Farewell to BIGGA’s Membership Man

BIGGA’s Membership Assistant Brad Anderson has left the Association to manage a pub in Harragill.

Brad, who joined the Association from school as one of the Reception Staff over 10 years ago will be managing the Coach and Horses pub in the town.

Brad’s membership role will be covered by existing staff for the time being.

Tim Hands Over The Reins At TGA’s Spring Meeting

Incumbent Chairman of the Turfgrass Growers Association, Tim Fell, was praised for steering the TGA through a challenging two years as he handed the reins over to fellow grower Hugh Dampney at the Association’s spring members meeting in Southport.

Hugh drew applause from the 60 members gathered at the Ramada Plaza Hotel as he described the achievements Tim had contributed to during tough trading conditions, including the inclusion of TGA member-grown turf in the landscaping contracts for the 2012 Olympic Games and the successful negotiation of a discretionary 28 day exemption for newly laid turf in the event of drought orders being imposed.

He presented his predecessor with an engraved decanter and some fine fishing vouchers to mark his term in office.

The next time the turf growers will convene will be at the TGA’s biennial turf show, which is being hosted by J&B Farnaby near Barnsley, on June 28 and 29.

Further details on www.turfshow.co.uk.

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Greencast Site Gets Makeover

There’s a new look to the Syngenta GreenCast website, with improvements to make it faster and easier to find all the essential knowledge for more proactive turf management.

GreenCast is the most comprehensive website for weather forecasting, disease risk prediction, turf management information and turf specific application advice, according to Syngenta GreenCast Project Manager, Karen Roberts.

“It remains completely free for all turf managers, agronomists and students. They just have to register once, to gain full access to all the resources and knowledge.”

She also highlights site features that include Weather Radar Information, which can track weather fronts moving across the country and forecast potential issues: “Used in conjunction with the Syngenta Spray Windows Forecast, greenkeepers and turf managers can plan spraying opportunities and programme work schedules.

“It’s part of our ongoing commitment to provide the most useful information for turf managers in a quick and convenient format.”

GreenCast is also now available as a mobile website, enabling greenkeepers, turf managers and agronomists to have instant access to practical information whilst out on the course or pitch, direct to their iPhone, BlackBerry or mobile phone.

Key features on the new look website include:

- Five-day local and national disease & weather forecasting – proven by course managers to be more accurate than other turf-focused weather providers
- Unique forecast of key turf disease risks – proven to aid more effective proactive decision making
- Valuable five-day spray window forecast – enabling better work scheduling and optimum spray timing
- Essential Integrated Turf Management advice from STRI and Syngenta technical specialists
- Full product information and advice to help achieve the best possible results
- Application advice to get sprays on target
- The latest news, innovation and technical updates for more effective turf management
- Entirely free access for turf managers, agronomists and students

For further info, visit www.greencast.co.uk.

John Steps Into Retirement

BIGGA Headquarters staff were on hand to pay tribute to retiring Chief Executive John Pemberton last month and presented him with gifts bought from donations gathered from staff, Paul Chairman and others keen to pay tribute to his 18 year contribution to BIGGA.

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Groundsman of the Year Awards Announced By Football League

The winners of the 2011 Groundsman of the Year Awards for the npower Football League have been announced.

After a season when extreme weather pushed pitches to their limits, the efforts of ground staff across the country have been recognised.

Ewan Hunter, of Nottingham Forest, has been named winner of the npower Championship accolade, with Burnley’s, Paul Bradshaw, and Gary Kemp, of Norwich City, both highly commended.

Carri Le United’s, David Mitchell, scooped the Award for npower League 1 while Joe Ayllett, of Milton Keynes Dons, and Southampton’s, Andrew Gray, - last year’s winner – both received commendations for the surfaces at Stadumkirk and St Mary’s.

In npower League 2, Anthony Haywood brought more success to promotion winners Chesterfield with the divisional Award for best groundsman. Bradford City’s, Michael Doye, and Shrewsbury Town’s, Richard Barrett, were highly commended.

Presented by the Playing Surfaces Committee, the Groundsman of the Year Awards recognise the importance of the quality of pitches and to acknowledge head groundsmen and their staff.

The Awards are determined initially using marks from referees and army managers for each game, and are then followed by detailed pitch inspections and a review of management operations. These visits were carried out in late March and early April.