

# SPEEDCUT NEWS

Sportsturf project update from Speedcut Contractors

Spring 2013

## Weather challenges met 'head-on'

SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS faced up to one of the wettest years on record by battling to complete a busy round of sportsturf jobs - and taking many orders for drainage in 2013.

"It was certainly a question of dealing with jobs according to the weather patterns last year," says contracts manager Kevin Smith. "The wet weather was horrendous and we completed jobs as and when we could.

"The rain has played havoc with our work schedules but we met most of the demands of clients by switching between jobs according to the ground conditions."

Among the projects halted by the wet weather was the reconstruction of two new pitches for Swansea Rugby Club, which continues in the spring.

Projects completed last year included the building of a new Gaelic football pitch near Wembley stadium for Brent Council, constructing a new football pitch at Shenstone, near Birmingham, and constructing a new football pitch for a college at West Bromwich.

At Radley College, near Oxford, Speedcut created a large plateau for new sports pitches on former agricultural ground, dealing with various soil condition problems and an underground spring.

"While the weather was a nightmare last year," says contracts manager Barry Pace, "we managed to complete a wide variety of sportsturf construction and renovation jobs by working between weather fronts and by being vigilant not to create undue damage to areas.

"It was certainly one of the toughest years as far as unpre-



Speedcut building a new bunker by the side of a new pond at The Leatherhead Golf Club, Surrey

dictable weather was concerned - and another big challenge contractors have to face with changing weather patterns. Patience and bravado were the two key words to describe the best way to deal with weather conditions. We certainly met the challenges head-on."

Speedcut managing director Dick Franklin, who founded the business at his Oxfordshire base in 1977, says: "The weather was the worst on record for contractors but we were pleased with the results we achieved on a wide variety of sports surfaces despite the very significant challenges."



Sandbanding the driving range at Burgess Hill Golf Centre, West Sussex

**GOLF work included Foxhills Resort and Golf Club where Speedcut completed more bunker remodelling, tee re-leveling, path improvement**

**and greens drainage. They also installed artificial tees on the Manor course.**

In Kent, Speedcut constructed new tees, artificial pathways and installed drainage at the historic Chislehurst Golf Club and nearby at Sundridge Park Golf Club they built a new driving range, dredged and re-shaped a pond for a new bridge and walkway and relocated and levelled tees.

Speedcut also carried out tee rebuilding work at Orpington Golf Club, Kent, for owners Mytime Active.

Moor Park Golf Club in Hertfordshire had an old wetland area completely dredged and deepened while at Gerrards Cross Golf Club in Buckinghamshire, working with William Swan of Swan Golf Designs, Speedcut worked on improvements to the practice area with a new chipping green.

At Silvermere Golf Club, Surrey, they rebuilt the ninth tee and at Wimbledon Park Golf Club carried out drainage.

Drainage was also installed at Royal Mid Surrey, Old Fold Manor, Barnet, and Highgate Golf Clubs.

## Chislehurst GC's new tees and pathways

SPEEDCUT has constructed new tees, artificial pathways and installed drainage at the historic Chislehurst Golf Club in Kent.

The 18-hole course is situated in 70 acres of parkland just 11 miles south-east of central London.

Speedcut rebuilt and extended the 7th tee, where the existing sleeper walling was suffering from age, and installed Huxley non-sand winter mats together with an artificial pathway to cure a wear problem between the 5th green and 6th tee.



An artificial tee and raised tee at Chislehurst

**A program of drainage is in place to deal with specific problem areas.**

"Chislehurst is one of those golf courses that combines splendour with beauty," says Speedcut contracts manager Barry Pace.

"Every feature was constructed to enhance the superb surroundings and demanding aspects of this tremendous golf course.

"With the lack of space and tight layout wear and traffic issues are exaggerated and all the work in this phase is planned to help the club maintain its high standards of presentation."

SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS are specialists in sportsturf construction, drainage and renovation. The company was established in 1977 and has an outstanding record in every type of sporting venue, including golf, football, rugby, cricket and racecourses. Clients include local authorities, schools and colleges.

## Radley College adds extra sport facilities



Speedcut in action at Radley College , Oxford, creating the new sports plateau

RADLEY COLLEGE near Oxford has a reputation for some of the best sporting facilities in the country - and Speedcut Contractors are proud to have been part of that story.

Grounds manager Adam King has been a cricket and football coach - as well as being responsible for seven groundsmen, two greenkeepers and seven gardeners.

"We work hard to produce the best playing surfaces we can," says Adam, who has been at the college for 12 years.

Radley has produced some outstanding sports stars over the years including the legendary cricketers Len Hutton, Ted Dexter, Robin Martin-Jenkins and Andrew Strauss plus rugby player Nick Wood of Gloucester.

Speedcut Contractors created a new 2.2 hectare plateau on which a rugby pitch, football pitch and cricket square will be



Adam King at Radley College with Speedcut working on the golf course.  
*Picture by Laurence Gale of Pitchcare*

created. The work was carried out on former agricultural ground.

And the job was not without its problems involving an underground spring and different types of soil material including sand, clay and gravel. The levels all had to be altered to meet the local terrain.

"This was a challenging job but the result will be an excellent surface for new pitches to be created," says Speedcut contracts manager Kevin Smith. "We always enjoy working with

Adam and his team."

Speedcut employed all their heavy-duty machinery at Radley, including the laser-guided Caterpillar D6, JCBs, and dump trucks.

Said Adam: "Speedcut did a great job, as they always do. I have known them for more than 11 years and in that time they have done some great work for us - including laying the nearby Smithsons cricket ground and working on golf course improvements."

As well as 15 rugby and foot-

ball pitches, nine cricket squares, two artificial pitches and a full rubber-crumbs tartan running track, Radley College caters for hockey (on grass and artificial surfaces), tennis, swimming, badminton, squash and golf.

Radley Golf Club, a 440 members-only club is based at the college and has nine holes - or a par 68 on an 18-hole circuit.

Adam was previously at Woodbridge School in Suffolk for five years where he was head groundsman and cricket coach.

At Radley College around 700 boys from 13 to 18 are all boarders and the college has an outstanding educational record.

Dick Franklin, Speedcut managing director, says: "We are very proud of our association with Radley College, being in our own home county and one of Britain's finest sporting and educational establishments."



THEN:  
Speedcut in action at Colchester United's new training ground in August 2011



NOW:  
The same training ground in December 2012

## Colchester United's new training ground

SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS completed five football pitches at the Colchester United FC Training ground at Tiptree in Essex at the end of 2011 - one of the toughest jobs they have done.

Now, just over a year later, the results are clear to see.

"The ground conditions were incredibly difficult," says Speedcut contracts manager Barry Pace.

"Because of the thick clay overlaying

gravel, our machinery was constantly under strain, despite tungsten tips on the cutters."

The training pitches themselves were each of a different construction to provide varied playing conditions.

The community pitch is well-used by local clubs who benefit from the excellent facilities on site. A fully-equipped clubhouse was built by APH Ltd.

"We are delighted with the results," says Barry.



# Pride of Sundridge Park

SPECTACULAR Sundridge Park Golf Club in Kent, with stunning views of the London skyline eight miles away, has received much acclaim for its superb fairways, greens and woodland.

And their own forester, Terry Gladwell - who planted some of the 250,000 trees nearly 50 years ago - used their own timber to build a fabulous new oak bridge over a pond rebuilt by Speedcut Contractors.

It's just one of the many tremendous features of this stunning 36-hole club that boasts nearly 1,200 members - and yet maintains a quiet and unassuming entrance near Bromley down a quiet back lane.

Course manager Paul Rudkin, who has been at the club for 27 years, has a team of 12 greenkeepers, plus forester Terry, and they have their work cut out maintaining this superb course to very high standards.

"We have very undulating slopes with all soil types, from clay to chalk, so you could say that our work is challenging," says Paul, who started at the club when he was 17.

Chief executive Luke Edgcombe, who came to Sundridge three years ago from Tyrrells Wood, says: "This club

has the strapline 'two superb courses and one friendly club', and that really sums it up.

"We invest a lot in improving facilities and have lots of plans, including one for a new clubhouse so that we can extend our activities to include larger social events from outside the club."

Part of that investment has gone on a new practice area completed last year - with four members bays, a separate teaching bay and a large enclosed state-of-the-art professional's room that includes cameras to show players how they are improving.

The new range building was a joint venture between Speedcut Contractors and Mike Copson Associates and the results are proving a very popular asset for the club.

The project also included releveling and extending the existing grass practice tee with Paul and his team, installation of full 25metre-width Huxley Range mats to the back and improvements to drainage, car parking and access.

Speedcut also carried out the dredging of the pond on the 18th Hole of

the West Course (which involved temporarily removing 2,000 fish, mainly carp, to another newly-built pond on the East Course).

Apparently it was last cleaned in the late Sixties by dragline so there was well over 50 years-worth of silt and debris build-up to be removed.

Speedcut also regraded and shaped the area in preparation for the paths and bridge installed by Paul's own team and lowered and laser-graded the 18th tees, which now have a superb view across the water and beyond.

"Speedcut, as ever, did a great job," says Paul. "I have known contracts manager Barry Pace for many years and he and his teams are always very meticulous and down-to-earth in their approach. Their atten-



Paul Rudkin, Sundridge Park course manager

tion to detail is remarkable and the results speak for themselves."

Barry's team also laser-graded the tees around the renovated pond, which now have a superb view across the water and beyond. They also aerated greens with their Gwazae deep pressure decompactor.

"It's always good to work with Paul and his team and we are delighted with the results," says Speedcut contracts manager Barry Pace.

[www.spgc.co.uk](http://www.spgc.co.uk)



Paul Rudkin on the completed bridge built by Sundridge Park GC forester Terry Gladwell

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Racecourse treated after Saltex

SPEEDCUT'S Gwazae deep-probe aerator was in action at Royal Windsor Racecourse following IOG Saltex - decompacting the track where the temporary crossovers were situated (pictured). They also treated other areas of the course.



The heavy rainfall in 2012 led to an increase in requests for Gwazae treatment and winter treatments on greens and pitches using special wide profile tyres.

### Artificial surfaces installed at schools

ARTIFICIAL grass play surfacing was installed for All Saints Church at Addlestone, Surrey, and at Kings College School in Surrey artificial grass was installed for player access to the new sports pavilion.

A pre-school play artificial grass area was installed for St. Hugh's School at Carswell, near Oxford, where new rugby and hockey pitches have also been sown.

## Keeping surfaces playable

SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS offer a variety of solutions to sports surface problems with a range of services.

For many high-wear compacted areas their Gwazae deep-probe aerator is proving an essential tool.

It is one of only a few available in the UK in the hands of experienced contractors.

The machine provides deep soil and subsoil decompaction through the injection of compressed air.

Speed of operation and depths achievable with a Gwazae make this invaluable in relieving soil pans and deeper compaction around areas of high wear on the golf course.

Because of the depth reached this makes the Gwazae aerator more effective in the results achieved than with traditional machines such as verti-drainers or ground-breakers.

As well as eliminating deep decompaction the surface is left virtually undisturbed which is ideal for fine turf sport situations where a perfect finish is required.

Speedcut Contractors' tractor-trailed Gwazae, manufactured in New Zealand, decompacts soil to a depth of up to 700mm using a probe and compressed air. It breaks the soil structure apart creating fissures through the soil profile while leaving the surface virtu-



Speedcut's Gwazae in action at Brentford Football Club

ally undisturbed, with just a neat insertion point left. The remaining small hole can be filled with drainage material or just left to heal over.

Soil improvement materials can also be injected into the soil during the process such as seaweed, gypsum and wetting agents.

It has proved extremely effective on racecourses, including Brighton and

Fontwell Park.

The clerk of both courses, Edward Arkell, said: "Speedcut's Gwazae was very effective on compacted areas of both courses and the results were achieved in a short space of time."

Speedcut also offer a verti-draining service for surface improvement and decompaction.



Speedcut Contractors' Mastenbroek drainage layer in action at Foxhills Golf Club and Resort, Surrey

## Laser grader for tees proves cost-effective

SPEEDCUT offers golf clubs a new solution to releveling and regrading tees, a cost-effective remedy for deteriorating conditions.

The laser-grading technique has been used to great effect at Foxhills Golf Club and Resort and The Oaks, Carshalton, both in Surrey, Wimbledon Park Golf Club and Worthing Golf Club in West Sussex.

Speedcut's BLEC Laser Grader is a small machine fitted with a 'Bullseye'



Speedcut's BLEC Laser Grader in action at Foxhills Golf Club and Resort, Surrey

Control System that collects a signal from a Dual Grade Laser to give a perfect finish with no margin for error.

Tees become uneven over time, through excessive use and soil settlement, edges

begin to slope off reducing the actual area that a golfer can 'tee off' from.

Existing turf is stripped from the tee area and the platform prepared for final grading

The laser grader is then set to the required grade and can create perfect tee platforms to any fall.

The increased tee area created is of great benefit to green-keepers and golfers, by helping to spread wear over a greater surface area without the need for major reconstruction.

## Schools put us to the test

SPEEDCUT CONTRACTORS celebrate 36 years in the sportsturf business this year and one aspect of the company's outstanding reputation is an incredible record of varied projects at schools, colleges and universities.

Major work at Charterhouse School in Surrey included rebuilding the 'Big Ground' main football pitch and restructuring and relocating one golf hole and building two new tees on their nine-hole course

And at Loughborough University, where Olympic training took place last year, Speedcut renovated football pitches, having built four new rugby pitches the year before on former agricultural ground.

On the Isle of Man at King William College a new artificial match wicket was installed with a 30-metre 2.7metre-wide Wilton woven artificial carpet over a dynamic base.

And at Castle Rushen High School, Castletown, an old concrete base match wicket was replaced with a shockpad over a new dynamic base.

Four-bay practice nets were removed and replaced with two concrete base bays and two dynamic base wickets.

"The work Speedcut did was absolutely fantastic," said Mike Atherton, head groundsman at King William and advisor on the Castle Rushen job, where he was once a pupil.



BEFORE Constructing the 'Big Ground' football pitch at Charterhouse School



AFTER Following the third cut two months after construction