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COVER: Simon Bourne, Cottesloe Golf Club:

No more than six months after a freak holiday accident left him paralysed from the chest down, Simon Bourne is literally back in the driver's seat as superintendent at Perth's Cottesloe Golf Club.

Photo: Brett Robinson



Bourne to battle: Rat's return to Cottesloe

8

In early February 2010, Cottesloe Golf Club superintendent Simon Bourne was lying on a hospital bed in Bali with two shattered spinal vertebrae contemplating the horrific prospect of never being able to walk again. Six months later and through the tremendous outpouring of support by a loving and caring family, his close mates and the turf and golf industries, Bourne has beaten the odds and has returned to work. ATM editor Brett Robinson looks back at what has been a remarkable, heartbreaking and life-changing year for one of Western Australia's most devoted superintendents.

Mother Nature tests tournament preps

18

Mother Nature is always a great leveller and experienced superintendents Ian Todd (The Victoria Golf Club) and Russell Fletcher (The Lakes Golf Club) had to contend with all she could dish out as they prepared their respective courses for the first two major tournaments of the 2010/11 season. ATM looks back at the 2010 JBWere Australian Masters and 2010 Australian Open.



The hazards of a profession

24

In ATM's continuing look at compliance issues, Lee Baines from e-par Infrastructure looks at the storage and handling of hazardous and dangerous goods at turf maintenance facilities and reveals some alarming statistics uncovered during his investigations.

The Sands set for 'Knockout' event

44

In June 2010 it was announced that The Sands, Torquay in Victoria would be holding a new style golf event from 20-23 January 2011 called the Surf Coast

Knockout. Course superintendent Nathan Bennett, who was involved with the 2003 and 2005 Australian Opens at Moonah Links as an assistant, looks at his course preparations for this unique event.



OPINION

Are you motivated?

30

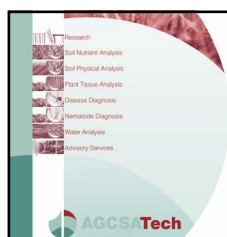
The Pulse asks superintendents what different techniques, aside from a size 12 Blundstone, they employ to motivate and get the most out of their course maintenance staff?

AGCSATECH UPDATE

New bents put to the test during first year

32

It has been just over a year since bi-monthly ratings began as part of the AGCSA's new bentgrass variety trial (HAL Project TU08002). AGCSATech senior agronomist Andrew Peart summarises the results from the first 12 months of the three-year project which is being conducted at three golf club trial sites in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide.



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RESEARCH

Response of soft-leaf buffalograss to renovation

48

University of Western Australian researchers outline the initial findings from a two-year research project (HAL Project TU09005) which is looking at the response of 12 soft-leaf buffalograss varieties to various renovation treatments.

Keeping alive the living library

50

In 2000, the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (previously QDPI&F) built and maintained a 'living library' of turfgrass selections made up of 138 different turf varieties. Jon Penberthy provides an update on these unique demonstration plots (HAL Project TU09002).



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Contributors to Australian Turfgrass Management Volume 13.1 (January-February 2011)

Lee Baines (e-par Infrastructure); Louise Barton (University of WA); Nathan Bennett (The Sands, Torquay); Simon and Marina Bourne; Michael Bradbery (Manly GC); Stephen Chapman (Barossa Valley GC); Tim Colmer (University of WA); Brooke Fletcher; Russell Fletcher (The Lakes GC); John Geary (AGCSATech); Tim Higgott (University of WA); Peter Lonergan (GCSAQ); John Neylan (AGCSA); Andrew Pearl (AGCSATech); Jon Penberthy (DEED); Eddie Ruis (Portland GC); Peter Semos (STA QLD); Sam Sherriff (SAGCSA); Geoff Stephens (Toro Australia); David Stewart (LNCGCSG); Ian Todd (The Victoria GC); Nathan Tovey (TGAA VIC); Michael Vozzo (Eastwood GC); Brad White (Cottesloe GC); Byron Williams (Cottesloe GC); Craig Wright (NSWGCSA).

A Bourne inspiration

One of the immensely rewarding aspects of my job at the AGCSA is the opportunity to meet a wide variety of industry practitioners and convey through the pages of this journal some of their stories. If there is one thing that I have learned over the past seven years, it's that you're a passionate lot who like nothing more than to talk about your patch of turf and the challenges faced. However, it has been some of the stories away from the everyday trials and tribulations of turf management that have resonated most, such as the aftermath of Black Saturday and the infamous Warringah Golf Club verdict.

This edition's cover story focuses on another of these stories. The plight of Cottesloe Golf Club superintendent Simon Bourne has been well documented over the past 11 months and in mid-September I was fortunate to head to Perth and spend a day at the club. Despite being paralysed from the mid-chest down, Simon returned to work in mid-July, taking the reins less than six months after that fateful day in February 2010. In this edition we track the remarkable chain of events that have forever changed the life of one of this country's most dedicated superintendents and how an industry has rallied around him.

If you live in Victoria, in recent months there has been a media campaign by WorkSafe which carries the central slogan 'Return to work, return to life', espousing how getting back to work can be a crucial part of an injured worker's rehabilitation. Although not injured at work, having his job to go back to has been a lifeline for the Simon and as he admits quite bluntly, "...the golf club basically saved my life."

As I have mentioned in this column before, Cottesloe must be commended for the way they have facilitated Simon's return to work. At no stage did general manager Brad White or the committee entertain the thought of casting Simon adrift, a sign of the respect they have for him as a superintendent and the job he does. It also speaks volumes of the manner in which Simon has engaged with the members and club management. Having such a positive relationship has proved critical in his hour of need and a lot of superintendents could learn a thing or two from the way he has approached this aspect of his role.

As well as wife Marina, who emerges as one of the real heroes in the story, kudos must also go the way of the Cottesloe maintenance crew. During his tenure as superintendent, Simon has gathered a group of guys he can trust and has engendered a culture that has made them a very cohesive unit. In his absence, the whole group has stepped up and grown up in many respects. Simon's assistant Byron Williams had to confront some of his own personal demons in taking over calling the day-to-day shots of maintenance operations, while from senior qualified greenkeeper down to apprentice all have had to take on greater responsibility to ensure their boss could concentrate on his rehabilitation.

At the end of the day, however, it's Simon's sheer bloody-mindedness and determination to live his life as normal as possible which is the real inspiration. Sure he has had and will continue to have his bad days, but it kind of puts things into perspective doesn't it.

Having just recently welcomed a new addition to my family – yes the Hurricane has a sister, a mere zephyr by the name of Elizabeth Jade – Simon's story certainly makes you appreciate the fragility of life and how one seemingly insignificant moment can have life-changing implications. As the saying goes, you don't know what you've got until you lose it. Simon may have lost the use of his legs, but he still has his job, his family and most importantly his life which, as Marina poignantly states, is something she and her two young daughters draw strength from every day. Enjoy the read...



Brett Robinson
Brett Robinson,
Editor



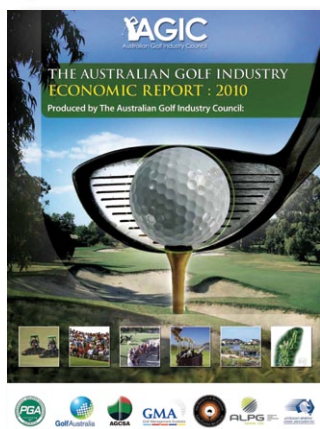
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Member survey garners feedback on AGCSA direction



The AGIC has released the Australian Golf Industry Economic Report 2010

The past few months have been very busy for the staff of the AGCSA with membership renewals, conference planning, trade meetings, consultancies, submitting research proposals and planning for 2011. Membership renewals is always a big period for the organisation and we would like to thank all members that have renewed their membership.

We are always endeavouring to add value to membership and we appreciate any feedback from members in terms of what we could undertake as an association. As part of this process, in early December 2010 we distributed an online survey to canvass members on their thoughts regarding the AGCSA and its activities. We thank all who took the opportunity to provide their feedback.

CARBON PROJECT APPROVED

The AGCSA has always had a strong commitment to environmental management and we are pleased to announce that we recently had confirmation that a project proposal in conjunction with The University of Melbourne on biodiversity and carbon capture, submitted to the Australian Research Council, had been approved.

The aim of this project is to improve our understanding of biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration provided by urban green spaces and in particular golf courses. To achieve this, the project has four specific aims:

- To quantify the carbon stored and sequestered in the vegetation biomass and soils of urban golf courses according to management intensity, age and bioregion;
- To quantify the biodiversity benefit of urban golf courses in comparison to the adjacent residential urban areas;



AGCSA general manager John Neylan and eight-time LPGA winner Rachel Hetherington hold the prestigious Presidents Cup during the recent AGIC delegation to Parliament House in Canberra

- To combine indirect carbon costs of golf course management with direct carbon benefits to produce an overall 'carbon footprint' using life cycle assessment (LCA); and
- To develop, or apply, spatially-explicit models to predict the carbon and biodiversity benefit of urban golf courses, parks and gardens, and to validate their predictive capacity.

AGIC DELEGATION

The AGCSA is a member of the Australian Golf Industry Council (AGIC) and in early November 2010 we spent a day in Canberra meeting with various Ministers and shadow ministers. These meetings provided an opportunity to sell the value of the golf industry and to put forward various proposals that will help the golf industry in the years to come.

We were fortunate to have Stuart Appleby and Rachel Hetherington with us, as well as the Presidents Cup as a means of promoting golf in



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Australia. The AGIC were fortunate to meet Prime Minister Julia Gillard where she was invited to be the Honorary Chair of the Presidents Cup, as is her US counterpart. The AGIC were afforded a meeting with her to discuss the value of the golf industry in terms of health and well-being and economic value (see page 56 for a full rundown on the visitation - Ed).

The AGIC also recently unveiled its report on the value of the Australian golf industry titled The Australian Golf Industry Economic Report 2010. The two key facts from my perspective are that the golf industry is worth \$2.94 billion and employs some 21,000 people and is a significant contributor to the Australian economy. It also highlights that golf is a big business and needs to be treated as such.

LOOKING AHEAD

The AGCSA is in a good position and has the ability over the next 12-18 months to invest more into members services. Some of the current areas include:

- Additional templates for best practice services,
- OH&S information;
- Course quality assessment criteria;
- Salaries and wages survey; and
- Research projects. The AGCSA has recently submitted three new research proposals to Horticulture Australia seeking matching funding to undertake research into the function and longevity of golf greens, developing course quality objectives and pesticide risk assessment.

The year ahead looks good for the AGCSA and we thank all our members and valued trade partners. From all of the staff at the AGCSA we hope you have a safe and happy holiday season. 🌿

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Superintendents and sports turf managers, are your apprentices registered for their free AGCSA membership? Apprentices receive all the AGCSA benefits at no charge for the duration of their apprenticeship simply by completing the form on this page or by registering on our website www.agcsa.com.au/membership.

Members and non-members alike can receive our weekly e-newsletter, The Cut by registering their name and email address or contacting membership co-ordinator Lyndel Conway on 03 9548 8600 or info@agcsa.com.au.

LYNDEL CONWAY
AGCSA MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR



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In February 2010, Cottesloe Golf Club superintendent Simon Bourne was lying on a hospital bed in Bali with two shattered spinal vertebrae, no feeling from the chest down, contemplating the horrific prospect of never being able to walk again. Six months later and through the tremendous outpouring of support by a loving and caring family, his close mates and the turf and golf industries, Bourne stunned everyone by returning to work at Cottesloe. ATM editor Brett Robinson looks back at what has been a remarkable, heartbreaking and life-changing year for Simon, his wife Marina and their two daughters Alexandra and Georgia.

Imagine lying on your back for 17 days straight and being told not to move. Imagine having stainless steel pins drilled into your head and having the pressure of them gradually tightened each day to the point where your skull is about to explode. Imagine being told you have just a two per cent chance of ever being able to walk again and that you could pretty much forget about returning to work. Imagine the dark, very dark, places that your innermost thoughts would go at hearing such a bleak prognosis.

Imagine having no control of any part of your body from below your chest – digestion, stomach muscles, bowel movements, bladder control, your legs. Imagine a nurse having to physically sit on top of you, pushing down on your diaphragm with all their weight to force you to cough.

Imagine having to learn the simplest of things all over again, like sitting up and getting dressed. Imagine the only way you could go to the toilet is by either using a catheter or inserting suppositories once every second day. Imagine how hard it would be to see the loves of your life – your partner, your children, you're closest mates – having to watch you go through all this.

Pretty confronting isn't it? Well, since 20 February 2010, Simon Bourne, superintendent at Cottesloe Golf Club in Perth, hasn't had to imagine. He has had to confront all the above and a lot more, much more, after a freak holiday accident in Bali forever changed not only his life but the lives of those nearest and dearest to him. They are the sort of things that would bring the bravest to their knees, but somehow, extraordinarily, this 33-year-old has proved to all around him that he is one tough customer.

Sure, he may now be confined to a wheelchair and still has no feeling from the chest down, but since the accident Bourne has been staunchly determined to remain the happy-go-lucky, laid-back turfie that everyone in the Western Australian turf community has come to know and respect over the past 15 years.

Through an inner desire and with the help of an unyielding support network, he has strived to live the life that he had prior to the accident. Setting goals and targets throughout his rehabilitation, he has knocked them off with seemingly consummate ease and the crowning glory came in mid-July when, just six months after the accident, he returned to his role as superintendent of Cottesloe Golf Club.

Bourne's story is truly inspiring, not only in the way he has been able to triumph over the challenges that have been put in front of him, but because of the heart-warming way in which friends, family, a golf club and an industry have rallied around a young man and his family during the most challenging of times. It is also about how a young couple and their two beautiful daughters have braved what none of us could ever imagine going through and coming out the other end stronger for it.



HOLIDAY HELL

For six-year-old Alexandra Bourne and her three-year-old sister Georgia, the excitement early last February was almost palpable. Soon they would be jetting off to Bali with mum and dad and some family friends for what was their first family trip overseas.

Seeing it was their first holiday all together, Marina Bourne did what every self-respecting mum would do and armed herself with every emergency phone number and address possible – Australian embassies, consulates, local hospitals, doctors – just on the off chance that she would need them if one of the kids was to fall ill. Little would she know that these would come into use for a completely different reason.

It was late on the fourth day of their holiday when the life of the Bourne family would change forever. Having spent a fun-filled day at Waterbom Park, Bali's massive aquatic-themed playground, the kids were fast asleep and the Bournes, along with their friends who were sharing a four-bedroom poolside villa in Legian, were relaxing after an enjoyable day. The heat, as it always is in Bali, was stifling even at that time of day and by 11pm they all decided to call it a night. All except Simon.



Bourne back in the driver's seat

"It was that hot that I thought I'd just jump in the pool for five seconds, cool down then jump straight back out and go to bed," recalls Simon of that fateful decision. "So, I basically just fell into the pool. I didn't dive, I sort of flopped in like you do. At the angle I did, though, the top of my head smashed into a ledge that was in the middle of the pool. Ironically, I had stubbed my toe on the same ledge the day before and had said to the others to watch out for it."

"I surfaced and immediately thought, 'F**k that hurt', so I swam over to the edge of the pool and tried to get out. My whole lower body felt like it was just floating and it was then that I knew was in a bit of trouble."

Unable to get out of the pool and with blood pouring from the gash in his head, Simon was pulled out by his friends. Marina quickly alerted reception, grabbed her passport wallet containing all the emergency contacts and called the Australian Embassy and travel insurer CoverMore. After what seemed like an eternity an ambulance finally came and ferried Simon to Bali International Medical Centre. Once there he underwent an immediate MRI which pretty much confirmed the worst.

"They had us in this room with all the curtains drawn and Simon was screaming in pain," recalls Marina. "They were trying to keep his head still but he was in agony and trying to move all the time. I could see through a gap in the curtains the doctors looking at the scans and all I could see were these smashed vertebrae."

"After getting off the phone to CoverMore who were organising a charter flight to come from Singapore to get us back to Perth, I spoke to one of the head doctors and told him to be honest with me. He said that Simon had smashed his C7 and T1 vertebrae and that the spinal cord had been stretched and dislocated. I didn't want Simon to know because I just wanted him to be as calm as possible, but that's when I knew just how serious this was."

Within 15 hours of the accident, Simon, Marina and the girls were back on home soil, much to their relief. Rushed through Customs, Simon arrived at Royal Perth Hospital where, mercifully, for the first time he was given some proper pain relief. A halo, complete with four pins (two front and two rear) were drilled into his skull and the following morning surgeons cut him open to fuse the shattered

Six months after a freak holiday accident left him paralysed from the chest down, Cottesloe Golf Club superintendent Simon Bourne defied the odds and returned to work. Having the goal of being able to return to work proved critical during his rehabilitation and through the unwavering support of his club, his crew and the turf industry that process has been made all the more easier. Pictured from left to right are Darren Wilson (GCSAWA president), Geoff Stephens (Toro Australia), Simon Bourne, Brad White (Cottesloe general manager) and members of the Cottesloe maintenance crew

vertebrae together in order to give the spinal cord as healthy an environment as possible to heal.

For the next 17 days Simon could do little except lie flat on his back and pop a cocktail of medication – at one stage the count was 31 pills in a day. When he wasn't sleeping or coming to terms with the sheer disbelief of what had happened in Bali, the nurses had him working on breathing and arm exercises in order to prepare him for the next phase – rehabilitation. Despite the gravity of the situation confronting him, Simon surprised everyone, himself included, with the way he seemingly accepted things so quickly and bravely concentrated on the long and challenging road ahead.

"I guess I always knew that I wouldn't be able to walk again," reflects Simon. "I think I came to terms with it pretty early and from that point I just tried to be myself, joking around and making light of things even though I knew I was in trouble. I'm pretty strong-willed so I just did all that I could within my control, so if I had to lie flat on my back for 17 days without moving, I didn't move for 17 days.

"I was very fortunate to still have use of my arms, although my left arm was a lot weaker than the right – I couldn't grip or even hold a kilo weight in my left hand – so a lot of the exercises initially were to build up strength in my hands and arms. Rather than

doing my exercises 3-4 times a day as prescribed, I always made sure that I was doing them 10 times a day. I knew my predicament, but I was determined to do as much as I could to give myself the best possible chance."

DEFYING THE ODDS

Having recovered from surgery and fitted into a brace which hooked into the halo to keep his neck and upper body in alignment, nearly three weeks after the accident Simon was transferred to the hospital's Shenton Park Campus spinal unit where the gruelling task of rehabilitation began.

For someone so proudly independent, having to have everything done for him – whether it was being lifted out of bed by a crane, sitting up, being washed, going to the toilet – was hard to get used to. In fact, "humiliating" is the word Simon uses. Despite the frustrations, Simon did the only thing he could and focus on his rehab which by now involved rigorous stretching exercises to keep the muscle tone in his lower body as well as weights to help build up the strength in his arms and hands.

Three weeks into his stint at Shenton Park, however, the news that Simon was half expecting and Marina feared finally came. On April Fool's Day they were told that Simon would have just a 2 per

STANDING BY THEIR COURSE SUPERINTENDENT

Brad White certainly won't forget his wedding day in a hurry. Within hours of tying the knot at a ceremony in the south of Western Australia, the Cottesloe Golf Club general manager was brought crashing back down to earth with a single phone call. Thinking it was his course superintendent Simon Bourne ringing to wish him congratulations, instead it was Marina Bourne on the other end who proceeded to relay news of the freak accident.

From the highs of his wedding, a few days later White was contemplating the gravity of the situation after visiting Bourne in Royal Perth Hospital. Understandably one of Bourne's immediate concerns was his job security at Cottesloe, but White was quick to allay any fears the young superintendent had.

"My reaction was, 'Mate, don't worry about that, let's just focus on your recovery and rehab and we as a club will do everything that's in your best interests'," recalls White of the discussion. "And that's the direction the club has taken. There was always the feeling that we were going to get him back to work and I think having that reassurance, knowing that things were in place and being taken care of here, was very important for Simon early on.

"Simon has been here his entire turf management career and he has been extremely loyal to the club. He is a very valued employee and highly respected among his peers, the turf industry and the members. We just appreciate the job that he does and felt that there was nothing else we wanted to do except support him."

White took over as Cottesloe general manager while Bourne was still an assistant, but after the departure of the previous superintendent he had little hesitation in elevating Bourne to the top job. That decision certainly paid dividends and as White attests the course has never been in better condition, something which has come about through Bourne's vision and his ability to engender a cohesive team down in the shed.

PULLING ALL STOPS

Standing by its superintendent in such a time of need, Cottesloe has received widespread praise from the Australian turf management community, and since getting the all clear from doctors the process to facilitate Bourne's return has been relatively straightforward.

Through the Federal Government agency Job Access Australia, the club had the maintenance facility assessed and is now in the process of getting plans drawn up to modify the toilet, lunchroom and office to address accessibility issues. The club also went out and bought Bourne a new work vehicle – a Holden Crewman to replace his Mitsubishi Triton which was difficult for Bourne to get in and out of – and had it fitted with hand controls.

It was then a matter of ensuring Bourne was eased back into the role and fitting his work hours around his rehabilitation. Initially coming back for just a couple of mornings a week, Bourne is now back full-time and works a 7am-2pm day. Despite having some apprehension that he was returning to work too quickly, those fears proved unfounded and White has been amazed by Bourne's determination to get involved again.

"I'll admit initially I thought he may be returning to work too soon given the massive change to his life, but right from the outset that's what he wanted," says White. "We talked to the medical staff early on and their advice was to play it as it goes, but given that he was showing an interest it was important to keep him involved.

"Simon has always been a positive person and nothing has ever been too difficult for him. To experience such a setback, for most it would be too difficult to overcome, but the mental toughness that both he and Marina have shown has been inspiring.

"The support we have had from the local superintendent community has also been phenomenal and has played a key role in getting Simon back where he belongs."

cent chance of ever regaining full motor function of his legs. Despite being warned early on that such a prognosis was likely, nothing could prepare Marina for those words and for the first time since the accident she broke down in front of Simon.

Resilience, however, is a trait that both Bournes have in abundance and despite the setback, once the tears dried it was down to business and refocusing on making the best of a life-altering situation. While Simon concentrated on his rehab, Marina stepped up her investigations into various alternative treatments, among them the use of hyperbaric chambers and stem cell research. Early on Simon was tested as a candidate for Functional Electric Stimulation (FES) and on the results of that was due to start a trial at the end of 2010.

Throughout his rehabilitation Simon continually set milestones and such was his willpower he would often achieve them well ahead of time. After ridding himself of the neck brace, which he managed to accomplish more than a week ahead of schedule, he quickly mastered most tasks which were thrown at him. While they may seem simple to an able bodied person, accomplishing tasks like being able to dress himself, get from his bed into the wheelchair or from the wheelchair into a car, were critical steps along the road to some form of independence.

In late April he was allowed home for the first time, an emotional and confronting day for all the Bourne family. While Marina and the girls were ecstatic to have their man at home, it was tempered by the reality that their existing home would be completely unsuitable when Simon returned home.

The biggest milestone, however, came at the start of June 2010. Early on when Simon was first transferred to Shenton Park, doctors said he was looking at upwards of nine months in rehabilitation. Simon had other ideas, however, and told everyone he would be out by Round 10 of the AFL season. Marina thought grand final week at best, but just as Simon had done constantly throughout his rehab he proved the professionals wrong. Incredibly, just 103 days after entering Shenton Park – the week of round 11 as it turned out – Simon was given the all clear to return home.



No sooner had he arrived home than thoughts immediately turned to what many thought would be impossible – a return to work. During his stay at Shenton Park, he was told that it could take up to two years to get back to work, and even then he would be lucky to be able to resume his previous role. For Simon, however, that was never going to wash. It wasn't that he wanted to get back to work, it was because he needed to and just a month after returning home, in mid-July 2010, Simon triumphed by rejoining the crew at Cottesloe.

Bourne pictured while at Bali International Medical Centre awaiting medical evacuation back to Australia. MRI scans revealed that he had shattered his C7 and T1 vertebrae, leaving him paralysed from the chest down

SECOND HOME SWEET HOME

Cottesloe Golf Club has been Simon's second home for nearly 15 years and he joined as an apprentice under then superintendent Alan Redmayne. A keen golfer who was introduced to the game at an early age by his dad Tony, a founding member at Sun City Country Club, Simon caught the turf management bug after spending a week's work experience at Lake Karrinyup.

Deciding this was the life for him, Simon drafted a letter and sent it to every private golf club in WA. Despite getting knocked back at Lakelands, it was Cottesloe that gave the enthusiastic Bourne the break he so longed for. In April 2006, after more than 10 years at the club, Bourne finally got the chance to show what he was made of when Redmayne left.

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Simple things like even sitting up became some of the hardest to accomplish early on, but through ongoing rehabilitation and continually going above and beyond what he needed to do, Bourne was able to reduce his stay at Shenton Park to just three months

Although not confident, Bourne applied for the job, but he need not have worried. The club knew it had a great asset and as well as Bourne's exemplary work ethic and his enormous bank of knowledge about the site, he also had some firm ideas about how to improve the course. The job was his.

"I had a number of ideas about the direction in which the course and maintenance operations should go and I put that forward to the club and luckily they gave me a chance," says Simon. "I think loyalty had a bit to do with it too."

"I have always loved playing golf and they gave me the opportunity here to present the course how I would like it if I was a member. Part of my package included membership which was fantastic and I started playing with the members every Thursday and then sitting with them in the bar afterwards talking to them, getting to know them and getting their point of view which was great."

Ask any of the members today what their superintendent has been able to achieve over the past four years and they will all tell you the same. Course conditioning and presentation has never been better, and combined with the gradual changes that Simon and his team have made under the auspices of Graham Marsh's ongoing masterplan, the course has steadily grown in stature. Just how much so was acknowledged weeks before Simon's accident when Cottesloe recorded the biggest jump in the Australian Golf Digest Top 100 rankings (it rose 35 places to rank 63).

DON'T FORGET ME

Ask Simon if there was ever a doubt in his mind that he would be able to resume his duties at Cottesloe and the answer is a firm 'no'. Right throughout his rehab he was in constant contact with the club – whether it was general manager Brad White or assistant superintendent Byron Williams who was marshalling the troops in his absence – and as those around him will attest, having the goal of returning to work became critically important.

Fortunately Cottesloe went out of its way to facilitate his return to work (see page 10), while through the support of the industry, such as Toro donating a modified Workman (see page 14), Simon's transition was made as easy as possible.

"When I got out of Shenton Park, the first thing I told Marina was that I wanted to go straight back to work," says Simon. "You can imagine her response, but I said even if it's just for a couple of hours to start with I needed to get back."

Adds Marina: "I did have a number of concerns obviously, but knowing that Simon could still do his job was such an important thing. His mind is constantly thinking about Cottesloe and his loyalty to the place and the love he has for his job there is paramount to how he functions."

"Without doubt his greatest fear was not being able to go back to work. I don't think it was more than 12 hours after his operation at Royal Perth that

he told Geoff Stephens from Toro, who had come to see him, 'Don't forget about me'.

"Simon's main aim throughout was to get back to work, regardless of what position, and we did everything we could to make sure that happened. To see Simon back there after six months and running the joint leaves you speechless. You just can't understand how huge it was for him and for me. That first day back I obviously had to help him get ready in the morning and when I saw his work shirt for the first time in such a long time I just balled my eyes out."

"I told Simon then and there that this is the start, this is where we try and get things back to normal. He needed this goal of getting back to keep his spirit alive, so needless to say it was a very emotional day for the both of us and one I will never forget."

As for the practicalities surrounding his return, aside from the obvious physical limitations, there isn't much that Simon can't do now that he wasn't able to before. Although his days start a little later, which means he relies on Williams to get the crew going each morning, Simon can still get around the course with ease thanks to the Workman. He has also shifted his focus more into the planning and management side of the superintendent role and as this edition was going to print he was busy overseeing the reconstruction of three holes and two tees as part of the masterplan.

"Obviously there are some physical things that I can't do, but I'm pretty much doing everything that I could before," says Simon. "Sometimes I forget that I can't walk and I'll find myself almost leaping out of the Workman to show the guys what needs doing. I used to hate being in the office but now I'm actually starting to enjoy it more, especially planning and strategising how we can improve the course."

"I can't say enough about the club and the way they have supported me and my family. You never know, but I don't think there would be many clubs out there that would have done what Cottesloe has done for me. Just having the trust in me and the support has been incredible, and I'm also pretty lucky to have a great crew who have done an incredible job in my absence."

NOT GOING IT ALONE

While the committed and determined attitude exhibited by both Simon and Marina over the course of the past 11 months can only be admired, both admit they could never have made it to this point without the massive support network which they have been able to call upon.

Right from the first week of the accident, an army consisting of friends, family and industry colleagues has gone out of its way to make sure that they have been able to focus on Simon's welfare. Whether it has been looking after the kids so that Marina could be there every step of the way through Simon's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ►

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Helping a **mate** get **mobile** again

Despite the tragic events surrounding Simon Bourne over the past year, the way in which the turf industry has rallied around him has been, in his words, truly humbling. However, it has been one particular mate who has played a special role in literally getting him back in the driver's seat

As a superintendent who revels in the hands-on aspect of his role, one of the hardest adjustments Simon Bourne has had to make in the months since returning to Cottesloe Golf Club following his accident, has been the limitations that have come with being confined to a wheelchair.

Prior to the accident, it wasn't uncommon to find Bourne out on course mucking in alongside his apprentices edging and raking bunkers and whenever he needed an escape from the office to contemplate the world he would often jump on a fairway mower and do a few laps.

While sadly that sort of work is not possible any more, Bourne has, through the help of good friend and local Western Australian Toro sales manager Geoff Stephens, been able to get mobile again thanks to the use of a specially modified Workman MDX utility.

Stephens, along with Bunbury Golf Club superintendent Des Russell, was among the first to see Bourne at Royal Perth Hospital just days after

the accident, and although confronting, like the rest of Bourne's friends and family, Stephens' thoughts immediately turned to how he could help out a mate in need.

"I was pretty devastated like everyone else when we heard what had happened to Simon, but we're just glad he is still with us," reflects Stephens, a former greenkeeper himself. "Everyone was very quick to rally around and do whatever we could to get him back to where in WA he is today. We're a pretty tight industry over here and everyone gets on really well. Simon and I are also pretty good mates outside of work and I used to get a fair bit of grog off him playing golf, which is probably the biggest thing I'm going to miss.

"When it became clear that Simon might not be able to use his legs again, we had a bit of a chat about what he would need in order to get back to work. It was obvious that being able to get around the course was going to be a key factor. The reality was that there was only so much that Simon could do sitting in the office, and for his own stimulation he needed to get back out on the course. I guess I was just fortunate to be in a position to work for a company that could help out, but it was more that I was doing it to help out a mate."

Stephens approached his superiors to see if it was possible to donate a Workman and once that was given the all clear the club was able to get in contact with a local mechanic who was able to make the necessary modifications as dictated by Bourne

and Stephens. What they have come up with is a modified utility which gives Bourne freedom to get around all parts of the course just as he was able to prior to the accident.

REMAINING IN CONTROL

The primary modification to the Workman has seen the removal of the accelerator and brake pedals and the installation of a hand lever which Bourne pulls back on to accelerate and pushes forward to brake.

Carrying a pre-existing injury to his right shoulder and also because of the safety guard, Bourne was unable to get into the Workman from the driver's side, so an air ride seat was installed on the passenger's side to enable him to transfer across from his wheelchair. A bench seat was placed in the middle so once he is in the air ride seat it's just a matter of sliding across behind the wheel and strapping his body in with a seatbelt. Non-slip matting on the floor also ensures Bourne's legs remain in position while driving.

The other major modification has seen the Workman's turf tyres replaced by smooth greens mower tyres, which enables Bourne to drive over and inspect the greens.

"It's amazing," says Bourne of the modified Workman. "It doesn't leave any wheel marks at all on the greens and means I can cruise slowly over them as much as I like and check them out, just how I used to. Obviously I can't get out and putt on them,



but this is the next best thing. We thought there may have been some issues in the wet with the slick tyres but that hasn't happened."

For Stephens, seeing his friend back doing the job he loves and being as mobile as he possibly can has provided immense satisfaction. "It has been a tough road for Simon and you have to be optimistic that one day he will be able to walk again. Being able to help him out by providing a Workman has been a humbling experience and I have had a lot of people come up to me and say thanks for helping out. The reality is, though, if I was in the same situation as Simon, he would do the same to help me. That's what mates just do." 🙏

Far left: As well as special hand controls, the modified Workman MDX has also been fitted with an air ride seat which makes it easier for Bourne to get in and out from his wheelchair

Above: The modified Workman MDX enables Bourne to drive across greens to inspect them without the worry of leaving tyre marks due to specially fitted greens mower slicks

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◀ **Cottesloe has been a second home to Bourne for his entire turf management career and just being back on deck, despite his physical limitations, has given a tremendous boost to his spirit**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

rehab, organising major fundraising events, through to helping out with course preparations for events at Cottesloe, the support has been unwavering.

Through a series of charity events and donations from various organisations, a staggering total of around \$200,000 has already been raised which has been put into a trust account. More than half of that money was raised in one incredible night last May when more than 1000 people turned out at the Perth Convention Centre for the Bourne Family Quiz Night. The turf and golf industries too have dug deep and combined the GCSAWA, SAGCSA, NSWGCSA, VGCSA and AGCSA have contributed nearly \$20,000, while a charity golf day in September at Cottesloe saw a further \$50,000 raised.

"The support has been overwhelming," says Marina. "It's not only the financial generosity which has been just phenomenal, it's also the 'Mate, I'll come and pick you up and we'll go down the footy club'. It's not being left alone. A lot of people said early on that you'll find some people will drift away after initially being there, but nearly a year later we haven't had that. The support has been constant and we can't see that diminishing.

"Simon's great mates have taken it upon themselves to make sure that whatever help we needed they would be here no matter what, even right down to the little things like Glenn Cross and the Mt Lawley boys coming and taking care of our garden. To know that there are people out there thinking about us every day, that is pretty special and we have drawn immense strength from that."

One of the many things their friends did early on was to set up a blog - marinaandsimon.blogspot.com. What started out as a practical way of keeping everyone updated on Simon's progress, the blog turned into a much-needed release for Marina.

It makes for compelling reading and some of the early posts reveal the raw, heartfelt emotion of what she and her family were going through. As well as taking heart from all the well-wishes, Simon was also moved by the words his wife was posting and admits that it made him even more determined during his rehabilitation.

If there is one thing that the blog demonstrates more than anything else, it's the incredibly positive outlook which the Bourne's have had throughout, but as both admit it was the only way to approach what had been put in front of them.

"I have and always will be a very positive person," says Marina. "I never cried in front of Simon and never made anything seem like an issue. Crawling into a ball and crying wasn't going to fix anything. It hasn't before so why start now. You just get on with it, get on top of it and do what you have to do."

LIVING LIFE

While Simon and Marina have conquered much over the past 11 months, the next milestone will come when they move into their new house. Having levelled their existing Duncraig home, Danmar Homes is currently constructing, at cost, the new Bourne abode, a single-level dwelling specially designed for Simon.

As far as his rehabilitation goes, as doctors told them on that fateful April Fool's Day, the first two years following the accident will be critical in showing any signs of being able to walk again. Although he has patches on his legs where he can feel some sensation, like warm water when having a shower, the difference between feeling sensation and movement are poles apart.

"Although Simon has been given those odds you always have that hope that Simon will be able to walk again," says Marina. "At one point Simon said to me, 'Well, if my legs don't work why don't we just chop them off'. I said to him what if in 10 years time they come up with a miracle cure? He just looked at me and said, 'I didn't think of that'. Well, you better start thinking like that, I said!"

The final word, however, goes to Simon, perhaps the only time in his life he'll get the final say given he's married to a good Greek gal. As he admits he can't see himself forever confined to a wheelchair, but regardless of whether that eventuates he is just content that he has been able to get as much of his life back on track as possible.

"Everyone has been surprised at how I have been able to accept what has happened," says Simon. "I have always been a very strong-minded person but I think having the support of everyone has helped me in that process. I can't see myself in a wheelchair for the rest of my life and you hope that something will come along, but all I can do is try and keep doing what I can with my rehab.

"If there is one positive to come from this, apart from still being here, it's that I'm married to Marina. I've always known she has been a very resilient person and with what has happened that has only been highlighted. I've come to realise how deep her love is for me and the kids. She has been amazing.

"Marina and the golf club definitely saved my life. Frankly, I don't know what I would have done without them." 🌿



Back doing what he loves thanks to the assistance of the modified Toro Workman utility



Dear friends,
To all members of the AGCSA and to members of all state superintendent associations from around this great country, I would like to personally thank you for your support and the generous donations that we have received over the last few months.

I, along with my wife Marina and daughters Alexandra and Georgia, have been overwhelmed with the amazing support and well wishes we have received since the accident I unfortunately had last February. All donations have been put into a trust account that a good mate of mine is managing and will be used in a way that will help me in my intentions to walk again. I believe that you never say never, so hopefully with the ongoing progress made every day in the medical profession this goal of mine can be reached.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Toro Australia, in particular Western Australian area sales manager Geoff Stephens, for donating a new Toro Workman and for getting it modified so that I can get around the course and basically get back to what I love doing – being a golf course superintendent.

After talking to Geoff about the prospects of getting a vehicle and how he could help me get back to work, we decided to put greens mower slicks onto the Workman which would enable me to drive across the greens. This has worked out beautifully to date.

I must also thank Cottesloe Golf Club and general manager Brad White for their support during my recovery and now that I'm back at work. The support and encouragement that I have received not only from the board of the golf club but from all the members and the maintenance crew has been overwhelming. I can't thank them enough and they have basically saved my life by just wanting me to return to work.

Thanks again to everyone for their donations and best wishes. This industry is amazing and the way every association and trade get together in times like this is just inspirational. Cheers,

SIMON "RAT" BOURNE
SUPERINTENDENT,
COTTESLOE GOLF CLUB, PERTH, WA



Despite a battle against the elements in the lead up to and during the tournament, The Victoria Golf Club was in superb condition for the 2010 JBWere Australian Masters. Revegetated areas in particular framed the course beautifully, such as par three 7th pictured

Mother Nature is the greatest of levellers and for Ian Todd and his crew at The Victoria Golf Club it was a constant battle in the weeks preceding and during the 2010 JBWere Australian Masters to get the course up to tournament standard. ATM reviews this season's first major held in mid-November, while John Neylan visits The Lakes Golf Club which hosted the Australian Open in the first week of December.



Mother Nature puts tournament

While many in Melbourne welcomed one of the wettest and coolest springs on record, the same couldn't be said for Ian Todd. The last time Australian Turfgrass Management visited The Victoria Golf Club course superintendent at the end of the 2010 winter, Todd was looking forward to a nice warm spring to get his Santa ana couch fairways bouncing out of the ground in preparation for the 2010 JBWere Australian Masters.

What's that saying about best laid plans? Well, as Melbourne's water storages hit 60 per cent for the first time in years and residents rejoiced as water restrictions were lifted – 170mm alone fell for the month of October followed by more heavy falls in November – for Todd it meant that he and his crew were up against it as they prepared the sandbelt course to host the likes of headline acts Woods, Villegas and Garcia.

With the spectre of the 2002 Open also weighing on the mind and pre-tournament media discussion surrounding those events, there was plenty of pressure on the maintenance crew to perform, but despite battling the elements Todd can sit back this summer and reflect on what was a highly successful return to the big stage for the club.

"I think in reflection there was probably a lot of anxiety on my part on the first day given what had happened in the past," says Todd. "I certainly felt that, but after we got through the first round I was a lot more comfortable with the way the course was, even with the hot northerly that got up on the Friday.

"The guys stood up and were fantastic and certainly played a huge role in the success of the tournament. With the weather the way it was on the Saturday, they worked right through the day and slogged their guts out to keep the course playable.

"The most pleasing thing for me was that everyone enjoyed the tournament, from the maintenance staff to the club management, the organisers and the players. It was a real feel-good tournament. Everyone had a lot of positive things to say about the course which was fantastic, particularly because most people hadn't been here since 2002 and seen the changes that had taken place.

"The players were really impressed with the course and that was gratifying given the amount of work that we have put into it since the last Open. The other thing was that the course didn't get torn apart (Appleby's winning total was just -10), and as I said



preps to the test



Despite an anxious lead-up for course superintendent Ian Todd, he can sit back and reflect on an event that re-established the course as one of this country's great tournament venues

to Peter Stackpole, our general manager, afterwards, it showed there is still a place in modern golf for short, strategic courses like Victoria.”.

RACE AGAINST TIME

Melbourne's wet and cool spring certainly did Todd no favours and it wasn't until about three days out from the first round that he felt as though things had finally come together. During winter some areas on the fairways were hit hard with drechslera and with cool spring conditions prevailing recovery was very slow.

The week prior to the tournament Todd was still plugging and turfing out small areas which had failed to come back and at one stage tournament

Players and officials alike were impressed with Victoria's presentation



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◀ Greens were just single cut on all four days of the tournament with the rollers only coming out ahead of the final round

organisers were toying with the idea of making some of these GUR. Fortunately with a bit of warm weather a week out, that wasn't necessary.

The crew also spent a lot of time in the bunkers in the lead-up after a total of 73mm fell on the last day of October and first day of November. Come the tournament itself Mother Nature again threw all she could and after the relatively benign conditions of the first round, hot warm northerly winds buffeted the course on Friday, with wind gusts up to 65kph. That was followed by a further dumping of 43mm on the Saturday, which saw the crew out with squeegees as the players completed their third round in the wet.

To get the sandbelt course in tip top shape, Todd was fortunate to receive extra assistance from a number of nearby clubs, with greenkeeping staff coming across from Commonwealth, Kingston Heath, Spring Valley and Peninsula. Todd's former assistant Luke Marsh also joined the crew for the week, while former employee and current Horton

Park Golf Club assistant superintendent Stuart Campbell was one of two Queenslanders who journeyed south for the tournament. As a unit they pulled some serious hours, and in the week before the tournament worked upwards of 80 hours.

With all the pre-tournament talk focussing on the greens, Victoria's undulating surfaces were in faultless condition for the tournament. Ten days out from the first round, Todd and assistant Tay Wilson worked them hard with constant cutting and brushing. Come the tournament all that was required was a single cut each morning to get the desired speed and roll, although following the deluge on Saturday the greens were single cut and rolled to get the desired firmness and speed back.

Although tournament crowds were well down on 2009 when more than 107,000 descended on Kingston Heath, traffic management was still a key throughout the 2010 event. After spending the past eight years working on a massive revegetation project, these sensitive areas were protected as much as possible, with just a couple badly trampled by spectators. Ironically, the rain which fell during the tournament proved a positive and these areas have recovered well.

The only areas still to come back include the practice fairway and areas surrounding the 18th green which housed the hospitality marquees. The practice fairway, which has been earmarked for future redevelopment, is the lowest point on the course and with heavy traffic combined with the wet weather the area quickly turned to mud.

The crew pulled some long hours, in particular getting Victoria's massive bunkers playable after Saturday's heavy rain





After benign conditions for the opening round, hot northerly winds buffeted the course on Friday, gusting up to 65kph



Former assistant Luke Marsh was one of a number of former employees to return to Victoria to assist Todd in his tournament preparations

At the time of Australian Turfgrass Management going to print, the venue for the 2011 Australian Masters was still to be confirmed although Kingston Heath is the odds on favourite after successfully hosting it in 2009. The other question mark surrounds the timing of the event as the Presidents Cup is scheduled at Royal Melbourne Golf Club from 14-20 November 2011, which would normally be the week of the Masters. Should it be scheduled prior to the Presidents Cup, Melbourne golfing fans could witness one of the best fields to assemble for a major Australian tournament. 🏆



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While Michael Clayton's new-look layout at The Lakes divided players and the critics, there was little question about its excellent condition

Below: 70mm of rain on Wednesday meant many of the course's waterways needed to be cleared of debris

The Lakes opens in style



Keeping the kikuyu fairways in tournament shape

The 3rd green and surrounds get a touch up ahead of the first round



The most enjoyable aspect of the job that I do is spending time with superintendents on their golf courses. To hear about the efforts being put in to improve the condition of the golf course and to overcome the challenges that it presents is always fascinating.

I had the pleasure of spending a day at The Lakes Golf Club during the 2010 Australian Open and it was great to catch up with superintendent Russell Fletcher and to hear about the challenges that he had faced leading up to the tournament. Most importantly it was great to see the result of all the hard work that he and his staff had put in to present such a magnificent golf course, which had so dramatically changed over the past 18 months following the redesign by Michael Clayton.



The trials and tribulations that Russell and his staff had to face during the grow-in of the new-look course were well documented in the last edition of ATM (Volume 12.6), in particular the persistent nematode problems that made it very difficult to establish the kikuyu on the approaches and green surrounds. With a lot of industry support and hard work the problem was overcome and the turf condition was excellent come the tournament.

Mother Nature, however, had not finished beating up on the golf course and decided to dump 70mm of rain on the day of the Pro-Am which subsequently had to be cancelled. Despite this setback the turf industry rallied around to assist Russell and the staff to get the course ready for play on the Thursday. Round one dawned sunny and dry and the well-drained course barely showed any sign of the deluge.

Another great aspect of the tournament was the number of volunteers from other golf courses. It is an ongoing part of the turf management fraternity that never ceases to provide me with considerable pride. There is an understanding that only a fellow turfie can relate to and that is the toil involved in preparing high quality surfaces for a major event. Well done to Russell and his staff and the club in providing a very high quality course for the country's national tournament. – **John Neylan** (Pictures courtesy of Brooke Fletcher) 🌱

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“On behalf of the Committee and Members of The Metropolitan Golf Club I wish to confirm our satisfaction with the work undertaken and the result.

I have already received many complements from members, most of whom (previously) felt the high fence would be a visual intrusion on our lovely course. That the net is almost completely transparent is quite amazing”.

Allan Shoreland

Secretary Manager

The Metropolitan Golf Club





The hazards of a profession

Worried about the storage and handling of hazardous and dangerous materials at your turf management facility? As Lee Baines from e-par Infrastructure writes in ATM's continuing look at OH&S issues, compliance may be simpler than you think.

Recently I spoke to a golf course superintendent who was dissatisfied with his maintenance facilities. While he did not know the exact reasons why they were deficient, he had grave suspicions that they would not comply with recognised standards and legislation and that he could be exposed to a penalty should there be an incident.

Certainly he knew they were old and inefficient. He went to great pains to explain that the club did not see the maintenance facilities as a priority and had restricted budget expenditure in this area for years. After a tour of the just completed \$1 million-plus clubhouse extension, I was starting to understand the superintendent's problem. It was clear here was an imbalance in how the club prioritised expenditure, opting for member amenity over operating efficiency and risk minimisation.

The superintendent thought that his best form of defence was to regularly send emails to the general manager and committee members/directors complaining of the lack of appropriate facilities. He thought this would provide good evidence on his part that he was doing his best by raising the matter in writing with the club executives.

While I was sympathetic to the superintendent's cause, I thought his mode of defence was also risky. Because he had clearly admitted knowledge of the shortcomings in the facilities in writing, he would

have no defence against a breach of legislation unless he was shown to be doing everything else in his powers to keep on top of the OH&S, environmental and dangerous goods risks.

For example, an inspection of the maintenance facility revealed fire extinguishers out of service and an assortment of incompatible dangerous goods stored haphazardly. These simple things are within the control of the maintenance staff and should have been addressed notwithstanding the lack of funds for upgrades.

Under these circumstances it could be argued that, as the superintendent did not do everything reasonably possible to deal with those risks within his control, simply raising (in writing) that there were other substantial problems, only highlighted the all-round known deficiencies.

When I suggested an audit be carried out to help him identify and control risks, it was clear by his reaction that he was concerned this could 'reveal all', something he was clearly not keen to do. The superintendent felt that this would simply highlight all of the deficiencies but the club would not allocate the necessary funds to rectify the problems.

The real concern is that by not carrying out the simple process of an audit and risk assessment and by adopting a 'head in the sand' attitude, this facility remains in breach of current legislation, leaving its managers and directors open to the risk of serious penalties. In the event of a major incident the results could be catastrophic.

LEGISLATIVE MINEFIELD

One thing is for certain, the legislative framework in Australia is extremely complex, with each state having specific requirements in regards to protecting the environment, providing a safe and healthy workplace for its employees and in the storage and handling of chemicals.

While the legislation is primarily state regulated and different in each state, the objective of each state's legislation is very similar. That is, the owners and occupiers must control and reduce risks on their sites wherever possible to avoid harm to people, property and the environment.

Unacceptable levels of risk must be addressed. The 'do-nothing' approach in the case above is not controlling and reducing risks which is the broad obligation of owners and occupiers under the legislation.

All states have Acts of Parliament which lay down the laws to which owners and occupiers (and managers/directors) are duty bound to comply. These Acts also have companion regulations that provide more details as to what broadly needs to be followed in order to comply with the Act.

Australian Standards, while not an express requirement under the Acts, do provide more technical details that provide more clarity on how to deal with chemicals, in particular hazardous and dangerous goods, and could be reasonably deemed as acceptable standards. There are at least 11 Australian Standards that are relevant in assessing compliance with the environmental, safety and hazardous and dangerous goods for turf facilities.

It is critical to understand that in each state there are three major Acts requiring compliance. While my colleague, Terry Muir from e-par, has done a great job in raising awareness within the turf industry of the environmental legislation, compliance also requires organisations and individuals to adequately meet the requirements of the Hazardous and Dangerous Goods Acts and the Occupational Health and Safety Act in each state.

Any infrastructure installed on the site must be considered in the light of the requirements of these three areas of legislation. I have seen many new installations, particularly fuel facilities, which fail to comply even though the fuel tanks themselves comply with the relevant Australian Standard. The installed tank, not just the tank itself, needs to comply with the provisions of the three Acts, Regulations and Australian Standards.



Far left: The legislative framework in Australia is extremely complex, with each state having specific requirements in regards to protecting the environment, providing a safe and healthy workplace for its employees and in the storage and handling of chemicals

Left: From audits undertaken by e-par Infrastructure there is little doubt that the risk involved in chemical storage in the turf management industry is high and generally at unacceptable levels

PAYING THE PRICE

Penalties for a breach can occur if an unacceptable level of risk causes an incident which becomes the subject of an investigation by environmental or workplace safety officers. The penalties for breach of each Act are severe for both individuals and corporations. The maximum penalties for breach for most states are shown in Table 1 (page 26).

In the infamous Warringah Golf Club case both the individual (the superintendent) and the corporation (the club) were prosecuted. All up it cost the club \$600,000 and damaged its reputation and that of golf at that time. The judge said in conclusion that;

- The physical conditions in and around the maintenance compound were inadequate;
- The club allowed use of inadequate facilities;
- The club did not provide adequate training and instruction for staff.



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There are at least 11 Australian Standards that are relevant in assessing compliance with the environmental, safety and hazardous and dangerous goods for turf facilities

Should you or your facility find yourself the subject of a prosecution the court will take into account both objective characteristics (i.e.: the objective seriousness or gravity of the offence) and subjective characteristics (i.e.: those which relate to the offender).

Objective characteristics include:

- **Financial reasons:** Did you obtain a financial advantage by not managing the risk?
- **Foreseeability of harm:** Was harm to the environment or to people foreseeable?
- **Practicable measures:** Could you have taken practicable measures to avoid the incident?
- **Control over causes:** Did you have control over the causes of the incident?
- **State of mind:** Was the act intentional, negligent or accidental?
- **Harm to people and environment:** Was it low harm, medium harm or serious harm?
- **Supervisor's order:** Were you acting under orders from supervisor?
- **Penalty:** Primary and additional penalties expressed in dollars, community service or imprisonment expressed in months or years

Subjective characteristics include:

- **Prior record:** Do you have a prior record or no prior record?

- **Co-operation:** Did you co-operate with authorities?
- **Contrition and remorse:** Have you shown remorse or contrition?
- **Prior good character:** Yes or no?
- **Plea:** Did you enter a guilty plea, not guilty plea, early or late plea?

The courts and the regulators take environment, safety and dangerous goods breaches seriously. If you have poor conditions in your facility because of financial reasons and an offence occurs that is foreseeable; practical measures could have been taken to mitigate, abate or prevent the harm; you had control over the causes of the offence; and there was a medium level of harm caused by the offence, then you could be in serious trouble.

If convicted, the courts will then look at your prior record before the offence occurred; whether you entered a guilty plea to the offence at the earliest opportunity; your cooperation; your contrition and remorse and capacity to pay. What a terrible position to find yourself in. Appropriate risk management strategies can make all the difference. The simplest way to check your current compliance status and to highlight any matters which may require attention is to seek professional help.

ARE TURF FACILITIES A HIGHER RISK?

Some chemicals used at a turf facility can be benign. However, during the last 12 months e-par Infrastructure has carried out extensive research in the industry and results highlight some revealing statistics.

Sixty-four per cent of liquid chemicals commonly used in the turf industry are formally classified as 'hazardous goods' (at varying degrees of toxicity from low to extremely high) and 20 per cent are classified as 'dangerous goods' (identified by the Class of Dangerous Goods from Class 1 to 9). Our research identified dangerous goods in Classes 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 (see Figure 1).

One of the greatest areas of risk in turf establishments is the chemicals stored and used

TABLE 1. MAXIMUM PENALTIES FOR COMPLIANCE BREACH BY STATE

STATE	OH&S	Dangerous Goods	Environment
NSW	\$800,000; 2 years imprisonment	\$800,000; 2 years imprisonment	\$5 million corporations; \$1 million individuals with 7 years imprisonment
QLD	\$300,000; 3 years imprisonment	\$300,000; 3 years imprisonment	\$2 million corporations; \$400,000 individuals with 5 years imprisonment
VIC	\$1 million corporations; \$200,000 individuals	\$300,000 corporations; \$60,000 individuals with 2 years imprisonment	\$1.2 million corporations; \$300,000 individuals with 7 years imprisonment
SA	\$300,000 corporations; \$100,000 individuals	\$500,000 corporations; \$100,000 individuals with 4 years imprisonment	\$2 million corporations; \$500,000 individuals with 4 years imprisonment
WA	\$500,000 corporations; \$250,000 individuals with 2 years imprisonment	\$500,000 corporations; \$100,000 individuals with 4 years imprisonment	\$1 million corporations; \$500,000 individuals' \$100,000/day

by the mechanics who service the maintenance vehicles. Forty-five per cent of these chemicals are classified as 'dangerous goods'. Figure 2 shows the extent to which they are involved in hazardous and dangerous goods on a daily basis.

From audits we have undertaken to date and the risks assessments completed as part of these audits, there is no doubt in my mind that the risk involved in chemical storage in the industry is high and generally at unacceptable levels.

If any of these organisations were to be investigated following an incident, it is likely the risks would be seen to be much higher than a 'reasonable person' would consider acceptable and in most cases failure to comply would likely be found to be the result of:

- A lack of understanding as to how to store and handle the chemicals, while complying with all legislation and all relevant Australian Standards;
- Failure to correctly audit, identify and register classes of chemicals;
- Ageing and inadequate storage facilities and infrastructure for the tasks at hand. Most facilities were installed prior to the recent legislation and new (or upgraded) Australian Standards being introduced and therefore were never going to comply with more stringent requirements expected today; and
- Poorly designed facilities that fail to meet legislative requirements.

LIQUID CHEMICAL STORAGE - HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

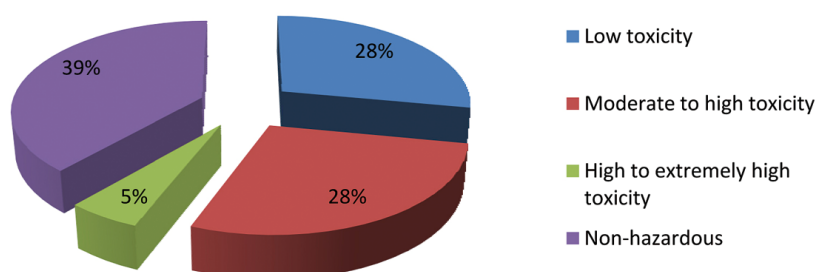


Figure 1. Liquid chemical storage – Hazardous substances. Source: e-par Infrastructure

WORKSHOP CHEMICALS - DANGEROUS GOODS

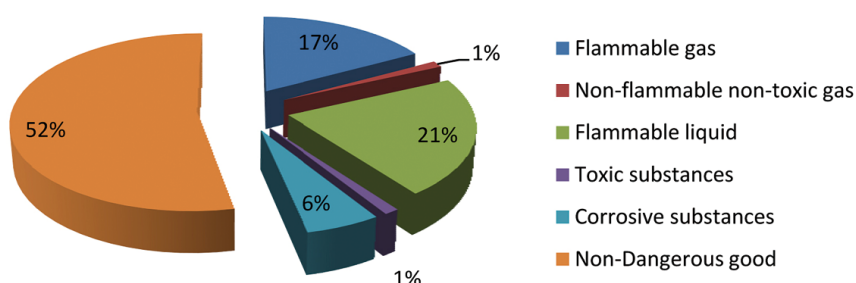


Figure 2. Workshop chemicals – Dangerous goods. Source: e-par Infrastructure



Environment, Climate Change & Water

Does your golf course have underground fuel tanks? Important things you need to know

Since **1st June 2009** all sites operating underground petroleum storage tanks must have:

- **Environment Protection Plan** which documents equipment, maintenance and procedures to detect and manage leaks and spills
- **Loss monitoring procedure** which meets current industry standards

From **1 June 2011** all sites must also have:

- **Groundwater monitoring wells** (minimum of 3) to detect any petroleum which may have entered groundwater.

Are you unable to comply with these requirements within the timeframe?

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water is able to grant exemptions in certain cases which extend the deadline for meeting these obligations.

Are you considering removing or abandoning tanks?

The Regulation does not require the removal of tanks. However, for OH&S purposes, if tanks have not been used for 24 months, they must be decommissioned. There are a number of options for decommissioning tanks and more details can be found in the *UPSS Technical Note: Decommissioning, Abandonment and Removal of UPSS*.

To find out more, visit www.environment.nsw.gov.au/clm/upss.htm or contact the UPSS team on upssreg@environment.nsw.gov.au or 131 555

Simple things that are within the control of the maintenance staff, such as the servicing of fire extinguishers, should be addressed notwithstanding the lack of funds for upgrades



LEGISLATION – IGNORE OR CONFRONT?

The legislation should be embraced and is not something to be afraid of. Indeed, the legislation is implemented through Parliaments as an aid to industry based on experiences in Australia and abroad. They are not simply there for the purpose of applying penalties for breach after the event, but rather to give guidelines and rules as to how to avoid an incident.

So what is the process that will help? What follows is a seven phase approach to risk management in turf facilities:

- **Phase 1:** Site inspection to identify risks, undertake a risk assessment and rank the risks in order of severity
- **Phase 2:** From the risk assessment and ranked risks, confirm whether or not the risks are unacceptable. Those which are unacceptable need immediate attention by following the six steps to risk management. These are:
 - Eliminate the risk altogether if possible which this may be as simple as storing some chemicals away from others
 - Substitute the chemical or work practice with one that has less risk

- Reduce quantities
- Introduce engineering solutions for long term control of the risk
- Introduce procedures and training to better control the risk
- Implement Personal Protective Equipment adequate for the tasks

After addressing risks under the control protocol as shown above, if the risks inherent in the facilities still need remedial attention then it is recommended moving to the next phase.

- **Phase 3:** Develop a Master Plan for a facility upgrade based on the minimum work required for current compliance, but including a detailed scope of work, indicative budgets and design layout drawings for future development and compliance.
 - **Phase 4:** Agree scope and budget. Submit a DA that suits the budget and then obtain building approval.
 - **Phase 5:** Finalise building costs, confirm scope, construction stages and timing.
 - **Phase 6:** Manufacture and build the agreed infrastructure.
 - **Phase 7:** Monitor, audit and continually improve work practices to drive risks down further
- Working closely with regulators and seeking compliance to the legislation in a timely and well-planned manner can save on operating costs in the medium/long term. The legislation is also clearly designed to help avoid the occurrence of a safety or environmental incident, thereby minimising health and safety risks to staff, members and the public, but also minimising the risk of penalties under the Acts that may apply to individual managers, directors and the club as a whole.

It is clear that many members of the turf industry are in breach of current legislation and as a result, in genuine danger of penalties under the Acts should an incident occur. The lack of compliance is in almost every case due to a lack of knowledge of the requirements and a lack of determination to do something positive.

All members of the turf industry should at least complete risk management phases 1 and 2 listed above (identify the risk and then rank the risk). This will be a significant step in helping you to identify and control risks as well providing you with the information to help you meet your obligations under the various Acts.

These first two stages can be implemented at relatively low cost and if completed, will have your organisation on the path to compliance. Should the initial audit and risk assessment identify substantial changes and improvements, a long-term plan tailored to your budget and specific requirements can then be developed.

Editor's note: Lee Baines is director of e-par Infrastructure. He can be contacted on (02) 4961 4060, 0421 282 844 or lee@epar.com.au

Hazardous and dangerous goods, OH&S and environmental legislation must be considered in the installation of any on-site infrastructure. Some new installations, particularly fuel facilities, can still fail to comply even though the fuel tanks themselves comply with the relevant Australian Standard





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Are you motivated?

At the 2010 Australian Turfgrass Conference, Sydney-based superintendents Mark Parker and Andy Hugill talked on staff management. As well as discussing the sourcing of employees, staff training and evaluation, they also looked at motivation, which as any superintendent or turf manager knows is where the real battle lies. The Pulse asked what different techniques, aside from a size 12 Blundstone, superintendents employed to get the most out of their staff?

“There is no doubt, the one aspect that I have found the most difficult since being employed as a golf course superintendent has been keeping staff motivated and interested in their job. So how do you keep their passion for the job at a high level?

Well, let's be honest it mostly comes back to their income. We all know that the paltry wage of an apprentice or qualified turf manager just doesn't cut it these days when you compare it to other industries. While this industry has never made anyone rich, the lifestyle and outdoor work does give reward in itself, but how do you put a value on this? I guess this is one of the motivation factors that I try to drill into my staff, but quite often that still doesn't cut it.

One method I have used to great effect has been changing some staff from earning a wage and increasing it by a couple thousand to a salary. The staff have enjoyed the guaranteed increased income which in turn can assist them when going for loans etc and also assists us in regards to budgetary control and predictability.

I have never re-adjusted apprentice wages as I am strongly of the belief that you have to do it tough when you first start out, but when you become qualified you will then reap the rewards of your first four years. I have lost some apprentices along the way but I reckon the quality ones stick and the two that I have now (2nd and 4th years) are quality.

I have also introduced six-monthly reviews and bonuses with the Christmas review being more significant (which assists with Christmas shopping etc). This has worked well with staff being able to have a financial carrot to aim for, but they know that they only get rewarded if they have worked consistently well. Over a year, some of my staff have earned an extra \$700-\$800 from bonuses.

We have also improved staff amenities to keep motivation high. In the past four years we have purchased a TV, DVD player, toasters, sandwich maker, air conditioners, heating, BBQ and have moved our lunchroom from a drab and damp room inside our shed into the course house that resides next to the sheds. We have an open fire place, private rear garden and a view across the 18th fairway and green to neighbouring Mt. Dandenong.

Giving staff onus and responsibility allows them to grow and keeps them enthused. My 4th year apprentice is responsible for our gardens and plantings throughout the course and he co-designed the new gardens (including plant types) around our new practice putting green. My foreman is responsible for machinery maintenance and another responsible for the upkeep of the bowling greens. Come major event time, each are responsible for their own areas and take a lot of pride in producing their areas at a very high level and they deliver every time.

We also have introduced a 'punters club' whereby all eight of us chuck in \$5 each Friday to go towards Tattslotto the following night. The total purchase of the ticket is \$30 so the remaining \$10 per week and any winnings (we are still waiting for the big one unfortunately!) goes towards some drinks every month or an end of year function.

I'm proud to say that I have a great crew behind me and sincerely believe that some of the above-mentioned things that have been put in place keep them at Eastwood Golf Club and, more importantly, in the industry.” **Michael Vozzo, Eastwood Golf Club, VIC**

~~~~~  
“Staff motivation is always a work in progress. I constantly review what we are doing to maintain morale and look for new ideas. It is a lot easier



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if you have the support of the club management to implement those areas that require funding. Unfortunately this is not always the case but there are many things that can be implemented without necessarily needing a lot of funds.

Some of these include one-on-one reviews each quarter; frequent positive feedback for work done well; never criticising in front of other staff; information and education on the technical aspects of the job; job variety; new skill development and responsibility; safe and clean work environment; thorough and safe training; method of recognition of skills/task competencies attained; course presentation goals; embracing staff suggestions and ideas; and respect.

Some of the things we have put into place here at Manly Golf Club include:

- A BBQ off-site every six months;
- A suggestion board in the lunchroom;



- Quarterly reviews with bonus and formal annual review where staff rate their own performance then discuss it with the superintendent and set individual staff objectives for the coming year;
- Attending a tournament for half a day if possible and attendance at industry days;
- Having staff rate the five most liked and disliked tasks to assist scheduling if possible;
- Regular staff meetings to discuss work programmes/safety etc...;
- Annual bowls or golf days;
- Supplying food for smoko and lunch;
- Giving greenkeepers some experience scheduling daily jobs;
- Encouraging staff use of the golf course; and
- Maintaining a spreadsheet of accomplished skills/training for each staff member

When in doubt ask the staff; they will have plenty of ideas and feel empowered particularly if any of their suggestions get implemented." **Michael Bradbery, Manly Golf Club, NSW**

"Obviously it would be nice not to get to the point where we wouldn't have to motivate our staff. If a staff member knows that he or she has to perform a certain laborious job for a whole day or week – for example trimming bunkers or mowing roughs – it is going to be hard to motivate them. We try to mix up the jobs every day so one person will not spend too long on any one job.

Creating small projects like building new tees, gardens, paths or reshaping bunkers and involving staff in this process will provide the staff members with a small piece of ownership in the place they work which they can admire their own handiwork every time they turn up to work.

Some staff members may feel they work harder than others, so keeping the jobs even between the work force may ensure equality and this should probably start at the top. Getting staff members involved in club activities may work for their motivation to a certain extent as they know what is expected from them with the interaction between members and committees." **Eddy Ruis, Portland Golf Club, VIC**



# superintendents and golf clubs course maintenance practices



# New bents put to the test during first year

AGCSATech senior agronomist Andrew Peart looks at the results from the first year of the AGCSA's three-year bentgrass variety trials at three sites around the country, while John Neylan recounts some of his recent travels to South East Asia where he caught up with a number of expat-Australian superintendents



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It has been just over a year since the bi-monthly ratings for turfgrass colour, sward density and overall turfgrass quality as a putting surface started as part of the AGCSA's latest bentgrass variety trial (HAL Project TU08002 – Evaluation of new bentgrass cultivars compared to Australian vegetative selections).

Other attributes that have also been measured at the three trial sites – Keysborough Golf Club (VIC), Cromer Golf Club (NSW) and Royal Adelaide Golf Club (SA) – include thatch accumulation, green speed and surface hardness and on one occasion wear tolerance at the Keysborough site. Two field days were also held last autumn at the Cromer and Royal Adelaide sites while a more recent spring field day was conducted at Keysborough.

Establishment results from the trials sites were presented in Australian Turfgrass Management Journal Volume 11.6 (Nov-Dec 2009), which also included a summary of the varieties being trialled, while in Volume 12.3 (May-Jun 2010) initial quality, colour, density and thatch accumulation figures were reported on. This edition we summarise the overall results from the first 12 months of the trial.

## TURFGRASS COLOUR

At Keysborough, the seeded variety T-1 provided the darkest green colour when averaged over the

six assessment dates of the first year. While T-1 provided the darkest green colour there, it was not significantly darker than another nine varieties.

T-1 also fared best at Cromer along with the vegetative variety AGCSA1, both being significantly darker green than all other varieties when averaged over the six assessment dates. At Royal Adelaide Golf Club there has been no one variety that has provided a significantly darker green colour during the first year.

## TURFGRASS DENSITY

At Keysborough, the seeded variety Declaration provided the greatest turfgrass density, although it was not significantly denser than Authority, Penn G2, Cobra 2 or SRP1RH93. The variety Dominant Extreme was significantly less dense than all varieties for the first year with the exception of SR1150.

At Cromer, the vegetative variety AGCSA1 provided the greatest turfgrass density although it was not significantly denser than Shark or SRP1RH93. Dominant Extreme was again significantly less dense than all varieties for the first year with the exception of Penn G2.

As with colour readings, at Royal Adelaide Golf Club there has been no one variety that has provided a significantly greater turfgrass density when averaged over the first year. At certain



assessment dates the seeded variety Shark, along with the vegetative variety AGCSA1 have provided significantly denser turf than other varieties, although this was not sustained over the entire year.

## TURFGRASS QUALITY

The results for turfgrass quality at each location are presented in Tables 1-3. At Keysborough the seeded variety Declaration provided the greatest turfgrass quality when averaged over the first year. However, it was not significantly greater than another seven varieties (Table 1). The vegetative variety AGCSA1 provided a turfgrass of the least quality although it was not significantly less than another seven seeded varieties.

At Cromer, the vegetative variety AGCSA1 and seeded variety Shark provided the greatest turfgrass quality when averaged over the first year. However, they were not significantly greater than another five varieties (Table 2). Dominant Extreme demonstrated least quality although it was not significantly less than Penn G2.

At Royal Adelaide, not one variety has provided a significantly greater turfgrass quality reading when averaged over the first year. However, on one assessment date (9 July 2010) the seeded variety Shark provided a significant greater turfgrass quality than all other varieties, with the exception of CY2, AGCSA1, SRP1RH93, T-1 and Tyee (Table 3).

## THATCH ACCUMULATION

There has been no significant difference at either the Keysborough or Royal Adelaide sites during the trial's first year in regards to thatch accumulation. At Cromer, only one assessment date (27 October 2009) provided a significant difference with the vegetative variety AGCSA1 accumulating more than all other varieties with the exception of 007, Shark and SRP1GMC.

## GREEN SPEED AND SURFACE HARDNESS

Results for green speed (ball roll) have been variable at all sites during the first year. At Cromer there was no significant difference recorded for green speed for the first two assessments, however, for the third (28 September 2010) Penn G2 provided the furthest ball roll and it was significantly more than the varieties 007, Dominant Extreme, SR1150, SRP1RH93, T-1 and Tyee.

Keysborough has provided the most variable results with the vegetative variety AGCSA1 having the least ball roll for the first assessment (16 December 2009) but the furthest ball roll on the second (4 June 2010). During the last assessment (10 September 2010) SRP1GMC provided the furthest ball roll and was significantly more than all other varieties with the exception of 007, Cobra 2, Dominant Extreme and AGCSA1.

At Royal Adelaide there was only one out of the four assessment dates that provided a significant

TABLE 1. KEYSBOROUGH GC - TURFGRASS QUALITY RESULTS

| Variety         | 26/10/09 | 29/1/10 | 19/3/10 | 4/6/10 | 16/7/10 | 10/9/10 | Average |
|-----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Declaration     | 7.8      | 7.0     | 6.5     | 6.8    | 7.2     | 8.0     | 7.2     |
| Authority       | 7.5      | 6.5     | 6.8     | 6.8    | 7.0     | 7.8     | 7.1     |
| Mackenzie       | 7.0      | 6.8     | 6.8     | 6.5    | 6.7     | 7.5     | 6.9     |
| SRP1RH93        | 7.2      | 6.2     | 6.5     | 6.5    | 7.0     | 7.7     | 6.8     |
| Penn G2         | 7.0      | 6.7     | 6.5     | 6.3    | 6.8     | 7.5     | 6.8     |
| CY 2            | 6.8      | 6.5     | 6.5     | 6.7    | 6.8     | 7.3     | 6.8     |
| Shark           | 7.7      | 7.2     | 6.5     | 5.7    | 6.5     | 7.0     | 6.8     |
| Cobra 2         | 7.3      | 6.3     | 6.5     | 6.0    | 6.7     | 7.2     | 6.7     |
| Penn A1         | 7.0      | 6.0     | 6.3     | 6.3    | 6.7     | 7.5     | 6.6     |
| SRP1GMC         | 7.3      | 6.8     | 6.5     | 5.8    | 6.2     | 6.8     | 6.6     |
| Dominant Xtreme | 6.5      | 6.2     | 6.2     | 6.3    | 6.5     | 7.3     | 6.5     |
| 007             | 7.2      | 6.2     | 5.8     | 6.2    | 6.2     | 7.0     | 6.4     |
| SR1150          | 6.8      | 6.5     | 6.3     | 6.0    | 5.8     | 6.8     | 6.4     |
| T-1             | 6.8      | 6.0     | 6.0     | 5.7    | 6.7     | 7.2     | 6.4     |
| Tyee            | 6.8      | 6.2     | 6.0     | 5.8    | 6.2     | 7.0     | 6.3     |
| AGCSA 1         | 5.8      | 6.5     | 5.5     | 6.0    | 6.0     | 6.8     | 6.1     |
| LSD (P<0.05)    | 0.7      | 0.6     | 0.7     | ns     | ns      | ns      | 0.5     |

TABLE 2. CROMER GC - TURFGRASS QUALITY RESULTS

| Variety         | 27/10/09 | 15/12/09 | 15/3/10 | 18/5/10 | 15/7/10 | 28/9/10 | Ave |
|-----------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| AGCSA 1         | 7.7      | 8.0      | 7.2     | 7.0     | 7.2     | 6.8     | 7.3 |
| Shark           | 8.0      | 7.5      | 6.8     | 7.3     | 7.0     | 7.0     | 7.3 |
| SRP1RH93        | 7.0      | 7.3      | 7.2     | 7.3     | 7.0     | 7.0     | 7.1 |
| SRP1GMC         | 7.5      | 7.2      | 6.8     | 6.8     | 7.0     | 7.0     | 7.1 |
| Tyee            | 7.3      | 7.0      | 6.7     | 7.0     | 7.0     | 7.0     | 7.0 |
| SR1150          | 6.7      | 7.0      | 6.3     | 7.3     | 7.2     | 6.8     | 6.9 |
| T-1             | 6.8      | 6.5      | 6.7     | 7.0     | 7.3     | 6.8     | 6.9 |
| Penn A1         | 7.2      | 6.8      | 6.5     | 7.3     | 7.0     | 6.3     | 6.8 |
| Authority       | 7.3      | 6.8      | 6.3     | 6.7     | 6.8     | 6.5     | 6.8 |
| CY 2            | 6.8      | 6.2      | 6.5     | 7.0     | 6.7     | 6.7     | 6.6 |
| Mackenzie       | 6.7      | 6.8      | 6.3     | 6.8     | 7.0     | 6.3     | 6.6 |
| Declaration     | 7.2      | 6.5      | 6.3     | 7.5     | 6.8     | 6.3     | 6.6 |
| 007             | 6.8      | 6.7      | 6.5     | 7.0     | 6.3     | 6.2     | 6.6 |
| Cobra 2         | 6.7      | 6.7      | 6.3     | 6.5     | 6.5     | 6.7     | 6.6 |
| Penn G2         | 7.0      | 6.7      | 6.2     | 6.5     | 6.5     | 6.3     | 6.5 |
| Dominant Xtreme | 6.0      | 5.7      | 6.3     | 6.3     | 6.5     | 6.2     | 6.1 |
| LSD (P<0.05)    | 0.5      | 0.5      | 0.5     | ns      | ns      | ns      | 0.4 |

difference in ball roll. On that occasion, SRP1GMC provided the furthest ball roll and it was significantly more than all other varieties with the exception of 007, Declaration, and T-1.

In relation to surface hardness, there has been no significant difference at any of the trial sites over the first year.

## WEAR RESISTANCE

Prior to the 28 October 2010 field day held at Keysborough Golf Club, all plots received 160 passes with the simulated wear machine over four days. The wear machine provided extensive wear and there was a significant reduction in turfgrass density of all varieties with the exception of Dominant Extreme, Mackenzie, AGCSA1, Shark and SR1150 (see Table 4.)

While the reduction in turfgrass density provided a significant difference to the majority of the bents, the rate of recovery was very good with all varieties bouncing back within a two week period.

**Far left: Condition of the bentgrass plots at the Keysborough Golf Club trial site following 160 passes with a specialised wear machine to one edge of the replicate. While the reduction in turfgrass density was significant, recovery of all varieties within a two-week period was very good**



TABLE 3. ROYAL ADELAIDE GC - TURFGRASS QUALITY RESULTS

| Variety         | 29/10/09 | 16/12/09 | 11/03/10 | 22/04/10 | 9/07/10 | 15/09/10 | Ave |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-----|
| 007             | 7.0      | 7.0      | 6.8      | 6.8      | 7.3     | 6.5      | 6.9 |
| Penn A1         | 7.0      | 7.2      | 7.2      | 6.7      | 7.3     | 6.3      | 6.9 |
| Authority       | 7.0      | 6.7      | 6.8      | 6.8      | 7.3     | 6.7      | 6.9 |
| CY 2            | 7.2      | 6.7      | 7.0      | 7.0      | 7.7     | 6.5      | 7.0 |
| Cobra 2         | 7.2      | 6.5      | 6.7      | 6.8      | 7.0     | 6.5      | 6.8 |
| Declaration     | 7.2      | 6.3      | 6.3      | 6.5      | 6.7     | 6.3      | 6.6 |
| Dominant Xtreme | 7.0      | 5.3      | 7.2      | 6.3      | 6.8     | 6.0      | 6.4 |
| Penn G2         | 7.2      | 7.2      | 7.2      | 6.7      | 7.3     | 7.0      | 7.1 |
| RAGC blend      | 6.7      | 5.0      | 7.0      | 6.5      | 7.0     | 5.8      | 6.3 |
| MacKenzie       | 7.0      | 6.5      | 7.0      | 6.8      | 7.5     | 6.3      | 6.8 |
| Mariner         | 7.2      | 6.8      | 6.3      | 6.5      | 7.0     | 6.0      | 6.8 |
| AGCSA 1         | 6.5      | 8.5      | 6.8      | 6.3      | 8.0     | 7.3      | 6.8 |
| Shark           | 7.2      | 8.0      | 7.5      | 6.5      | 8.5     | 8.0      | 7.2 |
| SR1150          | 6.8      | 5.5      | 6.0      | 6.5      | 7.5     | 7.0      | 6.7 |
| SRP1GMC         | 7.2      | 5.7      | 6.7      | 6.5      | 7.0     | 6.0      | 6.5 |
| SRP1RH93        | 6.8      | 6.8      | 7.0      | 7.0      | 8.0     | 7.8      | 7.0 |
| T-1             | 6.8      | 5.7      | 6.8      | 6.7      | 7.7     | 6.7      | 6.7 |
| Tyee            | 7.2      | 7.0      | 6.5      | 7.0      | 7.8     | 7.5      | 7.1 |
| LSD (P<0.05)    | ns       | ns       | ns       | ns       | 0.9     | ns       | ns  |

TABLE 5. FIELD DAY TURFGRASS QUALITY COMPARISONS

| Variety         | Cromer GC |           | Keysborough GC |           | Royal Adelaide GC |           |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
|                 | 18/05/10  | Attendees | 28/10/10       | Attendees | 22/04/10          | Attendees |
| 007             | 6.7       | 6.0       | 7.2            | 6.1       | 6.8               | 6.4       |
| Penn A1         | 7.0       | 6.0       | 7.0            | 5.8       | 6.7               | 6.4       |
| Authority       | 6.2       | 5.9       | 7.7            | 6.9       | 6.8               | 6.2       |
| CY 2            | 6.8       | 7.0       | 7.0            | 6.4       | 7.0               | 6.4       |
| Cobra 2         | 7.5       | 7.5       | 7.5            | 6.7       | 6.8               | 6.4       |
| Declaration     | 6.8       | 6.0       | 8.3            | 7.2       | 6.5               | 5.8       |
| Dominant Xtreme | 7.0       | 6.1       | 6.5            | 5.9       | 6.3               | 6.2       |
| Penn G2         | 7.2       | 6.3       | 7.5            | 6.5       | 6.7               | 6.2       |
| RAGC blend      | -         | -         | -              | -         | 6.5               | 5.8       |
| MacKenzie       | 6.7       | 6.9       | 7.7            | 6.6       | 6.8               | 5.8       |
| Mariner         | -         | -         | -              | -         | 6.5               | 6.1       |
| AGCSA 1         | 7.2       | 6.7       | 7.0            | 5.8       | 6.3               | 4.5       |
| Shark           | 7.0       | 5.9       | 7.7            | 6.6       | 6.5               | 6.0       |
| SR1150          | 7.3       | 6.8       | 6.3            | 5.4       | 6.5               | 5.1       |
| SRP1GMC         | 7.0       | 6.9       | 7.2            | 6.2       | 6.5               | 5.6       |
| SRP1RH93        | 6.8       | 6.1       | 7.7            | 6.8       | 7.0               | 6.0       |
| T-1             | 6.9       | 6.2       | 7.0            | 6.3       | 6.7               | 5.4       |
| Tyee            | 7.0       | 7.0       | 6.7            | 5.8       | 7.0               | 5.9       |
| LSD (P<0.05)    | ns        | ns        | ns             | 0.9       | ns                | ns        |

## FIELD DAYS

At all field days, attendees were asked to rate the plots for their perception of quality as a putting surface on a scale of 0-9, with 0 being equivalent to completely unacceptable and 9 being excellent. The results of each assessment at each location can be seen in Table 5. Generally the attendees rated the plots with a slightly lower figure than the regular bi-monthly assessments, however, the overall trends remained similar.

The attendees combined assessments provided no significant difference between any of the varieties at Cromer or Royal Adelaide, however, combined assessments at Keysborough provided a significant difference. There the variety Declaration was deemed to provide the best quality surface but

TABLE 4. KEYSBOROUGH GC - TURFGRASS DENSITY BEFORE AND AFTER WEAR TREATMENT

| Variety         | 18 - 22/10/2010 |            |     |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------|-----|
|                 | none            | 160 passes |     |
| 007             | 7.3             | 6.2        | sig |
| Penn A1         | 7.0             | 5.7        | sig |
| Authority       | 7.5             | 6.5        | sig |
| CY 2            | 7.0             | 6.3        | sig |
| Cobra 2         | 7.3             | 6.3        | sig |
| Declaration     | 8.2             | 6.8        | sig |
| Dominant Xtreme | 6.5             | 6.0        | ns  |
| Penn G2         | 7.2             | 6.3        | sig |
| Mackenzie       | 7.5             | 6.7        | ns  |
| AGCSA 1         | 7.8             | 6.3        | ns  |
| Shark           | 7.3             | 7.0        | ns  |
| SR1150          | 6.3             | 5.8        | ns  |
| SRP1GMC         | 7.3             | 6.3        | sig |
| SRP1RH93        | 7.8             | 6.7        | sig |
| T-1             | 7.0             | 6.0        | sig |
| Tyee            | 7.0             | 5.5        | sig |
| LSD (P<0.05)    | 0.8             | 0.7        |     |

it was not significantly better than the varieties Authority, CY2, Cobra 2, Penn G2, Mackenzie, Shark, SRP1RH93 or T-1.

The AGCSA would like to thank the superintendents (Mark Couchman – Cromer, Jeff Kaines – Royal Adelaide and Brett Chivers – Keysborough) and their staff at each of the trial locations for their continued maintenance of the trial sites, as well as Horticulture Australia for its financial support with the project.

Over the next 12 months the trial sites will continue to be assessed bi-monthly to continue to gather data and information about these new bentgrass varieties under Australian conditions.

## BLACK MOUNTAIN GOLF COURSE

When you have been involved with a golf course project from the very start it is always of great interest to observe how it has progressed over the ensuing years. I have had some involvement with the Black Mountain Golf Course in Hua Hin, Thailand since construction started in 2005 and during a recent visit it was gratifying to see how well it was performing.

Black Mountain was designed by Pacific Coast Design and constructed by ex-pat Aussie superintendent Gavan Wilson. Gavan was course superintendent at Anglesea Golf Club and then Northern Golf Club in Victoria prior to heading off to Bangkok about 20 years ago. The operation at Black Mountain is a little different to many golf courses in Thailand in that it has staff numbers typical of high-end Australian facilities rather than staff numbers up to 100-plus.

Hua Hin is south of Bangkok and has a slightly drier climate with average year round temperatures of about 28°C and annual rainfall of about 1000mm. The soils on the fairways are a peculiar silty sand



that is perfect at field capacity, rock hard when dry and liquid when saturated. This provided considerable challenges during the construction phase, particularly during heavy rainfall events when erosion presented a considerable problem.

The fairways, tees and greens and tees surrounds are grassed with Salam seashore paspalum which thrives in this tropical climate. It is a grass that forms a very high quality playing surface and can be beautifully presented. It is an interesting grass in that it can go into moisture stress quite quickly but recovers even more quickly with just a millimetre or two of moisture. It does suffer from dollar spot during cloudy, humid weather, but equally recovers very quickly under full sun.

The greens are TifEagle and the putting surfaces are as good a surface as I have seen anywhere in the world. The key aspects of the maintenance programme in producing such high quality surfaces are daily mowing, regular dustings, grooming and brushing. The recent introduction of new brushing heads has virtually eliminated grain from the surface.

## SINGAPORE SWING

I also had the recent opportunity to visit Singapore to meet up with another expat Scott McKay who will be well known to many in the Australian industry. Scott now works for a large local company Jebson and Jessen as a regional turf manager. With Scott I was able to visit the Sentosa Golf Club, home to the Barclays Singapore Open, and Tanah Merah Golf Club.

Sentosa was being prepared by superintendent Andy Johnstone at the time of the visit and was in excellent condition for the tournament, which incidentally was won by Adam Scott. There are two golf courses, the Tanjong and Serapong layouts, and we spent time looking at the Serapong course.

The fairways are zoysia, the greens TifEagle and tees seashore paspalum. Andy was filling in as superintendent and he has an interesting history in that he was a golf course superintendent turned course architect and was responsible for the changes to the course he was now preparing for the Open.

The other course we visited was the beautiful Tanah Merah. We inspected the spectacular Garden course which was beautifully presented with incredible attention to detail and is a credit to golf course manager Min Yee and his staff. The fairways, tees and roughs were *Zoysia matrella* with Sealsle 2000 greens. The greens in particular were presenting a very high quality putting surface, with a very fine leaf and high density turf.

During my time in Singapore we met with representatives of North Parks which is the government department responsible for managing



**The Black Mountain Golf Course in Hua Hin, Thailand as it is today and (inset) as the site looked during construction in mid-2006**

**AGCSA general manager John Neylan (right) with Gary Peterson (Profile) and Scott McKay (middle) at Tanah Merah GC**





Some of the interesting landscape wall features that can be found in Singapore

**North Parks, the government agency responsible for all greenspace in Singapore, is undertaking significant research into wear tolerance, shade tolerance and waterlogging**



all the greenspace in Singapore. We met with another Aussie expat Neil Power who is the assistant director industry development, National Parks Board, as well as meeting up with Dr. Ken Marcum who is working with North Parks investigating soil and turf options for the Singapore environment. Dr. Marcum is well known for his research into the salinity tolerance of turfgrasses and spent time in Australia at Melbourne University.

North Parks is undertaking extensive research investigating the wear tolerance of *Axonopus compressus*, *Cynodon dactylon*, *Paspalum vaginatum*, *Stenotaphrum secundatum* and *Zoysia matrella* on various soil types as well as looking at the effects of waterlogging. Shade tolerance studies are also being undertaken to better understand the shade tolerance of 11 turfgrass species/genus/cultivars. 🌿

## INVESTIGATION OF PLAYING SURFACE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Recently AGCSATech attended a workshop to discuss the methodology used to assess the playing performance of turfgrass playing surfaces. The rationale for the day was that there are numerous consultants, sports bodies and individuals throughout Australia who undertake performance testing or benchmarking of natural turf playing surfaces.

These benchmarking studies are undertaken for a range of reasons including impacts on injuries, safety and playability. With an increase in risk management a strategy being adopted at many levels of sport, testing of playing surfaces and interpreting what the data means has increased in importance.

There is little doubt that there is variation in the methodology used between operators and in how the data is interpreted. Each consultant/sport has tended to work independently and there is only limited standardisation of methodology, however, it has been based around similar principles. For example use of the Clegg Hammer (possibly the most popular of the testing methods) varies from consultant to consultant, both in terms of drop height and how the data is collected (e.g.: 1st or 4th drop, or some other combination). The question has now been raised by sporting bodies as to the varying methodology, the veracity of the measurements taken and the interpretation of the results.

To address the above concerns, a workshop was run by the Sports Turf Institute Australia (STI) and the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)

with funding from Horticulture Australia Limited (Project TU09039) to work through the devices being used, the methodology and the interpretation of the data. The workshop group consisted of consultants, scientists, representatives from the major sporting codes and an insurance expert.

The goals for the workshop were to:

- Review current sports field performance testing work being undertaken in Australia;
- To identify the requirements of our key sporting bodies in regard to playing surface performance testing;
- To scientifically evaluate specific performance testing methodology, in particular devices for measuring hardness and traction; and
- To identify priorities for future development of performance testing systems.

It was an interesting day in that once you load a room full of experts you can open up a lot of debate and opinion and not necessarily make much progress. The outcome of the day was that there are varying techniques used and that there is a major difference in the performance requirements for an elite level venue.

The other outcome was that there is a considerable gap between the purist scientific approach and what the field agronomist can practically achieve. Probably the most pertinent point for the day was that if local government built grounds correctly and were prepared to maintain them properly, there would be little need to undertake risk management assessments.





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# The challenges of couch control



Controlling couchgrass invasion can be a persistent management headache for golf course superintendents who maintain bentgrass greens. In this instalment of Tech Talk, John Geary looks at some of the control strategies they can possibly implement.

**Above: The major concern of bentgrass greens infected with couchgrass is uneven ball roll which affects the smoothness, consistency and overall quality of the putting surface**

There are numerous weed species which have the potential to invade bentgrass putting surfaces with *Poa annua* generally considered the number one enemy of most golf course superintendents. For many greenkeepers, however, couchgrass infestation is of equal importance with the removal of couchgrass from bentgrass seen as one of the most challenging in all turf management.

The major concern of greens infected with couchgrass is the uneven ball roll which affects the smoothness, consistency and overall quality of the putting surface. This is due to its coarse texture along with couchgrass having different growth characteristics, which under favorable growing conditions is very aggressive.

## PAST RESEARCH

While in recent years strategies have been developed aimed at suppressing and or eradicating couchgrass, the most comprehensive study into managing and eradicating couchgrass from bentgrass putting surfaces under Australian conditions was undertaken by the Australian Turfgrass Research Institute between 1990 and 1993.

Part funded by the Horticultural Research and Development Corporation (now known as Horticulture Australia) the primary researcher was Dr. Peter Martin with the final report titled TU012 – 'Development of ecologically based management procedures for controlling the invasion of bentgrass'. While the report is some 17-years-old, the detailed recommendations for couch control are still as valid today as when written and it is highly recommended interested readers download the full report which can be accessed via the AGCSA's environmental web portal or via the following link <http://environment.agcsa.com.au/files/u6/TU012.pdf>

The trial highlighted a number of significant points, including:

- Infestations can be categorised into three types:
  - On the edge of the green, usually as an extension of fairway or collar couch;
  - Circular infestations in the central part of the green (the degree of infestation is largely due to hole changing); and

- Random infestations in other parts of the green.
- Relatively limited surface infestations are accompanied by the development of an extensive network of rhizomes within the top 5cm of the soil;
- The vast majority of couchgrass invasion is via roots in the form of rhizomes within the top 5cm of soil;
- The spread of couchgrass can be difficult to identify due to couchgrass developing long, persistent rhizomes which often travel ahead of the visible infection;
- Rhizomes have buds every centimetre or so along their length and each bud can develop into a new shoot. If the rhizome is broken or cut, even the small pieces can form new plants, provided they have at least one bud and are buried;
- During the warmer months couchgrass patches are easy to identify, however during the cooler months couchgrass patches can be hard to detect due to the tendency of the bent outcompeting the couchgrass;
- Use of ineffective sprays, hole changing, cultivation practices (coring, slicing, scarifying etc) and hand weeding all have the potential to increase the infestation by breaking up of the rhizomes into shorter pieces, stimulating the buds to develop into surface shoots;
- The efficacy of Tupersan varies widely depending on the couch cultivar with some types surviving repeated applications over several years; and
- Couchgrass can be difficult to control with the smallest bit of rhizome left alive in the green being able to re-infect the whole green within two years.

## SOIL BARRIERS

Assessments were carried out on the use of soil barriers with Dr. Martin concluding that the soil barriers are effective in greatly reducing the frequency of infestation from the edge of the green. In practice, however, clubs who have installed root barriers have had varying results.

The first point to make is they can be fiddly and time-consuming to install while it is imperative the barrier is deep enough not to interfere with mowing and importantly ball roll. Some superintendents have also expressed concerns having experienced couchgrass rhizomes piercing holes through commonly used root barrier products.

## USE OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDES

Extensive testing was also undertaken on a range of selective herbicides and growth regulators to assess their effectiveness in either eradicating or suppressing couchgrass. It was concluded that while there are a number of herbicides with proven activity against couchgrass, all were deemed as too harsh to be used on bentgrass and in many cases *Poa annua* which is often found in bent greens.

The findings also reinforced long-held beliefs by many that the efficacy of Tupersan (active constituent 500g/kg siduron) varies widely depending on the couch cultivar with many Australian couchgrasses being notably resistant, surviving repeated applications over several years.

The research went one step further indicating that the use of Tupersan causes dieback of the central parts of rhizomes near vertical shoots while distant parts of the rhizome are unaffected. In effect, the use of Tupersan breaks up rhizomes into shorter segments which only exacerbates the problem by potentially increasing the severity of the infestation.

In recent years trials using several selective herbicides and growth regulator combinations such as fenoxaprop, fluroxypyr, Trinexapac-Ethyl and ethofumesate have been undertaken, however, control/suppression can be highly variable and dependent on the couchgrass variety.

It should be noted that fenoxaprop and fluroxypyr are not registered for use on bentgrass, with Tupersan being the only turf-registered product in Australia to control couchgrass within a bentgrass sward.

Dr. Fred Yelverton, who recently toured Australia courtesy of Bayer Environmental Science, advocates a slightly different approach, suggesting prevention is the most effective way of managing couchgrass encroachment.

His recommendations include weekly trimming around the greens perimeter with a mechanical edger to impede any stolon growth, stressing good hygiene practices such as blowing all debris off the green is vital to ensure no couchgrass material is left behind to infect the greens surface.

He also recommended Tupersan is best used as a suppressant and that it should be used at half rates, one month apart both in spring and autumn. The aim of the programme is to suppress any new growth while also giving the bentgrass a competitive edge. Needless to say the timing of application(s) is critical and should be timed to coincide with spring green-up and when soil temperatures start to decline in April-May.

## ONGOING BATTLE

Talking with superintendents across the country it is clear that the use of selective herbicides/growth regulators is ineffective in providing any meaningful long-term control. Kingston Heath Golf Club superintendent Martin Greenwood has battled with couchgrass encroachment over the past 10 years and has reverted to stripping a 900mm width of turf cover around each green (two sod cutter widths – see photo right) and removing the existing soil to a depth of 300mm deep. This is then replaced with clean sand and freshly cut turf free of any couchgrass contamination.

A number of clubs in Sydney are addressing the issue by installing a collar of seashore paspalum of varying width around the putting green perimeter. Shaun Probert, superintendent of Ryde-Parramatta Golf Club, states that the main benefit is providing a buffer zone between the fairway turf which consists of kikuyu and the greens turf. Maintenance practices such as mechanical edging and removal of debris is still required on a weekly to bi-weekly basis during the growing season.

To keep greens free of couch Dr. Martin stresses that constant vigilance is necessary, recommending the manual removal of plant material for greens with small amounts of couch infestation. Good hygiene measures such as screening topdressing material and thoroughly cleaning all machinery prior to greens use is also recommended.

For greens with moderate infestations the findings suggest hole changing as the biggest contributor to distributing couchgrass throughout the green surface. Therefore it is important practitioners carrying out hole changing duties examine each plug for any contaminated soil and discard if necessary. During periods of high temperatures when bentgrass is growing slowly it is also a good practice to not over fertilise which is simply feeding the couchgrass during its optimum growing conditions.

For greens severely infested with couchgrass the options are limited and other than living with the problem, reconstruction is the recommended path to follow. 🌿



**Kingston Heath Golf Club has taken to stripping a 900mm width around each green and removing existing soil to a depth of 300mm deep before replacing with clean sand and freshly cut turf free of couchgrass contamination**

**Couchgrass can be difficult to control with the smallest bit of rhizome left alive in the green being able to re-infect a whole bentgrass green within two years**





**TORO**

# Toro Turf Tour

**F**rom Turnberry in Scotland, The Wentworth Club in Surrey, UK, to the sub-tropical climes of his current home at Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club on Queensland's Gold Coast, Robin Doodson has packed more than most into a diverse turf management career.

While a lot has changed during his time in the game, there are a few aspects that haven't. Being a proud Scot is obviously at the top of the list, but so is the one constant that has remained throughout his entire greenkeeping career – Toro. Now as superintendent of a golf facility which pumps through 90,000 rounds a year, the quality and reliability that Doodson has come to know and respect from Toro is now ensuring that his maintenance operations will keep Sanctuary Cove ranked as one of Australia's elite resort facilities.

"I've pretty much grown up with Toro gear my entire career," says the 36-year-old who started out as an apprentice at the humble Rouken Glen Golf Club in Glasgow. "Toro has always been an industry leader and now as a superintendent I have quickly found that Toro can't be matched."

## RED SANCTUARY

Glasgow is certainly a world away from where Doodson now finds himself. Located in the heartland of Australia's tourist mecca, Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club boasts two championship 18-hole golf courses – the Pines Course (Arnold Palmer's first design in Australia) and the Palms Course, which over the past 18 months has been completely redesigned and due to open in April 2011.



The two Groundsmaster 4700-Ds are the true workhorses of the Sanctuary Cove fleet

Doodson arrived at Sanctuary Cove in May 2008 and after just a few months was elevated to the superintendent's role. It has certainly been a baptism of fire for the affable Scot, especially taking over at the start of a major course reconstruction project, but knowing he has Toro backing him up has made management operations a whole lot smoother.

Having developed such an affinity for Toro equipment over his career, at the start

of 2010 Doodson committed to an agreement with Toro Australia which will see Sanctuary Cove remain a red shed for many years to come. Although Toro machinery had made up much of the fleet in the past, up until that point the club had no dedicated purchasing plan.

That has all changed, however, and together with Toro's south east Queensland sales manager Craig Johnston, Doodson has been able to tailor a package which suits the club's exacting requirements. Sanctuary Cove has signed a principal partnership arrangement with Toro which sees most equipment on a three-year operating lease with some pieces covered under a five-year deal. Importantly it gives the club peace of mind not only from a budgetary sense but also ensures that come the end of that period the machinery is going to get replaced.

"Everything that mows grass here is now red," states Doodson. "When we started contemplating an agreement we looked at all the major players in the market and everything from the quality of the equipment, support etc... We took price out of the equation because



**Located on Queensland's Gold Coast, Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club boasts two championship 18-hole golf courses – the Pines Course and Palms Course**



**Location:** Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club, QLD **Superintendent:** Robin Doodson



Sanctuary Cove superintendent  
Robin Doodson

finer details of fleet management solutions which Doodson and Johnston were able to brainstorm between them which has further assisted the club. Together they were able to implement a plan to address efficiencies whether by juggling equipment between the two courses or coming up with different machinery transport arrangements.

### A REAL WORKHORSE

While the ProCore 648 pedestrian corer ranks as Doodson's most favoured piece of Toro machinery – in the 12 months it has been used on Sanctuary Cove's 328 greens Doodson has never seen root growth so far down – it is the real workhorse of the course maintenance fleet which the canny Scot is indebted to.

With 39 holes (that includes three practice holes) and more than 100 hectares of turf area in play, Sanctuary Cove has a huge amount of rough area which needs to be maintained to the exacting standards demanded by the members. In order to do this, the Toro Groundsmaster 4700-D has become the jewel in the club's crown and so superior is the machine that Doodson has two of these beasts which he simply wouldn't be without.

"I don't know how you could honestly manage a course here in Queensland without one," states Doodson. "You're mowing roughs 12 months of the year on the Gold Coast and although they may seem like an expensive

piece of equipment, there is no other machine in the market which saves a superintendent as much time and money as the GM4700-D does. It is an essential part of our fleet.

"The quality of cut is superb and the speed it can get around the course means we can keep the rough in great condition all the time. The seven floating decks provide a quality of cut that is superior to any fixed deck rotaries. There's no scalping and it's able to get around everything, whether its bunker edges or lake edges, of which we have a lot.

"Fourteen holes on the Pines Course have water in play, so having the GM4700-D on hand means we don't have to spend hours flymowing or whipper-snipping. We can just go along with the GM4700-D and take care of 95 per cent of that work. The productivity is superb and with the 3.7 metre width of cut you can mow up to 4.25 hectares in an hour."

### SERVICE LIKE NO OTHER

With such a huge demand placed on his equipment to have both courses in top condition, Doodson is fortunate to be able to call on the support of Toro's newest service centre just an hour up the M1 highway in Banyo, Brisbane.

Headed up by Grant Woodcock, the Banyo facility exemplifies Toro's commitment to after sales support and service which has made it the clear leader in the Australian turf industry.

we knew we only wanted the best. To put it simply, Toro ticked every box and the other companies didn't even come close.

"A big part of the reason that we went exclusively with Toro was the back up and support. That was a critical component. The way we operate at Sanctuary Cove, we pretty much have competitions six days a week, which essentially means we have to have the courses set up in tournament condition every day for the members. We simply can't be without a piece of equipment or else the presentation of the courses would be compromised.

"We see ourselves as one of the top end courses in south east Queensland and to achieve that you need to use top end equipment and Toro is the leader as far as we are concerned."

And it wasn't just the service, quality cutting units or the renowned performance and reliability that made Toro a right fit for Sanctuary Cove. It was also some of the



Doodson will take delivery of  
two more Reelmaster 5510s  
come January

# Toro Turf Tour

**TORO**



**Location:** Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club, QLD **Superintendent:** Robin Doodson



With competitions six days a week, Sanctuary Cove needs to be in tournament condition around the clock

Like Doodson, Woodcock has been working with Toro for close to two decades and unashamedly proclaims, "I wouldn't want to be fixing anything else!"

Based near Brisbane Airport, the Banyo centre services a mixture of local councils and major Brisbane and Gold Coast championship golf clubs and turf facilities. Woodcock and his team are proud of the level of service they offer and most recently the Banyo centre came to the rescue at Sanctuary Cove. Down a mechanic, Toro Queensland was happy to supply a mechanic onsite at the shortest of notice.

### PICTURE PERFECT PALMS

For now though, Doodson and his crew are gearing up for the grand unveiling of the redesigned Palms Course. Growing in a new golf course is an art in itself and Doodson, together with course architect Ross Watson, has relied on Toro to get the course into top shape.

While a small fleet of Toro machinery has done an exemplary job of maintaining the course during the grow-in, what has really set the course up was the decision early on to use Toro's 835 Series sprinklers across the redevelopment. Recommended by irrigation consultant David Hanby from Hydro Pumping and Controls, the 835s were chosen for their versatility and efficiency.

"The new Palms Course irrigation system was designed using Toro 835 Series and DT34 sprinklers, all electric valve-in-head type, with

about 930 new and 100 recycled heads across the system," explains Hanby. "We selected them because they are the most flexible golf sprinklers currently available.

"The 835s were used for the 'back-to-back' greens sprinklers. Generally they have been set up as one set of full circles to water the putting surface and the green surrounds and another set to water the putting surface only. The 835s have both an adjustable part circle sprinkler as well as a true full circle sprinkler with single direction of rotation in full circle mode, a feature unique to the 835s.

"The 835s were also used for tees and other areas which required more detailed watering, such as mounding around greens and bunkers, as well as lake edges and fairway boundaries near residential areas. The ability to use these sprinklers as full circles during grassing in, then changing to part circle or a full circle with full throw towards the centre to reduce throw along the rough, has been a real bonus. Further fine-tuning is available with the adjustable trajectory feature.

"The full circle only sprinklers used on the centre of fairways are Toro DT34s and they offer good value while still affording many of the features of the 800 Series."

With all major components of the new course having come together, the final piece will be in place come January when the club takes delivery of a suite of new Toro equipment. Doodson is relishing the chance of having a full complement of Toro gear to present the new-look course at its best.

"It has been a fantastic experience growing in the Palms," says Doodson. "The greens are a lot more undulating than before and the Flex 21s have been reliable and we have had no issues with scalping. The 835s have ensured that the grow-in has gone smoothly and we haven't had a single head failure yet. We are certainly looking forward to when the Palms officially opens and I'm sure with the new Toro gear coming we'll have it in pristine condition for the members."

### IN THE SHED - SANCTUARY COVE

#### Pines Course

- 4 Flex 21 Greensmasters
- 2 GM3150 Greensmasters
- 2 Sand Pro 5040's with bunker pump
- 2 RM 5150 Fairway mowers
- 1 4700-D Rough Mower
- 6 Toro Workman MDE

#### Shared

- Multi-pro 5700-D
- Multi-pro 1250
- Reelmaster 3100D Sidewinder

#### Palms Course

- 2 GM3150 Greensmasters
- 1 GM 4700D Rough Mower

#### Arriving January 2011

- 1 Sand Pro 5040
- 2 Reelmaster 5510 fairway mowers
- 4 Toro Workman MDX
- 1 Graden Greens Roller
- 1 Groundsmaster 3500 - Rotary surrounds
- 3 Flex 21 greensmowers
- MH400 material handler



Toro 835 Series sprinklers have been used throughout the new Palms Course redevelopment due to their versatility and efficiency



# More signs that Toro supports the golf industry in many ways



Toro has again committed to a major industry support program in 2011, spearheaded through our sponsorship of the AGCSA.

Toro will send the AGCSA Graduate of the Year to the University of Massachusetts in the US to participate in Winter School for Turf Managers. The winner will enjoy the US Golf Show and a tour of world leading Toro manufacturing facilities along with other international winners.

Toro will support, through their sponsorship and sharing of knowledge, the AGCSA's Golf Environmental Initiative and the AGCSA Water Initiative, vital programs for the future of our industry.

And of course Toro will again contribute to the AGCSA Annual Conference in many ways to ensure that the industry comes together to exchange ideas and continue to grow.

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**Count on it.**



The Surf Coast Knockout, to be held at The Sands, Torquay in Victoria from 20-23 January 2011, is being billed as an event the likes of which has never before been seen on any major tour the world over. After three rounds of usual stroke play, the final day will be in a match play format over six holes



# The Sands 'Knockout' set for event

Nathan Bennett is no stranger when it comes to major tournaments, having been involved in the 2003 and 2005 Australian Opens as an assistant superintendent at Moonah Links. Now superintendent at The Sands, Torquay, come late January he and the crew will be part of a unique event which is hoped will start a new trend for Australian tournament golf.

The Sands, Torquay is a fully integrated resort development located in Torquay, just south of Geelong in Victoria. The project boasts a championship golf course, designed by 2010 Australian Masters champion Stuart Appleby along with International Management Design (IMD) and was designed to challenge golfers of all levels.

The course is accompanied by a magnificent \$12 million dollar clubhouse hosting exceptional facilities including restaurant, spike bar, conferencing, function rooms, health club, pool, and a 4½ star 112-room hotel. The Sands is a private club with a growing membership while the function facilities continue to generate a high level of interest and support from the region.

You would think as the name suggests and being coastal that the course would be built on sand. That is true on just one hole. The rest of the course has been built on heavy soil, clay and three holes have been constructed on the old Torquay tip. The 'Sands' refers to the amount and size of bunkers on the course, which at the present time number 107.

Over the last four years we have removed or reduced the size of 15 bunkers. This has come about through consultation with the owner, members and the club professional. The position and size of some of these bunkers were only catching the average golfer which in turn was slowing down rounds and reducing the enjoyment for some. This is a big factor

as we are trying to encourage new members to join. Another influencing factor in removing some of the bunkers was to try and redirect golf shots away from surrounding houses.

## THE SANDS STEPS UP

In June 2010 it was announced that The Sands, Torquay will be holding a new style golf event from 20-23 January 2011 called the 'Surf Coast Knockout'. The owners and members are thrilled to be having a televised event here (it will be covered by Network Ten and ONE HD), but I think the most excited group of people are the ground staff.

To be involved in an event like this, as I have been fortunate in the past while at Moonah Links, is a wonderful experience. People that have worked through a tournament never forget the rewards of seeing their work on show and the hard work that goes into it.

Our preparations for the tournament are well underway. We were able to renovate our tees earlier than normal and have oversown the par threes with *Poa trivialis*, which will give them better colour and help with recovery over the winter months.

The couchgrass green surrounds have now been renovated and oversown with fine fescue. The fescue has been sown to allow us to try and clean up the grass weeds that persist in these areas. On the high side of the couch surrounds is the bentgrass and the low side is tall fescue and we have had tracking of herbicides up onto the bent and washing down into the tall fescue. Trying to keep these areas clean of grass weeds has been very difficult but I think we have more herbicide options with the fine fescue.

Rough at The Sands is tall fescue, which become thin once they dry out over summer. In September the entire rough was fertilised to try and thicken up areas and produce the seed head in the long rough.



The six holes to be used for the final round match play will 10, 11, 12, 16, 17 and 18 – pictured is the 215m par 3 17th

This has worked very well with the contrast between the long and short rough looking great. The long rough helps soften the look of the houses that are built throughout the course, as well as directing golf balls away from them.

When managing the rough we have to balance out the look of the hole, playability of the hole and the hazards the rough creates. Over the last few years the members have become accustomed to the rough and how much of a penalty it becomes when thick. The members are divided – some think it should all be cut so they can find their ball, while others love the look of the long grass and think that it should be a penalty if you hit the ball that wide.

The other issue is snakes and fire. Some residents get concerned about the fire risk but once it is explained that the rough will help protect their houses from balls then they usually calm down. Snakes will always be out on the course whether there is long rough or not and with the course having plenty of wetlands it is the perfect breeding and feeding ground for copperheads and red belly black snakes. The snakes could be a concern for the organisers during the Surf Coast Knockout in that they may hold up play temporarily or be a concern for the spectators, but either way we can't do much about them.

Over the spring we worked hard to clean the outside laps of the Santa ana fairways, using a shrouded boom to apply Monument (trifloxysulfuron) to produce a sharp line between the couch and tall fescue rough. The results were great although we have had some runoff into the rough. The same

technique was used with the greens approaches and these areas had to be roped off as there was a concern that the heavy soil would allow the Monument to be tracked for a longer period.

The Penn G2 bentgrass greens have come out of the winter well and are growing strongly. We will soon start to work them a little harder leading into the tournament with a slightly heavier than normal dusting programme and more regular brushing. We will try and verti-drain the greens about six weeks out from the event (this will be part of our normal maintenance programme as we don't hollow tine greens).

We anticipate cutting the greens at around 2.5mm depending on the speed we can get out of them, however, with the strong winds that can blow up quickly down here we have to be mindful of not gaining too much pace and having balls roll or play being stopped.

A large amount of time will be put into the bunkers and having them presented in the best possible condition as they are such a major feature of the course. Moving the sand and reshaping is already happening and will take some time.

In the process of reshaping the bunkers we have to minimise the disturbance to the faces. Balls plug in the faces a lot due to the large particle size of the sand so moving the compacted sand off the face to reshape could create a lot more ball plugging. Edging the bunkers creates another challenge due to the size. Growth regulators will be trialled to help control the growth and reduce the continual edging that will be needed.

# Nominations Open

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 **Awards**





◀ **The Sands' Penn G2 bent greens have come out of winter well and are growing strongly. Bennett anticipates cutting the greens at around 2.5mm but that will be dependent on the weather conditions at the time**

## EXCITEMENT MOUNTING

Our staff numbers run at 11, including our mechanic and part-time gardener and over the warmer months we employ a summer casual. Staffing numbers will increase by two before the event, but for the week of the event I anticipate that we will increase numbers by another 4-6.

The current staff are relatively young with little or no tournament experience, although my assistant Justin Rankin has good tournament experience in preparing for an Australian Open at Moonah Links and a US Open at Pinehurst. My foreman Tom Hogan has also been involved with the two

Australian Opens at Moonah Links. The young crew are very excited about hosting the event and are full of questions and ideas and they are all a lot more driven and focused since the tournament announcement.

As you can imagine, Victoria's Surf Coast population, in particular Torquay, swells over the summer months and this is our busiest period. Having the event at this time will create some timing issues and being able to get on the course and prepare will be difficult. The club won't close the course at all leading up to the event but we may be able to restrict carts for a few days.

## KNOCKOUT A NEW-LOOK FOR TOURNAMENT GOLF

**T**he Surf Coast Knockout is being billed as an event the likes of which has never before been seen on any major Tour the world over. The first three rounds of the Surf Coast Knockout will be contested under usual stroke play conditions, while the winner will ultimately be decided on Sunday by a reduced match play format.

The match play will be played over six holes only, with tied matches set to be decided by a 'knockout hole'. The PGA of Australia has scheduled the tournament to finish in twilight hours, meaning the semi-finals and final will be broadcast live from 12pm-5pm on Network 10, and from 12pm-7pm on One HD.

"The Surf Coast Knockout is a unique format that will challenge the traditional way in which golf tournaments are played and broadcast," says Max Garske, chief executive of the PGA of Australia. "This exciting concept will take a shortened version of the game live on the final day to millions of viewers both in Australia and overseas, engaging a new golf audience and

at the same time showcasing the magnificent Victorian Bellarine Peninsula".

The tournament format in brief is:

- The field size for the Surf Coast Knockout will be minimum 132 which will include a maximum of 20 amateurs;
- The event is a full PGA Tour of Australasia Order of Merit event;
- Rounds 1-3 will be strokeplay;
- The fourth and final round will be contested under match play conditions;
- Two cuts will be made during the tournament (a first for the PGA Tour of Australasia);
- The first cut will be made after 36 holes (to 50 plus ties);
- The second will be made after 54 holes (to 32);
- The fourth round (match play) will be 16 matches played over 6 holes;
- A proportion of prize money will be paid to the top 5 following 54 holes; and
- The remainder of the prize money will be paid following Sunday's final results.



Despite a young crew, course superintendent Nathan Bennett says his charges are excited about showcasing the course come the Surf Coast Knockout

The Surf Coast Knockout is a unique tournament format (see previous page for a rundown of how it will work) with the final day seeing 32 players playing match play over six holes. The last day is the only day that is televised, so the 'normal' preparation will be a little different for that day.

The six holes to be used will be 10 (a 356m par four), 11 (a 434m par four), 12 (a 510m par five), 16 (a 527m par five), 17 (a 215m par three) and 18 (a 376m par four). These holes rout nicely out and back to the clubhouse, are good spectator holes and will enhance the carnival atmosphere which the tournament organisers are hoping for. They are also some of the most challenging.

We will be able to put a lot of work into those six holes on the day of the telecast, but by no means does that mean that the other holes will be prepared less for the event. There will be less time pressure on the Sunday, although the finer details haven't

been worked out as yet in regards to whether the holes will be changed and markers moved after each round.

This tournament concept has never been used before so how popular the event will be is unknown. There seems to be good support from sponsors both locally and nationally and Australia's top golfers are getting behind the tournament as it is a full PGA Tour of Australasia Order of Merit event. Those to have signed up already include Peter Lonard, Craig Parry, Stephen Leaney, Pete Senior and Jean van der Velde.

I think the younger generation of golfers will love the concept as it will showcase some great golfers in a shortened exciting game. Match play is great to watch and if it is all square after the six holes it comes down to a shoot out hole, which will be both nerve-wracking for the play and thrilling for the spectator. 🌱

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Twelve soft-leaf buffalograss genotypes are being evaluated at the University of Western Australia to determine their responses to different renovation techniques.

Initial results show that all genotypes recovered within 6-8 weeks following major renovation by hard rotary mowing to cut thatch back to 10mm above the soil surface



# Response of soft-leaf buffalograss to renovation

In ATM Volume 12.2 (March-April 2010), University of Western Australia turf researchers outlined two new Horticulture Australia Ltd-funded projects, one of which was evaluating the responses of soft-leaf buffalograss genotypes to renovation treatments. Here Tim Colmer, Tim Higgott and Louise Barton outline the initial findings from this two-year project.



Know-how for Horticulture™

Many areas recently planted to soft-leaf buffalograss will require renovation in the coming years, so responses of this species to different renovation techniques needs evaluation. Towards the end of 2009, a project (HAL TU09005) was established at The University of Western Australia's Turf Research Facility at Shenton Park, Perth to determine such responses.

Twelve buffalograss (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*) cultivars are included in the study: Sapphire (B12), King's Pride (GP22), Matilda, Palmetto, Sir James, Sir Walter, ST26, ST91, Shademaster, TF01, Velvet and WA common. Data are reported here only for WA common ('old-style buffalo') and Velvet (the first 'soft-leaf type' grown in Western Australia).

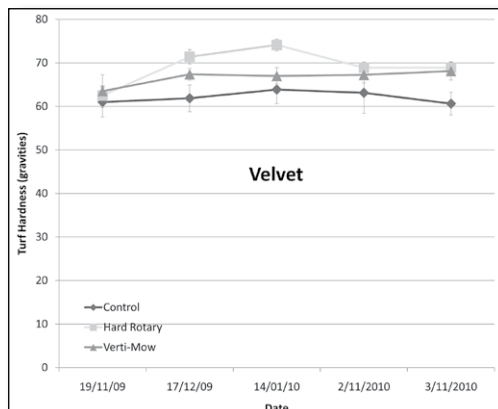
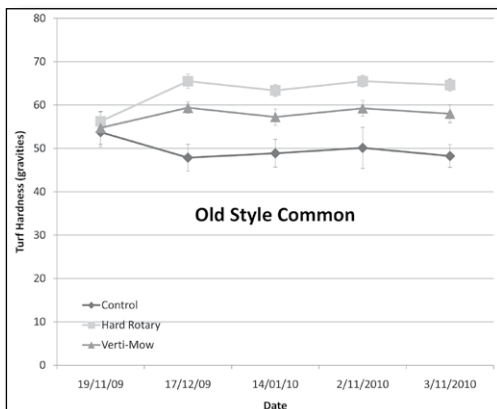
Two renovation techniques were applied on 20 November 2009 across the 12 genotypes in four-year-old plots, with some plots of each not renovated (controls). These four-year-old plots had considerable thatch build-up, so provided a suitable resource for the renovation experiment.

Colour, surface hardness and clippings produced (i.e.: growth) were regularly measured following the renovations, to document recovery of turf quality and subsequent surface improvement post-renovation. Renovation treatments were:

- Control (no renovation);
- Verti-mow in one direction, with light rotary mow to trim, rake off waste, light sanding of 5mm; and
- Major renovation to 10mm above ground using several passes of a rotary mower and rake to remove waste.

Plots subjected to verti-mowing were cut in one direction at 40mm spacings and a depth of 20mm using a Blue Bird Comber. Hard rotary plots were cut down hard, but gradually, using a rotary mower.

Plots receive 15kg/ha of N fertiliser once a month and are irrigated at 70 per cent replacement of net evaporation, summed and applied three times per week. Following renovations, plots were mown every two weeks at 25mm and clippings collected and oven-dried to measure growth.



Surface colour was quantified using a Chromameter every two weeks, while surface hardness was measured every four weeks using a Clegg hammer. These measurements were taken during the re-growth phase following renovations, until the end of March 2010.

## RESULTS

The visual impacts of the renovations were presented in Australian Turfgrass Management Volume 12.2 (March-April 2010). The hard rotary procedure resulted in a brown surface, and although green leaves quickly re-sprouted the surface greenness took six weeks to recover to the same levels of the controls and verti-mown plots.

Verti-mown plots also showed a decline in colour as compared with control plots, but did remain green and recovery to an acceptable standard was quicker than for the hard rotary plots (data not shown).

The renovation treatments succeeded in increasing the firmness of the surface of both the common and velvet types, but surface hardness was increased more by the hard rotary mowing than with the verti-mowing renovation (Figure 1) – a response most evident in the old-style WA common buffalograss.

Surface hardness will again be tested during the 2010/2011 summer (i.e.: just over one year post renovations) to assess whether these improvements persist with time. These plots will also be subjected to low irrigation inputs during the 2010/2011 summer, to enable assessments of whether the renovation practices influence the capacity of the various grasses to tolerate drought stress.

The renovation treatments greatly decreased the clippings produced by common and velvet buffalograsses during the summer of mowing following the renovations.

For both cultivars, total clippings produced during the period monitored were reduced by approximately half following verti-mowing, and clippings produced were even less (approximately half again) for the plots renovated by hard rotary mowing (see Figure 2.).

The longer-term effects, if any, on clippings production and rooting depths will be assessed during the 2010/2011 summer and these and other results will be included in future editions of the Australian Turfgrass Management Journal.



## CONCLUSION

In summary, all 12 soft-leaf buffalograss genotypes in the study recovered within 6-8 weeks following major renovation by hard rotary mowing to cut thatch back to 10mm above the soil surface, although one genotype remained 'thin' for several additional weeks.

The hard rotary mowing resulted in a brown surface for at least four weeks, whereas verti-mowing resulted in less disruption to the appearance of the turfgrass, but also typically resulted in smaller (albeit significant) increases in surface hardness.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

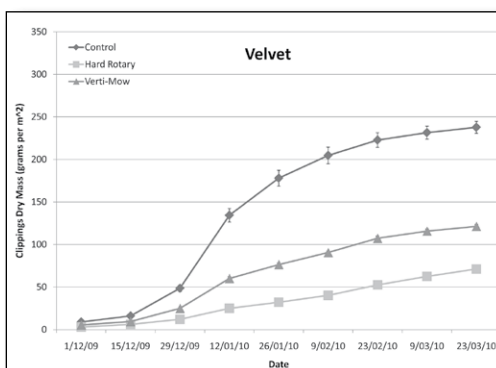
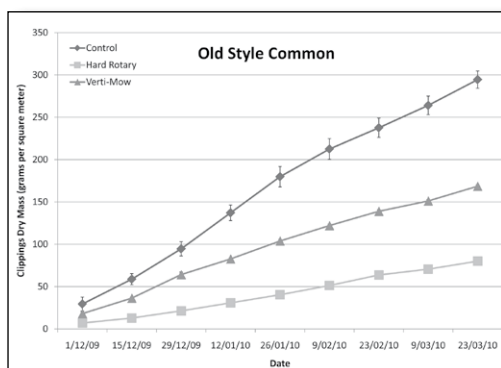
HAL project TU09005 is facilitated by Horticulture Australia Ltd in partnership with Turf Growers Association of WA, Water Corporation, Sir Walter WA Growers, Future Turf Pty Ltd (Village Green), WA Group Pty Ltd (Empire Zoysia). In-kind support from Mow Master, CSBP, Greenacres Turf Farm, Betta Turf, Turf Developments WA, Alwest Turfing and Nick Bell. Sharyn Burgess is thanked for working on the project during the 2009/2010 summer.

Plots used in the renovation experiment were established as part of HAL project TU04013, in partnership with QPIF. We thank the UWA Turf Industries Research Steering Committee for advice and support of our turf research.

Tim Colmer, Tim Higgott and Louise Barton hail from the School of Plant Biology at The University of Western Australia. 🌿

**UWA project officer Tim Higgott measures surface colour with a chromameter at the university's turf research facility in Shenton Park, Perth**

**Opposite page: Figure 1. Surface hardness of four-year-old buffalograss plots without renovation (control), or following renovations on 20 November 2009 (either verti-mowing in one direction at 40mm spacing and a depth of 20mm, and then top-dressed with 5 mm of sand; or being cut down hard, but gradually, by several passes of a rotary mower)**



**Left: Figure 2. Clippings produced by plots of four-year-old buffalograss without any renovation (control), or following renovations on 20 November 2009 (either verti-mowing in one direction at 40mm spacing and a depth of 20mm, and then top-dressed with 5mm of sand; or being cut down hard, but gradually, by several passes of a rotary mower)**



Since 2000 the Redlands Research Station has maintained a 'living library' of turfgrass selections made up of 138 different turf varieties taken from Australia and around the world

# Keeping alive the living library



Redlands Research Station has become one of the primary centres for turf research in Australia and back in 2000 a living library of turf varieties was developed for research purposes. Here DEEDI experimentalist Jon Penberthy provides an update of these unique turf demonstration plots.

In 2000, the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation - DEEDI (previously Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries) built and maintained a 'living library' of turfgrass selections made up of 138 different turf varieties.

Vegetative material was largely acquired by former principal scientist Dr Don Loch from overseas universities and breeders, and from sources across Australia. Since construction, the turf demonstration plots have been maintained at Redlands Research Station as part of DEEDI's efforts to supply vegetative material for research projects, but also education to the Australian turfgrass industry and wider community (e.g.: home owners).

Over time the plots have received ongoing maintenance and renovation as deemed necessary. However, the plots require significant resources to maintain each individual plot's integrity as far as the maintenance of true-to-type material, the exclusion of weeds and the implementation of appropriate management for each particular plot such as irrigation, fertilisation and mowing.

To date a comprehensive assessment of the plots, their condition and the individual cultivars contained in each have been audited and a plan of action for remediation, upgrading or replacement has been developed. This plan has been ongoing and is constantly being reviewed and revised.

Decisions are made in consultation with key members of the research group including senior turf scientist Matt Roche to ensure remedial action is appropriate, that replacement variety selections are appropriate and that they will assist future research project work.

Work that has taken place most recently has included the installation of a 300mm deep polyethylene root barrier around plots that are to be replaced to prevent any rhizome encroachment either into the new plot or out of the plot when the replacement variety goes in.

One of the greatest problems we have encountered has been the encroachment of grasses from one plot to the next and this is seen as a way of limiting such an occurrence. Each barrier that is installed around each plot is back filled with sodium bentonite in a further effort to discourage root penetration and development.

On the site we have continued hand weeding individual plots, spraying selective herbicides where applicable and using pre-emergent herbicide to control seed germination. This has largely been very successful, however, in some of the plots the decision has been made to replace a variety altogether either due to the variety being 'outdated' or the plot being too contaminated with other grass genotypes.

Where the latter has been deemed necessary, DEEDI staff have cut out the remaining turf, sprayed repeatedly with herbicide over a period of weeks/months, replaced the soil, installed root barrier and bentonite before replanting with sod or plugging of a new variety.

Varieties that have been (re-)planted this year include:

- DEEDI's *Sporobolus virginicus* variety QLD-Coast as runners;
- *Stenotaphrum secundatum* variety Shade Invader as sod and AusFine (ST-85), AusDwarf (ST-91) and ST-135 as plugs;
- *Paspalum notatum* varieties Pensacola, Argentine, Blue Dawn and LowGrow which were initially seeded into trays then plugged out in the field;
- Second-generation *Cynodon* hybrid varieties TifEagle, MS-Supreme, Tifdwarf and Novotek were plugged with material taken using a hole changer from the TU05001 warm-season greens grass test facility;
- *C. dactylon* x *C. transvaalensis* variety AGRD as sod from foundation plots growing at Redlands;
- *Paspalum vaginatum* variety Aloha as plugs;



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- *Cynodon dactylon* varieties Princess and Mohawk as seed; Premier, CynoMax (LEG13A) and Legend as plugs and Wintergreen as sod;
- *Axonopus fissifolius* narrow leaf carpetgrass as plugs; and
- *Zoysia macrantha* variety Nara (MAC03) as sod.

Post planting all plots routinely had pre-emergent herbicide applied and were watered liberally until plants were established. Recently DEEDI staff observed the persistent and aggressive weed identified as pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*) in a number of turf plots. This perennial weed thrives in moist/wet conditions and can quickly establish and become troublesome due to the prolific number of small seeds that can spread.

Selective herbicides to date have been limited and several applications have been necessary at 6-8 week intervals in order to try and keep the weed in check, along with the continued use of pre-emergent herbicide. Cultural practices such as lowering the watering frequency, aeration and routine mowing have also assisted.

Aesthetic and educational items have also been upgraded. Old sleepers used to separate the plots have been replaced and plaques identifying species and cultivar name with plot numbers have been attached to each plot, making the task of having to carry around a field map non-existent.

A number of visitors continue to inspect the turf trial and turf demonstration plots. Groups



include students and staff from the University of Queensland's Centre for Native Floriculture, staff and guests from Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland, TAFE students (including some from China and India) as well as turf managers.

Over the coming season turf varieties will continue to be propagated and planted. Ongoing weed, pest and fertiliser regimes will be undertaken and adjusted where necessary to accommodate new cultivars as they are planted.

**Following recent replanting of certain varieties, DEEDI staff observed the persistent and aggressive weed identified as pearlwort in a number of turf plots**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The DEEDI turf research team acknowledges the support of the Australian turfgrass industry, the Turf Industry Advisory Committee and Horticulture Australia for the ongoing maintenance and resources to be aligned to a HAL funded project (TU09002).



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# Barossa Valley Golf Club SA

Bordered by some of the biggest names in the Australian wine-making business, you would be forgiven for thinking that Barossa Valley Golf Club course superintendent and AGCSA member Stephen Chapman should be thinking of a career change. Not so, however, and here he provides ATM an insight into this regional South Australian course.



**Superintendent:** Stephen Chapman.

**Nickname:** Chappy.

**Age:** 47.

**Period as a superintendent:** Five years.

**Association involvement:** AGCSA (five years) and SAGCSA.

**Career:** Barossa Valley Golf Club 16 years.

**Turf management qualifications:** Advanced Certificate in Horticulture from Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE.

**Give us a bit about your background in turf management and the path you took to get to Barossa Valley Golf Club?** I started my working career as welder at a local engineering company. After nine years I decided it was time for a change so I began studying horticulture at TAFE and established my own lawn mowing and landscaping business which I operated for five years. During this time the Barossa Valley Golf Club decided to remove their sand scrapes and establish greens. In 1994 the club offered me a job, I accepted and I'm still here!

**Provide an overview of Barossa Valley Golf Club and some of its unique characteristics?** The club was formed in 1904 with the original course built on a small parcel of land between Nuriootpa and Angaston. In 1958, Penfolds Wines donated 60 hectares of land 6km north of Nuriootpa (which they deemed unsuitable for growing grapes) to the club.

Club members carved out an 18-hole golf course from the scrub finishing in 1962. At this time the club moved here changing its name to the Barossa Valley Golf Club. The original layout still remains today and

is surrounded by vineyards which supply grapes for the famous Penfolds Grange Hermitage (I bet now Penfolds wish they had kept the land!).

**Take us through your turf management operations there and how you have fine-tuned them during your time as superintendent?** With only two staff I have had to simplify operations as much as possible which basically means doing things 'less'. For example only raking bunkers once a week, only mowing greens three times a week and mowing fairways on an 'as needs' basis. Other labour-saving techniques have also been implemented such as spraying herbicide around the base of trees to save mowing time.

**What are some of the unique features about Barossa Valley Golf Club from a turf management perspective? Is it an easy/hard facility to manage?** The course is relatively easy to manage because unlike many other supers I have very little interference from the board or other committees in the day-to-day operations on the course.

**What are some of the major challenges facing Barossa Valley Golf Club both from a turf management perspective and general club management perspective?** The major challenge from a turf management point of view is maintaining bentgrass greens with very poor quality irrigation water (2200ppm TDS). We do this by applying regular applications of gypsum and occasional flushing with potable water. We are also experimenting with two non-chemical water conditioners.



From a club management point of view the biggest challenge is to increase our membership and number of green fee players to give us more resources to improve the course. This has been done in part by the appointment of a young enthusiastic manager who has come up with a lot of new ideas to promote the golf club.

**Outline any major course improvement works you have completed in the past couple of years and highlight any ongoing or future works that the club is undertaking.** The major project in the last two years has been the rebuilding of our main irrigation dam. This involved the removal of 1.5 metres of silt, raising the dam banks and installing a HDPE liner which has doubled the capacity of the dam.

We have also remedied a few drainage issues around the course, in particular the 8th green. We thought that the subsurface drains were starting to silt up so we decided to install new drains on the edge of the green. After locating the existing green drainage outlet pipe we discovered that the pipe was choked full of roots. The roots had filled the 90mm wide pipe for a distance of 12 metres. The next major project will be the construction of a new maintenance facility.

**How is Barossa Valley Golf Club faring in the water management stakes?** Water is an ongoing issue for us with quality, quantity and having a secure supply. Our bore water allocation has just been cut due to the way allocations are calculated, however, this has been offset by having a long-term contract with Wolf Blass wines to take their waste water.



**The one product I couldn't manage my course without is...** Soil wetting agents, because our local sand which is mined on site is very hydrophobic.

**What are some pros and cons of being a regional superintendent?** I can't really think of any cons apart from sometimes having to wait for machinery spare parts. There are a lot of pros including short travelling time to work, no traffic, fresh air, times when you are the only person on the course and personally knowing most members.

**Are expectations of course presentation and conditioning any less than that placed on your metropolitan counterparts?** At our club most of our members understand that we have limited resources and therefore our course won't look like Augusta National every day. The secret is to communicate to the members, telling them why you have done something the way that you have or why some things haven't been done.

**Above: Barossa Valley is a two-man show with superintendent Stephen Chapman (left) and assistant Martin Potts maintaining the course**

**Far left: Barossa Valley Golf Club is located in Nurioopta which is about 75km north of Adelaide in South Australia's wine growing heartland. It has 320 members and attracts some 15,600 rounds annually**

## AT A GLANCE - BAROSSA VALLEY GOLF CLUB

**Where in the world is Barossa Valley Golf Club?** Barossa Valley Golf Club (BVGC) is located in Nurioopta which is about 75km north of Adelaide in South Australia's wine growing heartland.

**Course specs:** The BVGC is an 18-hole 6026-metre par 72 course with SR1019 bentgrass greens, Santa ana tees and fairways and common couch roughs.

**Members:** 320.

**Annual number of rounds:** Approx 15,600.

**Major tournaments/events:** The Barossa Valley Open Golf Week is held each October and a celebrity golf day which last year featured West Indies cricket legend Sir Viv Richards and Rodney Hogg.

**Annual course management budget:** \$75,000 excluding wages.

**Staff structure:** Stephen Chapman (course superintendent) and Martin Potts (assistant superintendent).

**Climate:** Very hot summers (often 36oC-plus) and cold winters with frequent frosts. Average rainfall is 500mm.

**Water sources:** We have 3 water sources:

- Bore water – 50ML
- Winery waste water – 40ML
- Mains water – 5ML

**Irrigation system:** Toro SitePro controller with Osmac satellites. Greens sprinklers are Hunter LT 500s with a mixture of G500's and



**Some of Barossa Valley Golf Club's local residents**

131s on the fairways.

**Cutting heights:** Greens are cut at 3.5mm, tees and surrounds at 12mm and fairways at 16mm.

**Renovations:** The greens are cored twice a year with 12mm hollow tines then topdressed.

**Major disease pressures:** We do not have a lot of problems with disease apart from the occasional outbreak of winter fusarium which we treat with either Baycor or Rovral.





Barossa Valley Golf Club is a 6026-metre par 72 course with SR1019 bentgrass greens, Santa ana tees and fairways and common couch roughs

**Do you have to be more resourceful as a regional-based superintendent?** I think you do have to be more resourceful and our motto is 'Beg, borrow, scrounge'. Over the years we have built a lot of things using second-hand materials including an 18m x 12m shed using old bore casings and telephone poles.

**If you could change one thing about your job as a regional superintendent what would it be and why?** I don't think I would change anything, although it would be nice to have a bigger budget. However, in saying that, the challenge of achieving results with limited resources is very satisfying.

**How important are the relationships you have with other nearby country course supers/trade reps?** Steve O'Donnell from the Tanunda Pines Golf Club and I have a very good working relationship. We lend each other machinery and talk to each other about issues we may have on our courses.

**Given your distance from the major metro areas, how do you make sure you keep abreast of the latest turf management techniques and methods?** We are only one hour from Adelaide so I am able to attend most SAGCSA meetings and trade days.

The Australian Turfgrass Management Journal and AGCSA website are also very useful.

**What are some of the more unusual requests/things you have had to do as a regional course superintendent (not necessarily turf management related)?** I was once asked to remove a very large male kangaroo (which was injured and not happy) from the middle of the 11th fairway. I wasn't going anywhere near the bloody thing!

**What have you got in your shed?**

- Toro 3150 greens mower
- John Deere 2653A surrounds mower
- Toro 325D rough cutter
- John Deere 365 fairway mower
- Case 3230 tractor with front end loader
- Toro MDX Workman utility vehicle

**Which piece of machinery gets trashed the most and if you had a wish list what would be the next major ticket item that you would like to purchase and why?** Our rough cutter definitely gets trashed

Still going strong – the club's 1961 International tractor with front end loader



## OFF THE COURSE - STEPHEN CHAPMAN

**Any claims to fame outside of turf management?** I used to play football, cricket, basketball and tennis but wasn't much good at any of them. I am also a crap golfer.

**Favourite sporting team?** I like watching any AFL team play.

**What book are you reading now?** ATM Journal.

**Golf handicap?** 22.

**Favourite golfer?** Craig Parry.

**The best thing about the Barossa Valley (aside from the golf club) is...** The wine of course; it's the best in the world!

**What do you do to get away from it all?** Go fishing.



the most so that's the machine I would most like to replace because I am sick of lying underneath it trying to fix things.

**Do you have any interesting pieces of machinery which have been manufactured out of necessity or any old pieces of equipment that you keep alive?** We have a 1961 International tractor with a front end loader attachment that still gets us out of trouble when we need it (they don't make 'em the way they used to!)

**Do you think regional/country superintendents have a better work-life balance than their metro counterparts?** I don't think it matters whether you are in the city or the country you just have to make time to do things other than work.

**Favourite spot on your course?** 19th hole!

**Most pleasing/rewarding moment during your time as Barossa Valley Golf Club superintendent?** Seeing our greens remain playable during a Pro-Am when we had 127mm of rain before and during the event.

**Name three golf courses that you would like most to visit and why?** I would like to see any of the courses that host the Majors because of their history. 🌳



**The original Barossa Valley Golf Club layout still remains today and is surrounded by vineyards which supply grapes for the famous Penfolds Grange Hermitage**

**One of Chapman's turf management challenges is maintaining bentgrass greens with very poor quality irrigation water (2200ppm TDS)**



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## AUSTRALIAN GOLF INDUSTRY COUNCIL DELEGATION DESCENDS ON CANBERRA



**The Australian Golf Industry Council delegation visited Canberra in mid-November to continue the campaign of creating awareness about the \$2.9 billion Australian golf industry**

The Australian Golf Industry Council (AGIC), of which the AGCSA is a member, spent a day in Canberra in mid-November meeting with various Ministers and Shadow Ministers to continue the campaign of creating awareness about the \$2.9 billion Australian golf industry. This was the second AGIC delegation to Canberra in as many years and provided an opportunity to put before the government a number of initiatives that the golf industry wishes to undertake.

No more than 24 hours after capturing the 2010 JBWere Australian Masters, his first PGA Tour of Australasia title in nearly 10 years, Stuart Appleby swapped the fairways of The Victoria Golf Club for the hallways of Parliament House to be part of the AGIC delegation. Alongside eight-time LPGA winner Rachel Hetherington and AGIC representatives,

including AGCSA general manager John Neylan, the delegation met with Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Opposition Leader Tony Abbott and a range of other Ministers and their representatives covering a diversity of portfolios.

The Prime Minister was also invited to be the Honorary Chair of the Presidents Cup, as is her US counterpart. The AGIC were afforded a meeting with her to discuss the value of the golf industry in terms of health and well-being and economic value. Following the series of meetings, Appleby and Hetherington spoke at a dinner attended by more than 40 parliamentarians and the AGIC delegation where they talked about their love for the game and their desire to see the industry continue to prosper.

"The meetings were a great success for the delegation and I think we will see many outcomes as a result," says Max Garske, chief executive of the PGA of Australia and Chair of the AGIC. "This trip to Canberra was part of the AGIC's commitment to present a unified voice to those who can help influence the future of our industry, and with each year that passes our relationships with all levels of government are becoming more prominent and more influential."

The AGIC was established in late 2006 to provide a forum to help unite the industry on agreed industry-wide initiatives. The AGIC is made up of representatives from the AGCSA, Australian Ladies Professional Golf, Australian Sporting Goods Association, Golf Australia, Golf Management Australia, PGA of Australia and the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects.



**Around 20 turned out to the first of the AGCSA's informal regional walk and talk sessions at Horton Park Golf Club on the Sunshine Coast**

## HORTON PARK HOSTS AGCSA'S FIRST REGIONAL TURF SESSION

In the second week of November, the AGCSA successfully hosted the first of its regional 'walk and talk' sessions at Horton Park Golf Club on the Sunshine Coast. AGCSA general manager John Neylan, together with host superintendent and AGCSA Board member Pat Pauli, led a group of nearly 20 local superintendents and turf managers on a walk around the course during which time a wide range of turf and golf course management issues were discussed.

During the three-and-a-half hour session the group had a chance to inspect the couch plots that Pauli and his team had maintained as part of the DEEDI-AGCSA Warm-Season Greens Grass Trial (HAL Project TU05001) and discuss the impacts of organic matter accumulation, shade and cutting heights.

The group also examined plots of 328 and Champion and the differences in surfaces they can produce. Throughout the morning there was also vigorous discussion on other matters including OH&S, hazardous goods storage and the impact of mites and couchfly.

"It was an outstanding success and I think everyone who attended got something out of it," says Neylan. "The key to the day was having a superintendent like Pat who was able to contact other superintendents in his region and help organise the day. He was able to get some questions from those who attended prior to the day and we were able to use them as a platform for discussion."

"Also important was that Pat was prepared to use his course as a venue and as well as looking at some of the good things he was achieving he was willing to look at some problem areas on the course to help generate discussion. The AGCSA hopes to host further days such as the one at Horton Park and we think these kinds of days would be invaluable. We would like to hear from other regional superintendents and turf managers if they are interested and together we can help organise the day."

To discuss the possibility of having such sessions at your course or in your region, please contact AGCSA general manager John Neylan or call the AGCSA on (03) 9548 8600.



## AGCSA BOOKSHOP

The AGCSA has access to a huge variety of turf management books and can offer members substantial discounts off the retail price of many titles. A full list of books currently available through the AGCSA Bookshop can be viewed through the AGCSA website <http://www.agcsa.com.au/products/books>. The website also contains reviews which have appeared in ATM over the years.

Please note that the prices contained within the list are subject to change due to exchange rates. If you want to order a book call the Lyndel Conway on (03) 9548 8600 or email [info@agcsa.com.au](mailto:info@agcsa.com.au) to confirm exact price and shipping costs.

## Color Atlas of Turfgrass Weeds

### A Guide to Weed Identification and Control Strategies (2nd Edition)

By Bert McCarty, John Everest, David Hall, Tim Murphy and Fred Yelverton

Wiley (2008)

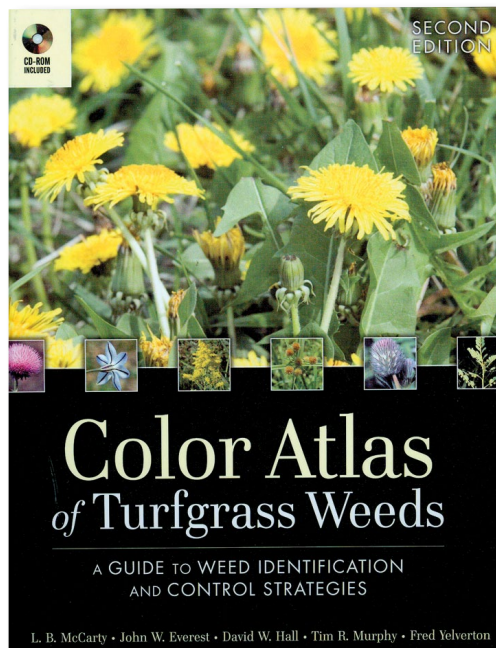
For more than a decade, Color Atlas of Turfgrass Weeds has been one of the leading authorities for turf and horticulture industry professionals in their ongoing quest to control weeds.

Released in early 2008, the second edition of the Bert McCarty, John Everest, David Hall, Tim Murphy and Fred Yelverton authored hard-cover book, which stretches to more than 420 pages (some 150 pages more than the first edition), has been updated to provide greater control information.

This expanded edition includes 50 new weed profiles, plus 400 additional, high-quality, full-colour photographs of weeds in habitat, seedhead or flower, and in some cases what the weed looks like when dormant. Each weed is alphabetically arranged by family and scientific name.

After an introductory chapter which briefly touches on general weed identification, developing a weed management programme and control options, the bulk of the book is broken into two major chapters – grass and grass-like plants and broadleaf plants – with each page dedicated to a specific weed. There is also a small chapter dedicated to mosses.

Each entry contains a description of the weed, its means of propagation and distribution (not just in America) while the authors also provide very useful information on control strategies (note that some of the products mentioned are only available in the US and Australian turf managers will need to check whether they are appropriate).



At the rear of the book there is a handy glossary of taxonomic terminology and an index to common and scientific plant names. The appendix contains tables on turfgrass species' respective tolerances to various pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicides. Also listed are efficacy ratings for various pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicides.

One of the great additional features of this second edition is the inclusion of a CD ROM which features an image bank of more than 1000 photographs, valuable control strategies and recommendations for every weed presented in the book.

**The AGCSA currently has a number of copies of Color Atlas of Turfgrass Weeds (2nd Edition) which can be shipped immediately. AGCSA members can pick up a copy for just \$170 (non-member price \$205).** 🌱

## ALSO CURRENTLY AVAILABLE THROUGH THE AGCSA BOOKSHOP....



**Australian Native Seeds Manual**  
by Ian Chivers and Kath Raulings  
(2009)

**AGCSA member price:** \$18.95

**Non-member price:** \$19.95



**Compendium of Turfgrass Diseases**  
(Third Edition) by Richard Smiley, Peter Dernoeden and Bruce Clarke (2005)

**AGCSA member price:** \$98

**Non-member price:** \$110



**Turfgrass and Landscape Irrigation Water Quality: Assessment and Management** by R Duncan, R. Carrow and M. Huck (2009)

**AGCSA member price:** \$165

**Non-member price:** \$195



**Growing Media for Ornamental Plants and Turf (4th Edition)** by Kevin Handreck and Neil Black (2010)

**AGCSA member price:** \$65

**Non-member price:** \$79.95



**Turfgrass: Science and Culture** by James B. Beard (1973)

**AGCSA member price:** \$280

**Non-member price:** \$323



**Rootzones, Sands and Topdressing Materials for Sports Turf** by Dr Stephen Baker (2006)

**AGCSA member price:** \$42

**Non-member price:** \$58



**The Superintendents Guide to Putting Green Speed** by Thomas A. Nikolai (2005)

**AGCSA member price:** \$99

**Non-member price:** \$125



**Managing Healthy Sports Fields** by Paul Sachs (2006)

**AGCSA member price:** \$99

**Non-member price:** \$115



**VGCSA Turf Management Safety DVD** (2008)

**Price:** \$38



**Fertilisers for Turf** (2002)

**AGCSA member price:** \$25.50

**Non-member price:** \$35



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**Matt Roche and Jon Penberthy with the \$5000 cheque which was raised during the recent GCSAQ Turf Research Golf Day held at Peregrine Springs on the Sunshine Coast**

Well, a strange old start to our spring/summer up north with the wet season arriving early at most centres on the coastal fringe and temperatures well below average. After a fairly normal October for our northern friends in Hamilton Island and Mackay, November delivered more than 500mm of rain. It obviously moved slowly down the coast as yours truly recorded the same and parts of Brisbane and Noosa copped 400mm for the month of October.

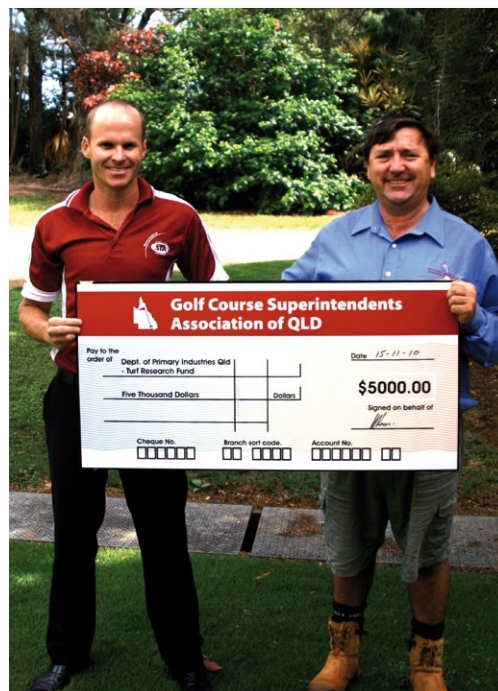
November was also a strange month with only about 60mm falling on most of Brisbane and the south east coast, but that was recorded over about 16 days. With a distinct lack of sunlight and warmth, most couch greens struggled to get moving and recover from winter stresses. Renovations were also hard hit by the rain across Queensland with many delayed or in some cases postponed, much to the delight of the golfers. Those of us with bentgrass greens were somewhat quietly pleased with the cooler temperatures!

Our major annual golf day fundraiser for turf research was held this year at Warren Green's Peregrine Springs Golf Club on the sunny Sunshine Coast. An exceptional day greeted us and the course was waiting to be torn apart. Numbers were down a bit on past years thanks to Tiger's appearance in Melbourne that same weekend, nevertheless those that ventured out to Peregrine Springs were treated to a great course and excellent hospitality in the clubhouse.

On the golf course it was the team of GCSAQ sponsor Total Eden, ably led by Steve Moncrieff, which took home first prize. Steve was assisted in his efforts by Paul Kleinschmidt, Vincent Tassone and Dave McClurg with Dave also snaring a nearest the pin prize. Charlie Giffard's Indooroopilly team ran second with host Warren leading his team into third place.

Other winners on the day were AGCSA board member and Horton Park superintendent Pat Pauli, Hyatt Coolum's Brendan Graham and Shane Hodda

**The winning Total Eden team of Steve Moncrieff, Paul Kleinschmidt, Vincent Tassone and Dave McClurg**



from Robina Golf Club picking up the other NTPs. Peter Abel smashed a drive out there that was hard to beat and took out the longest drive prize. Many thanks are due to our major sponsor of the day Twin View Turf and to our stalwart clubs Indooroopilly, Headland, Horton Park and Virginia who have not missed one of these days yet.

But the main winner of the day was turf research in Queensland, with a cheque for \$5000 presented by GCSAQ treasurer Dave Morrison (course superintendent Windaroo Lakes Golf Club) to a very grateful Matt Roche and Jon Penberthy from DEEDI. We are currently in discussions with the boys as to where this year's funds will be allocated.

In 2010 our funds were used to purchase a 'muffle furnace' which is used for ignition testing. This is a process where a turf sample is weighed then placed in the furnace to burn off any organic matter and then re-weighed to determine how much organic matter it contained. This will be an ideal tool when work on thatch reduction techniques is rolled out. Penbo also reports that the furnace doubles as an excellent pie warmer on those cold winter days in the breezy corridors at Redlands Research Station.

And finally, speaking of everyone's favourite 'experimentalist', if you find it a mouthful to say that you are a golf course superintendent and explain what you do for a living, get a load of Penbo's latest moniker – Technical Officer (Turf), Horticulture and Forestry Sciences, Agri-Science Queensland, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation! Now breathe...

**PETER LONERGAN  
PRESIDENT, GCSAQ**



It is with great sadness that I begin this column with the news of the recent passing of one of our dear life members Harry Smith. The former superintendent of New Brighton Golf Club passed away on 11 November 2011, the day of his 93rd birthday.

The NSWGCSA had planned a 'history day' on 9 December at the renamed Shelley Beach Golf Club on the Central Coast where all our life members participated in an open forum discussion on their history with the association, changes they have seen throughout the industry and some good old tales and stories during their glory days.

Unfortunately Harry was unable to hold on until that day, but he was well remembered by colleagues Reg McClaren, Peter McMaugh, Albert Wallace, Geoff Hatton and Bill Hopkinson, along with other stewards of our industry, who regaled attendees with some fantastic tales of years gone by.

The NSWGCSA Board has been looking into developing some membership and trade packages for the coming renewal period early in 2011. With restructuring of membership and packages made available for our trade supporters and advertisers, it is hoped this will provide a better option for those who support the NSWGCSA financially throughout the year. With our membership lower

than expected, Alison Jones has been continuing with the membership drive with the assistance and closer relationship with the NSWGA.

Other recent NSWGCSA events included the education day at Castle Hill Country Club (host superintendent Martyn Black). This included a tour of the irrigation upgrade currently underway at Castle Hill, discussions on the regulation changes for pumping from the Hawkesbury/Nepean River system for irrigation purposes and its effects to the turf industry, and the AGCSA water initiative. The day also included a tour to Lynwood Country Club and Dad & Dave's turf farm.

Our Christmas Cruise event returned on 24 November with around 70 people attending the function on Sydney Harbour. Despite the swell that whipped up I am pleased to report that there were no casualties. I must thank our sponsors Dad & Dave's Turf Supplies, Barmac and MyResults.

The NSWGCSA wishes everyone the best for a safe and happy holiday season. We hope that the weather is kind to us all over the holiday periods so that we can all enjoy some quality time with our families and friends.

**CRAIG WRIGHT**  
PRESIDENT, NSWGCSA



**Attendees at the NSWGCSA education day at Castle Hill Country Club in late October were able to examine the club's major irrigation upgrade project as well as hear from life member Peter McMaugh**

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South Australia has experienced cooler than average spring conditions with good rainfall right through October and November. This was the opposite last year with record heatwaves recorded from the middle to end of November. However, I am sure the heat is just around the corner, all part and parcel of living in this great state.

Recently the SAGCSA held an education day at Riverside Golf Club with the format for the day focusing on construction. The morning saw perfect conditions for the golf and congratulations go to Sam Fraser from Mt Osmond Golf Club who took out the honours.

Host superintendent Stuart Gillespie and course architect Neil Crafter then took the group on a course walk, looking at the new construction works undertaken at Riverside. Stuart explained that after years of storing fill, the club decided to use this in the redesign of the course, in particular on holes 10, 17 and 18.

This has seen big changes with reconstruction of new tees, greens and contouring of fairways. A big feature was the mounding surrounding the holes which have created an amphitheatre type feel when you stand on the green. Neil was excellent as he shared with us his thoughts and the processes involved in dealing with civil contractors, the club board and the course superintendent.

Neil also spoke about the challenge of golf course design on a small parcel of land like Riverside, yet still creating a challenging and enjoyable course

for the members. We very much thank Neil for his time as he gave us a wonderful insight during the course walk.

A whole lot of credit should go to Stuart and his crew at Riverside as they have done a brilliant job during what has been a long haul. Those boys must be sick of the sight of sod, but just think of the end result lads and I am sure you will look back and be proud of what you have achieved. Everyone I spoke to afterwards are keen to go back and see the final product which should be complete in a year or two.

After the tour we heard from Stefan Palm from Paul Munns Instant Turf who gave us an insight into some new product range and some developing grasses. The final presentation was from Daniel Healy from Neutrog Fertilisers who spoke on the company's range of organic fertilisers and soil amendments. After this we ventured to the shed for a gourmet BBQ, which really hit the spot and gave everyone a chance to catch up. It was fantastic to see a great attendance on the day and it certainly made all the preparations worthwhile.

The next SAGCSA meeting is in February 2011 at Royal Adelaide Golf Club (host superintendent Jeff Kaines) focusing on irrigation. I am looking forward to that. Finally, I hope everyone has a great Christmas and New Year and I wish everyone success over summer.

**SAM SHERRIFF**  
PRESIDENT, SAGCSA

## TGAA VIC

**Former TGAA VIC committee members John Neylan (past president), Ashley Miller (past vice-president) and Ian Beel (past secretary) celebrate at the TGAA VIC 21st birthday celebrations held at Trinity Grammar in November**

What a start it has been to spring this year with great sunny days followed by some real old fashioned wet spring days.

The TGAA Victoria committee has held some fantastic days in what has been a very busy end to the year. The major event of recent times was the TGAA VIC's 21st birthday celebrations at Trinity Grammar that was attended by around 35 past and present committee members. It was great to see some of the 'older' committee mixing with the current day committee and members.

Bruce Stephens from Anco Turf gave a brief rundown of the history of the association, with an explanation of how the first meeting eventuated. This meeting was attended by around 400 dedicated turf managers who saw the need for such an association to cater for a wider industry base.

A big thank you to all who attended the night and who have supported the association over the last 21 years. We look forward to the next 21 years and your continued support.

We also recently held our Summer Seminar on 24 November with around 90 delegates turning



up to Melbourne's new AAMI Park to listen to a variety of speakers. Thank you to all speakers who presented on the day.

Looking forward to 2011, I hope you all had a fantastic Christmas and New Year, and hope all is travelling well so far for this year. We have some exciting things planned for 2011 so stay tuned. On 16 March our annual Regional Seminar will be at the QE Oval in Bendigo. In May, the TGAA VIC will host a Trade Day, while the ever popular Cricket Wicket Seminar will be held at the MCG on 20 July.

**NATHAN TOVEY**  
PRESIDENT, TGAA VICTORIA



The STA in Queensland had its last outing for 2010 with a bus trip to the Sunshine Coast in mid-October. The day started at Ballymore with a real BBQ feast put on by Scott Wallis before heading off to our first stop at Caboolture Turf.

Tony Cross gave everyone a first-hand tour of the facility and explained the process of growing turf, right from harvest to the next harvest. He also explained that they have the ability to do special orders for customers.

The tour then moved on to Corbould Park race track at Caloundra, home to the Sunshine Coast Turf Club. The initial building of the track was completed in July 1985 and was the first major Queensland racecourse built outside of the Brisbane metropolitan area for over 50 years.

In April 2008 it became home of the first synthetic racing and training surface in Queensland. The 'Cushion Track' is the first of its kind in Australia and differs from the synthetic tracks currently in use in Victoria. It has been designed for Queensland conditions and in particular Corbould Park. The Cushion Track has replaced the sand track and consists of a mixture of long and short synthetic fibres, rubber, silicon sand and wax.

Everybody on the tour was amazed at the volume of work the Corbould Park guys get through

on a daily basis. How would you like to move 1.9 kilometres of railing in one day with five guys. This job alone made some of those present feel like their job isn't so bad after all.

Murray Weeding and Col explained the extensive testing they undertake on the grass and synthetic tracks on a daily basis which again was an eye opener for all. After this we had a tour of the new stables and facilities that house up to 300 horses, with the prospect of that number doubling in the coming years.

The final stop of the day was Stockland Park at Kawana where Brian Perrin led everyone around the facility and explained the level of use they have on the main stadium oval. They provided a nice T-bone lunch for everybody and it was great to have them as part of the day.

A lucky draw prize was held on the way back home with a 100litre esky and some BCF vouchers up for grabs. It was a great day and if there was a down side it was that not all the members got to enjoy it. Keep an eye open for the first event on the STA QLD calendar for 2011 which will fall in March; you won't want to miss this one!

PETER SEMOS  
COMMITTEE, STA QLD



The STA QLD Sunshine Coast bus trip in mid-October visited the likes of Sunshine Coast Turf Club's Corbould Park race track (above) and Caboolture Turf (below)



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**H**ello fellow greenies! This is the first instalment of a regional report from the Lower North Coast Course Superintendents Group (LNCGCSG). This is a newly formed group of golf course greenkeepers who span from Hawks Nest in the south to Coffs Harbour in the north of NSW.

This group has been born out of the need and want to have guest speakers on topics relevant to us and our climate. Also we believe we didn't see our fellow greenies often enough due to the distance between courses. We feel we are disadvantaged as far as training goes as we are usually expected to drive to Sydney for a brief education day. To most of us, sadly this is not an option.

We have had two meetings thus far with the first meeting held at Camden Haven Country Club on 28 July 2010. The meeting began with a brief welcome from the club general manager before an informal discussion round-table style was held. It was decided that we should meet quarterly and we discussed the area we should try to cover. A database of phone numbers and email addresses was shared between all and it was also decided to invite a guest speaker to each of the meetings to talk on topics of our choice.

At this meeting a steering committee was also formed which comprises of Steven Brennan (Port Macquarie Golf Club), Mark Bird (Camden Haven Country Club) and David Stewart (Forster Tuncurry Golf Club).

One of the highlights of day was the discussion started by Gary Forster, course superintendent at Wauchope Country Club. Gary spoke of his passion for Tifdwarf as a golf green surface compared to 328 and bent. Gary was one of the first to introduce Tifdwarf to the lower north coast on bowling greens, and some of us told him that's where it should stay! As we are on the border of bent and couch for use on greens, it was certainly a lively discussion. He also informed us Tifdwarf uses less chemical than bent, much to the horror of Globe reps present!

We then broke for lunch and refreshments, supplied by sponsors of the day Globe Australia and Toro. After watching Andy Stankovic eat two serves of lunch, we headed out on to the golf course for the all important nine holes, which was sponsored by Globe. We would like to thank Mark Bird (host superintendent), the Camden Haven Country Club and our sponsors Globe Australia (Andrew Stankovic and Geoff Bowtell) and Toro (Mark Johnson).

The second LNCGCSG meeting was held at Wauchope Country Club on 27 October 2010. This was the first time we had organised a day involving a speaker discussing topics that we wanted to talk about that related to our area. There were 16 keen greenkeepers and five representatives ready and willing.

Our first guest speaker was Paul Conradt from Bayer who gave a very informative talk on Bayer's range of products and fungicide programming. To Paul's credit he actually mentioned competitor's products in the programmes. One of the highlights was the audience involvement and I actually had to cut Paul short as lunch was due with golf following shortly after. We could have talked for hours!

The nine holes of golf was played on the back nine at Wauchope which was in tournament trim for the 2010 Australian Veteran Golfers Union National Championships, which made for quite a challenge for high markers like myself. I was tempted to put a bandaids on my putter face (slick greens), but all jokes aside the course was in beautiful condition. As an aside, congratulations to Wauchope, Port Macquarie and Camden Haven for hosting this major event in mid-November.

I must thank the 16 greenkeepers that turned up for the day. Please keep up the near 100 per cent attendance, with only two clubs not represented. You own this group, so please make the effort.

Everyone present spoke very highly of the experience which brings me to the point of promoting such greenkeeping groups around Australia. Forming a group like we have is a really good thing to do as you get education, the chance to meet like-minded greenkeepers from your area and also the opportunity to play other golf courses which is always an experience in itself.

Thank you to Wauchope for the use of their facilities and golf trophies and to host superintendent Gary Forster. Last but not least, a big thank you to our sponsors for the day Globe Australia and Bayer Environmental Science.

The next day LNCGCSG group meeting will be held at Port Macquarie Golf Club in early February 2011, after the summer rush.

**DAVID STEWART**  
**LNCGCSG STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Editor's Note: The LNCGCSG now has its own webpage, set up under the state association section on the AGCSA website. This page contains reports from previous meetings and notices about upcoming meetings. You can visit this page at [www.agcsa.com.au/state-association/LNCGCSG](http://www.agcsa.com.au/state-association/LNCGCSG)**

**For upcoming state association events  
 check out the AGCSA website  
[www.agcsa.com.au/event-upcoming](http://www.agcsa.com.au/event-upcoming)**



# THE ADVENTURES OF DGMAN<sup>®</sup>

Vol. 1, No. 5



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One of two LOWARA Dual SV92 Hydrovar controlled irrigation pump sets installed at the Virginia Golf Club in Brisbane by Australian Irrigation Services. Barry Lemke (pictured right) the Club Superintendent said " he is very pleased with the trouble free operation and considers the efficiency and simplicity of the Hydrovar system far superior to the manual pump system it replaced ". Australian Irrigation Services Dean Smith ( pictured left ) said " he had now installed several LOWARA Hydrovar systems at Golf Courses in Brisbane with very pleasing results". The second LOWARA Dual SV92 Hydrovar controlled irrigation pump set will be put into service later this year.

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The Hydrovar has gained a reputation as THE pump mounted microprocessor pumping system controller. But it does much more than just change motor speed.

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The Hydrovar is fully programmable on site as it incorporates the microprocessor and the variable drive in one compact and unique package

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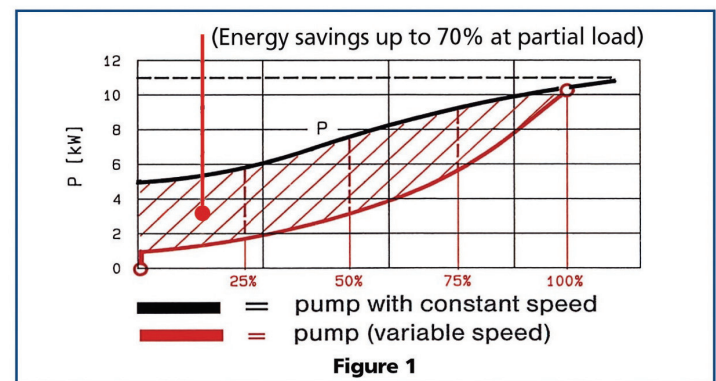
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## How The Hydrovar reduces maintenance cost

The Hydrovar software is designed specifically for centrifugal pump operation, control and protection. The Hydrovar can thus be setup to protect the pump from operating under various unfavourable conditions eg. cavitation, operating against closed head, low NPSHa or operation past a pumps maximum flow rate. The Hydrovar will automatically shut down and alarm if adverse conditions occur.

The Hydrovar provides the Golf Course Superintendent with the flexibility of watering as required with substantial savings on installation, power usage and maintenance. For details about the experience of some of Australia and New Zealands most prestigious Golf Clubs who have installed Hydrovar pumping systems, contact the Lowara distributors nearest you.



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