John Deere Present £5K Gift to BIGGA at Slaley Hall

John Deere kindly donated £5,000 to BIGGA at their latest Team Championship amid the spectacular surroundings of Slaley Hall in Northumberland.

Richard Johnson, John Deere Limited managing director, presented the cheque to BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croston.

The teams battled it out to reach the final. They are then joined by a dealer. The Slaley Hall final was followed by Selby Golf Club and Devon Golf Club. A net score of 58 were West Lancashire Golf Club and after a highly competitive day’s golf, the winners with a net score of 58 were West Lancashire Golf Club.
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John Deere, a BIGGA Gold Key member, works closely with BIGGA to support its educational activities. Team championship donations at previous tournaments amount to over £50,000.

The Slaley Hall final was the culmination of 24 regional finals held around the UK and Ireland that were supported by local John Deere dealers. Teams of three consisting of the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper along with two further senior members of the club management competed in a tense scramble format to reach the final. They were then joined by a dealer representative making a team of four.

The teams battled it out and after a wet start, the skies cleared for a glorious afternoon of golf on the superb course, expertly prepared by Course Manager Steve Cram and his team.

The format proved popular and after a highly competitive day’s golf, the winners with a net score of 58 were West Lancashire Golf Club.

The team’s greens chairman Nick Jones, Kevin Pickering of Turners Groundscare, first assistant greenkeeper Jamie Whittle (a late substitute for course manager John Muir) and committee member Ian Kearney. The team (with John) now have the fabulous opportunity to compete in the World Championship at Myrtle Beach, South California in November.

Second on countback with a net score of 59 were Royal North Devon Golf Club followed by Selby Golf Club.

Jim said: “We are very grateful for this generous donation from John Deere who are great supporters of our association and our membership. The funds will be utilised to improve our lending library service and to kickstart a new Careers in Greenkeeping project which we hope will provide a great service to prospective and current greenkeepers.

“It was a privilege to attend the John Deere Team Championship and witness so many golf clubs competing to win the remarkable opportunity to go forward to the Myrtle Beach Grand Final. The format of the Team Championship is superb as it encourages teamwork and communication between the senior management of golf clubs, John Deere are to be congratulated on their support of the event.”

BIGGA Commercial Manager Appointed

The recent activity at BIGGA HQ has continued with the appointment of James Cadwaladr as Commercial Manager.

James joins the Association from a similar position at a sports marketing agency, where he worked closely with right holders in the sports industry advising on commercial opportunities. His arrival comes at a time when the management team at BIGGA House.

James said: “My focus is to develop all sales, marketing and communications, ensuring these areas work together to serve the needs of our membership whilst delivering first-class support and value to all of our partners and clients.

He has extensive experience in the commercial side of the sports industry, in establishing strategic partnerships and appreciating client needs. James is a keen golfer, and a passionate supporter of Everton FC.

STRI Research 2012

STRI Research 2012 once again took place in Bingley and featured a range of fascinating presentations to turf professionals from across the UK. The Institute works with a number of companies each year on Research & Development projects for the sport turf industry and invited a selection of these companies to support the free two-day educational event.

This year Bayer, Everris, Rikskennett & Rigby Taylor, Ramooses-Jacobson, Sher riff Amenity & Plant Impact and Syngenta were in attendance.

Seven demonstrations took place on the fields overlooking West Yorkshire including a Preparatory of Cut demonstration from Ramooses-Jacobson. This was presented by Matt le Brun – who we profiled in last month’s Greenkeeper International, featuring an explanation of the science behind grass selection.

Other interesting discussions arose from Syngenta’s lively introduction to their new Turf Nozzle system, Sher riff Amenity & Plant Impact’s new liquid turf fertiliser ‘SNtronic’ and a sneak preview of Bayer’s new turf fungicide – officially to be launched at BTME 2013.

Over 250 delegates attended including greenkeepers, course managers, fine turf managers and ground staff. Gordon McKeag, STRI Chief Executive, said: “The event provided sport turf managers with invaluable insight and knowledge from industry experts to improve and sustain the quality of their turf.

“Attendees learnt firsthand how STRI’s long term research has helped to optimise the performance of sports surfaces at many of this year events including Euro 2012 and the Olympics.

“The event also enabled delegates from a whole host of sporting disciplines to see the commitment and dedication of STRI and all the supporting companies.”

Brian Story, Course Manager at Silloth on Solway Golf Club, commented: “The information we gained stimulated much debate and gave us a bit of much needed inspiration”.

SALTEX Support

BIGGA were once again delighted to support the SOG SALTEX event at Wymondham – and even happier to enjoy the exhibition over three days of glorious late summer sunshine.

We were inundated with positive feedback from our seminars which featured three of our most popular experts from Continue to Learn at BTME 2012.

David Cole, left, Course Manager at Letchworth GC, kicked off with an inspirational and informative session on managing winter kill after his club was severely affected by this in 2009.

Next up was Chris Haspell, Course Manager at Castle Stuart Golf Club, who entertained the audience with his experiences of building a links golf course and hosting the rain-lashed Scottish Open in 2011.

Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager from Syngenta, rounded things off with a debate entitled Organic Matter – Friend or Foe?” analysing how to decipher between thatch and organic matter.

All in all, a highly enjoyable and worthwhile few days – and attention now switches to BTME in January.

RETIREE

After 44 years of employment, David Wilson has retired from the Greenkeeping team at the Ardnamurchan Links. When he started in 1968, things were very different from what they are currently with only 10 staff looking after the 5 courses that made up the Links.

As he recalled, his job that summer was cutting teas, from May until the end of the season. With another member of staff, they would begin on the 1st tee of the Old and when they were finished the Old Course they would move onto another course.

The following day they would start back where they finished off until the tees on all 4 courses were cut, then begin on the 1st of the Old again and repeat the process all summer.

David was one of the first greenkeepers in the UK to gain a recognised qualification in greenkeeping which he obtained at Kinvale College in Cupar, where they started a greenkeeping course with the assistance of the Forestry Commission and Supervisor Mr JK Campbell.

During his time on the Links, David worked on all the courses. He was a foreman on the Eden Course for a spell but during the longest period of time he spent on one course was as head greenkeeper on the Old Course. This spell included during the major alterations in the mid 1980’s until 2007. He then became a head greenkeeper on the New Course but latterly was course manager on the Strathlene and Balloch courses. He has also been involved in the Scottish Open Championship more than any other Greenkeeper on the Links.

A large group of colleagues and friends turned up to wish him a happy retirement including past employers and Greens Committee Chairmen.
GI NEWSDESK

Stanley Zontek
1949 – 2012

It is with great regret that we have been informed of the death of BIGGA member Stanley Zontek, director of the USGAA Green Section’s Mid-Atlantic region, at the age of 63, after suffering a heart attack. Stanley was the son of a golf course superintendent – playing his first round aged just five - and graduated from Penn State University with a degree in Agronomy and Turfgrass Management.

He became one of the most respected agronomists within the industry and was a frequent speaker at HTMDC as well as other seminars in the UK and worldwide where he delighted audiences with his knowledge and enthusiasm. One of his more unusual responsibilities was maintaining the putting green at the White House.

He also received many awards including the GCBA Distinguished Service Award, the GCBA Don Rosal Humanitarian Award and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at Penn State – recognising his outstanding lifelong contribution to greenkeeping.

Everyone at BIGGA would like to extend their deepest condolences to Stanley’s family and friends at this sad time.

Norman Fenwick

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FLOODING HITS THE UK

The Indian Summer was sadly brought to an abrupt end in mid-September by a three-day deluge which swamped courses across the UK. Norrie Whytock was a trade representative for a Scotland Region patron who passed away in 1997. In memory of Norrie, the patron provided funds for a Trophy to be established in his honour with Bayer CropScience now firmly established as the sponsor of this competitive and enjoyable team event. John Young, BIGGA’s Regional Administrator for Scotland & Northern Ireland, fills us in on this year’s contest:

“The 2012 competition was held on Thursday 16 August at its spiritual home of Auchterarder Golf Club. Teams of four members represent each of the five Scottish sections in this stabilised competition. Team members qualify through their participation and subsequent success at sectional outings along with representation from the section’s committee. “Competitors were provided with a bright yet breezy start to their round. However as has been experienced by many this particular summer, the optimism for a dry round of golf proved unfounded with heavy rain, thunder and lightning disrupting play over the last six holes. Indeed, the course began to flood and the 15th green was unplayable for the last couple of groups. “The weather during 2012 has certainly not been the greenkeepers’ friend but it is testament to the dedication of all our members that the care and attention to detail is present everywhere we look. Archie Dunn and his team must be congratulated for the excellent course provided for this competition. It was in immaculate condition as commented by all participants with Stuart Taylor, Scottish Regional Chairman singling out the manicured shape to the fairways as one of the many highlights on the course. “Scoring was excellent even with the unfortunate restriction of only counting the scores over the first 14 holes. The best three scores from each team are combined to determine the competition results. Only one point separated the top three teams with the Central Section just missing out on the top places with a combined score of 77 points. “Reigning champions, the North Section and the West Section, both returned a score of 78 points resulting in the 4th team member’s score to be counted to determine the winner but they could not be separated on a total of 102 points. In this situation, the winner is determined on countback from combining all five scores over the last five holes with the North Section being crowned Norrie Whytock Trophy winners for 2012. “Congratulations are due to the winning team of Robert Patterson and Stewart Brown (both Royal Aberdeen Golf Club), Douglas Eldric Newsam (Ballyclare Golf Club) and Scott Ribeck (Rings Link Golf Club).” Stuart Taylor, Scottish Chairman, thanked all competitors for taking part and their continued support of the association. The chairman was represented by their National Accounts Manager Eleanor Jenks, for their continued support of this prestigious event in the Scottish Region’s calendar. He concluded his comments by thanking the host club for the courtesy of the course and their excellent hospitality.

Winning team captain, Robert Patterson, concluded the proceedings by accepting the Norrie Whytock Trophy and passed on his team’s thanks to the host club for their continued support of the event and to Auchterarder Golf Club.

NORTH SECTION SCOOPS NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY

Robert Patterson accepting the trophy from Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

ANGUS TAKES UP DREAM POST

Angus MacLeod, former Course Manager at Belton Woods Golf Club, has been appointed Director of the Golf Courses of The Belfry.

The born and bred Scot follows in the footsteps of the legendary Kenny MacKay.

Angus, 45, said: “I’m really excited, I’m still pinching myself that I’ve been given the opportunity to work at this legendary venue. Kenny’s left a superb legacy and it’s up to me to carry it on.”

“Had to make a presentation to the board of directors, that went well and it came down to a choice between me and another lad and I think I was nervous in the few and I was just delighted when I found out I had been successful.”

Angus will have responsibility for all three courses at the world famous location – the Brabazon, the PGA National and the Derby – and everyone at BIGGA wishes him every success in his new role.
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He also received many awards including the GCRAA Distinguished Service Award, the EGBA Don Rossie Humanitarian Award and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at Penn State – recognising his outstanding lifelong contribution to greenskeeping.

Everyone at BIGGA would like to extend their deepest condolences to Stanley’s family and friends at this sad time.

**Norman Fenwick**

It is with great regret that we have been informed of the death of Norman Fenwick, director of the USGA Green Section’s Mid-Atlantic region, at the age of 63, after suffering a heart attack.

Norman was a golf course superintendent – playing his first round aged just five – and graduated from Penn State University with a degree in Agronomy and Turfgrass Management. He became one of the most respected agronomists within the industry and was a frequent speaker at HTFDG as well as other seminars in the UK and worldwide where he delighted audiences with his knowledge and enthusiasm. One of his more unusual responsibilities was maintaining the putting green at the White House.

He also received many awards including the GCRAA Distinguished Service Award, the EGBA Don Rossie Humanitarian Award and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at Penn State – recognising his outstanding lifelong contribution to greenskeeping.

Everyone at BIGGA would like to extend their deepest condolences to Stanley’s family and friends at this sad time.
GREENKEEPERS HELP THE HEROES

Four intrepid greenkeepers recently completed a unique challenge as they walked over 130 miles from coast to coast… while pushing hand mowers!

Gutty Stuart Yarwood, Eddie Ainsworth, Tim Johnson and Gordon Irvine amazed onlookers as they ‘knowled’ three Ransomes Jacobsen pedestrian machines from Liverpool to Hull over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The initial idea, the brainchild of Tim, Greenkeeper at Wilmslow Golf Club, has at the last count raised almost £42,000 for Help for Heroes and you can still donate at www.bmycharity.com/TimJohnson

The group, plus two non-greenkeepers, battled steep hills in the Yorkshire Dales, terrible weather and even mechanical problems to complete the challenge in an impressive four days.

They began at Liverpool docks and pushed the mowers – christened ‘Trish 1’, ‘Trish 2’ and ‘Trish 3’ - to Manchester on the first day.

The next day was one of the toughest because you’re pushing a dead weight down a hill.

“Towards the end through the Wirral we had some great focal points and when we saw the Humber Bridge we thought we’d done it. However, it was still 15 miles away which meant five more hours of pain.”

He added that the highlight was the camaraderie that developed between the gutty lads – who did not all know each other prior to the challenge.

He said: “You get by on pluck and adrenaline, but at any time there will be someone who’s struggling so you need to pick them up.

Failure’s not an option, so even though you’re in pain you don’t think about it because you don’t want to affect morale. I had no idea how emotional it was all going to be.

“Ultimately, we were pushing hand mowers. You think it’s tough but we wanted to raise money for people who are pushing minesweepers.”

The lads would like to thank Tim’s dad Stuart who shadowed them and helped them immensely during the challenge, and also sponsors Symbio, Rgby Taylor, British Seed Houses, Prestige Garden Services, Ransomes Jacobsen and Benks Anomaly. They were also hugely grateful for the support along the way of Lymn, Wilmslow and Ave Golf Clubs plus Chris Sherban and Tracey Maddison.

Watch this space for the lads’ next bizarre-challenge next summer!

BIGGA NORTH CONFERENCE

The Northern Conference is scheduled for Wednesday 7 November at The Phoenix Sports Centre in Rotherham at 10am. The price is £10 for members and 350 for non-members.

The speakers are: David Wilkinsson, Course Manager at Wadsworth Golf Club – ‘Eight Feet Under and Still Surviving’. Melyn Taylor, Managing Director of Turfcity Limited – Drainage presentation Henry Bechtle, Technical Sales Manager for Eversis Limited – ‘The Implications of Nuisance within Integrated Turf Management. Dr David Greenshields, Research and Development Manager for Barenbrug UK Ltd – ‘Suitability of grass species for golf greens in the UK and Ireland’

A representative from The British Rootzone and Top Dressing Manufacturers Association, Jonathan Knowles, training co-ordinator at Myerscough College – ‘Education pathways and apprenticeships’. The theme is ‘Turf Management in all its Glory’ and features an exciting range of guest speakers. They include: Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, “Biology and the Effects of Parasitic Nematodes”, David Cale, Course Manager Loch Leven Golf Club, “Winter Kill In West Scotland”; Cameron MacMillan, Course Manager Queenswood Golf Club, “Mission Impossible”; Robert Wills, Plant Assistant Romney Oak Golf Club “Changes in greenkeeping as seen by a First Assistant”; Richard Comedy Director of Product and Marketing at Symbio, Jacobsen “Perceptions in Greens Management.”

BIGGA SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES CONFERENCE

BIGGA South West & South Wales 2012 conference will take place on Thursday 15 November at Oaktree Arena in Highbridge, Somerset. The theme is ‘Turf Management in all its Glory’ and features an exciting range of guest speakers. They include: Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, “Biology and the Effects of Parasitic Nematodes”, David Cale, Course Manager Loch Leven Golf Club, “Winter Kill In West Scotland”; Cameron MacMillan, Course Manager Queenswood Golf Club, “Mission Impossible”; Robert Wills, Plant Assistant Romney Oak Golf Club “Changes in greenkeeping as seen by a First Assistant”; Richard Comedy Director of Product and Marketing at Symbio, Jacobsen “Perceptions in Greens Management.”

The speakers are: Kate Entwistle – ‘New pest and disease issues’; Nigel Church – ‘Safety equipment improvements’ Ken Moody – ‘Course improvements case study – Thorpeness’

For more information please contact Clive Ongong on 01737 819343 or cliveongong@sky.com

BIGGA MIDLAND CONFERENCE

The Midland Conference takes place on Tuesday 6 November at Forest Hill Golf Club in Leicester, which is just off Junction 22 of the M1.

The price £65 each for members (Discounted to £10 each for bookings of 3 members or more at £52) for each member, with a 9am start.

The speakers are: David Lightbhoil MG MSc, Golf Course Manager at Beauregard Lakes Golf Club – Presentation TBC

Melyn Taylor, Managing Director of Turfcity Limited – Drainage presentation Melvyn Taylor, Technical Sales Manager and Henry Bechtle, Technical Sales Manager for Eversis Limited – ‘The Implications of Nuisance within Integrated Turf Management’

Dr David Greenshields, Research and Development Manager for Barenbrug UK Ltd – ‘Suitability of grass species for golf greens in the UK and Ireland’

A representative from The British Rootzone and Top Dressing Manufacturers Association, Jonathan Knowles, training co-ordinator at Myerscough College – ‘Education pathways and apprenticeships’.

For more information please contact Jane Jones, BIGGA Regional Administrator on 01454 370550, 07841 948110 or jane@bigga.org.uk
Re-alert for Chalara ash dieback disease

Following the initial alert on Chalara ash dieback in the last issue of Greenkeeper International, the disease has since been found at several different locations around the country.

The initial wide-area environment outbreak in Leicestershire was subsequently identified as Bisturl Park and Ride near Leicester where 1,000 trees were uprooted and destroyed. Suspect cases at plant nurseries in Surrey and Yorkshire have now been confirmed, while an additional outbreak in the grounds of South Yorkshire College has also been reported.

However, the most serious outbreak of disease to date is in trees planted during 2009 in woodland managed by Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) at Knockmount, 2km north of Kinlochwin in Renfrewshire to the west of Glasgow. The 300 hectare site has been entered by mixed broadleaves including 98,000 ash plants that will now be dug up and destroyed.

This is a particularly big blow against any hope of eradicating the disease and could well signal the end of the common ash tree as a British native tree. This is a fast spreading disease and with so many common ash trees in the wider environment the chances of further spread over the three year period (2009-2011) will be extremely high. There is no reason to suspect that the fungus and disease will behave any differently here to what has already been done in Europe. Up to 90 per cent of Denmark’s common ash trees are infected and almost all are expected to die.

At least five years too late the Forestry Commission has been finalising a rapid pest risk assessment which will not be published until a similar exercise in the EU. All of this will delay the time as well as the time elapsing during its presentation in Brussels for consideration by the EU.

In the meantime the causal fungus (Chalara fraxinea) remains an unregulated pathogen in the EU. It was first found in soils in the Netherlands. As consignments of common ash trees (Fraxinus excelsior) remain an unregulated pathogen in the EU.

Risk assessment. All of this will clearly take time as well as the time elapsing during its presentation in Brussels for consideration by the EU.

Up to 90 per cent of Denmark’s common ash trees are infected and almost all are expected to die.

Firstly, many congratulations to Thomas Paviele on becoming the 2012 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

I was hugely impressed by all the finalists and was particularly taken by their knowledge, passion and enthusiasm as well as being a very sociable group.

Well done to all the finalists. It was surreal much winning this award, or even being nominated, can help your career.

It lifts your profile hugely and stands out a mile on your CV.

If you’re not convinced, take a look at the interview with David Norton on page 58.

Just three years after winning the 1990 title, he was Head Greenkeeper at The Belfry.

This says everything about the stature and importance of the award, and he has some excellent tips for greenkeepers taking up first steps in the industry.

It was good that we educate and inform the younger generation who are the future of this great profession, and after meeting this year’s finalists it’s clear they are going to progress and become superbly skilled greenkeepers.

However, there is still plenty of work to be done in this area.

I received no formal education until my mid-thirties – it just wasn’t available.

You could argue I blagged my way into jobs without any formal training, which was an unsustainable situation. Now, the opportunities are there to be grasped, and I would urge you to get your name down to attend the fantastic educational seminars at BTME.

Speaking of BTME, as I left SALTEX (where the BIGGA seminars were tremendous) and extremely well-received it was clear attentions were now turning to our flagship event in January.

Pre-registration is now open at www.btme.org.uk, sign up now to avoid the queues. Personally, I can’t wait for my first BTME as chairman and I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

On the course, we had a little bit of a dry period in early September which I hope you also enjoyed. We had the first cut of the year in early September which I hope you also enjoyed. We need to encourage the Sections and Regions to talk to us and tell us what’s going on.

We’ve made the first steps on this mission but there is still more to be done in promoting the association.

I’m going to be visiting as many Sections as is practically possible over the next few months.

One of the main issues I’ve been concentrating on in the first weeks of my chairmanship is communications. I want people to shout about BIGGA and the myriad benefits we offer our members.

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