The 2011 South East Regional Conference was hosted this year by the Essex Section at Stock Brook Manor Golf & Country Club.

Unfortunately the first speaker, Darren Baldwin, Tottenham Hotspur Head Groundsman, was called away on business to Belgium, which resulted in a swift change around of the running order. First up, and Chairman for the day, was BIGGA’s Chief Executive Officer, Jim Croston.

Jim got proceedings under way quickly, giving a rundown on how he saw the Association progressing in the coming years.

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He was followed by Past National Chairman Richard Whyman. Course Manager at Bournemouth & Bournemouth GC. Richard ran us through his maintenance practices, with a breakdown of fertiliser and chemical usage, topdressing regime and how he dealt with pests like rabbits. He explained the principles of his work programme and the ethics behind them.

Richard showed graphs of his records, which he has been keeping over the 10 or so years he has been at the club.

Next to hit the floor was local boy, Stuart Kerrison, Head Man at Essex County Cricket Club, in Chelmsford. To we

He explained the need to keep the foot square, sometimes at other grounds by devious means. He even explained about the use of glue to stick the cracks in the wicket together.

A delicious lunch, provided by Stock Brook Manor, was warmly received by the 120 plus delegates and speakers, after which we moved to our last speaker of the day. Greg Evans Course Manager, at Ealing Golf Club.

Greg spoke about the problems of maintaining a course built on clay greens and his practices and principles of maintenance. He justified why he cut the turf at that height of cut. His feeding and topdressing programme and the difficulties he faced throughout the year.

A number of delegates asked questions of the speakers, which then started a debate between the speakers and the floor with the misconception that the wicket is a plastic, as opposed to a standard test wicket. The debate was excellent.

Hugh Boniface, from Cambridge University, was called away不幸 the golf club should have erected warning signs to prevent users to potential hazards. Sights considered that signs would have been a proper and effective way to draw the golfer's attention to the area between the 7th tee and the 6th green and, moreover, that if they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded, 'had they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded,' he said.

Brailsford ruled that the golf club should have erected warning signs on this point..

The programme gave an insight into the different aspects of managing sports turf and sports facilities. These varied from the diverse requirements of a modern football stadium, to presenting a course for the Scottish Open and the problems which have to be dealt with when adverse weather takes its toll.

The South West and South Wales Regional Conference took place at the new venue of the Oaktree Arena and Conference Centre, Highbridge, with 134 in attendance. The theme for the day was “The Spectrum of Sports Turf Management” with presentations from Cale Bigelow, from Purdue University, in the US, Chris Haspell, from Castle Stuart Golf Links, Hove Morgan, from Ashburnham Golf Club, Craig Richardson, from Bristol City Football Club, and Mark Hunt, from Headland Amenity.

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Along with these speakers the Region was pleased to welcome Jim Croston the new BIGGA CEO who spent a little time telling delegates about their Association and the future plans.

St Andrews Certified for Sustainability

St Andrews Links has become the first Open Championship venue to achieve the GEO Certified™ ecolabel in recognition of its sustainability commitment and achievements.

St Andrews Links Trust, which manages the seven courses at the Home of Golf including the Old Course and The Castle Course, has operated a sustainability programme for many years and this approach was described by Mike Wood, the accredited verifier, as being “close to defining an ideal model for sustainable management.”

In the GEO certification report the assessor praised the Trust’s commitment to social responsibility and community engagement as well as the eco-friendly manner in which the clubhouses, retail outlets and other facilities are operated.

They said that not only was the Trust maintaining a 600 year heritage as the birthplace of the game, it was “a standard bearer for 21st Century good practice in golf management.”

June Jones
South West and South Wales Regional Administrator

INJURED GOLFER VERDICT

The 6th green and the area between the 7th tee and the 18th tee or in the area between the 6th green and the 7th tee was a failure to erect proper warning signs on the course. We noted the golf club should have erected warning signs to prevent users to potential hazards. Sights considered that signs would have been a proper and effective way to draw the golfer's attention to the area between the 7th tee and the 6th green and, moreover, that if they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded, 'had they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded,' he said.

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The day was wound up by Jim Croston, the new BIGGA CEO who spent a little time telling delegates about his Association and the future plans. Jane Jones

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INJURED GOLFER GIVERDICT

A golf club has been found 30% liable for an accident which resulted in a golfer losing an eye – the judge found that remaining 70% responsibility belonged to the golfer who ignored the shot which caused the injury.

See Jon Albett feature elsewhere today "Golfer loses an Eye. Was this Accidental?" Damages were still to be fixed but a figure of around £50,000 had previously been agreed, and Heriot Castle Golf Club, in West Lothian, was refunded approximately £120,000 of that.

Judge Lord Brailsford ruled that the club's hobby was for its failure to erect proper warning signs on the course. He said the golf club should have erected signs alerting such users to potential hazards.

Sports considered that signs would have been a cheaper and effective way to draw attention of golfers and, moreover, that such signs, had they existed, would have been likely to have been heeded, he said.

Accordingly form the view that the failure to provide signs other at the 18th tee or in the area between the 6th and 7th tee was a failure of duty.
The doors have been thrown open to a multi-million pound customer attraction at JCB.

The permanent exhibition, called ‘The Story of JCB’, has been developed at JCB’s HQ at Rocester charting the company’s links to industry back to the 1820s.

The exhibition covers 2,500m² of floorspace and includes 14 zones which take the visitor on a journey through time, starting in the 1820s, when the Bamford family were blacksmiths in Uttoxeter through to the present day and JCB’s ECO range of fuel-saving machines.

The exhibition is also populated by 10 of the landmark JCB machines through the ages which had to be craned through the roof as the attraction took shape.

The centrepiece of the exhibition is a giant skeletal model of a JCB JS200 tracked excavator built to scale out of 8mm steel rod and created by renowned artist Benedict Braidwood, some of whose work is currently on display in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The finished artwork took five months to complete, used around one kilometre of steel rod and weighs around two tonnes – a tenth of the weight of the actual machine it represents.

JCB currently welcomes around 15,000 visitors from all over the world through the years which had to be craned through the roof as the attraction took shape. The permanent exhibition, called ‘The Story of JCB, has been developed at JCB’s HQ at Rocester charting the company’s links to industry back to the 1820s.

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**EUROPEAN GOLF BODIES TO PROMOTE GROW THE GAME OF GOLF WEBSITE**

A group of Golf organisations which include: The European Tour, FFEGCA, PGA’s of Europe, CMAE, EGDSA, GRO, EGGA and EGCA, have agreed to expand and promote Grow the Game of Golf website.

The aim of the website is to encourage and inspire golf clubs and other golf organisations to help develop the game, particularly at grass roots level.

There are various successful ideas on the website which you could acquire for the growth of golf at your golf club.

Call us now on 01883 344244 for prices and deals.

**New machinery at Bothwell Castle**

Bothwell Castle Golf Club recently signed a six year agreement with local Toro suppliers, Hamilton Brothers Ltd. The deal, worth over £300,000, represents a significant investment in plant and machinery to ensure that the course at Bothwell Castle continues to be maintained to the highest standards.

Acting Head Greenkeeper Alasdair McMillan said “I am delighted with the new machinery and thank the club for investing in what I consider to be the best greens equipment in the marketplace.”

The 2011 Club Captain, Andrew Braidwood said “It was very important to get the best equipment but also to get the right deal for the club.”

He went on to thank Hamilton Brothers Ltd for their assistance in securing this agreement.

The Club’s General Manager, Jim Callaghan CCM said that “It is vitally important that the Club continues to invest in its equipment and facilities for the benefit of all its members and their guests.

This agreement demonstrates that the Committee and the Club is focused on providing the best possible playing surfaces on its golf course for years to come.”

**Eagle’s Fairway Markers...**

...will enhance your course presentation.

Eagle’s range of posts, mowers and sprinkler head markers offers the complete distance measure solution.

Call us now on 01883 344244 for prices and deals.

**Kingsbarns is Golf Course of the Year**

Kingsbarns Golf Links has been voted the Golf Course of the Year at the Golf Tourism Scotland Gold Standard Awards held at the Kingsbarns Golf Links.

The St Andrews-based club was named Course of the Year for the fourth time, ahead of some of the leading courses in Scotland including Balcomie Links (Crail), the Carnoustie Championship Course, Castle Stuart Golf Links, Craighead No.2, MacDonnach Dunes, the New Course, St Andrews, North Berwick West Links, Pitichelly, the Old Course St Andrews, the Torrance Course (Fairmont St Andrews), the Ailsa Course at Turnberry and Western Gailes.

The GTS Gold Standard Awards are the only Scottish golf industry honours to be nominated by, and voted for by the industry itself. GTS members cast their votes online in the various categories.

**‘STORY OF JCB’ EXHIBITION SET TO GENERATE NEW EXPORT BUSINESS**

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JCB currently welcomes around 15,000 visitors from all over the world through the doors each year and this figure is expected to rise to 20,000 from next year as a result of the exhibition.

**Toro Show Reel**

When Chesterfield Golf Club undertook a three-year bunker renovation programme, they knew there was only one piece of kit to conquer the steep edges and sharp contours of their new hazards – a Toro Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder mower.

As part of a recently signed five-year deal with Toro distributor Lefy UK, the Derbyshire club has invested in two 3100 Ds.

As Course Manager, Mark Crossley, said: “We needed a machine that would get around those hard-to-reach areas, and it does just that and more.”

The club, which has been using Toro machines for seven years, has also added two Greenmaster 1000s, a Groundsmaster 3500-D Sidewinder and a Debris Blower 600 to its fleet. What’s more, Mark is looking forward to the delivery of a further five Toro machines in seven years. The club is looking forward to the delivery of five more Toro machines in the near future.

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BIGGA SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION SPONSOR PLACES TO HARROGATE WEEK 2012

This year the Regional Board of the South West and South Wales Region has decided to sponsor one place from each of the four sections on the Region’s Harrogate Hospitality and accommodation package, giving our people the opportunity to attend the show and surround.

Each committee has been asked to select someone from their Section who they feel would benefit from the experience. This opportunity has been made possible due to the RA’s work in stabilising and growing the financial resources of the Region and the support of the Region’s Patron.

Chairman’s Word
National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

An interesting and challenging year

“I all get very passionate about our golf courses, and this tremendous industry we work in, but its important that we keep it in perspective and realise that our family and friends play the most important part in our lives and we need to get the work/life balance right”

Many thanks also to the BRIGA members and trade members who delivered presentations at the recent round of Regional seminars and at IGGi’s ScotTurf.

They were all well attended and feedback was excellent from the delegates.

To keep up with all that is going on check the “Events” page on the website.

The judging for the Bernhard and Company sponsored BRIGA Delegation to the GIS show in Las Vegas took place. Congratulations to the worthy winners and commiserations to the many fine applicants who didn’t make it.

The quality of candidate is tremendous and shows how professional many of our members are in developing their careers.

The LAD department is continuing the review of the CPD scheme, Accreditation programmes and the Master Greenkeeper Award. The aim is to identify the needs of the industry.

Time will tell, but if you don’t try you will never know!

“We all get very passionate about our golf courses, and this tremendous industry we work in, but its important that we keep it in perspective and realise that our family and friends play the most important part in our lives and we need to get the work/life balance right”

Many thanks to David for the invitation.

I aim to off to China again for a work teaching on behalf of Elmwood, and meeting some contacts there to see what might be gained from relationships with BRIGA.

It’s been a long, interesting and challenging year, but exciting also. I am looking forward to the holiday season, and spending time with family and friends playing the most important part in our lives and we need to get the work/life balance right.

Enjoy the festive season, my very best regards, Andrew Mellon

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