

Edition 1 • 2020

The Approach

Australia & New Zealand Edition



JOHN DEERE

Environmental gains for NSW 'Hidden Gem'

Contents



Cover photo:
Muree Golf
Course, Port
Stephens area
in New South
Wales.

John Deere News	2-3
Tara Iti Golf Course	4-5
Marc Leishman	6-7
ATSM Women in Golf	8-9
COVID Greenskeeper	11
Staff Profiles	12-13
Muree Flats Delivery	14

The Approach Edition 1 • 2020
Australia/New Zealand

Contacts



John Deere Limited
Australia/New Zealand
Tel: +61 7 3802 3222 (AU)
Tel: 0800 303 100 (NZ)
Freephone: 1800 800 981
E-mail: 23Publications@JohnDeere.com
JohnDeere.com.au
JohnDeere.co.nz



John Deere Financial
Tel: +61 7 3802 3100
Freephone: 1800 800 981
E-mail: 23JDFinancial@JohnDeere.com
JohnDeereFinancial.com.au
JohnDeereFinancial.co.nz

Some products, options, attachments or accessories may not be available in all regions. For exact information about particular models and their specifications, please consult your John Deere dealer.

John Deere News

Triplex mowers recognised at international awards

John Deere triplex mowers have won a significant international award recognising the best innovations in engineering and technology in the agricultural, food and biological industries.

The American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers named **John Deere's 2700** and **2750 PrecisionCut™** and **E-Cut™ Hybrid Triplex Mowers** as a 2020 AE50 winner at its prestigious annual awards in Louisville, Kentucky, United States.

The machines, which are designed to take the stress out of mowing and save on input costs, were acknowledged for their innovative design by a panel of international engineering experts.

While the 2700 and 2750 reel mowers were developed in response to many of the needs and challenges of all customers, features were added that specifically benefit operations struggling to find quality labour and manage tight budgets.



AE50 Award: These machines allow for a precise, uniform cut, regardless of who is behind the controls.

Triplex mowers provide enhanced cut and greater consistency

The availability of quality labour and tightening operating budgets continue to be challenges, and understanding these customer needs was a key driver behind the development of the 2700 and 2750 PrecisionCut™ Triplex Mowers, and the 2700 and 2750 E-Cut™ Hybrid Triplex Mowers.

Designed to provide premium cut quality regardless of operator, improved grass catcher accessibility, and reduced operating costs, the new mowers provide a lightweight, open platform machine that's further enhanced by the proven TechControl™ system.

John Deere Golf & Turf Key Accounts Manager, Kodi Becket, said increased consistency and decreased input costs were at the core of the design and function of these machines.



The 2700 and 2750 Triplex Mowers were designed to take the stress out of mowing.

"The 2700 and 2750 Triplex Mowers were designed to take the stress out of mowing, with an enhanced TechControl system that allows for more precision than ever before," Mr Becket said.

Using the passcode protected TechControl system, managers and technicians can input commands, controlling almost all factors influencing an operator's performance, including frequency of clip, turn speed, clean up pass speed, and how fast the cutting units raise and lower.

"TechControl allows for a precise and uniform cut, regardless of who is behind the controls, while the passcode helps prevent operators from overriding any of the parameters that have been set," Mr Becket said.

"Together these features help to make every operator, your best operator."

An industry exclusive on the hydraulic models, and available on the hybrid units, the frequency of clip can be programmed by altering parameters on mowing speed, reel speed and number of blades on the reel. The settings automatically adjust with ground speed, ensuring uniformity from machine to machine.

Clean Up Pass Mode, a John Deere exclusive, is a preset operating mode that the operator can engage to automatically reduce mowing speed on perimeter passes to increase accuracy for less scalping or missed grass. This setting allows the operator to focus on the task, rather than feathering the speed.

Adjustable turn speed allows the superintendent to control how fast the operator is able to turn, minimising chances of turf damage. Additionally, the superintendent or technician can select Eco Mode, which electronically controls the engine speed to conserve fuel. With Eco Mode, the engine RPM automatically adjusts based on the load, saving up to 30% on fuel and reducing operating sound levels.

The 2700 and 2750 Triplex Mowers feature a lightweight, open platform frame design with a low centre of gravity for excellent stability and traction performance. The decreased weight reduces tyre tracking and compaction, and the open

platform design makes it easier to access the centre grass catcher. The grass catchers can be easily removed and installed with one hand, and have a translucent yellow option for better visibility of clippings levels.

Another notable change on the 2700 and 2750 models is improvement to the steering column, which features two points of adjustment – the column and steering wheel – and requires no tools, maximising operator comfort.

The 2700 and 2750 Triplex Mowers offer a 157.5 cm (62 inch) mowing width and mow speeds of up to 9.7 km/hour. The three-axis lift system provides up to 18 degrees of steering and 42 degrees of contour following for an even cut, especially in cleanups and undulating terrain.



Get the same cut quality, regardless of operator, using TechControl advanced supervisory controls.

Technology on the 2700 and 2750 triplex mowers has not only been designed specifically for greens but also tees and surrounds, a trait that is extremely important given profiles within the golf environment often boast rolling, undulating and varied terrain," Mr Becket said.

"Courses require a mower capable of 'hugging' contours, to provide a premium cut quality and maintain the highest calibre of presentation."

The new Triplex Mowers are now available for purchase. For more information talk to your trusted John Deere dealer or go to JohnDeere.com.au/Golf or JohnDeere.co.nz/Golf



Tara Iti Golf Club with views of the beautiful Te Arai coast, just south of Mangawhai, New Zealand.

Renowned Tara Iti collaborates with John Deere on new fleet

This top tier golf course, which sits off a rugged coastline in New Zealand, has partnered with John Deere to maintain one of the best links courses in the world.

"It's a spectacular setting for golf, or anything outdoors really, it's just absolutely beautiful."

You could argue he is biased, but take a look at a photo or experience a round at Tara Iti Golf Club and you can see why the club's Superintendent, Brian Palmer, describes it in this way.

Opening in 2015, the club is located on the Te Arai coast, just south of Mangawhai on the North Island of New Zealand.

Mr Palmer, who originally hails from the United States, said after first observing how the course was managed when he arrived to the role, he thought a different fleet of equipment was needed to handle the unique location and its fine Fescue grasses and sand base.

"I was just watching the operation and seeing how things worked and seeing what needed to be addressed," Mr Palmer said.

"We were spending quite a bit of money for repair and maintenance on our existing fleet which had been here

through grow-in, so granted it was five or six years old, but it was showing age and it was getting pricey to maintain.

"I also wasn't quite convinced we had the appropriate setup for this golf course.

"I'm not a brand guy in particular, I didn't have an allegiance to anyone in particular, I use what is suitable for the property."

After having a range of on-course demos from several brands, Mr Palmer said it was John Deere that impressed the most.

"We tried everything and got prices, and at the end of the day we felt most confident with John Deere - with the service and the equipment."

Lyndon Baird, North Island Golf and Turf Sales Manager, AGrowQuip New Zealand, said his team made a range of considerations when recommending a suitable fleet for the Tara Iti course.

"Grass types and hybrid technology was a major plus for John Deere - using up to 30% less fuel than traditional mowing equipment, while another major requirement was machinery that had a light footprint with the course built on soft dune sand," Mr Baird said.

The links style of course and its unique location also means some intricacies exist in managing the course.

"A unique aspect of this course is that we have no rough. The entire course is at fairway height or less so the only rotary mower that we own mows the cottage and homesites", Mr Palmer said.

"We send out the John Deere 220 E-Cut Hybrids™ for our greens, we mow at 4.5 mm and we typically shoot for about 10-10.5 feet on the Stimpeter.

"We have a surround cut which is with the 2500 E-Cut™ surrounds mowers, that's technically a greens mower, and we mow at 8.5 mm. The whole point there is just a smoother transition from the fairway to the green so you really can't even tell what surface you're walking on.

"The fairways are at 11.5 mm and we try to keep them pretty lean and try to keep them as firm as we can."

The full fleet also includes two 220SL Walk-Behind Greens Mowers, ten 220E Walk-Behind Greens Mowers, two 260SL Walk-Behind Greens Mowers, four 2500E Triplex Mowers, six 7500A E-Cut Hybrid™ Fairway Mowers, two sprayers, two bunker rigs, four John Deere tractors and a range of other support equipment.

John Deere Golf Manager for Market Development, Australia and New Zealand, Howard Storey said the early feedback from Tara Iti has been positive.

"We tried everything and got prices, and at the end of the day we felt most confident with John Deere - with the service and the equipment."

Brian Palmer, Superintendent,
Tara Iti Golf Club

"We are told the course quality has taken a large forward step in cut quality and appearance," Mr Storey said.

"Because of the unique location and topography of the site, as well as the stewardship needed to keep the course so immaculate yet be sympathetic to the environment, the whole experience has been a learning experience for our engineers and the Tara Iti staff.

"The golf course is rated in the top tier in the continent and the rest of the world, so aligning our quality products and stellar dealer support makes for a very strong partnership."



Looking across the 17th green.



Mowing No. 12 fairway.



Tara Iti Golf Club Superintendent, Brian Palmer.

Marc Leishman: “I’m just someone who loves grass that happens to be good at golf”



Professional golfer Marc Leishman of Australia cuts the grass on the green in his backyard after practicing hitting balls on June 02, 2020 in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

From a love of lawn to a highly prized golfing career, Marc Leishman has held onto his strong turf roots.

There’s no doubt Australian golfer Marc Leishman is a high-performer in his profession.

The world number 15 has claimed five titles on the USPGA tour, including January’s Farmers Insurance Open, and has challenged major titles. But he’d prefer to spend a conversation telling you about the grass that featured at those tournaments rather than the shots he hit.

Leishman has a love of lawn.

He thinks it started when he was a teenager, growing up in Warrnambool in Victoria.

“Me and my dad have always had a thing for lawns and I’d always give him a bit of a hard time when he cut the lawn when it didn’t need cutting, and I never really understood why,” Mr Leishman said.

“Once I turned 15 or 16, I started cutting the lawn and I found myself doing the same thing. In July when the weather was terrible and it wasn’t growing, I would still cut it basically to pick up all the stuff off the grass to make it look good.

“I never got right into it until I had this house I’m in now.”

Leishman, who lives in Virginia, United States, has well and truly “got right into it”, turning a hobby into an obsession and, with it, his backyard into a golfing practice facility.

He’s done so with a garage full of John Deere equipment.

“I’ve got two greens mowers [the 220SL] and a zero turn ride-on [Z355R],” Mr Leishman said.

“It has got a really good cut and I think it is maybe a little lighter than what I’d used before.

“It’s obviously a lot quicker on the big fella but I like the cut a lot more on the greens mower.”

Marc Leishman

Leishman said it was the quality of the product as well as John Deere’s support of the tour that helped him decide when choosing his equipment.

“It’s just good stuff.

“Being a sponsor of the tour, that was appealing to me – they support us, so why wouldn’t I support John Deere?”

You’d expect one of the world’s best golfers to want to talk about a tournament win, a near miss at the Open Championship at St Andrews, that perfect drive or long curling putt.

But for Leishman, it’s when you ask him to talk turf you can hear the excitement build in his voice.

“Bentgrass is a lot less forgiving as a golfer and if you slightly mis-hit a shot off Bentgrass, say it is slightly fat, you are going to get punished pretty badly,” he said.

“The Bermudas now are so good that if you slightly mis-hit a shot, you will generally get away with it, it’ll just release a bit on the greens and won’t have as much spin - but it’ll basically be the same result.

“I didn’t grow up on Bermuda and initially when I got on tour, I absolutely hated it and I despised putting on it, didn’t enjoy it and never putted well on it, but now it is my favourite surface.

“I grew up on Poa and Bent so I love putting particularly on Bent, but now I think the good Bermudas are even better than that which is something I never thought I’d hear myself say.

“What I’ve got now [at home] is called 419 Bermuda and I think it is pretty similar to a Santa Ana.

“The grass that I’ve got now, if I’m away for a month I can just scalp it back to nothing and it’ll be good two weeks after that.”

When your favourite subject is grass, it’s no surprise that Leishman feels a kinship with greenkeepers.

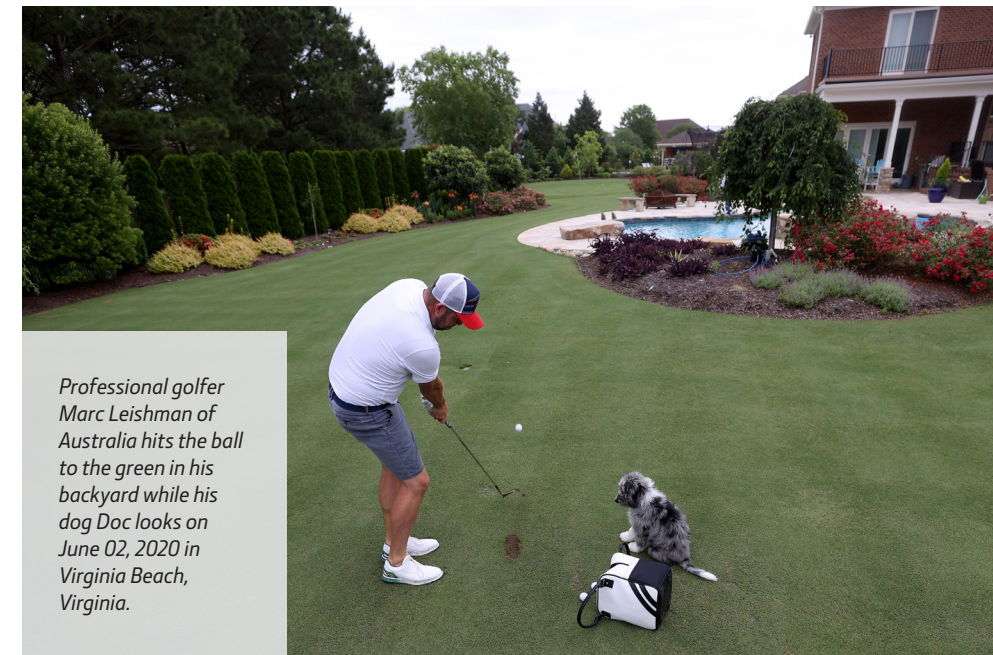
“I always like to say g’day to them because I can relate to them and I just love chatting with the guys and I feel like they’re very similar to me.

“Whenever I’m out there on a practice round and they’re cutting I’ll just tell them to keep going and I’ll work around them which a lot of the guys don’t do, which is frustrating to me actually.”

He’s replaced the gym with the garden as well. You won’t find Marc Leishman lifting weights alongside the likes of Bryson DeChambeau or Brooks Koepka. Instead, his fitness routine is behind the mower.

“It’s a bit of a workout for me.”

“I’m not a gym rat by any means, so that’s sort of my exercise, doing that [maintaining the lawn] and playing golf.”



Professional golfer Marc Leishman of Australia hits the ball to the green in his backyard while his dog Doc looks on June 02, 2020 in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



Marc and the International team on the 12th green on day one of the 2019 Presidents Cup at Royal Melbourne Golf Course (2019).

When he isn’t at an event, there’s a good chance Leishman will be in the yard.

“I cut my greens most days, I won’t say every day - I’m not cutting them super short,” he said.

“I had to lift it, I was cutting at point 200 of an inch and I’ve just lifted to 250.

“[The greens] only run at nine, so they don’t run perfect by any means, but I’ll probably spend an hour cutting on that and then I’m only cutting the long stuff

on the zero turn probably once or twice a week depending on the weather.

“I’d say I do maybe 10 hours a week on the walk mower, but when I’m home that’s enough because I’ve got three kids as well.”

And, given the way he talks about his turf, one might assume there’ll be another generation of Leishmans who will fall in love with lawn.

ASTMA leads charge on bringing more women to turf management



Martyna Synak, Assistant Superintendent at Oatlands Golf Club in New South Wales.



Women continue to drive change in turf management.

The Australian golf industry is leading the charge when it comes to equality and diversification with initiatives to encourage more women to choose turf management as a career.

Traditionally, turf management has been a male-dominated profession, but the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association (ASTMA) is making key moves to drive change.

"While we've seen an upward trend in females across all kinds of areas of sports turf management in recent years, it's still very heavily male orientated - something in the vicinity of 97 to 98%," ASTMA Chief Executive, Mark Unwin, said.

The organisation is supporting the global "Women in Golf Charter" led by the R&A, to try to encourage more women and girls to pursue turf management as a career.

Mr Unwin said the combined force of a misconception that there is a lack of exposure to career opportunities in turf management for women, and the perception of golf as a male-dominated sport had traditionally pushed females to focus on other professions.

"It's probably also important to acknowledge that this high male percentage demographic is similar in many qualified trade industries," Mr Unwin said.

"While we're perhaps a little behind others in driving the shift, the focus is there to continue pursuing this change, with the charter being a public announcement of our desire to do just that.

"It's important to recognise that the role itself is a combination of science, people leadership and environmental stewardship which is something not traditionally promoted widely in years gone by, which is perhaps why many probably don't even know it's a career possibility.

"Sure there are parts of the role that are hard - long hours and elements of manual labour - but if you take a look at any of the women we currently have in the industry right now you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone in the industry who says they're not up to it.

"Women have led and continue to drive some of this change themselves through their actions and are more than equal from a skills and drive perspective with other 'turfies' they're working with."

One of those is Martyna Synak, who is the Assistant Superintendent at Oatlands Golf Club in New South Wales. Originally from Poland, she worked in Sweden, the United States and New Zealand before settling in Australia.

After initially studying horticulture and working in landscape design, Ms Synak made the switch to turf management and has

not looked back, and was last year selected for ASTMA's Future Turf Managers Initiative.

Ms Synak said turf management is a hard but rewarding job, and can understand why it might not have been the career of choice for females in the past.

"Seeing the golf course at sunrise before all the golfers with beautiful shadows, the smell of fresh cut grass and nature waking up is priceless," she said.

"It isn't easy though, we are up early in the morning, digging in mud, running with the hose on 40-degree days, changing holes when it is pouring rain, cutting trees, pumping water out of bunkers, mixing and spraying chemicals.

"Greenkeepers have to be on duty no matter if it's a public holiday, Christmas, Easter or weekends."

Having completed a degree in Agriculture and a masters in Agronomic Engineering in her native Portugal, Susana Oliveira is another who is applying her trade in Australia. Ms Oliveira is Senior Greenkeeper at The Grange Golf Club in South Australia and said she quickly learned it was a much more male-dominated industry to what she was used to.

"When I first arrived in Australia, I was surprised at how few females there were working in the turfgrass industry, which was difficult for me to understand," she said.

"Coming from a European country, I have worked with multiple females throughout my career in Portugal, and some were also in management roles.

"In the past I have felt I needed to work harder than males to prove myself and prove I am able to meet the requirements of the job."

Ms Oliveira said the promotion of the profession is the key to attracting a younger generation of females to the industry.

"I think promoting females who already work in the industry and proving to the younger generation that it is possible to work in a previously male-dominated field, and be successful, is a great way to attract younger females," she said.

"These women can also act as mentors for people thinking of beginning careers in the field.

"Promoting this field of work at a high school level and the unique opportunities it can present is also important."

There has been a 10% increase in the number of women undertaking sports turf management apprenticeships over the past two years and ASTMA is planning further initiatives to increase this number.

"The first initiative has just been launched, which was developing a series of career videos highlighting the opportunities available in turf management," Mr Unwin said.

"This will then be supported by work with schools, career and workplace advisors and vocational career agencies throughout Australia, both through us (ASTMA) and state government bodies.

"We're working through two exciting initiatives that will hopefully be finalised in the next quarter, one being the establishment of a Women in Sports Turf Management program in conjunction with some of the work undertaken here and overseas by our trade and industry partners.

"Secondly, we're pretty far into the planning around an opportunity for a scholarship program for Australian females to head overseas and be paired for a week or two with a leading female superintendent or turf manager in other countries, which could be a huge boost for some of our qualified females."

"Seeing the golf course at sunrise before all the golfers with beautiful shadows, the smell of fresh cut grass and nature waking up is priceless."

Martyna Synak, Assistant Superintendent, Oatlands Golf Club



Oatlands Golf Club.



RELIED ON BY THE BEST COURSES ON EARTH.



AND ON THE CUTTING EDGE LOCALLY.

Our global investment in pioneering technology is helping to keep the world's best courses in superb playing condition. We're also supporting Australian and New Zealand courses, with a dedicated team that understands your business and will help you deliver the best golfing experience.

Contact your local John Deere Golf dealer to arrange a demonstration.

JohnDeere.com.au/Golf
JohnDeere.co.nz/Golf



PHOTO: Atlanta Athletic Club, USA

A tough start to the year: how one course is mowing its path through 2020



Jeff McManus, Superintendent at the Windsor Country Golf Club.

The global pandemic has disrupted many golf courses around Australia and New Zealand, but the Windsor Country Golf Club in New South Wales has faced many more challenges in 2020 than COVID-19.

The year 2020 will not be one Jeff McManus will forget.

In less than six months, the course Superintendent at the Windsor Country Golf Club was forced to respond to bushfires, flooding, a ferocious storm, vandalism, and COVID.

"It's been a horrible encounter," Mr McManus said.

The club, an hour north west of Sydney, is home to breathtaking views of the Blue Mountains, none of which has been able to be fully enjoyed by members and visitors in the first half of 2020.

The dire string of events commenced at the beginning of the year when horrific bushfires and associated smoke made it challenging for club staff to simply do their jobs.

"Some days the team just couldn't work outside, the air quality was dismal and the visibility was poor and dangerous," Mr McManus said.

In February, the weather charged towards the other extreme when floods hit and caused an unprecedented level of damage.

"Days rolled into weeks where parts of the course were still submerged due to the king tide from the Hawkesbury River merging into the water from the catchment from the Nepean region.

"Some parts of the course were under water for such a large amount of time that we suffered a loss of turf in large quantities.

"Six greens were totally destroyed, while eight greens' surrounds, rough areas, tee areas and fairway areas all suffered great losses."

The club faced another setback when a vicious storm followed the floods, tearing down 24 large gum trees and leaving large amounts of debris, making the course unplayable and forcing it to be closed.

Vandals then damaged one of the new greens in yet another hit to the club, before COVID-19's arrival completely shook Mr McManus and his plans to repair the now well-damaged course.

"That (the crowds) slowed our construction works down due to machinery access to certain areas, while the really concerning part was trying to maintain the remaining sections of undamaged golf course with the amount of people on the course."

Mr McManus said "John Deere came to the rescue the day I asked".

"An Aercore™ was delivered the same day to start the repair on all the damaged areas from the flood and this machine saved two of our greens that were under water for five days.

"Some parts of the course were under water for such a large amount of time that we suffered a loss of turf in large quantities."

Jeff McManus

"Some products were unavailable, or slow to arrive due to COVID, and added extra time to our works which was not ideal when we needed to get surfaces ready to reseed greens and lay new turf before the weather changed for the worst," he lamented.

But, when golfers were finally allowed back on the course following a relaxation of COVID restrictions, there was an influx of people, the likes of which had never been seen.

"It got to a point where some golfers were turned away due to the number of players we had," Mr McManus said.

"The remaining four that were submerged for longer periods couldn't be saved as the damage was too much, but without the help of John Deere we would have been looking at eight green rebuilds."

He said the Club's John Deere machinery line-up was crucial to recovery, including the 7700A PrecisionCut™ Fairway Mower, the 7200A PrecisionCut™ Trim & Surrounds Mower and 220SL Walk-Behind Greens Mower.

"All these have performed to a terrific standard in getting our new surfaces ready for play once again."

Meet **Kodi Becket** *Golf & Turf Key Accounts Manager*



How would you describe your career to date?

I started my career as an apprentice greenkeeper on the far south coast at the Batemans Bay Bowling Club and, after completion of my apprenticeship, I progressed onto golf courses.

I spent a number of years of my youth travelling around the world before coming back to Sydney, where I worked various roles at a number of golf courses including Elanora Country Club and Long Reef Golf Club. I was offered a territory sales manager role with a chemical and fertiliser company which afforded me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and networks, this exposed me to a different side of the greenkeeping industry.

I've been fortunate to work at a number of great companies within the golf industry over the years, which has allowed me to meet some great people and travel all over the country. I took two years off and worked outside of the golf business,

however when the job came up with John Deere I jumped at the opportunity to get back into the industry and I love every minute of it.

What is your career highlight?

Playing in the 2019 John Deere Classic Pro-AM at TPC Deere Run, in the Quad Cities, in the United States.

What was it that attracted you to this role?

John Deere is a world-class leader and innovator and have brought that innovation and technology to the Australian golf markets. That, combined with the prospect of visiting golf courses all over the country and other parts of the world, made this such a great opportunity - I had to take it.

What knowledge do you bring from your time as a greenkeeper?

Having an intimate knowledge of how golf courses operate and the idiosyncrasies

that come with operating a turf facility on a daily basis helps me to understand the demands of our customers and find solutions to accommodate their unique environments.

What do you wish you knew about turf management then, that you do now?

Embrace humility. Working with the environment is forever changing and presenting new challenges. Don't be afraid to reach out for help from the sales professionals you work with, or from your fellow golf course superintendents, we have a great community of professionals willing to offer advice when asked.

How far has the industry come since you first entered it?

I would be giving away my age if I answer this one! I think the two major standouts for me have been the consistent quality of golf course surfaces produced by our modern day superintendents and the evolution of their responsibilities. Today's superintendents are not only maintaining a facility, but it's expected they will be experts in workplace health and safety, environmental policy, human resources and budgeting - it has become a lot more of an office-based role over the years.

How far has course management technology and R&D progressed since you started in the industry?

A tremendous amount and it is still developing every day. Today, we have GPS-guided mowing and spraying equipment that automates reporting and increases accuracy and efficiency. There are hybrid and electric mowers with greater fuel efficiency and cut quality and John Deere is working on the autonomous fairway mower that will be linked to OnLink - a cloud-based golf course management platform that enables golf courses to collect data and manage equipment, labour, water, chemicals and nutrients, and playing conditions.

Meet **Tim Gammage** *Golf & Turf Key Accounts Manager*



When did you join John Deere?

I joined John Deere Australia and New Zealand in June 2019, however my passion for John Deere started back in 1990 in my home country of England. The local John Deere dealer was one of the first to take on the golf franchise back in the mid 1980s and, as their turf business grew, they needed to expand their sales team.

I enjoyed 15 exceptional years significantly increasing their Commercial Turf and Golf business before accepting an exciting new opportunity with a John Deere dealer group in New Zealand. They too wanted to grow their commercial turf business, and a very successful eight years followed.

In 2013, I started a new role as Turf Sales Manager for a John Deere dealer group in Alberta, Canada, where I helped create a sizeable increase in Turf business and experienced a steep learning curve in snow removal equipment. In 2015, an opportunity arose back in New Zealand, as Branch Manager for a North Island John Deere dealer group which I held until May 2019.

What was it that attracted you to the role?

It has always been my ambition to work for John Deere as I simply love everything about the company. When the position of Golf and Sports Turf Key Account Manager became available it ticked many boxes and sounded too good to be true.

What excites you the most about this job?

The opportunity for John Deere and our golf and sports turf dealers excites me. Australia and New Zealand are home to an abundant and diverse array of golf and sports facilities, from small rural nine hole courses to breathtakingly beautiful members clubs, to world-class sporting facilities, all maintained by passionate turf professionals. With a continued focus, commitment and support to our golf and sports turf customers, I am able to have an important role in the success of our customers' turf management approach and business.

What are some of the most exciting things on the horizon from John Deere in Turf?

Autonomy, Precision Turf (Global Positioning System technology) and John Deere Connected Support™, which is a suite of industry leading tools exclusive to John Deere that provide unique insights into machine diagnostics, including the ability to remotely or predictively diagnose a machine, before it becomes symptomatic. I believe this is John Deere's competitive advantage simply because advanced technology is strategic in our commitment to revolutionise our customers' business.

What learnings do you bring from your time working with dealer groups through the UK, NZ and Canada?

Life in different continents varies due to numerous factors including population density, traditions, economic and climatic conditions, yet the fundamentals of doing business remain, and customers appreciate dealing with companies that are committed and focused on supporting their industry.

What challenges do you see turf managers and dealers facing in Australia/New Zealand compared to what you've seen in the Northern Hemisphere?

One of the biggest challenges facing

our industry is a shortage of skilled, experienced labour and attracting the younger generation into the industry. Many customers and dealers struggle to find skilled staff to fill vacant positions, forcing some employers to look overseas. Combined with trying to attract apprentices into the industry, it makes recruitment extremely challenging. This isn't specifically a Southern Hemisphere issue but it certainly appears to be a significant challenge for Australia and New Zealand. This has been recognised by John Deere and a significant influence in the design of their latest 2700 PrecisionCut™ Series triplex mowers where the Superintendent can pre-set the machine to perform exactly the same - irrespective of operator experience.

How has the industry changed since you first entered it?

Turf and Agricultural machinery have played significant roles in sculpting my career so one of the most impressive advancements for me has been John Deere's innovation and development of equipment. When I started 30 years ago you wouldn't have seen electric/hybrid technology or GPS machinery.

Technology to-date has certainly improved product and performance efficiencies throughout the turf industry, yet over the next few years there will be a new generation of equipment that will be at the forefront of sustainability and best practice for turf maintenance.

Hidden gem moves to John Deere



Muree Golf Course, a hidden gem.

Staff at a golf course tucked away in New South Wales' Hunter Region have a renewed attitude toward their turf management approach after reaping the rewards of an equipment update.

Muree Golf Course, a hidden gem of the Port Stephens area in New South Wales, is known as a picturesque, 18-hole facility boasting breathtaking views and a traditional-style layout demanding accuracy and an ability to shape the ball both ways.

The course has PENN AI Bentgrass on the greens, with the tees a Greenless Park Couch and the fairways a mix of Couch and Kikuyu. Recently, Muree made the switch to John Deere equipment with the assistance of Chesterfield Australia.

Club Superintendent, Robert Baker, said he was able to work with his local John Deere dealer to build a fleet that best suited the needs of the course.

"We invited John Deere to hold an open day at our course and this allowed us, and many others, to have a look at a wide variety of equipment and speak to the reps from Chesterfield," Mr Baker said.

"We, as a group, were able to test drive each piece of equipment and ask a myriad of questions which the Chesterfield reps eagerly answered.

"The swaying decider to go with John Deere equipment was the overall quality of the products and the fact

that Chesterfield understood our specific needs.

"They were more than willing to work with us to meet those needs. This started what we believe will be a strong long-term relationship, which is very important to us."

Muree has taken delivery of the 2030A ProGator™ with a HD200 SelectSpray™ unit, a 5055E Tractor with a H240 Front Loader and an Aercore™ 800 Aerator.

The fleet will be further boosted in September with the addition of a 2500B Diesel Riding Greens Mower, an 8700A PrecisionCut™ Fairway Mower, a 2653B PrecisionCut Trim and Surrounds Mower, a 1600 Turbo Series III Wide-Area Mower, two HPX615E Work Series Gators™, and a 1200A Bunker and Field Rake.

Mr Baker said his team is already reaping the rewards of the new lineup, with the sprayer drawing praise from staff for its usability and efficiency.

"I love this machine with the SelectSpray controller which gives us greater control over the application rates," he said.

"I have seen a 75% reduction in chemical waste. This in turn reduces my cost for waste removal and it's better for the environment, and I am now confident that the correct usage rate for the chemical used has been applied to the playing surfaces.

"My staff and I are genuinely excited about the rest of the fleet arriving, as in this current climate it has been a big morale boost to my team.

"We expect the members to enjoy an even higher standard course and playing surfaces maintained by dedicated staff and equipment."



Robert Baker, Superintendent, Muree Golf Club.

"I have seen a 75% reduction in chemical waste. This in turn reduces my cost for waste removal and it's better for the environment."

Robert Baker, Superintendent,
Muree Golf Club

John Deere Golf Dealer support network

Like you, we love green. That's why we've got locations throughout Australia and New Zealand to support golf customers nationwide. With 13 John Deere Golf franchised dealers and 78 outlets, you have unrivalled access to world-leading turf equipment, along with genuine John Deere parts and accessories, comprehensive warranties and flexible finance. Let us help you improve your turf results.

Find your local Golf Dealer at
JohnDeere.com.au/Dealer or
JohnDeere.co.nz/Dealer





JOHN DEERE
GOLF

TEE TIME WAITS FOR NOBODY, NOT EVEN PARTS

With online and mobile ordering, and our centrally located distribution centre, we can have genuine John Deere parts and accessories shipped straight to your local John Deere Golf dealer the next day, resulting in minimal downtime and disruption. Genuine John Deere parts are the best way to protect your equipment's performance. Plus they come with a comprehensive warranty*, so you have complete peace of mind.

To find out more contact your local John Deere Golf dealer.

JohnDeere.com.au/Golf
JohnDeere.co.nz/Golf

*6 month/unlimited hour warranty on new Turf parts. See John Deere Service Repair Parts Warranty for details at JohnDeere.com.au/PartsWarranty or JohnDeere.co.nz/PartsWarranty.



OFFICIAL
GOLF COURSE
EQUIPMENT
SUPPLIER

