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November 20, 2007

HOW CROWN III SAVES THE GRASS AT ONE OF BRITAINS OLDEST COURSES



View of 18th hole and Club House at North Berwick Golf Club

The North Berwick Links are the second oldest course in the world where there has been continuous play since 1604. The golf club was founded in 1832 and is the 13th oldest club in the World

North Berwick is one of East Lothian most famous courses, a classic championship links that has many hazards including the beach, streams, bunkers, light rough and low stone walls.



The signature hole is the famous 15th known as the Redan. The West course is the most notable and is regularly sited in "Golf World's" top 100 courses. It is currently 30th in the British Isles.

As well as the North Berwick Club, the course is used by both the Tantallon and Bass Rock Golf Clubs. It comprises of 200 acres of Triple SI countryside and is a Scottish Heritage Site. It is heavily used and the West course takes 50,000 rounds a year.

The Course Superintendent is the highly regarded Stuart Greenwood who has worked there for 16 of his 32 years in the profession.



Starters Lodge

This part of Scotland's east coast is one of the driest parts of Britain, averaging 24 inches per annum over the last few years. This gives Stuart a range of problems, which include heavy erosion; which is increased by the popularity of the Links with visiting parties of all nationalities.

Prior to the year 2000 in an attempt to overcome some of the wear problems, he had adopted the use of synthetic turf in certain difficult parts of the course and the rest was

returfed every year. At that time his consultant agronomist recommended that he use Crown III. This Patented rubber particulate material had been used in the USA for several years with great success and was introduced to the UK in 1999 by Tebbutt Associates.

He applies the Crown III using a hollow corer, going down to 3-4 inches, removing the cores and brushing into the holes along with the seed. He has also used a verti-drain technique successfully on the more accessible parts of the course, this is now more widely used and requires 20-25mm solid tines, taken down to 5-6 inches, then drop spreading 6 kilos/sq.m the results are as good if not better than with the hollow corer. In both cases he over seeds and protects the area until he has a good head of grass, which has mown twice before it is released for use.

Stuart Greenwood concludes that the use of Crown III is economic, as it has eliminated 75% of his returfing. He is now down to less than 50 sq.m per annum and says that he will get rid of all surface turfing within two years. He only requires to reapplying Crown III once every three years except in the very heavy traffic areas

The next areas in line for treatment were six Bridge crossing, four wall crossings, a green apron, walk offs from tees and greens and the shore path line on the second hole were treated over the next three years. He remarked that for the first time for years they have grass on the shore path area at the end of the season.

He says that the treated areas where a minimum of six kilos per sq metre have been used, have not had to be returfed for three years.



Wall crossing treated with crown III showing grassed surface

