



# GOLF MANAGEMENT

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NUMBER 146 | SPRING 2024

## Toro Enhances IntelliDash Irrigation and Fleet Management Platform



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"BREXIT IS ALSO HAVING A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT IN EUROPE, WITH  
THE LOSS OF FREE MOVEMENT BEING FELT IN SEVERAL SECTORS,  
INCLUDING GOLF"

## FAIR COMMENT

There is an old adage in the English language along the lines of 'never discuss politics or religion in polite company'. Since 2016, in the UK, there's a third topic one should not bring up if one aims to stay on good terms with the gathered company: Brexit. However, I'm going to risk somebody's wrath by raising the subject.

Recent analysis of the UK economy by Goldman Sachs has determined it is now worse off than before Brexit — which will come as no surprise to anybody who lives in Britain, and has a UK passport. The figure the analysts settled on was five per cent against other comparable countries.

But the fallout of Brexit is also having a detrimental effect in Europe, with the loss of free movement being felt in several sectors, including golf. Twice, recently, when visiting clubs on the Iberian peninsula, I found myself engaged in a discussion with GMs on the topic of young UK golf professionals. Previously, young UK pros would work a season at leading European courses, learning their trade and gaining valuable experience. Additionally, according to my GM acquaintances, they would, in turn, help to develop young, local talent, who don't have the same history with golf, and, consequently, help service levels at the club improve.

For the club — and the GM — this was an invaluable by-product of the young pro's learning curve. But that's been lost now because of the rule that states they can work only 90 days in 180 before having to leave the Schengen area — unless they can obtain an expensive, and often complicated, work visa...

**READ THE FULL COMMENT ONLINE**  
[golfmanagement.online/comment/146](https://golfmanagement.online/comment/146)



### Words

Michael Lenihan  
Publisher



# FEATURING

## SPRING 2024



## CALLUM NICOLL

### FAIRMONT ST ANDREWS

"I was taking the golf bag out of the back of the car with the wind coming sideways, when I got a phone call letting me know about a retail manager's job at the Els Club in Dubai, and it was like, 'when do you want me to start'".

# 22



## MARK ADDISON

### JCB GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

"I understand and accept why we exist, including the privacy of the club. However a lot of golfers here are guests of our members which is great to be able to offer them the JCB experience."

# 26



# RADOMÍR HOLEČA

## PENATI GOLF RESORT

"In 1995, my Mum went to America on a business trip, and returned with a set of golf clubs and I remember asking her what they hell they were. I was 15 at the time, and I'd never seen a golf ball, yet alone a set of golf clubs."

30



# MOLLEY PAVEY

## BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB

"I'd say our average age is between 30 and 35. We are a young team, which is nice because we're all developing together. Our oldest member of staff is 55, and he's our head chef. Our head greenkeeper is only 39."

34



# BENGT RITTRI

## BLUEWATER GROUP

"Some people don't think golf is environmentally friendly, but we want to show that here is one of the areas where golf can be leading, being plastic free and taking care of the environment, using local water and bottling it."

42

"AS THE ONLY PROVIDER OF BOTH GOLF COURSE EQUIPMENT AND IRRIGATION, TORO IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO SUPPLY THIS INFORMATION TO COURSES VIA A SINGLE DASHBOARD"



## COVER STORY

TORO.COM



Golf course managers can monitor, manage, track and maintain the health of their operations all in one place with the recently updated IntelliDash platform from Toro.

With just a glance, course managers can view real-time operational data, including agronomic conditions, labour, asset location and equipment health. Additionally, course managers can use data to simplify course operations, improve efficiency and effectively allocate resources.

"The new updates we've introduced to the IntelliDash platform bring together key course elements to provide course managers and superintendents greater visibility to course health and unique access to equipment fleet and irrigation data," commented Norma Frotton, product marketing manager for the Toro golf irrigation business.

"As the only provider of both golf course equipment and irrigation, Toro is uniquely positioned to supply this information to courses via a single dashboard — and we're committed to ongoing enhancements that will evolve this critical platform.

Toro IntelliDash combines equipment and irrigation data to provide the ultimate golf course management dashboard. No other dashboard comes close to providing golf course professionals the data, mobility and customisation tools they need to help them efficiently move through their day.

For agronomic conditions, IntelliDash will continue to integrate popular Toro products like Lynx Central Control, which aggregates

essential irrigation information to better manage water and resources while maximising course playability and aesthetics.

This alliance is built from key industry partnerships to maximise the IntelliDash single platform experience.

Since its launch in July 2022, Toro has continuously developed and implemented new features to ensure the dashboard is a productive tool for course managers, and the latest enhancements, announced last month include updates to myTurf Pro Integration, which provides active myTurf Pro customers with access to the IntelliDash platform with their Pro subscription.

The Geofencing facility — which allows remote monitoring of digital boundaries and keeps equipment within designated course areas, ensuring proper use of equipment while providing protection for off-limits or wet areas of the course that need special care — has also been updated.

IntelliDash is also able to calculate weather averages by combining multiple weather services for informed predictions, and furthermore, can forecast water loss estimates from soil several days in advance.

Reflecting the global appeal, IntelliDash is available in numerous language options including English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Dutch, and Thai.

And finally, the 'What's new on Toro IntelliDash' keeps users informed of the latest features and widgets to get the most from the platform. **END**



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The Scandinavian, DEN  
Barsebäck, SWE  
Heritage Resort, MAU  
Royal Auckland, NZ  
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ONE OF THE BONUSES WAS MEETING A NINE-YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO  
WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT GOLF"



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# WOMEN'S GOLF STILL LIPPING OUT

A sports journalist by trade, I have always remembered what was said to me on my first professional commission, covering county cricket – not one of my specialist sports – at The Oval. In the press lounge I got talking to one guy who looked 'old school' and admitted to some nerves, as I was still at college at the time and was not as knowledgeable on cricket as I would have liked.

"Don't worry, dear boy," he smiled. "I normally cover rugby league. It's all the same words, just in a different order."

His words have stuck with me ever since. Obviously, it's not strictly true: different sports use different terminology; non-sports stories require a different approach completely, but the who, what, where, why, when, and how, remain the same today. What his words had done was give me the confidence to approach any written task and I remain eternally grateful to a guy whose name is still unknown to me to this day. So much for the journalist's inquisitive mind...

Which leads me to how, back in 2005, I had a foot in both camps: journalism and PR. I was involved in the launch of the London Golf Show and one of the bonuses was meeting a nine-year-old girl who was passionate about golf and was already a better player than I ever could be. Not surprisingly, she attracted a lot of attention. Which was quite an achievement at that show, as a fashion stage, featuring long-legged lovelies of both genders sporting the latest in golfing apparel, garnered a crowd three deep twice a day, and provided the attending snappers with a great opportunity to offer picture editors with 'something different'.

But a nine-year-old with a seemingly perfect golf swing, a cheeky grin and an accommodating golf simulator proved equally popular. That young girl is, at the time of writing, ranked eighth in the Rolex Rankings – one of only two Europeans in the top 20. Yet Charley Hull had, arguably, more media coverage as a nine-year-old at a golf show than she has exposure for being in the world's top 10.

That wouldn't be the case if she were male; we'd know what she had for breakfast and be able to recite all the brands she wore and played. Women's football coverage is off the scale at the moment, and rightly so, but women's golf still seems to lag behind the male game when it comes to media coverage, though it can be just as thrilling. Like women's football, it should not be compared to the male version but seen as a sport in its own right. And boy – or should that be girl – are they good...

I recall being told by a sports editor, a decade or so ago, that his newspaper would only be interested in a story about the first day of the Ladies English Open if Laura Davies were mentioned in the intro. She didn't let me down – and it still seems we have a long way to go. **END**

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## GOLFMANAGEMENT.ONLINE/NEWS



### A TITANIC EVENING AT 59CLUB ANNUAL SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

More than 200 of the finest venues, teams and individuals from many of the leading resorts and clubs across the UK and Ireland descended on the iconic Titanic Hotel in Liverpool on February 29th, 2024, as 59club UK recognised their very best customer service providers of 2023. 59club's prestigious accolades are determined by scores collected from their impartial mystery shopping audits, which evaluates the experience afforded to guests, club members and prospective members all in accordance with 59club's objective benchmarking criteria..

#### **SEARCH '59CLUB' ONLINE**

at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



### LA RÉSERVE GOLF LINKS, MAURITIUS, ACHIEVES GEO CERTIFICATION

La Réserve Golf Links, at Heritage Golf Club, Mauritius, has become the first course in the African region to be awarded GEO Certified Development Status. Recognising developments that exemplify sustainability through fostering nature and enhancing local ecosystems, conserving resources and supporting their communities, the GEO Certified Development status honours projects that have transparently integrated sustainability into their decision-making processes, from initial site selection through to becoming operational.

#### **SEARCH 'HERITAGE GOLF CLUB' ONLINE**

at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



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## DOM PEDRO RESORTS TEAM UP WITH HOW MANY STROKES TO IMPROVE ESG

After some impressive work as general manager at Costa Navarino in Greece, Nuno Sepúlveda is now CEO at Arrow Global Portugal in his native Portugal. With an increased focus on ESG at Arrow, it was a natural next step for Sepúlveda to once again team-up with How Many Strokes — the Digital Information Board & HCP Conversion Table that he also installed at Costa Navarino.

**SEARCH 'ARROW GLOBAL PORTUGAL' ONLINE**

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## CLUB CAR VICE PRESIDENT NATALE HIGHLIGHTS STRONG OUTLOOK

In a statement, Club Car vice president EMEA, Marco Natale, stated that Club Car is extremely well equipped for the future following consecutive record years in 2022 and 2023. In a new video, posted on YouTube, Natale discusses the company's post-Covid success, the doubling of production in Poland and expanding into the street-legal market — plus what's to come in 2024 and beyond.

**SEARCH 'MARCO NATALE' ONLINE**

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## MELANOMA CHARITY SEEKS SPONSORS FOR NEW GOLF SUNBOARDS

As part of the Slip! Slap! Swing! campaign, the Melanoma Fund is launching a sponsored sunboard scheme to get free sunscreen dispensers into 100 golf clubs this year, complimenting their educational resources, to benefit the wellbeing of members and greenkeepers. Each sunboard contains a sunscreen dispenser, loaded with a one litre cartridge of SPF50 Stokoderm sunscreen, and a UV dial to support educational information on how, when, and why to apply.

**SEARCH 'MELANOMA FUND' ONLINE**

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story

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## KINGSWOOD RECRUITS THE R&A SUSTAINABLE AGRONOMY SERVICE

Kingswood Golf and Country Club in Surrey is on a mission to elevate their 1928 James Braid designed golf course by focusing on playing surfaces to heighten player experience and have recruited the expertise of The R&A Sustainable Agronomy Service. Working with their senior agronomist, Simon Watson, a plan has been formulated which includes data driven decision making and a long-range planning within a sustainable mainframe to evolve the parkland course which in its past has hosted the Ladies' European Open.

### SEARCH 'KINGSWOOD' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## TRUMP TURNBERRY BOLSTERS GOLF MANAGEMENT TEAM

Trump Turnberry has strengthened its golf management staff by appointing two industry-leading talents, paving the way to an even brighter future for the iconic venue. Debbie MacMillan has taken up the post of International Golf Business Development Manager, working closely with overseas venues and tour operators to connect an international audience with Turnberry's golf offering, headlined by the world-famous Ailsa course.

### SEARCH 'TURNBERRY' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## STOKE PARK HOST UNDER ARMOUR BIOMECA SWING LAUNCH EVENT

Stoke Park recently hosted the launch of the Under Armour Drive Pro in their newly refurbished state-of-the-art BiomecaSwing Studio. The studio, which contains technology unique to Stoke Park in the UK, is a very exciting addition to Stoke Park's golf facilities, particularly to its golf coaching programme — an element currently open to guests as planning and renovation works are ongoing. The newly refurbished BiomecaSwing Studio includes a TrackMan 4 doppler radar system which can be used both indoors and outdoors to track the flight of the ball and measure club data at the point of impact.

### SEARCH 'STOKE PARK' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](http://golfmanagement.online) for the full story

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## GOLF CLUB DE COMPAGNIE ENTERS THE MODERN ERA WITH HOW MANY STROKES

General manager, Fopke Drijfholt, was relatively new to the golf business when starting his role at Golfclub Landgoed De Compagnie in the Netherlands. With a background in digital marketing and technology, Drijfholt was the right man for the job, especially as the club needed someone to come in and modernise the business. "Making changes in a business like a golf club with a lot of traditions is not an easy task, so it is important to provide modern improvements that is easy for members to accept and embrace," explains Drijfholt.

**SEARCH 'HOW MANY STROKES' ONLINE**  
at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## GRAHAM DOWN APPOINTED NEW GOLF COURSE MANAGER AT BROCKET HALL

Graham Down has been appointed the new golf course manager at Bocket Hall near Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. Down, who will take up the position on March 4, 2024 and will oversee the management and maintenance of the estate's two championship courses, the Melbourne and the Palmerston, named after former Prime Ministers who once resided at Bocket Hall.

**SEARCH 'GRAHAM DOWN' ONLINE**  
at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## BROCKET HALL TO HOST SERIES OF DAVE PELZ SCORING GAME SCHOOLS

Hertfordshire's Bocket Hall is to host a series of shot-saving Dave Pelz Scoring Game Schools between March and October this year. The one, two and three-day sessions are aimed at golfers looking to improve their short game and putting techniques under the guidance of one of the world's leading short game coaches, Dave Pelz, and his highly-trained team. A former physicist, Pelz has dedicated a large part of his life to scientifically analyzing the golf swing and paying particular attention to the short game.

**SEARCH 'BROCKET HALL' ONLINE**  
at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



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## TAYLORMADE GOLF AND TIGER WOODS ANNOUNCE NEW BRAND

TaylorMade Golf and 15-time major champion and 82-time PGA TOUR winner Tiger Woods have announced an extended partnership to launch a new lifestyle brand appropriately named Sun Day Red. As part of the TaylorMade Golf Company, Sun Day Red will be a completely stand-alone brand with a dedicated team of designers and staff, as well as its own headquarters in San Clemente, California. The Sun Day Red brand was created from the ground up to be one of the most sought-after lifestyle brands with a full range of premium apparel and footwear.

### SEARCH 'SUN DAY RED' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## GUY RIGGOTT PROMOTED TO CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF BGL GOLF

Guy Riggott has been promoted to the role of Chief Operating Officer in the Golf Division of BGL with immediate effect. Having joined the business in September 2014 as operations director, Riggott has spearheaded the division's journey while prioritising the development of people within his teams, as well as taking great pride in the sustainability journey BGL has undertaken. He was also required to ensure the prosperity of the golf business throughout the Pandemic.

### SEARCH 'GUY RIGGOTT' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



## FALDO SERIES TO BE POWERED BY GOLF GENIUS FROM 2024 ONWARDS

Golf Genius has announced the Faldo Series as a new customer, effective immediately. Faldo Series will utilise Golf Genius Tournament Management to elevate the end-to-end golfer experience across its three tours — Elite, Junior, and Futures — with elements such as Series Calendars, WHS Handicapping, Online Registration, Payment Processing, Live Scoring and Golfer Communications.

### SEARCH 'FALDO SERIES' ONLINE

at [golfmanagement.online](https://golfmanagement.online) for the full story



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# NEW DESTINATIONS

## WORLDCLASS.GOLF



INFINITEM



It has been a busy couple of months for worldclass.golf – a portfolio of the world's premier golf courses, destinations and resorts – with the addition of two new members... Gloria Golf Resort in Turkey, and Infinitem in Spain.

A shining light in Turkish golf, Gloria Golf Resort is located just 30km away from Antalya International Airport in the popular holiday destination of Belek, and has a five-star venue that is home to three hotels and Turkey's largest golf complex.

Designed by French golf course architect Michael Gayon, Gloria Golf Club consists of 45 holes made up of two 18-hole championship courses and a nine-hole academy course.

Infinitem Golf is home to three outstanding golf courses, each with their own distinct design and layout.

Located near Tarragona on the Costa Dorada, Infinitem offers unique activities and experiences to both its national and international guests, with 45 holes split across three courses all of which complement each other to perfection, two of them designed by golf legend Greg Norman.

The world-class courses are enhanced by the resort's top-end facilities, that are the permanent host of the last stage of the European Tour Q School.

Commenting on the two new additions, CEO of worldclass.golf, Michael Lenihan, said: "What a fantastic way to start 2024 by welcoming two world-class golf venues to the portfolio.

"Both Gloria and Infinitem share similar values, and with 41 member destinations now affiliated to the portfolio, it's clear that worldclass.golf is growing in stature." **END**



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# CALLUM NICOLL

## DIRECTOR OF GOLF & ESTATES, FAIRMONT ST ANDREWS



As a proud Scotsman, few could blame Callum Nicoll for wanting to return to his native homeland following a nine-year spell working in the heat and humidity of the Middle East.

Growing-up on the west coast of Scotland, Nicoll took to golf, like a duck takes to water. Hailing from a golfing family – his uncle, Brian Gunson is general manager at Shady Canyon Golf Club in California – it was always going to be the case that young Callum would want to chance his luck in the golf industry in some capacity.

Aged 18, Nicoll got his first career break whilst trying to find his way as a professional golfer as he explained: "I started my career at Turnberry as an assistant professional and spent five-and-a-half great years there before moving to Prestwick, where I was given the chance to do a little bit of work whilst still playing.

"I had a couple of years trying to make a career for myself as a player," he admits, "but when I got to 27, I had a choice to make especially with the winter coming.

"I did some work for my dad in his company; worked on a building site and even worked in an Amazon factory for a few months over the winter before realising that as ambitious as I was to try and make a success of playing, I didn't want to go through the next two or three winters like this.

"I had a really good network of friends from Turnberry, and their careers were really starting to go in a good direction, which made me realise that after getting some good advice from them that maybe now was the time to think about a change."

And as Nicoll elaborates, change happened a lot quicker than he anticipated.

"I was actually caddying for a friend at Dundonald Links in the Tour School, in howling wind and rain – a typical October day in Scotland," he laughs.

"I was taking the golf bag out of the back of the car with the wind coming sideways, when I got a phone call letting me know about a retail manager's job at the Els Club in Dubai, and it was like, 'when do you want me to start'.

"Three weeks later, I was in Dubai with a whole new wardrobe, and I was in the sunshine."

Nicoll spent six years plying his trade as head professional at the Els Club, before assuming his first managerial role as director of golf at Abu Dhabi Golf Club, a position he held until 2018.

Although Nicoll adjusted to life in the UAE, after a nine-year spell he was ready to move on following a change in his personal life.

"It was not easy playing golf [in those conditions] and it was quite tough," he admits, "but after one or two years you do kind of get mentally used to it. That said, I would rather play golf in 45°C than -3°C."

Nicoll returned to the UK to answer a call from Stephen Follett, CEO of the London Golf Club who persuaded him to take over a temporary role as director of golf, only for Nicoll to stay a tad longer than anticipated.

"I loved working with Stephen and the London Club so much that after five weeks, we came to an agreement, and my temporary position became permanent," he explained.





## "BEING PART OF A RESORT, GUESTS STAYING AT FAIRMONT ST ANDREWS CAN PLAY EARLY IN TOWN AND THEN COME BACK TO THE HOTEL"

Nicoll spent two-and-a-half years throughout Covid working with Follett, before his quest to return north to Scotland took a step in the right direction, when in June 2021, he was appointed director of golf and estates at Rockliffe Hall in County Durham, the same job title he now holds at Fairmont St Andrews.

"Rockliffe Hall is a fantastic resort, with a good golf course and nice facilities," he said. "It's a quality resort with a five-star hotel and a real focus on quality."

And one assumes that the focus on quality, was one of the many attributes which attracted Fairmont St Andrews to Nicoll when an opportunity presented itself just over a year ago to move to the 'Home of Golf'.

Perched atop the cliffs east of the town centre, Fairmont St Andrews currently offers two 18-hole golf courses – the Torrance which is a traditional links-style course, and The Kittocks which is well-known for its backdrop and sea views.

Following the acquisition in 2019 by Great Century – a Hong Kong-based company – plans to amalgamate the courses into one 'world-class' course was approved last year, although the project is now on hold.

Off-course, the five-star Fairmont hotel continues to offer an unrivalled Scottish welcome with Tartan décor throughout the interior in homage to the historic location.

Few hotels in the area can match the world-class levels of comfort and service, and it is with these service levels in mind, that Nicoll hopes to elevate the golf offering.

When any golfer thinks of St Andrews, the Old Course will always be top of any bucket-list, together with the likes of Kingsbarns and the Castle Course. Green fee competition in the area is therefore fierce, and although not as highly regarded as some of its more illustrious neighbours, Fairmont at St Andrews does have a USP, something which Nicoll is keen to exploit.

"The one thing that we do have here – and sometimes I don't like to use the word – is two championship courses, which is quite unique in this location. Quite often you find that one course is outstanding, and the other not quite so good, yet our pricing structure and service levels are the same on both the Torrance and the Kittocks.

"Obviously everyone that comes to St Andrews wants to play the Old Course, but we have a unique offering in that we can offer a great golf experience coupled with a relaxed experience in the evening, all on one site.

"Being part of a resort, guests staying at Fairmont St Andrews can play early in town and then come back to the hotel, have a spot of lunch or a swim, and then nip out again for nine, or 18 holes in the afternoon in a buggy.

"We offer that degree of flexibility and freedom for all guests to have a relaxed experience on a timetable that suits their requirements."

Nicoll is under no illusion that he needs to build recognition of the golf experience at Fairmont St Andrews but is reassured that thanks to the global reach of the Fairmont brand, he will be able to grow visitor numbers, especially from North America which remains a key market for Scottish golf tourism in general.

"We cater for a number of international guests," he said, "and we have a strategy to pinpoint who our key market is and enhance that whole visitor experience – both in the hotel and on the golf course – as much as we can.

"Tiny little improvements and all the small details really do add up and help to create a great day out for guests. I'm working with 59club – as I did at Rockliffe Hall – which is a great tool to compliment your own SOPs and service standards."

Clearly Nicoll must be doing something right, as he and his team at Fairmont St Andrews has just won 59club's coveted Gold Flag for the best resort in the UK.

Now aged 42, Nicoll appears content to be back home in Scotland, and during the off-season has also worked in the hotel as a duty manager enhancing his personal experience and skill set.

With his family now settled in the town, whatever the future holds for Fairmont St Andrews, the owners can rest-assured that the golf experience is clearly in safe hands.

And in whisky parlance, perhaps, one might suggest that any plans to blend both courses should be put on ice, as what the resort already offers is a unique experience at 'The Home of Golf'. **END**







**Words** Steve Wilson  
**Online** [jcbgolfandcountryclub.com](http://jcbgolfandcountryclub.com)

# MARK ADDISON

## GENERAL MANAGER, JCB GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB



Thanks to the backing of an iconic British company associated with breaking ground and constructing new landscapes, JCB Golf and Country Club is set to bulldoze its way on to the elite golfing tournament scene later this year.

The week after the Open Championship at Royal Troon, the sprawling Staffordshire course, which opened in 2018, will play host to a field which is arguably as strong as the one going for the Claret Jug the week before.

LIV Golf presented by JCB takes place July 26–28 at a venue which will certainly not yet be familiar to millions of golf fans. The private club has around 80 corporate members and you will only find your way past the front gate by invitation.

Although if you're lucky enough to get in, you won't be paying a guest rate or a green fee to experience this fantastic place, which also boasts terrific dining, leisure facilities and ten luxurious four-bedroom guest lodges for their visitors.

There's a certain air of mystique about this ambitious vision of JCB chairman Lord Bamford, which was subsequently brought to life by the skills of Robin Hiseman from European Golf Design.

But general manager, Mark Addison, is ready to let the golfing world see for themselves when LIV Golf rolls into town in the summer.

Addison said: "I've been fortunate to be involved with the project from the ground up. When I joined in October 2017, the last fairway had just been seeded. The course design and most of the groundworks had

been done and we opened the course the following June.

"When I first joined, part of the vision was to host championship golf and to be that Tour venue.

"The golf landscape has evolved in recent years and we are pleased to have secured the LIV event. We had some options to consider, but it came down to what we felt was best for the business.

"The intention from JCB was to have a tool to help grow its brand globally and we're excited about how the club can contribute towards this.

"We've had two Legends Tour events with Darren Clarke as host and other big names such as Ernie Els, Vijay Singh, Colin Montgomerie and John Daly – it was a really strong field.

"We also did two years of Rose Series events which we learnt a lot from as our first introduction to tournament golf.

"This is us opening the doors for the week, giving people the chance to enjoy some fantastic hospitality, see this amazing golf course and watch some world class golf," he said.

Addison has youth on his side aged just 35, but already has years of experience at a wealth of top clubs, having started his own golfing career as a greenkeeper during his college days at Mersey Valley Golf Club near his hometown of Warrington.

A degree in golf management followed at the University of Central Lancashire – where he met his wife Emily – while also learning some commercial skills with retailer American Golf, during his studies.



# "THE GUEST JOURNEY IS EVERYTHING AND BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE AND THE REPUTATION WE HAVE, EVERYTHING WE DO HAS TO STAND OUT. AND WE HAVE TO DELIVER THAT CONSISTENTLY"

But he was able to forge his career alongside Daniel Hodson at the De Vere Group, before Addison then went on to rise through the ranks at Formby Hall, The Belfry and Cameron House on Loch Lomond.

Addison explained: "Whilst I was at The Belfry, I was aware of the project at JCB and was approached by a marketing business to assist them on a marketing strategy for the new club as they didn't have any previous experience in the golf space.

"With the permission of my MD at The Belfry – a brilliant guy called James Stewart – I sat down with them to pass on a few business model ideas and some strategy work to focus on.

"From here I was introduced to JCB and subsequently asked to join the project," Addison continued.

After initially joining as head of sales and marketing in October 2017 under Hodson, Addison took on the GM role two years later succeeding David MacLaren.

Although the golf course was almost complete, the business itself was effectively a blank canvas.

He said: "At the time, Euan Grant, had been project and course manager since the start, coming with a wealth of experience from properties such as Turnberry and St Andrews.

"Robin also did an incredible job and the thing about golf course designers is that they often tend to get the credit many years later but he definitely deserves a lot of credit for what he achieved.

"Working alongside Euan, we pretty much built everything we see today – the academy, the clubhouse, the lodges and the gym but also everything else that comes with starting a new business.

"There are two simple reasons why JCB made that original investment: one was to be a tournament venue to complement the brand globally and the second was to be a VIP base for customers and dealers in the JCB global network.

"We feel like we are doing our bit to enhance that reputation."

The size of the overall investment is not in the public domain and the privacy also ensures the golf course will remain out of

reach for many keen golfers who would love the opportunity to play there.

Addison said: "I understand and accept why we exist, including the privacy of the club. However a lot of golfers here are guests of our members which is great to be able to offer them the JCB experience.

"We love doing that and we will still do just under 10,000 rounds this year which keeps us busy."

As you may expect, Addison ensures that standards are high but it doesn't require a crack of the whip to keep anyone in check.

He said: "The guest journey is everything and because of who we are and the reputation we have, everything we do has to stand out. And we have to deliver that consistently. If we can't deliver it consistently, it's not worth doing.

"I have a team of about 70 staff split across the greenkeeping team, golf operations, housekeeping, food and beverage etc. When it comes to my team, I'm here to help them do their jobs. I'm not a micromanager but if I can assist them, I will."

Perhaps a reflection of the quality of the course itself comes from those who choose to play there, with a Ryder Cup star among the members.

Addison said: "Tommy Fleetwood is a member here. He came to us to practice before the Masters a couple of years ago. He can choose to practice pretty much wherever he wants but he chose here because of the similarities to Augusta and the green complexes, which reflects on us pretty well, I think."

And although he is no slouch himself having got his handicap down to five at its lowest, Addison's children, Charlie (ten) and Molly (seven), have shown early signs of promise on the course.

He said: "They've both taken to it really well – Charlie nearly had a hole-in-one on the fifth hole not that long ago, however I did tell him 'your golfing career would have peaked far too early if you'd achieved that'.

"I'm lucky if I play once a week in the summer but I tend to put my clubs away in the winter.

"Let's put it this way, anything in the 70s is great for me." **END**

# RADOMÍR HOLEČKA

## DIRECTOR OF GOLF, PENATI GOLF RESORT



Directed by and starring Lasse Åberg, *Den ofrivillige golfaren* is a Swedish film about an unassuming sanitation worker who gets roped into a high-stakes golf match against an arrogant businessman and has just one week to learn how to play golf.

The comedy follows Åberg to Scotland where he takes lessons from a veteran golf professional before squaring up for his eagerly awaited match.

Released in Swedish cinemas in 1991, the film – which was inspired by the golf stories of PG Wodehouse – translates into *The Accidental Golfer* in English and has proved to be one of the most successful films ever made in Sweden.

And should Åberg ever contemplate a sequel, then perhaps *The Accidental Golf Director* might be worthy of consideration, with Radomír Holečka possibly starring as the leading man.

Growing up in Bratislava in Slovakia, golf was alien to Holečka, so when asked how he today manages arguably the best golf resort in the region, he simply laughs and says, "It's weird, I know."

"In 1995, my Mum went to America on a business trip, and returned with a set of golf clubs and I remember asking her what they hell they were. I was 15 at the time, and I'd never seen a golf ball, yet alone a set of golf clubs," he laughs.

"I finished high school and went to university in Slovakia studying economics, but as that didn't really capture my imagination, I decided to switch to IT. This was around 1995 when the Internet was kicking-in, so it seemed to make sense.

"Aged 21, I travelled to Australia to study and spent two-and-a-half years there and had a great time. I joined a band, and we performed around Australia and I had the time of my life."

It was around this time, that Holečka made his first foray into the sport as he explains: "I knew about golf but wasn't really attracted to the sport until a friend of mine invited me to a driving range one day.

"I started playing and fell in love. I didn't have any lessons, so started chipping, then driving before going out onto the local courses. There was rarely anyone on them when I played, and I loved it.

"As I started to uncover all aspects of the game, I found not one but a whole bunch of interests in the sport, so decided that working in golf management would be a great career choice."

Albeit arriving late to the industry compared to most of his peers – many of whom had tried, and failed by this point, to make it on Tour – Holečka stresses that his career choice was no accident.

"I love the landscape of a golf course, especially some of the courses in New Zealand which look like botanical gardens. Plus, as I have a keen interest in hospitality management – particularly contemporary clubhouses with modern eateries – coupled with more than a passing interest in golf technology and travel, a career working in golf seemed to be a perfect fit.

"It appeared that the whole ambience surrounding a golf course tended to be relaxed and stress-free... of course, now I know it's completely different," he smiles.







## "IT APPEARED THAT THE WHOLE AMBIENCE SURROUNDING A GOLF COURSE TENDED TO BE RELAXED AND STRESS-FREE"

Holečka spent three years studying golf management at the University of Central Lancashire, before returning to Bratislava in 2008 although he candidly admits that he wasn't quite sure what – or where – he wanted to work.

With golf participation in Slovakia not exactly thriving at the time, Holečka created Golf Club SSG, which as he explains, was a national programme for the development of the game, with a particular focus on youth development.

"Working with SSG college in Bratislava, I was invited to create a golf management program which, after a year-and-a-half, was accepted as a National Scholar Program across all colleges in Slovakia, something I am very proud of. Without my friend, golf professional Steven Hughes, we would not have succeeded, so I owe him an enormous debt of gratitude."

It's unclear if Holečka gave golf lessons, but his enthusiasm and dedication helped expand the programme to Greece, Turkey and Florida and he still retains some involvement.

His stock was clearly rising within Slovakian golfing circles, so when Penati Golf Resort opened in 2012, Holečka was the perfect candidate to assume the role of director of golf, a position he still holds today.

Covering over 217 hectares of, breathtaking scenery in Slovakia's Záhorie region situated less than an hour from the nation's capital, Bratislava, Penati features 36-holes including the Nicklaus Studio-designed Legend Course which boasts the longest hole in Central Europe – a 712 metre (778 yard) masterpiece that can be played as either a par 5 or 6.

The Legend Course culminates with a challenging short par 4 onto an island green located in front of the clubhouse.

The second course at Penati, the Heritage Course, is located amidst breathtaking scenery of pine forests on land interspersed with white sand dunes. Designed by Jonathan Davison the Heritage Course follows Scottish traditions.

Holečka joined Penati a few months prior to the opening of Legend Course, at a time when golf participation was low with just 300 members pre-opening.

"The clubhouse wasn't built, and the Heritage Course was under construction at the time," he recalls.

"Back then, we didn't have enough members to break even, and the overseas market knew nothing about us, so we had to literally drag people by the hand to Penati to show them in person what we had to offer. It took a good three years to establish the club, but by 2015, people in the region had learned more about us, and life started to get a little better."

With 992 members now, Holečka and his team at Penati have overseen a three-fold increase in membership. "We're getting close to 1,000 members now," he said, "which is the type of business that we need, especially with the ever-expanding residential part of the resort. That boomed during Covid-19 as nobody could travel and as a result, currently have 300 built around the resort, plus some smaller properties by the lake."

Although Holečka admits that 85 per cent of rounds played are of domestic origin, the growth in tourism is something which is slowly evolving, especially since Penati joined worldclass.golf in 2020.

Accommodating international guests for the 2024 season will be far easier come May, when eight new boutique guest suites are opened in the clubhouse. "We're looking to cater for the domestic and overseas market and offer an experience which is unmatched elsewhere in the region," he enthuses.

Aged 43, and with a young family, Holečka is content at Penati, although after giving 12 years to the project, one senses that curiosity may one day get the better of him.

"I'm really happy at Penati, and especially love the environmental work that we do here," he admits. "With what we've all achieved here, it would take something very special for me to consider moving away, especially as Penati is just 90km away from my hometown and I love the climate here."

"I'm a little bit of a summer person, as probably all golfers are, so if an opportunity came up in a southern climate, then I would consider the challenge. But it would have to be something worth taking the family with me for."

Until then, assuming that Holečka and his family are even tempted away, Penati remains home. And should Lasse Åberg consider that long-awaited sequel to *The Accidental Golfer*, he'd be well advised to set it as far away from Sweden or Scotland as possible, as one assumes, the weather will be far too cold for Holečka. **END**



# MOLLY PAVEY

## GENERAL MANAGER, BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB



An inset day tends to be welcomed by pupils, affording them a bonus day free of the classroom, but is cursed by parents, left with the inconvenience of making additional child care arrangements.

Neither nine-year-old Molly Pavey nor her father John could have imagined that one of her inset days would see him play the inadvertent role of successful careers adviser.

It was the moment the now 24-year-old general manager of Bramshaw Golf Club, in Lyndhurst, Hampshire, was introduced to the sport for which she had such a natural aptitude that she would become a county champion in her teens.

"My dad used to play, and we had an inset day and he was, 'What do I do with you?' kind of thing," recalls Torbay-born Pavey.

"So he took me to the driving range, at a little local nine-hole course, and that was it really."

Was it actually the case of the avid golfing father just musing, 'What can I do that Molly can tag along with me? I know, I'd like to go and hit some golf balls?' "Absolutely," she laughs.

No matter the motive for her father's choice, she is grateful that it led to a deep love of the game at which she would both quickly excel and subsequently embrace as an occupational vehicle albeit not one travelling down the road towards tour pro despite having such aspirations after winning the Devon women's championship at just 16.

"I had thought about the possibility of trying to become a tournament pro by going down the route of American college,

but I didn't feel I was quite good enough," she says.

"I think when I was under 18 I was quite a big fish in a small pond, especially living in Devon as well. However, I played in quite a lot of national and regional events and, when you open your eyes to that, the level is so much higher than a lot of people think."

She quickly assessed that she did not have the drive or patience to devote herself to the practice she knew was required to succeed at the top.

"I think when you get to that point there's no point chasing something that maybe your heart isn't fully in."

However, she did feel, having also shown an affinity for other sports, including football and tennis, before she applied herself solely to golf, that she could find fulfilment by pursuing a career that involved sports.

The work ethic that has seen her achieve the admirable accomplishment of becoming general manager at Hampshire's oldest club by her mid-twenties was responsible for her working no fewer than three jobs to pay her way at Bournemouth University, where she gained a degree in Sports Psychology and Coaching Sciences.

Spells at Harrow House International College and Clayesmore School were undertaken with a view to gaining a postgraduate certificate in education, the end goal being becoming a sports teacher, but she reveals: "The pupils can be really challenging at times and I realised that possibly the teaching route wasn't for me. I very much respect people who work in education, especially private schools, because it is challenging.



## "OUR OLDEST MEMBER OF STAFF IS 55, AND HE'S OUR HEAD CHEF. OUR HEAD GREENKEEPER IS ONLY 39, SO TO BE A HEAD GREENKEEPER BEFORE YOU'RE 40, I'D SAY, IS QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT."

"I was then at a bit of a crossroads and I thought, 'What do I do from here?' and I thought, 'I know golf; let's give this a go'.

"I started at Dudson Golf Club as golf operations assistant. It was quite heavy front-facing, and then obviously a bit of admin, which always comes with golf clubs.

"It was a real eye opener as to how a golf club runs and what goes on behind the scenes. Having been a member of a golf club for years, you see it as a customer, but you don't necessarily see it as an operator, so it was really interesting to see and understand how golf clubs work."

She stepped up to work as golf operations manager at Meyrick Park in Bournemouth – part of The Club Company's portfolio – leaving there in August 2022 to take up the same position at Bramshaw.

Promotion to assistant general manager just under a year later was followed by further elevation to her current role in October last year.

Her ascent to the position in just over two years in the industry has probably placed her among the youngest golf club general managers in the UK.

"I would have thought I probably am, but I've not really thought about it because that's a bit scary," says Pavey, whose record and politely confident demeanour both suggest that apprehension would trouble her no more than would a one-foot putt.

She credits those in charge at Bramshaw for their attitude that sees youth as an asset and not a liability.

"Our owners are really developmental, they want us to be the very best that we can be, which is really refreshing in a place of work.

"I think you can either go for a lifestyle along with a job or the job is your lifestyle. I think it's quite easy for golf clubs to facilitate that because all day you're talking to people, you're meeting new people, and we're quite a young team at Bramshaw.

"I'd say our average age is between 30 and 35. We are a young team, which is nice because we're all developing together.

"Our oldest member of staff is 55, and he's our head chef. Our head greenkeeper is only 39, so to be a head greenkeeper before you're 40, I'd say, is quite an achievement."

Bramshaw, home to golf since 1865 when its exotically named land owner Philip de Crespigny produced a track for his guests, became a club 15 years later and has two layouts – The Manor and The Forest.

The club provides the esoteric aspect of golfers finding on occasions that sharing the fairways with them are members of the New Forest's 'Big Five' – pigs, cattle, sheep, horses and deer.

"We say to the visitors 'have you seen the Big Five today?'," says Pavey. "The Forest Course is all common land so they have full rights there. We know when spring's around the corner because we always see the pigs and all the baby pigs as well."

As of February, after a few hours spent if not big-game hunting then hunting for their best game, players will be able to watch from a new, enlarged balcony overlooking the last green as those behind them complete their rounds.

"One of the investments that the company are doing is extending the balcony right out, which will seat about 80 people, and we should have that come the end of February, along with a new swing studio," says Pavey. "There's a lot going on at the club."

"The balcony will overlook the 18th green so it will be fantastic for a bit of banter with the guys as they come off the course."

Despite work restricting her opportunities to play as much as she would like, Pavey manages to maintain an impressive handicap of one and, having been cleared to play in the women's club championship last year, won it.

"I'm not sure how well that went down," she laughs, but it is easy to believe that the rapport and reputation her hard work and diligence have built at Bramshaw in a short space of time meant that no one will have begrudged her what seems likely to be a unique double of being both a club's general manager and its club champion. **END**

# AL ZORAH

## ALZORAHGOLFCLUB.AE

**Words** Pete Simm

**Location** Ajman, United Arab Emirates

In the world of golf, we're lucky to have the opportunity to travel to some extraordinary places.

Gazing out from the lofty vantage point overlooking the ninth green, with a striking mangrove forest stretching out into the distance, the relaxing sights and sounds of the Arabian Gulf nearby and nature all around, there's no doubt this is one of them right now.

Currently under construction, and scheduled to open this autumn, the rooftop bar of the impressive state-of-the-art new clubhouse at Al Zorah Golf Club, in the northern region of the United Arab Emirates will offer some of the best views in the region and form a focal point for the surrounding community.

Featuring three restaurants, a fitness centre and two outdoor swimming pools, the three-storey clubhouse will only serve to enhance the club's growing reputation as one of the new rising stars of golf in the Middle East and allow golfers the option of playing 18 holes, from either the adjacent first or tenth tee boxes.

Regular visitors to the UAE will be familiar with the many delights of downtown Dubai and the bustling city, but head 40 minutes north up the coast to the Emirate of Ajman and you will find Al Zorah City and Al Zorah Golf Club, a thriving golf and real-estate project that is being heralded as a leader in elite modern beachfront developments in the UAE.

And unlike the glitz and glamour of Dubai, Ajman offers a chance to reconnect with nature away from the hustle and bustle of its neighbouring emirate.

Al Zorah is the ideal place to retreat from the outside world, and at its heart lies the golf club and its acclaimed 18-hole championship golf course, complemented by a beach resort and hotel, as well as an array of fine and casual dining options, ensuring that residents and guests can savour the very best of locally and internationally sourced cuisines.

The club proudly boasts the first layout in the UAE to be designed by Nicklaus Design and is operated by Troon under the Troon Golf brand.





## AL ZORAH IS DEEPLY ENGAGED IN THE AUDUBON INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM AND IS A HAVEN FOR BIODIVERSITY

Opened in December 2015, the par-72 course gracefully meanders around a natural mangrove landscape – the mangrove forest covers an area of some 1.3 million square metres – and two spectacular lakes, providing a distinctive and enjoyable challenge for golfers of all skill levels.

The course from the back tees will provide a stern test for the average golfer given the length of some of the holes – especially three of the four par threes – yet venture forward, and the course becomes more playable, and the greens more accessible.

Although the amount of rough on the layout is minimal, dangers lurk to the right on many holes including two par threes which have mangrove trees waiting to swallow an errant tee shot. A testing par five ends the experience, which will involve a challenging second shot around the aforementioned mangrove tees which jut out part way across the fairway.

Already regarded among the best courses in the Middle East, it's easy to see why Al Zorah – with the quality of design, level of course conditioning and experience offered – is hard to fault. The course is immaculate throughout, especially the smooth putting surfaces which, running at 11 on the stim-peter, feature numerous subtle slopes and contours and add to the challenge provided.

The scenic view from the par-four ninth tee, as you play uphill and over a ravine to the green in front of where the new clubhouse is being built, is one to live in the memory, as is the four-hole stretch from the 12th to the 15th, the penultimate short hole and the pick of the bunch – measuring 170 yards off the back tees and playing over water to a well-guarded green.

The layout may measure 7,169 yards from the tips but there is a choice of four tees available to make sure players of all handicaps can enjoy the experience in equal measure, while everyone that plays must take notice of the constantly changing tidal system, which alters the look and feel of the course on an hourly basis and contributes to a unique and memorable 18 holes.

A 350-metre-long driving range and extensive practice facilities – not to mention a sparkling new fleet of Club Car golf cars – all complement the luxury golfing experience, while the status of the club – which is in the process of being rebranded as the Al Zorah

Golf & Yacht Club – is set to be raised further when the clubhouse opens.

Designed by ANNAKA the clubhouse will feature golf and leisure facilities including a purpose-built gymnasium, golf shop, tennis courts, and swimming pool.

Also offering underground parking and various food and beverage outlets, golfers and visitors will have chance to dine, socialise and relax within the club, making it the envy of golf clubs around the UAE.

Sustainability is a central theme in everything that Al Zorah does, and the club uses a range of innovative and far-reaching initiatives to boost its eco footprint.

As well as exclusively using reclaimed water to irrigate the course and employing two full-time staff members to monitor its water usage, Al Zorah is deeply engaged in the Audubon International Program and is a haven for biodiversity, with more than 200 species of native and migratory birds among those to call the rich wetlands home.

Al Zorah also achieved GEO Certification in November 2022, but perhaps most impressive is the ongoing work that Al Zorah is doing regarding mangrove-planting.

Producing millions of litres of oxygen per day, mangroves are vastly more effective in trapping carbon dioxide than other trees, making them one of humanity's most valuable tools in the fight against climate change.

As well as Al Zorah City's commitment to double the estimated 500,000 mangrove trees already on site at the stunning coastal destination, the resort has pledged to plant a mangrove tree for every golfer who experiences the golf club – with players even invited to make the short journey to Al Zorah Mangrove Natural Reserve and plant the tree themselves.

When it comes to accommodation, the United Arab Emirates is renowned for rolling out the red carpet to golfers and Al Zorah City is no exception, whether it be a luxury venue for a stay-and-play break, a modern new home or the chance to take advantage of one of the attractive real-estate investment opportunities available.

The golf club has a number of high-profile hotel partners, and they don't come much better than the luxurious Oberoi Beach Resort in Al Zorah City, a five-star hotel where world-class hospitality meets stunning international cuisine. **END**





**Words** Christopher Stratford  
**Online** [bluewatergroup.com](http://bluewatergroup.com)

## BENGT RITTRI

### CEO, BLUEWATER GROUP



Environmental entrepreneur Bengt Rittri, founder and CEO of Bluewater – a company whose twin and entwined aims are to end global reliance on single-use plastic bottles and provide water ‘as pure as nature’ intended – is passionate about all the benefits of being on the golf course.

“I like meditation and I feel that golf is a form of meditation,” enthuses the 63-year-old Swede. “You walk and you observe, you see the nature, and you focus on something, the golf ball, and the highest level of meditation is when you’re outdoors and you’re social.”

What he doesn’t do, though, is play golf. “I was always thinking that I would start to play golf when I get older. That was my plan, but then I thought, ‘Maybe I got older,’” he laughs.

Years without becoming a golfer slipped by because of Rittri’s lifelong devotion to trying to do his utmost to take care of both the environment and those of us who live in it.

His level of devotion was exemplified by fairly rapid abandonment of a plan simply to “enjoy life” after he sold his highly successful air purification company, Blueair, to consumer goods giant Unilever when he was in his fifties.

He switched his focus from the provision of pure air to the provision of pure water and Bluewater’s scope expanded when Rittri’s investigation into the problems posed to the planet by plastics gave him considerable cause for alarm.

“In the Swedish archipelago where I live, I saw all these dead fish,” he explains. “I started to read about all the plastic in the ocean.

“I did a lot of research about it around the world to try to work out how we were going to solve that, and I started to work with it. I thought one of the ways of getting rid of plastic was to get rid of the plastic bottles.”

Scientific scrutiny that showed bottled water contained hundreds of thousands of tiny particles of plastic that could be injurious to human health intensified his concern and led to the design and manufacture of refillable stainless steel and glass bottles that complement the use of Bluewater’s hydration stations and compact household purifiers.

The latter use Bluewater’s SuperiorOsmosis treatment process, which they claim removes up to 99.7 per cent of known contaminants from water, to provide locally sourced, purified and chilled drinking water.

If you have been to any of the recent Opens, starting in 2019 at Royal Portrush, you may well have quenched your thirst at one such station.

An invitation from the R&A five years ago opened the door onto the golf industry for Bluewater and subsequently led to last year’s announcement that the company had been appointed by St Andrews Links Trust as its official hydration supplier at the Home of Golf.

“We were contacted by The Open because they’d wanted to go plastic-free there and they’d looked around for all kinds of solutions around the world, and they said we were the only ones who could do it,” says Rittri.

“They thought because we had the greatest purification system, and we had water



## "SOME PEOPLE DON'T THINK GOLF IS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, BUT WE WANT TO SHOW THAT HERE IS ONE OF THE AREAS WHERE GOLF CAN BE LEADING, BEING PLASTIC FREE"

bottles, we could put those stations up at their golf course. In just a few months we organised it.

"We put up 18 huge stations around the golf course and then we made 100,000 bottles for them, so all the visitors that came could indulge in pure, cold or ambient water or carbonated water, and drink that and refill that.

"Even the players, from Tiger Woods to everybody else who was there, drank from our bottles."

One estimate puts global plastic bottle sales at a staggering one million every minute. With recycling rates as low as nine per cent, this means more than half a million plastic bottles every hour are likely being discarded into landfill, being incinerated, or entering terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

As well as the damage caused to the environment, Rittri also is hugely apprehensive about the possible long-term harm humans might suffer as a result of the bottled water containing contaminants such as microplastics and nanoplastics. Most of these appear to come not from the bottle, but from the source of the water or how the water is processed.

Is there enough concern that we should all stop drinking water supplied in plastic bottles?

"We work with different specialists, one is Portugal's Mirpuri Foundation," says Rittri. "Dr. Ivone Mirpuri is a medical doctor and she co-wrote a white paper about this together with us, and she advised never to drink water from plastic bottles, especially if you are pregnant."

Dr. Mirpuri, one of the world's top medical experts on human hormones and how they are being disrupted by toxic chemicals, went further in an interview with Bluewater, saying: "Humankind faces extinction within 200 years unless steps are urgently taken to reduce the use of synthetic plastics and the chemicals in them."

A chilling prognosis, although Rittri is optimistic that the tide can be turned. "I believe in human ingenuity," he avers.

"We thought 'how could we solve the problem of plastics?' and we thought, 'Well, humans came up with the problem to pollute the world and they will also come up with a

solution how to solve it', so we have done a lot of competitions for people and researchers around the world and innovators, and we also innovate ourselves. There are so many things that people are working on, so eventually we are going to figure it out."

Although Bluewater affected its entry into the world of golf at the highest level possible, Rittri says its systems are scaleable so as to be suitable for any size of course or club. Indeed, all the way down to an individual home.

"Some people don't think golf is environmentally friendly, but we want to show that here is one of the areas where golf can be leading, being plastic free and taking care of the environment, using local water and bottling it," he says, and adds: "We can put up any number of water stations according to what is needed, maybe a few stations around the golf course plus one in the club restaurant.

"Clubs could finance it through subscriptions, by having a digital screen on the stations that provides information, but could also be used for advertising, or have sponsors who care about the environment who would maybe pay for the installation. Then we would have water bottles in the pro shop that they can sell and the golfers will refill.

"Bluewater bottles were developed for golfers. They're easy to open with one hand, it keeps the water cold or hot for a long time, it's a good grip and it fits in all kinds of golf equipment, so we call it the player's edition bottle that we did originally for The Open. All the players really liked that bottle and kept it."

Bluewater's expertise and systems are in sizable demand among hotels around the world, and the company are also involved in other sports besides golf, in particular football and Beach Soccer Worldwide, sailing and the America's Cup, and cricket and the Desert Vipers in UAE.

Just talking briefly to Rittri, it becomes immediately clear that the world would benefit greatly if it could bottle his enthusiasm, compassion and concern for both humans and habitat and share them around the globe.

But the world would be well advised before distribution not to package these precious commodities in plastic. **END**

# THE TRUE COST OF UNDERINSURANCE

## AND WHY MANY FIND OUT WHEN THEY NEED TO MAKE A CLAIM



We all know that trying to save money could cost your club.

No one likes to spend more money than they have to, especially when it comes to insurance. But, insurance is there to protect you against unforeseen events, so reducing your cover to lower your insurance premiums could cost you more in the long run.

One of the consequences of trying to keep insurance costs down by not insuring the correct amount is underinsurance, but what exactly is underinsurance?

When asked 'what is the value of the property?' people may assume this refers to the market value of the golf property.

In reality, this needs to reflect what it would cost you to rebuild your golf property at the time you arrange or renew your policy.

Valuations do not necessarily provide a reinstatement cost for insurance purposes and often refer only to the structure and don't include the surrounding areas of the golf property – such as car parks, outbuildings or trees – or mirror the definition of buildings within the policy document.

This doesn't just apply should you need to completely rebuild your golf property. It is a common misconception that if the cost of a claim is below the total sum insured (partial loss), the full amount being claimed will be paid.

This is not the case. Should you need to make a claim, and your golf property is found to be underinsured, your insurance company could apply the condition of 'average' and would only pay out the percentage of your golf property value represented on your policy.

In the worst case scenario, your insurer could void cover on the grounds of misrepresentation.

In many insurance contracts there is a 'Condition of Average' clause which means that when receiving a claim for a golf property or business, if the insurer believes the property or business is underinsured, they can reduce the claim by the corresponding percentage.

To give you an example, if you have an outbuilding on your premises which is damaged, and will cost £100,000 to repair, you would make a claim for the full amount and expect this to be paid in full, because your insured value is £500,000.

However, if at the time of making your claim, the total reinstatement cost of your property is valued at £1 million, your property would be underinsured by 50 per cent.

This means that your insurer could impose a proportionate settlement and you would only receive a 50 per cent pay out, leaving you to find £50,000 to contribute to the cost of your outbuilding repairs.

If the underinsurance is too large, the insurer could even say that the policy is void as the client failed in their duty of fair presentation under the Insurance Act.

The importance of being insured correctly is therefore vitally important, as Marsh Sport are keen to stress.

Marsh is the world's leading insurance broker and risk advisor. With around 40,000 colleagues operating in more than 130 countries, Marsh serves commercial and individual clients with data-driven risk solutions and advisory services.





## "WE WERE GRATEFUL TO MARSH SPORT FOR HIGHLIGHTING THIS SIGNIFICANT SHORTFALL AND IF WE HAD NOT DECIDED TO CHANGE OUR INSURER THIS WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN DETECTED"

"As with any golf club it is imperative that you ensure you have the adequate insurance to cover all eventualities," a client of Marsh Sport recently stated.

"Our golf club would have been in a very difficult position and in fact we wouldn't have been able to continue as a golf club if this had not been checked and highlighted to us.

"We thought we had sufficient cover in case we had to rebuild the clubhouse. In fact, we were insured for £1.5 million when it was built but as of today we were actually under insured by £2.2 million.

"The consequences of this would have been catastrophic for us. If we had to rebuild the clubhouse through a claim the insurance would only pay an average.

"It was valued at the time it was built but as we hadn't had any further significant building work done there was no thought of having a regular valuation. So it is important to have regular valuations done on your property as many will have increased over the years.

"We were grateful to Marsh Sport for highlighting this significant shortfall and if we had not decided to change our insurer this would never have been detected," the client stressed.

"The process in terms of a new valuation was very straight forward and was done with the minimum of fuss or interruption.

"From our experience I would recommend every golf club to ensure you regularly undertake a valuation on all your properties. If not you may be in a position that we could have been in and not being able to afford the rebuild costs".

Heeding that sound advice should be important to all general managers operating a golf club, and there are a number of questions to ask yourself to help prevent underinsurance such as did you use the market value of your golf property as the insurance value, or the reinstatement cost?

Also, consider if you originally received a bespoke insurance reinstatement valuation when the policy was stated, and has it subsequently been reviewed in the last two years.

For example, has the club built any extensions or undertaken any alterations since your last valuation.

Also consider if there would be additional complications to repairing your building. For example, does it have listed status, or is it situated in a conservation area?

Also ask yourself does your insurance value fall in line with the buildings description within your policy, and does your building have any technological or material specifications, such as solar panels or a unique construction material that would make it more expensive to repair?

And finally, is the building constructed of modern methods of construction such as modular?

These are all important questions to ask, which explains why Marsh Sport works with Rebuild Cost Assessment Ltd to offer clients a desktop rebuild cost and rebuild period assessment of any commercial or residential property, up to a current sum insured of £10 million.

This works by analysing multiple data sources, including industry standard quantity surveyor data and building cost information services from RICS and using this information to calculate the true reinstatement value of your property.

The survey is priced at a very competitive rate, and offers peace of mind to not only general managers, but golf club members who have a vested interest in the running and management of their club.

Marsh Sport also provides on-site rebuild cost assessments, and collates all relevant information to provide you with a quote.

"At Marsh Sport, we want to help you manage your risks and make sure that you are fully covered – whatever life throws at you," commented Chris Rhodes, head of Marsh Sport, which is a business of Marsh McLennan, with annual global revenues of over \$18 billion.

"We are part of a global insurance network but are proud to be a community broker who can provide you with world-class insight and expertise.

"However big or small your property, get in touch with us, and we will help you with all your property insurance needs." **END**

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"REPRESENTATION IS KEY TO CHANGING HOW FUTURE GENERATIONS  
PERCEIVE TURF AND HOW WE CAN ATTRACT MORE WOMEN"



**Words**

Karen Proctor  
Regional Sales Director APAC  
Jacobsen

## GUEST BOOK

KAREN PROCTOR



Imagine you have a workforce that has equal numbers of men and women. If you do, then congratulations – you are one of the few in the turf industry. If you don't, you are not alone. There are many types of diversity, all equally important, so today, I'd like to address gender diversity and how to attract more women to the turf industry.

Having more women in the industry is not just about doing the right thing; it is about reaping the benefits of having balance. Research tells us that you can improve retention rates and improve profitability if you get it right, and these are just a few of the perks!

Representation is key to changing how future generations perceive turf and how we can attract more women from other industries. If you are recruiting for greenkeepers, use pictures of ladies operating machinery as an effective way of increasing female representation.

The wording we use in job adverts can impact who applies for the role. There are language tools available to remove gender bias to ensure you appeal to a wider audience. Also, being aware and researching how unconscious bias can impact who you recruit and how you distribute tasks is also vitally important.

There are many aspects that can help change the demographics in turf, but one thing is certain... as stakeholders in the industry, every one of us has a responsibility to change it. **END**

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