment the customer service he receives from the company on a regular basis.

"Jamie Lees (Technical Area Sales Manager) and other members of the ICL team are always available to advise us on products. We get regular visits from them here at Newburgh and they also stay in contact with us via email. The information we receive is always very helpful and the technical advice is great.

"Overall, I couldn't recommend ICL enough," he said.

## John Deere wins Rotary Mower of Year

John Deere's 1500 Series TerrainCut front rotary mower has won the Horticulture Week What Kit? Ride-On Mower of the Year Award 2015. The mower was selected from a shortlist of eight machines that also included the John Deere X590 Multi-Terrain lawn tractor and ZTrak Z997R zero-turn mower.

Celebrating the very best in professional machinery, the WhatKit? Mower of the Year Awards 2015 were split into three separate categories – pedestrian, ride-on and tractor-mounted/towed.

The ride-on award citation said: "This



has been the hardest category to judge. There are several worthy winners and we met on three occasions to try to decide the winner. In the end it was the versatility of the John Deere mower that clinched it.

"Out-front rotaries are a first choice for many contractors carrying out council work and are a favourite with operators. The 1500 Series TerrainCut offers an exceptionally comfortable work station, with a commanding view of the work ahead and well laid-out controls."

There are five 1500 Series TerrainCut models equipped with three-cylinder diesel engines from 24 to 36hp, four-wheel drive, high-capacity rotary mower decks and a new optional grass and leaf collection system. They are designed to mow and collect thick grass at high speeds and still produce a quality cut.



# Limagrain transforms Market Drayton club

As a long time user of Limagrain products, Simon Cotterill, Head Greenkeeper at Market Drayton Golf Club, believes that the company has been instrumental in helping him transform the greens.

Regarded as one of the best golf courses in the county, Simon and his three full time members of staff and one part time, are tasked with maintaining the course at Market Drayton Golf Club to the highest possible standard.

Simon has worked at the club for over 25 years and for 20 of those years he has been using Limagrain products. In 2010 he decided to undertake a major greens renovation programme and to help him along the way he sought the advice of the company.

"Between 2008 and 2010 we made some improvements to the greens which resulted in better drainage and

surfaces. Because we had drier greens we thought that we would try and get rid of the meadow grasses so we started taking advice from Limagrain on how to take meadow grass greens over to bent grass greens. They have been great and have been helping me with a number of things including varieties, planting regimes, overseeding and getting the best out of the Graden machine initially and later a sorrel roller type speed seed."

To improve the overall quality of the grass species, Simon overseeds with Limagrain's MM9 grass seed, which is a product of the MM range – one of the most respected brands in the UK amenity industry. The MM9 grass seed produces a fine, dense sward for the ultimate playing surface, and Simon has certainly noticed the improvements.

"From 2010 until 2013 we overseeded just once a year with the MM9 and



were putting on 5g per square metre through the Graden. In 2014 we started using 2g a month in May, June, July and August with an overseeder and we did the same this year.

"MM9 has extremely quick germination and we've seen a massive increase in grass coverage and density in the last five years on the greens. We now have greens dominated by up to 70% bent grass instead of annual meadow grass.

"It's safe to say that I would absolutely recommend Limagrain."

**"We now have greens dominated by up to 70% bent grass instead of annual meadow grass," says Simon Cotterill, Head Greenkeeper**

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# Stamping out rural crime with Kubota's RTV-X900

Law-breakers across rural Oxfordshire villages are thinking twice before carrying out machinery thefts or taking part in anti-social behaviour thanks to Kubota's RTV-X900 utility vehicle.

The sturdy RTV has been loaned to Thames Valley Police to allow the force to patrol miles of countryside and protect farms and local businesses from being targeted by criminals.

Thames Valley Police is the first police force in the UK to introduce an all-terrain vehicle to its fleet and the impact is already showing after six months, with the force seeing crime rates fall rapidly thanks to the constant presence of police officers being able to access areas of land that were previously out of bounds or difficult to access.

Two residents who have experienced the RTV's benefits first hand are Colin and Pauline Rouse, residents of Backhouse Farm in Bampton. The couple had previously been victims of an arson attack when bales in their field were set alight, causing huge devastation and a significant loss of income.

The use of the RTV by the force meant that when a second arson attack took place, Police Community Support Officer, Colin Davies, was able



to get to the scene of the crime within minutes before heavy rainfall washed away incriminating evidence.

"The RTV has been invaluable in helping us reach a much higher percentage of rural crimes and improve the service we provide to the local community, such as the arson attack at Backhouse Farm.

"Local farmers have recognised what we can now do and have been fantastic in supporting us, providing access to their land so that when an

incident takes place, we can be patrolling the difficult countryside terrain in rapid time," said Colin.

In addition to being used to patrol the countryside, the utility vehicle has been put to good use in the town centre proving its versatility.

The force has attended around 96 crimes across Carterton, Bampton and Norton since the RTV arrived in June last year, with each officer able to get to the scene in under one hour.

## Knapsack system with a difference



Evolution is the name of a new knapsack sprayer range specially developed for the amenity professional user.

The system package has been designed to apply products effectively at 1 bar pressure and, with the supplied nozzles, apply a medium to coarse spray application rate of 150 litres per hectare, at normal walking speed.

Each Evolution knapsack sprayer comes equipped with 1 bar of pressure regulator and a range of nozzles that offer operators a choice of spray swath widths and one that can be used for spot treating. As the Evolution system controls many application variables,

Rigby Taylor will be supplying users with specific dilution recommendations for its range of products.

All the operator has to do is select a suitable nozzle for the area being sprayed. Initially four knapsack models will be available: Two back pack models

with tank capacities of 15 litres and 20 litres and 12 litre and 7 litre compression sprayers.

The system also comes with a range of optional accessories such as a 3.2m or 5.4m extension lance, nozzle shrouds and made to measure booms.

### NEXT GENERATION RXV GOLF CAR

★ E-Z-GO has introduced the next-generation model of its RXV golf car, equipped with a revolutionary combination of AC power and IntelliBrake technology for superior performance and increased energy efficiency.

The RXV's AC Drive technology is said to be up to 25% more efficient than the DC technology traditionally used in electric golf cars, and provides a powerful, consistent and reliable ride on all types of course terrain.





# Nick clocks up 25 years

1989 was a memorable year. The Berlin Wall came down; Duran Duran were top of the hit parade; Arsenal also won the league; Sky TV was launched in the UK; Mrs Thatcher was in power and Nick Darking joined Charterhouse Turf Machinery! At BTME 2016 senior staff at Charterhouse Turf Machinery took the opportunity to recognise his almost unbroken 25 years of service.

Nick's initial role was very much hands on as he started work in the workshop building machines. After

a very short break, he moved in to a Sales Demonstrator role which led into becoming Area Manager for the South. It is here that his strong relationships with Charterhouse Dealers was formed and ultimately would lead to the position of Sales Manager, the position he still holds today.

Redexim and Charterhouse Director, Herman de Bree, commended Nick for all his hard work and support for the Charterhouse business.

"His work with customers across all sectors of our industry and the support he has given to his dealers has been a key part of Charterhouse's success and growth over the years.

To show their appreciation for Nick's 25 years working with the company Herman, with his fellow Director, Geoff Burgess, presented Nick with an original signed photograph of Damon Hill racing at the Monaco Grand Prix in 1996, the year in which Nick's hero won the F1 Championship.

**Herman de Bree and Geoff Burgess congratulate Nick Darking, centre, on his milestone**

## Pellenc announces battery updates

Pellenc has introduced a host of new features for its new range of batteries ensuring a quiet, powerful, low vibration and low emission operation for users. Pellenc is sold exclusively in the UK by Etesia UK.

There are 18 tools available in Pellenc's battery-powered range so there's a tool to cover every landscaping need. From chainsaws, pole saws and hedge cutters to grass trimmers, brushcutters and the new Rasion mower.

With no more starting problems, no

more filling of a petrol tank; your old machinery will belong in the past with the light, odourless and noise-free Pellenc battery-powered tools.

Pellenc's zero emission concept offers a full range of truly professional handheld power tools which are powerful, silent and emission-free thanks to the lithium-ion technology and 'brushless' electric motors.

Updates include:

■ More power from the 700p battery. 752wh and 2.5kw of power

■ Lighter 700p battery. The new battery weighs just 5.2kgs

■ Longer hibernation period. All four batteries in the range will now hibernate for up to two years when not in use

■ Longer sleep mode. All four batteries in the range will now go into 'sleep' mode for 10 days before switching to hibernation mode. Previously it was three days.

All Pellenc batteries and tools come complete with a three year warranty.





# John Deere Gators get on track



John Deere has approved the use of Camso rubber tracks on its Gator utility vehicles in Europe, following their availability in the US for several years. An XUV 855D Gator equipped with a Camso UTV T4S four-track system supplied by UK distributor Supatracks was recently featured on the company's stand at LAMMA 2016.

Designed to extend the versatility and all year round use of these popular all-terrain vehicles even further, the Camso tracks reduce ground pressure by up to 75 per cent to less than 1 psi and take less than two hours to install in place of the wheels, with no other modifications required. Track widths are 318mm

(12.5in) in front and 356mm (14in) at the rear. The tracks are steered and therefore minimise disruption of the soil surface when driving off-road.

Camso tracks are manufactured in Canada by the same company that supplies units for John Deere's 8R, 9R and new 9RX four-track Series agricultural tractors. Camso is the world's leading maker of tracks for farm and construction vehicles as well as snowmobiles. Track systems provide better weight distribution and maximum flotation on all types of off-road terrain.

The 25hp XUV 855D Gator 4x4 has a standard top speed of 32mph and features true on-demand four-wheel

drive, activated by a dash-mounted electronic switch, power steering and all-round independent suspension, adjustable at the rear. Ground clearance on the tracks is increased by around 45% to 406mm while total payload and towing capacity remain the same at 635kg and 680kg respectively.

The Gator's standard deluxe Mauser ROPS frame can be upgraded to a full glass cab if required, and models can be ordered with a variety of other factory and dealer installed options and attachments. These include tool carriers, cargo box dividers, a front mounted load rack, a bull bar and side extensions.

## Woodchipper's amazing workrate

The Carlton 1712 woodchipper is now available in the UK, exclusively from Orange Plant. Offering a 305mm chipping



capacity, this high productivity machine is ideal for larger jobs.

Known best for their range of stump grinders, the Carlton 1712 provides an ideal balance of capacity, economy and portability. It features a 300 x 440mm throat and 700 x 1200mm infeed hopper opening. The precision high-speed balanced cutting disc has a diameter of 950mm with 4 knives. Orange Plant has made a number of adaptations to the American base model to make it compliant with all relevant EU legislation, including fitting the machine with a 74hp

engine to ensure compliance with engine emission regulations.

John Compton has already hired the Carlton 1712. "When I explained my requirements Mark Wilson explained the possible benefits of the new 1712. During the demo I was able to put 3.5 tonnes of wood through it in just 45 minutes. With the smaller chippers I was only getting through six to seven tonnes in a whole day! Using the 1712 has significantly contributed towards an approximate 60% reduction in my expenses for woodchip."



# Accolade for sustainable development: for the third time

Ransome Jacobsen's three-hole golf course, The RJ National, located at their European headquarters on the outskirts of Ipswich, has been re-certified by the Golf Environment Organisation. With this latest accolade, the RJ National becomes the first golf course in the UK to be awarded GEO Certified status for commitment to sustainable development for a third time.

In his report, Keith Duff, the independent verifier who carried out the course's re-certification audit said,

"This three-hole golf course and adjoining noise testing area was built in 2008 on industrial wasteland adjacent to the Ransomes Jacobson international headquarters and manufacturing facility in Ipswich. It was designed for multiple uses – as a golf course, as a demonstration area for golf course maintenance machinery, and as a noise testing facility for machinery. The aim was to produce a sustainably managed golf course, using turf grasses (mainly bents and fescues) managed appropriately with low inputs of water, fertiliser and pesticide. This has been achieved.

"There is a strong link with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, who provide ecological advice. All water abstraction and discharge, and energy use and waste management, is undertaken as part of the whole site environmental management plan operated by Ransomes under ISO 14001. There is a strong link with the nearby Waldringfield Golf Club, whose Course Manager provides consultative support through a weekly visit in the summer. During the winter months, the retired Course

Manager from Woodbridge Golf Club provides monthly advice. Support is also provided, on an as needed basis, from Ipswich Golf Club greens staff.

"There is clear evidence of steady continual improvement of all aspects of the facilities environmental performance over the nine years since initial certification of the site, and especially with regard to ecosystems, energy and resources, environmental quality, and people and communities. The level of commitment shown by the company, and their staff, is exemplary."

The unique three-hole golf course was the brainchild of David Withers, then Managing Director at Ransomes Jacobsen and now President of parent company, Jacobsen.

"With the support of some of our industry partners, our parent company Textron, and a tremendous team effort by everyone at Ipswich, especially our current greenkeeper James Gotts, the RJ National has become a great success on many levels," he said. "The course is a great asset for testing machinery, showcasing the products we manufacture and is a facility to demonstrate our environmental leadership to distributors and customers. Hopefully our example serves as an inspiration – showing that creating and maintaining a sustainable golf course can be good for golf and good for business."

GEO's Chief Executive Jonathan Smith concluded saying, "We are delighted that the RJ National has been re-certified, representing as it does, sustainability throughout their golf environment through a continued commitment to protect and enhance nature, while using

resources efficiently and carefully and working together with their community.

"Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all eco-labelling, affirming the important 'continued improvement' principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey, rather than a static level to achieve. This also demonstrates that GEO Certified can celebrate the achievements of all types of courses, from RJ National's innovative short course to high-profile, internationally recognised facilities."

**The RJ National has become a great success on many levels. Greenkeeper James Gotts is pictured with the certification**





# Round-the-clock irrigation at Pontefract & District



**"The new sprinklers are great; easy to access, easy to service and have cut right down on watering time," says Course Manager David Mulholland**

Pontefract & District's Course Manager David Mulholland has praised the golf club's recent investment in Toro irrigation, reporting "round-the-clock" control since its installation.

The West Yorkshire club embraces modern technology, and was in fact home to the first complete installation of Toro Infinity sprinklers with Lynx Control System.

In operation since spring this year, ready for the high season and dry weather, David said the new system is more efficient, controllable, and offers great flexibility.

"Our previous system comprised of old PVC pipe that was glued, and the glue was breaking down; it was

a real liability. Not only did we have leaks, but during dry spells, when we rely heavily on irrigation, it wasn't delivering," he explained.

"The new sprinklers are great; easy to access, easy to service and have cut right down on watering time," added David.

Now able to operate the entire system from his mobile phone or laptop, he singles portability out as a key benefit.

"For situations when we apply a product to the turf, for example, and need to water immediately after, being able to use my mobile while out on the course is fantastic. I can stop it should golfers approach and not have to interrupt play.

"And if I've set a watering programme and by the time I'm at

home it's started to rain, I can easily stop it from there too! Couple that with easy-to-adjust sprinklers and I have round-the-clock control able to choose how and when I water."

The Lynx system conveniently combines all of your essential irrigation information in a single, intuitive interface, where it's always readily available. You can instantly access relevant course management information-past, present or planned-from multiple sources.

Installed by local Toro dealer Full Circle Irrigation Ltd, based in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, David says that as well as being impressed himself, the club's management were also happy and surprised how little disruption there was during installation.

## Vanmac to sell Trilo range direct

Vanmac bv is no stranger to the UK market with their range of Trilo Blowers & Vacs. But now they will be selling their full product line direct via a network of established dealers. To assist with distribution and the setting up of the nationwide dealer network, Trilo has

employed Jon Proffitt as UK Factory Support Manager. Jon is well versed with the range and has a wealth of knowledge of the market.

This direct route will help Trilo ensure they meet the requirements of the end user, while providing customers

with more competitive pricing, quicker customer response and the opportunity to order parts direct from their factory in The Netherlands. The newly appointed UK dealers will also have access to direct factory information and parts shop 24-7 to keep the process quick and hassle free.



# Why it's best to be **PROACTIVE**

Located on the edge of the Vale of Evesham, Broadway Golf Club is considered one of the best golf clubs in the Cotswolds. Having been at the club for 29 years, and Head Greenkeeper since 2008, Jamie Blake is on a two-pronged mission to switch the club to a preventative maintenance regime to reduce chemical applications, and improve the overall course condition.

The greens at Broadway are mainly Poa annua and were in the past, susceptible to disease. Although Jamie and his team had made good strides in reducing attacks over the years, they were still managing disease reactively which often meant high chemical usage.

A few years ago, Jamie attended a talk by Headland Amenity's Mark Hunt who discussed the potential benefits of using Growth Degree Days (or GDDs) as a method of creating a more effective chemical application programme.

"The concept sounded interesting so I went away and started recording data such as rainfall, temperature and disease incidence and compared this with observations of the grass conditions."

In the second year, Jamie was able to use the data to start planning applications of Plant Growth Regulators.

"Using the GDD figures and correlated course conditions we worked out that we needed to apply PGR's every 150 days to maximise efficiency. By taking a more scientific approach to applications and working proactively, we have achieved fantastic results."

Now into the third year of the programme, Jamie is continuing to learn more from the results and is now using the GDD data to plan other maintenance activities such as aeration and topdressing.

This technique has also meant Jamie has achieved his aim of reducing chemical applications.

"I try to minimise using chemicals where I can so when I took over I tried to use none, which didn't work too well!"

As part of his foundation degree Jamie investigated different types of disease management, comparing biological and chemical methods. In the preventative test trials Jamie used Headland's Throttle fungicide.

"I followed the instructions of Headland's Adi Masters to the letter and couldn't believe the results we achieved, it was amazing! We now use Throttle as part of our preventative programme across the course and we are not having to use any other chemicals. Everybody's happy – I'm not having to apply a lot of fungicide

and the golfers and members can see the course is kept healthy."

"Being proactive rather than reactive is working well for us and that all comes back to the GDD analysis. If you make observations too late you are only reacting to a problem, but if follow a proactive regime you'll always be in control and ahead of the game."

**Head Greenkeeper Jamie Blake: on a two-pronged mission**

## Rigby Taylor launch Germin-8

Germin-8 is a new grass seed treatment that stimulates and supports accelerated germination and emergence. A potent liquid cocktail of speciality penetrating surfactants, nutrients, sugars and mycorrhizae is pre-applied to each individual grass seed as a permanent coating.

When rootzone moisture is present, the speciality surfactant in Germin-8 provides effective penetration of water into the seed by lowering surface tension.

At the active germination stage, each

seed has immediate access to a highly beneficial package of targeted nutrient, sugars and micronized mycorrhizae.

Accelerated germination enables the emerging plants to benefit from applications of pre-seed fertiliser and bio-stimulants, such as Activate R, to increase significantly speed of establishment.

Germin-8 offers excellent benefits in cold, wet climatic conditions, leading to higher plant survival following renovation. This, together with

appropriate aeration, contributes to the rapid transfer from the plant seedling stage to an established sward.

In Germin-8 trials, on perennial ryegrass, red fescues, browntop bent and smooth-stalked meadow grass, a germination increase of 83% – 100% was achieved 10 days after treatment compared to untreated seed.

Germin-8 liquid seed treatment, adds just a maximum 2% increase in and therefore no requirement to increase recommended seed sowing rates.



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# Tea Break Teaser



1. What is the fewest number of horses ever to finish the race? Between one and five; between six and 10 or between 11 and 15?
2. In which year did Foinavon memorably win the race at odds of 100-1 after a number of horses fell, refused or were brought down at the 23rd fence?
3. What was the name of the horse which brought Sir AP McCoy his one and only victory?
4. Name the jockey who has won the last two Grand Nationals?
5. To within 20 years when was the first Grand National run?
6. What was the name of the horse which Bob Champion rode to victory in 1981 following his recovery from cancer?
7. Beecher's Brook is the most famous fence at Aintree but what was the Christian name of the Captain after whom it is named. Is it Nigel, Barry or Martin?
8. What was the name of the horse which "won" the famous false start Grand National in 1993?
9. What distance is the Grand National run over? Over three miles, over four miles or over five miles?
10. Can you name one of the two horses who managed to beat Red Rum to the winning line in the National?
11. Who are the two jockeys who recorded victories aboard Red Rum?
12. In which year did a bomb scare mean the National was run on a Monday?
13. Who was the famous comedian who owned 1994 winner Miinnehoma?
14. Who was the first female jockey to complete the Grand National?
15. How many fences are there on the Aintree Grand National Course?

■ *Answers on Page 35.*



# A20

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# Compact tractors

They're tough, they're versatile and they're everywhere. We take a look at the latest...

## Ipswich goes for Iseki

Bartram Mowers, the Norwich-based Ransomes Jacobsen dealer for East Anglia, has signed a third five-year preferred supplier agreement with Ipswich Golf Club. It coincided with the delivery of new course maintenance equipment, which included an Iseki TG5470 compact tractor with cab and MX front loader.

Graham Brumpton is the Course

Manager at the 6,500 yard heathland course and commenting on the TG5470 said,

"The TG5470 is an excellent general purpose tractor for numerous golf course applications. We are committed to improving the heathland environment here at Purdis Heath and one of the uses of the tractor and loader is to remove the top layer of vegetation and expose the native soil before we distribute the heather brash to start of the regeneration process.

"The TG5470 features an advanced transmission system with electro-hydraulic forward and reverse selection. It provides a selection of clutch engagement patterns, selecting the most suitable pattern depending on gear position and displays this visually on the instrument panel. It also allows the operator to select a gear by push button, whilst in motion, without depressing the clutch. Also switching from forward to reverse can be achieved in the same manner."



# McCormick turf tractors

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

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

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

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

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

A narrow header rail creates a deep windscreen for maximum forwards visibility; full-size doors provide easy access with no 'B' pillars to interrupt the view to either side; and controls on the right-hand console are angled towards the driver making them easy to use.

The novel idea of housing the cab air filters in the rear pillars makes them easy to reach for cleaning and results in a slim roof panel for low overall height – the four smallest models measure just over 2.4m to the

## At a glance

- McCormick X4 Series comprises seven all-new cab or platform models
- Power outputs from 64hp to 107hp with wide choice of transmissions
- New cab design is spacious with big glass area and low overall height

top of the cab, while the three larger machines, which have a slightly longer wheelbase to maintain balance and traction with bigger implements, stand only a little taller at 2.5m.

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

Two- or four-wheel drive, cab or open platform, and a choice of synchro shuttle and power shuttle transmissions add to the specification mix.

Latest Deutz engines with simple emissions control technology feature under the bonnet of the 64hp X4.20C, 69hp X4.30C and 76hp X4.40C, which are slightly narrower and shorter than the others. There is also the 75hp X4.35C with a Perkins engine to earlier emissions rules, which gives it a distinct price advantage while engine stocks last.

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

"With the support of a professional dealer network and parts operations at our base near Doncaster and the Argo Tractors international parts distribution centre in northern France, it's a range that deserves consideration by anyone operating in the amenity sector."

**This new  
McCormick tractor  
design is unlike  
anything we've had.**





## Compact tractor finance from John Deere

John Deere Financial has announced a new finance programme for UK customers of the company's comprehensive compact tractor range, which includes 1R, 2R, 3R and 4R Series models from 25 to 66hp.

Available to business customers until further notice, the offer is for 4 + 44 monthly repayments at an overall flat interest rate per annum of only 1 per cent, based on 60 per cent of the recommended retail price.

Taking as an example the 1026R – which is the smallest compact tractor model in the John Deere range – an initial financed payment of £586.16 would be followed by 44 payments of £146.54, based on a retail price of £11,273 and a net deposit of £2029.20, giving a representative APR of just 3 per cent. The VAT can be paid in total on signing a hire purchase agreement, or on each payment on a finance lease scheme.

“Financing new equipment in this way can help any business to forecast and fix its capital investment costs, while also taking advantage of the latest available technology,” says John Deere Limited Turf Division Manager, Chris Meacock.

Advanced technology features on John Deere compact tractors include LoadMatch, MotionMatch and SpeedMatch operating modes for maximum versatility in a wide range of tractor applications. There is also a choice of AutoConnect drive-over rotary mower decks and, on selected models, the award-winning Hitch Assist system, which makes coupling up implements and trailers to the tractor's rear hitch or three-point linkage quicker, easier and safer.

Using the system, external switches mounted on the rear fender allow the operator to move the tractor backwards and forwards at a maximum speed of 12mm/second, and raise or lower the hitch as required.

John Deere's new 4066M and 4066R compact tractors also utilise the latest diesel particulate filter (DPF) technology to deliver cleaner engine emissions while maintaining or improving overall machine performance.



Activity on the Branson stand

## Branson Tractors claim LAMMA to be a success

First time exhibitor Branson Tractors UK chose LAMMA to showcase their range of agricultural and compact tractors.

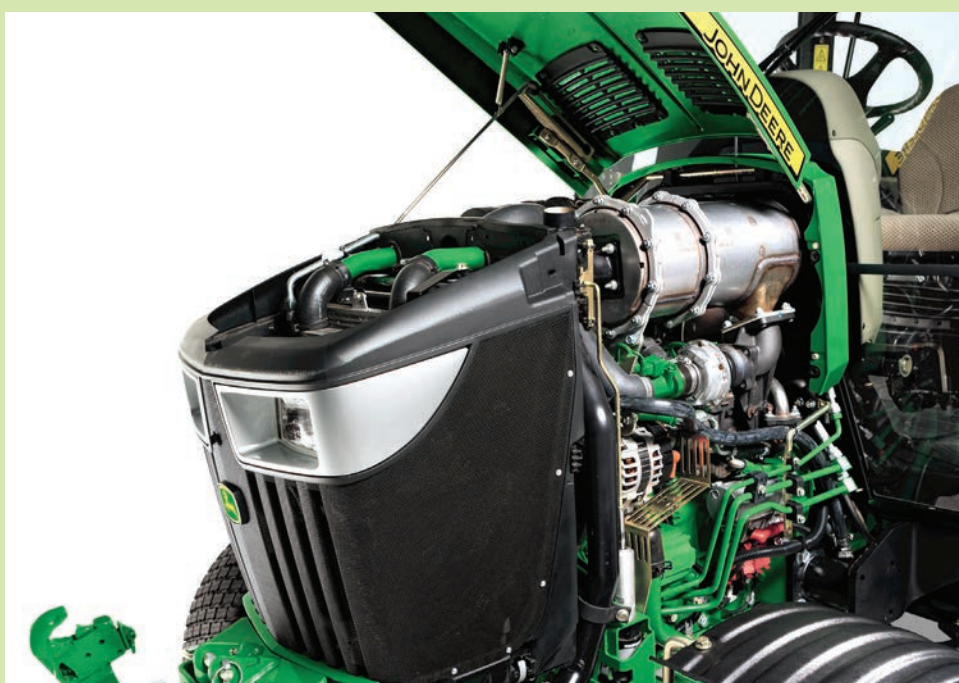
All the tractors on display created great interest including the K78 - 74 hp for general agricultural use, 5025ch - 47hp a cabbed compact model for use in confined spaces such as cattle sheds and grain stores and the 2900 - 21-30hp compact for orchards, market gardens and intensive poultry units

“LAMMA has been a most successful show for us. Not only did we receive enquiries from farmers that will be passed to their locally appointed dealers, we were also delighted to receive approaches from several dealers

wanting to take on the brand,” said Managing Director, Nathan Walker.

“Since our launch in November last year we have appointed 14 dealers across the country and are now in negotiations with others. This is an exciting development for Branson Tractors who are strong in other parts of the world and are now seeking to expand their market share throughout Europe and we are delighted that they have appointed The CTC as their sole official UK importer,” he added.

“We are confident in the Branson Tractors UK name. Every new tractor carries a two years warranty that includes engine, driveline and all original equipment. Also, CTC have the UK stockholding of a complete range of spare parts with the backing of a larger stock in mainland Europe. So whatever the requirement CTC will keep you working from day one,” said Nathan.







## When only a compact will do, Longcliffe Golf Club chooses TYM

Longcliffe Golf Club in Leicestershire is an 18-hole heathland course positioned on the lower slopes of Charnwood Forest. There's a wealth of woodland including oak, pine, beech and silver birch, and a lot of leaf clearing that needs doing, especially in autumn and winter.

"To make short work of the leaves that need clearing across the course we have a Tornado blower and a Trilo vacuum collector, which despite

being a big piece of kit only needs a 60hp tractor to pull it," said Course Manager, Peter Sands.

"We opted for a TYM T603 for the job and haven't regretted it. It's compact with a lot of power and has no problem moving the Trilo around, and is further pulling its own weight moving materials and top dressing with a frontloading bucket, among other things."

Offering great manoeuvrability the T603 features a 50-degree turning angle, optional Powershuttle, 18.48 gallon fuel tank, dual air filters, foldable ROPS, and a comfortable open ergonomic cab.

Partnering the Tornado blower

Peter chose the TYM T233. It has the smallest horsepower of the TYM family, but easily manages a backhoe or front loader and fits attachments, such as the Tornado blower, with ease. It provides the perfect combination of form and function for smaller jobs around the golf course and, according to Peter makes short work of pulling a Verti-Drain to aerate the ground and slitting the fairways to maintain good root growth.

"We've had our two TYMs for three years now and they've pretty much been out most days with chores to do. They're good value for money and reliable too," said Peter.



# Compacts that turn heads

The compact tractor is the centrepiece of any groundsman's arsenal. The best compacts balance the need to be tough and powerful with being light and nimble, to ensure it can undertake a variety of tasks, from turfcare to general site maintenance.

The compact tractor market continues to go from strength to strength, yet value for money and reliability are still the key factors for many purchasers. Kubota has long been the dominant force in this market (now enjoying over 40% market share), with the brand's popularity borne out of these factors, among others.

In more recent times, Kubota has improved and enhanced its compact range, with new key features added which are fast becoming must have additions for operators.

Minimising turf damage may seem an obvious 'must have', but the reality is, it is not always as straightforward, and finding a model that packs a punch but can also leave minimal (if any) marks on the turf can be tricky. Staff at Reading FC, Cardiff Blues and Northampton Saints have all cited this issue as an important factor, but one that has been minimised by using Kubota tractors as part of daily maintenance regimes.

Kubota's B50 Series is one of the most popular lines in the range, alongside its compact STW Series and mid range L Series tractors. The B50 and STW Series boast Kubota's unique hydraulic bi-speed turn function, which automatically activates when the front wheel turning angle exceeds 35°, which ensures a smoother, faster and tighter turn for operators, and, importantly, reduces turf damage.

With budgets still under scrutiny



**Kubota has improved and enhanced its compact range, with new key features added which are fast becoming must have additions for operators.**

Both the B50 and STW Series (above) boast Kubota's unique hydraulic bi-speed turn function

– despite the market being in a much brighter position - many in the sector will look to streamline fleets and demand more from their machines. Specialist fine turf equipment will always have its place, but compact tractors can facilitate many maintenance tasks from aeration, vertidrainage and overseedings, so this is arguably one of the most important decisions to make when equipment comes up for renewal.

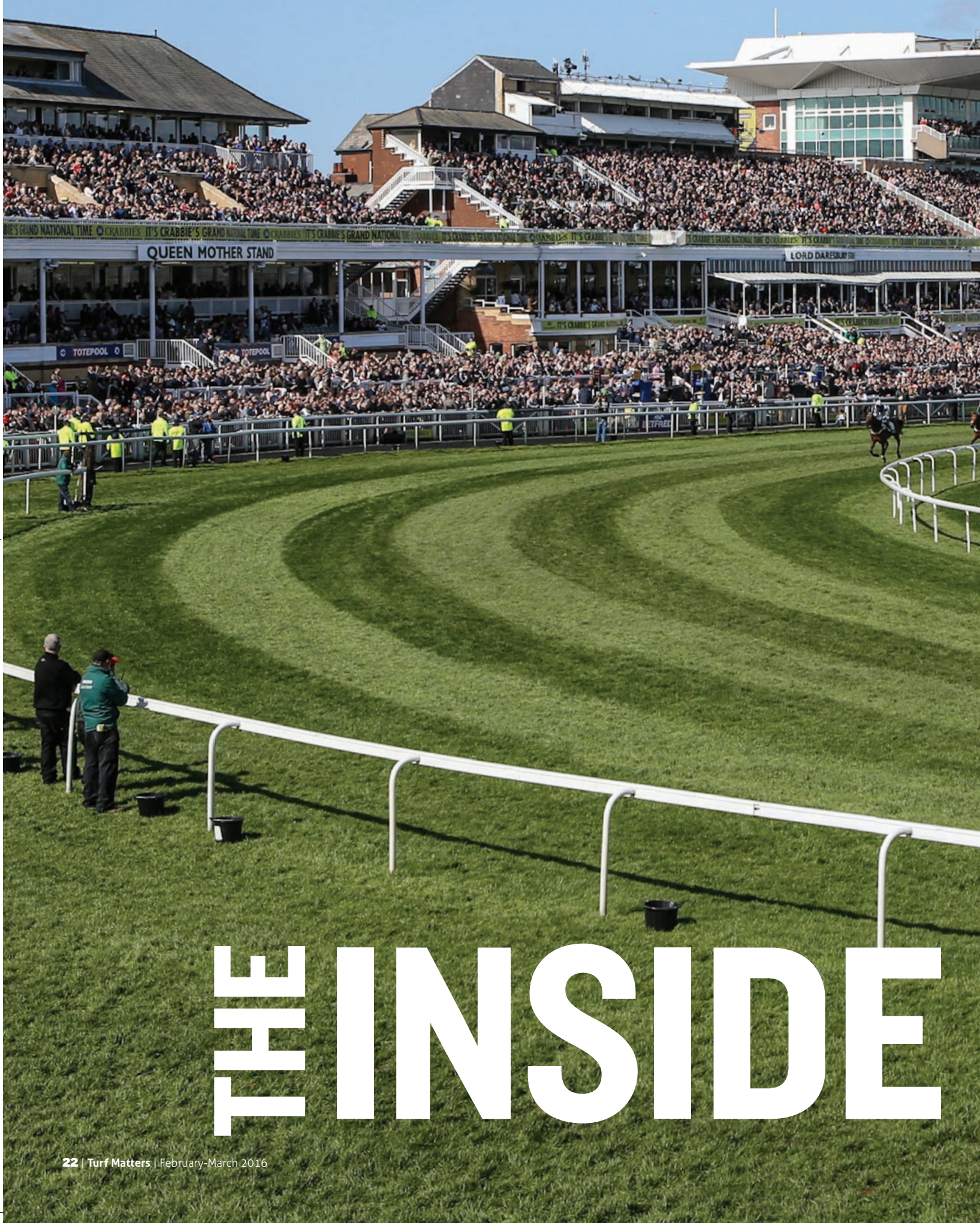
The popularity of the Kubota

range is also helped by the company's commitment to tailor its purchasing options to the individual customer, which includes practical and flexible finance options across the full range.

A reliable aftersales package (supported by a strong dealer network) is a given, and good residual value is another key factor, meaning clubs can not only maximise usage but also the return on their investment.




Aintree



# THE INSIDE





The Grand National has produced some marvellous memories for so many over the years but **Scott MacCallum** was keen to meet the men who make it all possible by managing the toughest test that turf ever faces.

**T**here are some events which become landmarks in our lives and which provide memories which last our entire three score and ten. The prime example of this – for those of an English disposition at least – would be the World Cup win in 1966 and those of a certain age, can still tell you what they were doing when those people were getting on the pitch, thinking it was all over. Also, those musically inclined, will easily recall seeing ABBA singing Waterloo to win the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest, in Brighton. More recently we can all identify the spot behind the sofa from which we watched the final game of Andy Murray's Wimbledon triumph in 2014. These occasions are modern history. Some create collective memories, while others are more personal and, for that reason, may be even stronger. ►

PHOTOGRAPH: Aintree Racecourse



► The Grand National has that ability to produce everlasting memories in both categories. For me, I recall standing on the terracing of Dens Park, in Dundee, as a 13 year-old, watching the home side play Ayr United and learning that Rag Trade had beaten Red Rum to win the 1976 National thus bringing home my first ever winning bet. I can tell you that the windfall – 10p each way on the 14-1 shot – didn't change me, but also didn't take long to burn a hole in my pocket. Incidentally, while I was jumping up and down proclaiming my insightful punditry, and new found wealth, to my fellow football fans, current Scotland Manager, Gordon Strachan, was putting away a penalty for the home team. Ah the memories!

Moving on just over five years from then and my early days as a cub reporter for The Courier newspaper the first assignment which brought me into contact with a celebrity was the opening of a William Hill bookies in Perth. There I was patting the neck of the aforementioned Red Rum, feeling a tad guilty that I had bet against him those years before and that I had been less than pleased when he'd pipped the gallant Crisp, literally, at the post in 1973.

Despite my early beginnings I'm not a gambler but my wife and I bet on the National every year and had the odd success but nothing more than enough to fund a decent night out.

It all goes to highlight just how vividly the Grand National is woven

into the culture of this country, and how much of a responsibility sits on the shoulders of those people tasked with ensuring that our favourite horse race is a fantastic spectacle while, at the same time, minimising risk to horse and rider.

The men tasked with ensuring that the Grand National is fit for purpose as one of the most anticipated dates in the calendar are Clerk of the Course, Andrew Tulloch, and Head Groundsman, Mark Aynsley.

Turf Matters caught up with Andrew and Mark for a chat about what it takes to prepare for The Grand National and how to prepare turf for the toughest challenge it can ever face.

**Turf Matters** You've both got huge jobs which carry a lot of pressure and a responsibility. How do you cope?

**Andrew Tulloch** We are all very passionate about jump racing and the Grand National is a great shop window for the sport. But it also carries a huge responsibility for us to do it well and that also goes for jockeys and trainers and we are all looking to make it as safe as possible. That said it is a horse race and while you can go through scenarios it can't prepare you for everything as there is always something which puts a different twist on it.

It is a live event with a Saturday crowd of 70,000, on live television, with a worldwide audience of over 600 million, and it's not like a football or a rugby match where, if something goes wrong, you can stop play and regroup.

**Mark Aynsley** I like to think Aintree is the best racecourse in the country and more so when the Festival and the National is here. We all go out of our way to make sure everything is as perfect as we can make it. We have a team of eight full time groundsmen and two greenkeepers for the nine hole golf course and a lot of them are from Liverpool and they are proud that they are a part of the National and go that extra mile to

**TM** When does preparation for the National start each year?

**AT** As soon as the race is over we beginning planning for the next one. Our main role is to nurture The National, and from my perspective the welfare of horse and rider is number one priority. The National is a fantastic part of this country's heritage, but we are aware that things need to move forward. ►

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TRUST IN THEM  
IMPLICITLY.**

**MARK AYNLEY**

PHOTOGRAPH: ANITREE RACECOURSE



**THE GROUND  
STAFF ALL  
WORK ON  
FENCES AS I  
PREFER THAT  
EVERYONE  
CAN DO  
EVERY JOB.**

**MARK AYNSLEY (RIGHT)**

PHOTOGRAPH: CAVIN TRAFFORD



► **MA** It is a winter sport so ultimately we have to present our best ground, for our biggest event in the year at a time when there hasn't been much grass growth. In maintenance terms we are no different from any other sport, the aim is a healthy sward, at the correct height with the correct organic matter. But more importantly for us and racing is the going for the time of year. We look for well maintained, good to soft ground which keeps the animals at a suitable speed and makes the racing safe.

We currently use Barenbrug Stadium RPR, and have done so for a number of years – one for recovery and two for the holding capacity of the plant in the soil.

If everything is where it should be – in the right place at the right time – our turf surface is ready two weeks in advance. Quite frankly, if you haven't fed it or seeded it, or got the grass to grow two weeks beforehand it's not going to grow. The jobs we do in the immediate lead up are testing starts, ensuring the jumps are ready, that we have spares of everything and the correct number of flags for the race etc.

We rely on an awful lot of help from other people, including Head Groundsmen from other racecourses around the country, and you put your trust in them implicitly. You can't do the job yourself. Funnily enough I tend to worry more after the event than before. I wake up the night after in a cold sweat about what might have gone wrong!

**AT** I've got a couple of excellent Clerks who support me for the National meeting in Simon Claisse, from Cheltenham, and Kirkland Tellwright, from Haydock, and they are both very experienced guys.

**TM** What are your main objectives when it comes to maintaining Aintree?

**MA** We like to have a firmer take-off and a softer landing area, the reason being the need for a better surface for horses to push off and then something comfier for the horse and jockey to land on. Horses create divots which can be five inches deep and four inches square so really the grass gets obliterated. It is the bends which take most of the damage rather than the areas around the jumps. Footprints on the bends go on an angle of 45 degrees and can be like a plough and furrow at times. ►



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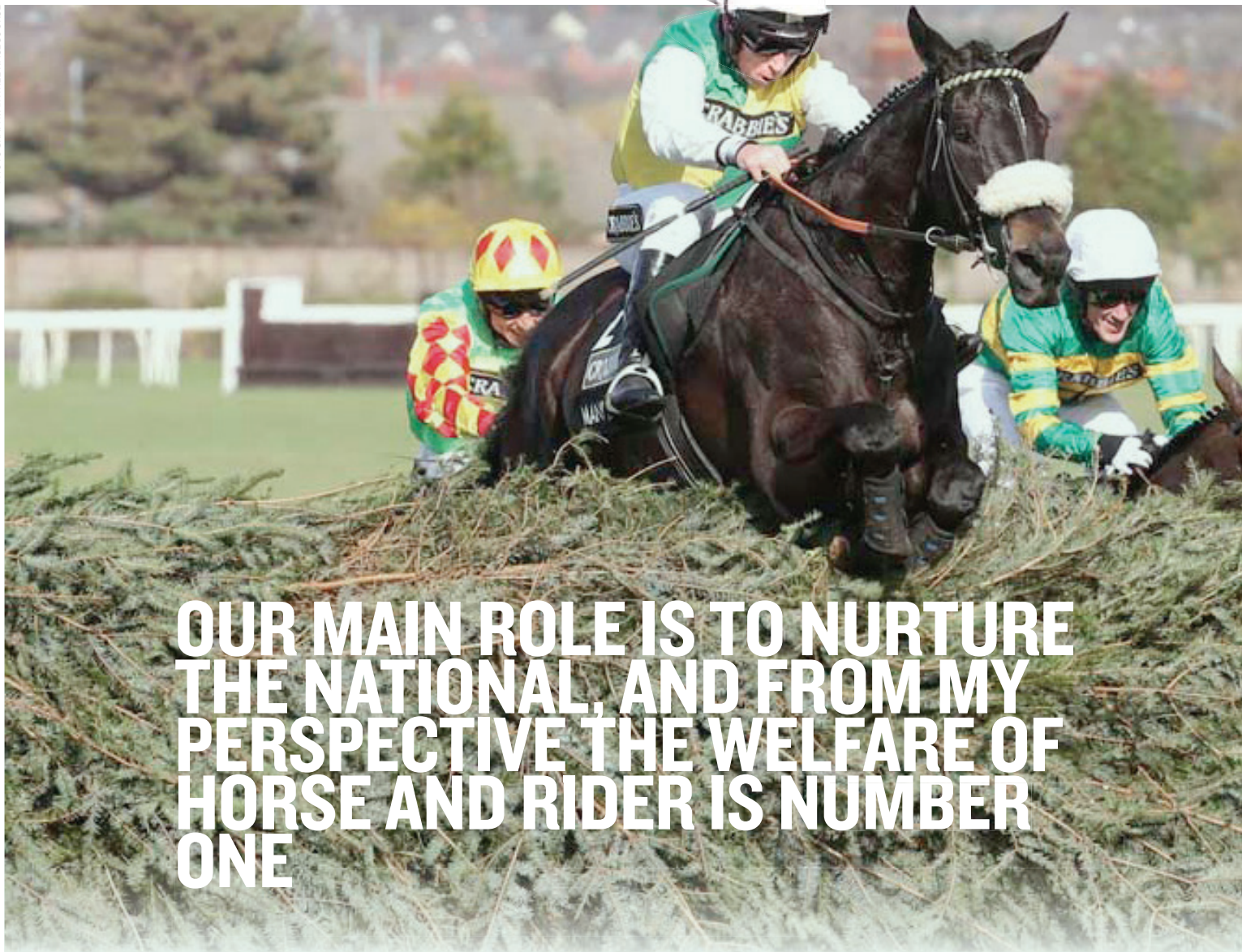


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# OUR MAIN ROLE IS TO NURTURE THE NATIONAL, AND FROM MY PERSPECTIVE THE WELFARE OF HORSE AND RIDER IS NUMBER ONE

► For recovery we pre-mix anything up to 250 tonnes of top soil mixed with grass seed and then a treading company provides a team of 45 to go out and individually fill in each divot using buckets and trowels. You don't want any voids in the surface and it is also a way of improving your grass species by getting seed into the turf.

**AT** Mark comes from a golfing background so is used to divots but not quite the sort of divots we have. Four hooves hitting the ground every stride and we have about 100 horses racing each of the three days during the Grand National meeting. We try wherever possible to get everything back within 48 hours with hour back filling, so it is very labour intensive. There is no mechanical way of filling divots.

**MA** We don't manage our turf in a traditional manner because our fixtures are either in the spring or late autumn so in summer time, when other turf professionals might

traditionally be feeding and watering, we really want the grass to go to sleep as we don't want to be cutting it all the time. We are basically forcing the grass for April at times and we do apply nitrogen to get the grass ready. You do have to play with the weather and a warm December helps enormously to get the seed up. We use fleeces and mulch – Barenbrug BAR 50 is one of the best things every invented. It's fantastic!

**AT** As Mark said we do try to maintain the going on the easy side of good which means you can get a heel in it and make a nice print. There is a direct correlation between injuries and performance. If you and I were to run on tarmac we'd get a bit jarred up and so would a horse, so you are trying to produce the best ground that the majority of horses would like to run on.

**TM** What do you have by way of machinery and, other than Barenbrug who supplies your consumables?

**AT** We have a very good relationship with John Deere and we lease all of our Wide Area Mowers and tractors from them – Turner Groundcare is the local dealer. The Jockey Club has 14 racecourses and John Deere is the official supplier. We also use a Wiedenmann vertidrain, a Sisis slitters and run hollow corer from Green Tech.

**MA** I use a lot of Headland Xtend products while we also have a group deal with Sherriff Amenity.

**TM** Can you tell me about Aintree's irrigation system?

**MA** We are able to water the running surfaces of all three of our courses and we do this in various ways. The irrigation system has been here 10 years in November. The water comes out of three boreholes into an irrigation ring main. The Mildmay course, which contains hurdles and fences and is part of the National course, uses Briggs Irrigation reels and Briggs booms





and we run two machines at once in opposite directions – one pulling a 50 metre irrigation boom and the other a 40 metre irrigation boom. In a nine hour watering window we can apply 9 mil of water.

On the National course we have a pop up irrigation system, a Rainbird system installed by Arden Lea, and this has revolutionised our watering. It allows us to water for the “going” and not to mention agronomy reasons. Each fence is served by four sprinklers, two at the front and two at the rear, and all are valve in head and it allows us to target faster areas which require a bit more water or lower lying areas around the Canal Turn which we can omit. The new system also allows me to get to bed a little bit earlier.

**AT** We are the only jump course in the country with a pop up irrigation system which, I might add, came at considerable expense over the last four or five years – the best part of half a million. We are now able to alter the going so Mr Frisk’s course record – eight minutes 48 seconds – in 1990, which was set on very quick ground, is likely to stand forever.

**TM** Aintree is famous for its unique fences. Can you tell me how they have evolved over the years?

**AT** My background is surveying and riding horses while Mark is the turf side, coming from a golf background, and the two of us are constantly looking at things and ▶



Here at Turf Matters we are determined to applaud the great work that this country’s local authorities do – despite all the budget cuts.

Does your council do a fine job in maintaining its amenity space and sporting facilities? Does it take time to landscape its roundabouts and boundaries? Are its pitches well draining and cut regularly to the optimum height?

If the answer is yes then please let us know and we will try to showcase the work that it does.

If you would like to nominate your own local authority, or one which you as a business has as a client please contact us at Turf Matters (email: [scott@turfatters.co.uk](mailto:scott@turfatters.co.uk)). Alternatively, a local authority may nominate itself.

Let’s ensure that the work of the much maligned local authorities receives the credit they deserve.

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# IT'S NOT LIKE A FOOTBALL OR A RUGBY MATCH WHERE, IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, YOU CAN STOP PLAY AND REGROUP.

ANDREW TULLOCH

► how we can improve. It is from this that we came upon the easy fix fences which are basically a plastic mould into which artificial birch is placed and then dressed with natural spruce. Before that they had been of a timber construction and we even have one groundsman, older than the rest of us, who remembers when local farmers grew hedges for transplanting onto the course! But the main thing for us was to make the fences more horse friendly – if a horse does make a mistake and leaves a leg in the fence it still has the opportunity to find its feet again. If you hit something solid at 30mph it's going to hurt so the plastic helps there. We were very keen that the fences retained their outward appearance – that's their uniqueness. The spruce laced into them gives the appearance which is identical to how they have always been. It is important that we don't reduce the height, which is something people do say. What I would say to that is if you are driving down a wiggly road rather than a straight one you concentrate more and

take more care.

**MA** The new easy fix fences are contained within a timber frame. At the front you see a 14 inch hard wood toe board along the bottom of the fence, which is painted bright orange, followed by a guard rail which is roughly a third of the way up the and the two act as sighting lines as the horse and jockey approach the fence.

The ground staff all work on fences as I prefer that everyone can do every job. The actual fence building for the National fences does tends to be down to three guys who are very good at it and the outward appearance is superb. I can't do it as well as them, which pains me!

**TM** What other changes have you made to improve safety at Aintree?

**AT** In recent years we have put in by-passing laybys on the outside of the fences. Until recently Aintree was one of the only courses where you couldn't by-pass a fence and if there was a problem the horses still had to jump the fence. The fences were wide enough for this to

happen we put down fibresand and turf and now we can direct runners should there be an obstruction.

Following on from that we have also installed plastic catching pens to catch loose horses. We also have a big team of lads and girls to catch loose horses. These came in in 2009.

**TM** Anything else?

**AT** Having been involved in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta one saw what was done to cool down horses after the equestrian events. So following the London Olympics we use the demisting fans which were at Greenwich and have created our own wash down area. We created a dedicated wash down area, provided a tent for shade and utilised the demisting fans which allow the vets to check the horses before they return to the stable.

**TM** Thank you for this insight into what goes on behind the scenes before, during and after our favourite horse race. I hope all goes well this year and we all create wonderful new memories from the 2016 Grand National.





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# Polaris to the rescue



F.R.E.D. stands for Fast Response Emergency Drone, and it's the name given to a very special service which is operating with a Polaris Ranger 570 Crew in South West Scotland. Holywood Services, the Polaris dealer for the area, has supplied the Ranger to Duncan Carmichael's Community Interest project for the

Emergency Services, to carry drones for deployment to 'accident' sites.

The off-road abilities of the Ranger Crew can take them to otherwise inaccessible areas where the drones are used for faster search and rescue assessment. Images sent back by the drones are assessed for the emergency services to take appropriate action, effectively saving money, for example, by not having to send the air ambulance to a non-critical scene.

The Ranger 570 Crew was requested as the ideal machine for the job of travelling with the drones, carrying up to four people and having the space for a stretcher mounted on the rear box or for tools and equipment. The ambulance service, para-medics, fire fighters, Police Scotland and national power companies can all benefit from the drones being able to go to road traffic accidents, flooding and

searches for missing persons. This is especially effective using the Polaris to carry them into difficult terrain for launch.

Once airborne, special software enables images from the drones to be viewed on up to six devices, such as mobile 'phones and computers, at a time. Search areas and distances covered are far wider with the drones deployed and where there is a need the 4x4 capabilities of the Ranger 570 Crew can take emergency volunteers right to the scene of the accident or disaster zone.

"Successful development of the F.R.E.D. service will, it is hoped, lead to it getting on to the International Rescue Register and we have been showing the Polaris and drones at large numbers of events to demonstrate the rescue capabilities, with a great deal of interest as a result," said Duncan Carmichael.


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## Inspiring youngsters

Eleven students from Northgate High School in Ipswich visited Ransomes Jacobsen's European Head Office as part of their involvement in the Greenpower IET Formula 24 competition.

The Greenpower Education Trust is a charitable organisation with the aim of inspiring more young people to become engineers by presenting the engineering industry as an interesting and relevant career choice. Teams of students between the ages of 9 and 25 build and race their own electric powered race cars on top racing

circuits such as Goodwood.

The Northgate students have constructed a 24-volt electric vehicle with support and guidance from teachers Jim Jenner and Steve Burgoyne and have successfully competed in the regional competition.

Jason King, a former apprentice at Ransomes Jacobsen and now Customer Care Director, invited the Northgate students to visit their European Head Office to see how the long established manufacturing company introduces a new vehicle into the market.



# Statistics reveal scale of success of Saltex 2015

The 70th SALTEX exhibition exceeded all expectations after an independent audit confirmed the exhibition as the largest turf management event in the UK with a total of 8,714 unique individuals attending. Now, the visitor surveys have been flooding in – revealing a fascinating and in-depth insight into the visitor profile of the show.

With visitors traveling from every corner of the UK as well as every continent around the world it was encouraging to see that over 70% of the visitors rated their overall SALTEX experience as being good, very good or excellent.

Over 65% of visitors said that they attended SALTEX to source new products, services or suppliers, while 20% wanted to make the most of the free educational LEARNING LIVE seminars and to receive one-to-one advice through the IOG's Ask the Expert feature. With so much on offer at SALTEX, there was something for everyone and over 80% said that they were successful or very successful in meeting their objectives.

With such a large number of visitors attending SALTEX to source new products and services; they certainly came to the right place. The exhibition is a great way to launch and showcase new products and

over 70% of visitors said that there was an excellent mix of products on display. Table 1 shows what visitors were looking for.

Exhibitors at SALTEX 2015 reported huge success at the show, suggesting that the visitors were a very powerful group of buyers. With deals being done there and then on the show floor, it's no surprise to see that over 80% had purchasing responsibility. Over 75% of all SALTEX visitors also had the ability to sign off purchases of up to £100,000.

As for the type of facilities that the visitors were responsible for, it was great to see such a wide array of visitors (table 2).

Visitors also found the more central location of the NEC to be more accessible with 70% stating that the new location was either good or excellent. Within the halls of the NEC, visitors favoured the more compact setting with over 70% rating the layout of the event either good or excellent.

Overall the visitor survey has demonstrated just how good the was the quality of attendees – further enhancing SALTEX as the must attend event of the year.

SALTEX 2016 will be held at the NEC, Birmingham on 2 and 3 November 2016. For more information visit [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com)

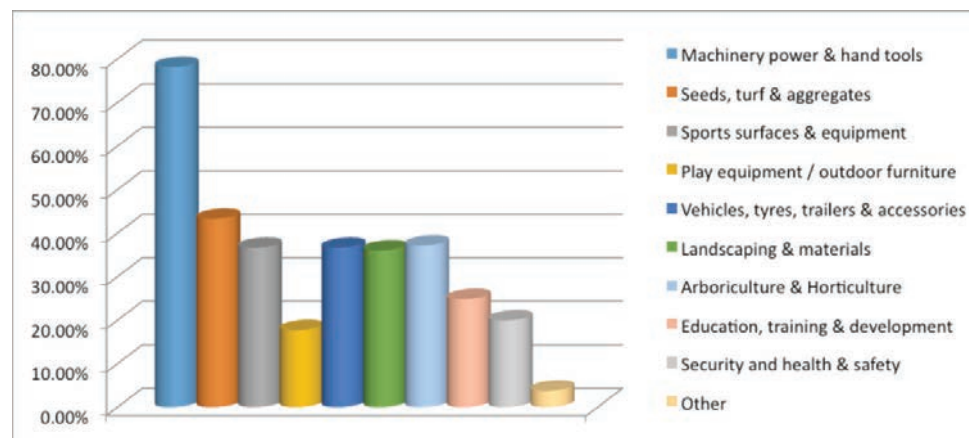


Table 1

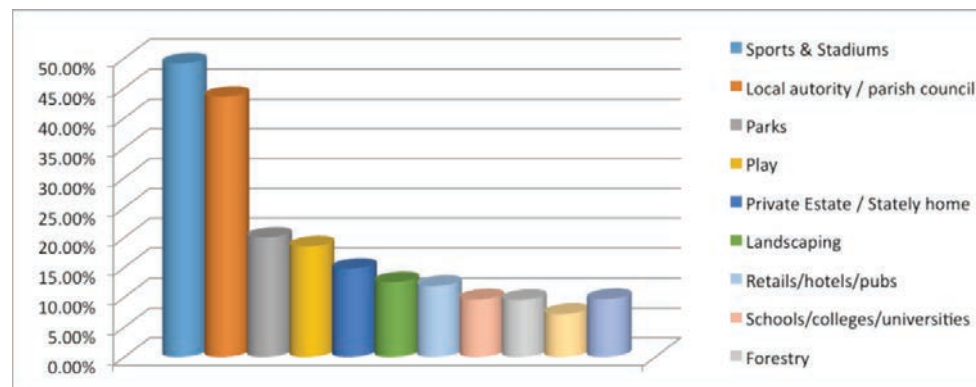


Table 2

## BUYERS' GUIDE

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# Golfing Nobody's Blog

Well it's about now that the letter informing us of the annual renewal of subs drops onto the mat. Usually we've already been primed as to what to expect – an inflation matching rise or, if there is a special project at the club, a small levy and the promise of a fantastic new irrigation system or stunning new maintenance facilities to house those ridiculously expensive lawn mowers, sprayers and hole making machines

We've also had a chance to justify the expense to our better halves, highlighting that it would be much dearer for a season ticket if we were a football fan, while having bought new clubs last year our capital expenditure would be much less this year.

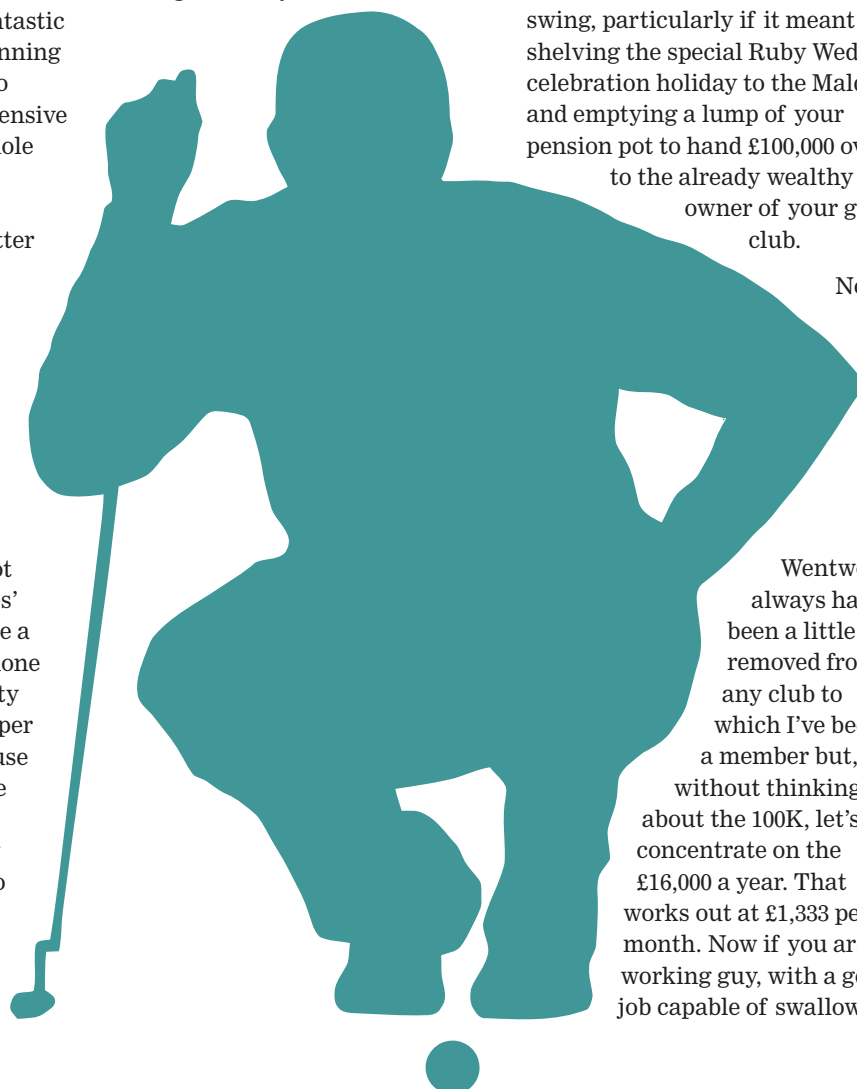
So spare a thought for our friends at Wentworth who got quite a shock when their subs' letter arrived. Now, even to be a Wentworth member you've done alright for yourself. It is pretty posh and you do get three super golf courses, a plush clubhouse and a top of the range leisure club at your disposal, and if I had the money I'd certainly feel it would be a good way to spend a Saturday morning – you might even find yourself up against Bruce Forsyth in the Seniors' Matchplay.

But the new Chinese owners decided to up the annual subs from £8,000 to £16,000. A bit of a choker, particularly if you'd only just persuaded Her Indoors that 8K was fair enough – after all it was significantly

less than a grand a month. But, and this was the bit which would have the heart sinking, the club also wanted each existing member to lodge a £100,000 debenture with the club – it's £115,000 for new members. That would be hard to swing, particularly if it meant shelving the special Ruby Wedding celebration holiday to the Maldives and emptying a lump of your pension pot to hand £100,000 over to the already wealthy owner of your golf club.

Now

Wentworth always has been a little bit removed from any club to which I've been a member but, without thinking about the 100K, let's concentrate on the £16,000 a year. That works out at £1,333 per month. Now if you are a working guy, with a good job capable of swallowing







# as seen on TWITTER

a £16,000 per annum golf sub, you will be pretty busy and the chances are that time will be limited through the week. So you might only be able to play at weekends. Build in holidays, weddings, weekend work commitments etc and you may only be able to play three weekends out of four. That means your golf would be costing you around £444 per weekend, or round if you only play one of Saturday or Sunday. Even if you are partnered with Brucie, and walking some of the best manicured fairways to be found anywhere, that does seem quite a bit of money.

I've often attempted the ruse of calculating my membership costs against the number of shots played, which does tend to make most figures look better but I don't think Mrs Golfing Nobody would be taken in by that assessment of the Wentworth subs!

So I do feel for those Wentworth members. The only consolation is that they do have some wonderful alternative clubs to join in the area and they will find most of them less heavy on the pocket than the subs they were paying even before the price hike.

What it does show is that if you are a member of a proprietary club you are a customer and your ability to influence club policy is limited, whereas if you are a member of a traditional members' club you can decide what the club does. You can get together with a group of fellow like minded members and pass a resolution to ban Ian Poulter style clothes, or limit Societies to Tuesdays from 10am to 11.30am. Or, importantly, hold subs to inflation levels.

Some of those displaced Wentworth members may soon be doing just that on the Boards of the members' clubs they choose to join.

*\*As told to Scott MacCallum*



**The RHS** @The\_RHS Nice article on @Telegraph online featuring RHS Garden Holidays! Check it out at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/tours/10-best-garden-holidays/>

**BIGGA** @BIGGALtd Membership update: we're pleased to announce the new membership CRM system has gone live! Please bear with us during the transition period.



**Oakham Groundstaff** @Groundstaff1 New Tractor arrived today, all ready for renovations!

**Fusion Media** @FusionMediaEu Industry Shows Support For @IOG\_SALTEX <http://www.fusion-media.eu/industry-shows-support-for-saltex-2016/>

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**FMC Turf** @FMCturf Seize the Disease – a guide to early spring #lawn surprises courtesy of @lawnlandscape – <http://ow.ly/YHMiR>



**Allett Mowers** @AllettMowers Worcester College! This is what an Allett mower and a highly talented grounds team can achieve! #stripes #allett

**Wives of Turf** @wivesofturf Question of the Day: When was the last time you and your MoT had a true date night? One where you actually left the house.

**Etesia UK** @EtesiaUK #Etesia Hydro 100 III: The new generation

**CompleteWeedControl** @CWCLimited 3G rubber crumb – an inconvenient truth? Read more here – <https://www.iog.org/news/3g-rubber-crumb-inconvenient-truth-comment-iog-ceo-geoff-webb>

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## Tea Break Teaser answers

1. Between one and five. In 1928 just two horses finished the race; 2. 1967; 3. Don't Push It; 4. Leighton Aspell; 5. 1839; 6. Aldaniti; 7. Martin; 8. Esha Ness; 9. The race is run over four miles, three and a half furlongs; 10. L'Escargot (1975) and Rag Trade (1976); 11. Brian Fletcher and Tommy Stack; 12. 1997; 13. Freddy Starr; 14. Geraldine Rees in 1982; 15. 16 – 14 of which are jumped twice in the National.





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