Inside...

GORDON’S DOUBLE
Action from Liphook...

The greatest staging
The hosting of the 40th Ryder Cup reviewed inside

ALSO INSIDE...  ROOTING : RESILIENCE THROUGH CHANGE
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Pebble Beach was only fictional turf equipment on every inch of every hole. From ECLIPSE™2 and ECLIPSE™ 322B greening and seeding green mowers to CSS2 fairway mowers and AR22 and AP22T rough mowers, the five courses of Pebble Beach that Jacobsen to maintain all its precious turf.

So why does one of the world’s most famous golf destinations choose Jacobsen turf equipment year after year? It’s quite simple: Jacobsen is the only turf equipment that can provide the world-class conditions Pebble Beach is known for.

EVERY COURSE.
EVERY HOLE.
EVERY DAY.

WELCOME FROM BIGGA

I always consider the changing of the clocks in late October to be the official end to the season signalling dark nights, the onset of winter and the switch to ‘Conference season’. Writing this just after the warmest Halloween on record, (23.5°C in Gravesend!) I’m not quite sure the seasons are entirely going to plan but certainly it is time our attentions turn to education, conferences and of course BTME.

The launch last month of our most extensive Continue to Learn programme ever has been extremely well received, bookings are 30% up on last year and already some of the workshops are approaching capacity. Additionally, the news that exhibitor bookings are going superbly, meaning we will be utilising four halls of the Harrogate International Centre once again, is very encouraging. BTME is a critical event to the turf management industry and for greening in particular. The combination of top class education, cutting edge products and services in the exhibition halls and the unique networking opportunities that Harrogate provides makes BTME an unmissable event.

On that note I am thrilled that BIGGA Partners Jacobsen, John Deere and Toro/Lely have committed to exhibit in 2015 Partnwhich have made it through to the interview stages, the opportunities on offer are genuinely once in a lifetime experiences that can have a profound impact on greening careers. ‘We are grateful to our sponsors for working with us to bring such valuable opportunities to our membership.

The next few weeks will also see the inaugural series of Regional Gatherings, these events, free to BIGGA members, are aimed at providing excellent education and also an opportunity for BIGGA to engage with members at regional level to discuss the important issues facing the industry and the Association itself. I am looking forward to meeting many members across our five regions and hope you are able to attend and join the discussions.

Finally may I offer two sets of congratulations in relation to the BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota recently held at the stunning Liphook Golf Club. Firstly to Gordon Sangster of Cathkin Braes Golf Club who successfully defended his title with some fantastic golf against a high quality field. Equally to David Murdoch MG, course manager at Liphook, his excellent team of staff and the very many volunteers who helped out over the couple of days. The golf course was simply magnificent in relation to the BIGGA National Championship, for both initiatives the Association will be represented well. Good luck to all those who have made it through to the interview
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I must start this month’s column with a final mention of the Ryder Cup. It’s the third I’ve been fortunate enough to attend, and it just keeps getting bigger and bigger. There are more spectators, more media and more sponsors than ever, the scale of the set up is amazing. There is no doubt it’s a completely different event to any other in golf – imagine Bubba Watson encouraging noise from the crowd at The Open and hitting his tee shot to loud cheers! In my view its high profile can only be a good thing for the sport.

The home greenkeeping team and the volunteers did a fantastic job – the weather was in their favour, but the hours remained long and the work was arduous at times. They are a credit to the industry. The week also provided a good opportunity to spend time with Board members from the GCSAA, even though the eventual result went against them it was great to discuss greenkeeping and the industry in general with them. At Chippenham…yes, the grass is still growing! We still need to tweak certain parts of the course which are now unused after our renovation, and we’ve carried out hollow tining and topdressing. The leaves are starting to come down so obviously there’s plenty of work to be done there, and I know many of you will be in the same boat.

I want to encourage as many members as possible to attend the Regional Conferences, three of which take place in November. The Conferences are fantastic educational opportunities as well as a chance to network with fellow members and I urge you too show them your support where possible.

The funding and assistance provided by BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters underpins the Association’s considerable investment in Continuing Professional Development and all our educational activity. They are investing in the future of BIGGA members, we are hugely grateful and urge you to show them your support.
At the clocks go back it’s time to look forward to HTME 2015 as bookings continue to pour in for the superb Continu to Learn education programme and four halls of the Harrogate International Centre prepare to feature hundreds of exhibitors. Europe’s biggest turf management exhibition has also been boosted by the announcement that Jacobsen, John Deere and Toro have decided to exhibit in January. A move which is set to take small-scale stands at the exhibition. We believe that the annual turf management calendar, the three brands are set to reinforce the message that spraying and much more – drainage, fertilisers, the importance of BTME in the turf management calendar, the three brands are set to

BIGGA REGIONAL GATHERINGS CONFIRMED

The next couple of months sees the launch of the BIGGA Regional Gatherings which offer excellent educational and networking opportunities across England and Scotland and they are all free to attend for all BIGGA members.

The Association has secured the services of a presenter from STGA for each gathering, and Ben Young from the Knockout Course at Head Greenkeeper Chris Weir, Chairman Ken Bonser plus Steve Warren and Paul Daffern from the Greens Committee rounded out the second day. This was the final Golf Club with Deputy Course Manager Tony Lusaffe, Chairman of Green Nick Cole, Vice Captain Niall Allen and Chairman Richard Cockpen flying the flag for Wales.

The superb Potters Heath Golf Club was the venue for the final and it turned out to be a beautiful sunny day. The format was Stableford, best two scores on each hole to count. All the finalists made it through qualifying events in each of BIGGA’s five Regions held in July, August and September, with one of the main aims of the tournament to encourage excellent relationships between the senior decision makers at golf clubs across the Regions.

BIGGA GolF Management Trophy sponsored by Everris has been won by the team from Chipping Sodbury Golf Club.

CHIPPING SODBURY SCOOP EVERRIS TROPHY

Based on the Annual RPU figure for August 2014 the Committee for Golf Club Salaries (CGCS) has recommended an increase of 1.8% in the level of recommended Salary Scale for Golf Club Managers and Greenkeepers. The Committee are fully aware that 2014 has been another difficult year for club finances, but believe it is essential to at least maintain parity with the Government RPU figure in order to retain current staff and attract new recruits.

The CGCS has recommended rates of pay package are guided by the Committee are aware that they are for negotiation only and that, as in many industries, some staff will earn substantially more, while others will earn less, depending on the standing of the golf club. The CGCS wants to emphasise that these scales are for ‘packages’ and should be treated as such, not taken into account individual and team performance and any increase in responsibility or experience.
Agronomic Services are the latest organisation to sign on the dotted line as a BIGGA Education Supporter.

The company – a long-standing supporter of the Association – supplies liquid fertilisers, micronutrients, bio stimulants and wetting agents with the aim of ensuring turf managers produce the strongest sports turf possible all year round.

Based in Ripon in North Yorkshire, they work closely with technical advisors and agronomists to find the right solutions for turf managers and also provide and support industry training and education seminars.


Agronomic Services Managing Director Jo Snowden said: “We’re delighted to be on board with BIGGA. For us this is a fantastic way of communicating with the end user, and ensuring they understand more about our ethos and how our products work.

‘Education Supporter status also reaffirms our commitment to educating turf managers which is something we’re increasingly involved in and hugely passionate about.”

BIGGA’s Business Development Manager Jill Rodham said: “This latest agreement again shows the value to organisations in agreeing to become Education Supporters. It shows how committed they are to investing in the future education and development of our members, and also enables us to work closely with them on new initiatives and projects.”

Visit to HTME will again be able to visit the Agronomic Services Stand (A1). For more on the company visit www.agronomics.co.uk and follow them on Twitter @DPSGOLF.

50 YEARS AT ELIE FOR BRIAN

Happy retirement to Brian Lawrie who is leaving The Golf House Club in Elie after an incredible 50 years of service.

He joined the club as a 14-year-old worker and has stayed at the links course in Fife for his entire working life, working his way up to Course Manager.

He recalled: “If you had a job in your last year of school in those days you were allowed to leave. I had worked here in the summer before, so when they said they were looking for a greenskeeper I jumped at the opportunity.

‘It was either that or joinery but I loved being outside in the fresh air, so greenskeeping came first.

‘I’ve always tried to present the course the best it could possibly be. Of course, the weather doesn’t always allow you to do that, but I’m proud of any time here.”

He added he is now looking forward to his retirement, playing some golf and gardening.

Brian was presented with a bottle of whisky by Robert Melide on behalf of the Scottish Central Section. He has been replaced by Stuart Brown.

NICK PARK MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Nick Park Memorial Tournament took place at Temple Golf Club in Berkshire on September 29.

Friends of Nick, supporters of the ‘Campaign for Real Golf’ and Temple members gathered to remember Nick and play a Temple course close to the village.

Park of golf design and length, with a restricted distance ball. Price to play McKina Golf, the tournament organiser, Co-Founder of REAL and a member of Temple, demanded everyone what the day stood for. To remember Nick and all that he had achieved – as a great friend to many, an expert on all matters relating to the golf course, a recreational golfer, fisherman and someone who appreciated the finer things in life.

Scoring was remarkably good with over half of the field recording 30pt or more, ‘Allianz won the Ladies’ event with 29 points with Stig Backen claiming the Men’s’ prize with 38.

Thanks to both Jean and Nan Park for providing the prizes.

For more details on the campaign visit www.realgolfcampaign.org

COMMON JUNIPER - SMALL NATIVE CONIFER WITH A BIG DISEASE PROBLEM

Common juniper (Juniperus communis) is only one of three British native conifers (English yew and Scots pine are the others). Once very common this small conifer, which was already rare due to destruction and decline of its traditional habitat, is now being pushed towards the very edge of extinction by yet another exotic disease arriving in the UK on plant imports.

Golf courses in Scotland and northernmost England (Cumbria and Northumberland/Durham) are most likely to harbour wild, native common juniper because the remaining 400 hectares of substantial juniper woodland is now concentrated in these areas.

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The BIGGA North East Section Autumn Tournament took place on a beautiful sunny October day at Alnmouth Golf Club. Jim Storey and his team had prepared their usual high standard course to challenge the likes of Jack Friar returning from Liphook.

With some excellent scores. Jim Storey won the Gross Trophy with a score of 76 (Par 71). Jack Friar won the Stableford with 37 Points. Mark Linsey was runner up with 34 Points and Colin Donaldson in third place with 33 Points.

A great day and thanks to all the sponsors for 2014 (Rigby Tucker, Rickerys, TBL, Lloyds, Shorts of Whithburn), to Alnmouth Golf Club for excellent hospitality and course presentation and to all who attended.

Kevin Henman, greenkeeper at Rowlands Castle Golf Club, had to take lessons before the 4.5 mile challenge, with the aim of reaching the Isle of Wight. It was all in aid of the Oakley Waterman Caravan Fund. Six-year-old Oakley died after suffering from a rare cancer, and his final wish was for a caravan to be built to allow other children suffering from life-threatening illnesses could use it for a break from hospital.

Kevin joined 22 other swimmers including greenkeeper colleague Jim Dancey for the swim. He takes up the story. Kevin said: “22 swimmers, 22 kayakers, a fishing boat and the Gosport Ferry came along for the day. The ferry also held the family and friends, some of which had to take a day off work just to see us.

“All we had to do was swim across…forgetting the fact that one of the largest container ships in the world was just leaving Southampton and heading our way. The stomach churning nerves before we got into the water for me was too much. I couldn’t look anyone in the eye, including Jim!”

“At 8.55am we started, I was in the slow group and Jim was in the fast group, 10 minutes behind. The aim was to meet at the first checkpoint at the same time. The first mile seemed to take forever but finally everyone made it.

“Here we had to wait for clearance from the harbour master to continue across the shipping lane. We waited for about 10 minutes and quickly became cold. Fortunately we got the all clear and entered new territory, further out than any of us had been on our training.

“The final leg was emotional. Everyone’s hard work had paid off. With about 200 meters to go we swimmers stopped and congratulated each other before walking through the shallow beach to the warm welcome of supporters. And boiled potatoes were downed with a beer, but just one mind. It was maintenance week and we had a hard days work to look forward to the next day!”

To date, Kevin and Jim have raised £3,050. The whole group have raised £11,250 and all the donations are still being accepted on Kevin’s Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/JamesandKevinswim

MEMBER SWIMS THE SOLENT

A BIGGA member took the plunge recently when he swam the freezing cold Solent for charity – despite not being able to swim months before!

“Jim and I celebrated with a beer, but just one mind. It was maintenance week and we had a hard days work to look forward to the next day!”

A BIGGA’s South West & South Wales Regional Administrator Tracey Harvey has presented the iPad Winner with his prize of an iPad.

Jon Wood, Course Manager at Trevose Golf Club, was revealed as the winner in last month’s GI. Jon said: “It was delighted to win the iPad, it’s been a busy time so my young son has been using it more than me so far!” Jon also wins a framed print of his picture.

YOUNG GUNs IN NORTH EAST

The BIGGA North East Section is benefiting from the input of several young greenkeepers with a series of education camps also being planned.

Biggin Interns (who were praised in April’s Greenkeeper International), became Head Greenkeeper at Devonshire Castle Golf Club aged just 18. Now 23, Stuart is a Education Officer on the North East Committee and is hosting the first education camp on Bunker Building.

Assistant are invited to spend the week at Devonshire's stunning links, with accommodation and evening meals provided. Learning about the design, construction and maintenance of bunkers on the course. If interested please email BIGGA's Regional Regional Administrator Sandra Raper on Sandra@bigga.co.uk.

Jack Friar is just 19 and has just been appointed the new Head Greenkeeper at Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat on a trial basis. The average age of the greenkeepers of the BIGGA North East Section is now just 29, the committee are young and progressive and constantly find ways to bring greenkeepers together to learn and encourage each other. To find out what you can do for your Section contact your Section Secretary – all the details are in the handbook.

The 19-strong team were on site as the first heavy rain for several weeks hit the course, particularly during the practice day.

But thanks to the superb efforts of the home greenkeeping team, aided by the volunteers, the tournament (won by Māikū Bremer) was a great success with the greens stimping at over 1 1 feet despite the rain.

Golf Courses Estate Manager and former BIGGA Chairman Peter Todd said: “After having one of the driest Septembers on record and paying for rain, we should have been careful what we wished for! We went from hand watering greens one month to pumping bunkers the next.

“From 1 October to championship Sunday on the 19th we had 131mm of rainfall, 45mm of which fell on practice day alone. Monday of tournament week was basically used to put back together all the bunkers, using four pumps, two sand pros and a lot of manpower.

“Working closely with Eddie Adams, Senior Consultant for the European Tour throughout the week, we mapped out a daily plan based on our knowledge of the course and the changeable weather forecast. It was imperative to grab every opportunity to mow with the short weather windows and day length.

“Despite the adverse weather, our greens were the real stars, running at a consistent 11 feet plus on the stimmer all week.

“The satisfaction for the team came from the very positive feedback from the pros and TV commentators. They were very complimentary about the consistency across the course, in particular the putting surfaces.

“The volunteers were involved in moving greens, tees, preparing bunkers and a whole host of essential tasks that made the event such a success. It was great to meet so many new faces and share the tournament experience with them. All the volunteers added to the camaraderie, lifting team spirits to a real high and we can’t thank them enough for all their efforts.”

Tournament support was provided by Lily UK, Beruhard and Co. and Double A, which was very much appreciated by the club and the tournament organisers. Events of this scale would not run so smoothly without the additional equipment and technical support provided by these club suppliers, which was very much appreciated by everyone at The London Club.

Peter and all the team would like to thank all the volunteers for their fantastic efforts. Wesley Lenihan, Martyn Fuller, Keith Murray, Adam White, Chris Kibble, Michael Long, Dan Fisher, Aaron Launchbury, Christian Pink, Oliver Hock, Martin Brown, Joe Kelly, George Little, Jon Cary, Simon Hutton, Steve Ellis, Paul Massey, Anthony Stockwell and Ross Jones.
This month it’s time for another push for the BIGGA Xtra Benefits scheme which more and more members are taking advantage of – don’t miss out!

One of the many BIGGA members to benefit from the scheme, which was launched on the opening day of BTME 2014, is Kevin Moore, Head Greenkeeper at Whitwood Golf Club in West Yorkshire.

He said: “I’ve used the benefits in a variety of ways. He said: “I’ve used the benefits for shopping cards that give me a variety of ways. I won a golf competition, got a charity event to promote or have an unusual and interesting hobby? We’re always looking to feature BIGGA members in the magazine, so contact steve.castles@bigga.co.uk and you could find yourself in the next issue of GI.

You’ll find that more benefits will be available.

• National Price Promise – This stamp means that you should be getting the best possible price deal that this company makes available.
• Provider Price Promise – This stamp means that you should be getting the best possible price deal that this company makes available.
• Free Price Promise – This stamp means that you should be getting the best possible price deal that this company makes available.

“Although there will of course be exceptions, we intend to ensure that our members can always access the very best prices available. And if we’re ever wrong, we’ll do our best to make sure that you end up with the best rate AND something extra in recognition of your time. (Terms and conditions apply on a written like-for-like basis).

Please try these benefits out – and tell us what you think!”

WE NEED YOU!
Have you taken advantage of BIGGA Xtra Benefits? Have you
Continue to Learn 2015 at BTME 2015 is off to a flying start with bookings pouring in - and if you’re a young greenkeeper looking to improve your career prospects and make the next move it’s vital for you to attend.

It’s important to note that Continue to Learn and the Turf Managers’ Conference is not just about CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to CPD and everything related to 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Greenmech at Greetham

Greetham Valley Golf Course spends considerable time and effort on investigating viable and sustainable ways to reduce their carbon footprint. They have installed a biomass boiler powered by woodchip, some of which is produced onsite from their own coppiced trees.

To make that possible the Club purchased a GreenMech ChipMaster 220 wood chipper.

Greetham Valley Hotel, Golf Course and Conference Centre is set amidst beautiful Rutland countryside, minutes away from the triangulated Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

This two 18 hole championship golf course, and 9 hole par 3 academy golf course, is set in 276 acres. Originally farmland, owner Robert Hitch has transformed the area by planting 25,000 trees over the last 25 years, which is in addition to the 10 acres of original woodland that was there.

With so much need for maintenance and thinning out of the trees Robert decided on an in house system using their own wood chipper.

The resultant chipped wood could then feed a massive boiler to provide heat and hot water for their Lounge Bar, restaurants and Club changing rooms as well as their 35 bedroom hotel and all eight of their Rutland Lodges.

For tackling a really big job such as this, Robert settled on the GreenMech ChipMaster 220 with its substantial 220mm chipping capacity to get the job done.

Enginnered with a 50hp Isuzu water-cooled diesel engine it has a unique patented Disc-Blade chipping system to ensure a constant chip quality and give a dramatic proven cost saving.

It has a substantial 1100mm x 800mm infed chute, coupled with an infeed throat opening of 230mm x 230mm to enable branches to be easily and quickly processed. The spring tensioned twin hydraulic feed rollers are controlled by the advanced electronic No-Stress system and powerfully crush woody material to give effective throughput management of up to 7 tonnes per hour.

Robert said: “We didn’t try any other chippers because we knew the make to be a quality product and it produced the chip we were after.”

“All of my eight greenkeeping teams are impressed with it and find it very easy to use. Any chippings that we can’t use in the boiler are used for mulching round trees. It is very multifunctional.”

Buying Clearwater Now Even Easier

Clearwater is already established as the most competitively priced washpad water recycling system in the UK and now, to help those wishing to invest in a system to beat the ever closer deadline for the EU Water Framework Directive, Highgaped Group have made buying their system even better.

From 1 October 2014 purchasers have been able to take advantage of the latest offer where the system will be supplied at half price now with the balance due in 6 months’ time. This means deferring payment of £3244.50 plus VAT.

Joint MD David Mears said: “Legislation is tightening and we know of one or two golf clubs that have been visited and warned about pollution, so compliance is a must. The EU Water Framework Directive is due for full implementation in 2015, so time is running out. We know we have a system that is already competitively priced but have helped to develop the spread of the use of washpad with our pay half now and half in six months on the system. In effect a customer can be up and running paying less than £6000 when ordering. For a genuine recycling system, that will take some beating!”

A Clearwater system comes with a large 5000 litre capacity as standard and with two water guns each powered by individual high pressure stainless steel pumps. A special chippings barn is also supplied at no extra charge.

This attractive package (just over £9000 all in) is fast becoming the popular way to purchase Clearwater as many have realised just how easy installation of the system can be. David added: “We know that many golf courses and others have competent staff or builder members so this option, not available from some suppliers of recycling equipment, is a sensible cost-saving choice, especially with our new offer.”

“To make installation easier, we issue full and very detailed Installation Instructions with photographs and drawings. When installation and washpad build has taken place, we send an engineer to commission the system.

“Further savings are sometimes possible too when an existing washpad is suitable for modification”. Clearwater has been approved as a Water Saving Technology since March 2008 and, as such, qualifies for 100% first year capital allowances under the ECA scheme. This means that purchasers of ClearWater systems in the UK can write off 100 per cent of the cost of a complete installation against taxable profits in the year of purchase under the ECA Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) scheme. Many have reaped the benefits of this as it can bring significant financial savings and reduce your business’ impact on the environment.

There’s never been a better time to buy and comply – order Clearwater now, prevent pollution and save thousands of litres of water!
Gordon’s at the double

The 2014 BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota had it all – wonderful golf, heroic greenkeeping efforts, a hole in one and finally a deserved winner retaining his crown by just one shot.

The BIGGA team arrived on a sunny Sunday afternoon at Liphook Golf Club, which nestles in the beautiful South Downs. However, autumn storms were forecast for the first day’s play and sadly the weather predictions proved correct.

The next morning, defending champion Gordon Sangster teed off at the par three opening hole in breezy, overcast but dry conditions. But shortly afterwards, torrential rain arrived and the decision was taken to suspend play at 11am with water accumulating on some greens.

Course Manager David Murdoch, his team of six greenkeepers plus 11 volunteers then worked manfully to sweep and squeegee water from the greens. As David and several of the Liphook team explained, the course dries incredibly well – but the sheer volume of rain would have defeated almost any course as over 30mm in total fell over the course of the day.

The 80-strong field then tucked into soup and sandwiches until play resumed at 2.45pm. Unfortunately, the weather then deteriorated once again and the golf was abandoned for the day at around 4pm. As no-one had completed 18 holes, the decision was taken to decide all the prizes on day two. A delicious carvery served in the clubhouse later that evening cheered up the players as they discussed the possibility of shooting “the round of their lives” to claim the Championship!

Overnight many of the competitors were woken by a thunderstorm in the early hours, but despite more significant rain the greenkeepers again worked tirelessly and were rewarded with a glorious sunny morning. The sight of Dan Burn mowing the 18th green in the sun...
shine was hugely welcome! With ten times rematching the same, Gordon again struck the day’s first shot and an exciting day began, with all the players in with a shout over the 18 holes of competitive golf, on greens running at a little over 10 on the stimpmeter.

The players were unanimous in their praise for the course. Kenzy Mitchell from St Andrews, who won the Scottish Golf Championship at Breads Park Golf Club, had driven for nine holes to play. He was in contention again until he had the misfortune to hit a marker post on the 18th – but despite this blow he said “I really enjoyed it, it’s a great course and the greens are fabulous, really undulating. It’s just a great course and the greens are fantastic.”

David Wilkinson, Head Greenkeeper at Wrexham Golf Club, summed up the players’ thoughts when he said “I really enjoyed it, it’s a great course and the greens are fabulous, really undulating. It’s just a shame I couldn’t get the ball in the hole today!”

A delighted Beverly Blair (picted right), from Southwick Park Golf Club, hit the second hole in three third. As well as a bottle of champagne this earned her a special trophy from the club donated by the widow of a member. She said: “It’s my second hole in one but it’s so special to hit one in a BIGGA competition. I was quite emotional and my golf went downhill a bit after that! But I’m so pleased and I’ll never forget it.”

As for the main prize, the unassuming Gordon Sangster from Cathkin Braes Golf Club edged out a spirited challenge from Golf at Goodwood’s Andy Brown to retain the BIGGA National Championship. Gordon, a plus two handicapper, played to his impressive handicap to record a 68, a single shot clear of Andy, despite using a mallet putter.

Clutching the trophy and £500 worth of vouchers, he said: “I hold some big par putts on the back nine. I fancied a change of putter so borrowed one from a mate. I reckon I owe him a drink after this!”

“I eagled the par four 8th from about 90 yards and that gave me a wee lift. The standard of golfers here is superb, if you shoot three or four over you’re probably not going to be in the prizes, so you need to bring your ‘A game’ and have some luck too. I had a real laugh on the way round with my playing partners and that helps as well.

“It was hard on the first day, Mother Nature was against us, but the course is fantastic, the greens are unbelievable. Considering the amount of water that’s fallen they’re so smooth, fast and undulating. The greenkeepers here and the volunteers have done an incredible job.”

Course Manager David Murdoch MG added: “The weather on the first day, and overnight beading into the second day, posed a huge challenge for us but the effort from our team and the volunteers has been incredible.

“Considering the amount of rain that fell on the Monday, and further heavy rain just a few hours before the start on Tuesday, it was from all concerns. It’s been an incredible effort working with all of them.”

A raffle was held which raised money for the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund, and proceedings closed with BIGGA CEO Jim Croston thanking all the greenkeepers for their superb efforts in ensuring 18 holes were possible on day two.

**RESULTS**

**BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY** (Best gross over 36 holes) 1st - £500 vouchers, 2nd - £300 vouchers, 3rd - £250 vouchers) 1 Gordon Sangster, Cathkin Braes Golf Club 68 (-2) 2 Andy Brown, Golf at Goodwood, 69 (-1) 3 John Kerringham, Chipping Sidbury Golf Club, 71 (+1)

**BIGGA CHALLENGE CUP** (Best nett over 36 holes) 1st - £450 vouchers, 2nd - £300 vouchers, 3rd - £250 vouchers) 1 David Ross, Test Valley Golf Club, 68 (-2) 2 Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 69 (-1) 3 John Kerringham, Chipping Sidbury Golf Club, 72 (-2)

**BIGGA CHALLENGE PLATE** (Stableford, 1st - £75 vouchers) Darryl Jones, Lymington Golf Club, 38pts 2 BIGGA CHALLENGE BOWL (Lowest gross, affiliate prize, 1st - £75 vouchers) Gary Oglivie, Avoncrop Amenity Products, 75

**TEAM PRIZE** (Best 4 combined nett scores, 4 vouchers for £75 plus medals) 1 South East - Andy Brown (Golf at Goodwood); Jason Brier (Maldon Park Golf Club); Wayne Sewell (Worpleston Golf Club), Paul Davy (Porters Park Golf Club), 284 2 South West & South Wales - David Ross (Test Valley Golf Club), Leigh Mordy (Knowle Golf Club), John Kerringham (Chipping Sidbury Golf Club), Alex Ward (The Kendleshire Golf Club), 286

**NEAREST THE PIN (Champagne) 7th - Matt Hutchinson (Hassocks Golf Club) 17th - Paul Hedge (Radley Golf Club)

**LONGEST DRIVE (Champagne) 4th - George Morgan (The Monifieth Golf Club) 12th - James Dair (Toll House & Golf Club)**

**SHOUT OF THE DAY** Hole in one on the 3rd - Beverly Blair (Southside de Park Golf Club)

**SHOOT OUT**

**GOLFERS OF THE DAY**

- **Monday (pm)**
  - **8th** - 186 1 John Keenaghan, Chipping Sodbury Golf Club, 72 (+2)
  - **12th** - 286 1 South East - Andy Brown, Golf at Goodwood, 69 (-1) 2 Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 69 (-1) 3 John Kerringham, Chipping Sidbury Golf Club, 72 (-2)

- **Tuesday (am)**
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**THANKS TO THE SPONSORS**

BIGGA would like to thank David Murdoch MG and his team. They are Dan Burn, Eddy Oliver, Tim Howard, Al MacDonell, Reece Jones & Neil Jones.

Thank you to all the volunteers; Joe Dormer, Dan Dumbrill and Ryan Burton from West Sussex Golf Club; Doogie Spencer and Jackson Allen from Berkendish Manor Golf Club; James Norris, Rich Covey, Lee Blackburn and Elliot Hawkins from Blackmore Golf Club; Pete Oliver from Hankley Common Golf Club; Derek Cunliffe from Bigga Club; John Greenbridge; Liphook Golf Club. Without your efforts the tournament would not have gone ahead.

Also thank you to the sponsors Charterhouse and Kubota, all who donated raffle prizes and everyone at Liphook Golf Club.
Throughout our careers we have spent a huge amount of time talking about, observing and assessing root development and making recommendations to encourage root development. Rather than interview just one greenkeeper, we’ve summarised our collective experiences when talking to a whole host of greenkeepers in recent years. We hope it rings true with you.

AO & HB: So, are you happy with your greens?
Greenkeeper: Yep absolutely, surface performance has been excellent this year and player feedback has been good. Ok, so disease pressure is there but we’ve got it under control, the surfaces have been good and we are well set for the winter.

AO & HB: Any issues to speak of?
Greenkeeper: If I am honest I am always a little disappointed with my depth of rooting. I don’t know why but it just doesn’t seem to improve and I can honestly tell you that I have tried everything!

AO & HB: Why are you disappointed?
Greenkeeper: When I change the hole or take samples from the greens, the rooting seems to be down to about 100mm but never much more. I aerate, topdress, keep my fertiliser and irrigation in check and use soil conditioners but nothing seems to bring about any improvement.

AO & HB: So what’s the problem if the surfaces are good?

AO & HB: Why do you think we are all so hung up on deep rooting?
Greenkeeper: Well…correct me if I am wrong, but grasses absorb the majority of the nutrients required for growth from the soil via their roots and the roots also absorb the water that is required for plant functioning. They also play a role in surface stability and wear tolerance. I think the development of a deep, dense and healthy root system has to be a key objective for my maintenance programme.

AO & HB: So, good greens management should be fully focused on achieving deep rooting?
Greenkeeper: In a way, but the whole root development thing seems to be more complex than that, and I am not certain if I know what really controls it. I suppose a range of factors are important but I just can’t seem to nail it.

AO & HB: So what are the main factors that you think are important?
Greenkeeper: The height of cut has got to be number one. The leaf area is critical for photosynthesis and the fundamental functioning of the plant. At college we learned that with a very low height of cut the photosynthetic area of the leaf is reduced and so is the level of sugar / carbohydrate production. I think I am right in saying that in this case the sugars get prioritised for respiration and shoot growth rather than being used for root growth. I know that height of cut has a huge influence on root development, which is why I try not to take too many liberties with mine.

AO & HB: So do you think that golf greens with their low heights of cut will always struggle to develop deep rooting?
Greenkeeper: I would say so, but that isn’t the only reason for poor rooting. Soil compaction is important, nutrient and water availability, soil aeration and thatch build-up are all major influences and I’ve not even mentioned biology. I guess even the time you measure the rooting will make a difference. I try to work on all these things but don’t seem to be able to provoke a positive response.

AO & HB: Ok, let’s break it down a bit and consider the rootzone first. What are we focusing on?
Greenkeeper: Well, roots need space to root, grow, branch and expand so there will be a physical restriction to growth in compacted soils, or maybe in soils with a fine texture and a poor structure. What was it Jim Arthur used to say? “Roots do not grow in the soil, but in the air spaces between the soil particles”.

AO & HB: What else did you say…arthritis?
Greenkeeper: Of course, roots also need oxygen because root respiration is an important plant process and a well aerated rootzone, with good air exchange and surface atmosphere is again critical for root development. Lack of air will just cause the roots to die-back.

Dr Andy Owen and Henry Bechelet, Technical Managers for Everris Limited, share their experiences talking to greenkeepers about rooting and how to encourage root development.
AO & HB: Yes, and we know that aeration is affected by soil moisture and thatch as well.

Greenkeeper: Exactly! Soil moisture is something else to think about – not just because grass roots will grow towards moisture and move away from dry soil but compaction will fundamentally affect the health of the rootzone. Increased soil moisture will mean less pore space for air to occupy and we have just discussed how important air is. Thatch content is in the mix too, a layer of thatch will hold water at the turfbase, to reduce air content and restrict deep root development.

AO & HB: What about nutrition, you’ve not mentioned that yet?

Greenkeeper: Well plants don’t grow in a sterile environment, and they develop complex relationships with soil microbiology. This has to be encouraged and supported, although there is some confusion here too, lots of different stories and very little evidence. Again, in my mind, getting the moisture and aeration right in the rootzone goes a long way to allowing the microbiology to develop naturally. Some feeding of the bugs has got to be useful and do apply a tonic of seaweed and carbohydrates to help.

AO & HB: So that’s a pretty comprehensive grasp of the situation - what now?

Greenkeeper: It would be good to hear your thoughts on what to check off when considering my rooting problem, what have I missed?

AO & HB: Sure, it is worth starting by saying that grass rooting in at its greatest when environmental and management conditions are conducive to root growth, so your primary focus must be on maintaining a healthy plant and good growing environment. Also, when you evaluate rooting it is difficult to see the fine roots, and actually 100mm of healthy fine roots, with well-developed root hairs, could be much more efficient at absorbing water and nutrients than a visually deeper, more coarsely structured root system. The roots per unit area of soil might not compare, and this is what is really important. But if you want us to list a few things, number one would be to appraise your height of cut. Can it be relaxed at all without compromising your surface playing quality to give the plant the maximum photosynthetic opportunity? Secondly, take a good hard look at your rootzone, does it look and smell healthy, is there any layering or compaction? Finally, objectively measure your organic matter content – send off some cores for analysis and assess the impact any thatch layer is having on your rootzone performance.

Greenkeeper: OK, that makes sense and I do most of that anyway.

AO & HB: Following this, have a think about your aeration practices, develop that balance of surface and deep aeration to encourage efficient air exchange between the rootzone and the atmosphere and provide the space for the roots to develop. If your thatch control is in hand then the aeration need not be too disruptive, but as a guide you should be doing something every few weeks. Link the aeration with a frequent topdressing regime to dilute the thatch, improve surface firmness and help to keep the surface open for air exchange.

Greenkeeper: Right, that’s all good, topdressing, aeration, height of cut – what about nutrition?

AO & HB: The key here is avoiding nutrient imbalances or deficiencies, remember as you said, the plant will photosynthesise to produce carbohydrates which will be used for root growth only after other plant needs have been met. There is clear evidence that sustained release of nutrients throughout the growing season provides the best environment for the plant to invest in a strong deep rooting system, so consider slow-release feeds. You definitely want to avoid the excessive lush growth you might get by over-applying N or too much quick release N. In this situation, the plant increases its shoot growth rate utilizing excess carbohydrates, which are diverted away from root development. Not a good approach.

Greenkeeper: So, design a programme of steady nutrient release. Any other tactics to consider?

AO & HB: Water is by far the biggest challenge. Too much water and the soil becomes stiffer, too little and the turf becomes stressed and both adversely affect rooting. Essentially, we need to manage the soil to contain enough moisture to sustain healthy growth and encourage the development of a healthy root system, but not too much that leads to the production of a stagnant soil and root die-back.

This means adequate drainage, aeration and good soil profile management during periods of wet weather, then careful control of irrigation inputs during periods of dry weather. We think that all we need to adopt the use of accurate moisture probes and use them properly to direct irrigation to the areas that need it and help sustain the development of a healthy plant and root development. Overwatering is a common problem in greenkeeping and has a devastating effect on plant and soil health. The only way to keep on top of it is with an accurate moisture probe.
In 1987, the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations said: “Sustainable Development seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” There are many other definitions, but this one is my favourite.

Is the awareness of sustainable issues a modern phenomenon? Possibly, but there is evidence that even in golf - the most traditional of sports - sustainability has been promoted for many years. “Economy in course construction consists of obtaining the best possible results at a minimum of cost. The more one sees of golf courses, the more one realises the importance of doing construction work really well, so that it is likely to be of a permanent character. It is impossible to lay too much stress on the importance of finality.” Wise words indeed, written in 1920 by Dr Alister McKenzie. An early advocate of a sustainable approach?

Golf courses are certainly responding to the challenges of sustainability, but until recently, bunkers seemed to have escaped attention. Unlike other areas of the golf course, where the greenkeeper’s knowledge of agronomy is critical, the main challenges in bunker construction and maintenance are linked to drainage, soil mechanics and geotechnical matters. Civil engineers like myself should feel comfortable in this territory. On links and more exposed courses, deeper bunkers are needed to retain the sand. Steep banks, often revetted, are ravaged by forces of erosion.

This issue got me thinking about whether a more engineered approach could pay dividends in the golf industry. My solution was to use layers of recycled artificial grass to form retaining walls. I knew from my work in development that much of this material was currently being disposed of to landfill, a costly and unsustainable approach, so there was a readily available supply.

What I did not know was whether the golfing fraternity would accept a synthetic solution, even though the aesthetics of the artificial solution were very satisfactory to my eyes. The answer to this question lay in another skill I learned as a civil engineering designer: cost benefit analysis.

Southerndown Golf Club (where I am a member) is a highly respected championship course occupying a beautiful natural and exposed site on the South Wales coast.

Sustainable Bunkers: Artificial Intelligence has the answer
Unfortunately, the powers of erosion there are particularly severe and are accelerated by the action of the many grazing animals. At the same time that I was inventing bunker solutions, Southerndown’s Course Manager Andrew Mannion was searching hard for a solution to his bunker face and edge challenges. Andrew had tried and failed with several different bunker design styles. His careful time and motion study proved that the club was spending well over £20,000 per year on maintaining and rebuilding bunker edges. Despite this, Andrew would freely admit, the bunkers were never in a good condition. Andrew and I arranged to meet.

We compared the cost of installing my synthetic revetted solution to the consequences of bunker edge erosion; instability, neglected appearance, sand contamination and resultant drainage issues. There are however many other bunker challenges that I have now turned my attention to, providing impartial advice to golf clubs on issues such as bunker drainage and liners. The choice of liners for bunkers is now becoming an interesting issue, as new products enter the market, providing more choice, and perhaps some confusion for golf clubs. As with my synthetic face concept, the final decision on liners can often be justified by a careful cost-benefit analysis. For example some products may appear at first glance to be expensive, but, if a course has bunkers with steep sand splashed faces, many club managers may be disturbed by the true cost of the labour intensive task of reinstating sand after heavy rain. An appropriate liner which can effectively hold sand (but appeared to be expensive) might actually be in reality a sound financial and hence sustainable investment.

At my company we will consistently promote a sustainable approach to bunker construction and maintenance, whether or not that involves the installation of our synthetic face. McKenzie believed in finality, so do we, build it once!
Resilience through change

Liggy Webb, a presenter at the Turf Managers’ Conference in January, examines the power of resilience when overcoming tough times and outlines ten ways of increasing your resilience in a sometimes unforgiving world.

“Although we may not always have control over our circumstances, we can control how we respond to them,” Liggy observes.

If you lack resilience you may become overwhelmed by the stressors and simply fall apart. You may find yourself dwelling on your problems and using unhealthy coping mechanisms to deal with the pain and heartache.

This has a huge impact on both physical and mental health, which is an increasingly concerning area with depression set to be the second biggest global form of illness by 2020 according to The World Health Organisation.

My overall observation is that resilient people are able to utilise their skills and strengths to cope and recover from the knockbacks and challenges, which could include illness, job loss, financial problems, natural disasters or relationship break-ups.

There are times when we will have no control whatsoever over those changes, however, we have 100% control over our reaction to those changes.

When I began the research for my latest book “Resilience – How to positively adapt to stress and change”, I interviewed over 100 people from a range of nationalities and backgrounds to ascertain the behavioural indicators of the competency of resilience.

There is certainly a strong recognition that individuals and teams need to equip themselves, proactively, to be able to deal with some of the challenges and relentless change that we will inevitably have to deal with in our lives.

Modern living is becoming increasingly challenging and if we ever hear ourselves saying “I don’t like change” then that is really tantamount to saying “I don’t like life”.

You may find yourself struggling with low mood, lack of motivation and having difficulty coping with the demands of daily life, but resilience is there for you.

Resilience is about the ability to bounce back and get on with life. Being resilient is about the ability to decide which is the more important thing to react to, the fact that you have encountered the pain and heartache, or the fact that you are not going to allow the pain and heartache to stop you from achieving your goals.

Ten Top Tips for Building Personal Resilience

1. Take a journey of self discovery

Self awareness and self confidence play an essential role in helping you to cope with stress and recover from difficult events. Understanding yourself is the first port of call and then reminding yourself of your strengths and accomplishments is key.

2. See the glass half full

Staying positive during difficult periods can be difficult and it is important to maintain a hopeful outlook. Being an optimist does not mean being naive and ignoring the problem. It means understanding that setbacks are transient and that you have the skills and abilities to combat the challenges you face.

3. Take emotional control

Being emotionally aware and recognising how you can potentially react in certain situations will help you to take more self control. It will also help you to be more considerate with regards to how your reaction can affect other people.

4. Change for the better

Being positive about change is a really good approach. You may not be able to control or change circumstances; however, you can absolutely change your attitude towards them so you are far more in control than you think. Flexibility is an essential part of being able to manage change and, by learning how to be more adaptable, you will be much better equipped to respond to any life crisis you experience.

5. Cope well with conflict

Conflict is an inevitable part of life. We all have different personalities and along with those are belief systems, values, perspectives, likes and dislikes. Some conflict can be difficult and, at times, unsettling – especially if you take it personally and are very sensitive.

6. Embrace ‘probortunity’

The word ‘probortunity’ is a hybrid of ‘problem’ and ‘opportunity’ and looks at the concept of taking every problem situation and seeking out the opportunity. It works on the premise that even in every crisis situation an opportunity will arise and there will be some benefit.

7. Look after yourself

When you are feeling traumatised, stressed and upset, it can be all too easy to neglect your own wellbeing. Losing your appetite, not exercising, not getting enough sleep, drinking too much alcohol, not drinking enough water and driving yourself too hard are all common reactions to a crisis situation.

8. Make connections

Building and sustaining a strong network of supportive friends, family and work colleagues will act as a protective factor during times of crisis. It is important to have people you trust and can confide in.

9. Keep going

When Churchill summed this up perfectly – “If you are going through hell, keep going.” There is a lot be said for picking yourself up, dusting yourself off and carrying on.

Being resilient is about the ability to bounce back and get on with life. Being resilient will certainly improve your quality of life and give you a greater sense of satisfaction and personal accomplishment.

10. Create a vision

In times of crisis or when you are feeling low it is good to hold on to your dreams and not lose sight of the fact that you can always have something to look forward to.

Summary

Resilience is about recognising the importance of taking personal responsibility and accepting that we have more control of our circumstances than we may automatically believe. By maintaining a positive and agile mindset we can develop our own coping mechanisms and by doing this we can also help others around us.
The Ryder Cup is now proclaimed to be the third biggest sporting event in the world and therefore required high quality preparation and maintenance to live up to this billing. The excellent Glenegales greenkeeping team were assisted by 40 volunteers from around the world to showcase this wonderful spectacle of golf.

The 40th edition of the Ryder Cup hosted by the Gleneagles Resort has widely been described in the media as the greatest staging of the iconic matches to date. After the venue was announced some 13 years ago it had always been an ambition of mine to be involved in the course preparation.

Having started my greenkeeping career at the Resort working from 1999–2000, I was delighted to have been selected as part of the 40 strong greenkeeper support team. Having been a regular visitor since my period in employment, it has been fantastic seeing the commitment from the Hotel and staff preparing the PGA Centenary course so it would be fitting to stage the largest spectacle in world golf.

Over the past 13 years and more intensively, the last five, the course has been developed and invested in heavily so it would all come together for the now famous three days in September. The greenkeeping team led by Scott Fenwick and Steve Chappell have carried out an unbelievable amount of hard work getting the course to where it is today.

The industry should be extremely proud to have been showcased in such a fantastic light.

The professionalism of all the staff during the tournament was second to none and I have never witnessed a team which was so driven to deliver at the highest standard possible. The calmness of the management team resonated through all of the staff allowing everyone to go about their jobs precisely and more importantly with a smile on their face. It was a great insight watching every individual in the team excel by taking ownership of their own task. The camaraderie between all of the staff was fantastic and exemplified the definition of teamwork.

No task or job was taken lightly no matter how small and everyone was ready to help each other to work towards the same goal of providing the highest standards achievable. I am very proud to say it is certainly the highlight of my career to date and it will definitely take some beating.

I will be taking away with me some amazing memories which I hope will help shape my greenkeeping career going forward.

The greatest staging

John McLoughlin, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Grange Park Golf Club, was just one of the volunteers and he told this to GI...
Well the dust has started to settle, yes we do get dust in Scotland, after the Ryder Cup and I just wanted to take this opportunity to publicly thank the people that not only made the event happen but also made my job, and life a hell of a lot easier during the week of the event.

Firstly to the greenkeeping team here at Gleneagles who have worked so hard over the last few years in developing the PGA Centenary Course into what she has become.

There has been so much going on with reconstruction works, drainage installation and agronomic improvements over the last three years and they have all shown a high level of commitment, determination and pride in getting the job done.

To the volunteers that came in during the week of the event you were quite simply brilliant, you came together as one with our team and ensured that the golf course performed at her best.

The enthusiasm, passion and pride shown by you guys made me feel so immensely proud of our wonderful profession and for that I could never thank you enough for your contribution to the event.

I would also like to thank the following companies for their support of our team during the week. The Toro Company, Lely UK, Ransomes Jacobsen, Greentech Sportsturf Ltd, Severn Amenity Services, Stevens POGO, Craighie Sand & Gravels, Aquatrols, Farmura, SGM, Subair & Thorntree Amenity all helped to ensure that the volunteers where well looked after during their stay with us.

It was also great to have the support of BIGGA during the event, Sanni Strutt and John Young were both onsite during the week and had put together a great mix of seminars, discussion groups, CV clinics and quizes to keep the guys entertained during the day.

It was also great to have Jim Croston, Chris Sealey and Les Howkins with us during the event to meet and talk to the guys as well as representing our association in meetings with the GCSAA and other industry bodies.

These links can only help build the reputation of our profession and association as we move forward.

Video star

One of the volunteers, James Bledge from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, has created a superb video featuring the work of the team throughout the week – you can view it for yourself by typing ‘ryder cup Greenkeepers’ into YouTube.

James said: “When Steve Chappell asked me to take photos at The Ryder Cup I also saw an amazing opportunity to make a short film that would showcase the hard work of the green staff and volunteers. As far back as February, I had a vision of how I wanted the film to flow, and I feel that I kept to the plan.

“The first thing I did was choose a song that would reflect the epic sunrises and sheer intensity of the competition. The whole video was arranged around certain parts of the music with the climax of the song matching the climax of the week, which was the 1st tee filling up on the Friday. A GoPro was used on time lapse and video modes, the most interesting footage taken from the 18th grandstand. The key to making a film like this is to try push boundaries, find interesting angles to shoot and use your imagination! Loved making this film, in a place so stunning with such an amazing organisation it was easy and an absolute pleasure.”

Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper, PGA Centenary Course, Gleneagles also writes for us

The team leaders, Mikey Doris, Gavin Speedie, Peter Patrindon and Allan Patrindon took on their roles with great energy and understanding and ensured that the guys within their teams understood what was expected from them through the week.

The support and counsel that they offered during our morning and evening briefing meetings was amazing and made the course set up run so smoothly. John Myles, my deputy on the PGA, worked tirelessly during the week ensuring that everything was in order, spending time with the greenkeeping team, myself, the team leaders and officials from the European Tour to make sure we had all the bases covered.

You all took my vision for how we would set up the golf course and made it seem effortless; again I could never thank you enough for your contribution to the event.

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These links can only help build the reputation of our profession and association as we move forward.

Last but not least I must thank two people.

Firstly Jim McKenzie MBE who gave me the opportunity to experience the 2010 Ryder Cup at Celtic Manor which led me on this amazing journey and to Scott Fenwick who gave me the opportunity to come to Gleneagles.

The trust and support you have shown me over the last three years has been incredible and for that I will be eternally grateful.
Without the radical soil amendment that comes with golf green construction the subterranean structure and drainage required to support and maintain year-round playable turf would simply not exist.

You only need to inspect earthworm casts, slightly rain-washed on autumn mornings, to see the gleaming grains of sand and understand what lies beneath the turf. Golfers may curse the white silica surrounding golf greens but are thankful for the ‘bedrock’ of silicon dioxide (silica) otherwise known as sand supporting and securing professional turf. Golf greens are constructed with a lifetime of uninterrupted play in mind, although in practice 30 to 50 years is par for the course. After reconstruction beckons. This is where the application soil amendment products may be used to repair, retrieve and restore the microstructure and texture of soils and to rebalance the chemistry (e.g. pH and salinity). These mechanical and chemical factors underpin the turf and grass plant biology including root growth and development, access to and uptake of nutrients, and the activities of beneficial soil animals and microbes as well as the severity of pests, diseases and turf weeds.

Turf problems that benefit from soil amendment products can be broadly divided into compaction and hydrophobic (water hating) conditions, and the development of chemically damaging conditions like excessive acidity or alkalinity or the specific formation of sub surface ‘black layers’.

Compaction is largely the result of compression and desiccation leading to less available and active pore space, reduced water movement and holding capacity, poor aeration and the creation of inhospitable conditions for root growth and development. Soil amendment (amelioration) products may be used to repair, retrieve and restore the microstructure and texture of soils and to rebalance the chemistry (e.g. pH and salinity). These mechanical and chemical factors underpin the turf and grass plant biology including root growth and development, access to and uptake of nutrients, and the activities of beneficial soil animals and microbes as well as the severity of pests, diseases and turf weeds.

Turf problems that benefit from soil amendment products can be broadly divided into compaction and hydrophobic (water hating) conditions, and the development of chemically damaging conditions like excessive acidity or alkalinity or the specific formation of sub surface ‘black layers’. Compaction is largely the result of compression and desiccation leading to less available and active pore space, reduced water movement and holding capacity, poor aeration and the creation of inhospitable conditions for root growth and development. Soil pH is all about chemical balance and providing optimal conditions for nutrient availability and uptake and steady grass growth. Marked deviation from the acidic soil status preferred by fine turf grass species leads to reduced growth and vitality of the sward, and specific problems related to weeds, diseases and worm casting. Black layer problems are more specific and relate to gaseous toxins like hydrogen sulphide emitted from the ‘contaminated’ sub surface layer of soil.

Creating pore space

Integrated approaches are the best and most sustainable ways of maintaining good soil particle size/pore space size profiles and alleviating compaction and its associated effects. ‘Integrate Plus’ from Rigby Taylor is a liquid formulation containing 44% w/w (weight/weight) of water-soluble polymeric polyelectrolytes. Its powerful negative (anionic) charge attracts the positively charged clay and organic fines, pulling them together to form larger particles of soil to create larger pore spaces, increased water movement and improved aeration. Spray treatments with ‘Integrate Plus’ increase soil permeability and water percolation by repairing the structural conditions responsible for standing water, poor drainage, hardpan and black layer. By getting to the core of the soil problem, and the root of poor grass growth the conditions for healthy and vigorous turf can be recreated. As its name suggests ‘Integrate Plus’ should be used as part of a wider turf management package including mechanical aeration by spiking, tining or coring immediately before application and with irrigation afterwards.

Adding pore space

Half and half is the ideal ratio of soil particles to pore space, with the latter split 50:50 between capillary pore space and non-capillary pore space. Non-capillary pore space is the conduit for water percolation and is otherwise filled with air. Severe soil compaction virtually obliterates non-capillary pore space with a severe negative impact on soil drainage, aeration, root growth and development. Sandy soils resist compaction, but with little capillary pore space they have poor water holding capacity and nutrient retention. Peat is often added to sandy soils to improve water holding capacity and nutrient retention. However, the problem with peat and other organic materials is a tendency to reduce permeability (water percolation rate) and being short term in effect. There are several custom-designed, inert and porous soil amendment products that can achieve the desired result through becoming part and parcel of soil structure. Instead of modifying existing soil particle structure they supplement soil with extra particles each with its own pore space. Thus more pore space is added using supplemental mineral matter, rather than its creation from natural soil particles. ‘Axis’, a granular inorganic soil...
amendment from HeadlandAme
nity is an example. Its inert porous
granules are made from naturally
occurring minerals containing
thousands of microscopic diatoms
which are hard and sponge-like
structures providing porosity and
associated benefits to soil. The
product is ‘laced’ (heated to very
high temperatures) to produce a
totally stable and inert material,
resistant to breakdown and becom-
ing a permanent and integral part
of the root-zone.

The extensive internal pore
structure boosts percolation and
aeration, helping to avoid and
alleviate compaction problems
and black layer formation. Poorly
drained soils become more perme-
able, and free draining soils with
low cation exchange capacity (CEC)
will hold more water and nutrients.

Volume rather than mass is the
secret of success with granular soil
amendments and this low bulk
density material fits the bill. Best
practice recommendations are:
- mixing 50:50 with a suitable top-
dressing material; application after
core/rounding/draining; drag mat/
brushed into holes and watered in;
or used in a Drill and Fill operation.

Axis can also be used in turf
renovation by rotovating into the
top 150mm of the root-zone prior to
re-turfing or seeding. Overall aim is
for an incorporation level of 10% by
volume in the top 100mm - 150mm
of the root-zone.

**Blocking black layers**

Black layer is the result of oxygen
deficit in the soil profile to cause
toxicity to turf from resulting
anaerobic conditions. The root
cause of black layer is compaction
resulting in poor permeability and
waterlogging. However, other fac-
tors are implicated in black layer
formation including accumulation
of algae and anaerobic bacteria,
and the inappropriate use of iron
and sulphur containing products to
give hardpan and toxic layer
formation.

Black layer is located in the sub
surface and aggravated by environ-
mental conditions above ground
including evergreen trees shading
golfing greens year round to restrict
air movement and the penetration
of sunlight onto the turf.

These situations give a perpetu-
ally wet turf surface which inhibits
growth and encourages algae
to further impede water infiltration
through the soil profile. End result
is the classic sequence of events
- soil saturation, water logging,
zero oxygen, build up of anaerobic
bacteria, toxic gas production and
restriction on grass growth and
development – leading to progres-
sive black layer formation.

The key component of remedies
for black layer problems is finely
ground, activated carbon (char-
ccoal). With its inherently huge
physically active adsorptive area
activated carbon is able to take up water
and toxins produced by anaerobic
bacteria.

Rigby Taylor’s ‘Blockade LX
(liquid formulation) and Blockade
G2000 (granular formulation) deliver a four-way attack on black
layers using:
• Enzyme systems to degrade the
protective slimy coating that sur-
rounds anaerobic bacteria
• activated carbon to adsorb and
neutralise hydrogen sulphide gas
with its classic rotten egg odour,
coupled with a soil penetration
agent to assist delivery of the carbon
particles into the sub-surface layer
• a porous ceramic soil amend-
ment product
• a rooting bio-stimulant to assist
growth re-colonisation of affected
areas

**Acid test for turf**

Turf grasses perform best in an
acid soil environment within a
pH range of 5.5 – 6.5 and values
outside this range will progressively
reduce grass growth and vigour. Soil pH extending into the alkaline
range (pH 7+) is the most common
problem particularly for turf laid
down over chalk and limestone
soils.

But many golfing greens and
tees are created from sand and
materials that naturally produce
root-zones of high pH and low in
organic matter. Consequences are
varied including low-retention of
water with high nutrient leaching
leading to turf stress, and locking-
up of nutrients such as copper,
iron, manganese and zinc. Such
conditions encourage broad-leaf
weeds like yarrow, self heal and
coarse grasses like Poa annua as
well as specific turf diseases like
tall fescue and Fusarium patch.

Sulphur is an essential plant
nutrient but also keeps soils within
the desired acidic pH range. The
element was once ‘delivered free’,
from power stations and factories
which spewed out finely divided
sulphur as a pollutant evenly over
the land. However with the green-
ning up of the environment came the
de-greening of crops, pastures and
sports turf with sulphur deficien-
cies first showing up in wheat, itself
a member of the grass family.

Sulphur is now applied to turf as
an essential plant nutrient where
required, but more commonly as a
soil amendment product to lower
pH. Soil bacteria called Thiobacilli
break down and solubilize the
 elemental sulphur to form sulphur-
ic acid. This dissociates in the
soil-water to give negatively charged
sulphate ions (SO42-) and posi-
tively charged hydrogen ions (H+),
the latter causing an acid reaction
and lowering the pH.

Sulphur soil amendment prod-
ucts do not use ordinary powdered
sulphur but custom-designed prills
or pastilles which are easy to handle
and apply and which present a large
surface area for the slow release of
sulphur throughout the season. One
such example is ‘Sulphur 95’
a micronized elemental sulphur
product from Vitax and marketed
as a mini-prill. The formulation
flows well and is readily dispersed
by soil moisture for slow release of
sulphate into the soil.

The need to move soil pH in the
other direction from excessively
acid to less acid is not so common
and is fraught with danger because
it is easy to ‘overshoot’ into alkalini-
ty where using crude lime-based
materials. However, there are
custom-designed products like
Microcoal® from Rigby Taylor which
is a dust-free, micro-granulated
form or calcium carbonate and
recommended for use with strict
follow-up pH testing.
Headland’s 20/20/30 approach to help fend off disease

How you can guard against the onset of Fusarium Patch by taking a long-term, strategic view of the disease

As autumn arrives, the combination of residual summer warmth and late season humidity suggests that the onset of Fusarium Patch is never far away.

The very fact that the disease, caused by the fungal pathogen Microdochium nivale tends to be common at around the same period each season means we can and should prepare in advance for its arrival.

Seven years of research at the STRI show that it is possible to minimise its effect whilst limiting the input of pesticides - if we take a preventative, longer term view.

A plan to maintain plant health, going into and during this autumn period, can have a hugely positive effect on reducing the incidence of turf disease.

This approach takes a longer term, strategic view of turf management using preventative applications of plant elicitors and plant hardeners, applied prior to the main disease period rather than relying solely on costly repeated fungicide applications.

Trials have confirmed that it is possible to significantly reduce the effect of Microdochium nivale when timely applications of specific protectants and elicitors are undertaken, most importantly, before the disease has become established.

The use of foliar plant protectants, containing elements such as Calcium, Potassium and Silicon are intended to increase the hardness of the plant cell wall, making it harder for a pathogen to physically attack the grass plant.

In addition, some forms of foliar iron are able to decrease the pH on the leaf surface and/or reduce moisture levels, which it is suggested may also discourage fungal development by offering a less favourable environment.

Foliar plant elicitors such as phosphite based products, can trigger the natural defence mechanisms of the plant (SAR or Systemic Acquired Resistance) aiding plant growth even in the presence of a pathogen.

Headland Amenity has undertaken trials at the STRI at Bingley each year since 2007 to establish which combinations of these materials have the best chance of managing Microdochium nivale.

The most effective combination found to date, utilises a tank-mix application of three liquid plant health products alongside a liquid fertiliser.

Of the plant health products, Liquid Turf Hardener is a calcium based plant hardener that helps increase cell wall thickness. Seamax ProTurf is a citrate chelated iron formulation that also hardens cells and creates an acidic leaf environment, and Turfrite is a phosphite liquid. To this tank-mix was added a source of liquid potassium Vertex K (0-0-25).

The combination of these three products applied prior to the onset of disease, at rates of 20L/Ha (Liquid Turf Hardener), 20L/Ha (Turfrite) and 35L/Ha (Seamax ProTurf) - hence ‘20/20/35’ mix, has shown to be the most beneficial in helping to minimise the effects of Microdochium nivale over the autumn/ winter period.

The ‘20/20/30’ approach is focused on helping the plant to defend itself more efficiently and reduce the effects of disease.

The reduction of dew and surface moisture are also key elements of disease control in fine turf, as well as moisture are also key elements of disease control in fine turf, as well as reducing the incidence of Microdochium nivale.

STRI trials have shown considerable success using the plant surfactant Dewcure, which can be effective for up to three weeks in lower temperatures. As with most things, timing is the key. If Microdochium nivale is kept in check, and not allowed to proliferate, then a much healthier sward is evident going into the new season. Any significant level of disease reduction might result in a reducing need for fungicide.

Whiteleaf GC encountered a situation during the winter when the greens were very high in thatch and very susceptible to disease. They were finding the high pressure periods of disease to be September and October due to the high moisture levels mixed with warm conditions.

They had difficulty getting the plant strong enough and found they had to spray a lot to try and keep the disease at bay. Mike Ginger, Head Greenkeeper, went to Iain Richardson from Headland to improve plant health as well as reducing the costs they were spending on fungicides.

"We started to use the 20/20/30 programme over 5 years ago," he said, "and have more than halved our fungicide bill. It also means that after the winter months we have superb plant health and minimal susceptibility to disease."

"We seemed to be using excessive amounts of fungicide - spraying 8 times in 2013," he commented. "With the use of 20/20/30 we have already seen a considerable drop in the amount of disease spraying we had to do which is a huge saving in cost and labour. It's only a year since we started the programme but we're delighted with the results we're getting."

"20/20/30' represents a preventative approach, helping the grass plant to create an environment that can resist disease pressure, rather than offering a curative strategy."

It is not likely that its use will result in a complete absence of disease, but rather minimise levels to those that may be more manageable.

Often, fungicide may still be needed where any residual disease is evident.

Using this combined approach, overall costs can be considerably lower - up to 50 per cent less than using fungicide alone, and as the products being applied are plant nutrients rather than pesticides, the impact on the environment is reduced, whilst turf quality can more often be enhanced.
Turf machinery constantly adapts to suit the environment and setting in which it works. But can the reverse be true? Well, yes, claims Dale Hand, Course Manager of two golf courses, one of which has been shaped to suit the mowers he manages.

Working with a small greenkeeping team, Dale spends his hours maintaining Aylesbury Park Golf Club in Buckinghamshire and Clandon Golf, Surrey. Fifty miles apart, the two courses have streamlined operations in a novel and effective way to capitalise on the equipment and machinery they manage, limit downtime and rationalise staff training. It’s a model in which other courses may see merit, he believes.

In its 19th year, Aylesbury Park runs a pay and play and member club. Constructed on clay, the 18-hole course can suffer when deluges descend. Clandon Golf is pay and play - although it has annual ticket holders, who are in effect members – and its 18 holes are in increasing demand all year round.

Dale is not the only common factor in the equation. PGA professional Geoff Legoux co-owns Aylesbury and Clandon Golf and has been involved in several golf course ventures, including Cheshfield Downs in Stevenage. This is where he met Dale, who has been Geoff’s right-hand man ever since, moving to Aylesbury as Deputy Head Greenkeeper in 1995.

Dale runs a tight ship at Clandon – full-timer Jez Healey and himself two days a week, with Jason Dabbe brought in as a second full-timer in January to replace a part-time greenkeeper there as demand rose.

Dale admitted: “Running a course with two full-time greenkeepers is a challenge, but presentation is everything, and with the resources we have, the standard here is pretty high.”

Golf course architect Peter Jones designed the course, constructed over free-draining chalk on Surrey’s North Downs, the front nine opening five years ago, the back nine a year later.

With the likes of Clandon Regis, Guildford and Weysey nearby, although these are private members clubs, Clandon fairs pretty well, Dale confirmed. “We’re very busy all year round. Many courses locally can only be closed in winter due to flooding but our location means we stay open – their loss is our gain.”

Aylesbury does not have the same drainage qualities of Clandon Golf, being built on clay as opposed to chalk, so inevitably suffers in very wet conditions.

In the growing season, there is very vigorous growth, however, the team of Dale plus three full-time greenkeepers are able to keep up with the cutting using a John Deere WAM barowing rotary for the semi-rough and a John Deere 7700 fairway mower for the fairways.

The commitment to delivering quality courses to a tightly controlled budget permeates a management style of making the most of available resources, exemplified by the turf machinery operating at both sites.

Each course “doubles up” with 2500 greens mowers and 2653 utility mowers from preferred supplier John Deere, in part to allow units to be moved seamlessly between sites when needed.

Dale admitted: “Running a course with two full-time greenkeepers is a challenge, but presentation is everything, and with the resources we have, the standard here is pretty high.”

Golf course architect Peter Jones designed the course, constructed over free-draining chalk on Surf.
In the third part of his four part series, Continue to Learn 2015 speaker Dr Paul Miller looks at the fundamental biological needs of turfgrass

The next big question has to be, where does the glucose come from? As animals we consume our energy-rich compounds as food, and derive our glucose from the breakdown of these compounds in our digestion and metabolism. We know that plants don’t eat food as animals do, but that they make their own energy-rich compounds through the amazing process of photosynthesis. This process is the major differentiating factor defining plant life. The plant takes two abundant and simple compounds, carbon dioxide and water, and driven by the energy of sunlight the process converts them into glucose. This is represented by this equation:

\[ \text{Glucose + oxygen} \rightarrow \text{Carbon dioxide + Water + Energy} \]

\[ \text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6\text{O}_2 \rightarrow 6\text{CO}_2 + 6\text{H}_2\text{O} \]

For the process to take place, in addition to water and CO₂, we need an appropriate temperature, light and chlorophyll (chlorophyll is the compound that makes plants green, meaning that photosynthesis only takes place in the green portions of the plant). If we look carefully at the two processes of respiration and photosynthesis we see that one reverses the other, which makes things nice and tidy. But the plant has to make more glucose than it needs to immediately burn in respiration, because there are days and times when the plant is not able to photosynthesise (night time, low-light days, short days, cold days yet still needs to reproduce). So it has to put some glucose away into storage for those times when it can’t photosynthesise – and grasses store energy-rich compounds in roots, rhizomes and stolons. In addition, the plant uses glucose as the preliminary building block for manufacture of glucose, and to put into storage. So from all of this we can judge that the manufacture of glucose through photosynthesis is of singular importance in the functioning of the plant, and it should be clear that if we limit the ability of the plant to photosynthesise then we compromise its capacity to function properly, to repair from wear and damage, and to see itself through the winter when there is not enough light or heat. To compromise any of these is not at all good.

A second area of plant metabolism that I feel deserves special attention is that of nutrient uptake. As we know the plant needs a large number of essential nutrients to function fully about 16 in all, each with a specific job to do. N, P and K are the ones to which we give most attention and that it takes these up into the plant cell. How is this achieved, and how does the root work? Plant roots are amazing organs, literally growing to explore new areas of the soil, anchoring the plant to the ground whilst (in the right conditions) absorbing water and taking up nutrients. So there are several important processes taking place in the root, and in terms of uptake of water and nutrients the three of greatest significance are osmosis, diffusion and active uptake. As with all living cells those of a plant root are enclosed by a membrane (picture a balloon full of sugary liquid) and in order to get into the plant cell water and nutrients have to pass through that membrane. Water passes through the membrane by the process of osmosis, whereby it goes through a concentration gradient to equilibrate the concentration of the aqueous (water-based) solution on either side. So if, as normally is the case, the concentration of the solution within the plant cell is stronger that than of the soil solution (soil water with nutrients dissolved in it) then water will pass through the membrane into the plant cell. Once inside it is drawn through the plant by the process of transpiration, exiting as vapour through tiny holes in the leaf (stomata). Osmosis is not under the control of the plant, and does not require energy, as demonstrated by the fact that non-living membranes of the right properties can allow osmosis, and by the fact that if the soil solution strength exceeds that of the cell contents, then water will move from the cell back into the soil (think spillage of quick-release fertiliser leading to scorched turf).
word ‘active’, meaning it requires the expenditure of energy, and release of energy in turn requires respiration (the burning of glucose in the presence of oxygen).

As we have identified with photosynthesis, energy is the currency of living organisms, and is hard won, so why would the plant ‘spend’ some of it in taking up nutrients? This expenditure must convey certain advantages to the organism.

When we look at the process of active uptake we find it does indeed convey certain advantages – the plant can take up nutrients against a concentration gradient, meaning that even if the soil is running short there is a mechanism to extract the nutrient from the soil, up to a point. Secondly, the uptake of nutrients is selective, meaning that the plant doesn’t just take the nutrients that are there because they are plentiful, it actually exercises control and takes the ones it needs. Evolution must have decided at some point that spending energy to allow these mechanisms to operate was a price worth paying.

Let’s revisit respiration at this point – respiration is the burning of glucose in the presence of oxygen. Plants do not have the oxygen distribution system (heart and lungs) that animals possess, so the parts of the plant that need oxygen need to have direct access, meaning that for our roots to function properly there needs to be sufficient air in the soil, also meaning that if there is insufficient air in the soil the roots don’t work properly.

If we try to ‘join the dots’ from previous articles we will recall that fescue and bent grasses are most at home in sandy soils, which can be as much as 20–25% air-filled porosity at field capacity. We also identified that Poa annua does better in heavier soils (less air space) rooting in the upper levels of the soil where the oxygen is maximised.

Space doesn’t allow a full description and explanation of all aspects of plant physiology, but what I have tried to do here is identify four highly significant processes – respiration, photosynthesis, osmosis and active uptake, and think about their significance to the functioning of the plant.

In the fourth and final article I shall consider these again and try to relate them further to the commonly used management techniques on the functioning of the grass plant, thinking about the things we can do to get the plant functioning as nature intended, and discussing the implications if we don’t manage to do that.
Talk about a Revolution

In recent years, there has been a steady progression towards more sustainable management practices in the turfgrass industry. Whether driven by budget restrictions, legislation, or genuine concern for the environment, greenkeepers everywhere are becoming increasingly mindful of the inputs of their golf courses.

While the exact definition of “sustainable” may differ from one golf course to another, a common theme runs through every definition: maximized efficiency and reduced waste.

Though new tools have made it easier to monitor inputs, sustainable management practices are often complicated by environmental variables, such as inconsistencies in the growing environment and unpredictable weather patterns. That’s where Revolution comes in.

Revolution is a patented soil surfactant that is proven to significantly reduce watering needs and a reliance on inputs to grow healthy, resilient turf. Revolution’s unique molecular structure sets it apart from all other soil surfactant products on the market and leads to its unparalleled performance in the field.

By optimally balancing air, soil, and water in the rootzone, Revolution lays a strong foundation for healthy turf and can help greenkeepers reduce water consumption and their reliance on other inputs.

Reduce Watering
Golf courses are often scrutinized for their water use, especially during prolonged dry periods. In recent years, high-efficiency irrigation systems and soil moisture probes have given turf managers significantly more control over the amount of water applied to their turf.

However, once water leaves the irrigation system, other inefficiencies take over.

Water repellency and the natural behavior of water often combine to negate the water savings produced by these high-efficiency irrigation tools.

Water repellency is a naturally occurring phenomenon that can hinder the movement of water into and through the soil profile. Untreated soil water repellency leads to water puddling, channeling, or running off the surface.

The end result is plenty of wasted water, even for otherwise highly efficient irrigation systems.

Revolution’s unique molecular structure holds water more closely to soil particles than any other surfactant on the market, overcoming the inefficiencies caused by water repellency and encouraging water to move in a thin, continuous film throughout the soil profile.

More than a decade’s worth of research has shown that Revolution can produce high-quality turf at dramatically reduced rates of irrigation.

A 2012 study conducted by Dr. Kevin Frank at Michigan State University examined Revolution’s performance under a variety of irrigation regimes.

Dr. Frank’s results show that Revolution produces consistently higher-quality turf under deficit irrigation.

When turfgrass was watered to just 50% of its daily evapotranspiration (ET) losses, Revolution produced significantly higher-quality turf compared to the untreated control, never falling below the acceptable turf rating (Figure 1).

This could lead to 20-40% water savings over the course of a season and virtually eliminate the need for hand-watering during the hot summer months.

Revolution’s unique, methyl-capped molecular structure (below top) allows it to attach more closely to soil particles (below bottom).

Improve Nitrogen Efficiency

With rising fertilizer costs, the demand to get the most out of Nitrogen sources has never been greater. Research has shown that Revolution increases Nitrogen efficiency in turfgrass, providing plants with the energy they need even at reduced rates of fertilization. The end result is plenty of wasted water, even for otherwise highly efficient irrigation systems.

Revolution’s unique molecular structure holds water more closely to soil particles than any other surfactant on the market, overcoming the inefficiencies caused by water repellency and encouraging water to move in a thin, continuous film throughout the soil profile.

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Revolution’s unique, methyl-capped molecular structure (below top) allows it to attach more closely to soil particles (below bottom).
Despite the seemingly endless task of blowing and collecting leaves does on a parkland course, it's not my favourite time of the year - the seemingly endless task of blowing and collecting leaves does start to drain your enthusiasm and it's only just started! I'm sure all you links guys are glad you don't have this problem. If you have any news call me on 07974458649 or email amcgeough@amcgeough.co.uk alternatively you can post on the Cleveland Facebook page.

**NORTH EAST**

Congratulations to Jack Friar who at just 19 is Head Greenkeeper at Percy Wood Golf Club. We wish him well. He is sure Jack will go into his new role, with the help and advice he takes from other members within our section, our section is one big happy family! Northumberland is becoming the nation’s capital for young Head Greenkeepers, with 80 innumerable others at Dunstanburgh.

The BIGGA North East Section Autumn Tournament took place on a beautiful sunny October day at Alnemouth Golf Club where Jan Storey and his team had prepared their usual high standard course. Jan Storey won the Gross Trophy with a score of 76 (Par 71). Jack Friar won the Stableford with 37 Points, Mark Linsley was runner up with 34 Points and Colin Donaldson was third with 29 Points.

**NORTH WALES**

The autumn tournament was played at Caernarfon golf club on 17 September with only 16 players, we did initially cancel the competition due to it being so under subscribed. Results: 1 T Adamson / E Angel 43 pts, 2 M Hughes / J Cormet 39, 3 A Peel / P Watson 38.

We were well represented at the National with Andy Peel, Jo Hughes, Simon Ashfield, Andrew Corrisses and Dave Wilkinson flying our colours. We are looking for new blood on the committee especially non golfing members, to apply please come to the AGM. We are making an appeal for courses to hold course walks, if you have anything that may be of interest please contact Paul Lowe as I know he has a great interest in this field.

Jez Hughes has been crowned club champ at Vale of Llangilen Golf Club, well done Jez.

**NORTH WEST**

The North West Section held a seminar at Myerscough College on 15 October with presentations from Mark Hunt of Headland Amenity, Cameron McMillan of Queenswood Golf Club, Neil Adams of Lely UK and Myerscough College. These presentations coupled with outdoor workshops from Berhards, DryJect, Lely UK, Campsey Air2G2 and VGR Topchanger and the ProFusion complete bunker renovation made for a great day of education.

Thanks are extended to all these people and companies for contributing a great effort and also to Tilers Turf and Whitemoss Eco for donating turf and sand to complete the day. The final attendance was 92 and thanks are extended to all those who took the time to come along. The feedback forms completed are being used to plan a Spring event, probably in early March 2015.

**Welcome New Members**


Although early autumn is beautiful time of year to be working on a parkland course, it's not my favourite time of the year - the seemingly endless task of blowing and collecting leaves does start to drain your enthusiasm and it's only just started! I'm sure all you links guys are glad you don't have this problem. If you have any news call me on 07974458649 or email amcgeough@amcgeough.co.uk alternatively you can post on the Cleveland Facebook page.

The Annual Christmas Competition and AGM will take place at Wilmot Golf Club on 11 November. To enter please contact David Weir on 07774 999230 or email dwawes@rigbytaylor.com.

**Northern**

Events coming up

**NORTHERN**

A new date for the Christmas golf day at Rawdon Golf Club is 17 December, same tee times 10am. As always it’s a four-man team Texas scramble over 9 holes followed by festive dinner and beer and prize presentation. All teams receive a prize plus the nearest pin too kindly sponsored by Bob Wild. A few of us will probably wander in to Leeds to finish the day off!

**SHEFFIELD**

Don’t forget our Christmas Competition will be held at Bondhay Golf Club on Thursday December 4. The October DryJect demonstration at Rotherham Golf Club had to be postponed due to adverse weather but we hope to run this in March 2015.

Thanks to The Phoenix Sports and Golf Centre for hosting the Regional Conference on 6 November and also to all the companies and speakers involved. Sheffield Section supported this event by paying the entry for all Sheffield Section Greenkeeper members attending the event.

The date for the Dog Racing evening has been posted on Facebook and emailed and stated to those who have supplied an email address and mobile number (Please test your name and mobile numbers to 07994392155). The Christmas Golf Competition and AGM is being held at Bondhay Golf Club with tee times from 10am, anyone who can help please come along and join the committee so that 2015 can be a bumper year for golf, education and social events. Thank to Bondhay for hosting. Bookings to Andy Unwin or Neil Peters please.
Events Coming Up

**MID ANGLIA**

Our next golfing event is our Turkey Trot/Texas Scramble at Ashridge GC on December 10. Requirements: at least one team member to have played in one of our other events through the season in order to secure a spot for this ever popular event. Cost is £30 for Members and £40 for Guests so please get your teams in early to avoid missing out on our final event of 2014.

**MIDLAND**

Christmas Golf Tournament at Blackwell Golf Club on 3 December. Dress for partners on the day. Full English breakfast, golf and Christmas dinner to follow with a cost of £27. Please contact Rhys or visit the website www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk and fill in an application form.

**News**

**MIDLAND**

Autumn Tournament at Hanworth Golf Club: results: 1 Adam Jones 42pts. Congratulations to Adam whose round included 8 birdies in a six under par 66! 2 Cliff Woodwell 33, 3 Steve Thompson 33, 4 Ian Ashford 33. 5 Dave Gibbons 32, 6 Craig Hartley 31. Nearby the pins won by E Stant x2, A Jones and Roger Butler.

Midland Section AGM followed the golf at Hanworth with the following officers elected: President: John Wrigley. Chairman: (12 months maximum to allow smooth transition) Ed Stant. Deputy Chairman: Rhys Thomas. Secretary: Andy Smith. Treasurer: Gary Wakkins.


The section welcomes Gary Wakkins, Dave Collins and Andy Laiing to their new positions on the committee and look forward to their input and fresh ideas. The committee also thank Nigel Tyler and Kevin Pugh for their commitment to the Section over the years on committee.

And now for a word of warning, 1, 20 years ago ran myself over with a tractor and got away with it, the same thing has happened to someone I know. It’s a case of six of one and a half dozen of the other. Never try to start a tractor without being sat on the seat, and never leave it in gear.

**South East**

Autumn Team Trophy at Colchester Golf Club was held on a warm and rain free September Day. Captain George Chinnery and his team had produced and presented the course in a fantastic condition and all the players enjoyed the day and hospitality laid on by the club.

Team competition results: 1 Banks Amenity - Simon Banks, Sam Young, Stuart Tierney and Antony Kirwan, 117pts. 2 Colchester GC – Keith Chinnery, Sam Cook, Craig Strain and John Williams. Nearest Pin 8th: Matt Wise. Nearest Pin 16th: Neil Peachey

**Thanks to Sponsors**

**ESSEX**

This issue would not be possible without our generous sponsors, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continued support. If you feel you may be interested in sponsoring Midland Anglia Section in 2014/15 please contact a committee member for details.

**Welcome New Members**


**Your notes**

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or sean.mcdade@rigbytaylor.com by the 15th of November.
Events Coming Up

**SOUTH WALES**

Our Christmas competition is at Glynneath Golf Club on 20 November. If anyone is interested, please feel free to contact us and attend as everyone is welcome.

**SOUTH COAST**

A very informative evening was had by all who attended at Liphook. With Dave Ross from Test Valley winning the Nett and Beverly Blair from Southwick bagging a hole in one, which was a fantastic achievement.

Congratulations to Crieff Course Manager Charlie MacDonald on winning the BIGGA Challenge Plate at the National Tournament.

**SOUTH WEST**

Thank you to everyone who attended the Autumn Stableford tournament at Carnoustie. Kingsbarns and St Andrews which were both at an exceptional level of play.

**WES T**

The annual dinner will take place at the end of November venue still to be confirmed. We have had a collection of classic cars which included an MGB GT, and a MGB roadster. He also seems to have been around for a long time and not aged at all. Brian Hillan (Drumpellier GC) got married on 3 October, I would like to wish him and his new wife all the best for the future. Gerry Broadley of Glasgow GC celebrated the birth of his second child Olly on the 3 October, so we wish him and baby all the best from the section.

Please remember to get in touch with any information of births, deaths, marriages etc. on: 0141 9425554, or 077098 29194, or e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com

**Scotland**

Congratulations to Steve Chappell and all the team for the course they produced in testing conditions, please contact Paul Worster (paulw@mgcnew.co.uk) for any queries.

We also have had calls for training in specialist areas particularly a PGU upgrade from apprenticeship qualifications, again please express your interest promptly to either Paul, Traccey Harvey (tracey.harvey@bigga.co.uk) or myself. As usual if there is any other training that is required drop any of us a line and we will do our best to help you.

All of our Section events are open to members of other sections, please feel free to contact us and attend as everyone is welcome.

**NorthWest**

The section recently held our Autumn Stableford tournament at Monkshall GC, the day was a great success with great weather and the day a fantastic course to present to the section also, well done to all.

Brian Hillan (Drumpellier GC) got married on 3 October, I would like to wish him and his new wife all the best for the future. Gerry Broadley of Glasgow GC celebrated the birth of his second child Olly on the 3 October, so we wish him and baby all the best from the section.

Please remember to get in touch with any information of births, deaths, marriages etc. on: 0141 9425554, or 077098 29194, or e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com

**Scot land**

The annual dinner will take place at the end of November venue still to be confirmed. We have had a collection of classic cars which included an MGB GT, and a Reliant Scimitar if you can remember that car. He retired in January through ill health and didn't get a chance to enjoy his time taking things easily, sadly a good person is no longer with us and he will be missed, but always remembered by a lot of people.

As I would not want to leave my article on a sad note I should mention the retirement of Norman Bartlett of Nairn Brown who has decided to hang up the boots after I don't know how long but he seems to have been around for a long time and not aged at all.

Congratulation to Crieff Course Manager Charlie MacDonald on winning the BIGGA Challenge Plate at the National Tournament.

Please remember to get in touch with any information of births, deaths, marriages etc. on: 0141 9425554, or 077098 29194, or e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com

**Welcome New Members**


Rodney Crouse, International Member, St James Plantation (USA)
We are North Staffs Irrigation Ltd - with 40 years' experience and a founder member of the BTLIA we remain a family run business specializing in the design and installation of irrigation and drainage systems.

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Howard Swan has, for many years, presented at numerous seminars, workshops and conferences both at home and abroad. Whilst best known as a Golf Course Architect he has a passion to share his vast knowledge and experience of golf course design and renovation projects which he has been involved in globally.

In more recent years, his son William has become the third generation of Swans in the architectural profession and is continuing the tradition of sharing best practice with all who attend SGD workshops which are focused on employers – Owners, Officers, Club and Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers – and have proved very popular.

The GTC will again be hosting workshops during BTME 2015 where Swan Golf Designs will again feature with plans also afoot to host more workshops regionally before January and into spring 2015.

Howard takes up the story of SGD being involved in quality education of greenkeepers and employers with the offer to assist any Quality Assured Centre or BIGGA Region or Section.

He said: “We have long held the belief that anyone is to learn anything about anything in life then it must come from three things – Information, Communication and Education...or ‘ICE’.

‘That essential learning process comes from taking information, no matter at what level it may be imparted by others, and absorbing it into your memory for the future. Having a good system of communication helps greatly to facilitate that.

‘In our own field of golf course design and development, or more realistically in these days of the indifferent state of the golf course market redesign and redevelopment, we work with a large number of individuals in any one project and the success of that project is essentially reliant upon that team performing as well as it can. Each individual contributes their bit.

‘We often say the best projects are those which are not led by the golf course architect as we might get carried away and run away with the excitement of what might be conceived on the golf course.

‘In most projects the team needs to consist of the client – a golf club chairman, chairman of green, a green committee, a golf club manager – who has a vision of what it wants from the project in five or ten years’ time and an intent to achieve it in sensible, realisable steps – and who may lead the team. They should be supported by the technical input and expertise of the golf course architect, who may project manage it throughout its various stages, by those who might specialise in irrigation technology, in agronomy and of course the greenkeeping team.

‘The relationships between each of the team members is vitally important to the success of that project and the understanding which is developed between them can yield the outcome everybody wishes for.

‘Those relationships are only developed by sharing information, by communicating clearly and well, by understanding each other’s position in taking the information by that communication and using it to maximum effect. Essentially, therefore, becoming the education process from which we all learn.

‘The best projects in our experience over 45 years of working in the industry have come where all of those are realised. All members of the team rely upon each other, learn from each other, and maximise their efforts with a singular purpose to succeed.

‘There is, without doubt, a universal requirement to adopt the GTC’s philosophy of allowing all levels of greenkeepers AND employers access to both formal and informal education and training. On the job training and online learning has given many an opportunity to further their knowledge without having to leave their workplace. This is one option we see as having great benefits to individuals and the business as a whole.

‘It’s this philosophy we have given many an opportunity to further their knowledge without having to leave their workplace. This is one option we see as having great benefits to individuals and the business as a whole.

‘It’s this philosophy we have been pleased to bring to the GTC in conceiving and contributing to their workshop programme with our fellow QA training providers. BTME 2015 now beckons with two further workshops focusing on bunkering and the safety of golf courses, and we look forward to those taking opportunities to put the ‘ICE’ theory into practice.”
Kippie Lodge, Sports & Country Club
HEAD GREENKEEPER

Kippie Lodge Sports and Country Club is a prestigious private members club on the outskirts of Aberdeen. The Club has in excess of 3000 members and is to lead a team in raising and maintaining the standards required at the Club.

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**Recruitment**

**HEAD GREENKEEPER – SOUTH EDINBURGH**

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  - A keen eye for presentation and attention to detail
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  - Excellent communication skills
  - Understanding of how job and equipment performance affects the playing conditions of the golf course.
  - Positive attitude with good communication skills.
  - Works well in a large team atmosphere.
  - Ability to train others

The successful candidate will have the following attributes:

- Minimum 5 years Links experience
- NVQ Level 3 equivalent
- Full Spray (PA1,2,6) certificates
- Ability to lead and motivate the greenkeeping team
- An understanding of computerised irrigation systems
- A good working knowledge of course maintenance machinery
- A keen interest in golf

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The successful applicants will need to be highly motivated, well organised and experienced Head Greenkeeper, lead a team and further their career.

- Proven history of producing work to a high standard
- Excellent communications skills
- Good organisational skills
- Ability to work under pressure
- Ability to motivate and work with a team

Remuneration is negotiable dependant on experience.

**Closing date for applications is Monday 1st December 2014**

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As part of our planned growth we are now seeking two individuals to develop our business in London and the North of England.

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A new page featuring the best Tweets and pics from the industry – don’t forget to tag @BIGGALtd to give yourself a chance of being featured!

**Our favourite tweets this month...**

@essxbigga
@BIGGALtd-BCC-BolchsterGC well done to the team from Banks Amenity winning at Colchester golf club today! Course was in fantastic condition

@tomofreemo
A big thank you to everyone @BIGGALtd & @TheToroCompany for a great experience well done to kennelhall! A worthy winner & great bloke

@CentenaryHGK
Final sand levels being established this week. @essxbigga/nouncy @BIGGALtd

@sandra4bigganor
@BIGGALtd Peter Larter had a great 70th birthday yesterday and enjoyed a Lancaster and red arrow fly past in the afternoon – congratulations

@My_Apprentice
Great picture of @BIGGALtd TORO Student Greenkeeper of the year finalist. MG greens team @thomastimson @kingsdowngc

@AnthonyStockwel
Great to catch up with many of the @BIGGALtd Kent section yesterday especially Bexleyheath

@IanReevo
1st green gravel carpet down, 2nd green on its way, 1st tees nearly finished, stay of construction @BIGGALtd

@wesleni87
Massive congratulation to Kevin oneill worthy winner! Great guy! @Torostudentoftheyearawards @BIGGA

@the_log
@BIGGALtd CEO does the #IceBucketChallenge Awesomtions

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