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Magazine - 2010 STA NSW Cricket Wicket Seminar Wrap Up

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By [Rob Jenkins](#) in [Shows and seminars](#) on [13th Sep 2010 6:00](#)

Last week the Sports Turf Association of New South Wales hosted a two day seminar at Blacktown Olympic Park. Both days were extremely successful with a swag full of delegates and trade attending the action packed Seminar.

The couple of days were more than just your usual turf seminar as they featured Australia's most well known turf personality and wicket technician Les Burdett. Les is of course a household name thanks to his 42 years of service to the famous Adelaide Oval.

More than just having the chance to hear Mr Burdett speak, delegates from around Oceania got the chance to work hands on with Les as he covered every aspect of wicket and outfield preparation. The demonstrations took place on full size turf wickets. You couldn't have asked for a better venue to host the seminar, Blacktown Olympic Park turned on the style with glorious sunshine on both days which helped keep everyone's spirits up. A few pink scalps even saw the sunscreen brought out on the second day! Blacktown is right up there as having some of the best facilities in Australia for training and playing on and it was no surprise to see the world class venue presented to us all in superb condition.

STA NSW President Graeme Logan and CEO of Cricket NSW David Gilbert got the proceedings underway on the first morning inside the indoor training facilities. The morning's talks got underway with Ricky Aitken from Hong Kong Cricket Club giving us an insight into preparing wickets for the Indian Premier League. Ricky received and invitation from the Deccan Chargers in 2008 to help get the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium up to the quality expected for the world's richest tournament the 20/20 IPL.

Presentations from major sponsors GYC for Toro Australia as well as Geoff Hatton Jnr for the respected Sustainable Turf, had the morning events moving along nicely. After a quick tea break the delegates moved outside to the outdoor training wicket decks.









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This is where the real action took place with a make shift grand stand whipped up in front of the wickets, so the delegates could take a load off while Les and his side kick Nick Kozak from Blacktown Olympic Park got to work. While Les talked the delegates through how he went about scarifying, top dressing, wetting of wickets, clipping and rolling on the microphone, Nick went about trying to carry out the work in the middle. It didn't take long for the two men to build up into some good banter which kept the crowd entertained over both days. Les of course couldn't help but get his hands dirty as the morning wore on showing young and old how it's done out in the middle.



It wasn't long before lunch was upon us and this gave the delegates a chance to have a browse around the trade stalls. The event was well supported by the industry with over 20 stalls dotted around the well laid out venue. All the usual suspects attended both days with their support Globe, Toro, Sustainable Turf, Bayer and Living Turf all had a large presence at the show with Gold Sponsorships.

Newly formed Proturf Machinery was present on both days. Proturf are the Jacobsen dealers for NSW and were created with the marrying of Turfcraft Machinery's John Purtell and PJC Sportsturf's Chris Stig. It was the

ideal seminar for one of Australia's experts in grinding Chris, to chat to delegates about how to get the best from your mowers and just what the quality of cut can mean to the health of your turf. Proturf Machinery is also the importer of the respected Bernhard Grinding range throughout Australia so the talk was listened to with interest.

Mentay the name synonymous with cricket wicket rollers in Australia had a Mentay 2000 on hand during the seminar to undertake all the rolling work. No better advertisement could be needed than the big green and gold roller silently rolling up and down the pitch while Les Burdett talked on the importance of rolling the perfect pitch.



The company behind the impressive cricket training set up Gabba Sporting Products also had a stand for the event. Gabba is known for unique 'Demountable Sports Net System' which they manufacture and hold the patent for in Australia. Gabba Sporting Products was also the first company to introduce synthetic grass into the country.

Back out in the middle after lunch Les talked more specifically on rolling times and duration, then finished on wicket covers, Hessians and growth mats. He touched on what the covers achieve and how important they are in relation to a perfect wicket with just the right amounts of moisture, all the advice that was eagerly gobbled up.

The first day went off without a hiccup and concluded at Rooty Hill RSL with some drinks and a chance for the delegates and trade to discuss the successful opening day.

Another 8.30 start and another glorious day at Blacktown for the final day of the seminar.

Star presenter Ricky Aitken spoke on his time at the famous Hong Kong Cricket Club. Ricky has been at Hong Kong since he left Tasmania in 2002 and has expanded his role at the club to include consultancy work for the Kowloon Cricket Club and Hong Kong Cricket Association. More sponsor talks this time from Living Turf, Globe and Bayer with all the companies touching on what they had been up to this year and their new developments.



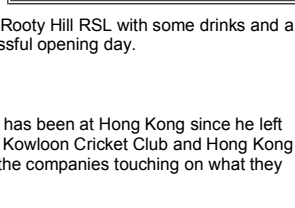
Adam Lewis finished off the morning's attractions inside. Adam honed his skills by working at both Hurstville Oval and Hurstville Golf Course before he was appointed Ground Manager of Hurstville Oval in 2001. During his tenure, Hurstville Oval has been awarded the NSW Cricket Association Ground of the Year five times and has hosted numerous high profile matches including Women's One Day Internationals and the NSW Ford Ranger Cup. Anyone who has notched up Ground of the Year five times commands respect so it was a great way to finish up before we all headed back outdoors.

Les and Nick again picked up where they left off with the banter flowing easily once more. The final practical work including match day preparations, final rolling, marking out and wicket recovery and sprigging with washed turf, was all covered. The crowd also headed out onto the B oval in the afternoon where watering of the wicket table and outfield preparations and presentations were discussed.



Lunch was again a good chance for the delegates to have a nose about the trade stalls. A popular stall and the machine that gets my tick as the most exciting of the seminar was the Coremaster Royale at the Greencare stall. Coremaster is a name that is renowned in Australia for producing turf aeration equipment. And this latest installment into the range will not be letting anyone down. Deeper, faster, smoother, quieter, lighter and with less maintenance the Royale needs a closer look to be believed. The machine ran in the same spot all day and didn't damage the turf in the slightest, you could barely hear it running to top t

all off.



All in all the day was an exciting concept that was well received by all the delegates and trade. Having the seminar both indoors and outdoors on real wickets was a great idea and the presence of big turf personalities such as Les Burdett, Ricky Aitken, Adam Lewis, Graeme Logan and New Zealand's Karl Johnson sure helps, but you get the feeling this show would have been a huge success no matter the attendees. NSW STA pocket dynamo Jenny Zadro always keeps things running smoothly and the concept of the idea meant this was always going to be a winner. Mix in some fantastic weather and a perfect venue and you have a hit seminar!

As always thanks has to go out to the trade for making the event possible, their continued support and presence at these shows makes for a colourful backdrop. All the stands looked great and as usual plenty of work went into them.

Well done to the STA and all involved on a fantastic show. Head to www.facebook.com/pages/Pitchcare-Oceania for more great pictures from both days.




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13th Sep 2010 by [dlp](#)

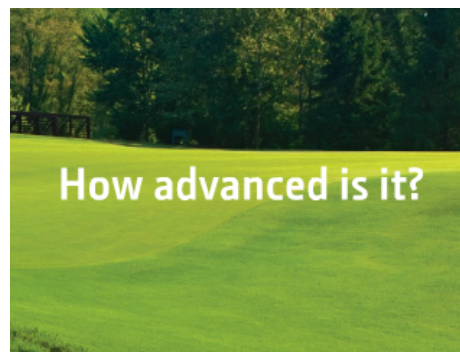
hope its on again next year, will def head down for it.

 13th Sep 2010 by [SarahGibson](#)
Good to hear David 😊

Rob might let me come next year as well! A new spin on his wrap up's would surely be welcomed haha.

Maybe they will have a new test venue curator every year? I imagine that would be a huge hit amongst the delegates.

From the 21 questions etc I have been typing up I hear Kevin Mitchell at the Gabba is also very well respected amongst his peers.



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