Robin McMillan retired recently after having served nearly 37 years as Head Greenkeeper at Moffat Golf Club, in Dumfriesshire. Robin, like myself, was born and bred in Moffat and he developed an interest in golf when, as a youngster, he became a message boy for the local grocer, Mr Stewart, who was also a fine golfer and a great believer in getting youngsters involved in the sport. His method was quite novel. He expected his message boys to caddy for him in the evening, without payment, but he encouraged them to try it out for themselves. I followed Robin as Mr Stewart’s message boy and it certainly worked for both of us.

It was with great pleasure that I was able to attend the celebration to mark Robin’s retirement. The club and his friends had arranged a golf match and dinner in the clubhouse where a presentation was made to him for his many years of devotion to the club. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening where friends and work colleagues paid their respects and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Robin became a greenkeeper at the club where his uncle was the Head Greenkeeper (nepotism was alive and well). After four weeks his uncle decided to retire and left him as the sole Green Staff member. A daunting task at an 18 hole golf course. Robin embraced the challenge and he has been a stalwart and a fine example of a hard working and conscientious greenkeeper who has been a credit to greenkeeping and, especially, Moffat Golf Club. Robin has always been a member of BIGGA and a great supporter of the Association.

Robin leaves Moffat in the capable hands of Mike Wilson who has been his deputy for a number of years. Mike is taking on the responsibilities of Head Greenkeeper and we wish him all the best. Robin is looking forward to all the opportunities retirement will bring. He is a staunch supporter of Queen of the South Football Club and will now have more time to attend the matches. Golf is also high on his agenda. We wish Robin well and hope he has a long and happy retirement.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

Harry Jurgens, of AFT Trenchers, is taking part in a vintage car rally from Peking to Paris. The route from China to France will take the teams more than 30 days to complete, through more than nine countries, with plenty of stops along the way. 100 cars from around the world are competing.

“We are taking part in the 4th Peking to Paris event that retraces the steps of 11 pioneering automobile adventurers in 1907. It has also presented us with an opportunity to raise awareness and hopefully funds for Parkinson’s disease,” said Harry, who is competing with a friend.

David Salisbury, Course Manager at Burghley Park Golf Club, has a huge library of old books and photographs and he has uncovered this photograph taken in 1976 of delegates at a training course at the STRI. See if you can spot younger versions, and haircuts, of some familiar faces.

Paul and Jane Undery, long time PR consultants for Etesia, were presented with a momento at Saltex by Etesia’s Managing Director Patrick Eves, to mark Paul and Jane’s retirement. The couple were invited to Etesia’s traditional Saltex breakfast so they could meet up with their friends in the press and say goodbye.

Paul and Jane Undery
New book for the British Standards Institute

This informative, simple, clearly laid out book brings together all of the relevant information needed to manage the risks presented by the use of machinery. By answering the most frequently asked machinery safety questions the book offers practical health and safety solutions.

With questions featuring in a purple font and plenty of white space this A5 book would be a valuable read for anyone involved in Risk Assessment and general H&S.

The author, John Glover, is a graduate of the Institute of Occupational Safety and has practised health and safety law and safety of machinery for a number of years.

It can be obtained from the BSI, Group Headquarters, 389 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 4AL www.bsigroup.com

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Class of ’76

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Paul and Jane Undery

For further information, contact Etesia on 01428 734444. www.etesia.co.uk

Email your news to scott@bigga.co.uk
Ransomes Jacobsen threw open the gates to its European head office and invited the UK turf industry to an Open House event over two days in late September. Over 400 guests, including many current customers, prospects, dealers and distributors, representatives from the media and local dignitaries, attended the event which provided a varied programme of activities. Industry partners including BIGGA, STRI, IOG and GEO were present as were suppliers to the sector, Scotts, Syngenta, Bernhards and Broadwood International.

The event took place in a relaxed atmosphere, somewhat similar to a country fair, with equipment displays and demonstrations, historic Ransomes equipment including the first Budding lawnmower, a working Ransomes steam engine, thrasher and ploughs, factory tours, outdoor games and a nearest the pin competition on the company’s three-hole golf course.

On the following weekend a Family and Friends Day with a similar format saw 620 people invade the premises to see the array of turf maintenance equipment produced in Ipswich. A model steam railway provided rides for the children and entertainment included fete and funfair-type games, a ‘beat the goalie competition’, music from a local school band, a putting competition and a BBQ lunch. The local police and fire and rescue services were also in attendance with their latest vehicles.

Commenting on a very hectic three days, Managing Director, David Withers, said, “It was quite a week and exceeded all expectations. We had around 430 visitors over the two industry days and 258 of those toured the manufacturing plant. Some came from as far away as Holland and Austria. Many remarked that they had not appreciated that we produced mowing equipment on this scale, so it was pleasing to get the message across to so many. “The Family and Friends Day was equally successful and provided the opportunity for the staff to show their loved ones where they work and showcase how they contribute to the success of the business here in Ipswich,” said David.

Golf Environment Award Winners

Portmore Golf Park and James Hutchinson, of Fairhaven Golf Club, are the two main winners in the 2010 Golf Environment Awards. Portmore, in Devon, won the Overall Achievement Award and James, the Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year and Owner/Manager of Portmore, Colin Webber, and James each win a Study Trip to the USA.

Regional Winners were: Scotland. Loch Lomond GC; Wales, Aberdovey GC; Northern England, Ribble Valley GC and Southern England, Alderburgh GC.

Individual Project Award winners were: Nature Conservation. Delamere Forest GC; Water Management. Maesteg GC; Waste Management, Machrihanish Dunes GC and Turfgrass Management. Royal St David’s GC.

OPEN DAYS

PORTMORE GOLF PARK AND JAMES HUTCHINSON, OF FAIRHAVEN GOLF CLUB, ARE THE TWO MAIN WINNERS IN THE 2010 GOLF ENVIRONMENT AWARDS.

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After 38 years with SISIS, UK Sales Manager, Keith Vertigan, has retired. Keith started with SISIS as Area Representative for the North West, later moving to Scotland as Manager of SISIS Scotland. After a very successful few years he returned to Macclesfield to become UK Sales Manager. Keith was presented with vouchers so that he can add to his very extensive range of fishing equipment. He is now hoping to spend more time relaxing at the side of a river – and hopefully catching some fish!!

SISIS new sales team is Andrew Roberts as UK Sales Manager, supported by Andrew Walker as Field Sales Manager and Douglas Boa as Sales Office Manager.

The third Northern Region Inter-Section Golf Tournament, sponsored by Whitemoss ECO Supplies, was held on September 22, at Llangollen GC.

For the first time all six Sections in the Northern Region competed on a fine day on superb course prepared by Course Manager, Jez Hughes, and his staff. The format was a three man team from each Section playing Stableford with all three team members scores to count. The event was once again a very close run affair with the Sheffield Section just claiming victory with 108 points over the second placed North Wales team with 104 points.

The Longest Drive was won by Paul Roberts from the North Wales Section and Nearest the Pin was won by Andy Peel also from the North Wales Section.

The Region thanks all teams for making the effort to play, some travelling great distances.

The Region’s thanks are also extended to Llangollen Golf Club for providing the venue and some excellent food; everyone was made to feel very welcome. Particular thanks are extended to Andy Law, Managing Director of Whitemoss ECO Supplies Ltd, for his continued sponsorship.

Photograph shows the winning Sheffield Section team and others from left to right: Stewart Pigott, Sheffield Section; Ian Holoran, Northern Region Chairman; Jez Hughes, Course Manager; Andrew Roberts, UK Sales Manager; Jez Hughes, Course Manager; and Tom Strong, Sheffield Section.

Nominations
Open for the Edwin Budding Award

The International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association is now accepting nominations for the fourth annual Edwin Budding Award. The Award recognises those who have made significant contributions to the golf course equipment industry, including those who have excelled in the business, history, education, design, engineering and maintenance of golf course equipment.

Nominations should be sent to nominations@igcema.org, and the deadline for nominations is November 26.

The winner will be presented the award in Orlando, Florida, USA during the Golf Industry Show.

“Back to the Future” is the theme of the European Golf Business Conference 2010. The fifth edition will be held in London: the first time the event been held in the UK - from November 30 to December 2.

An international group of representatives from the golf industry will gather in this city, to exchange ideas of how the game can grow, to discuss current developments of the industry and to share knowledge and information on golf course management.

More information about the programme, speakers and location can be found at the conference website: www.conference.egcoa.eu.

Back to the Future: The 5th European Golf Business Conference!

Protective shield

What if you had a long-lasting protective shield against Fusarium even for the toughest winter?
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First for Sutton Green

Sutton Green Golf Club, is one of the first clubs in the area to take delivery of the hybrid greens mower from Jacobsen, the Eclipse 322.

The diesel-electric hybrid mower was delivered recently by local Ransomes Jacobsen dealer, TH White Ltd of Reading.

Nathan Kim Sing is Head Greenkeeper at the club and has a team of four to help maintain the course.

“About 18 months ago we received a complaint from a neighbour in a nearby house close to one of our greens about noise from early morning mowing.

We took a reasonable approach and changed our greens mowing regime, but it is inconvenient for us as we have many early starters, especially at weekends, and preparing the greens in that part of the course is an issue for us,” he said.

Grass Roots Technology

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Fast knockdown

What if you had a fungicide active in leaves, thatch and soil providing contact + activity?

Visit www.greencast.co.uk for more information
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**Pay Recommendations**

The Committee for Golf Club Salaries (CGCS) feels that it would be inappropriate to recommend any form of increase for 2011 to the salary scales currently in place. In reaching its decision the Committee has taken into account the general economic climate and the impact that this has had on golf clubs throughout the UK.

The CGCS recommends rates of pay as guidelines for Clubs to follow, but is mindful that at all times they remain a matter for negotiation between the individual employer and employee. The CGCS further considers that employers should make an appropriate pay award to recognise any substantial change in responsibility, qualifications or duties carried out by their employees as well as reflecting any changes to legislation governing rates of pay. Performance issues are also an important and relevant criteria in salary negotiation.

The CGCS wishes to draw to the attention of golf clubs the impending changes in pension legislation that will come into force with effect from 2012. From this date both employers and employees may have a mandatory obligation to contribute into a Personal Pension Plan or the Government’s National Employment Savings Trust (NEST). Employers should begin to look into how they will be affected and what will need to be put in place in order to comply with the legislation.

**Grass Roots Technology**

Dean Wood Golf Club has become the first UK course where staff across all three vocational levels are completing their qualifications through the use of E-portfolio technology.

Course Manager, Chris Halkerd has not only embarked on his own professional development by completing Myerscough College's NVQ level 4 Sportsturf pilot, a blended learning programme utilising ILM training mixed with innovative assessment methods and short bite sized training certificates, but has also been supporting his staff through their level 2 and 3 apprenticeship programmes using the same methodology.

“The e-portfolio sports-turf qualifications Myerscough provided for me and my staff proved time efficient, well constructed and industry specific,” said Chris.

“The new way of completing work based qualifications has allowed me to develop my team of staff which in-turn has benefitted the quality and standards at Dean Wood.”

**Reward for Ronnie**

Liberton Course Manager Ronnie McCrindle received a plaque from Chairman, Stewart Crawford, on behalf of the East Section at the Autumn Outing to the club, to recognise 40 years at the club.

“Ronnie will be retiring in two years time we wish him all the best in his retirement when it comes round. I think he deserves it,” said Stewart.
Delegates at the recent Barenbrug and STRI Druids Glen Golf Resort open day have given glowing feedback on the event, which revealed the preliminary findings of a new trial taking place at the County Wicklow course. Over 40 superintendents from across Ireland attended the day to gain an insight into the Green Diffential Input Trial. Established in partnership with STRI, the trial is the first of its kind in Ireland and aims to determine the influence of both standard and reduced input maintenance regimes on grass species for golf greens.

Following a welcoming speech from Druids Glen’s course superintendent John O’ Sullivan, on why the 18-hole championship course decided to participate in the trial, Barenbrug’s research and development manager Jayne Leyland, gave a presentation on the company’s global breeding programme, before a series of other informative presentations including Dr Ruth Macrae who updated delegates on turfgrass protection and the methods and value of thatch reduction for overseeding and interseeding. Dr Ian McClements who spoke about the STRI Programme and Neil Pettican, regional sales manager for Barenbrug in Ireland, after lunch, given John Fitzpatrick, illustrated how easy it is to implement a species exchange programme with the Graden.

Best wishes from us all, John

May I acknowledge the efforts of outgoing BIGGA CEO – John Pemberton. As our CEO since 2004, John has helped BIGGA develop into what it is today. John is wished well by all.

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GoLd For OULTON Hall

The Estates team at De Vere Oulton Hall is celebrating after picking up two top horticultural Gold awards in the space of just one week. These latest awards bring the hotel’s overall haul to eleven commendation gold medals for its gardens over the last three years.

After picking up a Gold Rose Award at Yorkshire in Bloom last week, the Estates team at Oulton Hall has won a further Gold for the impressive planting at the main entrance to the hotel.

The Estates team at De Vere Oulton Hall, which has been maintained to the highest standard despite it being a very difficult dry summer.

The judges were particularly impressed with the overall standard of bedding displays and permanent planting at De Vere Oulton Hall, which has been maintained to the highest standard despite it being a very difficult dry summer. John Brown, golf course, estate and property manager, said: “These awards are true testament to the hard work and dedication of all estates team but especially our fantastic gardeners at the hotel. I would like to thank them for their continued commitment and passion towards the upkeep, maintenance and presentation of our beautiful gardens which give pleasure to so many.”

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Harrogate Weekend 2011

The Scottish Region is offering the following package for the Holkham Inn, Harrogate. The accommodation is from Monday 17th January, three nights, Bed & Breakfast En-suite rooms on 17th, 18th and 19th January, 2011. Cost will be £165.

To obtain a booking form for the accommodation contact the Regional Administrator, Peter Pettican, e: ppettican@barenbrug.com or e: pettican@barenbrug.com

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