The GTC is aware that many of the readers of this column are often the greenkeepers who, with the odd exception, are convinced that there is no substitute for having an educated, trained and preferably qualified greenstaff to maintain and manage the golf course. However…

For many years greenkeepers, mainly through their own Association, have asked for better support from the Home Unions and other golfing organisations including the R&A, GCMA, PGA and PGA European Tour to help spread the word to the golfer on the important role and work of the Course Manager and his/her greenkeeping team contribution to the game of golf.

In recent years we have seen real progress and the GTC Board with its representative bodies, the Home Unions and BIGGA are determined to make every effort to “educate the golfer”.

We now have annual seminars and workshops hosted by the Home Unions on behalf of the Golf Course Managers and the Scottish Golf Union’s development of Case Studies showing best practices aligned to the Sustainable golf course programme.

There is now some excellent information available on the web and on the representative bodies on the GTC – visit www.the-gtc.co.uk and click on the respective logos.

We also should acknowledge the support, through a special project, the R&A has given to the GTC primarily to promote the Sustainable golf course and Benchmarking to our Centre turf staff but this years series of workshops also included representatives from the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) and the Golf Club Managers Association (GCMA).

Never has it been more possible that all golfing bodies work together to not only promote greenkeeper training to maintain good sustainable playing surfaces but also to applaud the many golf clubs who are struggling in the economic climate.

The ongoing reports from the Home Unions that many private clubs membership are still in decline and the nomad golfers are increasing has led the GTC to appeal to golf clubs to consider donating a green fee to the work of the GTC on behalf of the casual player enjoying their facilities.

The letter to clubs from GTC Chairman, Donald Steel, can be viewed on the GTC website and any reader who feels they or their employers can assist the GTC, please feel free to download the letter and form.

All contributions will assist the GTC to continue its vital work for the future.

The most recent initiative from the GTC is the launch of the Quality Assured Providers (QAP) Project sponsored by the Golf Club Managers Association (GCMA) and the Scottish Golf Union’s Quality Assured Providers (QAP) Project.

One of the most important roles of the GTC is to direct both employees and greenkeeper students to those Centres and Training Providers who offer qualifications and courses in accordance with the National Standards for greenkeeping.

I make no apology in asking readers once again to look out for the GTC’s Quality Assured logo on literature and websites of those Centres and Providers who have met the criteria – see below.

For further information on any matters relating to greenkeeper education, training and qualifications contact the GTC direct: Tel 01347 838640 or email david@the-gtc.co.uk.

October means dark nights, pumpkins and hallowe’en. With Harrogate Week approaching, you’ll be in for a treat! Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2011

The Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2011 programme is now available. BIGGA members should have received a copy with this magazine.

With a combination of two day, one day and half day workshops, supplemented by a series of five seminars, Continue to Learn 2011 will deliver almost 150 hours of education over five days. We have worked hard to ensure that there is something for everyone and for the first time we will be presenting a Turf Managers’ Conference.

We have been able to reduce the cost of the workshops and conference thanks to the support of the Gold and Silver Key contributors to the Learning and Development Fund.

The workshop programme will include:

- Two day workshops:
  - Golf Course Design
  - Moving into Management

- One day workshops:
  - Golf: Basic Mechanics Workshop
  - How to be an Outstanding Manager
  - How to be an Outstanding Manager: Irrigation System Design
  - Moving With The Times: Diagnostics and Problem Solving
  - Basic Budgeting and Golf Club Finance

The workshop programmes are available on the Harrogate Week website or by contacting the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 and select Option 3.

More seminars will be added to the programme and can be found on the official Harrogate Week website, www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager?

Pesticide Update

Golf Club Marketing

Nine half day workshops:
- Basic: Electrical System Maintenance
- Producing a Golf Course Policy Document
- Volunteer’s Workshop
- Introduction to Hydraulics
- Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop

The Rules of Golf and Course Setup for PGA Events

Protected Species and Habitats for Bumblebees and Butterflies

Basic Greenkeeping Techniques

Carbon Auditing for Business Advantage

So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager – Getting it Right in 2011 presented by the GCMA

All of the workshops can be booked online via the Harrogate Week website or by contacting the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 and select Option 3.

Our congratulations go to all of the finalists performed to a very high standard making it a very difficult decision for the judges.

After much deliberation the decision was made and the 2010 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year was awarded to Andrew Stanger, from Horsforth Golf Club, and representing Askham Bryan College.

Andrew will be attending the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts commencing in January 2011.

Congratulations go to Andrew and also to his course tutor, Steve Prinn, who wins a trip to the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, Florida.

The runners-up, who win a trip to Harrogate Week 2011, were: Sebastian Cavilla, from The Manor House Golf Club, representant Bridgwater College; Cummington Coursing; and Sean Brorett, from Ellesborough Golf Club, representing Myer Golf College.

Our congratulations go to all of the finalists.