Show business

News, photographs and interviews from a bustling BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition 2015

ALSO INSIDE... LES HOWKINS MG IS NEW BIGGA CHAIRMAN
ONE BRAND
OF TURF EQUIPMENT

Pebble Beach has only Jacobsen turf equipment on every inch of every hole. From ECLIPSE® and ECLIPSE® 322 walking and riding greens mowers to LF550™ fairway mowers and AR522 and AR722T contour rotaries, the five courses of Pebble Beach trust Jacobsen to maintain all its precious turf.

ONE BRAND
EVERY DAY.

END

After a fantastic BTME last month, matters were brought into perspective when we heard the news of the passing of former chairman, George Malcolm.

It was worth reflecting on the comparative youth of the Association, as recently as 30 years ago there was no united voice for the greenkeeping industry. George, as chairman of the BIGGA, was instrumental in the coming together of all the disparate associations and was very proud to serve as BIGGA’s 45th chairman in 1991. I would like to pass on my condolences to all George’s family and friends.

BIGGA has come a very long way since then and nowhere was that more evident than at BTME 2015.

Five members were awarded Life Membership at the AGM, all extremely deserving for lifetimes dedicated to the industry and the Association.

I was particularly pleased to see Clive Osgood, chairman in 2001 and our Regional Administrator for the South East, receive this honour. Despite the odd infirmity in recent years, Clive has given his entire working life to the betterment of the Association and has done so with dignity. Well done Clive.

At the opposite end of the career spectrum it was inspiring to meet the youngsters who have been nominated to form our first Young Greenkeepers Committee. BIGGA is in good health but we must continue to plan for the future and adapt to meet the needs of the younger generations, I know that the input of the Young Greenkeepers will be instrumental in helping us achieve that.

This magazine contains a thorough review of BTME, the success of which serves as a motivation to ensure the 2016 event is even bigger and better.

We have opened a fifth Hall in the Exhibition Centre to cope with exhibitor demand, our plans for the education programme are already underway and I am confident it will yet again be the highlight of the greenkeeping calendar. Thanks to all that helped make BTME 2015 such a great start to the year.

Enjoy the read.

Jim Creston
BIGGA CEO
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British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association
It’s quite surreal to be sat drafting my first Chairman’s Word column for Greenkeeper International, never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be in this position and I find it an incredible honour to have been chosen to represent BIGGA in this role.

As a young greenkeeper starting out in the late eighties when BIGGA was still in its infancy, I worked at Kibworth Golf Club in Leicester where my passion for greenkeeping was driven by the Head Greenkeeper Chris Butlin. If I am completely honest, my dream was to be a golf pro, but I wasn’t good enough. However I retained the love of the sport and fell into greenkeeping, firstly as a temporary summer employee, then full-time and I haven’t looked back since.

The industry has given me over 25 great years of employment and I have loved every day (well almost every day!) - it’s offered me some fantastic opportunities and I have made so many amazing friends along the way.

The build up to BTME is always filled with excitement. My two young daughters count down to Christmas in sleeps and I do the same with BTME, I know it’s a little bit sad but I’m sure I’m not the only one. This year was even more exciting than normal, knowing that I was becoming Chairman on the Wednesday evening.

The Continue to Learn programme this year was bigger and better than ever and was matched by the largest number of delegates in its history. A massive thanks must go to the team at BIGGA House for all their hard work before and during the event, also thank you to all the members from across the UK and abroad for continuing to support the fabulous education programme.

With the exhibition again filling four halls there was a real buzz around the place and with the three big machinery manufacturers committed to exhibiting on a larger scale in 2016, I feel it is clear that BTME is fulfilling the industry’s needs and the future is very strong. Please be assured that the board and senior staff will never become complacent and will continually strive to make BTME better.

The AGM as usual was held in the Queens Suite of the Harrogate International Centre. I appreciate that BTME is an incredibly busy week for everyone, but it would be great to see more members attending what is a very important event.

The most crucial part of this year’s AGM was the vote on the new Articles of Association which went through unanimously which was very pleasing after all the hard work that went into producing them over the last 18 months.

The adoption of the new Articles gives the Association a modern governance structure and ensures our compliance with the Companies Act.

It is the intention of the Board of Management to review this document on an annual basis. It will become a living document that can be tweaked on a regular basis if necessary and voted on by the members at the AGM.

This should save us going through the long process of overhauling the constitution and governance which has taken up much time and effort over the last couple of years.

The AGM also marked the end of Arnold Phipps-Jones’ time on the Board of Management. Arnold has been heavily involved with BIGGA for many years and has served as South East Board of Management member for the last four and a half years.

In this time he has devoted many hours to the Association and his input will be missed, on behalf of the Board I would like to thank Arnold for all his hard work and dedication over the years.

He has been replaced by Andy Baker, Head Greenkeeper at Ely City Golf Club. I know he will bring lots of ideas and enthusiasm to the table and I look forward to working with him over the coming year.

The AGM went very smoothly with a slightly emotional Chris Sealey giving a heartfelt speech in his final moments as Chairman.
I was moved by the support of past Chairmen, Board members and all who attended the AGM. This continued later in the evening when I went for a celebratory drink in the well-known pub located in the Old Winter Gardens. My entrance was fairly normal – my team wanted to carry me in on their shoulders like Cleopatra but decided I was too heavy despite my recent weight loss! It was an unforgettable day for me.

During my year as Vice Chairman I got to know last year’s Chairman very well and what an honour it was. Chris Sealey is a true gentleman, has been a credit to our Association for many years and has guided the Board and BIGGA House team in a truly professional manner over the last 12 months.

Chris has carried out a huge amount of work behind the scenes that most members just don’t see. He has been the perfect role model for me and I will endeavour to carry on all of his good work.

So, what does the business of Chairman hold in store for 2015? Well at the last Board meeting we held a session where it was decided that a new strategic plan for the Association was required. This will not be rushed, and member feedback will be needed to ensure the plan is in line with member and industry needs and expectations. Initially it will require member involvement in a survey with possibly more to follow. We will endeavours to make these surveys user friendly, and I urge all members to take part and get involved in shaping the future of greenkeeping for the greenkeepers now and the future.

Education is a matter close to my heart. I’ve benefited from many BIGGA training courses over the years and I can see BIGGA being a very important year for the L&N department.

Last year saw BIGGA invited to sit around the table with the GTC and government departments to discuss and plan the new trailblazer apprenticeships. The very fact we were invited to the discussions table is a massive step in the right direction for our Association. We are currently developing our own accreditation scheme, which will eventually encompass all levels of education from Apprentice to Master Greenkeeper and form the backbone of a professional registration system.

The new CPD scheme has also been up and running for over 18 months now and we are now approaching 1000 registered members. We will be working hard on the other 5000 in the year ahead!

I must also thank everyone at Richmond Golf Club and the team of greenkeepers that work with me. Without the support of the club and the team, taking up the role as BIGGA Chairman would not have been possible.

As we move into February and towards the spring, winter projects are coming to an end, you start to see welcoming pictures on social media of daffodils in flower and the focus changes back to course conditioning. I sincerely hope the weather is kind and we can all get our courses in great shape early in the season to provide our members, guests and visitors with a fantastic golfing experience.

Remember, if you have any problems BIGGA offers an extremely extensive support network through the various helplines and the section committees and Regional Administrators. Support from your RA is one of the many benefits of membership. However, all too often they are called in too late to be of any real help, so don’t be afraid to use their skills at the first signs of a problem.

All that remains is for me to wish everyone the best for the forthcoming season, and I hope to see as many of you as possible at forthcoming events.

Les in front of the Richmond clubhouse. And during construction work on the course

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Funding

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

Contact details

Les Howkins MG, BIGGA Chairman
chairman@bigga.co.uk
This year sees a brand new event added to the European Tour Race to Dubai Series. The inaugural Paul Lawrie Matchplay will take place at Murcar Links Golf Club from 30 July – 2 August.

This is another great event heading for Aberdeen right on the back of the successful Aberdeen Asset Scottish Open which was held in the city in 2014.

The format will be 64 of the top players in the Race to Dubai series playing a straight knockout over the 4 days with the winner being crowned on the Sunday afternoon.

As with any major golf tournament, the ultimate success of it relies on volunteers from within the industry giving up their time to assist the existing Murcar Links team in the day to day set up of the golf course.

Volunteers are required, and tasks include: greens cutting, approach cutting, tees cutting, fairway cutting, bunker maintenance, dressing and more.

There will be accommodation provided at no cost to anyone wishing to be involved in the support team for the tournament.

Those interested should contact Course Manager Bob MacKay at green@murcarlinks.com for further information.

The BIGGA Midland Regional Conference is on Wednesday 25 February at Stonebrak Golf Club in Coventry.

The day will be kicked off by Pete Newton, Head Greenkeeper at Rockcliffe Hall Golf Club, who will be focusing on the use of precision cutting techniques. The meetings were resurrected last autumn by BIGGA’s South East Regional Administrator Sandra Reeves (Course Manager at Leyland GC) and John Ison (Course Manager at Garstang) had the idea to hold informal meetings locally to talk about all matters turf related.

Whilst the concept met with a measure of scepticism they went on and called the first of many monthly meetings that were supported by 20-40 greenkeepers, all of whom enjoyed the camaraderie, information sharing and support that these gatherings brought with them.

The meetings were resurrected last autumn and have proved popular.

The guys have no secret formula - they simply just pick a venue, share the date and time with as many people as possible via Twitter and Facebook and use their Regional Administrator to email members and obtain a CPD Code. Yes - these meetings are educational and attract a CPD Credit.

Who attends? Anyone who wants to! The venue is usually free and whoever attends either pays for their own food or a company can sponsor it and give an educational seminar.

How does it help? Well you get to spend time with like minded, dedicated turf care professionals.

Is it an extension of BTME? Yes it probably is - it gives you an opportunity to get together with other members and chat in a relaxed environment.

The next meeting is from 6pm on Monday 9 February at Garstang Golf Club, and three greenkeepers have been tasked to do a 10 minute presentation on any topic greenkeeping related. It is a good way to develop skills for presenting and public speaking too.

So, what’s a Turf Club?

Recently the Lancaster Turf Club met at Garstang Golf Club where the open forum event discussed a range of topics including diseases, budgeting and the current economic climate for the golf industry. Not quite what was expected - but that’s Turf Club!

Warren Byvan, Course Manager at Lancaster Golf Club, opened proceedings by explaining how some eight years ago he, Scott Reeves (Course Manager at Leyland GC) and John Ison (Course Manager at Garstang) had the idea to hold informal meetings locally to talk about all matters turf related.

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Mike Stoker took over from Dennis as Head Greenkeeper at the parkland course, which celebrated its centenary last year, and credits him with passing on extensive greenkeeping knowledge.

Mike said: “He was a very well-known knowledgeable greenkeeper and wasn’t one of the ‘old guard’ who resisted change. He went to college in his forties to further his greenkeeping knowledge, and was always up to date and willing to use modern machinery and techniques.

“The reason Whitchurch has such a good reputation is mainly down to his 19 years of tireless work until his retirement in 2002. He lived for the job and would work all the time that he could.

“He knew so much from him, and would not have been the greenkeeper I am today without the period I spent working alongside Dennis as his Deputy.

“He was a lovely, lovely man and will be sorely missed by all the greenkeepers.”

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Mike Stoker took over from Dennis as Head Greenkeeper at the parkland course, which celebrated its centenary last year, and credits him with passing on extensive greenkeeping expertise.

For more details please contact BIGGA’s South East Regional Administrator, Tracey Maddison, whose presentation will cover BIGGA Support and how to get involved in many opportunities the Association offers.

An educational and fun day will be rounded off by BIGGA General Manager Tracey Maddison, whose presentation will cover BIGGA Support and how to get involved in the many opportunities the Association offers.

To book, download the booking form from the events list at bigga.org.uk or contact Sandra Raper on 07866 366966 or email Sandra@bigga.co.uk.
AQUATROLS REACH AGREEMENT WITH HOME OF GOLF

Aquatrols, the world leader in soil surfac- tant technology, is pleased to announce that it has reached a three-year agreement with the St Andrews Links Trust to supply Revolution and other Aquatrols products to all seven courses at St Andrews through 2017.

According to Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews, the agreement with Aquatrols was reached after careful consideration and years of satisfactory experience using Aquatrols products.

He said: “We have been using Aquatrols products, primarily Revolution, across our seven courses for over five years. We chose Revolution because we require a product that can achieve success in the widest variety of soil structures that make up the Links Trust.

“Revolution allows us to optimise turf health across all of the sites and helps us to deliver the optimum conditions expected at the Home of Golf.

“We pride ourselves on working with the experts in any given field. The sheer amount of research that Aquatrols puts into its products highlights their strong commitment to the industry.

“Aquatrols dedication to research, along with their years of demonstrated expertise and service has created a strong working relationship between us.”

Representatives from Aquatrols said they were thrilled to agree to the three year deal.

Tom Malehorn, Aquatrols International Marketing Manager, said: “We are honoured to be able to supply Aquatrols and Furmura products to the St Andrews Links Trust.

“Our commitment to optimising growing conditions at St Andrews matches our global commitment to the turf industry as a whole.”

Aquatrols President and CEO Tracy Jarman echoed that sentiment, adding: “We take pride in delivering products that stand up to the rigorous demands of our customers.

“It brings me great joy to know that Aquatrols products are trusted at the highest levels of the turf industry.”

NEW SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND CHAIRMAN

Frank Clarkson, Golf Course Superintendent at Dundonald Links, has taken on the role of South West of Scotland Section Chairman, replacing Ian Paton who is now Scottish Regional Chairman.

Frank’s colleague Amanda Donais took the opportunity to speak to Frank about the position.

Amanda said: “Before we find out more about Frank, I’d like to take this opportunity on behalf of my fellow Section Members to thank Jim for all of his hard work and commitment over the years and wish him good luck and every success in his new position.”

AD: Frank, first of all, congratulations on your new role.

FC: Thank you, it is a great honour to represent a region which is rich in history and possesses some fine golf courses.

AD: Where did you begin your greenkeeping career and was this your first career choice?

FC: I entered the industry at the ripe old age of 27, beginning my career at Burnley Borough Council. However I soon found myself working on the golf course which at the time was short staffed. I quickly fell in love with this type of work. Prior to this I was self-employed in sales for 11 years.

AD: How long have you been in your current role?


AD: Do you have any tournament experience?

FC: I’ve been lucky enough to be involved in numerous professional and amateur tournaments whilst at Dundonald and Loch Lomond. The theatrical midnight finish of the Millennium Solheim Cup will live long in my memory.

AD: How do you manage golfers expectations with your agronomic goals?

FC: Golf like many sectors in the leisure industry is going through challenging times. The key is to match customer expectation with sustainable expenditure.

“If we are within budget and the customer expectations are met then we have got the balance right.”

AD: How has the industry changed since you began your career?

FC: Technological advances in general over the last 30 years have seen all aspects of day to day life change dramatically. More advanced equipment and materials have made the job easier however the age of social media and greater expectations temper these advances somewhat. I don’t feel the core task of managing turf has really changed.

AD: Do you play golf or participate in any other sporting pastimes? Watching Burnley FC from the sofa doesn’t count!

FC: Handicap of 18, however I rarely play. Football, music and walking are my preferred past times.

AD: What would you say to your younger self?

FC: Not a lot, as I know it would fall on deaf ears.

Thanks Frank and all the best for the upcoming year.

SYNGENTA AND BIGGA SET TO HELP GOLF UNLOCK ITS TRUE POTENTIAL

Syngenta has joined forces with BIGGA to extend its exciting project to support and help to revitalise the golf industry - Unlocking Golf’s True Potential.

The key initiatives that make up the Syngenta and BIGGA partnership include:

- An education programme for greenkeepers on improving turf spray application techniques.
- This will ensure greenkeepers get the best possible results from every application. It will be delivered via a series of Regional seminars and presentations alongside Best Practice articles in Greenkeeper International.
- Promotion of Operation Pollinator – Syngenta’s nationwide environmental initiative to proactively create new habitats for bees and other pollinating insects, and make golf courses a more attractive place to play. The aim is to reinforce Operation Pollinator as the number one practical environmental initiative in golf.
- Further surveys within the greenkeeping sector to provide industry insight that will help shape future practice.
- Syngenta’s Caroline Carroll said: “Greenkeepers have an integral role in providing the playing surface quality, environmental features and facilities that will attract more people to play the game. Their actions are imperative in ensuring the environmental and business sustainability of the clubs.
- “Working closely with BIGGA at a Regional and National level will give greenkeepers access to our R&D resources and support services to help enhance what can be achieved.”

BIGGA CEO Jim Croston said: “We’re delighted to be working with one of our BIGGA Partners in this exciting initiative. We will be seeking to engage our members at Regional and National level in Operation Pollinator and the importance of correct spray application.

“This project is a step towards advancing the game through environmental sustainability.”

You can find out more about Operation Pollinator, and Syngenta’s innovations and products by visiting the Syngenta turf management website: www.greencast.co.uk

BIGGA MEMBER JACK KICKS OFF

Jack Herdington is a BIGGA member and greenkeeper at Puttenham Golf Club, where their unique selling point is the speed of their greens.

However, this isn’t the only sport and accuracy required in Jack’s life after he started playing kickboxing as a hobby just over two years ago.

Thanks to his passion and enthusiasm travelling and his training, he is now travelling with his kickboxing team, Enthusiast Kickboxing, to Athens to compete in the Athenian Challenge, a competition that draws some of the best fighters in Europe.

Jack has already won local competitions, a beginner’s European Trophy and in February became British No. 2 in the Advanced World Association of Kickboxing Organisation Nationals.

Jack is also a member of the Young Greenkeeper Committee. Good luck Jack, and watch this space for news on how he gets on!
NEW ROLE FOR MASTER GREENKEEPER

Crown Golf, the UK’s largest golf club owner and operator, has appointed Mike Bush MGA as Group Course Manager across its portfolio of 38 golf courses at 25 facilities.

The 39-year old Master Greenkeeper was previously Course Manager at the company’s flagship property, St Mellion International Resort, a role he took up in 2003. He will remain based at the award-winning Cornwall resort and will continue to manage the two European Tour courses there, although his new job will also see him regularly visit all of the group’s clubs.

Crown Golf, which has one of the UK’s largest greenkeeping teams with a greens team of nearly 200, predominantly owns golf clubs in the South, with Euston Park GC in Messeyayle and South Essex GC near Brentwood representing the group’s northernmost and easternmost points respectively.

He will manage the group’s Course Managers, including setting strategy and maintenance plans for each club, and will head up the group’s national accounts and machinery purchasing activities.

He said: “We believe that greenkeepers are to develop our large green team and to continue to improve golf course quality across the Crown Golf estate.”

Mike led the St Mellion team which prepared the Resort’s Nicklaus Signature Course for its most recent European Tour event, the 2007 Midas Group English Open Championship.

He added: “I know the standards required for elite golf at European Tour level, as both a Europe’s best-loved golf resorts, and I am looking forward to helping each of our teams achieve the maximum possible playing quality at their own courses.”

“T here’s huge diversity between our golf courses: we have parkland on heavy clay, downsloons on chalk, and SSDs sites like Hampton Court Palace.

“Every golf course is different, and it is rewarding to see a club like Euston Park improve year after year, until it is performing at the very top of its game.”

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: “Mike has demonstrated a commitment to personal development throughout his greenkeeping career and it is hugely gratifying to see his hard work recognised in this way by his employers.

“The Master Greenkeeper award is widely considered to be the foremost achievement in the profession.

“We at BIGGA are extremely proud of Mike and wish him well in this challenging role.”

Late ‘birds’ fail to catch the early OPM ‘worms’

Milder winters increase insect survival rates and rates of growth and reproduction benefit from higher spring temperatures. Winter 2013/14 was exceptionally mild in Northern England, essentially frost free and April 2014 the fifth consecutive month with a higher than average temperature. Fast forward to May in 2014 when insecticide spraying started and L4 by mid May. This quicker than normal growth and development appears to have compromised the success of insecticide spraying using Bacillus thuringiensis subsp kurstaki (BTK) which punches a hole in the gut wall (following ingestion) to invade and kill the host. However, BTK will not kill larvae older than L2 because it cannot penetrate their resilient gut wall.

City of London Corporation, which owns and manages 11,000 acres of historic and open space, reported a population explosion this year. OPM nests were found in the Olympic Park at Stratford and at London Zoo, Regents Park in Westminster right on the border with Camden.

Kew Gardens reported its worst year ever with up to 1,000 pests. Vast numbers of larvae swarmed around the bases of trees. Open top boxes and traps were installed on site, mainly concentrating on the perimeter of the park. However, the top boxes have been largely ineffective, with no evidence of spraying.

A significant number of larvae were found in the Olympic Park, but not in the Olympic Village. For the Olympic sites, pest control was controlled by BTI spraying on a twice weekly basis.

A more effective approach was taken for many of the London Boroughs. Pest monitoring with pheromone traps carried out in late summer to coincide with emergence and flight period of adult moths was extended to Queen’s Park, Hamstead Heath and Epping Forest. The pheromone is a laboratory designed replica of the natural sex attractant (pheromone) released by the female OPM moth to attract males during mating.

Pheromone lures were placed in tent-shaped Delta traps or the larger-capacity bucket-shaped Funnel traps and suspended in oak trees. Male moths are attracted by pheromines of the volatile pheromone and secured in the traps to give entomologists a measure of the size and spread of the adult moth population. Male moths capable of flying up to 20 km were trapped in the London Boroughs of Camden, Barnet, Hackney, Waltham Forest, Lewisham and Sutton and also in the Epsom district of Surrey, all well outside the existing area of OPM infestation.

Favourable weather and environmental conditions are clearly the key factors driving pest numbers and spread and with which an already huge and costly control programme cannot compete.

Dr Terry Mabbett

BOOST FOR TEAM AT HEYTHROP PARK

A new golfing reputation is being built on the edge of the Cotswolds, with the 282-room Heythrop Park Resort near Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire making a major statement of intent by boosting its greenkeeping team for 2015.

Steve Cherry, a 25-year career greenkeeping professional who prepared 17 European Tour events under Alex Hay at Woburn, has been appointed Estate Manager after spending 14 years at Windmill Village GC in Cirencester.

He will manage the group’s Course Managers, including setting strategy and maintenance plans for each club, and will head up the group’s national accounts and machinery purchasing activities.

He said: “We believe that greenkeepers are to develop our large green team and to continue to improve golf course quality across the Crown Golf estate.”

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Scottish Patron Award Winners

The 2014 Annual Patrons Award was held at Strirling Golf Club on Wednesday 9 December with the regional chairman, Jim Paton hosting this prestigious event. The Scottish Golf Club for allowing use of this excellent venue and for providing entertainments with a fantastic hunch.

Alister Connell was the guest speaker at the lunch providing a fascinating talk on the preparation work at the facilities used for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Alister did particularly well considering he was writing the list of the high overhead projection facilities.

Jim thanked Alister and asked him to present the certificates to the 2014 Patron Award Winners:

Central Section – John Baxter, Greenkeeper at Dollar and District Golf Club

East Section – Stuart Ferguson, Course Manager at Dundas Park

North Section – Richard Johnstone, Depute Head Greenkeeper at Nairn Dunbar Golf Club

South West Section – Ian Smith, Greenkeeper at Dunfermline Links

West Section – Andrew Orr, Greenkeeper at Drumfiller Golf Club

The Scottish Region would like to thank our patrons for their continued support, without which the region would be unable to provide members with the various events held each year.

Patrons: Anthony Sale; Allyson; Roderick; Bryson Tractors; Campoe; Double A; Fergusons; Farmura; Friends; Germain Seeds; Greentech; Hamilton Bros; Headlands; Hibernians; Hughness; Indigove; Lily UK; MacGregor’s; Midlothian Sports; Nairn Brown; Orchard Amenity; Rigby Taylor; Robin; Fentons; Sneeze; Spalding Groundcare; Sports Turf Services; Tamborina; Thomas; Thronstrees; Turf Irrigation Services; Turftech

Do you have any news, photographs or stories on any aspect of greenkeeping?

Contact BIGGA Communications Executive, Steve Castle on 01347 833829 or email steve.castle@bigga.co.uk
George Malcolm

Since the passing of George Malcolm, BIGGA has been inundated with tributes for a former Association Chairman, great friend to many and an influential member of the BGGA which preceded BIGGA.

Scootsman George, former Course Manager at Middlesbrough Golf Club, hailed from Lochee, south of Edinburgh, and was BGGA Chairman in 1991. He passed away on Saturday 24 January at the age of 74 after suffering from an illness.

He joined Middlesbrough Golf Club – known to everyone locally as Brass Castle – in 1964 and apart from a brief spell working at Saltburn-by-Sea Golf Club, spent his entire working career there until his retirement nine years ago.

He was hugely passionate about greenkeeping and educating greenkeepers, and in 1977 helped establish what is now the BIBGA Cleveland Section with the assistance of the likes of Harry Lees, Roger Shaw and Bruce Burnell.

He was a member of BIBGA’s Open Support Team at Muirfield for the 1987 Shrewsbury and Bruce Burnell.

He was a member of the Cleveland Section Secretary, worked in-house. He just put so much hard work into everything he did.

He was very proud to be elected BIBGA Chairman as he believed he could champion the hands-on, grass roots greenkeeper.

He was a fantastic mentor and I owe him so much, I was an assistant greenkeeper when he was Course Manager and I learnt an awful lot from him.

One of his proudest moments was when he joined BIBGA’s Open Support Team in 1987. As well as having a good chat with Fuzzy Zoeller, he always used to recall how high he raised his rake in the air as he walked up the 18th, soaking up the applause from the galleries. He said that for that moment, he felt like a celebrity for the first time!

John Talbot is Middlesbrough’s current Course Manager and added: “I was with him briefly as I replaced him when he retired, and it’s one of the premier courses in the area because of him. Under his guidance, the team built the 6th, 7th and 8th holes from scratch and they are superb.

He knew how to get the best out of his team, he was strict when it was necessary, but was very fair and made sure he praised you when you had done a good job.”

Middlesbrough produced a book for their centenary in 2009, and devoted a page to George. An extract reads, “George joined in April 1964 as Head Greenkeeper, but was ultimately promoted to Course Manager. This meant he took over responsibilities for all aspects of greenkeeping from Ernie Scott, our Professional at the time. Until then, Professionals had included greenkeeping in their responsibilities. “We all owe George a debt of gratitude for his part in the course developments which have been completed during his time in office. George was with us for 41 years (apart from a short break in 1975/76) but was at Saltburn and has always remembered for his expertise, dedication and long hours he willingly put in to maintain our first-class course. “George used to ‘put the lights out’ on the course, watering from a single standpipe, often when many of us were tucked up in bed!”

Tony Smith, former Course Manager at Penrose Golf Club and BIBGA Chairman in 2012/13, added, “He was a stalwart of the Cleveland Section and the Association, and also a great ambassador for both. He was a hands-on greenkeeper who would work tirelessly, often seven days a week, 12 hours a day. He was always at the end of the phone if you needed a chat, but remained keen to learn throughout his career. “He was a very good friend to many and will be sorely missed.”

George was elected an Honorary Life Member at Middlesbrough when he retired in 2005. The flags at BIBGA House have been flying at half mast in tribute. George leaves his wife Marion, daughters Fiona and Jackie plus son David, who followed in his footsteps and is currently a Head Greenkeeper in Germany, and two grandchildren, Mailin and Evie.

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Rest In Peace, George.

With thanks to George’s family, Ian Pemberton, Ian Holohan, John Talbot, Tony Smith, David Golding and Middlesbrough Golf Club.
Membership News - the section which updates you on the countless benefits of being a BIGGA member. We’re on hand to help.

You can contact BIGGA House, our Regional Offices, our Personal Accident Helpline, Legal Assistance and our Lifestyle Counselling Helpline.

You can also save money with our Xtra Benefits scheme. More information can be found in the Members’ Area of the BIGGA website.

BENEVOLENT FUND NOW OFFICIAL CHARITY
The BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund now has official charity status.

After months of work behind the scenes at BIGGA House, it is now established to offer charitable purpose and as is the register of charities number 1191098. It was officially registered on the final day of BTME 2015 – Thursday 29 January – and is registered as a charity which makes grants to individuals for the prevention or relief of poverty.

The full details please visit https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/bigga-fund/set-up-a-charity.

This is exactly what we’re trying to encourage and if you’re not a member of BIGGA, you miss out on all these opportunities.

This is another excellent opportunity for members to swap stories, and many Sections and Regions held gatherings throughout the week.

BIGGA General Manager Tracey Maddison said: “The BIGGA stand was manic during most of BTME, filled with members chatting to the BIGGA House team, swapping greenkeeping tales, updating each other on news and generally learning from each other.

“This is exactly what we’re trying to encourage and if you’re not a member of BIGGA, you miss out on all these opportunities.”

WENTWORTH SUPPORT
Don’t forget to apply for the BMW PGA Championship support team by 27 March.

This is another excellent member opportunity to join the home team at Wentworth in May. And if you’re a team of 15 at which is required 19-24 May, and match taking places between 21-24 May.

It’s another superb development opportunity on a professional and personal level. To apply fill in the application form in this issue and return to Rachael Duffy, BIGGA House, Aldwick, Alcester, West Midlands, B80 7RS. For further information and to apply see page 56, or contact Rachel at BIGGA House.

BIGGA MEMBERSHIP BRINGS NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
One of the main benefits of BTME, and BIGGA membership, are the fantastic networking opportunities open to members. BTME is the perfect showcase for this with various events taking place both inside and outside the Harrogate International Centre.

The John Deere TPC Saysgrass Volunteers met on the John Deere Stand, as did the Delegates heading on the trip to the Golf Industry Show in America courtesy of Bernhard.

Past Future Turf Managers Initiative candidates also gathered to swap stories, and many Sections and Regions held gatherings throughout the week.

BIGGA General Manager Tracey Maddison said: “The BIGGA stand was manic during most of BTME, filled with members chatting to the BIGGA House team, swapping greenkeeping tales, updating each other on news and generally learning from each other.

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Other USEFUL NUMBERS
(Pull Members only)
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L&D News
The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA

We are heading towards the 1,000 mark for CPD members.

All members have a free online account and you can claim your first CPD in minutes. As GI went to print, 985 members were on the CPD (Continuing Professional Development) scheme.

Remember – if you attended Continue to Learn at BTME, or even just the exhibition itself, you can claim CPD Credits via our more accessible, easier to use scheme.

For more on CPD, and if you have any questions, please contact the L&D Team or email cpd@bigga.co.uk

The latest members to be awarded CPD in January 2015 are as follows:

- Michael Frappat - Cosby GC
- Paul Mills - Penn GC
- Scott Cottin - Greenburn GC
- Matthew Teasdale - Rockcliffe Hall GC
- Jack Methington - Portland GC
- David Langham MG - Wimblodn Park GC
- Matthew Plasted - Muswell Hill GC
- Roger Tydeman - Dulwich & Sydenham Hill GC
- Graeme Roberts - Camberley Health GC
- Alastair Higgs - Wivelash Garden Centre
- Stefan Carter - Woodford Golf & Country Club
- Mark Broughton MG - Aldaburgh GC
- Sam Evans - Olympic Park GC
- Jamie Blake - Broadway GC
- James Fox - Trentham GC Ltd
- Andrew Hart - Hendon GC
- David Collins - Lickey Hills GC
- John Grey - Middlesborough Municipal GC
- George Pitts MG - Yelverton GC
- Simon Oliver - Whitley Bay GC
- Philip Butler - Murrayfield GC
- Mike Roddd - Chichester GC
- Stephen Lawlor - The Duke’s St Andrews
- Kevin Moore - Whitwood GC
- Leigh Powell - Hockley GC
- James Parker - Pantry Castle GC
- Les Howkins MG - Richmond GC
- Ben Shipp - Ely City GC
- Wesely Leonharn - Ealing GC
- Hamish Campbell - Cannock Chase GC
- Sidney Avesmith MG - Frinton Heath GC
- Stuart Ferguson - Dundas Parks GC

Learning & Development News has the latest updates on CPD and everything related to greenkeeper education and training, supported by our BIGGA Partners, BIGGA Education Supporters and Individual Contributors – funding your future. Contact the Learning & Development team at BIGGA House for more information.
For more than 100 years the Kyoeisha Co. of Japan has been making first-class, high quality, user friendly machinery for its customers. Since late 2007 customers in the UK have been sharing in that experience, finding out just how low the whole life service costs of Baroness mowers can be!

After another very successful three days supporting BIGGA and Greenkeeping at BTME 2015, Baroness would be happy to arrange your demonstration so you too can find out how you can benefit from substantial whole-life ownership cost savings.

www.baronessuk.com

Tel: 01256 481591
BTME 2015

...ITS SHOW TIME!

Here we go with our extensive 20 page review of BTME 2015. Read on for a Newswdesk special, interviews with the visitors and exhibitors, and much much more. The buzz really is back at The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition

Four sold out halls, record figures for education and unrivalled networking opportunities were just some of the highlights of BTME 2015 as BIGGA announced a return to five halls for next year’s exhibition.

The Continue to Learn education programme broke all records - at the last count, an initial figure of 2,900 delegates had travelled from across the UK and the world for the hugely diverse range of seminars and workshops.

A total of 4,722 visitors also attended the three days of the exhibition at the Harrogate International Centre with the halls particularly busy on the first day.

It soon became evident from speaking to exhibitors that the quality of visitors was higher than ever, with key decision makers from all manner of sports clubs, authorities and associations striking deals throughout the week.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: “It’s been another fantastic week and it’s featured record numbers attending our Continue to Learn education programme which is at the heart of what we are trying to do. The programme is going from strength to strength and this really drives quality visitors to the exhibition.

“This year we’ve hosted 215 excellent hours of education, the programme is going from strength to strength and this really drives quality visitors to the exhibition.

“We’ve had four sold out halls this year and as exhibitor demand continues to increase, BTME 2016 will feature a fifth exhibition hall. We’ve already focusing our minds towards next January.”

Educating in Yorkshire

BTME 2015 saw record numbers of delegates at the Continue to Learn education programme in Harrogate, North Yorkshire

At the last count, an initial figure of 2,900 delegates had travelled from across the UK and the world for the hugely diverse range of seminars and workshops - up around 4% on last year’s already busy schedule.

The week is now so packed with seminars, workshops, conferences and presentations that Continue to Learn is spread across the Harrogate International Centre and The Crown Hotel throughout the week.

Once again, the Turf Managers’ Conference was real highlight of the programme with five excellent speakers discussing a range of topics and interacting with the audience.

It was also heartening to see younger greenkeepers attend the event and prove that, despite its title, more inexperienced turf managers are keen to attend to increase their knowledge.

Wesley Lenihan, Deputy Course Manager at Ealing Golf Club, attended the Conference and four other seminars during the week on subjects ranging from disease control to aftercut appearance.

He spoke for many of the delegates when he said: “This was the first time I’ve attended the weekend Seminars at BTME, I took part in the Adjusting Cutting Units and Aftercut Appearances, run by Ian Rumpeter from Toro and Ben Taylor from Bernhard Grinders, who were both brilliant. This mixed practical skills with theory, and was a real eye opener.

“I found the disease management seminars really interesting as they provided information on active ingredients and their affects, discussing the timing of applications relating to different disease stages and the transport methods within the plant.

“Next year I’m planning on attending different seminars based around managing people and dealing with conflicts, as they were recommended from friends in similar roles at their clubs.

“Continue to Learn at BTME is a great week, it provides you with the chance to learn from seminars, speakers and fellow greenkeepers, meet new faces and old friends while discussing industry topics.”

The educational theme continued in the exhibition itself with the likes of Askham Bryan College, the GCiAA, GCMA, STRI and Merrist Wood College all hosting bustling stands.

Myrnesough College again exhibited, and held a greenkeeping Mastermind on their stand for delegates to test their agronomic knowledge – leading to some healthy competition!

Employer Services Manager Lee Price said: “It’s been a fantastic week and it’s featured record numbers attending our Continue to Learn education programme which is at the heart of what we are trying to do.

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Photos courtesy of @arastudio
INDUSTRY FIRST FOR BIGGA GREENKEEPER

A greenkeeper based at gWest, has become the first turf manager ever to hold a hat trick of top industry qualifications accredited by three worldwide greenkeeping bodies.

Lee Strutt, Course Manager at the Perthshire resort course, is already a Master Greenkeeper with the British International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) and a Certified Golf Course Superintendent with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSSA).

Now he’s become the first greenkeeper in history to achieve a third award, the Master Superintendent (MS) from the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA).

Lee was presented with his MS designation by Christian Pilon, President of the CGSA, during the Welcome Celebration at BTME 2015.

The greenkeeper, who is now officially Lee Strutt PGdip, MG, AGS, CGCS, MS, said: “I feel very privileged to become the first greenkeeper to achieve all three designations, and proud of the fact that I represent the UK and BIGGA as the first member to do this. Knowing I would be breaking new ground was a real motivator.

“The MS was very intense, to try and focus on a whole range of subjects from agronomy to management for the exam with the added pressure of having to answer 300 questions in six hours, effectively one every 90 seconds.

“Without a doubt, I have gained so much both professionally and personally from this fantastic industry, learning from my peers and seeing so many people who have had an influence on my career at BTME 2015.

“My inspiration and drive come from one focal point in my life. Whilst at school I was told by my form tutor that ‘I would never amount to anything’.

“This made me very determined to achieve something!”

Lee first obtained his Accredited Golf Superintendent (AGS) designation from the CGSA in 2008. This was a prerequisite to work towards the higher Master Superintendent designation. Lee also obtained the GCSSA’s, Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) in 2014. His knowledge, skills and abilities were validated through the development of a portfolio consisting of his responses to skill statements, case studies and submission of work samples.

Two GCSSA certified superintendents also carried out an on-site inspection of gWest, this was followed by a six-hour exam covering every conceivable aspect of greenkeeping and management.

Lee’s first professional designation was BIGGA’s Master Greenkeeper (Mg) certificate achieved in 2001. Only 65 greenkeepers currently hold MG status – a prestigious award which recognises turf managers who have reached the highest standards of greenkeeping and golf course management.

Firstly the candidate must acquire 200 of BIGGA’s Continuing Professional Development Credits, then an on-course inspection takes place under the gaze of two Master Greenkeepers – similar to the GCSSA award.

The third stage involves a case study and technical examination. Lee began his agronomic career as a trainee greenkeeper at Bath Golf Club in 1984, then enjoyed spells at Broadstone Golf Club, Knighton Heath Golf Club and The Duddesbury Golf Club – where he secured his first Deputy Course Manager role.

In 1994 he moved to The Richmond Golf Club before being made Course Manager in 1997. He became the construction and grow-in Superintendent at gWest in 2008.

He’s studied Sports Turf Management at Merist Wood College, followed by a Post Graduate Diploma in Sports Turf Technology at Cranfield University.

He was also part of the volunteer greenkeeper support teams at the 2012 and 2014 Ryder Cups, and has also worked at several other tournaments including European Tour events and Scottish Opens.

Lee has a handicap of 14, and is particularly passionate about greenkeeper education.

He is heavily involved in several of BIGGA’s continuing professional development initiatives. He was the instigator of the popular ‘So You Want to be Promoted’ seminar, regularly presents at ‘Continue to Learn’ at BTME and is a mentor for the Future Turf Managers Initiative educational event supported by Jacobsen.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croston said: “I’d like to congratulate Lee on a great achievement, we’re all very proud that a very active BIGGA member is the first greenkeeper to ever obtain these three awards.

“It sets a fantastic example to the industry where continual professional development is essential.”
New for BTME 2015 was the Chairman’s Lunch, held in the stunning surroundings of Harrogate’s Sun Pavilion.

The event, held on the Wednesday lunchtime of the show, aimed to toast the outgoing Chairman alongside the Board of Management, past Chairman and other stalwarts of BIGGA. BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack joined BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton, the current Board of Management and the likes of Walter Woods, Jack McMillan and Cecil George for the reception.

Chris made a brief speech thanking the attendees, the Board, the entire team at BIGGA House and the trade for their assistance during his tenure. The tables were named after Bristol Rovers FC legends in recognition of Chris’s tireless support of his football team.

Leighton Walker, General Manager of Chippenham Golf Club, also contacted GI to pay tribute to Chris. He said: “The Club is very proud of Chris and the time that he has served as BIGGA National Chairman.

“The opening of seven new holes at Chippenham in May 2014 was also a great success and a credit to Chris. The year has been the icing on the cake of a great career in the industry.”

Situated in Harrogate’s Valley Gardens, a light snow covering provided a spectacular backdrop outside, although this did mean a fleet of taxis were required to ferry some of the attendees to the Pavilion.

Happily, everyone arrived safely and were able to salute Chris’s memorable 12 months as Chairman.

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JOHN DEERE TPC SAWGRASS DELEGATES

The Delegates for the first ever John Deere TPC Sawgrass Volunteer Programme in May joined forces on the company’s stand in Hall M at BTME 2015. The latest excellent educational offering from BIGGA involved members filling in an online application form via the BIGGA website, then completing a video application outlining their greenkeeping knowledge, career aspirations and why they wanted to join the Programme.

A shortlist was then drawn up, and candidates successful after the video stage then underwent interviews with BIGGA’s five Regional Administrators, BIGGA officials and a representative from John Deere. The successful five are Michael Burgin from Normandy Golf Club, Chris McVultur from Portstewart Golf Club in County Londonderry in Northern Ireland, Graham Down from Ashwickby Park Golf Club, James B ledge from Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club and Mike Ellis from The Point at Frinton.

Four of the Delegates met on the John Deere stand – unfortunately Chris’s attempts to join them were thwarted by poor weather on the Wednesday which led to the cancellation of his flight. However, in the week after BTME Chris Meacock, John Deere Turf Division Sales Manager, made the journey to Northern Ireland to meet the team at TPC Sawgrass, again courtesy of John Deere.

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**RIGBY TAYLOR PRIZE**

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton drew the winning name for Rigby Taylor’s prize draw to win an OptiM8 ‘Professional’ spreader – a competition which attracted many entries on their buzzing stand.

Rigby Taylor, who are a BIGGA Partner, enjoyed a successful show which was rounded off by Jim joining Rigby Taylor’s Mark Whiting on the stand for the draw. The winner was Jack Friar, Head Greenkeeper at Percy Wood Golf & Country Retreat.

Richard Fry, Rigby Taylor’s marketing director, said: “From a large number of entries, Jack’s name was the first to be drawn and his club will receive a brand new OptiM8 ‘Professional’ spreader.

“This prize was really welcomed by the club as only recently they had their spreader stolen, so the replacement could not have come at a better time.”

The company had a very busy BTME, with three new products launched. Firstly they introduced their new Armaline marking system. Specially developed for use with the award winning Infinity paint, Armaline is a versatile linear marking attachment for use with turf utility vehicles.

For many local authorities, schools and training grounds, the multiple marking of sports pitches is a time consuming task. Now, with the introduction of Armaline, multiple pitches can be over-marked by one operator in a fraction of the time taken when marking with a pedestrian walk-behind marker.

Also launched was the latest seed mixture R25 CRT (Creeping Ryegrass Tetrapot), which is an exciting 100% perennial ryegrass blend featuring creeping and tetraploid perennial ryegrasses. This leading innovation provides the fastest establishment possible for the renovation and divet repair of high impact playing surfaces.

Trialled and tested at Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI), the combination of Stolwijk, Fabian, Dapaco and Columbia, also offers superior recovery, exceptional wear tolerance and excellent resistance to drought and turf diseases.

As if that wasn’t enough, Rigby Taylor have also launched three new brochures for 2015 – ‘Professional Products’, ‘Landscape Products’ and a Case Study. The Professional Products brochure features 160 pages of product user information, technical explanation, disease identification, pH and soil analysis advice and much more.

Landscape Products contains 34 pages of featured landscape products. New for 2015 is a complete re-vamp of the company’s grass seed range of landscapers products.

Finally, the independent Case Study describes one UK Metropolitan Borough Council’s analysis of their pitch linear marking practices and how it was able to reduce its cost per pitch by over 42% and save over £16,000 and 36,000 litres of water on the pitches it marked.

All three pieces of literature are available from a Rigby Taylor area representative.

**ANDY BAKER JOINS BOARD**

BTME 2015 saw Andy Baker officially replace Arnold Phipps-Jones as BIGGA’s South East Regional Board of Management member.

Andy, Head Greenkeeper at Ely Golf Club, said: “Looking forward to being part of the Board and continuing the recent excellent work that has been carried out. There is a great buzz at BIGGA House, with already, energetic, dedicated team (I know I will) enjoy working with.

“I hope that can be an inspiration to all the younger greenkeepers. We need to encourage them to be more involved within the Sections and Regions. Without involvement at all levels greenkeeping wouldn’t be where it is today.

“I would like to say a huge thank you to Arnold - he has worked tirelessly over the last four and a half years, dedicating much of his personal time to the Association. Also, thank you to Ely Golf Club in allowing me to take up the role on the Board, and also to my very supportive family.”

The AGM also saw Stuart Imeson, Course Manager at North Bexwell Golf Club, named new Vice Chairman, with Tony Greenwood, Course Manager at East Surrey Golf Club, to officially replace Arnold Phipps-Jones. Andy Clark – Broadstone Golf Club

Ashley Brear – Luffenham Heath Golf Club

Andy Clark – Broadstone Golf Club

**BTME 2015 was the venue for the first ever meeting of the Young Greenkeeper Committee.**

Ten youthful members from across the UK met to chat about their perceptions of BIGGA and its role, with the intention of coming up with suggestions to feed into BIGGA’s strategic plan.

Discussions then moved on to the function of the Committee, how often they will meet and identifying roles within the committee.

The Committee aims to engage younger members of BIGGA, and provide the Board of Management with feedback into the needs of more youthful members. Each Region will nominate two members to serve a two-year term.

There are 13 members on the Committee, they are: Paul Armour – St Andrews

Robert Bennetts – Inmingham Golf Club

Ashley Brear – Luffenham Heath Golf Club

Andy Clark – Broadstone Golf Club

Mike Ellis – The Point at Polzeath

Jack Hertrington – Poulton Golf Club

Stuart Imeson – Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club

Andrew Naismith – Worthing Golf Club

James Parker – Rainford Castle Golf Club

Scott Roberts – Hanley Curzon Golf Club

Dan Simpson – Rockcliffe Hall Golf Club

Liam Springett – Braintree Golf Club

Miles Todd – Llandudno Golf Club (Maesdu)

A welcome and introductions from Jim Croxton and Lex Howkin’s MG, BIGGA General Manager Tracey Maddison, joined Northern Regional Administrator Sandra Raper to facilitate this first meeting.

The group raised some interesting discussion points, went away enthused and were tasked with setting up social media platforms to interact with younger BIGGA members.

The group will meet in person twice a year with regular conference calls also arranged.

**FIVE NEW BIGGA LIFE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED AT AGM**

Five new BIGGA Life Memberships were awarded at the AGM. First up was Ken Pattison, Course Manager at Hallamshire Golf Club, who was followed by Barry Holt, former Head Greenkeeper at Burfield Golf Club.

Next was Clive Osgood, former Course Manager at Walton Heath Golf Club who is currently BIGGA’s current South East Regional Administrator.

Fourth Life Member announced was Jim Paton, Course Manager at West Kilbride Golf Club and current BIGGA Chairman.

Finally Bill Paterson, former Head Greenkeeper at Beaconsfield Golf Club, was awarded Life Membership.

**COMMS MEETING**

The Tuesday of BTME saw much activity in the Media Centre, downstairs in Hall E. After a series of press briefings from exhibitors, and a touching memorial to Mike Beardall (former editor of The Groundsmans) attended by many of Mike’s industry friends, dozens of the speakers who compile the Around the Green notes for GI met to discuss BIGGA’s communications with members of the BIGGA House team.

The meeting was chaired by BIGGA’s Communications Executive Steven Castle who was supported by BIGGA’s General Manager Tracey Maddison and the BIGGA Regional Administrators.

Steve said: “It was a hugely productive meeting and I would like to thank everyone who attended, and also those who couldn’t be there but have sent suggestions and ideas via email.

“Thoroughly enjoyed meeting some of the scribers for the first time and how we are all passionate about spreading the word about BIGGA members’ excellent and memorable experiences professionally and personally. Members’ suggestions are always taken on board and we will be implementing some of the ideas from last month, so keep an eye on the magazine!”

“If you have any feedback on Around the Green, or any aspect of our communications, please contact steve.croxtone@bigga.co.uk.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

Five new BIGGA Life Memberships were awarded at the AGM. First up was Ken Pattison, Course Manager at Hallamshire Golf Club, who was followed by Barry Holt, former Head Greenkeeper at Burfield Golf Club.

Next was Clive Osgood, former Course Manager at Walton Heath Golf Club who is currently BIGGA’s current South East Regional Administrator.

Fourth Life Member announced was Jim Paton, Course Manager at West Kilbride Golf Club and current BIGGA Chairman.

Finally Bill Paterson, former Head Greenkeeper at Beaconsfield Golf Club, was awarded Life Membership.
AMENITY FORUM SPRAYER AWARDS

A new amenity initiative launched at BTME is set to recognise and reward the industry’s best sprayer operators.

Launching the Awards at BTME, Amenity Forum Chairman, Professor John Moverley, highlighted that accurate and efficient spray application was an integral part of the commitment to fulfil the Sustainable Use Directive.

The Amenity Forum Sprayer Operator of the Year Awards are sponsored by Syngenta and Everris. Sprayer operators are encouraged to enter one of three categories:

- Sports and amenity turf using hand-held equipment
- Hard and porous surfaces using vehicle mounted equipment
- Sports and amenity turf using boom sprayer

Successful entrants will be sent a short questionnaire to report on their spraying practices, designed to identify and highlight examples of best practice, along with individual practical tips and advice they have implemented.

A short list of finalists will be visited by a panel of independent industry specialists to award the accolade of Sprayer Operator of the Year in each category.

Each winner will receive a Go Pro Hero action video camera, along with £500 of training vouchers for further CPD.

Initial entry forms can be downloaded from the Amenity Forum website, or available from any of the Amenity Forum industry specialists supporting the Awards.

Entry to the Sprayer Operator of the Year Awards has been entered for NRoSO, BASIS and BIGGA CPD credits.

BAYER SIGN BIGGA PARTNERSHIP AT BTME

The agreement confirming Bayer as a new BIGGA Partner was officially signed on Bayer’s buzzing stand at BTME 2015.

The turf science specialists and BIGGA have enjoyed an excellent relationship and the signing of this agreement is intended to bring the two organisations even closer together for the benefit of BIGGA members.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton joined Head Darren Brown, Head of Bayer’s Environmental Science Division, to confirm Bayer as BIGGA’s latest Partner.

As well as their impressive stand at BTME which attracted plenty of footfall, Bayer’s Technical Manager Dr Colin Mumford – who is a former greenkeeper – again presented a free seminar during the Continue to Learn education programme.

Colin, former Head Greenkeeper at North Weald Golf Club in Essex, followed up last year’s seminar on neonicotinoids with a presentation on innovative solutions for integrated disease management.

The company also recently hired another ex-greenkeeper, Greg Collins, as a National Account Manager, and they have also regularly supported BIGGA Regional and Sectional seminars, trade stands and meetings the show was a big success and we will return again next year for more!”

A BIG THANK YOU FROM DEVON AND CORNWALL

Devon and Cornwall members would like to thank Masons Kings and Farmura for the sponsorship of a mini bus to this year’s BTME at Harrogate. 11 members travelled up on Monday morning, starting the long 400 mile journey, with the first pick up at 5.30am. With a couple of stops along the way, they arrived at the Cairn hotel at 2.30pm.

Thanks to Mike Ellis, Devon and Cornwall Secretary, said: “With all the seminars, trade stands and meetings the show was a big success and we will return again next year for more!”
Commitment to a fifth hall for BTME 2016 reinforces exhibitor sentiment that this year's show marked an upward shift in sector optimism.

The buzz is back

Greg Rhodes joined the BIGGA House team for the week and reports on how thriving visitor interest set exhibitor pulses racing at BTME 2015

The visitor quality was as high as ever and the new technology we've introduced has adapted well to both the show and the visitors, judging by the reaction from faces old and new."

Also ringing the changes were Campey Turf Care Systems – and it paid off handsomely, according to Managing Director Richard Campey. "This year we invested in a new stand and a fresh look because we believe BTME to be an important event in the greenkeepers' calendar," he said. "It proved to be an excellent show for us, with genuine interest and many enquiries to get the year off to a positive start."

"Our stand designers have opened our eyes to the possibilities of exhibiting at BTME," said Lely Sales and Marketing Manager Mike King confirmed. "This year we invested in a new Briteliner screen. We've had lots of interest across our whole range. The new Briteliner and AXI line markers were a hit with visitors, and we sold off the stand. Salt spreaders hit the mark too, especially on the Wednesday when wintry weather arrived."

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"I'm delighted to support what is a well organised and well presented show. The education sessions are varied and informative and the BIGGA team are always attentive. We've taken quite a few orders off the stand, particularly for our new 'Turf Reports' system of recording and displaying course information."

"Commitment to a fifth hall for BTME 2016 reinforces exhibitor sentiment that this year's show marked an upward shift in sector optimism."

Hall Q will come back into the fold alongside halls A, B, C and M to herald a return to pre-recession buoyancy as the sector powers forward once more.

A bustling first two days for regular exhibitor Johnsons Sports Seed saw plenty of interest in their special mixes and in their hourly prize draw.

Amenity Specialist Matthew Le Brun, pictured inset below right, who developed the system confirmed “huge interest” in the product, adding: “Data collection is massive but understanding and correlating it is the critical factor.”

GroundsControl’s online applications covering all aspects of grounds management proved popular too. “The quality was there,” said Marketing Manager Jane Ratcliffe. “We exhibited last year and we’re glad we decided to do so again.”

Irrigation specialists Rain Bird Europe SNC have exhibited at BTME for the last three years and 2015 was once more a satisfying event for them, with plenty of strong leads to pursue. Golf Sales Manager Kneale Diamond revealed.

Sports industry contractors MJ Abbett found that all three days were buzzing. “BTME attracts a wide range of consultants, golf course architects and course managers,” Contracts Manager Nathan George (middle right) reflected, “so we can network with them strongly. The visitor quality was as high as ever and the general atmosphere of the show has risen too.” Next year’s BTME is already in the diary for MJTS Golf and Utility Vehicles, confirmed Operations Director Nick Williamson. “Although fewer visitors came on the stand, those that did were a better quality of enquiry. Well be here next year.”

Show first-timers Engo Group to Managing Director Richard Campey. “This year we invested in a new stand and a fresh look because we believe BTME to be an important event in the greenkeepers’ calendar,” he said. “It proved to be an excellent show for us, with genuine interest and many enquiries to get the year off to a positive start.”

"Our focus was to make ourselves known to the market here," said Norbert Zatko, “and we’ve networked with many of our UK suppliers." The group covers everything from golf course construction to greenkeeping services across Russia and the Ukraine. Two projects are underway at Strawberry Fields and Mill’s Creek near St Petersburg.

"The stand concept worked for us and the new technology we've introduced has adapted well to both the show and the visitors, judging by the reaction from faces old and new." Also ringing the changes were Campey Turf Care Systems – and it paid off handsomely, according to Managing Director Richard Campey. "This year we invested in a new stand and a fresh look because we believe BTME to be an important event in the greenkeepers’ calendar," he said. "It proved to be an excellent show for us, with genuine interest and many enquiries to get the year off to a positive start."

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For County Sport Surfaces this was their fourth, and best, year at BTME to date. "People once thought artificial turf was a luxury," said Managing Director Duncan Clark-son, talking about demand for their design and installations services, "but not anymore. The British weather has seen to that." Striving to spread the word about creating new life for used artificial
BtMe 2015 Review

Turf were Sports Maintenance Services, who reported a brisk show. “There’s been very positive interest in our Xtraction recycling process,” Sales Manager Jason Lewis-Lamb enthused. Jason is pictured bottom right.

“Greenkeepers now have an option to buy recycled turf for applications such as pathways and driving range mats at a third to a half the cost of the new product. Feeder schools take-up is strong and we are stressing the importance of an end of life policy on using artificial turf, as there is plenty of inherent value in it for secondary applications.”

Sports Turf drainage and construction specialists Turfdry were looking forward to following up “a good number” of inquiries after BTME, after the family-run business last exhibited at Harrogate in 2007. “I’m really pleased with the level and quality of interest this year,” recorded Assistant Manager Matthew Taylor, pictured top left.

Development of bunker technology continues unabated and the market opportunities were not lost on Daniel Smith of certified installer Better Billy Bunker, which debuted this year in the wake of their work at Gleneagles for the 2014 Ryder Cup. “The education programme is extensive,” he added, “and the show has been really successful for us, with a host of contacts made and leads to follow up.”

Concerns over health and safety compliance and tougher on-site security propelled visitors to CleveLand Sitesafe, where Sales Manager John Hodgson said: “When there is so much expensive kit on golf courses and sports grounds, keeping them safe and secure is a small outlay in comparison.”

Golf’s environmental drive helped steer visitors to Waste2Water Europe, where interest in their run-off recycling systems ran high. “We received plenty of potential orders,” commented Managing Director Tim Earley, “and were pushed off our feet, particularly on the Wednesday. The environment is a hot topic in golf so we benefit from that movement. “I was impressed by the level of expertise of those we spoke to. BTME is really improving in that respect.”

Sector purse-strings are certainly loosening, believes Richard Fry, Righty Taylor’s Marketing Manager (shown below).

“Visitor quality was very pleasing overall,” he reported. “The optimism being felt showed through, as did the enthusiasm of those who came on the stand.”

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Similarly upbeat, grinder specialists Bernhard & Co recorded quality across all three days.

“Visitors were looking more at our larger machines,” said Sales and Training Support Cathy McEwan. “They were trying to include purchases in this year’s budget, which is very encouraging.”

Syngenta always command major billing and attract a wide visitor spread but this year might have turned out to be a watershed. “Numbers were healthy” said Rod Burke, Market Manager EAME, “and the quality of attendees was fantastic, with a high level of engagement.

We enjoyed an even more diverse spread, including visitors from Dubai and Turkey.

“The standard of the seminar programme goes from strength to strength – it’s very encouraging. Our 4pm seminar on disease management was sold out. What an enjoyable show.”

After a spell of uncertainty across the sector following the economic downturn, it seems the good times are returning to greenkeeping and groundsmanship, if exhibitor feedback at BTME 2015 is any yardstick.

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Thanks for attending 
and see you next year 
19-21 JANUARY 2016
Successful industry shows adapt to reflect, and predict, shifting trends and developments. BTME can claim to be doing that in big measure as 2015 saw an arguably wider cross-section of the turfcare sector attending than ever before.

Globalisation is alive and kicking. Turfcare united this year as greens and grounds professionals descended on Harrogate to deepen their knowledge and widen their outlook, reports Greg Rhodes.

“Variety adds spice to BTME 2015”

Turfcare united this year as greens and grounds professionals descended on Harrogate to deepen their knowledge and widen their outlook, reports Greg Rhodes.

“It’s always helpful to develop my contacts and to chat to exhibitors who supply us. They like it, as it is a show of support for them. Education is my big focus this year, as I only took over four months ago and promised myself to back up my theory with work and knowledge as much as possible.”

For younger visitors, BTME can be a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening experience. It was for Alex Luliak, Apprentice Greenkeeper at Skipton Golf Club, who was attending the show with Deputy Head Greenkeeper Darren Hargreaves.

At the club for just six months, Alex, 17, said: “I love fixing machines and bringing them back to full working order. I gain a real sense of achievement from the job.”

Darren, who is a BTME regular, added: “There’s the chance to learn a bit here. The job is not just about cutting grass but lots of other aspects as well. Machinery developments have made the job easier but it’s still hard work - we still take cutters by hand.” Myrescough College was in force throughout the show, spreading news of its apprenticeship schemes and foundation degree course as well as making time to treat local youngsters to a day out.

Malcolm Eckett, their Greenspace Practical Lecturer and Sportsturf Machinery Tutor, was shepherding a throng of 14 to 16-year-olds around the stands to gain some hands-on knowledge of this bustling business. “This is a chance for local young people to really shine,” commented Malcolm about the scheme Myrescough runs.

Michael Swann certainly did – the 20-year-old is taking his Level 3 diploma in Sports Turf. His favourite part of it? “Finding out about looking after football pitches.”

Also attending was amenity specialist Rebecca Turner and colleague Kevin Grieve, who attended the first two days. Covering Sheriffs’ Amenity’s Yorkshire area distribution, she was searching out “good deals on spreaders and sprayers”.

“There’s a rise in the number of smaller set-ups – cricket and bowling clubs - visiting the show for the day,” Rebecca added.

The weather may have closed in during BTME but the show proved blessedly free of Yorkshire fog, a problem though for Matthew Hoden and his team member Richard Slater from Sickleholme Golf Club, Sheffield. “Education is the biggest aspect for me,” said Matthew. “The presentation on bent grasses was particularly valuable as we are introducing pure bents on our greens to create a better surface and get rid of the Yorkshire fog.”

Deputy Head Greenkeeper of Royal Jersey, Allan Black, also warmed to the mists session, while his boss Ben Blampied-Smyth was focusing on soil fertilisers for the 1,200 member-strong links course, while ryegrasses were looming large for Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Teignmouth Golf Club, Devon.

Here with his Head Greenkeeper, he applauded BTME: “Lots of new opportunities and brilliant networking, plus plenty of chat. What more can you want?”

The turfcare ecosystem were Michael Abbott, Houghwood Golf Club greenkeeper and Malcolm Greenhall, Lancashire Rugby Club Club, Lancashire Rugby Club, Lancashire Rugby Club, Lancashire Rugby Club.
Visitors who caught the video that launched the BIGGA Welcome Celebration on Tuesday surely marvelled at its stunning effect in capturing the build-up to the 2014 Ryder Cup in pictures backed by an almost apocalyptic soundtrack.

The creative force behind it is James Bledge, Deputy Course Manager at Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, who spent eight days filming the video and two days of editing the footage.

“I built the awards video around the songs and used time-lapse photography and fitted a camera high above the entrance to Gleneagles and programmed it to take shots very four seconds,” he revealed.

“The video’s already had 16,000 views on YouTube. I’m now looking to develop video CVs.

“The show is one of the highlights of the year for me - networking, education, meeting old friends and gaining ideas for new videos. Technology interests me too and I love that it’s held in Harrogate, the people are so friendly. My five-hour train journey from the South East is no worry for me.” This was backed up by new BIGGA Life Member Clive Osgood sitting beside him, who is based in Epsom, Surrey. “It’s no distance,” he added.

Bring on BTME 2016.
Dealing with weeds in turf

Professional turf is a tightly-knit grass sward with seemingly few openings and opportunities for invasion by weeds, but a surprisingly large number of plant species with no business in turf continue to establish and grow.

Turf weed process and achievement is governed by a range of botanical attributes alongside breaches in turf integrity that allow these dicotyledonous (broad-leaved) plants to exploit the environment and ecosystem. Turf weeds are simply green plants in the wrong place, and at the expense of fine turf grasses.

Keeping a low profile

The meristems (growing points) of grass plant species are sufficiently low to miss the mowers’ blades and this is the essential factor underpinning the creation and maintenance of turf.

Broad-leaved weeds with intrinsically higher growing points should be dispatched by the inherently low cutting heights required to maintain sports turf in a playable condition, but in practice many do escape to survive and thrive as turf weeds.

Weed plant populations contain a range of biotypes and especially those species with a high seed production potential. Close cutting over a long time period will select out the most prostrate individuals which go on to generate more of the same.

Classic in this context is the dandelion (Taraxacum officinale) often seen on tightly managed tees still producing yellow flowers virtually at ground level. But a cut too low can be just as damaging as a cut too high, with common daisy (Bellis perennis) and greater plantain (Plantago major) being two common weeds which thrive in the same. ‘Same but different’ is self-heal (Prunella vulgaris) and creeping cinquefoil (Potentilla reptans) are all examples of weeds that spread through turf via creeping stems or stolons.

Crowding out

Turf weeds like dandelion, common daisy, the plantains and self-heal produce leaves in rosettes at or just above soil level. Rosettes of leaves lay flat on the ground at a sufficiently low position to avoid cutting while shading out and killing the adjacent grass plants.

The large toothed leaves of dandelion are super-efficient light blockers, shading out and smothering short fine leaves of fine turf grasses.

Rosette weeds expand and exploit the space around with asexually produced daughter plants generated directly at the fleshy rootstock and stem (e.g. daisy and plantain) or even more efficiently at the nodes of running stems or stolons where adventitious roots form to create new independent plants.

Creeping buttercup, white clover (Trifolium repens), and creeping cinquefoil (Potentilla reptans) are all examples of weeds that spread through turf via creeping stems or stolons.

Parsley-piert (Aphanes arvensis) and dove’s-foot crane’s-bill (Geranium molle) are two additional turf weeds spreading quickly via creeping stems or runners which may root at the nodes.

These two weeds favour sandy substrates which of course golf greens and golf tees very much are. ‘Same but different’ is self-heal which grows and spreads from short rhizomes (underground stems).

Mat-forming broad-leaved weeds as a group are capable of creating substantial patches of weed growth across turf in a short space of time.

Coming in from the outside

Broad-leaved plants should rarely get the chance to flower and set seed in turf but low cut mowing over a long period of time favours the survival and growth of prostrate biotypes that can still flower even at soil level.

Long flowering periods as shown by mouse-ear chickweed – Cerastium fontanum, ephemerous (year-round) flowering, short seed-maturation times, minimum germination requirements and the ability to exploit tiny germination sites in turf are all attributes contributing to sexual reproduction as an important part in the spread and establishment of weeds in turf.

Most weeds of turf are widespread in the wider environment
where they can generate heavy seed loads that ‘come back’ to impact on turf. Classic examples are the wind-borne ‘poppies’ (_{Papaver}_) fruit/seed of dandelion and closely related species like cat’s ear (_{Hypochaeris}_).

Turf weeds are adept at exploiting small germination sites including tiny patches of bare soil caused by wear and tear, turf thinning from leatherjacket root feeding, and damage and holes left by physical removal of individual weeds. Worm damage and holes left by physical leatherjacket root feeding, and wear and tear, turf thinning from tiny patches of bare soil caused by small germination sites including related species like cat’s ear (_{Hypochaeris}_), and loads that ‘come back’ to impact where they can generate heavy seed production. It is all down to plants that reveal those weeds with a high degree of self-sufficiency and the ability to withstand drought conditions. It is all down to plants that can utilise the limited water supplies most efficiently and more to do with capacity to conserve water by limiting the rate of transpiration (loss of water from the leaves by transpiration) than any ability to absorb water more efficiently from a dry soil with a low water potential.

Yarrow (_{Achillea millefolium}_) bearing finely-divided fern-like and wax coated leaves from which transpiration rates are minimal is the archetypal drought tolerant turfweed. But there is an associated factor which operates within a group of highly specialised turf weeds including white clover, bird’s foot trefoil, yellow sucking clover/jesser tref (_{Trifolium dubium}_) and black medic (_{Medicago lupulina}_). As leguminous plants they have a symbiotic (mutually beneficial) association with nitrogen fixing bacteria (_{Rhizobium}_) living in root nodules and furnishing the plants with self-sufficient amounts of usable nitrogen.

Restrictions on water availability automatically mean restrictions on the uptake of soil nutrients. Subsequent lack of available nitrogen essentially stops the growth of daisies and all weeds with the exception of these leguminous plants. That is why large patches of healthy looking white clover persist through dry periods.

**Self-sufficiency**

Long, hot and dry periods soon reveal those weeds with a high degree of self-sufficiency and the ability to withstand drought conditions. It is all down to plants that can utilise the limited water supplies most efficiently and more to do with capacity to conserve water by limiting the rate of transpiration (loss of water from the leaves by transpiration) than any ability to absorb water more efficiently from a dry soil with a low water potential.

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**Staying the course**

A sizable number of turf weeds are equipped with food storage organs which enable plants to survive adverse environmental conditions including drought and prolonged periods of sub-zero temperature. Examples of these so called ‘perennating’ organs are the tap roots of dandelion and close relatives like cat’s ear, as well as the bulblets of the bulbous buttercup (_{Ranunculus bulbosus}_). Perennating organs may also play a part in asexual reproduction. For instance, the underground portion of the dandelion appears to be just a swollen root but any attempts to dig out individual plants reveal another function.

Piecs of tap root left in the soil form fibrous roots and develop into new plants, causing a cluster of small dandelion plants to grow from the failed attempt to dig out a single plant.

Another weed spreading in response to soil disturbance in the lesser celandine (_{Ranunculus ficaria}_). Lesser celandine is now widespread in turf but once established is difficult to remove. Lesser celandine causes protracted proble
Coated seed and bent grasses

How STRI trials backed by DLF Trifolium found that coated seed can help bent grasses establish quicker

Sustainability is currently a buzzword and the more sustainable the sward the better. A key problem that some greenkeepers face is that Poa Annua cannot be maintained sustainably – it has a high demand for water and fertilizer and is prone to disease and thatching up if not maintained sustainably – it is therefore a weed. A key problem that some greenkeepers face is that Poa Annua cannot be maintained sustainably – it has a high demand for water and fertilizer and is prone to disease and thatching up if not maintained sustainably – it is therefore a weed. In part due to the more invasive habit of this type compared to the other bentgrasses in the trial. The conclusion of this bent grass research was that the establishment of the bent grass under seed coating was up to month quicker than non-coated seed and would be less optimal germination and establishment among different bentgrasses, with or without seed coating, during the transition process.

Aim utilisation during the early stages of plant growth. Fertiliser is coated onto the seed meaning the germinating and developing seedling receives the benefit, not the surrounding plants. This is particularly important when over-seeding into a competitive sward. The STRI was selected to carry out the trial and their Trial Report was completed on behalf of DLF Trifolium in 2012. It was officially titled ‘The effect of oversowing a Bentgrass/annual meadow grass seed sward with different Bentgrass seed mixtures.’ Their belief was that putting new bentgrass seed into an existing turf bed would be beneficial during the establishment process.

As iSeed is heavier it was expected that around 50% less iSeed was sown in plots compared to uncoated seed plots. July was chosen to represent an ideal time to establish new seed and obtain recovery most quickly, but the summer of 2012 was mild and wet. However, due to this weather the seed germinated and in-filled the Graden CSII system (remove organic matter, back fill with fresh rootzone and seeds in one operation) in July 2012 at approximately 4 pm.

iSeed parachuted the new seed into the germinating and developing seedling, meaning the germinating and developing seedling receives the benefit, not the surrounding plants. This is particularly important when over-seeding into a competitive sward. The STRI trial had a very high level of organic matter removal before beneficial effects in sward species composition change is observed.

Therefore, the addition of the seed coating provided extra benefit by decreasing the ‘heal-up’ time post-Graden treatment compared to non-seed coated J All Bentgrass.

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Therefore, the addition of the seed coating provided extra benefit by decreasing the ‘heal-up’ time post-Graden treatment compared to non-seed coated J All Bentgrass.

However, due to this weather the seed germinated and in-filled the Graden CSII system (remove organic matter, back fill with fresh rootzone and seeds in one operation) in July 2012 at approximately 4 pm.

As iSeed is heavier it was expected that around 50% less iSeed was sown in plots compared to uncoated seed plots. July was chosen to represent an ideal time to establish new seed and obtain recovery most quickly, but the summer of 2012 was mild and wet. How STRI trials backed by DLF Trifolium found that coated seed can help bent grasses establish quicker. Therefore, it is unsurprising that two oversowing operations did not provide a significant change in this trial.
How to finance your fleet: Part 2

Equipment finance payments can be made using the normal range of credit options if required, or on a tailor made repayment schedule to match individual budgets and cash flows. The normal range of finance options includes:

Hire purchase
You pay the VAT due on the equipment at the outset and make regular fixed repayments over an agreed period. Once all repayments have been made, you become the owner of the equipment. For tax purposes you are treated as the owner from the outset of the agreement and can therefore claim any capital allowances available (consult your tax advisor for details). You are also responsible for the maintenance and insurance of the equipment.

Key benefits of hire purchase
• Certainty that the finance agreement cannot be withdrawn as long as you continue to abide by the terms and conditions of the contract.
• The regular nature of repayments and a fixed interest rate make budgeting easier.
• A cost-effective way to fund acquisitions. Using a traditional bank overdraft to fund equipment purchases can result in a growing hard core of debt that can prove more costly to your business in the long run.
• A straightforward form of financing which leaves you in control of both the used equipment value and the claiming of capital allowances.

Finance lease
Although you never gain ownership of the agreement, a finance lease is similar to hire purchase in that you make regular fixed repayments over an agreed period. A key difference is that VAT is payable on each lease payment rather than paying the full VAT due on the equipment at the outset of the agreement.
Another key difference to the hire purchase option is that while you cannot claim capital allowances, you are able to offset the lease repayments against any taxable profit.
Once again, as with hire purchase, you are responsible for the maintenance and insurance of the equipment.

There are a couple of key benefits of finance lease in addition to those for hire purchase:
• Enhanced business cash flow, with the ability to spread VAT across the life of the lease agreement
• A straightforward form of leasing which leaves you in a position to control the used equipment value.

Operating lease & contract hire
Operating lease is different to both hire purchase and finance options in that you do not repay the full value of the equipment over the rental period. You enjoy lower rental payments, paying only for what you use, rather than the full cost of purchasing the equipment. At the end of the rental period you return the equipment. However, as with the finance lease option, VAT is payable on each rental rather than at the outset of the agreement. Although you cannot claim capital allowances, you are able to offset rental payments against any taxable profit.

In addition, John Deere Financial contract hire is an operating lease that also includes a professional maintenance package.

The additional key benefits of operating lease are:
• Enhanced business cash flow with lower payments than for hire purchase or finance lease, and the ability to spread VAT across the life of the rental agreement.
• None of the uncertainty and effort associated with remarketing used equipment.

Additional key benefits of contract hire
• Known running costs; extending the principal of fixed interest costs, this type of agreement goes further and flags all equipment usage and servicing costs for your business
• Lower repair costs with preventive maintenance.

Although a dealer maintenance plan will not cover the cost of repairs outside warranty, the likelihood of a major breakdown is reduced with more regularly maintained equipment.

Finance case study:

Mundesley Golf Club

Mundesley Golf Club, close to the north Norfolk coast is described by finance director Reggie Shreeve as ‘usually a small village course.’ The club recently completed a 1 + 6 John Deere Financial deal with dealer Stuart Edge of Ben Burgess.

This was for six used John Deere machines including mowers for the tees, greens, fairways and rough, a Gator and a compact tractor, plus other ancillary equipment.

‘After a long and thorough process, we elected to go for a full replacement package deal, including an agreement on fixed servicing costs,’ said Briggs.

‘In dealing with Ben Burgess and John Deere Financial, we particularly appreciated their flexibility – because they’re committed to the industry, they understand small clubs’ requirements such as ours and they built the package around what we could afford. We recruited our Head Greenkeeper Richard Plummer a year ago, and straight away he made a couple of suggestions on what was needed and where we could save a lot of time, particularly mowing the rough and grass banks.

‘Richard has one full-time assistant and one part-time, and with these new machines both their productivity and the quality of course presentation have increased.’
Swede dreams

After nearly two years as Course Manager at Ingelsta Golf Club in Sweden, International BIGGA Member Warren Clements explains how he’s kept the greens to a high standard while fighting the long harsh winters, the economy and limited pesticide use.

After several years as Deputy Course Manager at Ealing Golf Club, in early 2013 I was given the opportunity to become Course Manager at Ingelsta Golf Club in the suburbs of Norrkoping, south Sweden. It was an adventurous move, I knew it would progress my career and I could also join my girlfriend out there.

Ingelsta is a 3557m2 18-hole par 46 parkland course with USGA A4 Perin greens and fairways. Along with a driving range, two putting and chipping greens, a short game area and a short kids’ course the practice facilities were excellent.

The greenskeeping team consists of myself and one other full-time greenskeeper in the winter, and we add two seasonal in the summer. With the course still under a metre of snow in February 2013, to produce a course report I had to study photos to identify areas of improvement.

My main aim was to produce the best putting surfaces by implementing similar maintenance regimes from what I learned and adopted from Ealing.

A testing start

I officially started my role in April 2013 just as this part of Sweden experienced one of its worst winters, with snow and ice cover lasting up to five months. Temperatures during this period reached as low as -30C.

The course was completely brown and the greens suffered severe damage from ice burn and prolonged snow cover.

Combined with dry windy weather the greens then started to suffer from desiccation with no option of irrigating as our lake was frozen, so we had to resort to applying water from a 300 litre spray tank.

In the UK I was used to maintaining greens at a high standard all year round with a good maintenance backup. I wanted to implement this at Ingelsta but the weather forced me to wait. It took five months to achieve full recovery after implementing an overseed of Penn in the spring along with ongoing topdressings and a steady feeding programme.

In fact, I went for the unorthodox approach of overseeding the worst damaged areas on greens with a tee Rye mix with the Bent to produce a response while the slower growth rates of Bent grew in. Mowing at this time was minimal, at a height of 4.5mm.

Winter golf and the economy

In September 2013, after a second overseed of a Penn mix, we had full coverage of 90% creeping bent and 20% Poa. For me, the Annual Poa which invaded the greens was not a problem and I had the experience of managing it with the Bent.

Another challenge was ahead! From October the height of cut was 3mm and the greens continued to look healthy. With one or two cuts per week we were still producing stimp readings of 8 or 9, combined with keeping play on grass tees. Because we’re 12 holes, you can play in two hours we were achieving a true roll and stimp speeds of 10. With local courses averaging 7 or 8 on the stimp we now had happy members and guests. However, with another winter fast approaching I knew another challenge was ahead!

Ingelsta is only course in the area that traditionally stays open during the winter. Unless there is snow cover or early white frosts present normal greens are open thanks to a well drained USGA construction. Many courses in Sweden close or use temporary greens. Since the golf boom from 2000 to 2006 a hundred courses were built in Sweden to meet the perceived demand. Then, the worldwide economic slump hit Sweden too.

Recorded golf club memberships dropped 30%. Many courses (like us) ended up with very small memberships and had to rely on green fees and sponsorships. Business was very slow in the summer and we had to up our game in the winter for income.

We wanted to provide the same standard of greens in the winter as we do in the summer to appeal to golfers and bring in business, while at the same time prepare them for the winter. Having heights of cut raised in the winter was not the factor to protect green surfaces, in my view it’s all down to the plant health itself. I was confident our feeding programme would sustain low heights of cut and play on greens throughout the winter.

We applied weekly foliar feeds of Hi K Potassium Nitrate with about 10kg soluble Iron knowing this would provide the plant enough protection and recovery during the winter. Having heights of cut raised in the winter was not the factor to protect green surfaces, in my view it’s all down to the plant health itself. I was confident our feeding programme would sustain low heights of cut and play on greens throughout the winter.

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for snow and timings of procedures are crucial.

We planned to give the greens a spike and apply a preventative fungicide a couple of days before it was forecast to prevent diseases such as Pink snow mould, and hope that perennial ryegrass was present the ground as this acts as extra protection for the plant.

This procedure was carried out in January 2014 when the first snow fell, but fortunately it was only on the ground for three weeks and the greens pulled through well with no signs of disease.

If snow cover was going to exceed the 60 day survival rate, plans were put in place to remove or melt the snow off the greens using natural methods such as covering the snow with leaves we collected in the autumn to cause a radiant effect from the sun melting away the snow down to the grass sward.

Unfortunately, the only two selective Herbicides available, Starane and Tomahawk, carry the same active ingredient (Fluroxpyr) which has a damaging effect on creeping bent grass species.

With our fairways and most of our semi rough and surrounds sown with bent we’ve resorted to cultural methods. Weed control on the streets, open wastelands and parks are restricted no weed invasion onto the course from surrounding areas is uncontrollable. We have to focus on getting a good sward of grass cover in all areas of the course to prevent this.

According to new laws, every golf course here must apply to the local council for a licence to spray. For the licence to be granted we have to inform them of every product we’re planning to spray on the course, the rates of applications, and how many times each product will be applied.

**2014 in summary**

We’ve now focusing on a greens maintenance programme that consists of monthly verticuts of 1.5mm below followed by small but often sand dressings of 5 tonne per hectare, organic granular feeds in spring and mid summer and weekly kiloar feeds of NK, Iron and now primo.

This has led to fast, firm and true putting surfaces and healthy grass. We’ve hit consistent green speeds of 12 throughout the playing season, and to my surprise we’ve had no disease outbreaks. The only fungicide we applied was before snow back in January.

As I write the course is open and only genuine Toro cylinders: we’re now focusing on a greens maintenance programme that consists of monthly verticuts of 1.5mm below followed by small but often sand dressings of 5 tonne per hectare, organic granular feeds in spring and mid summer and weekly kiloar feeds of NK, Iron and now primo.

Thankfully, at the moment, there are five fungicides available in Sweden - Sportak, Amistar, Medalion, Banner Max and Headway.

For other pesticide use Merit Turf is available for insects and Roundup Lion, Banner Max and Headway.

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Join the BMW PGA Championship support team

Now is your chance to apply to join the volunteer BIGGA greenkeeping support team for the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth in May.

**BIGGA has provided a support team for this event for many years and volunteers are again required for all four days of this the flagship event of the European Tour.**

The 2015 tournament is between 21-24 May, and an early morning prep team of 15 volunteers are required for the full week as back up to Kenny Mackay and his team at the prestigious Surrey venue.

A course preparation team of 15 is required 19-24 May. Match raking takes place 21-24 May.

For the first two rounds there are approximately 52 match rakers, and for rounds three and four, 40 are needed.

This is another superb development opportunity on both a professional and personal level, with a fantastic camaraderie developing between the team.

Light clothing and refreshments are provided and a small marquee is provided as a base adjacent to the first fairway on the West Course.

Please note that no accommodation is provided at this event.

To apply, please fill in the application form and return to: Rachael Duffy at BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF by the closing date of Friday 27 March 2015.

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**Please email in a head and shoulders photo to rachael@bigga.co.uk**

**Please make sure you have spoken to your golf club or Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper prior to applying and you are definitely available.**

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**Note**: A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority will be given to the more active members.

We welcome applications from members from all Regions, but priority will be given to members from the South East.

Please ensure that you have spoken to your golf club or Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper prior to applying and you are definitely available.

**To apply please fill in the application form, enclose a passport photograph and send to Rachael Duffy, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF by the closing date of Friday 27 March 2015.**
Durabunker Dives in with ‘The Shark’

Tennessee National Golf Club, a signature Greg Norman Design managed by Troon Golf, recently became the first course in America to undertake a major bunker renovation project in conjunction with UK based company Durabunker Ltd. The former world number one, known as The Great White Shark, said of the course: “I’m very proud, just as Durabunker Director Rhidian Lewis is now equally proud to be associated with the venue.

Durabunker, formerly known as Envirobunker, is a patented bunker construction method that uses recycled synthetic material to build revetted bunker faces and edges, offering significant cost and maintenance savings, a design life of over 20 years and many other benefits over traditional construction methodologies. Phase one of an exciting 32 bunker project was completed in November 2014, using a combined team from Durabunker Ltd and SouthEastern Golf, the contractor of choice for Greg Norman Design.

Andrew McClintock, Course Manager at Tennessee National, said: “This is a first class venue, but the resounding message coming from the members was that our bunkers were letting the golf course down. “We have large revetted bunkers that were in a sorry state and required rebuilding every three years. The labour and maintenance burdens were huge and have actually resulted in many of the bunkers from the original design being filled in.

“It was recently agreed that we would actively look to increase our membership and we realised that to achieve that goal it was imperative to find a solution to the problems we suffered with our bunkers. We wanted to maintain the integrity of the original design, with revetted bunkers being central to the character of the course, but felt it just wasn’t sustainable. We then found the one viable solution to our problems – Durabunker.

“The product has absolutely transformed our bunkers, they look incredible, so natural and totally in keeping with the golf course. Everyone to a man has been blown away by the result achieved through using Durabunker, both the product and the company have performed exceptionally for us. “The company director was on site throughout the first phase of the project, which was re-assuring for us. Durabunker staff were very hands on, leading the construction and shaping work and ensuring quality standards were met by our joint teams. I cannot recommend the product, the staff or the company highly enough.”

Rhidian Lewis, Director at Durabunker added: “We communicated closely with Andrew before we won the contract. We presented a number of options and we worked hard to ensure that we were able to deliver the project within a fairly stringent budget. We recognise this as a crucial part of working with any client, and as such always ensure that we fully understand the requirements of the golf course before recommending the appropriate working model. This can vary from full contractual services to part managed projects and even licence agreements.

“Contrary to many courses in the UK who prefer to carry out renovation work in house, the US market does rely more heavily on contractors to execute projects. “Having input from our own highly experienced team, some of whom have worked with this product since before its introduction to the market in 2011, was important for Tennessee National.

“However we are equally happy to work with clubs who wish to carry out bunker renovation in house, utilising their own staff and expertise.”

Andrew added: “Durabunker has had a dramatic impact on the golf course and the feedback from the membership has been overwhelmingly positive. The financial benefits are also considerable, we will realise a return on investment by the end of year three.

“In the current climate there are few courses immune to financial pressures, Durabunker is a method to build high quality, long lasting bunkers, at a reasonable cost.

“Our maintenance overheads will be dramatically reduced and the product will also have a positive impact on our bottom line – it really is a win win situation!”

ECONOMICAL AND EFFICIENT

A choice of two battery-powered spray machines designed for easy operation and efficient, economical performance. Both machines are ideal for applying liquid fertilisers and treatments to turf and other surfaces.

EvenSprey 300

- 4-wheel machine with 1600mm wide spray boom
- 30 litre tank capacity
- Equipped with a 1600mm double independent spray boom
- Handlebar controls – instantly adjustable spray pressure
- Can be used with full boom or just right hand boom (boom folds away for easy transportation)
- Spray lance for spot treatments
- Back to tank agitation
- Rechargeable 18 amp/hr battery pack
- Pneumatic grass tyres

EvenSprey 250

- Lightweight 3-wheel machine
- 25 litre tank capacity (enough for 500m²)
- Equipped with a 1115mm spray boom
- Handlebar controls
- Shurflo pump
- Rechargeable 7.2 amp/hr battery
- Pneumatic grass tyres
- Optional spray lance

Call 01530 510060 or visit www.vitax.co.uk for more information

2015 Amenity and Sports Turf Product Catalogue NOW AVAILABLE

Vitax Amenity

EvenSprey

Supaturf
Deep in the highlands of Scotland lies Brora Golf Club, a true traditional links course designed by famed golf course architect James Braid. The northernmost of all Braid-designed courses, Brora is brimming with unique charm and personality.

Today, James and his small team are able to contribute in some way to the success that he achieves. He said: “Revolution also improves the conversion of organically bound nitrogen to plant available nitrogen” as research has proven at the University of Wageningen in The Netherlands.

It’s no surprise that Revolution is trusted by so many turf professionals around the world. It’s the only soil surfactant that goes beyond water repellency issues, providing comprehensive water management and plant health as well. Revolution’s patented formulation balances air and water in the soil profile, leading to a better root system and improved soil health. By maximizing the potential of your growing environment, Revolution helps turf function more efficiently and perform at consistently higher levels, even under stress. Try it — and see the benefits for yourself.

According to Graham the appealing ‘true links course like Brora lies in its rustic charm and atmosphere. That aura is matched by the tried and true approach to sustainable turf management embraced by the team. He said: “The unique, patented structure of the Revolution molecule holds a thinner film of available water more completely around the soil particle while allowing excess water to move deeper into the soil. The balanced air to water ratios help to provide a safer, healthier soil environment which provides proven benefits for the plant in the face of abiotic stresses.”

Revolution helps to keep the moisture in his greens remarkably consistent, rain or shine. James, Revolution helps to keep the greens “winter” extremely well, meaning members and visitors enjoy consistent, rain or shine. James and his team do a wonderful job.”

The World’s Leading Soil Surfactant.
Welcome New Northern Members


EAST MIDLAND

I hope all of you enjoyed HTME 2015. Lots going on pre Harrogate, and I’m sure lots to follow from Harrogate. I myself missed the Turkey Trot changed at the last minute to Beedles Lake, thank you to Tim and all the staff there for accommodating us and making a very enjoyable day out. I hope you enjoyed the Mulled wine at half time and did anyone find a golden nugget in their Christmas pudding?

Talking of golden nuggets, I have a voucher to give away to a lucky reader of this section? All you need to do is email me your place of work, contact details and the lucky winner will be selected at random, with an adjudicator at the next section meeting.

RIGHT THEN CALLING ALL EAST MIDLANDS MEMBERS – we have been blessed to have a roster of V Midland section, who is up for it? Who fancies the challenge? Date and venue TBC please either email myself or another committee member!

Results from the December competition: 1 C Weir & M Anderson, 2 G Skinner & R Hartley (BANDITO), 3 J Baker & P French. NP went to M Price, J Dunn and J Baker. Winner is £20 John Lewis Voucher for the giveaway!

Remember to email in any news from the section or planned events to – email gilksmatt@farol.co.uk

Thanks to Sponsors

EAST MIDLAND

Thank you to the sponsors of the Turkey Trot - Biggy Taylor, Countrywide and Jukco.

Welcome New Midland Members

South East

Contact your Section correspondent with news, events or anything else for Around the green...

Events Coming Up

KENT
- 10 March - Royal St. Georges Golf Club
- 14 May - Faversham Golf Club
- 24 September - Walmer and Kingsdown Golf Club
- 26 November - Redditchs Golf Club

Please get your names in early for all events, particularly Royal St. Georges, now as numbers are limited.

LONDON
- 2015 Golf tournaments: Spring and Summer will be at Highgate and Bush Hill Park but we’ve not confirmed which round yet. Xmas tournament will be at Moor Park.

The Big day is at Oakland College Smallford on Tuesday 17 February with 4 great speakers covering the V’s first with by John Ross MG on vibration and noise at work, Second is Steve Chappell on Voluntering and the Ryder Cup, third is the first ever Master Greenkeeper Laurence Pither on Vision, and last but not least STM’s Stella Rixon on Variation changes in GK in the last decade.

2015 Education: We have another short session on Wednesday 25 February which is free and includes refreshments at Mill Hill Golf Club, 12.30 until 2pm. - “Chemicals getting the best performance from them” with John Beck and Mike Williamson of Hiferriff Amenity.

On Wednesday 18 March the well-known Billy McMillan will be talking about and demonstrating the Dry Jet sand injection system at Muswell Hill Golf Club.

SURREY
- Walton Heath GC Regional Dinner March 2015.

South West & Wales

News and photographs wanted

Tony Bremer Treasurer, Ashley Allprese Secretary, Roger Tydeman Regional Representative, Scott Roberts Golf Events, Andy McEvoy Education, Lewis Birch, Ron Christie, Alastair Harris, Sam Bethell and yours truly will represent the section for 2015.

Congratulations to Les who became BIGGA Chairman at BTME 2015, after putting Surrey firmly on the map. We wish Les every success in striving forward and setting new benchmarks in our industry as National Chairman.

Results

SURREY

Guildford GC hosted The Turkey Trot on the same day as the AGM. Results: The Boys 55.5 points 3rd The Dorking Duo, Tony Brenner and Andy Fowler 56.9 points. Longest Drive Les Howkins MG and Nearest Pin Gareth Roberts.

Thanks to Matt and all the team for preparing first class surfaces and all the staff at Guildford GC for a warm welcome and ensuring we all had a great day.

Home Counties Secretaries V Surrey Greenkeepers at The Berkshire. Victory 4 3 1/2 to the Secretaries.

Thanks to Sponsors

SURREY

Thanks to all the trade who have supported us throughout 2014 these include Avoncrop, Ernest Doe, JSM Ltd, WGM, Countrywide, Complete Weed Control, Rigby Taylor, Lister Elder, Symbia, Godfryes, Profusion, Thompson PerfurAllof, Compliant Grounds, Greenman and Big Jim from Grass roots.

Welcome New Member

Dean Winfield, Greenkeeper, Pine Ridge Golf Club.

Events Coming Up

SOUTH WALES

The spring seminar will be held at Royal Porthcawl GC on 5 March, a flyer will be sent out with details of cost and speakers.

SOUTH WEST

A valuable opportunity for certified chainsaw operators to update/refresh refresher training has been organised for March. Dates are yet to be confirmed allowing flexibility in scheduling. Please contact Paul Worster (paulw@mgnew.co.uk) or Stuart Bowman (s.bowman@thornbury.co.uk) for details.

Please keep an eye out for the South West fixtures list to be published shortly. In the meantime here is a summary of the year’s events:

- 16 June - Rigby Taylor Team Challenge at The Players Golf Club
- 22 July - Golf Management Trophy at Minchinhampton Golf Club
- 10 September - Summer Tournament and National Qualifiers at Cliffs and Cliffs Golf Club
- 18 November - Regional Conference at Somerset County Cricket Club
- 15 December - Christmas Tournament at Marbrough Golf Club

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

Welcome New Member

John Munyn, Greenkeeper, Manor House Golf Club at Castle Coombe, Lain Harries, Assistant Greenkeeper, Ferndown Golf Club, Robert Preston, First Assistant, Manor House Golf Club at Castle Coombe.

Welcome New International Members

Paul Willoughby, International Member, Golfcentrum Amsteldijk (Netherlands), Mauritier Thorn, International Member, Golf Club Grand Ducal (Belgium).
Events Coming Up

NORTH
The annual conference on 3 March is fast approaching and hopefully we will have a large turnout from the section. This is also a great opportunity to gain more CPD credits with your attendance.

WEST
I should like to draw your attention to the Scottish Conference to be held once again at Dunfermline on 3 March, some excellent speakers have been booked so I would recommend attending. Cost will be £65 per ticket with lunch included as usual.

SOUTH
Spring outing will be held at Clober Golf Club sometime in May as usual, hopefully not when I’m in Turkey playing golf and The Autumn outing is planned for September as usual with a date still to be set but the venue will be East Renfrewshire Golf Club.

News and photographs wanted

South West of Scotland
Great to catch up with everyone at Harrogate and as ever, a diverse education programme catering to all was on offer - well done to Team BIGGA!

A warm welcome to all of 2015’s committee members – Frank Corrigan (Education Officer), Alan Campbell (Communications Officer), Ryan Bell, Assistant Greenkeeper, Glencorse Golf Club, Daniel Karlsson, Student, SRUC (Elmwood), Bruce Watson (committee member). Anyone with news added or anyone willing to write a short report on his return.

Please send your news and photos in to your section correspondent or Steve Castle (steve.castle@bigga.co.uk) by the 10th of each month

Well done to Ian Smith on receiving the Patrons Award at the recent luncheon at Stirling Golf Club.

A good day was had at the Bernard Grinders demo day hosted by Keith and his team at the Galloway on 4 February. On a sad note, two days into 2015, Ayrshire golf was in mourning on receiving the news of passing of Champions title holder and Greenkeeper Gary Bryden. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and colleagues at Trump Turnberry. Please contact Ian or myself on any new events or upcoming contacts.

North
After all the festivities hopefully everyone is back in full swing getting their courses ready for another golf season.

I hope that all who went to Harrogate enjoyed themselves and came back full of knowledge and with stories to tell.

Congratulations to Bob Mackay and his team on being awarded the new European Tour matchplay event in late July. This is just reward for all the hard work that Bob and his team have done at Murray over the last three years. The course is in superb condition throughout and will be a fitting test of links golf for the top European players.

Our new committee structure is in place with George Mitchell and Neil Sadler now on board and getting involved in all aspects of the north section committee.

As we now have a new committee in place we will endeavour to have more section news available in the magazine.

Central
George Pendrich is leaving his job as Course Manager at Scotscraig GC to explore another avenue in the turf industry. George was a regular participator at Section and Regional events and will be missed.

Meanwhile, at Ladybank GC, congratulations are due to Colin Powrie, who has been promoted and had his title changed to Course Manager from Head Greenkeeper. As a result Dave Gray has risen to Head Greenkeeper and Dave Cooper to Deputy Head Greenkeeper.

Central
Well the weather recently has certainly prevented a few of our members from venturing out, although I did notice 2 past captains playing the other day on frost greens covered in snow carrying full sets of clubs.

May pass on a thanks to my key team for all their efforts last year and hard work in preparing the course, let’s hope we get as good a season and weather as last year, thank you.

And last but not least, I will report on how things went at Harrogate in the March issue, but until then I hope everybody has a good start to the year and keep well.

A point for discussion, what events do the members of the association reading these words wish to be arranged or organised on behalf?

What areas of discussion do you want to talk about, height of cut, growth regulators, different fertilisers, or just about the changing times of the golf industry?

I recently read an article by club managers about the challenges ahead in regard to running club members and it was quite an eye opener. Golf clubs will have to find ways of meeting the needs and demands of the members and greenkeepers are part of that process.

I should probably state my own case but will relate some of my thoughts in the next issue, until then please contact me on the numbers below with your own views.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any events pending, sponsored walks, wedding, or births, you can get in touch by phoning 01419 425554 or 07790 823914, or by email on stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com.

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Paul Hampsey, Course Manager, Trump International Golf Scotland.
Jamie Aitken, Greenskeeper, Archerfield Golf Links.
Paul Murray, Greenskeeper, St Andrews Links Trust.
Daniel Karlsson, Student, SRUC (Elmwood).
Ryan Bell, Assistant Greenskeeper, Glenloch Golf Club.
Ian Whitehorn, First Assistant, Crowborough Beacon Golf Club.

GI Newsletter
The March issue of the GI Newsletter is now online, you can find more details at www.gi.co.uk

Yanmar
Yanmar are now dealers for Ammann, Yanmar and Cormidi plant equipment.

1T - 10T excavators & Diggers
Rollers & Compactors
Tracked Carriers/Dumpers

Visit our website to see our regularly updated used machinery listings at www.farol.co.uk/groundcare

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The old saying, “mighty oaks from little acorns grow” or “great things may come from small beginnings” could easily be used within the world of greenkeeping.

So many of today’s top Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers began their illustrious careers as youngsters often with an interest in golf or just preferring to work outdoors. There are many fine examples of individuals who have become greenkeeping ‘legends’ starting off as poorly paid apprentices. But their appetite to learn new skills and pick up knowledge at every opportunity has seen them become icons for others to aspire to.

Over the years when I met individuals new to greenkeeping and asked them their personal goals, they often reply, “I would like to be a Course Manager at St Andrews or another very prestigious course”. The Home of Golf and many other high profile golf courses have been maintained and managed by leg-fins of greenkeeping. The one thing they all have in common is their commitment to their own and their team’s education and training.

Apprentices and apprenticeships have been the very foundation that greenkeeping and golf course management have been built on over many years.

The delivery of knowledge has also changed whether it is as part of the apprenticeship programme, a HND or Degree. Over the years many people have contributed to developing a range of work based and college based specific qualifications which are now available through full or part time attendance at college, online, Distance Learning or in the workplace.

To ensure the apprenticeship and all qualifications and education and training courses are fit for purpose, the GTC has received receipt support from all.

This has become apparent with the Government inviting all industries to become Trailblazer organisations. We submitted an application to ensure our sector could have an influence on policy and the Standards for Greenkeeping.

In February 2014, the GTC were approved as a Trailblazer Organisation and the last 12 months has seen them involved in Downing Street receptions as well as being involved in two reforms with other employer led organisations, many of whom are large employers better known as “blue chip companies”.

This status has positioned the GTC in the driving seat to design apprenticeships to ensure they include the skills and knowledge required for the future greenkeeping workforce.

The GTC immediately called on golf club employers, large and small, greenkeepers, representatives from the Quality Assured Centres and Awarding Bodies such as City & Guilds to help shape the new apprenticeship Standards.

BIGGA and England Golf have both been major supporters of the Trailblazer project and David Crostan, Proprietor of Cold Ashby Golf Club became the Chairman of a GTC Apprenticeship Reform Group. A Technical Working Group was also established with representatives from BIGGA, including Les Howkins MG, the new Association Chairman, and turf tutors who were charged with working to new Guidance to write new Standards for the professions within Greenkeeping and Golf Course Management.

The current apprenticeship Frameworks have been successful but the Trailblazer project is an opportunity to not only review the current content of the apprenticeship but reform them in accordance with the new Guidance. The Guidance is continually being updated, but as a Trailblazer you expect this as there is much to test and trial along the reform journey.

You might ask why did the GTC not wait until other industries had worked through the reform process, it might have been an easier process. But the GTC might ‘kick all the boxes’ to become a Trailblazer, I remembered the days in the sixties when I started life as an Apprentice Greenkeeper and there were no formal courses, only a week at Bingley at the end of three years working on a golf course.

The development of greenkeepers relied heavily the commitment of Head Greenkeepers, and any education seminars arranged by the then Associations, BIGGA, SIGGA and EIGGA. The volunteers giving their time to the Associations today would be called Trailblazers and we shouldn’t forget their work.

During the late sixties and seventies training courses were developed by Agriculture and Horticulture Colleges, starting in Scotland and spreading across the UK. It took years for Greenkeeping to be identified as a specialist sector and receive due recognition by Awarding Bodies such as City & Guilds and SIGGA.

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Next month David explains how the GTC worked through the reform process. In suggesting the GTC might well be looking to test industries attempting to develop National Occupational Standards for their sector.
ARTIFICIAL GRASS PATHWAYS

Verde Sports Limited provide some top tips...

1. Muddy Paths Put Players off
   A lot of work is carried out throughout the year to ensure that the course is in tip-top condition. However, the golfer still has to get both to the course and back to the clubhouse. Cheap, quick fixes for these paths are often used. In the long run however, they are not cost effective and players are put off on many occasions. Would you want to walk across a muddy path?

2. Cost Effective Solution
   Artificial Grass may appear expensive at the outset, but there is minimal maintenance required and it should last up to 20 years once installed. The green staff now have more time to concentrate on the course. All in all saving long term costs.

3. Easy Installation
   Artificial Grass is easy to install and can be carried out by the green staff themselves. As long as a free draining base is provided, the artificial grass can simply be laid directly over the compacted sub-base. Both sand-filled and non-sand filled options are available to suit different areas of the course. If installed correctly, this will remain in place for years to come. The installation is very similar to that of natural turf.

4. Versatile & Hardwearing
   A properly installed artificial grass pathway is substantial enough for the golf course machinery to drive over - the same path can be used for tractors, mowers, buggies, trolleys, golfers and the greenkeepers.

5. Sound Resistant
   One of the benefits of artificial grass is that it provides a surface, which is silent and comfortable to walk on, allowing the golfer to concentrate on their shot without the distraction of a noisy path.

6. Natural Appearance
   The attractive green surface of the artificial grass blends well in to the course surroundings. This enhances a wide variety of areas that look and feel like natural grass without the associated wear or maintenance problems.

7. Polypropylene Surface
   Verde are the only company that offer polypropylene pathway surfaces. These proven products are non-slip, long lasting, durable and hardwearing, and have been supplied to the golf market for over 25 years. Other companies offer polyethylene equivalents, which are softer and slipper.

Not only does it withstand this constant traffic but it also is suitable for playing from if a ball lands on the path.

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Seasonal Assistant Greenkeepers

We are currently looking for experienced Assistant Greenkeepers for the upcoming summer season in Norway. The contract length will be between 6-7 months from April onwards. Milland Golf is a fully-regulated course in Norway's scenic north. The location of the 18-hole course is magnificent, with views down to the sea from the international airport (Gardermoen). Designed by Robert Trent Jones, the course is a 9-hole par 3 and is described in the local published course guides.

The seasonal staff will be asked to work within a team, of which they play a key role responsibility, to maintain the course to the highest possible standard at all times. We are looking for people who understand a tight quality and responsibility role.

The current seasonal role should involve:

• Experience working on a golf course (3 years minimum)
• A qualification in Greenkeeping (NVQ 2 or SVQ 2 is currently in process)
• Experience using machinery
• Experience with courses work / Tournament preparation
• Experience with machinery and course set-up

To apply for the position send an email with a covering letter and current CV along with 2 references to: Chris Barnard, Links Superintendent, chris.barnard@royalcinqueports.com

Closing date for applications: 28th February 2015

HARBOURNE GOLF CLUB

Experience Qualifed / Near Qualified Greenkeeper

Seasonal for 2013, Harborne Golf Club is a 10 hole City Golf Club situated in Birmingham. We are currently looking for an experienced, qualified or near qualified greenkeeper to join us on a two year fixed contract. The ideal candidate will be in a role where they will be expected to work on the highest standard and possess the following:

• NVQ Level 2 in Amenity Turf
• NVQ Level 2 in Spraying
• Knowledge of irrigation and machinery
• Possess a full driving licence

The successful candidate will be expected to:

• Work in a small team and have a willingness to learn new skills as and when necessary

To apply for this position please email a covering letter and current CV along with 2 referees to: Mrs Paula King, Club Secretary, Walmley Golf Club, Walmley, Birmingham, B70 7JE

Email: secret@clandonregis-golfclub.co.uk

Clandon Regis Golf Club, Epsom Road, West Clandon, Surrey GU4 7TT

Email: office@clandonregis-golfclub.co.uk

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

A hardworking and reliable person required qualified to NVQ Level 2 and holding PA1/PA6 spraying certificates is desirable.

Applications in writing with full C.V. to: Paul Napier - General Manager, 01483 224888.

Closing Date: 28th February 2015

THETFORD GOLF CLUB

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

The Thetford Golf Club is a private member golf club, whose membership has increased considerably in recent years. The course is situated in the small market town of Thetford, 12 miles from the East Anglian capital of Norwich and 10 miles from the Norfolk coast. The course is predominantly links in character and has been designed to one of the highest standards possible, both visually and in terms of playing quality.

We are currently recruiting for an Assistant Greenkeeper position. The successful candidate will be working in a hard working and dedicated team and have an understanding of the responsibilities that this role requires. Due to the nature of the job, a full driving licence will be required.

To apply for this position please email a covering letter and current CV along with 2 referees to: Mr. Paul Gould, Course Manager, Thetford Golf Club, Brandon Road, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1NE or email: paul.gould@thetfordgolfclub.co.uk

Closing Date 28th February 2015

Lindrick Club

Due to retirement Lindrick Golf Club is seeking applications for the post of Course Manager

For further details and information contact Mrs Paula King, Club Secretary, Lindrick Golf Club, Deep Carrs Lane, South Yorkshire, S81 8BH. Tel: 01909 475282 e-mail: paulasking@lindrickgolfclub.co.uk

Woldingham Golf Club

Advert for a qualified Greenkeeper

Woldingham Golf Club is a private members Club located within the heart of Surrey. Working the Oldest heathland course in Surrey and one of the finest in the UK. We are currently looking for a suitably qualified Greenkeeper to join our existing team of 30 staff. We have a reputation for having one of the best maintained courses in the country and are looking for someone who has the same drive and commitment to providing a high quality service.

To apply for this position please email a covering letter and current CV along with 2 referees to: Ms Joy Smith, Assistant Secretary, Woldingham Golf Club, Pond Road, Woldingham, Surrey, RH6 1JZ

Closing Date: 28th February 2015

Wentworth Club

Seasonal Assistant Greenkeepers

We are currently recruiting for Seasonal Assistant Greenkeepers to work on one of three championship standard 18 hole golf courses. Working within a team you will be expected to work as part of a small team and be part of the maintenance team that provides a high level of service throughout the summer. In addition, you will also be expected to undertake marketing and teaching duties in the Golf shop.

These positions are an excellent opportunity for anyone looking to gain further experience in the Greenkeeping industry and a successful candidate will have:

• A qualification in Greenkeeping (NVQ 2 or SVQ 2)
• An understanding of what quality and responsibility mean

For further details please contact: Nigel Timms on 01932 580355 or by email at nigel.timms@wentworthclub.com

Supagrass Lawn Treatment Business Franchise for Sale

Supagrass Thames Valley is an established Supagrass Lawn Treatment Business Franchise that provides a range of all year round services to both residential customers in Berkshire and South East London. These services include a minimum of 4 visits a year to each customer, to improve the quality of their lawns, including but not limited to Overseeding, Overseeding, Fertilising and Weed Control.

We are currently recruiting for experienced Assistant Greenkeepers to support us throughout the year in terms of our service to both residential customers in Berkshire and South East London.

For more information regarding careers at Wentworth Club please visit our website at www.wentworthclub.com/clubs/careers/
Our favourite tweets this month...

@BIGGALtd

@sportsmetals
Awesome #BTME15 thanks @BIGGALtd and all that visited. Nearly had chance to take a pic

@GCMAUK
Thanks to everyone @BIGGALtd for a great week at #BTME2015!

@Horticap
Another brilliant time down at @BIGGALtd exhibition. Everyone was really lovely to our students

@KarolProGrasS
The joint trip to Harrogate @BIGGALtd with customers. Great trip. Great place and people. See you next time #ProGrasS

@CentenaryHGK
Great job by the @BIGGALtd team putting together another amazing BTME great education networking and socialising as always #proudofyouall

@TheFlaxby_GCC
Great day at @BTME15 thanks to @BIGGALtd for their help. The lads together for one of the last times as team Flaxby

@golfindustria
Sir, #BTME2015 is over, great job done by @BIGGALtd team so see you at Harrogate next year #BTME2016!

@CradocGreens
A great couple of days @BIGGALtd BTME. Some great seminars and some interesting products made for another fantastic show.

Take Control of Premium Cut Quality

Our NEW generation of Fairway Mowers redefine cut quality and combine it with uncompromising productivity. Take advantage of our latest innovations like eHydro operation, TechControl management and SpeedLink cutting unit adjustment. Achieve the cut quality your course desires with the NEW A Series.

*The finance offer is available for Golf & Bowls clubs in the UK only. The offer includes all golf & turf equipment, commercial mowing, utility vehicles and JD attachments. Offer is available until 28th February 2015. Finance is limited to 60% of retail value. Rates/payments may vary to reflect changes in tax and cost of funds. VAT where applicable. An administration fee will be charged. We may withdraw this offer at any time. Finance is subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. For further information contact your local John Deere dealer.
The Toro® greens package

Perfect Machines for Perfect Greens

Only Toro has the full package of turf equipment to make your greens look and play like the best.

When it comes to producing greens that everyone wants to play, Toro is just perfect. And now, with the fantastic new GreensPro 1240 dedicated greens roller, Toro is the only manufacturer with the full greens’ maintenance equipment package. It means that, for every job – from cutting, rolling and aerating to top dressing and spraying – there’s a quality Toro machine to help you produce the perfect green.

Full details at www.toro.com
For a free onsite demonstration, call Lely on 01480 226800

Lely. Your partners in turfcare. Call 01480 226800.
Lely not only brings you Toro. Talk to us, too, about TYM compact tractors and Otterbine water management systems.