

THE GOLF BUSINESS

Issue 25 • April 2019

FEATURING

Neil Statham

club secretary at
Knole Park Golf Club

FAMILIES

ADVENTURE GOLF

The pathway to full membership

CAMPAIGNING

GOLF AND HEALTH

Craig Tracey MP's new column

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ere's three major issues I discovered in the last month that are all covered in the following pages:

Business plans are saving struggling golf clubs

At least two UK clubs have been struggling and both look a lot more secure after putting together business plans. Marland Golf Course in Rochdale has been saved thanks to a plan involving offering free membership and coaching for children, providing Get into golf sessions, creating a new coffee shop and seeking out sponsorship, while Craigie Hill Golf Club in Scotland has discussed converting its 18-hole layout into nine holes, selling some land and using the income to fund the creation of a purpose-built clubhouse.

Brexit isn't the only thing that parliament is discussing

The first ever Golf and Health Week – backed by all of golf's governing bodies and professional golfers including Annika Sorenstam and Padraig Harrington – which is aiming to encourage people into taking part in the sport, is taking place this month.

The week has inspired a motion that's been tabled in the House of Commons by Stephen Gethins MP, who said: "We now have robust evidence that golf delivers health benefits for all people."

Golf clubs are hot property at the moment

A number of leisure operators have been snapping up golf clubs recently. Dundonald Links in Scotland has been sold to Darwin Leisure, which now owns three golf clubs, Cherry Burton GC in Yorkshire has been sold to Aureus Leisure, Warner Leisure Hotels has

acquired the Heythrop Park Resort, on the edge of the Cotswolds, hotel operator Arora Hotels has purchased The Buckinghamshire GC and hotel brand Hilton has bought The Westerwood in Scotland.

It's not just leisure operators that are interested in golf clubs at present – the former Ladies European Tour golfer Fame Tate has acquired Stanedge Golf Club in Derbyshire and the private members' Hazlemere Golf Club in Buckinghamshire has become proprietary – its sale alone attracted at least 10 bids.



Alistair Dunsmuir, Editor

To let us know what you think of this month's *The Golf Business*, or to comment on specific issues or advise us of your clubhouse / course renovation plans, please email golf@unionpress.co.uk

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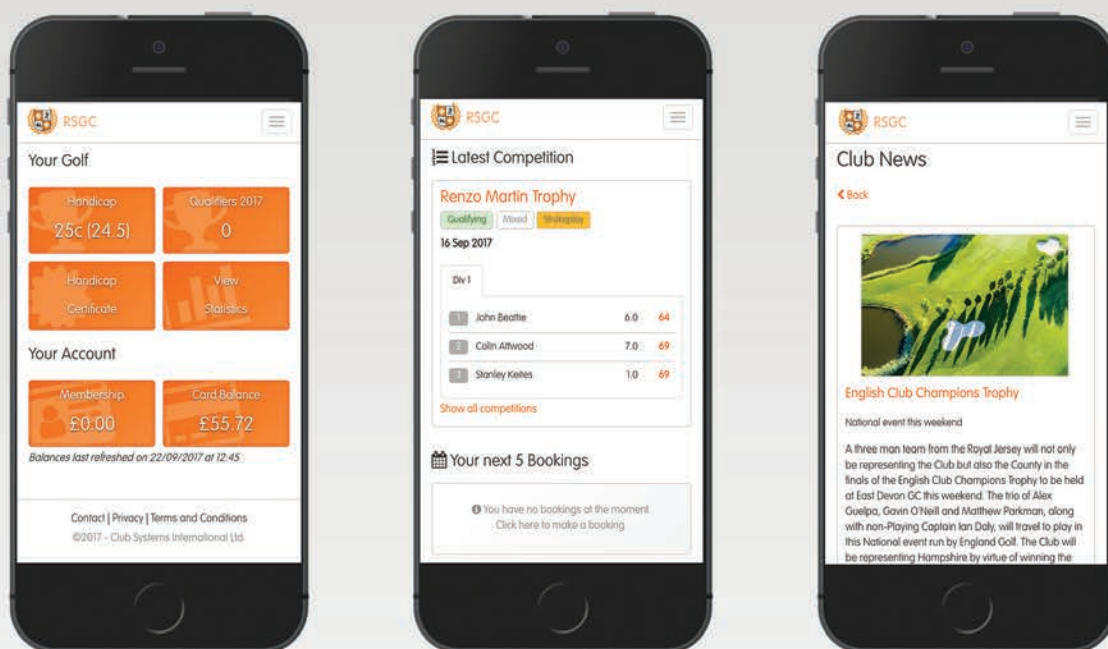
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Former LET player buys Derbyshire golf club

The former Ladies European Tour golfer Fame Tate has acquired Stanedge Golf Club in Derbyshire and opened it to the public.

Tate said the nine-hole moorland course will open up opportunities for more people to play and get into golf.

“Stanedge is a great nine-hole golf course situated on the edge of the Peak District, with superb views and great turf to play golf on,” she said. “We aim to make golf fun and accessible at Stanedge to both visitors and members alike. We will develop a very inclusive and open policy, allowing people to feel welcome, comfortable and relaxed whilst enjoying their experience either on the course, in the clubhouse or learning to play the game with the help

of our PGA professional staff.

“We want to make Stanedge Golf Club a place where people feel welcome and relaxed so they may enjoy their time with us. We’re offering family membership for £950 – for a family of four this equates to less than £20 per month per individual.

“We are also keen to grow junior golf and introduce young players to the game, at £50 per year this is less than £1 per week, not sure where you can get access to sports facilities at that price anywhere else?”

“We will also be running regular coaching sessions for all abilities and in particular for those new to the game through our Get into golf programme.”

Tate started playing golf at the age of 10 at Tipton Park Golf Club. At the age of 14 she was playing off scratch and she went on to represent Great Britain and Ireland in The Curtis Cup in 2002 and 2004.



Leisure operator buys club for £4.5m

One of the UK’s greatest golf courses has been sold for £4.5 million to a leisure operator that is investing in the golf industry.

Dundonald Links, venue for both the men’s and ladies’ Aberdeen Standard Investments Scottish Opens in 2017, has been sold to Darwin Leisure.

In 2017 the company purchased The KP Club, a 180-acre luxury holiday and golf resort in Yorkshire for an

undisclosed fee. The company says it intends to invest heavily in its new acquisition, which is expected to include a new clubhouse and, potentially, new homes and lodges.

Its previous owner was Loch Lomond Golf Club. The general

manager at Loch Lomond, Bill Donald, said: “It is a bit of a wrench as we have built Dundonald Links up, but we think

Darwin Leisure can give the club what is now required.”

Under the deal, Loch Lomond members will continue to have playing rights at the Ayrshire course, which was designed by Kyle Phillips and was originally called Southern Gailes.

A number of leisure operators have been snapping up golf clubs in recent months. Cherry Burton Golf Club in Yorkshire has been sold to Aureus Leisure, Warner Leisure Hotels has acquired the Heythrop Park Resort, on the edge of the Cotswolds, hotel operator Arora Hotels has purchased The Buckinghamshire GC and hotel brand Hilton has bought its first golf resort in Scotland – The Westerwood.

A spokesman for Darwin Leisure said: “Dundonald Links will now join the Darwin Escapes Golf portfolio of golf courses, which also includes The Springs in Oxfordshire and The KP Club in Yorkshire.

“Darwin Escapes has recently made a multi-million pound investment to upgrade the clubhouse facilities and course at The Springs and has ambitious plans to transform the clubhouse at Dundonald Links in order to create a state-of-the art facility with high quality leisure and dining options and a market-leading indoor performance centre.”



Tributes for club owner who has died aged 59

A number of people have paid tribute to Alan Strange, the co-owner and professional at The Brow Golf Club in Shropshire, who has sadly died suddenly, aged 59.

Alan ran the golf club with his wife, Catherine, and four children.

According to the *Shropshire Star*, he collapsed at home.

A statement on the club's website read: 'It is with deep sorry and regret that we announce the death of Alan Strange, golf professional and co-owner of The Brow Golf Club, who very sadly passed away

suddenly at home on Sunday, February 17.

'Our thoughts are with Catherine and family at this most difficult time.'

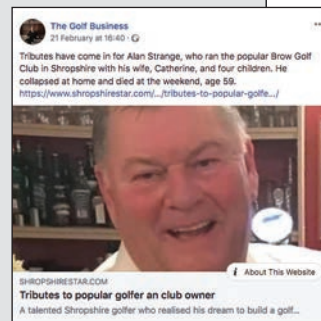
Alan's friend, Tony Pennock, the golf club manager at Seckford Golf Club, said: "Alan was such a great guy and I feel honoured to have been his friend, this is such sad news. We used to play golf together in practice rounds as assistant pros on the Midlands circuit. So, so sad. RIP AL."

Alan had competed on the

European Tour before becoming a golf professional in Leicestershire.

Along with his father, Alf, he then realised his dream to establish a nine hole golf club at The Brow.

'He drew up the course on farmland owned by his family since the 1960s, and his experience as a competitive golfer ensured that the course was testing for all,' stated the paper. 'It was built on 35 acres of beautiful countryside. Over the years the course and the club evolved into one of the most popular venues in north Shropshire.'



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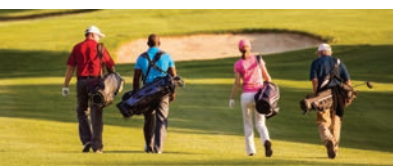
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‘Golf and Health Week’ takes place

A week-long R&A backed campaign to raise awareness of the health benefits of playing golf is taking place this month. The first ever Golf and Health Week, from April 15 to 19, aims to encourage golfers, non-golfers and lapsed golfers of all ages into taking part in the sport.

The week will promote the health benefits of golf across a variety of different platforms and members of parliament have hailed the concept.



The All-Party Parliamentary Golf Group co-chair, Craig Tracey MP, said: “Golf and Health Week is a very welcome initiative, which I am sure will

encourage more people to get involved with the sport and enjoy the health benefits that golf provides.”

To see Craig Tracey MP’s new column in *The Golf Business*, please turn to page 34

Hazlemere converts back to proprietary ownership

A private members’ golf club in Buckinghamshire has been sold off of a guide price of £1.75 million and converted back to being a proprietary club, which it was in the 1980s and 1990s.



Hazlemere Golf Club’s general manager, Jerry Young, said: “Interest in the club was phenomenal.

“We had at least 10 bids and new interest materialised throughout the process.

“In the end the club was sold to an individual who is keen to maintain the ethos of the club whilst at the same time prepared to reinvest in the fabric of the buildings and golf course.”

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Struggling golf club has its future saved

At least two golf clubs concerned about their futures have been putting together rescue plans – and at least one of these has meant the club has been saved.

Marland Golf Course in Rochdale, which was on the verge of closing down, has had its future secured, after its plan was approved by Rochdale Council.

The 18-hole course will be run by local golf professional Andrew Terry and his business partner, Joe Jackson, for 12 months, after the council agreed to support their takeover plan.

The course is owned by Rochdale Borough Council and has been run by its leisure provider Link4Life for a number of years. But the council recently signalled that it could no longer support the facility.

Joe Jackson, new finance director at Marland Golf Course, said: "We are delighted we have played our part in keeping Marland Golf Course open, however this is only the start and the hard work starts now.

"We have been overwhelmed by the support we have

received and we want to encourage everyone to come and use the facilities to make sure it is the family friendly, thriving, community hub we want to create."

The club will be reaching out to local schools and charities offering free membership and coaching for children, and attracting new people to the sport.

Joe and Andrew, who will be the director of golf at the course, plan to improve the course and facilities with a new coffee shop for park users and golfers to enjoy. The club is looking for sponsorship and seeking local businesses and individuals to get involved in keeping the course and facilities running.

Meanwhile, Craigie Hill Golf Club in Scotland held a special 'business briefing' attended by around 100 members as the *Daily Record* has reported that it has been struggling to post profits.

The newspaper states that the 108-year-old club has seen a membership reduction of nearly 50 per cent since 2004 – and since then the age profile has risen.

Proposals discussed include selling some of the land and creating a nine-hole layout at the 18-hole venue. This would also fund the creation of a new purpose-built clubhouse.

3 Hammers owner wins service award

Ian Bonser, who has helped countless people to follow their golfing dreams, has been honoured with England Golf's Lifetime Service Award, sponsored by *The Telegraph*.

Bonser, the owner of the 3 Hammers golf complex in Staffordshire and a committed volunteer in the game, was recognised at the England Golf awards, sponsored by adidas Golf, at the Royal Lancaster London.

He received a special message from Dame Laura Davies who told him: "Congratulations Ian on an amazing achievement. What you have done for golf and all the time you have put in means this award is thoroughly deserved."

Bonser, a five-handicapper, learned his own golf as an 11-year-old at 3 Hammers. By the time he was 25 he owned the centre and had embarked on his plan to create "a place where young people and adults can pursue their dreams, aspirations and goals in a fun, accessible and

affordable environment." Over 32 years his ambition has touched countless people. Each year, over 200,000 people visit the centre. In the last four years 30,000 adults and 10,000 juniors have had lessons at 3 Hammers. Thousands of pupils in 12 schools are introduced to the sport.

Other winners included Conor Gough of Stoke Park Golf Club, Performance of the Year; Stanton-on-the-Wolds Golf Club, Championship Venue of the Year; Wiltshire Golf, County of the Year; Mytime Active, Innovation Award; Exeter Golf and Country Club, Most Welcoming Club of the Year; Mark Feeney from West Derby Golf Club, Volunteer of the Year Award; Lou McLoughlin of Bromborough Golf Club, Young Ambassador of the Year; and Aaron Lansberry from Hatchford Brook Golf Centre, Coach of the Year.



Bonser (centre) received his award from Adam Sills, head of Sport at The Telegraph, and BBC commentator Dan Walker (left)

Guide launched to help attract youngsters

A new guide to help golf clubs attract young people into the sport has been produced by England Golf.

The guide offers to give clubs a 'greater understanding of young people'.

Understanding Your Junior Market forms part of a raft of

measures identified in the wider national 'Growing the Game for the Future' plan which is supported by the Golf Foundation and the Professional Golfers' Association.

The guide highlights

ways to find out what young people want from golf and golf clubs – and what could put them off. It uses the

specially created profiles of seven different types of youngster to show how they and their parents view golf.

A supporting video and online training are available to show clubs how to use the profiles to understand their current juniors and their families, create activities to attract new players, develop retention plans to keep their interest and market these successfully.

Lee Dolby, England Golf's young people manager, commented: "One size definitely does not fit all. Young people change faster than at any other time in life and what appeals to a six-year-old may not be right for a 16-year-old. But, many clubs still just offer one version of junior golf.

"We need to think about the individuals, their motivations and the barriers they encounter. Traditional membership is dropping among young people; that doesn't mean they don't want to belong and feel part of a club, it does mean they don't like what clubs are offering.

"We want to work with clubs to create new and exciting ways to engage young people and inspire a love of golf which will last a lifetime."



Georgia Hall to promote golf to families



Georgia Hall.
Getty Images

Women's British Open champion Georgia Hall has been named as an ambassador for The R&A – and she aims to inspire more

women, girls and families into playing golf.

The 22-year-old will undertake a wide range of promotional activities to enhance initiatives that encourage more women, girls and families to play golf.

Hall will play a key role in raising the profile of women's and girls' golf in support of the Women in Golf Charter, led by The R&A, which aims to inspire an industry-wide commitment to developing a more inclusive culture within golf around the world and to enable more women and girls to flourish and maximise their potential at all levels of the sport. The R&A is also investing £80 million into women's and

mixed golf over the next ten years to boost participation in the sport.

Georgia Hall said: "There is no better known body in golf than The R&A so I was extremely honoured to have been invited to be an ambassador for the organisation.

"I am passionate about helping to grow the game so it's very natural for me to support The R&A's great initiatives, particularly for women and children, over the coming years. The Women in Golf Charter is a great first step and I look forward to working with them on some exciting initiatives over the next few years."

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Was your captains' inauguration like this?

Burhill Golf Club in Surrey's incoming club captains for 2019 opted for a *Lion King*-themed event for their inaugurations – in front of over 200 attending members.

Showcasing Burhill's family-friendly and fun ethos, Temi Kapo and Alex Jamison – who will be taking over as men's and ladies' captains respectively for 2019 – made the journey to the par three 18th hole on the New Course atop a customised buggy dancing to the *Lion King* theme tune as new junior captain, Sasha Crockett, drove them.

An impressive number of Burhill members turned out for the vibrant ceremony to see in their new captains while the club put on canapes and live musical entertainment.

Dubravka Griffiths, general manager at



Burhill Golf Club, commented: "It was certainly the most exciting captains' drive-in I have ever been a part of! I think it shows the club spirit that exists here at Burhill and the willingness of the membership to have fun, breaking free of

the traditional stereotype of golf clubs as stuffy and boring.

"Temi and Alex have each contributed a lot to the club over the past decade and more, so I'm certain that they will both oversee a very successful year for Burhill."

Steve Dougan is the new manager at Kings Norton



The PGA fellow professional, director of golf and experienced club manager, Steve Dougan, is to oversee the day to day operations at Kings Norton Golf Club in Birmingham.

The club manager will be working closely with the board of directors, course manager, head professional and caterers to grow and improve all aspects of the business as well as members' and guests' experience at the club.

Dougan has held senior roles at a number of golf clubs including Dartmouth Golf and Country Club, Yelverton Golf Club and Boringdon Park Golf Club.

The appointment comes as the club has invested more than £600,000 in its course.

"As it bids to become one of the premier clubs in the region, Kings Norton has spent more than £360,000 alone on machinery to improve and maintain its 27 challenging holes," he said.

"And after one of the hottest and driest summers on record the club is also investing £58,000 in a brand-new greens' irrigation system.

"Add to this further investment of £190,000 to be spent over the next three years remodelling and improving all of the 85 bunkers, it is clear that Kings Norton Golf Club is positioning itself for the future.

"Since the appointment of new course manager, Neill Smith, in August 2018, the 27 holes at Kings Norton have seen a rapid transformation, quickly gaining a reputation as one of the best conditioned golf courses in the Midlands. Smith has overseen the investment in a brand-new fleet including greens' mowers, a top dresser and utility vehicles alongside enhanced staff training.

"Kings Norton is definitely the club to join in 2019."

in their own words

Keith Pelley

Chief Executive of the European Tour



Gary Wolstenholme on the Staysure Tour in Seychelles last year

I was asked in an interview the other day what I was most proud of since becoming Chief Executive of the European Tour in August 2015.

It is always difficult to single one element out, largely because we have achieved a number of things over the past four years.

The Rolex Series, for example, has been transformational for the European Tour and the way it has entered the sporting vernacular so quickly is a testament to the work of everyone involved.

We have also produced some truly brilliant content which has helped cut through to different audiences to showcase the wonderful characters of our players. And of course no-one who was involved will ever forget The Ryder Cup in France last September. It was simply spectacular.

But I would like to shine the spotlight on an area of our business that sometimes does not get the recognition it deserves – the Staysure Tour.

If you turn the clock back four years, the Senior Tour, as it was then, was on life support. It was meandering in mediocrity with only 11 tournaments on the schedule, it was losing money and generating little interest with potential stakeholders. We had to take a decision; either invest or close it down.

With the full support of the board, we took the decision we were going to rebuild. We invested, we installed David MacLaren as head of the Tour, we were creative with our formats with amateurs playing with the professionals in the tournaments, and we found a wonderful partner in Staysure who believed in our vision.

In 2015 the Senior Tour had only 11 tournaments and was losing money. Today, the Staysure Tour has 20 tournaments and its prize fund has increased by 200 per cent



This year, the Staysure Tour will have a minimum of 20 tournaments on the schedule in exotic locations like Seychelles, Mauritius and, as of now, a new venue in Tobago. Our Staysure Tour members have also reaped the benefits of the growth with the overall prize fund for the Tour increasing by some 200 per cent.

In real terms it means that, at the end of the 2015 season, only five players earned more than €100,000. At the end of the 2018 season, that number was 24. Look out for that number to be even higher this year.

Related to the above, I will leave you with this thought. The 50+ age demographic has traditionally been one that television advertisers and agencies have not proactively

tried to reach. Most companies have sought after the cherished 18 to 34 demographic – but are they missing a trick?

Having been in the media for close to 30 years I have many conversations with agencies and partners about the 50+ demographic being critical going forward, based on changes to wealth management and

health improvements affecting how long people are living.

It is an interesting thought, especially if you consider these points: (i) 76 per cent of the UK's wealth is in the 50+ demographic; (ii) 24.2 million people are over 50 in the UK; (iii) one in five 'baby boomers' are millionaires; (iv) there are over 200 million people over 50 in the EU. TGB
For more information, visit www.europeantour.com

Former Ryder Cup player Stephen Gallacher used the leisure facilities at Macdonald Hotels & Resorts throughout the 2018 season

Wealth from health

One way several golf clubs are earning increased income is from marketing themselves as health centres that provide gyms, yoga and pilates in addition to golf. Tania Longmire reports

A

s the lucrative health and wellbeing market continues to offer rich rewards to many facilities, an increasing number of golf clubs, which are well-placed to tap into it, are doing just that.

Hever Castle Golf Club Kent, for example, is launching Hever Castle Wellbeing this spring to enhance the club's offering to members, visiting golfers and members of the public.

Osteopathy, physiotherapy and massages will be available in the five treatment rooms of the new centre as well as a range of yoga and pilates classes, while the clubhouse bar and restaurant will both be serving up an

extended choice of healthy menu options.

General manager Jon Wittenberg said: "We aim to deliver inspiring and life enriching wellbeing services to our existing members and our local community."

Congleton Golf Club in Cheshire has also seen the benefit in offering alternative forms of leisure – last year to its members and, for 2019, visitors as well.

It all began when golfer Tim Taylor, who, along with his wife Ann, was suffering from back pain, decided to take up pilates, and called Congleton as he had seen a poster advertising a class at a nearby leisure centre when he had

visited the club. Within 18 months Congleton was running the classes and Ann's chronic back pain was cured.

Ann said: "Instructor Alison Farrall has been life changing. I was enduring so much pain with my lower back – and had been for several years – I had been prescribed amitriptyline to take at bedtime to help me sleep.

"Six months after starting pilates, I was able to stop taking the pills and my GP was so impressed he said he was thinking about recommending patients to Alison."

Tim, who then joined the golf club, said: "My back improved quickly and if pilates can have this effect on Ann and myself – not in our first flush of youth – then goodness knows what it can do for younger people.

"Obviously wherever possible physical exercise is preferable to taking pills and it all started with the golf club's barman taking the trouble to

make sure we got the info we needed, which turned out to make such a big difference to our lives."

"My back improved quickly," said Tim, who took a pilates class at Congleton GC. He was so impressed that he has now joined the golf club

And Macdonald Hotels & Resorts, which runs eight golf venues in the UK, has been investing in its leisure facilities lately.

Last year Stephen Gallacher, 2014 Ryder Cup player and three-time winner on the

European Tour, opened the new Vital Health & Wellbeing Club at Macdonald Inchyra Hotel & Spa in Scotland.

He said: "My programme consists of lots of cardiovascular exercises. I am a big fan of the static bike, it's a low impact work out, which builds strength and power, helping me to hit the ball further, as well as increasing my focus and concentration. Spin classes also increase endurance and stamina – which are essential during tournaments when I can be playing or practicing for up to five hours every day."

Weight training is another key element of Stephen's workouts, including cable chops, squats, dumb bell bench presses and lunges which are all geared to strengthening the muscles in his legs, back and arms. These help him to improve his posture and positioning to maximise the point of impact when hitting the golf ball.

Stephen continued: "Strong muscle groups give me control when practicing and competing, and help keep me injury-free and in general good health." TGB



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Alternative adventure

Adventure golf is becoming big business. Here we speak to the operations director of Adventure Leisure, which now has 12 venues in the UK including three at BGL golf clubs, to find out what's causing this growth and how it can benefit existing facilities



A

Adventure Leisure, a wholly owned subsidiary of Burhill Golf and Leisure (BGL), one of the largest golf course operators in the UK, manages a growing portfolio of adventure golf

We view adventure golf as a leisure activity separate from our established golf operations and more in competition with bowling or other leisure activities

venues within golf centres, leisure parks and city centres across the UK. We spoke to operations and development director, Andrew Scholey, to learn more about the business and his plans for developing it further.

What is the attraction of adventure golf and what is the difference between it and other forms of golf aimed at children such as mini golf and crazy golf?

Like any leisure activity, the attraction of adventure golf is entertainment. It is a fun-for-all-the-family activity that really doesn't

require a huge amount of skill, meaning anyone can play and enjoy it at the same time. Principally, adventure golf is not dissimilar to mini golf or crazy golf, however, our focus is on creating something much more than a few holes with a putter. We try to create an exciting environment with theming, lighting, music and sound effects where our customers have a very positive experience.

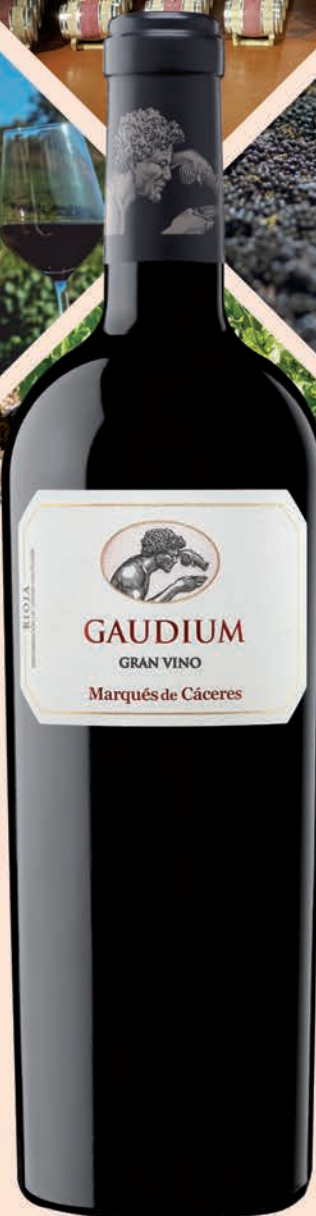
What adventure golf facilities has Adventure Leisure set up?

We currently have 12 adventure golf facilities with an equal split between indoor and outdoor venues. Five of those are located at established golf venues like our BGL golf centres or driving ranges. The other seven are located at leisure parks, retail parks or in city centres completely away from other golf facilities.

We view adventure golf as a leisure activity completely separate from our established golf operations and more in competition with bowling or other leisure activities. It is crucially important to position each unit as a destination venue with a strong split between the games and F&B sales. We appeal to families or groups who know that they can not only play but get good food and drink without



VINTAGE
2014
93
POINTS



VINTAGE
2014
95
POINTS



VINTAGE
2011
93
POINTS

TIM ATKIN MW
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RESERVA 2014 | GAUDIUM 2014 | GRAN RESERVA 2011

additional revenue streams

having to go elsewhere; this adds to the overall experience and means customers stay for longer.

We opened four new venues in 2018 in Newcastle, Milton Keynes, Bournemouth and Birmingham. Each one has had early success which is a really good sign.

How much does an adventure golf facility like this cost to set up?

An indoor unit, for example, would usually be £2 million requiring roughly 15 to 20,000 square feet. Outdoor units are less costly, roughly £500,000, using around 23,000 square feet of space, but it is a significant investment to set up a new venue. Each unit employs between 25 and 40 people including part-time and full-time staff as well as its own general manager.

What are the benefits to BGL of offering adventure golf?

Our journey into adventure golf came primarily as a result of a desire to access the leisure market, combined with an internal company commitment to growing golf across



categories and across the UK, and we wanted a way to access the leisure market. Our venues are versatile and whilst promoting a family friendly atmosphere, we have also had success with the adult market. The beauty of adventure golf is its universal appeal and if we can open our venues at 10 in the morning and close at midnight then it means it's working very well.

We see forms of golf such as adventure golf as the grass roots entry point for many, especially children, into the game of golf. If you can put a putter and ball in a child's hand then the chances they take up golf can only increase. We see at individual centres that adventure golf leads into people using the driving range and nine-hole course before transitioning to the main course as potential new members. It has to be one of the main platforms from which to grow the game.

What are Adventure Leisure's plans for the concept moving forward?

We are expanding; the goal we're aiming for is to open 25 units across the country in a fairly short roll-out plan which means opening three or four new venues each year. We've seen great early success in all of the new openings over the last couple of years and maintaining a balance between sites in busy metropolitan areas and venues at golf complexes gives us a big list of potential locations.

Introducing new technology to adventure golf is something we are always

looking at however, it will never compromise the fundamental fun and simple aspects of the game that make it accessible and enjoyable for everyone. In particular, we are researching ways to implement automatic scoring systems and being able to acknowledge special moments, such as hole-in-ones, out on our courses.

TGB



Keep the lease

Golf clubs have to invest in their courses if they are to be profitable. Ian Henderson from Golf Finance says one way all clubs can do this is by leasing their course machinery

One of the reasons why Castle Stuart Golf Links has seen record-breaking visitor numbers for the last couple of years is because it has invested in its greenkeeping team and the course machinery they use.

There is, however, a way golf clubs can invest in their courses even if they don't have the budgets Castle Stuart has. Leasing may be the way forward, especially because clubs can simply spread the VAT element over their monthly lease payments.

For example, with a finance lease agreement, you can spread that VAT cost over the life of the agreement yet still effectively own the equipment at the end of the period.

In other words, if you were to buy a £30,000 mower, where you would normally pay £6,000 VAT up front, you can simply spread the VAT element over your monthly lease payment and avoid this predominantly irrecoverable up-front cost.

With leasing, many clubs in the past have worried about ownership at the end of the finance period, but a simple paperwork exercise can transfer full ownership to the club at the end of the agreement.

With finance lease packages available on both new and used equipment, along with flexible payment plans to suit all types of businesses and cashflows, it should be considered as a real option.

Each golf club has their own idiosyncrasies, so it is always worth checking with your accountant or VAT expert. *TGB If you require a quote, or would simply like to talk over options with an expert at Golf Finance, please call Ian, Joe or Ken on 01620 890200*

James Hutchison, course manager at Castle Stuart Golf Links

What women want

Bernard Fitzgerald is the PGA professional at Westmanstown Golf Club in Ireland. Over one five-week period this winter he delivered a series of lessons to a huge number of women, which has improved their golf and been an excellent initiative for the club. Here, he details how it all happened



T

hrough great organisation from the ladies' section of the golf club, we put a plan together to get the ladies'

section to participate in golf over the winter months. One way to do this would be through weekly group coaching sessions over a number of weeks. Along with correct planning, the fairest way to deliver the programme would be to get all the ladies into groups via their handicap and ability – this way all the groups were of the same standard.

I proposed a total of five weeks' coaching sessions covering all aspects of the game.

Coaching people to play golf and learn the basics would be key to how I was to plan the sessions. The sessions were fitted around my work schedule so it was pretty easy to put together. For instance, I conducted the coaching on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings from 10am. The fourth and final group start was at 1pm so it was a good four hours coaching each day.

I thought it would be a good idea for there to be less than ten players in a group. This would give me a good opportunity to get around to each individual and give them some one-to-one coaching.

I started the sessions talking about the shot

at hand, how it was played and the principles applied such as grip stance, posture, ball position, swing and so

on. Then I would demonstrate the shot so they could see it for themselves. It was important for me to keep the coaching pretty simple and easy to understand – this way it would be better

A total of 84 ladies signed up to be part of my 'welovegolf' campaign

for the golfers to get to grips with what I was talking about.

My philosophy on the swing is fairly straightforward and I like to teach in a simple way in which players understand the impact factors. The

more complicated it's made it becomes easier for the player to get lost and that's not what we want.

The number of people who attended

We had a great response from the ladies' section of the club for the coaching sessions. A total of 84 ladies signed up to be part of my 'welovegolf' campaign! To be honest I was totally blown away by the numbers that signed up.

I was relishing the prospect of getting stuck into coaching the ladies. At the end of the day I simply love coaching golf and there's no better sight than seeing somebody improve after some instruction. For me I don't like a golf lesson that is difficult for the pupil to understand. I like to see myself as someone who teaches in a very simple way.

I decided to deliver the lesson in this way by starting off with a putting clinic in week one – a nice little ice breaker for the ladies to start. This was followed by chipping in week two and then pitching in the third week. As you can see the golf swing is starting to lengthen and the golfers are starting to get a grasp of the golf swing itself. By the time we had the final week they had a good grip of the full swing.

Marketing

For any clubs out there looking to find ways of marketing or getting in touch with members and visitors, BRS is one of the best tools out there. To communicate with the ladies' section the ladies' committee sent out a very simple email to all the lady members, giving details of the proposed five-week lesson programme. As I was the new professional of the club the response was very satisfying.



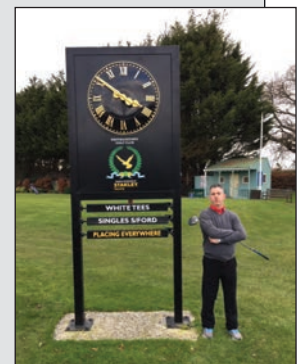
We had a putting clinic in week one. This was followed by chipping in week two and pitching in week three. By the time we had the final week the ladies had a good grip of the full swing

Bernard Fitzgerald: My golfing career path

"My golf career began by being introduced into the game by my parents and I joined, as a junior golfer, County Meath Golf Club. My introduction into professional golf started at Beech Park Golf Club as an assistant professional under Zak Rouiller. Here I learnt all the basics of my trade from teaching to retail and club

repairs. After a period of over ten years there I moved to Lisheen Springs Golf Club where I spent two years under former Tour player Raymond Burns. But since April of 2018 I started my new position of club professional at

Westmanstown Golf Club, working alongside director of golf, Edward Doyle, who has a wealth of experience and expertise. Here I am at my best with more responsibility and plenty of coaching opportunities. Over the years I've seen many changes in the golf industry to now where it may be difficult for clubs to recruit new members. That's why I think these new initiatives being introduced, such as Get into golf and welovegolf, are fantastic ways to grow the game."



women's golf

Details of the lessons were advertised at the golf reception at the golf club on a Tuesday and Sunday; these were the main competition days that the ladies participate. So to compile the names I simply put up a notice in the ladies' locker room asking anyone to state if they were interested in the coaching sessions. The only data I needed was their name, handicap, email and other contact information. Having met with the ladies we decided to split the groups up by handicap. This way the standard in the groups would all be equal.

We see now how social media is playing a major role – a niche that I'm looking to get more into.

After every week I posted on my Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts to promote the work I was doing. On a social media front I would like to grow and reach a wider audience with the help of this article. Golf can give great opportunities for

people – you never know who you might meet. So feel free to get in touch or give me a follow (contact details are at the end of the article)!

More than 80 per cent of the attendees played through the winter months

Over the years I've seen many changes in the golf industry to now where it may be difficult for clubs to recruit new members. However, especially women golfers who may have had children and are now looking for ways to get themselves out and about again, are a perfect fit for golf clubs. Golf is not only a great sport but also it's a great way of meeting new people. So joining a golf club is a fantastic opportunity for women.

How many carried on playing at the course?

As the lessons got started the ladies really threw themselves into it, and considering it was early November we were blessed with fine weather. Starting off with something like putting really brought the group together quickly. With over 80 players taking up the coaching, the feedback was fantastic. I could tell straight from the off that they were enjoying it. Every couple of days the ladies would come up to me in the shop and ask me questions about the previous session. For me that's what makes coaching so great and there is nothing better than seeing people improve.

Luckily, through a great ladies' section at



Westmanstown, of the golfers that took up the sessions more than 80 per cent of them played through the winter months, with more than 60 golfers on a Tuesday, which is ladies' day and 50 participating on a Sunday.

Thankfully the feedback was fantastic and we're already looking at doing it again this spring. The word filtered through the club about the lessons, which has also helped me as I've seen an increase in the number of my individual clients. **TGB**
Contact Bernard –
bernardfitzgeraldpga@hotmail.com;
Facebook: @bernardfitzpga;
Instagram: @bernardfitzgeraldpga;
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Neil Statham

is the Club Secretary at Knole Park Golf Club in Kent. He talks to *The Golf Business* about marketing the club, how managing a top golf club has changed in the last few years and the unique challenges involved in running a Site of Special Scientific Interest where the land is leased from a Lord's estate and the country house is owned by the National Trust



Neil Statham

K

nole Park Golf Club regularly appears in top 100 in England golf course lists – can you tell us a bit about the course and the history of the club?

Knole Park Golf Club was established in 1924 when members of neighbouring Wildernesse Club feared the course was going to be sold for development. Members of the Wildernesse approached Lord Sackville and were granted permission to build a golf course within the grounds of the 1,000 acre ancient deer park. James Braid was engaged to survey the land and identified approximately 200 acres of the park as being ideal for a golf course. In addition to Braid, J. F. Abercromby of Fowler, Abercromby, Simpson & Croome was also asked to design a course over the land and ultimately it was Abercromby's design that was selected. Whilst both designs used the same parcel of land, Braid's worked in a clockwise route whereas Abercromby's worked anti-clockwise.

A few additional tees have been added over the years but in all other respects the course remains exactly as Abercromby designed. In *The Golf Courses of Great Britain* (1925), Darwin wrote, 'few if any park courses will be better, certainly none will be prettier.' He wasn't wrong.

The term 'park' is somewhat misleading as the course is more like an inland links or heathland course with bracken rather than heather, its sandy soil drains brilliantly and the undulating landscape enabled Abercromby to design a course of tremendous variety and interest; no two holes are remotely alike and you'll use most clubs in the bag regularly.

A few years ago, I made contact with 'Top 100' raters and asked them to come and play Knole as most had never been here. Once the ball was rolling it seemed that each one enthused more about the course than the last



one. I felt the course design and setting clearly deserved a rating in the top 100 but recognised that the 'rustic' nature of the course could be presented better. Having recently completed the creation of a number of new championship tees in preparation for the Tillman Trophy and future major events (the course from the new black tees stands at 6,659 yards, par 70, SSS 73), the focus for our new head greenkeeper has been to improve the presentation of the course. Early signs are very encouraging and we look forward to return visits from the raters with great interest.

You've been Secretary at Knole Park for several years now, how have you found the running of the club, and generally the role of a UK golf club manager, has changed in that time? What has your career path been?

After 27 years working in the City, I decided I wanted get involved in the golf industry as golf has always been my passion. I approached the club and offered my services to assist the then Secretary, Robert Brewer. When Robert resigned a year later to take the position at Royal Wimbledon, I was offered the opportunity to become Secretary of Knole Park. Having been a member since 1989 and having played here prior to that for many years in the Kent Cob Scratch Open and Kent Youths Championships, I was delighted to accept the position. My only condition was that I did not have to give up my membership; my enjoyment of playing Knole Park being greater than my desire to run the club. Fortunately, the chairman agreed and just over nine years later I am still here!

Robert suggested I attend an induction course at the Golf Club Managers' Association's headquarters in Weston-Super-Mare, I recall sitting in a conference room as the first speaker opened proceedings with the crushing words: 'Gone are the days where the Secretary spends his days sitting at the bar supping gin and tonics with the great and the good of the club! This is now a job for 'seriously professional' people.' At the end of the week it was clear that the management and financial skills I had learned in the City would be of more use than my ability to hold a drink.

Over the last nine years the demands on 'The Office' have increased considerably year on year. Software development in the industry has enabled a steady delivery

of new features and services to the membership, who lap them up greedily. However, much of the increase in workload is unseen and of no interest to the membership. The endless stream of legislative changes continues to add to the wide range of subjects a modern club manager needs to have a sound appreciation of.

The golf industry has become tougher to succeed in, with membership levels generally lower than in the past and visitors always looking for a deal. Careful marketing is important for most clubs and getting the balance right between members and visitors is a particular challenge for clubs like Knole Park, which, being a real golfer's golf club, is very busy with competition golf and inter-club matches, yet, like most, needing to secure a good level of green fee income. The various sections within the club have grown their portfolio of competitions and matches over the last 20 years or so and it is fair to say the diary is pretty rammed. With more golfers today wanting to play a friendly fourball and less a twoball medal, there is an increasing demand to clear space in the diary. Fun shotgun start events with a casual dress code lunch after are proving increasingly popular. Responding to what the majority of your members want inevitably generates the need for diplomatic management of the old guard.

What do you find are the biggest challenges managing the club today?

In no particular order I would say: managing members expectations, I am sure most Secretaries will have experienced offering an additional service for the first time and the members saying: 'that's great, thank you'; the second time they ask ahead of time: 'will you be doing that again?' then it's: 'where is it!'

Communication: email may be relatively old tech but it's still widely used, which is fine for distributing information but clearing down 100 emails from my inbox every day is a challenge in its own right – members assume that because they sent an email it has been read and actioned, and yet it's amazing how often they didn't get

Much of the increase in [a golf club manager's] workload has been unseen and of no interest to the membership

profile

the one you sent them! It is increasingly important to feed members information about what is happening at the club, be it development on the course or the

latest social event the Captain wants supported. Providing the members with an efficient and effective means to raise issues and have them responded to quickly is something members now expect. The instant nature of messaging apps and social media generally has altered members' expectations considerably.

Finance: at Knole we lease the land from Knole Estate; the annual lease payment is significant and something many clubs don't have to accommodate. Luckily, we have had excellent treasurers during my time and have managed to carry out some wonderful improvements to the course, practice facilities and clubhouse, and remain debt free. Members' golf clubs are still businesses that need to be well-managed to survive and thrive and this sometimes means unpopular decisions have to be taken and it is important not to be swayed by the vocal minority.

The 18th at Knole Park

What are the pros and cons of having a golf course on National Trust land?

The National Trust owns the majority of Knole House but not the land, which is retained by his Lordship and Knole Estate, so we have a tri-party relationship just to add to the complexity. The biggest challenge for the club is getting the National Trust to manage their public away from the golf course. To be fair they have done a great deal in recent years working with the club and the Knole Estate, such as creating recommended walks around the 800 acres that the course does not use. We also have around 60 signs in the park

designed to educate the public, but it is amazing how some people lose the ability to read on a sunny day, so more work is required by the National Trust before we can say we have cracked it. The challenge is trying to get a huge organisation like the National Trust to move away from its standard approach and implement bespoke measures for a unique site.

The park is a Site of Special Scientific Interest – it short, this means it is protected. Natural England are involved and we have many more restrictions and obligations than most clubs regarding our maintenance of the course.



“I made contact with ‘Top 100’ raters and asked them to come as most had never been here. Once the ball was rolling it seemed that each one enthused more about the course than the last one”



The 16th (right, the 5th)

Having said that, you could not wish to find a more naturally beautiful place to play golf, the scenery is stunning and the deer are a magnificent addition, even if they do manage to run through the majority of the bunkers most nights.

Fortunately, our greenstaff have strong backs and rake every bunker every morning.

The club is a member of Golf Tourism England. How did this come about?

We were approached by Golf Tourism England together with The Wilderness and Hever to create a small tour. To be honest, the jury is still out on the effectiveness of this. We have seen more tangible benefits from our top 100 listings.

How do you communicate with existing members?

Email and the website still form core communications with members, although other means are used. Our junior organiser manages a Facebook account for our 60-plus junior section.

We have just started using Golf Hubber, a live scoring app with both internal club and external marketing capabilities. We have generally stayed away from the plethora of other communication means as there are now so many of them and every member you talk to prefers something different. There are risks associated with some of these that I know many clubs have been burnt with.

How does Knole Park Golf Club fit in with the local community? Is it also trying to attract more women and juniors to the facility?

Knole Park GC is a great supporter of the local

Fun shotgun start events with a casual dress code lunch after are proving increasingly popular

community, from offering fourball vouchers to local schools and good causes to hosting large charity golf days. Our professionals run coaching for kids of all ages and actively work with a number of local schools. The Stoodley Trust helps fund a number of junior activities at the club and several local businesses have also sponsored various junior events. Knole has one of the strongest juniors sections in the county and the club fully supports the extensive range of junior competitions and matches including an annual match against the Stockholm Club that alternates home and away.

We are fortunate to have a very enthusiastic ladies' section. Last year

we completed a full review of the ladies' tees as it was felt that, like many clubs, the ladies' tees were simply placed at the front of an old men's tee. We engaged Jonathan Gaunt, a renowned course architect, to assist us with a re-design that has transformed the scoring and hopefully the enjoyment for our ladies' section and encourage more ladies to join.

What is the club's approach to customer service?

Fundamentally, we remember that golf for the majority is something they do to relax and enjoy themselves. The atmosphere in the clubhouse is designed to reflect that. Knole Park has always been a friendly and welcoming club. We have standards, of course, but we try to ensure they are sensible and reasonable. We have dispensed with the need for jackets and ties other than on special occasions and formal dinners. The majority of the time a members' shotgun start competition will, for example, be followed by a two-course lunch with a smart-casual dress code. Much to the distress of some of our older members we now allow jeans to be worn if you are coming to the club for social reasons. Members have respected the spirit in which this was done and I have yet to see a pair with mud on or holes in – and bar takings are increasing.

In terms of food and beverage, what does the club offer?

Our bar is well stocked and tended by our friendly and attentive staff who



are always willing to listen to tales of missed putts and bad luck. Our head chef Adam is excellent and our members will regularly praise his efforts. In addition to our bar menu we have a wide ranging menu available for more formal dinners. We have recently introduced some fine dining evenings that are also proving popular.

Knole Park tends to appoint its managers to its board of directors for the term of their employment with the club. Why has it pursued this model?

Being a private members' club, owned by the members, the management board is clearly



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responsible to the membership for the strategic direction of the club and its financial performance.

Having the Secretary attend the management committee meetings is integral to their ability to do that. I am fortunate that my experience as a golfer has also enabled me to have a fair degree of input to the development of the course, which I hope members have appreciated. The course is our greatest asset and as such will always be our primary concern.

I also sit on the finance, golf and house committees with my assistant Tim sitting on the events committee. The club is effectively run by the Chairman, Treasurer, Chairs of Golf and House, the Lady Chairman and four elected members, who are

assigned to the various committees. The Captain, Lady Captain, Vice-Captain and Lady Vice-Captain together with some willing volunteers run the events committee. Captains have a great deal to do during their year and at Knole we have taken the approach that they have enough to do without getting involved in the running of the club.

Knole Park offers squash facilities. How popular are these and how do they fit in with the club's overall health provision?

All golf members are automatically squash members, but we do also have around 90 squash members who are non-golfers. The squash side of the club has proven very popular and the club

competes in matches as well as members and their guests simply enjoying a game.

Membership is free to junior players as is the coaching they receive. We consider the squash facilities a useful addition as many members are far more fitness conscious than they used to be. Sadly that means they don't often come into the bar for a couple of pints, but you can't have everything.

Kent has a number of world famous golf clubs and is one of the top counties in England for its number of leading venues. Do you find yourself in competition with fellow Kent managers?

Clearly, all clubs compete to some degree for members and

visitors. We set our stall out to offer a top quality course for people who are passionate about golf. Others might focus more on the social side and the game of golf is perhaps secondary to that. There is no right or wrong here and each club hopefully finds the right mix that works for it.

On the whole, I have a very good relationship with other Club Secretaries in Kent.

Our regional Golf Club Managers' Association organises a number of events throughout the year to keep us in touch with one another and provide opportunities to discuss issues relevant to us all.

There is usually a lot more that unites us than divides us, as the

“The scenery is stunning and the deer are a magnificent addition, even if they do manage to run through the majority of the bunkers most nights. Fortunately, our greenstaff have strong backs and rake every bunker every morning”

The 8th at Knole Park

profile

saying goes, and in my experience Club Managers have always been willing to offer advice and help to one another wherever they can, be it a few courtesy rounds when your course is shut to members because you are hosting a large tournament or which cleaning company is worth talking to.

Many of the clubs have friendly and competitive matches which add to a friendly rivalry between them.

Kent is blessed with some magnificent courses and arguably the best course in England in Royal St Georges, so personally I am delighted we are so strong as a county. TGB



A warm welcome and strong sense of arrival – club secretary Neil Statham and Eagle sales manager for the south of England, Liam Burns, stand proudly next to an example of one of the brand new signs installed at Knole Park Golf Club

The power of the brand: Case study Of Knole Park

When Knole Park took the decision to review the branding of the club and how this could enhance the overall customer journey, the club selected Eagle.

What followed was a structured, professional and methodical approach to understanding, first of all, what the club needed and then, in turn, how best to achieve it, represent it and position it. Eagle believes that the power of the branding can propel a club to greater heights and has been helping a large number of clubs throughout the UK achieve a variety of goals, such as:

- Improve their position on National and International course rankings.
- Increase and retain membership numbers.
- Increase green fee revenue.
- Overall, drive the revenue performance of the business.

Club secretary, Neil Statham, explains why the decision was taken to review the branding in the last 12 months and why Eagle was chosen as the company to work with:

We had an existing relationship with Eagle through our scorecards, so when we decided to upgrade our signage throughout they were an obvious contender, given the quality of their products. We looked at a couple of alternatives but on balance felt Eagle covered all the bases well and could give us the uniform branding we were looking for. New course furniture has now also been purchased, so the finishing touches are just being completed.

What has been the feedback from members?

Members have loved it; there is a general

feeling that we are giving the club the love it deserves and the attention to detail is noticeable.

There will inevitably be a few that think it's all a waste of money, it is usually the same minority that thought the old tin lockers were better than the new wooden ones and the bitter we sold 30 years ago was better value than the one we have now.

What benefits have you seen?

Members have always been proud to bring guests to the course but now they stroll around to the first tee rather than rushing their guest there! The effect of all this is hopefully a greater desire for members to bring guests to the club and enjoy the facilities.





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The Good Work Plan

The government introduced a policy paper called ‘The Good Work Plan’ in December 2018, which sets out its vision for the future of the UK labour market. But what is it, what are the proposed changes and how might it be relevant to golf clubs?

Golf clubs might welcome parts of the new legislation – especially the clarification in relation to employment status tests for golf club professionals

In July 2017, the Taylor Review was published, which reviewed modern working practices, in particular the ‘gig’ economy and agency workers. The review outlined an ambition for all work in the UK economy to be fair and decent and for

employers to offer opportunities that give individuals realistic scope to develop and progress.

The purpose of the report was to look into how employment practices may need to change as a consequence of changes in the labour market and modern business models. Essentially, recognising that casual or ‘gig’ workers may not have adequate rights and protections, it suggested that the goal should be ‘good work for all’ and sets out seven steps towards achieving fair and decent work for all, with realistic scope for development and fulfilment

The Good Work Plan is the government’s response to the Taylor Review, with some changes already enacted and in force, others due to come into force in the coming months and years, with others still in either consultation or early stages of formulation.

How might it affect golf clubs?

Many golf clubs will employ seasonal, ‘casual’ or zero hours staff who would



Guidance on how a non-legislative scheme would operate includes banning employers from making deductions from staff tips

fit within the broad definition of 'gig' economy workers. 'Gig' workers are those who do not work fixed shifts, are not required to carry out a minimum number of hours each day or who can, in theory, work as much or as little as they choose.

The Taylor Report was seeking to get away from the suggestion of 'casual' work being regarded as 'inessential', whereas in fact it might be the only work that an individual can do. With that in mind, efforts have been made with the Good Work Plan to improve the rights and protections of those workers.

What are the changes?

The first change was introduced on December 18, 2018, whereby any employer who fails to pay an employment tribunal award is now named and shamed by the government, in a similar way to those who breach minimum wage payments

From April 6, 2019, there has been

an increase to the amount that a tribunal can order as an aggravated breach penalty from £5,000 to £20,000 in respect of breaches occurring on or after April 6, 2019.

From April 6, 2019 there has also been a right to a payslip for all workers, which must include the hours worked for hourly paid workers and employees.

With effect from April 6, 2020:

- The reference period over which a week's pay for holiday purposes is calculated, will be extended from 12 weeks to 52 weeks.
- A statement of written particulars will become a day one right for both workers and employees and will have to include additional mandatory content.
- A 'key facts page' will have to be provided to agency workers (similar to a section one statement for an employee).
- The 'Swedish derogation' in respect of agency workers will be

abolished (which gets around the right to the same basic pay and conditions as comparable employees after a 12 week qualifying period).

- The threshold for information and consultation arrangements will be reduced from 10 to two per cent.

Other notable changes in the Good Work Plan, which do not yet have draft or final legislation or alternatively guidance on how a non-legislative scheme would operate, include:

- A review of the test for employment status.
- Rights for zero hours workers to request a more predictable and stable contract such as to have guaranteed hours.
- Improve continuity of service for casual employees.
- An extension of redundancy protection immediately prior to, during and after maternity leave.
- An alignment of employment status for tax and employment rights purposes.
- State enforcement of underpayments of holiday pay.
- Banning employers from making deductions from staff tips.

There are many aspects to the above changes where an effect will be felt by golf clubs. Most notably, clubs might welcome clarification in relation to employment status tests for golf club professionals.

For any advice in relation to employment law matters or any other legal matters within a golf club, please contact Alistair Smith on alistair@ngcaa.co.uk or 01886 812943



The National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association

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in their own words

Craig Tracey MP

Writing exclusively for *The Golf Business*, the co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Golf Group, and Member of Parliament for North Warwickshire & Bedworth, discusses the work that the group does to support the sport

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf was one of the first organisations to become a signatory to The R&A's Women in Golf Charter



Whilst Brexit dominates political debate in Westminster, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Golf continues to provide a strong voice for the sport.

Established in late 2015, the group has the

deliberately broad remit 'to support the sport of golf', meeting regularly in parliament to hear from speakers from across the world of golf and discuss issues in the sport.

Outside of our regular events, we offer group members the opportunity to promote the game to government, parliamentarians and, more broadly, act as a strong voice for golf in Westminster.

Whilst we are always looking at new topics, our core focuses for 2019 are 'inclusivity' and 'the health benefits of golf'.

The R&A's Women in Golf Charter was warmly welcomed by the group following its launch in 2018, and we were one of the first organisations to become a signatory. However, we recognise that there is much more to be done to encourage

more women and girls to play and work in the game, and we are committed to working with partners from across the industry to develop a more inclusive environment for all to take part in the sport.

I recently raised this work with the secretary of state for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in the chamber of the House of Commons, and the group plans to meet with the secretary of state or sports minister, along with major golf bodies, later in the year.

At our next meeting, we will focus on women's and girls' golf, taking evidence from a panel of leaders from across the industry, and hope to be able to pull together some action points for the group to take up with government.

The APPG is also keen to promote other inclusive forms of the game, including for those with disabilities, shorter forms of





The APPG hosted the First International Congress on Golf and Health in Parliament with The R&A last October, which featured a number of high-profile speakers. A scientific consensus linking golf and health, commissioned by the World Golf Foundation and supported by The R&A, was presented with findings revealing that playing golf is associated with a range of physical and mental health benefits

the game such as GolfSixes, and other alternative formats.

Providing a variety of opportunities for all to participate in the sport is the best way that we will grow participation, and we are committed to working with all in the game to achieve this.

The other key area of the group's work in 2019 is around the health benefits that the sport delivers for participants and spectators.

There is increasingly a need for sport to evidence the return on investment that it delivers to government, and golf been a real leader in the sports sector in producing data to support the contribution it makes to the nation's health.

The group was proud to host the First International Congress on Golf and Health in Parliament in conjunction with The R&A in October 2018, which featured a panel discussion with a number of high-profile speakers including public health minister, Steve Brine MP.

A scientific consensus linking golf and health, commissioned by the World Golf Foundation and supported by The R&A, was presented with findings revealing that playing golf is associated with a range of physical and mental health benefits. New studies are also underway to investigate improved quality-of-life through golf and on the sport's impact on people with a range of diseases including dementia and Parkinson's disease.

The group will continue to promote the health benefits of the game in 2019, especially to government. We plan to work with partners across the industry,

At our next meeting, we will focus on women's and girls' golf, taking evidence from a panel of leaders from across the industry, and hope to be able to pull together some action points for the group to take up with government

particularly focusing on further research into the health benefits of golf for those with long-term conditions, and also around social prescribing of golf. TGB
More information about the APPG, its activities and how to get involved, can be found online at www.parliamentary.golf and on Twitter @ParliamentGolf

Body guards

Three of the biggest risks to your customers and employees, and ultimately you, come via legionella, electrical equipment and fire hazards. There are, though, suitable measures that clubs can put in place to minimise the risk of all three, provided qualified personnel carry out the appropriate risk assessments, writes Tania Longmire



While cases of Legionnaires' disease in golf clubs are, thankfully, rare, when they do occur they are incredibly serious for both the club as well as whoever has contracted the disease.

For example, a Scottish golf club was fined a six figure amount for failing to put in place adequate controls to prevent Legionnaires' disease after guests used a hot tub in one of its lodges – resulting in one of them, sadly, dying just days later.

Environmental health officers visited the club and detected the presence of the legionella bacteria in showerheads in two bedrooms and in the hot tub. An investigation found that no suitable risk assessment had been carried out in relation to water systems at the resort.

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), golf clubs must carry out a risk assessment in order to take the right precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to legionella. "You may be competent to carry out the assessment yourself but, if not, you should call on help and advice from either within your own organisation or from outside sources, for example, consultancies," said a spokesman.

The assessor needs to understand the club's water systems, the equipment associated with the system such as pumps, heat exchangers, showers and so on, and its constituent parts. They must identify whether they are likely to create a risk from exposure to legionella, and whether:

- the water temperature in all or some parts of the system is between 20 and 45 °C
- water is stored or re-circulated as part of the system
- there are sources of nutrients such as rust, sludge, scale, organic matter and biofilms
- the conditions are likely to encourage bacteria to multiply
- it is possible for water droplets to be produced and, if so, whether they can be dispersed over a wide area, such as showers and aerosols from cooling towers
- it is likely that any employees, members or visitors are more susceptible to infection due to age, illness, a weakened immune system and so on, and whether they could be exposed to any contaminated water droplets.

The risk assessment should include:

- management responsibilities, including the name of the

competent person and a description of the system

- competence and training of key personnel
- any identified potential risk sources
- any means of preventing the risk or controls in place to control risks
- monitoring, inspection and maintenance procedures
- records of the monitoring results and inspection and checks carried out
- arrangements to review the risk assessment regularly, particularly when there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

An assessor should first consider whether the club can prevent the risk of legionella by looking by, for example, identifying whether it is possible to replace a wet cooling tower with a dry air-cooled system. It is essential to design, maintain and operate the water services under conditions that prevent or adequately control the growth and multiplication of legionella.

The club must, for example, ensure that the release of water spray is properly controlled, avoid water temperatures and conditions that favour the growth of legionella and other micro-organisms, ensure water cannot stagnate anywhere in the system by keeping pipe lengths as short as possible or removing redundant pipework and treat water to control the growth of legionella.

If the assessor identifies a risk that the golf club is unable to prevent, it must introduce a course of action such as a written control scheme which will help manage risks by implementing effective control measures. All findings must also be recorded.

Electrical safety

A second major safety issue in the golf club is electricity, which can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property. At the end of last year two golf clubs were fined a total of nearly £25,000, both under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, for failing to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of employees who had suffered burns.

The main hazards of working with electricity are electric shock and burns from contact with live parts, injury from exposure to arcing, fire from faulty electrical equipment or installations and explosion caused by unsuitable electrical apparatus or static electricity igniting flammable vapours or dusts.

Golf clubs must ensure an assessment has been made of any electrical hazards, which covers who could be harmed by them, how the level of risk has been established and the precautions taken to control that risk.

The risk assessment should take into consideration the type of

health and safety

electrical equipment used, the way in which it is used and the environment that it is used in.

Fuses, circuit-breakers and other devices must be correctly rated for the circuit they protect. Isolators and fuse-box cases should be kept closed and, if possible, locked. Cables, plugs, sockets and fittings must be robust enough and adequately protected for the working environment. Machinery must have an accessible switch or isolator to cut off the power quickly in an emergency. Electrical equipment and installations must also be maintained to prevent danger.

“Make arrangements for inspecting and testing fixed wiring installations, that is the circuits from the meter and consumer unit supplying light switches, sockets, wired-in equipment, to be carried out regularly so there is little chance of deterioration leading to danger. This work should be carried out by a competent person,” explained the HSE spokesman. “That is someone who has the suitable training, skill and knowledge for the task to be undertaken to prevent injury to themselves and others.

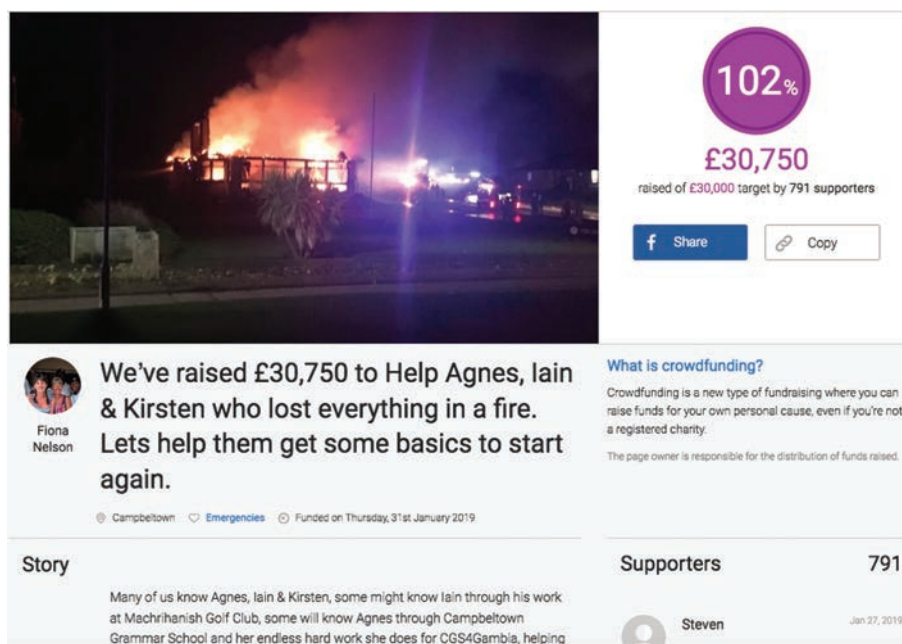
“A successfully completed electrical apprenticeship, with some post-apprenticeship experience, is one way of demonstrating technical competence for general electrical work. More specialised work, such as maintenance of high-voltage switchgear or control system modification, is almost certainly likely to require additional training and experience.”

Fire safety

Fires in golf clubs are depressingly common and, in many cases, unavoidable. In the last few months, for instance, Glasgow Golf Club saw 75 per cent of its clubhouse damaged, and Machrihanish Golf Club’s clubhouse was destroyed, in two devastating fires.

As nobody was hurt in either fire they are useful reminders of the importance of carrying out risk assessments, which both clubs had done.

“Throughout the UK the person typically responsible for fire safety in commercial premises is the owner / employer, but it can be anyone with some control over the premises,” said a spokesman for the Fire Industry Association. “Penalties for breaches of fire safety legislation can include heavy fines or imprisonment.



The image shows a screenshot of a crowdfunding campaign on a website. At the top, there's a large purple circle with '102%' inside, and below it, '£30,750' in bold, followed by 'raised of £30,000 target by 791 supporters'. There are 'Share' and 'Copy' buttons. Below this is a photo of a building on fire at night. The main text reads: 'We've raised £30,750 to Help Agnes, Iain & Kirsten who lost everything in a fire. Lets help them get some basics to start again.' It includes a small profile picture of Fiona Nelson and mentions 'Campbeltown', 'Emergencies', and 'Funded on Thursday, 31st January 2019'. On the right, there's a section titled 'What is crowdfunding?' explaining the concept. At the bottom, there's a 'Story' section with a paragraph about Agnes, Iain, and Kirsten, and a 'Supporters' section showing a profile for Steven and the date 'Jan 27, 2019'.

Last year Glasgow Golf Club saw 75 per cent of its clubhouse damaged, and Machrihanish Golf Club’s clubhouse was destroyed, in two devastating fires

Therefore, the person responsible for fire safety must manage a variety of tasks including fire risk assessments, general fire precautions such as fire detection, alarm systems and fire equipment, fire safety policy and procedures, and arranging for suitable means of escape including signs, notices and emergency lighting.

“Ultimately, the ‘responsible person’ should make sure that all fire safety equipment is properly maintained and that staff have had fire training (fire drills and evacuations). The ‘responsible person’

may appoint others to undertake these duties but they remain legally responsible. The fundamental starting point to managing the fire safety of premises is the fire risk assessment and there are five key steps that should be followed:

1. Identify fire hazards
2. Identify people at risk
3. Evaluate and remove hazards
4. Record, plan, inform, instruct and train – record major findings and actions taken
5. Review the fire risk assessment regularly and change where necessary.

The risk assessment should identify the range of protective measures appropriate to the premises and its usage.

TGB

More information about how to control the risks of Legionnaires’ disease, electrical faults and fires can be found via the Health and Safety Executive’s website www.hse.gov.uk. A company that specialises in all three risks in golf clubs is KT Facilities Management: www.ktfml.co.uk

**If you operate, occupy,
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applicable premises
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- Electrical Fault Finding



club profile

Trent Lock G&CC

Offering adventure golf, a health retreat and conference and banqueting facilities, the Nottinghamshire club caters to more than just traditional golfers. But with two golf courses and now a luxurious changing room, it's got them covered as well, writes Andy Waple



D

esigned and built in 1991, Trent Lock Golf and Country Club has everything needed to satisfy golfers and those seeking high quality conference

and banqueting facilities.

Nestling between locks of the River Trent on the borders of the three shires of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, it was a welcome addition to the Midlands when opened by proprietor Edward Mccausland, a PGA professional.

A venue for the famous Trilby Tour, it has two challenging golf courses – the original nine-hole Canal Side course and the 18-hole Riverside course – as well as a floodlit driving range with automated power tees and targets, and a fully equipped golf shop with custom fit club centre.

Golfshake, the online community of regular golfers and group organisers says:

**When I do something
I do it to a high standard
and I wanted the new
locker room to reflect
the quality seen
throughout the clubhouse**

'The Riverside Course has been designed to embrace a number of water features in a tranquil setting adjacent to the River Trent. With a par 70 it measures 6,042 yards, providing a challenging yet satisfying round of golf with great views. The nine-hole par 36 course at 2,911 yards is perfect for the beginner looking to develop their confidence and skills.'

With its adjacent Adventure Golf theme park, it has an attraction for children to take their first tentative swings with a club and hopefully get hooked for life. The 12-hole set up, designed and constructed by one of Europe's leading manufacturers, is based on a pirate theme with its own private beach and shipwreck. It has proved a great success with children of all ages.

The clubhouse is much more than a venue designed to serve the needs of golfers before and after their rounds.

Its Locks Lounge & Bar is a popular choice among golfers, club members and the public who enjoy the home cooked classics, grills and all-day dining menus.

The club also houses a business centre featuring high-tech equipment with flexible working space, including conference suites with a break-out lounge, for seminars, product launches and meetings.

Day delegates have the option of combining business with pleasure by incorporating golf and tuition into their meetings and some choose to include Adventure Golf for team building.

A banqueting room with panoramic views of the grounds

Ridgeway finance scheme to make transforming your locker rooms a reality

The Ridgeway finance scheme will allow you to utilise annual locker rentals to pay for your new lockers.

Unit 21A, Chartmoor Road , Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4WG

Sales: 01525 384298 Email: sales@ridgewayfm.com



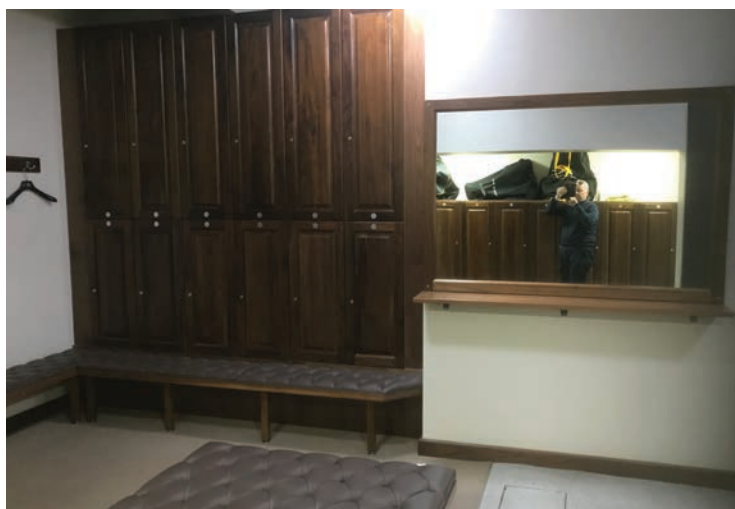
from its own private sun terrace is well used for a variety of functions including weddings.

The Locks Retreat, Beauty, Body and Nail Spa located on the first floor within the clubhouse completes the leisure environment.

One facility missing from the original set up was a proper locker room where golfers could change and store their belongings.

Edward, who prides himself in precision and high standards throughout, selected Ridgeway Furniture to work with him to provide a top quality locker room after seeing the company advertised in *The Golf Business* and reading the many endorsements of Ridgeway's work from others in the golf industry.

Edward said: "When I do something I do it to a high standard and I wanted the new locker room to reflect the quality seen throughout the clubhouse. I selected changing room lockers and benches with walnut fielded panel doors



and leather upholstered benches and I am more than happy with the result.

"Ridgeway were good to work with and the fitters were very accommodating," he added.

Since its inception Ridgeway has manufactured tens of thousands of lockers that have been installed in some of the most prestigious golf clubs in the world.

The company has seen turnover increase by more than 100 per cent over the past six years and has invested more than £500,000 in a new factory increasing its capacity by over 50 per cent. The facility, at more than 18,000 square feet, means the company is now the UK's largest dedicated manufacturer of wooden lockers. TGB



in their own words

Andrew McKinlay

chief executive of Scottish Golf



For too long, golf has taken for granted its universal appeal: from spanning more generations of active participants than arguably any other sport, to the impact a simple round will have on physical and mental wellbeing.

Until now. Scottish Golf has signed up to support the inaugural Golf and Health Week, a campaign co-ordinated by The R&A to raise awareness of the myriad of benefits of the game to people of all ages and abilities.

This month, we will be helping to shine a light on the impact the sport has on those who take part in various ways, with the purpose of recognising the wider benefits for those regular golfers but also to inspire non-players and lapsed players to get involved.

Sport has always been reluctant to lavish self-praise and golf is no different but it is imperative that we not only remind ourselves of the wider benefits of the game we love but also remind government and the population at large.

For many thousands of people in Scotland, golf is a fabric of everyday family life and through the Golf and Health Week we will showcase the many and varied ways that we improve the lives of those who take part – with a view to a more consistent and proactive approach to communicating the wider benefits of the biggest participation sport in Scotland.

Simply put, golfers live longer and have better overall physical health. Last year, a global consensus amongst leaders in public health, public policy and sport backed golf to tackle physical inactivity and the prevention of illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer of the breast and colon.

Evidence linking golf and health, commissioned by the World Golf Foundation and supported by The R&A, was presented at Westminster following research led by the University of Edinburgh and published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

Previous research has also highlighted that those that play golf live five years longer than those that don't play, while the sport has been shown to have both self-esteem and self-worth benefits.

Whether it is the 1,000-plus calories that are burned during the average of four miles around the course, or simply the social interactions that encourage friendship, golf is unequivocally good for you.

We will be focusing on the mental health benefits, including how golf can help prevent the onset of cognitive decline and, in those who have dementia,

reduce the decline in physical and mental activity; and how golf can be used positively in the lives of those who suffer Alzheimer's, whether as a means of exercise or through projects that evoke memories of sufferers' pasts through great golfing triumphs.

We will also be looking at programmes designed to prevent loneliness, especially among the older population, and outline how clubs can play an increasingly important role in promoting fitness, healthy eating and community involvement.

The aim of the week is to collaborate with The R&A, European Tour, PGA, Ladies European Tour and our

network of clubs to share inspirational stories and reaffirm that golf as an activity can and should be enjoyed by all.

As someone who has previously spoken about the benefits my life-long love of golf has had at various stages on my own mental health, I am a huge

advocate of this important week of awareness.

Simply put, golfers live longer and have better overall physical health

Solheim Cup

With less than six months to go until the 2019 Solheim Cup at Gleneagles, we are excited by the return to form of Carly Booth this season, not least since becoming a new ambassador for Women and Girls' golf in Scotland.

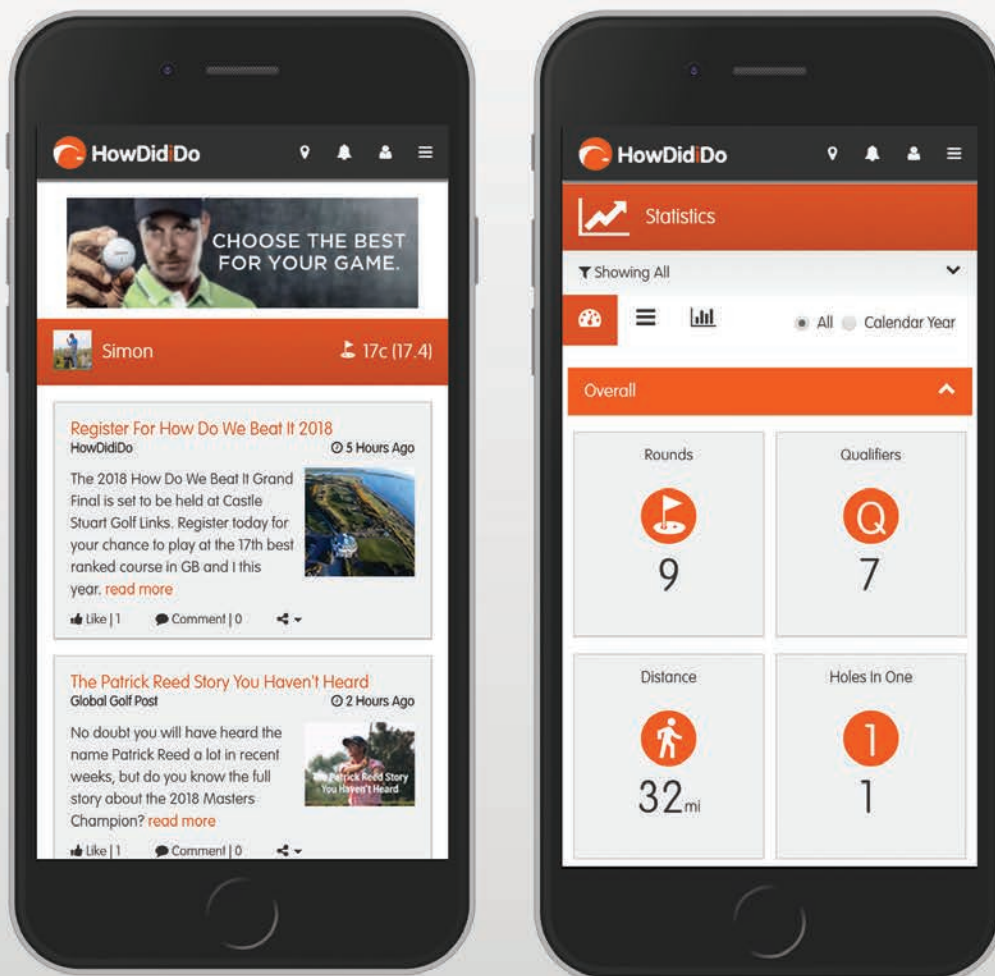
One of our key strategic priorities is to grow participation among girls and women and Carly's commitment to making Catriona Matthew's team has been demonstrated by her recent fourth place finish in the Canberra Classic.

It would be an amazing feat for Carly and we look forward to working with her to inspire girls and women to take up the sport. TGB

Visit scottishgolf.org for more information



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The largest, most engaging online golf community in Europe



The best things in life are FREE

There are two proven ways to benefit a golf club and children – offer free golf to them and raise awareness that you're offering them free golf. James Bargeron reports

I've recently been reading a number of articles on golf clubs struggling with membership declines and some are even having to close. Something no one wants to see.

One of the areas I believe is vital to keeping a golf club alive is the junior side. Not from a financial point of view but for building the foundations for the future – both for the club and the youngsters themselves.

So, how do we get more juniors involved at a time when computer and phone games and the tech world is taking over more than ever? Raising awareness is the key.

I hadn't started playing golf when I was at school, not out of choice but more out of lack of awareness. I'm sure back then money would have been an issue, as I had two brothers who also played sports and it would have tested most families to have one child join a golf club, let alone three!

However, our school had an arrangement with the local golf club, that students could play for free, but for some reason we didn't know anything about it, otherwise we would have jumped at the chance. Especially during the long summer holidays and the late summer evenings.

How many golf clubs have such an arrangement in place and how could we get more junior golfers involved?

Offering local schools free memberships to all those that want to learn to play the game and, in order for them to play during the holidays, they would have to attend a

group of sessions at each club once a week after school during the week or, if it fits, a Saturday morning.

Each junior would learn not just about how the game is played, the rules and the etiquette, but also a set of core values and life lessons that are linked with golf, such as honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, trust and so on, before they move to a higher level and are allowed out onto the golf course.

Helping to instill these values as they progress into adulthood would, I'm sure, be welcomed by parents when they understand the benefits for their kids,

especially for those whose immediate thoughts are 'golf is an expensive sport'.

My local golf club, and I'm sure there are others, is working with local schools to help promote awareness of the game and the summer camps they offer, which is great.

I'm sure people know of golf clubs in their area, but not many have an idea of exactly what they offer for the local kids.

It will never be perfect, the more we raise awareness with the power of social media as well as the personal side, I'm sure it can help bring more juniors into the game and local clubs. TGB



James Bargeron is a performance coach for golfers both on and off the course. For more information, visit www.Golfing-Minds.com

Player score input terminals

More than £20,000 has now been awarded to 'small golf clubs' – about a third of the total allocated – to help them prepare for the new World Handicap System (WHS).

The money has been donated by England Golf's 'preferred partner', the golf club IT specialist, Club Systems International (CSI), to, so far, 44 golf clubs, ahead of the change in 2020.

With an application and approval process administered by England Golf, grants of more than £500 have been made available to qualifying clubs to enable them to purchase a CSI 10" PSiTouch screen, allowing club members to input their own scores – an essential piece of hardware, as player input of scoring is a prerequisite of WHS.

Darren Wood, CSI's relationship manager, joined England Golf's handicap and course rating manager, Gemma Hunter, at the

first installation, at Haigh Hall GC, in Wigan.

He explained: "Since announcing the offer at the England Golf roadshows last year, we have seen a steady flow of enquiries and, subsequently, accepted offers. Our financial support continues to help smaller clubs acquire the same cutting-edge technology used by their larger counterparts."

Clubs need to meet at least one of three criteria to qualify for a grant: having fewer than 300 members, an annual revenue of less than £250,000 or employing fewer than three full-time staff. Clubs meeting the required criteria will qualify for a grant totalling 25, 50, or 75 per cent of the normal PSiTouch price of £695 (plus VAT).

To apply for a grant, clubs should email clubsupport@englandgolf.org to request an application form.



Bag tags

There are more benefits than you can imagine if you provide useful, eye-catching golf bag tag identification products. Eagle creates golf club bag tags that can be personalised and displayed on the bag of every member and they can be branded with the club's information, helping to promote your club.

Eagle provides a variety of tag options, from metal bag tags, military style membership bag tags, single print economy tags and security bag tags. These are produced in a variety of different materials such as metal, plastic and leather. The bag tag defines a members place at their club and is something they can be proud of using.

The metal tag is its premium high quality solution for golf club bag tags at a very reasonable cost. Using specialist engraving and enamel paints, a detailed representation of your club logo can be portrayed on a stylish gold, silver or bronze antique finish tag. Minimum order is 250 tags.

Membership tags are a slightly larger version of the standard credit card size. Also called a 'military size' card, the dimensions are 100mm by 70mm, moulded from a 840 microns flexi-plastic, with rounded cornering and often with a slot for a strap. You can have various membership categories in a range of designs with variable data options such as members' names. These tags have been very popular with golf clubs over the years. Minimum order is 100 tags.

A simple single-colour bag tag is a durable plastic solution, which is both strong and hard wearing. With its vivid colour design, this tag is perfect for long range identification of the golfer and also a very cost effective way of monitoring your members in and around the golf course. Minimum order is also 100 tags.

Contact Eagle

01883 344244 | info@eagle.uk.com

the PGA professional

Disney's land

PGA Fellow Professional Stuart Disney is the head pro at The Mendip Golf Club and has recently won various awards, including 'Most Improved Business of the Year'. Here, he talks about the programmes he's introduced to benefit non-traditional golfing profiles such as children and disability groups, and why his pro shop is now so well regarded





What daily challenges do you face in running a pro shop and teaching?

Time management can be a bit of a headache at times, but, fortunately, my head assistant James and my wife, Susanne, are brilliant at organising my time for me!

We have a busy season ahead with lots of club competitions, matches and visiting groups. Delegating tasks to staff is key to enable us to function and they also feel a sense of ownership.

Dealing with customers is what we are good at and it's so important that each day starts with a brief 10 minute meeting discussing what's ahead. This has become crucial to maintain our customer service levels.

We also have a weekly meeting to review the week and to also plan for the next. Nothing is left to chance and the systems we have in place enable us to respond to the everyday challenges we face.

There is a constant flow of new golf products – how do you manage your stock to serve the needs of your members and visitors?

When I started as a head professional in 2009, I invested in Crossover's XPOS till system. The reporting it gives us as a business is brilliant and my staff are tasked with stock taking on a weekly

basis, finding our weakest selling products, pushing these out the door and looking at the latest product launches.

James, my head assistant, and I go to stock rooms and if he can't go, he is always looking at what's in the pipeline from manufacturers, what our current suppliers are offering and finding out if we should be changing what we offer.

One key area in the past 12 months we have worked hard on improving is our stock holding and stock turn. We used to hold close to £50,000-worth of stock and our turn was poor at 1.78. Looking at how we buy and stock the shop was eye-opening and we have now reduced our stock holding to £30,000 and improved our stock turn to 3.79.

The result from a shop layout perspective was better merchandising, something that Susanne is brilliant at, and customers can now see what we have to offer. It does mean more time spent ordering and stock controlling, but isn't that what business is about?

How do you manage your day?

James and Susanne strictly control my diary. I have dedicated times for coaching, meetings, membership interaction and administration.

They are the ones that enable me to do what I am good at and they have such a drive to continually improve the offering to the members and visitors.

I can't do what I do without my team behind me and they are so important to the success of what we do.





When I started in May 2017 at The Mendip GC we had just three junior members. We now have 53, a Saturday Junior Academy, a 'Junior Council' with a junior captain and have a team that's entered the Somerset Junior Golf League and is sponsored by a local company

What are you doing to support junior golf and introduce kids to the sport?

When I started in May 2017 at The Mendip Golf Club, we had just three junior members. We now have 53. I started this process by conducting a Saturday Junior Academy and during the first year, mostly members' children and their friends joined us for coaching. I then introduced 'Golf Access' which helped us to get more juniors playing on the course and I then got into my local primary school, which really accelerated the process.

Going to local village fetes and into the community helped us to raise our profile and we also held an open day which massively helped us. This also helped to get into more schools and working closely with the Golf Foundation, we were able to set up satellite clubs, grow our Saturday Junior Academy and ensure we engaged with our juniors for playing opportunities and coaching.

I have now taken on the role of junior organiser, we have a 'Junior Council' with a board member and junior captain and vice captain, and have now entered the Somerset Junior Golf League for the first time in a number of years. With a local company sponsoring the junior team this year, it's an exciting time for the club!

Are you trying to attract more women to golf?

I am always looking at ways I can get more women

playing and have run some initiatives to help this. One such initiative that helped the club was a 'Member's Guest Day' in which each lady member was invited to bring a non-golfer to the club, have some free coaching and a show around the course followed by some holes and a social gathering in the clubhouse afterwards.

This helped us to get more women onto our Get into Golf programme and the lady members also became 'golf buddies' to help introduce the newcomers to the game by playing with them. The network we created has helped us to generate more lady members and our Get into Golf programme is going from strength to strength.

Do you have any programmes in place such as academy membership to make it easier to introduce beginners to the game?

I have introduced various

membership options to the club since I started. How golfers choose to join clubs has changed forever and they are always looking at ways in which they can join clubs to suit their lifestyle.

We have a range of age group categories: 18-22, 23-29, 30-34 and 35-39 year olds. This helps us to catch these important age groups and have also introduced a 'Lifestyle Category', which is a points-based membership system for those looking to come into the game and also does catch those who were looking to leave the club because of a variety of reasons such as not playing enough to justify a full membership.





Stuart (left), winning the 'Most Improved Business of the Year' award from TGI Golf's retail consultant, Ricky Gray.

Left: Members of the Exeter Royal Deaf Academy. Stuart has learnt sign language to be able to teach golf to people who have hearing loss

A lot of PGA pros are having to be a step ahead of their competitors in their offerings and technology – what additional added value services do you provide?

I have installed a swing studio right next door to my shop with GC2 Launch Monitor. It has been the best investment I have ever made. It enables me to coach all year round, to offer the best custom fitting service around and also helps me to engage with members through the use of 'Nearest the Pin' challenges and 'Long Drive' events along with members playing other courses if ours is closed or they want to have some fun playing indoors!

I have continually updated the studio, with better product displays, adding in a Huxley putting mat, and showcasing specific brands and the demo equipment on offer. Hosting demo events has proven to be a huge benefit to having the studio, keeping it all close to the heart of the golf club.

When did you join the TGI Golf Partnership and what was it about it that attracted you?

I joined TGI Golf in May 2009 when I took up my first head pro post. I was attracted to TGI because it enabled me to become my own brand, with amazing support behind the scenes.

Has TGI Golf been of benefit to you as a PGA professional?

TGI Golf has shown to be of huge benefit to me as a PGA professional. I am a proud PGA member and I attend many PGA CPD courses to keep me up to date from an educational perspective. TGI Golf has only enhanced this with strong links to Crossover Technologies, the brilliant retail consultants, the business conference, TGI Golf events ... the list goes on. The TGI Golf Partnership helps me to raise my profile to my members, gives me the support to grow and is the perfect partnership in conjunction with the PGA.

What year did you turn professional and what have been your career highlights, both playing and employment?

I turned professional in December 1990. I qualified as a PGA professional in

the PGA professional

1993, becoming one of the youngest ever to qualify aged just 19.

I reached the final qualifying round for the Open Championship at Royal St Georges in 1993, before I won the Devon Professional and Assistant Professional Championship in 1994.

I played on the PGA European Challenge Tour in 1996 before focusing my attention on developing the game of golf and coaching. I held various coaching positions throughout Devon, becoming Devon County Girls' coach in 2003. I held this post until 2011, helping the girls become three-time South West Jamboree winners.

I became the first British-based PGA professional to pass the 'PGA Advanced Diploma in Golf Studies' in 2007 and became a PGA Advanced Professional. My coaching led me to develop my skills further and I started to coach into the community and my ethos that golf is a game for all.

I worked with a number of disability groups, including the Exeter Royal Deaf Academy and created links through the county sports partnership, Active Devon and delivered golf at a number of events such as the Devon Ability Games, Special Olympics North Devon, Blue Light Days and at county shows.

I was awarded the Devon Sports Award for my 'Contribution to Inclusive Sport' in 2016 and the PGA recognised my work as not only a golf coach but as a club professional as 'inspirational and exceptional' in awarding me PGA Fellow Professional status. I am continuing my professional development and my goal is to become a PGA Master Professional.

My work has also been honoured by the PGA with the 'PGA Development Professional of the Year 2016'. I was awarded the Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership 'Participation Coach of the Year 2018' and I am also the Somerset County Girls Lead Coach.

I am honoured to be the PGA Fellow Professional at The Mendip Golf Club and I look forward to developing the relationships with the club members and helping the golf club to grow.

I was also recently recognised by TGI Golf as the 'Most Improved Business' at the group's awards night at Trump Turnberry. TGB

golf clubs working together

A sea change

Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club, a spectacular course located on the White Cliffs of Dover, has joined a marketing partnership featuring golf clubs and accommodation providers, in order to maximise the tourism potential from the Open returning to Kent in 2020, writes Tania Longmire



The golf club known as 'The Club on the Cliffs' thanks to its stunning position perched on top of the iconic White Cliffs of Dover, Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club, has joined Visit Kent's Golf in Kent Partnership.

The partnership is comprised of some of the finest golf courses in the country including the championship links at Royal St George's, home of the Open Championship in 2020, neighbouring Prince's and Royal Cinque Ports and Littlestone near Romney Marsh as well as the inland layouts at London Golf Club, Hever Castle, Leeds Castle and North Foreland.

With the hosting of the Open Championship at Sandwich, the Seniors Amateur Championship at Royal Cinque Ports and the Junior Open at Littlestone next year, the eyes of the golfing world will be firmly on Kent and its golf offering, which will benefit Walmer & Kingsdown in terms of profile and media exposure in the build-up to 2020's summer of golf tournaments.

Walmer & Kingsdown will also be hosting a unique world championship that year when the 2020 World One-Armed Golf Championships, attracting 50 of the world's best one-armed golfers, is staged at the course.

Designed by the legendary course architect James Braid, Walmer & Kingsdown boasts panoramic views of the English Channel from every hole as

well as glimpses of the coast of France on a clear day. Its unique location makes it not only the closest English course to Europe separated by the world's busiest stretch of water, but one of only a few in the world where players are able to see another country on a separate land mass while enjoying a round of golf.

Established around the natural landscape high up on the edge of the cliffs, the course sits along a sharp ridge and a steep valley which makes for a challenging and fascinating round of golf that is characterised by numerous hanging lies, uphill tee shots and a handful of distinctive square-shaped plateau greens that are protected by low, grassy banks that demand precision shots to finish anywhere close to the flag.

Golf in Kent is a marketing partnership that comprises the golf courses, Visit Kent and some of the county's best accommodation providers. It was set up to build on the legacy of the county staging the Open Championship in 2011 and to promote Kent as one of England's premier golfing destinations. TGB



The 7th tee at Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club



2 years interest free from Waste2Water



Environmental stewardship is now a legal requirement enforced by legislation. Everyone is probably now aware it is a criminal offence to allow certain substances including mineral oils, detergents and chemicals to enter surface drains, watercourses or soakaways, causing groundwater pollution. Large fines of up to £50,000 and even imprisonment can now be levied in the event of a serious pollution incident.

EU Water Framework Directive

A raft of legislation has been recently introduced to reinforce this message, including the EU Water Framework Directive which was fully implemented last year. So, if you have not already installed a dedicated wash area to avoid the risk of pollution now is the time to act to ensure your course is environmentally compliant.

Two-year interest-free finance

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

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

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

Waste2Water ensures environmental compliance

Installing a Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off System provides a superb equipment wash facility and ensures compliance with the environmental legislation. Equipment wash-off, refueling, degreasing, chemical mixing and any other potentially polluting activities can all be undertaken on the pad, removing any risk of groundwater pollution from routine activities.

Better still, the recycling wash system continuously re-uses the same water, reducing wash water usage by more than 90 per cent!

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

Inclusion in the Water Technology List (WTL scheme) provides a very handy cash flow boost with a 100 per cent first year Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA). This gives full 100 per cent tax relief against taxable profits in year one – instead of the standard reclaim period of eight years! It sounds a bit complicated but rest assured your accountant will be delighted!

Installing a Waste2Water Recycling Wash System

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

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

Tim Earley is the managing director of ESD Waste2Water

Tel 01782 373 878

Email: info@waste2water.com

Waste2Water
Environmental Sustainability With
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Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards launches

Web: www.bigga.org.uk/education/toro-student-greenkeeper-of-the-year.html

The British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), Toro and Reesink Turfcare have launched their annual competition that seeks to uncover the brightest emerging talent in the golf greenkeeping industry.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards are a nationwide competition to uncover the best student greenkeepers from among the ranks of BIGGA members.

Two awards are up for grabs, with the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award entering its 31st year and open to all greenkeeping students studying for eligible qualifications. The other award is the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year, available to greenkeeping students aged 20 and under.

The winner of the main award will head to the University of Massachusetts for a six-week scholarship to study winter turf management, while the winner of the 'Young' award will earn a two-week work experience placement at the exclusive Vidaubin Club in the South of France, in addition to a Continue to Learn package at BIGGA's annual turf management exhibition each

January. Prizes are also up for grabs for the runners-up in each category, while those who nominate or endorse the applications of the winning students – who can be course managers, head greenkeepers or college tutors – also receive a major prize.

Application forms can be downloaded from the BIGGA website and the deadline for applications is May 24, 2019. Regional interviews will take place in July and the national final will take place at BIGGA House in September.

Daniel Ashelby of The Mere Golf Resort won Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year in 2018 and said: "When they read my name, my heart just started going crazy! I didn't know what to expect when I arrived for the final but you meet people who are at the same level as you and they are just very passionate, dedicated people. It's a fantastic experience and I'd recommend it to anyone!"



Danny Patten and Daniel Ashelby were awards winners in 2018



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the golf course

Jersey's floor

As one of the most southern courses in the UK, Royal Jersey has mild winters ensuring it experiences more than 50,000 rounds per year. Head greenkeeper, Allan Black, talks to Tania Longmire about the course's grass exchange programme, bunker renovation and integrating water management with nutrition conservation



Royal Jersey Golf Club, with views of Mont Orgueil castle and the French coast, has been a major feature in the Channel Islands for 141 years. The club has a rich history – under Nazi occupation during World War Two the course was turned into a minefield and the remnants of the German invasion can be seen along the opening hole where two gun emplacements are situated. The island itself has produced a disproportionately high number of leading golfers, including Harry Vardon, Ted Ray, Tony Jacklin and Tommy Horton.

As for the course, at just over 6,100 yards, it's not especially long but accuracy is essential – there are over

the golf course

60 bunkers and numerous gorse bushes to avoid. The opening four holes follow the shoreline, while the remainder of the course is more inland, although still within viewing distance of the sea.

We spoke with Allan Black, who's been head greenkeeper at the club since last September, to find out about his work and the venue itself.

"The biggest challenge we face is the amount of play we receive," he explains, "it is estimated that we get around 50,000 rounds of golf a year and this is mainly members.

"We have a two-tee start on the course, the first and 10th tees where golf starts at 7:30am and is busy every day even through the winter. This means that we need to be on the ball in our planning of jobs to stay in front and out of the way of golfers as much as we can. When we do any aeration

or overseeding we will put a temporary pin on the fairway of the hole we are working on so golf can continue."

Recently Royal Jersey has been running a grass exchange programme across the course.

"Walking around the course daily is the time I think I enjoy the most"



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the golf course

“The greens are a mix of fescue bent and, of course, poa,” he says. “We have been working hard for a few years now on decreasing the poa by introducing and creating an environment for the fescue to thrive – we have done this by reducing our organic matter, reducing the nitrogen and water to the greens and improving the soil health of the greens. This has been a long process and we have had some tough times when the poa was looking weak and causing patches on the greens to look yellow and stressed.

“The membership did notice this and would ask questions, but in general they were understanding of the process and have been very supportive, and the last two years have seen the greens become more consistent through the season. We are starting to see fescue throughout the sward. Even in poa patches we now see the fine leaves of the fescue breaking through, which

We have built four hibernacula around the course. The biggest one we built is under the fourth tee – this was the first one we did and it got national TV coverage on The One Show



is a positive sign that we are moving in the right direction.”

Black has been running a renovation programme to the bunkers as well.

“We have 61 bunkers on the course,” he details. “When I took over, one of the things I was looking to improve was the consistency of the bunkers and I set up a five-year programme to get them all revetted so no bunker on the course will be older than five years. This is quite a challenge as we don’t have a turf nursery on site and can’t source revetted turf on the islands. So, we use turf from tees that are due to have new irrigation fitted or are beginning to look uneven, we then

level that tee and lay new turf.

“This year we revetted 10 bunkers, four of which we used revetted turf and have been impressed with it so far. The feedback from the members has been positive.”

In addition, the club integrates water management and nutrition conservation on the course.

“We spray Revolution monthly and tank mix it with Attain [both from Aquatrols],” says Black. “It’s applied with 900 litres of water then we add 4mm of irrigation water straight after if there is no rain. This helps get the products into the soil where the Revolution needs to be most effective and within a day or two you

the golf course



start to see the consistency across the greens when taking moisture readings. With other surfactants we have used in the past the readings can be all over the place. Revolution really does do what it says on the tin and is a must-have for us."

Finally, Black talks about the ecology of the course.

"The club works closely with Bob Taylor from STRI and also the Department of the Environment – States of Jersey where we have annual course walks and reports," he says.

"The biggest ecology areas on site is the gorse around the course. We have a gorse management plan in place where we coppice areas each year to help rejuvenate that area and not allow the gorse to become too leggy and open that it serves no ecological value for wildlife. We also have a lot of green lizards and slow worms to help protect them – we have built four hibernacula around the course. The biggest one we built is under the fourth

tee, this was the first one we did, and it got national TV coverage on The One Show.

"The biggest satisfaction for me is presenting the golf course, whether it be for a big competition or for a corporate event. Even though the lead up to it or the morning of the event can be stressful there is no better feeling when it all goes to plan, and everything looks sharp.

"Walking around the course daily is the time I think I enjoy the most – I can get a good look at things, make lists and plan the jobs ahead, take moisture readings, speak to the team doing their jobs and talk to the members.

"As I have only been head greenkeeper for a few months I would have to say our biggest achievement to date was building ten bunkers this winter within two months – granted the weather was on our side but the team really worked hard and to a very high standard to produce some of the best bunkers I have seen built on the course." TGB



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The Express Dual 5500 from Bernhard and Company

motors with integrated position feedback give users total control and flexibility on how they want to sharpen their mowing equipment. The Anglemaster 4500 now benefits from variable grind motor and traverse motor speeds, allowing the machines to be totally adaptable to the type of blades being sharpened. Having flexibility in motor speed enables the user to optimise the speed of grind according to the type of stone chosen.

This, in conjunction with RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology, delivers consistency – no matter who uses the equipment.

How RFID technology works

RFID is an easy way to assign a unique identity to an object, meaning that each individual user can have their own settings programmed into a card no bigger than a

credit card. The settings of each mower can also be uploaded onto the card, making it easy to recall previous settings and keeping consistently sharpened mowers to the same specification. This means that turf / equipment managers can ensure the quality of cut is consistent without having to intervene, so even a newly trained user with little experience of sharpening will be able to achieve the highest quality expected.

This feature is standard in the Anglemaster 4500 and Express Dual 5500. Another feature that generated a lot of excitement at the Golf Industry Show was the laser surveying device on the Express Dual 5500.

Bernhard and Company has upgraded its range of sharpening systems with equipment packed with the latest technologies. Recent industry tradeshow saw the grinder manufacturer launch several exciting new machines, including the top-of-the-range Anglemaster 4500 and the Express Dual 5500. As a result, the ever-reliable brand is now providing sports turf specialists with the tools to achieve accuracy, precision and – more importantly – consistency at every cut.

But what can be so exciting about a bedknife or a reel grinder?

Time to get smart

The new features include smart motors. These high torque, load sensing

Benefits of laser measurement

Laser measuring has been used for many years in the aerospace and automotive industry to measure large parts and assemblies as well as improving industrial robot accuracy and precision.

Why would a laser measuring device be used in a grinder though?

The laser surveying unit is used to highlight deformation and dynamic measurement. This is important because some modern-day cutting units rely on the cylinder to bedknife being parallel within very tight tolerances to ensure optimum performance.

During continuous mowing or backlapping, the cylinder can be subject to 'coning'. This can only be corrected through precise grinding. The Bernhard laser surveying device will measure the cylinder to highlight any coning, hence allowing the grinder to remove the taper out of the cylinder with an optimised grind cycle.

In the scanning process, the laser will also measure the outer diameter of the reel. This gives the operator reassurance that the cylinders are within the manufacturer's recommended specifications.

The laser surveying unit is used to highlight deformation and dynamic measurement. This is important because some modern-day cutting units rely on the cylinder to bedknife being parallel within very tight tolerances to ensure optimum performance



The combination of this unique technology makes the Bernhard sharpening systems the most innovative systems yet. TGB

A specialist in sports turf technology, Bernhard and Company is committed to providing leading turf care solutions to golf courses worldwide. From blade sharpening systems to sports surface air movement and moisture control solutions and supplementary lighting solutions, the Bernhard product portfolio is focused on providing its customers with world-class playability. Bernhard's turf health solutions are used at top 100 courses and famous sporting venues around the world. Bernhard and Company prides itself in supporting your course and working with you to provide the best possible solution to your turf problem to achieve optimal long-term results.

Bernhard and Company not only offers demonstrations of its products but also costs analysis and finance options to help golf courses secure the sharpest mower blades as the most cost-effective way. For more information, visit www.bernhard.co.uk

Toro

reesinkturfcare.co.uk

Royal Birkdale Golf Club has saved 25 percent on water consumption during the 2018 heatwave thanks to Toro.

The timing could not have been more fortuitous as Royal Birkdale Golf Club turned on its new Toro irrigation system in April 2018 just in time for one of the hottest summers the country has ever experienced.

Little did Chris Whittle, course manager at Royal Birkdale, know, as the tender process for a new irrigation system started in September 2017, that within weeks of installation a record equalling heatwave would hit the country.

As golf courses fought to prevent their turf from being burnt brown and water costs rose accordingly, Chris was in the fortunate position of having efficient, accurate and precise irrigation at his fingertips with a new Toro Lynx central control system and all new sprinklers, including Toro Infinity, across the 240-acre 18-hole links course in Southport, Merseyside.

"The time had come to replace our

system," says Chris, who has been course manager at the prestigious club for almost a quarter of a century. "We had a Toro system that had always served us well and the service from distributor Reesink Turfcare, L.S. Systems and Robin Hume Associates has always been great so there was no question we'd go with anyone else, but we needed more control. Lynx was the obvious choice and no sooner was it installed than it was put to the ultimate test!"

And the system triumphed in the face of adversity, says Chris: "We're delighted with the results Toro has delivered. We spent some time learning the system, there was tweaking required as we set it up, making it specific to the course and making sure we maximised its capabilities. Once that was done, operation was easy and straightforward. As I'm sure you can imagine having remote access to make real-time adjustments was particularly useful this summer!"

"Prioritising water allocation meant we kept the course playing well, looking fine and in the best possible health," Chris continues. "Not only that, but despite the need for more irrigation than we've experienced for many years, we made huge savings in water consumption."

25 percent savings and that's a conservative estimate, says Chris: "It was a figure that was unexpected in how significant it was. We hoped to make savings with the new system obviously, but not while we contended with extreme heat and lack of rain, the worst of which we hadn't seen in years! When we realised how much we'd saved we couldn't believe it."



Reesink Turfcare

info@reesinkturfcare.co.uk

Reesink Turfcare, the UK distributor for top turfcare brands including Toro, TYM Tractors and Otterbine lake and pond aeration, has invested in six new service vehicles for its mobile technicians.

With the up-to-date and extended fleet, Reesink is now more equipped than ever to provide customers with an effective and dependable service, says Reesink's operations manager David Jackman.

"By investing in this new fleet of vans, we have more reliable and efficient equipment, which means we can provide an improved service to our customers," says David. "We take maintenance of our products seriously and this fleet of vans is essential to deliver back up if and when it's needed. We pride ourselves on providing excellence and that doesn't just begin and end with the sale of the product."

Three of the vans will be at Reesink's Sheffield Park service branch in East Sussex, one at the branch in Livingston, Scotland and two at the East Anglian service branch based at the company's headquarters in St Neots.

David continued: "We have a particular focus on customer service, ensuring it expands in line with the company's growth and we want to build on our relationship with our customers within our direct areas. This investment is the next step in strengthening that relationship."

TYM Tractors

Tel: 01480 226800

Reesink Turfcare's range of small tractors just got bigger with the introduction of the nimble TYM T194.

With the agility of a mower and the additional features and practicality of a small tractor, the T194 adds a completely new dimension to the TYM range.

The T194 joins the popular subcompact TS25 to bring customers who don't need a larger framed mid-duty model but need the most amount of power, productivity, versatility and efficiency one compact package can offer, more choice.

Designed to appeal to customers looking to more commercial alternative to the ride on lawn mower and those wanting a small multi-purpose product, the T194 takes this to the next level and more. TYM had simplicity and practicality in mind when designing the T194 and because of this they have equipped it with features which customers are sure to appreciate, such as a powerful dual range HST transmission which includes the fatigue busting "auto throttle" system which conveniently links the HST pedal to the engine throttle.

Increasing the power in Reesink's small tractor offering is the TS25. Upping the ante from 19hp in the T194 to 25hp in the TS25, the TS25 has been appealing to a similar audience as the new T194 for a few years now, delivering all the benefits of the T194 but with more power. With a hydraulic lift capacity of 600kg, it's renowned for delivering superb value and outstanding performance. An optional front loader and mid-deck further increases its versatility opening it up to many more applications.

TYM sales manager Steven Haynes says: "Reesink brought TYM to the UK market because its tractors deliver enhanced performance and engineering excellence. These smaller tractors are no exception to that."



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BIGGA

Charterhouse Turf Machinery has agreed to provide educational opportunities for golf course professionals nationwide for the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), while Rigby Taylor has also announced a major sponsorship package.

In its new capacity as 'education supporter' for the association,

Charterhouse will provide professional development opportunities for BIGGA members.

For over 35 years, Charterhouse has been a leading provider of professional maintenance machinery to keep both natural and artificial surfaces in a first-rate condition. The company distributes the Redexim range of

aerators, overseeders, topdressers and scarifiers for natural turf. To complement this, the Graden range of pedestrian verticutters and the BLEC range of specialist landscaping and turfcare products, are also available.

Charterhouse sales manager Nick Darking said: "We are proud to be working alongside BIGGA as an education supporter."

Meanwhile, Rigby Taylor is to sponsor BIGGA's three annual golf tournaments, the National Championship, the Golf Management Trophy and the Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund Golf Day.

Rigby Taylor will also be involved in all qualifying matches for each tournament and offering further support through the involvement of its key suppliers. In addition the company will provide technical advice on tournament preparation and product support.

Richard Fry, Rigby Taylor's marketing director, said: "Our sponsorship of the tournaments is the company's expression of confidence in the industry and a vehicle for gaining closer ties not only with greenkeepers but also their greens' committees and other key decision-makers."

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO, added: "These events bring together all levels of the golf club structure, helping to build stronger relationships within teams and across barriers."



Toro

reesinkturfcare.co.uk

The state-of-the-art greenkeeping facilities and workshop at Royal Norwich are complete, meaning Toro now has a home at the new site to work and live.

Only the second all air-conditioned facility in the country, the building was reclaimed from an old refrigeration warehouse and now houses a team room with pool table, stylish meeting rooms for business meetings, state-of-the-art workshop and parts storage, a 'boot room' with washing machine and dehumidifier, showers, every convenience has been thought of, confirms Peter Todd, director and estates manager, including its green credentials:

"It's completely insulated, so will be highly efficient. 100 percent of its daytime power is generated from the solar panels on the roof as well as supplying 40 percent of the clubhouse electricity needs."

The facility has been home to a loan fleet of used Toro equipment, compiled to accommodate the growing-in phase of the courses, but now it welcomes the beginning of Peter's Toro fleet.

"Dwarf perennial rye grass in a blend with fescue took hold and grew so quickly in those early days, we needed to get on top of it fast and only a rotary would do," he added.

It's clear to see why a loan fleet of used equipment made economic sense! Now joining that loan fleet which has worked so hard in the early stages are four Flex 2120 pedestrian mowers for hand cutting the greens, the Greensmaster 1600 is Peter's top choice for the tees and the Groundsmaster 4500-D and Groundsmaster 3500-D are taking on the initial mowing of the fairways and semi-roughs.

EcoBunker

ecobunker.co.uk

Royal Guernsey, located at L'Ancrese on the Channel Island, between England and France, has completed the first phase of a multi-year rebunkering using the EcoBunker Advanced synthetic edging product.

The project started in December 2017, when EcoBunker construction manager Llewelyn Matthews travelled to Guernsey to build a test bunker on the club's short game practice area. The success of this trial project convinced Royal Guernsey to sign up for a three-year project to rebuild all 31 bunkers on the golf course, as well as adding some new fairway traps in the last phase (winter 2020-21).

Course manager Marcus Hamon says: "These bunkers needed to be right as they would be around for a long time. Llewellyn didn't let me down and the rebuilt bunkers look great and sit



nicely in the undulations of the golf course. The service from Richard and the team at EcoBunker was first class."

EcoBunker CEO Richard Allen says: "The success of the Royal Guernsey project is a testimony to the effectiveness of our EcoBunker Advanced process, which reduces the weight of turf required to build a bunker by the use of cantilevering and a cement modified backfill."

EAGLE

www.eagle.uk.com

Rochester and Cobham Park came to EAGLE for a new large entrance sign. It was at that point, when reviewing the logo to be used, that not only did it fall short visually of how Rochester and Cobham Park wished to be perceived as a club, but also that there was no relationship between the icon and the title meaning that the logo was not versatile across a number of different formats and layouts. It was, therefore, decided that the club required a re-brand and identity upgrade before investing in a signage and print collateral project.

Starting from square one, a full audit took place at the club as the management plotted the route to prosperity. At the time, the

club did not own a high-resolution logo, have a colour palette to work with and the website was not mobile-optimised. Of

course, with a limited budget, there is a tendency to be lured into schemes that promise to cut corners and provide short term investment, but the experienced team saw past this, realising that the first step was to implement solid and authentic foundations before any progress could be made.

Rochester and Cobham Park briefed EAGLE that the new look must be something that was fresh, appealing and recognisable. EAGLE leveraged the already recognisable essence of the old logo and modernised it for the 21st century. EAGLE's signage team conducted an audit of the premises deciding that a full course signage upgrade as well as a customer journey signage project was required to enhance the experience when playing at the course.

There is now a tangible sense of positivity at the club. With a new responsive website and consistent identity, it now has all the foundations in place to market itself effectively. John Aughterlony, club manager of Rochester & Cobham Park Golf Club, commented: "We wanted to define our customer journey for both our members and visitors and in working with the design team at EAGLE, we were able to deliver this."



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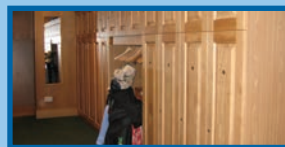


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