



GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Augusta **Syndrome**

Winning the battle against golfer expectations

FEATURED INSIDE



ALSO THIS MONTH:

BIGGA Delegation to Golf Industry Show | Managing Expectations
Stoke Park | Topdressing | Aeration | Strathtyrum

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WELCOME



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

I love the Masters. I can just about remember Jack Nicklaus's incredible win in 1986, when at the age of 46 he tore through the iconic back nine in just 30 strokes to become the oldest winner of the title.

Sadly, as I approach the same age Nicklaus was, my golf seems to just get worse! I reckon I've watched every Masters since; there is something special about knowing every hole, shot and putt off by heart and the event seems to always produce drama.

The tournament has always marked the start of the golf season for millions of golfers. And therein lies the rub; golfers all over the land watch the superfast and perfect greens, see the verdant fairways and the magnificent flowers and shrubs that frame the action and get themselves revved up to go and play for the first time in the year.

Of course the majority of our courses are still miles away from peak condition at this time so we suffer by comparison - Augusta Syndrome.

In this edition we take a really good look at this topic and hopefully provoke some thoughts from you on the issue of meeting golfers expectations, especially early in the season.

While Peter Jones argues in these pages that expectations can be met, I do believe we have some work to do in managing the expectations in the first place. I hear regularly that 'BIGGA should be educating golfers', on all manner of issues. With 4 million people in the UK playing the game regularly that is a lot of education, particularly when you consider the breadth of what we need to tell them – appreciation of greenkeeping and greenkeepers, course etiquette, appropriate green speeds etc etc, the list goes on. Well, this is something we're focused on, but we don't have a magic wand. We are heavily engaged in a number of areas, not least working closely with the sport's governing bodies. Later this month we will once again gather in St Andrews with all the major associations and organisations in the sport. The challenges facing you, our members, are firmly on the agenda.

Elsewhere in this edition you will read about the excellent BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show sponsored by Bernhard & Company. As ever the 10 delegates were a credit to UK greenkeeping, BIGGA, their clubs and themselves, and I know it was a career defining opportunity for all of them. While in the USA our president, Sid Arrowsmith MG, had an opportunity to present a Master Greenkeeper award to one of our latest recipients, Erin Stevens from Emerald Dunes. The presentation took place in front of several hundred course superintendents and I'm delighted to report that Sid dealt with the situation impeccably; his presentation was superb and he did us proud. The GIS presents us with a fantastic opportunity to interact with dozens of our key supporters, particularly those that exhibit at BTME. I'm pleased to report that next year's show in Harrogate is filling up fast, it already looks like being a complete sell out and the BIGGA team is focused on ensuring that next year's BTME is better than ever.

Cover photo: photogolfer / Shutterstock, Inc.

WELCOME



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FROM THE EDITOR

Is Augusta Syndrome done?



An overview of this month's edition of Greenkeeper International, with your editor, Karl Hansell

You may think the March issue is a little early to start talking about Augusta Syndrome, but quirks of magazine deadlines mean this is our last opportunity to help you prepare, so when that member - you know the one - approaches and asks why the course doesn't match what he saw at Augusta, you'll have the answers.

There's a quote from Peter Alliss who, well aware of the unreasonable expectations of early-season golfers, once said: "For people to think that their own courses should be like Augusta is like dreaming of living in Buckingham Palace. It is completely unobtainable."

But maybe, just maybe, we're getting to the point where we can use the education we have gained and the tools at our disposal to have our courses firing on full cylinders by the time the US Masters is gracing our screens.

I asked Peter Jones to put together a piece on how BIGGA members can manage the expectations of their members, and he surprised me when he came back with a piece suggesting that, with the right amount of planning and a realistic understanding of what can be achieved over the winter period, courses can actually be golf ready by 1st March. It's a great read and I'm sure you'll take something from it.

Some courses must deal with the pressures of Augusta Syndrome more than others. Stoke Park, due to its close links with Bobby Jones' club, is one of those. And so I sat down for a chat with Course Manager Alex Millar to discover how a close attention to detail is helping to elevate the course to new heights.

With no more complaints as to why the course doesn't look like that which we see at Augusta National, perhaps we can finally reply to our club golfers with, 'How come your golf isn't as good as what I saw at the Masters?' Wouldn't that be something.

Elsewhere, the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show was once again a tremendous success. Sponsored by BIGGA Education Partner Bernhard & Company, the members who were selected once again did us all proud with their exemplary conduct throughout the trip.

When undertaking a once-in-a-lifetime trip such as this, anyone would get excited, and it's important to balance enjoying the experience with representing yourself and your association in a professional manner. I'm delighted to say the guys did just that, and it's testament to each of them that when I asked if they could say a few words,

I received enough information to fill the magazine a few times over.

This month we're delighted to launch some other initiatives that I can't urge you enough to be a part of. We're announcing the Open Support Team for 2017, but if you fancy taking part in coming years, have a word with some of the successful guys and ask what it takes to win a place.

There's also the launch of the nomination period for the Toro Student Greenkeeper Awards. If you are a talented student, or you know someone who is, take the time to apply. You've nothing to lose and, possibly, everything to gain.

IN THIS ISSUE

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

28 Paul Morris

Paul is managing director at GBR Technology. He has a degree in Chemistry from Oxford University and an MBA through the Open University. He has 11 years of product development experience and seven years' sales experience, before he started at GBR Technology eight years ago.



30 Peter Jones

Having previously been a course manager in his own right, Peter formed his golf course consultancy business in the mid 90s. He is on the RIPTA register of independent consultant agronomists and has worked with a wide range of clubs, each with a variety of budgets, staff numbers and expectations from golfers.



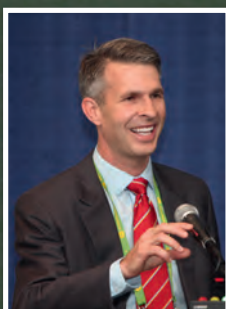
36 Alex Millar

From James Bond to Bridget Jones, Stoke Park has featured on British film for years. But this month we're more interested in the club's links to Augusta National via its course designer. In this feature, course manager Alex discusses how attention to detail is vital as the club seeks to live up to expectations.



40 Doug Karcher

Doug is a professor within the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas. In this role he initiated a turfgrass research programme which looks at ways to improve the functional and aesthetic quality of turfgrass through the refinement of cultural practices. He explained how new grass species have changed top dressing methods.



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What did BIGGA's delegates get up to when they visited the Golf Industry Show?

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Peter Jones gives some advice to help you make Augusta Syndrome a thing of the past

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ACROSS THE BOARD

ACROSS THE BOARD



Rob Welford

Board member

I sit here penning this column, during what has been an unusually mild few days for late February, feeling quite tired but excited about the fact spring is hopefully just around the corner.

The tiredness is because here at Waltham Windmill we have just completed an additional early aeration programme to our greens, and we have been running one staff member light since last October, which puts additional stresses and strains on my small team considering an ambitious winter work schedule – my fault once again!

The excitement stems from the fact I have just filled our vacant position with an experienced qualified greenkeeper. There is also the prospect of sectional and regional educational opportunities on the back of a vibrant BTME to fulfil my quest for greater knowledge and ideas. Oh, and the fact we only have two more projects to finish before the end of March, or maybe April!

One thing I have already mentioned earlier was the dreaded word, stress. But what counts as stress? Stress is defined as the 'human body's natural response to any change in the environment that requires an action, reaction, or adjustment to what's normal'.

In recent years it has become apparent to the Board of Directors that stress is becoming more widespread within the greenkeeping industry. Stress has always been there and how much it has increased is difficult to verify, but in our age of social media and increased communication, awareness is greater than ever.

This is a subject that I have personal experience with. Now I have met some people who just don't seem to suffer from even the smallest amount of stress – our chairman Les Howkins claims to be one of them! Although it may not look like it to people on the outside, I do though and have done so for many years. I'm now not afraid to admit it but my personal experience with stress led me to suffer depression which required professional help, and I thank my wife for pushing me to gain this. There is no cure as such, but I have developed techniques to overcome the daily stresses of my life.

The question we asked ourselves as a board and staff was, as a member's association what can we do to help our members who are suffering from stress? From this question came others such as: what do we already do? What are the causes of stress in our industry? It was decided that a significant piece of work was required to answer our questions and we enlisted experts to help us in trying to formulate a plan of action.

Our first step was to hold a pilot 'Stress & Wellbeing' workshop, to which we invited a group of around 25 greenkeepers. It was shocking to see that most of them had suffered with work-related stress to some degree, however small, at some point in their career. The causes were varied and included staff, weather, personal expectations, unrealistic expectations from others such as members, committees and owners, and general change. However, it was clear that the stigma associated with admitting you're suffering is a big hurdle in our male-dominated industry. There is also the question of, who do I go to?

So, who can you go to? We offer the Lifestyle Counselling Helpline as part of your membership package. Friends and family can provide a support network, as can fellow greenkeepers who know first-hand the stresses within the industry. Our team of Regional Administrators can point you in the right direction or provide a listening ear. Finally, there are professional and healthcare bodies too.

Our aim is to roll out these workshops across the UK to give members the tools to understand where stress comes from and strategies with which to deal with it.

We will continue to work with governing bodies, such as England and Scottish Golf, the R&A and our industry partners the GCMA and UKGCOA, to make them aware of the stresses involved in our job and to help alleviate them at source. We will use them to help educate the golfer and manage their expectations so they are in line with the resources they have available.

However, you can also help yourself before it becomes too much. Pick up the phone – like BT said, "It's good to talk".



A completed winter project at Waltham Windmill

Funding your future

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



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG ■ Chris Lomas MG ■ Andrew Campbell MG CGCS
Richard McGlynn ■ Jaey Goodchild ■ Frank Newberry ■ Greg Evans MG

Open Support Team



NEWSDESK

B IGGA has unveiled the line-up of members who will be heading to Royal Birkdale as part of the Open Support Team.

Members who gain a place on the team are given unprecedented access to the world's greatest golf event, with a greenkeeper on hand to assist every single match that will take place throughout the championship.

Each year the R&A requests BIGGA's assistance with hosting the championship, meaning members have witnessed some of the greatest duels in golf first hand, including Henrik Stenson overcoming Phil Mickelson at Royal Troon in 2016.

Greenkeeper Rob Patrick of Stoneham was assigned to that famous final battle, and with

neither player going in a single bunker during the round, it meant he got to enjoy a money-can't-buy view as the round unfolded before him.

He said: "Being on the support team gave me a front row seat and going down the 18th gave me goosebumps. Surrounded by the grandstands, it was like an arena and I am never going to feel that excitement again."

The 146th Open will be held at Royal Birkdale, marking the 10th time the Claret Jug will have been contested at the Southport course.

BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton said: "Each year we are able to reward some of our most hard-working members with the opportunity to get a front row seat at the Open. It is a long week, and our team work extremely hard, but the rewards are incredible. Many

of them go on to describe their time on the support team as one of the highlights of their careers. Thanks must go to the R&A for once again putting their faith in our talented members, who I am sure will give their all to make sure the 146th Open is once again a huge success."

The BIGGA Support Team will be provided with food, accommodation, refreshments and uniform for the event.

Arriving at Royal Birkdale, the team will be required to rake for the players during the tournament itself, and may also need to help with early morning preparation work and evening divot duties until the Claret Jug is lifted.

Thank you to everyone who applied to be a part of this year's team.



Anthony McGeough Richmond	Andy Unwin Birley Wood
Billy Merritt Beacon Park	Asa English Rothley Park
Jamie Martin Gifford	Graham Ives Louth
Steve Hemsley Bolton Old Links	David Taylor Mendip Spring
Richard Holmes Crosland Heath	Adrian Kitchinson Lincoln
Richard Saunders Mowsbury	Simon Rothwell Whitwood
Kevan Glass Brokenhurst Manor	Andy Naismith Worthing
Ben Scrivener Abridge	Wes Lenihan Ealing
Jon McMullen Lee Park	Russell Carr Golf at Goodwood
Tom Smith Wickham Park	Stuart Tait Renaissance
Chloe Gallagher Ramside Hall	David Springham The Burstead
Matthew Gallagher Royal Mid Surrey	Mitchell Jordan Lingdale
Bill Whybrow Garon Park	Tom Freeman Kingsdown
Oliver Kirk Newmarket Links	Paul Gater Caldy
Ben Williams Maesdu (Llandudno)	Steven Carmichael Dumfries & Galloway
Joe Frampton Sunningdale	Stephen Dale Withernsea
Seamus Gaughan Megros, Switzerland	Daniel Evans Maesdu (Llandudno)
Tim Leat Rich River, Australia	Tom Pattison Blyth
Sean Sullivan The Briarwood, USA	Richard Ponsford The Bristol
Sean Brocklehurst Harpenden Common	Dale Housden Hollywood
Michael Burgin Normanby Hall	Marcus Tolmie Longridge
Matt James Cumberwell Park	Shaun Cunningham Mortonhall
	Ken Ward Harrogate
	Tom Wright Long Ashton
	Craig Hempseed Mortonhall



DOGS ON COURSE



Name: Sam

Owner: Kevin Weller

Course: Lingfield Park

Breed: Collie

Favourite treat:

Sausages or ham

Favourite spot on the course:

Going through the woods

Naughtiest moment:

Sam is naughty and every time you start the vehicle up as he likes to nip at the back wheel. My team have also learnt to be careful when starting a back pack blower up as he likes to make a flying lunge at the nozzle, mouth wide open, to take a bite.

My dog is happiest when...

he is running around the course, either behind or leading the utility vehicles.

If you know a dog we should feature, email karl@bigga.co.uk



Sustainability questionnaire

BIGGA members are being asked to take part in a questionnaire that will help form the basis for a Golf Sustainability Project.

Golf courses in the UK cover an area equivalent to the Lake District National Park. Unmanaged areas, which provide habitat for wildlife and wildflowers, are estimated to cover more than 1,000 square kilometres.

The idea of a Golf Sustainability project has been developed following extensive discussions between various industry and educational bodies.

Sustainability Executive James Hutchinson said: "BIGGA is delighted to be working closely with Environmental Solutions International Ltd and the Golf Sustainability Project. We look forward to assisting the golf industry become more sustainable and as a consequence be heard by the Parliamentary decision makers.

A short survey has been designed, which will gather information on the natural environment and resource consumption.

Scan the QR code to take part.



THIS MONTH @BIGGALtd



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Well done
@DundonaldLinks
GCM Ian & Mahe!!
Wellbeck Club Champs
@BIGGALtd
@bigga_sws



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@BIGGALtd
@BIGGAEastAnglia
nothing like a bit of
hand mowing this
morning to blow
away the cobwebs
🌈 #rainbow
#thealdburghway



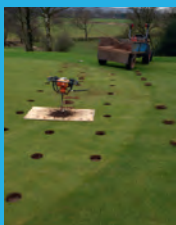
@Babertonreport
Solid tining greens
this week with 9mm
diameter tines
to a depth of 100
#greenkeeping
@BabertonGC
@BIGGALtd



@INTTurfCO
What a great bunch of
guys. Now back to the
UK. They represented
@BernhardGrinder
@BIGGALtd and our
industry superbly



@Tracey_Maddison
Great week with these
guys #BBD2017 at
#GIS17 thanks to
@BernhardGrinder
& @BIGGALtd
for providing this
amazing opportunity
#onceinalifetime



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normal drill and fill
method, but one
that should work for
us @AvroGolfClub
5th green, breaking
through a clay layer



@robreeves042000
3rd bunker
#beaconsfieldGC
ready for base to be
sprayed and sand. All
shaping and work done
#InHouse @BIGGALtd

Toro Student Greenkeeper awards 2017



Dan Waring and Jimmy Heritage won in 2016

The prestigious Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards are returning for 2017 and now is your chance to get involved with this career-defining opportunity.

Last year Jimmy Heritage, of Maylands, joined the list of talented greenkeepers who have secured the highly coveted Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award, which is now in its 29th year.

"Winning the award was the culmination of three years' hard work," said Jimmy, 25. "Greenkeeping has become such a passion for me and it's fantastic that we work in an industry where those who work hard are dedicated and rewarded for their successes.

"I hope there are many more highlights to come in my career, but winning Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner was certainly a great way to start. I would encourage anyone else who is thinking about entering to get involved - you won't regret it."

The prize for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner is an incredible

six-week scholarship which sees them travel to the University of Massachusetts to study turf management and also includes a trip to the Golf Industry Show and a visit to the Toro Factory.

20-year-old Dan Waring, of Ashbourne, also celebrated after becoming the first winner of the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year award.

Reesink Turfcare is the UK distributor of Toro machinery and Managing Director David Cole said: "Last year we introduced a Young category to the awards and this opened up a window of opportunity to a new audience, while also re-energising the competition format. Plus, we have been able to make the entrant's tutor and club more involved, so everyone's a winner."

The winner of the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year award receives a two-week work placement at the exclusive Vidauban Golf Club in France, plus a trip to Continue to Learn at BTME.

Major prizes are also available for the awards runners-up and those who nominate the students.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award is available to all greenkeeping students studying for eligible qualifications, while the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper award is specifically for greenkeeping students aged 20 years and under.

Head to the BIGGA website for more information, including the full list of entry criteria and an application form. Alternatively, scan the QR code above.



YOUNG GREENKEEPERS' COMMITTEE

Representing the youth of the sports turf management industry

The Young Greenkeepers' Committee page is a fairly recent addition to Greenkeeper International, and we wanted to give you an introduction to some of the guys who form the group.

They come from all over the country and from a wide variety of backgrounds.

But all are ambitious and work hard, not just to further their own careers, but also the education available to the next generation of greenkeepers.

If, when reading this piece, you would like to get involved with the Young Greenkeepers Committee, then please get in touch.



My name is Charlie Simper, I'm 26 years old and I work as an assistant greenkeeper at Hadley Wood in Hertfordshire.

I started greenkeeping after developing an interest when playing golf at a club close to home in Middlesex.

I was keen to join the YGC and represent the South-East Region to network with other ambitious greenkeepers and provide support for the younger members of the association where I can.

I want to help the committee build the confidence of the younger generation while gaining valuable experience along the way.



I'm Ben Williams, deputy head greenkeeper at Maesdu (Llandudno) and I was recently nominated to join the YGC.

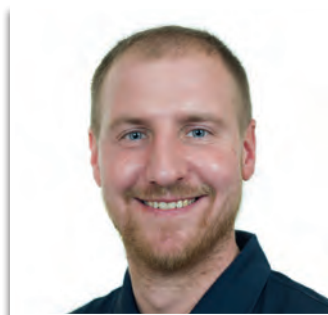
I completed my apprenticeship at North Wales GC before spending a year in the USA on the Ohio State Program. After my year in the USA I completed summer seasons at Celtic Manor and New South Wales Golf Club in Sydney before returning home to North Wales. I'm studying towards my FDSC Sportsturf qualification with Myerscough College and I was lucky enough to receive a Jacobsen higher education scholarship. I'm looking forward to representing the youth of the greenkeeping industry going forwards.



I'm Jimmy Heritage. I'm in my fourth year in the industry and I work at Maylands in Essex.

At the time of writing, I'm in the USA visiting Toro HQ after graduating from the University of Massachusetts' Winter Turf School with Highest Honours - all of which has been part of the prize for winning the 2016 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year award.

I was pleased to be chosen for the YGC as I'm a huge advocate of education and am hoping to use the experience of the intensive study at UMass to share ideas about narrowing the gap between apprenticeships schemes in the UK and the education programmes of the States.



Hi, I'm Stuart Tait, head greenkeeper at Renaissance Club in East Lothian.

I started in this fantastic industry as an apprentice at Gullane. I then moved on to an assistant role at Renaissance Club, working my way up to head greenkeeper, with a year as course manager at Alnwick Castle in between. Away from work I have an amazing wife and young daughter.

I am delighted to be part of the YGC and find the other lads welcoming and inspiring. We as the YGC have a lot to offer for young greenkeepers trying to improve themselves personally and professionally and are always happy to answer any questions.

GI AROUND THE GLOBE



Name: Jordan Fairweather
Position: Group director of golf
Golf Course: Tron Golf, Els Club Malaysia

What is the most unusual or interesting thing you would tell other BIGGA members about Malaysia?

Can I say everything? People's perception of life, their job and life's priorities are different from the British mindset. Working abroad opens up your mind and allows you greater appreciation for different customs and cultures.

How would you describe the style of course that you manage and what are its most defining features?

Malaysia has an equatorial rainforest climate so we are growing Bermuda and Zoysia. I manage 72 holes over three sites. One course is a parkland style with three loops of nine, including a par 3 along the South China Sea. One course is in a rainforest so we have no bunkers and use the natural features. This was voted Asia's best new golf course in 2015.

How does greenkeeping in Malaysia vary from the UK?

Firstly there is no down time, no slow season. It is a 365-day intense agronomy program where you are trying to prepare the turf the best you can for the next rain season, but keep course conditioning 5-star every day. Weather is all or nothing – there can be no rain for 20 days, then 50+mm in an hour, which can cause flooding. The team is new to greenkeeping and has little concept of a golf course. Disease and insect pressure is very high due to the climate.



Courses in Asia rely on fungicide and insecticides significantly more than European clubs.

What is the best part of living in Malaysia?

Experiencing a new region, exploring and learning new customs and cultures. Having the weather to be able to go for a swim everyday!

What is the worst?

It can be tough for your family when they are so far from home with a large time difference and miss home comforts. You have to find a good work to life balance.

How does the weather affect your work?

Our whole program is dictated by the monsoon rains. We do not have the traditional four seasons found in Europe, but a dry season and wet season. Temperature is a steady 28-31 degrees celsius all year around, but it is the monsoon rains where we get around 50mm rain in 45-60 minutes that really affect us. These temperatures, coupled with humidity and the rain makes it challenging to keep surfaces dry.

What types of wildlife do you get on the course that you wouldn't in the UK?

Monitor lizards, otters, dusky leaf monkeys, common long-tailed macaques, horn bills, wild boar. On occasions a python or cobra can be spotted.

What is your club management structure like?

I work for the largest golf management company in the world, Tron Golf. We are the operator of The Els Club Malaysia for our client, who in this case is the strategic investment arm of the Malaysian government, tasked with developing hospitality and attraction destinations.

What is the public perception of golf in Malaysia?

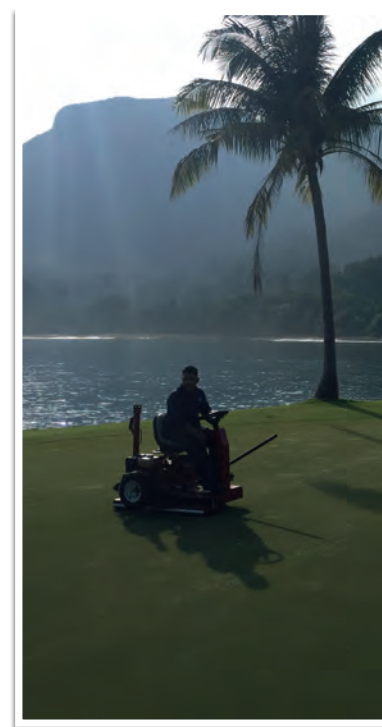
Golf has been around in Malaysia for a long time and 20 years ago golf was seen as an elitist sport. But that has changed a lot as it has been made more affordable. The Ministry of Sport encourages golf as they see the tourist opportunities they can gain as a country.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

I choose to continue to be a BIGGA member to keep up to date with industry news back in the UK and Europe, to continue to learn and benefit from the services BIGGA offer as one of the industry leaders back in the UK, and to support the association I first joined as an apprentice greenkeeper.

What one tip would you give to British greenkeepers that you have learnt in Malaysia?

Don't get complacent with your practices, methods or materials. Continue to look outside that box, outside the field you work in. Working abroad we do not always have the luxuries the European and US markets have and have to adapt to find a solution and to continue to drive course conditioning forward.



GI Ecology

By James
Hutchinson
BIGGA's
Sustainability
Executive



The 'Eco Pod' at BTME proved to be a success, with many of you squeezing in to say hi or to tell us about the wildlife stuff going on at your place of work.

It's obvious that environmental matters are high on the list of the modern greenkeeper, with many questions being aimed our way. Both Tom Jacques and Steve Thompson performed admirably on the stand - many thanks for your help gents.

Recently, BIGGA was involved in a meeting with England Golf, Golf Union Wales, Scottish Golf and the Golf Environment Organisation. Sustainable strategy was high on the list, with all agreeing that more accessible advice is required to our respective members. Watch this space for further details.

Meanwhile, BIGGA is working closely with Tony Hanson of Environmental Solutions International and Junier Browne of JBEL Environmental Services to advise our industry on potential issues which may arise in the future.

Sightings of egrets are on the rise, with three reported on golf courses this past month. However, if you are in the Willow Tree Fen area of Lincolnshire, keep a look out for the incredibly rare bluethroat, which is mooching around those parts. Also, a red flanked bluetail has set down in Wern Ddu, Caerphilly, and an Iceland Gull in Lerwick harbour - good luck seeing them, and wouldn't it be great to have them ticked off the list?

I am always amazed by the inventiveness greenkeepers have with their recycled timber - take a look at these various examples.

Send your sightings to @Ecology1BIGGA or james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk



Background:
Beedle Lakes

Left:
Fairhaven's
bug hotel



**STRI Golf
Environment Awards
winner Greetham
Valley's bug hotel**

GI Ecology sponsored by



With spring just around the corner, many of us will be thinking about flowering meadows and ways of embellishing roughs on courses.

The Euroflor range of Urban Meadow seed offers solutions for most sites, with a variety of colour combinations, heights of flowering, spring and autumn sowing.

Flora Britannica stands out for golf course use. It's a mix of over 25 species of native and naturalised

flora. Euroflor guarantees a successful meadow display because all the species within have been germination tested. They include poppies, cornflower, flax, birdsfoot trefoil, and nodding catchfly. The seed can be sown from April to June and will provide colour 50-60 days after sowing, until the first hard frosts of winter. If conditions are favourable, annual species may set seed and perennial species will return in following years.





MEMBERSHIP TEAM
01347 833800 (OPTION 1)



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MEMBERSHIP

Full Members Personal
Accident Helpline
0121 698 8046 / 43

Greenkeepers
Legal Assistance
0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling
Helpline
0333 000 2082

MEMBERSHIP

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Membership Team

Help with Health & Safety

Keeping up with your obligations under health & safety and employment legislation can be time consuming and costly.

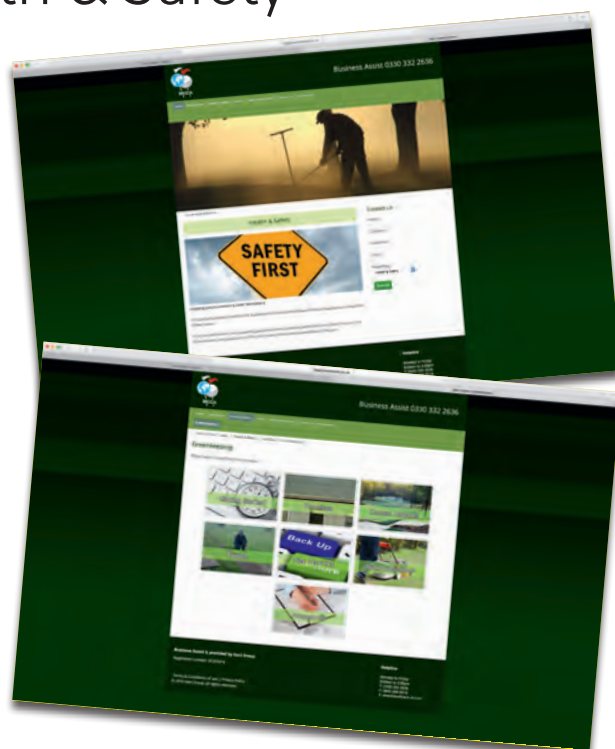
BIGGA members can receive free assistance in getting their course up to scratch by logging into their account in the members area of the BIGGA website.

The Xact Business Assist services provides a source of information required to become compliant, a range of sector-specific template documents and a business hours helpline giving access to website support.

The website introduces members to the areas that will be encountered during day-to-day working life and provides guidance on how to resolve issues and establish best practice.

Topics covered within the website include:

- ▶ **Getting started:** This contains all the general information required on health & safety.
- ▶ **Premises:** Provides detail on all subjects relating to the occupation of your premises.
- ▶ **People:** Provides all relevant information on subjects relating to employees.
- ▶ **Risk planning:** Provides advice on risk identification, analysis, response and disaster recovery planning.



▶ **Work equipment:** Provides all the information you need to be aware of in relation to work equipment.

▶ **Procedures:** Provides all relevant information on what is required to maintain compliance with appropriate health & safety legislation.

Full members - Category 1A and 1B - will have already been emailed the link to the website. The username is the email address featured on the BIGGA database, while your password is your BIGGA membership number.

Xact will also be emailing members a user guide and contacting each to introduce themselves and the system.

Anyone who has questions about the Xact service can email enquiries@xact.com or call the team on 0330 332 2636.



THE BI-SPEED TURNING POINT FOR TURF CARE.



If you want a tractor that's better at every turn, turn to the Kubota B50 Series. Calling upon over 50 years of innovation and engineering excellence, the latest generation of Kubota tractors incorporates bi-speed turning to increase manoeuvrability and minimise turf damage. The B50 has been designed to deliver outstanding performance, economy and reliability and is also available with an integral air-conditioned cab for maximum operator comfort and productivity. For more information about Kubota's diverse range of world-class groundcare machines and aftersales support service, visit www.kubota.co.uk or call **01844 873190**.



**LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT TEAM**
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L&D NEWS

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Learning and Development Team

ICL Scholars reflect on learning opportunities



The ICL scholars at BTME 2017

BIGGA Partner ICL presented five members with the opportunity to take advantage of the education opportunities at Continue to Learn.

In this piece, three of the ICL scholars report back on their experiences during BTME 2017.

Thanks go to ICL for their continued support of BIGGA members through the annual scholarship scheme, which offers a 15-hour education bundle to five of the association's members.

Darren Crowley, head greenkeeper at Owston Hall

"I'd like to start by thanking everybody at ICL and BIGGA who made the 2017 scholarship possible. Being a regular visitor to BTME, but not having attended Continue to Learn, the education bundle was fantastic for my personal development. Continue to Learn is now something I will attend

each year. The great thing about the scholarship is you can cater your bundle towards your own professional development. The scholarship was also a great educational opportunity and fantastic for networking with fellow greenkeepers and trade representatives to share individual experiences."

James Sergeant, head greenkeeper at Sudbrook Manor

"The thing I really enjoyed about the courses was the fact you had to open yourself up and interact with the group. This really took me out of my comfort zone, but I really enjoyed meeting new like-minded people from all over the world. I have already put some of the ideas I learned into practice."

Lyle Davidson, deputy head greenkeeper at The Carrick Golf Club on Loch Lomond

"The scholarship made it possible for me to attend my first ever BTME. Throughout the event it enabled me to meet and learn from many interesting people in greenkeeping and other industries. The education seminars helped to improve my technical knowledge, while others developed people management skills. I feel there is something for everyone at BTME and the experience has provided me with the confidence to use the skills and techniques in my career going forwards."



Congratulations to the following members who achieved CPD Approved status this month:

Darren Anderson MG, Abergele; Ryun Holden, Golf Club Wyllyhof; Jon Methven, St Andrews Links Trust; Sam Bethell, Chipstead; Steven Hemsley, Bolton Old Links; John Hampton, Wakefield; Alexander Reid, Carnoustie; Glenn Kirby, Hockley; Graeme Jones, Muswell Hill; Kevin Pitts, Bridgewater College; James Dobie, Leyland; James Lindsay, Stirling; Luke Turner, Willingdon; Sam Evans, Fulwell; Richard Johnstone, Nairn Dunbar; Craig Potts, Forest of Arden; Kevin Hensman, Rowlands Castle; Shaun Humprey, Rowlands Castle; Hamish Campbell, Dundas Parks; Stefan Carter, The Wentworth Club; Gavin Neill, St Andrews Links Trust; Tim Sethi, Golf Club Nuolen AG; Ben Shipp, Ely City; David Collins, Lickey Hills; John Keenaghan, Chipping Sodbury.

The following members also achieved their milestone this month: Darren Anderson MG, Abergele; Lee Sayers MG, Mid Kent; Stuart Ferguson, Dundas Parks; Robert Welford, Waltham Windmill; Jeremy Hughes, Symbio; Sam Evans, Fulwell; Ben Shipp, Ely City

PROPOSAL TO PRESENT

Are you interested in presenting an education event at Continue to Learn at BTME 2018?

Submit your 'Proposal to Present' through the link on the BIGGA website or by visiting:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/P2P2018

The BIGGA Membership will vote on all of the viable proposals.

Proposals that receive the most votes will be included in the Continue to Learn at BTME 2018 education programme.

Closing date for all 'Proposal to Present' applications is 17 March 2017.

Continue to Learn at BTME is presented by BIGGA.



TIME IS RUNNING OUT, GET YOUR PROPOSAL IN BY 17 MARCH



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Richard McGlynn, Jaey Goodchild, Frank Newberry, Greg Evans MG

Valentine's date a success for London section

On 14 February, more than 150 greenkeepers attended the London section's annual seminar for a date with the management team from last year's British Masters.

Held at Oaklands College, the speakers were Phillip Chiverton, golf course manager, and Jonathan Taylor, head greenkeeper, at The Grove, who talked about the challenges involved in the European Tour event. They also discussed maintaining the large estate that includes England football and NFL training facilities.

Adrian Mortram, managing director of Robin Hume Associates, spoke on the subject of irrigation and how to evaluate and improve your system.

Dr Andy Owen, ICL International Technical Manager, then delivered a presentation on soils, their characteristics, how they can be



degraded and how they can be better managed to provide healthy playing surfaces.

Matt Plested, course manager at Stoneham, talked about how he and his team have overseen the construction of a new greenkeeping compound, in addition to

managing bunker and heather renovation projects.

Feedback from those who attended has been excellent and this annual seminar has become one of BIGGA's largest. The London section is already planning ahead for next year's seminar.

STRI sets Scottish roots

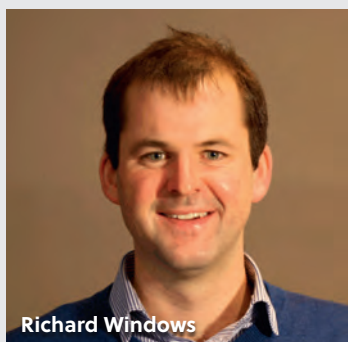
STRI Group has opened a Scottish office in the heart of Glasgow, to help deliver a diverse range of sportsturf solutions to new and existing clients.

The premises, based in West George Street, will be a base for STRI's Scottish agronomy team, who work closely with The R&A, and an arm of its Yorkshire-based sports service design department, which manages projects on pitches and stadiums across the world.

Richard Windows, STRI agronomy manager, said: "A base in the centre of Glasgow is an exciting development for STRI and will allow closer links with our Scottish clients. The new office will allow for the agronomy and design consultants to work more

closely as a team and utilise each other's individual skills to deliver a better and more collective service for our clients across Scotland."

As well as existing members of Scottish staff, the Glasgow office will be home to new STRI appointments Neil Rodger, who joins as design consultant, and agronomist Richard Wing, who starts in his new role in early March.



Richard Windows

Amenity Forum

The Amenity Forum's annual conference is to take place on Thursday 12 October at the Pirelli Stadium, Burton on Trent.

The conference will be entitled 'Keeping Britain Moving' and speakers will address the key issues in the sector.

Speakers include John Parker, of Transport for London, who will address the issue of keeping our cities moving.

Colin Mumford will speak on the 'appliance of science' and Professor Alan Gange will take a specific look at biological control linked to his research programme at Royal Holloway University of London.

A leading head groundsman will give his views on the pressures of producing high quality sports surfaces and a session led by two leading sector experts will pose the question 'what is the future for weed, pest and disease management?'

The forum is also engaged in running its series of half day free 'updating events' across the UK. Information on locations is given below and pre-registration is done by email admin@amenityforum.net. The dates and locations are: Cheshire, 14 March; Essex, 23 March; Surrey, 28 March; Devon, 4 April; Edinburgh, 11 April; Durham, 12 April.

Amenity Register CPD points are on offer.

PGA team with John Deere

John Deere has been named the official golf course turf equipment provider to the PGA of America.

The BIGGA Partner has signed a five-year agreement and will include support of the PGA Championship, KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship and the KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

PGA President Paul Levy said: "The PGA of America is excited about having John Deere,

a wonderful friend to PGA Professionals and the game of golf for many years, join as a partner to our association. John Deere aligns its own mission of service with that of the PGA, to embrace the fabric of our industry."

John Deere celebrates its 180th anniversary this year and will offer equipment programmes to PGA-owned facilities and championship sites over the term of the agreement.



John Deere has strengthened its relationship with the PGA of America



Ask Dr Mumford

With Colin Mumford,
Bayer Turf Solutions

Do you need advice with your turf problems?
Email info@bigga.co.uk

Question: What is Augusta Syndrome and how can I tackle it?

Augusta Syndrome isn't actually a turf disease, it's the criticism that occurs when the UK golfer sees the immaculate greens at the US Masters on television, just at the time when our courses have had to contend with months of harsh weather.

This often leaves greenkeepers feeling disheartened, but they should remember that this is an unrealistic level of presentation for a UK golf course to achieve in April.

Firstly, Augusta has a vast budget. This accounts for a large workforce, who ensure everything is presented perfectly, when most greenkeepers wouldn't have enough hours in the day.

Augusta is in the south east of the USA, with a totally different climate to our own and turfgrass species that thrive at different times of year. There's also a far larger pool of products available to treat weeds, pests and disease.

Greenkeepers shouldn't forget their courses are often open all year round and get a lot of use. The course at Augusta is actually closed for a large part of the year, so wear and tear is kept to a minimum and there's plenty of time for the turf to recover ahead of the tournament.

Top tips to avoid Augusta Syndrome:

- Manage your members' expectations, not everyone has the same resources
- Ensure you have healthy turf in autumn and winter, so you'll see less scarring come spring
- Present your course well with sharp mowing patterns and well raked, weed free bunkers, as many golfers associate a smart looking course with quality turf, even if it's not the case

Tweet us your turf questions @BIGGALtd using #AskDrMumford or email info@bigga.co.uk

Scottish links' landmarks

A collection of leading Scottish clubs have announced a series of special events and historic milestones to coincide with Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017.

Links with History, which features some of Scotland's finest courses, will mark a run of anniversaries with a sequence of tributes and the relaunch of its recently revamped website.

"This is going to be a massive year," said Barrie Liddle, managing secretary at Scotsraig, which will celebrate its 200th anniversary.

Further down the coast, the world's seventh oldest golf club, Crail Golfing Society, will mark the 175th anniversary since captain John William Maillardet presented the club with a silver medal. Ladybank and Lundin will also celebrate anniversaries.

Lynette Harmer

The association was saddened to hear of the passing of Lynette Harmer, a director of BIGGA Partner Farmura.

Lynette, wife of Jonathan Harmer, died on 6 February after a long illness.

She had been director of the company since the late 1980s and helped oversee the growth of the company, until it was acquired by Aquatrols in 2014.



Lynette Harmer

TYM T654

With an all-new 67hp Deutz engine with improved emission standards, the TYM T654 is a full-size utility tractor with more than enough horsepower for a wide range of jobs. A good all-rounder it has a spacious operator's platform with digital instrument panel and accommodates a wide range of attachments and implements from front-end loaders and backhoes, to mowers, cutters and rotary tillers.

TYM
TRACTORS



Front Loader
Option to add a front loader

All-Weather Cab
Environment controlled cab for comfort all year round

Instruments
Digital instrument panel

PTO
One-touch PTO on/off switch panel

Engine
Tier 4 regulated Deutz diesel engine

Weights
Counter balance weights available

Transmission
24F/24R mechanical transmission

Tyres
Shown with turf tyres. Also available with industrial or agricultural tyres

Platform
Spacious operator's platform

Royal Norwich chooses Toro ahead of move



Reesink's Julian Copping and Royal Norwich general manager Phil Grice

Royal Norwich has invested in Toro as it prepares for a historic relocation.

With all the legal and planning formalities complete, it is expected Royal Norwich will move to the nearby location of Weston Park, where a 27-hole facility is expected to be constructed.

Royal Norwich General Manager Phil Grice said: "We are at the start of a very big project. Our vision is to create one of the region's most prestigious golf facilities and we're off to a great start with European Golf Designers, who designed

Celtic Manor's 2010 Course, on board and the investment in a range of Toro machines."

The relocation isn't expected to take place until late 2018 at the earliest and during that period the existing course will be maintained to the usual standards.

During the grow in of the new course, the two greenkeeping teams will be merged and the Toro equipment will help tend 45 holes between the two sites.

"There is so much for our members to be excited for," added Phil.

TOP DRESS MORE FREQUENTLY, FOR LESS

WITH BRITISH SUGAR TOPSOIL



Sports&Turf

Golf Courses
Winter Sports Pitches
Lawns

With a move towards more frequent topdressing applications throughout the growing season, greenkeepers are having to challenge their budgets.

Proprietary top dressings feature large in the greenkeeper's consumables spend. Hearing the requests of his golf course and sports turf customers, British Sugar Topsoil's Andy Spetch, an agronomist by training, set about developing an 80/20 top dressing, using a higher and coarser sand content to assist free drainage.

Other benefits he sought were easier integration into the surface of the turf, better soil fertility and healthy growth, and so Andy blended the mixture with British Sugar Topsoil's BS3882:2015 certified topsoil, containing both phosphorous and potassium.

The resulting product, named Sports & Turf, was launched last autumn and Andy believes it can play a valuable role in augmenting the established use of proprietary dressings, and reduce costs.

"I am very excited about the potential for Sports & Turf, which was developed in direct response to our customers' feedback," he said. "Sports & Turf has not been developed to be a substitute for fine greens dressing, but rather it contains coarse sand, which makes it beneficial in areas where drainage is poor and wear has caused compaction, such as approaches, fairways and tees. 67% of the sand content of Sports & Turf comprises medium to coarse sub angular sand, which makes it easy to apply and less likely to cap existing fairway material."

Trials are underway

Sports & Turf was analysed by the Sports Turf Research Institute and now replicated trials – one on golf tee and the other on fairway turf – are taking place at the research facility in Bingley. The turf comprises grass species commonly found in winter games pitches and lawns and the trials are testing the effects of the top dressing treatment on grass growth, turf health and colour, and on surface playability.

Trial methodology

Sports & Turf at three different application rates – 2kg, 4kg and 6kg/m²/year – is being compared with an untreated control and with the same three application rates of sand only, on both turf types. The initial applications were made in October 2016 and the second is planned for this spring.

Wear is being applied to elicit stress on the turf, according to the prevailing ground conditions, but without causing significant loss of grass cover. The rate of golf-type wear has been nominally set at one pass per week. Each of the trial plots is being maintained appropriately for the turf surface it is representing, including mowing at appropriate cutting heights, irrigating, fertilising and using other turf products as required.

Assessments

Throughout the trial period, STRI will assess: turf cover, quality and colour; normalised difference vegetation index; surface hardness;

volumetric soil water content over the upper 60mm of the profile; sward height.

The STRI trials conclude at the end of June. In the meantime, Steve Coghill, senior horticulturist at King's College, Cambridge, has been carrying out his own trials on the formal lawns that grace the college grounds. Areas that had suffered from compaction and poor drainage received 40 tonnes of Sports & Turf in the autumn of 2016 and Steve is delighted with the results so far.

He said: "Sports & Turf is a fantastic dressing, promoting growth and helping improve drainage. It is also an excellent substrate for sports turf renovation and repair."

Sports & Turf top dressing is available now in bulk IBC bags. www.bstopsoil.co.uk.



Larger particles on surface



Sports & Turf being spread on Kings College lawns



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 /greenkeeperstraining
committee

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FUNDING CHANGES FOR APPRENTICES

In spring 2017, the way the Government funds apprenticeships in England is changing.

Some employers will be required to contribute to a new Apprenticeship Levy. Others will be involved in Co-investment.

Apprenticeship Levy

From 6 April, employers with an annual wage bill of over £3million will be required to invest in apprenticeships and contribute to a new apprenticeship levy. Employers will also have to pay the levy if they are connected to other companies or charities for Employment Allowance which have an annual pay bill of more than £3m.

Those who fall into these categories will have to pay through the Government Gateway PAYE system.

The levy will be charged at 0.5% of an employer's wage bill. In return, the employer will receive an allowance of £15,000 to offset against their levy payment (See below).

Once the levy has been declared to HMRC, employers will access the funding through an apprenticeship service account.

The levy applies to all UK employers, with the service supporting the English apprenticeship system.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own arrangements for supporting employers to access apprenticeships:

Scotland, www.apprenticeships.scot

Wales, businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/apprenticeships

Northern Ireland, www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/apprenticeships

Employers should negotiate a price for each apprenticeship with their main provider.

This will include:

- A programme of training and education
- The cost of the end-point assessment (Assessment Organisation)

Funds from the account can be used up to the funding band maximum.

However, if employers agree a higher price, they will have to cover the balance.

If you do not fall into the category to pay the levy, you will not need to use the apprenticeship service to pay for training and assessment until at least 2018.

Co-investment

From May 2017, those employers with a pay bill of less than £3m will be required to co-invest in training.

They will still:

- Choose the programme of training and education apprentices will receive
- Choose an Approved Training Provider and Assessment Organisation

The employer will make a 10% contribution to the cost of training and end-point assessment and the government will pay up to 90% of the cost of training. Any cost above the funding band limit will have to be covered by the employer.



The GTC is funded by:



Apprenticeship Levy

An employer with a pay bill of £4 million will expect to pay:

$$0.5\% \times £4,000,000 = £20,000$$

With the government allowance:

$$£20,000 - £15,000 = £5,000$$

annual payment.

Payment will be made directly to the employer and can be spread over the term of the apprenticeship with an agreed payment schedule.

Employers who take on a 16 to 18 year old on an apprenticeship standard, will receive £1,000 to help meet the extra costs. Training providers will also receive an incentive payment of £1,000 to reflect the Government's commitment to have more young people on apprenticeships.

The funds, whether through the apprenticeship service account or through co-investment, can only be used towards the costs of apprenticeship training and end-point assessments with an approved Training Provider and Approved Assessment Organisation.

For more information go to www.gov.uk/guidance/pay-apprenticeship-levy

Co-investment pay bill less than £3 million

Funding band 8 – Maximum contribution £6,000 for total cost of training, education and end-point assessment

000,000

£600 10% Employer Contribution

£5,400

90% Government contribution



Scan here to find out about the performance management rules

High on Power... Low on CO₂

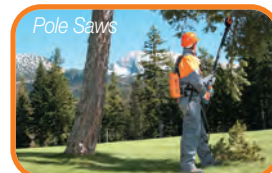
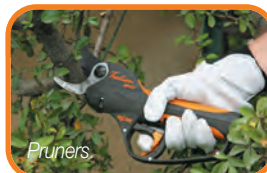
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PELLENC

Also available...



One Battery, Multiple Options



“They are extremely lightweight with low noise and vibration levels. Pellenc ticks all of our boxes.”

Peter Anderson, Machinery Maintenance Engineer at RHS Wisley

The Ultra Lithium Battery provides constant power and an operating range display, which indicates the remaining power level in real time. This provides between half a day and a full day of work depending on the type of tool used.

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MEMORIES OF AMERICA

Education, networking, personal development and a hot tub – it's the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show sponsored by Bernhard & Company.

For the 10 BIGGA members selected to take part in the trip to Orlando, Florida, the journey is a whirlwind of course visits, meeting industry experts and representing the association at the Golf Industry Show, one of the major events in the industry calendar.

We asked the delegates to report back on what they learned while Stateside.

Thanks must go to Bernhard & Company for their continued support of the BIGGA Delegation and for providing members with this incredible career development opportunity.

The BIGGA Delegation at Celebration Golf Club, pictured

BEN KEBBY

TEMPLE

The two months between learning I was selected for the delegation and departure were a whirlwind of preparation, but it was only when I attended the Bernhard drinks reception at BTME that I realised how much of an honour this delegation really is, and what high company we had been selected into.

The 4th February quickly came and soon after, so did 12th February. In between proved to be one of the greatest weeks of my career.

It is hard to quantify how incredible the delegation was. Perhaps it was the great fun I had with my playing partners at Waldorf Astoria Golf Club, or maybe the two superb education workshops. Perhaps it was the unrivalled networking opportunities, or catching up with distant friends. But perhaps the highlight was in fact the other delegates. In these delegates I have created career-long friendships and look forward to the reunions in the years to come.

JACK HETHERINGTON

ALNWICK CASTLE

It was a truly amazing experience that will undoubtedly change my career for the better. I shared the trip with a great group of lads who I will enjoy keeping in touch with.



Fancy taking part?

Check out the July edition of Greenkeeper International for details of how you can apply for a place on the BIGGA Delegation 2018 sponsored by Bernhard





Now I have returned to the real world I have many happy memories to look back on, but I have been filled with passion and motivation towards my work and this industry, due to the knowledge I gained from the trip.

I urge everyone to apply. Successful or not, you will learn something. And if you are fortunate enough to gain a place, it could change your career forever.

JAMIE BLAKE

BROADWAY

After applying for several years, I was very happy to be selected to go on the delegation to Orlando. So much was packed into the trip, all of which gave great opportunities to learn.

From landing on the Saturday until returning, your feet do not touch the ground. This time is packed full of experiences, many of them unique to the trip. During any off time, the networking within the group was fantastic and we soon gelled together.

One major thing was evident about greenkeeping in America and that is that money is less of a restriction, providing the product you want to invest in is up to the standard expected. In the UK we usually work the other way, working to match our practices to our budget, to produce the best we can.

On the second day of education we had a fantastic talk by Michael Hurzdan, a course architect, who shared some great knowledge.

On Friday we visited Shingle Creek, Waldorf Astoria and the Celebration Club. It was interesting listening to the different management techniques for warm season grasses and was great to see the facilities and how they were organised.

The experience has given me a lot which I will use to improve as a greenkeeper and in turn improve myself, the course and my facility. I urge anyone who hasn't been to apply for the chance. If not successful, keep trying. It's definitely worth it.

SAM BETHELL

CHIPSTEAD

For some of us the networking began on the flight over to America, where we had the chance to sit and chat to the many other turfies on the plane.

Monday was when the business side of the trip started. All kitted out in the Bernhard and BIGGA attire, we



The BIGGA Delegation at the Golf Industry Show

Right: A Bernhard licence plate

entered the Orange County Convention Centre and got a first glimpse of the sheer size of the event.

Two floors of education and dozens of rooms, all filled to the brim with people looking to learn.

The first seminar was 'Understanding turf fungicides' by Richard Latin PhD of Purdue University. What struck me first was the challenge the weather poses to the American industry. But the amount of chemicals they have available to combat their problems is a blessing in comparison.

I sat next to Paul who is a superintendent from Portland, Oregon and was asked how many of their diseases we suffered, and it's probably around half. Then I asked how many of their active ingredients we have, and I replied just five or six, his face told the whole story – especially when they apply for nine months of the year.

The second day of education was arguably the best day of education I have had in my time as a greenkeeper. Michael J. Hurdzan PhD gave a talk on 'Golf course design and evaluation' and for eight hours I hung on his every word.

The ideas of how to improve a course and how to implement plans from start to finish were great, but how each part of the course was talked about with passion just made you want to jump in the excavator back home and start making changes. Michael finished the seminar by talking about the work he had done on Erin Hills GC, which hosts this year's US Open. It is a natural course where only four of the holes were created from land movement, otherwise the holes were cut into shape from the already existing landscape.

LEWIS BIRCH

SUNNINGDALE

I've managed to achieve many goals in my career, but being part of the Bernhard Delegation is one my finest accomplishments. Words cannot explain the experience I've just been part of, and I'll never forget it. I thoroughly enjoyed the interview process, meeting the other delegates and the build up to the trip.

One of my favourite parts of the experience was representing BIGGA during the Golf Industry Show. One of the ways we did this was by spending time at the BIGGA booth, where we were able to answer any questions from greenkeepers.

I've tried to learn as much as possible from the trip and I hope to take this back to my workplace, to help make improvements for the future.

This was an experience I'll never forget and I strongly recommend anyone who is interested to apply for a place next year.

PAUL BROWN

HAM MANOR

What an unforgettable experience! Previous delegates I'd spoken to had told me how brilliant the trip was, and how intense the week would be, and I have to admit I was skeptical that it could match up to the reputation. But it turned out that although it was physically and mentally exhausting, it was also absolutely worthwhile.

The seminars were a real eye opener and my pen couldn't keep up with the amount of information there was to absorb.

The entire second day was spent with Michael Hurdzan, looking at common sense golf course design. This was probably the best day of education I have ever experienced in 33 years of greenkeeping and I can't explain just how much I took away with me

This was a trip that will stay with me forever. It will, without doubt, shape the future of many of the guys in the group.

Top left: Paul Brown using VR to see architecture work on golf courses

Top right: Behind the scenes at Waldorf Astoria. Image by Diane Whitworth

Bottom left: Alligators patrol the waterways of Florida's courses

Bottom right: Team bonding

I took so much away with me that will help me improve as a course manager, and I made some lifelong friends along the way.

For those that think they don't stand a chance of being chosen I say, give it a go, what have you got to lose? You won't regret it.

The BIGGA Delegation was unforgettable, unbelievable and truly inspirational.

JON METHVEN

ST ANDREWS LINKS TRUST

It was great to start the first day of the trip with golf at the stunning Waldorf Astoria Golf Course; this experience allowed everyone to relax after a long flight and I would say that playing in beautiful warm weather helps the golf to be far more enjoyable. The evening was topped off with the Superbowl, which is one of America's top sporting events.

The show days were great as there were so many stands to see and visit. I was also overwhelmed at the number of people who noticed my St Andrews Links badge and wanted to chat to me. I felt proud to represent BIGGA, Bernhard and the St Andrews Links Trust, with many networking opportunities throughout the show.

Day one of the show started with me chatting to Chris Zugel, superintendent at Whistling Straits, and I have hopefully managed to secure a place on the volunteering team, at the 2020 Ryder Cup.

The evening receptions were a great chance to meet others within the turf industry; I made many new contacts and met many old contacts from around the world.

The overall experience of the whole trip was absolutely amazing and it should be a 'must do' for anybody who has not yet applied.





SCOTT ROBERTS

BASINGSTOKE

The week I spent in Orlando for the Golf Industry Show was easily the most beneficial experience of my career so far.

Not only were the seminars very educational but the amount of people we had the chance to network with was fantastic. I'd heard so many great things about the delegation, but you don't realise how valuable this experience is until you are a part of it.

The Golf Industry Show itself certainly fulfilled the 'over the top' expectations that I had before we arrived. We were greeted with music and men on stilts, before a magician on one of the stands performed some very impressive card tricks, while sneakily advertising his products.

This was my first opportunity to witness how advanced some of the machinery and products are in America and there are quite a few that I am looking forward to seeing over here quite soon.

JASON BROOKS

TORQUAY

The first thing I would say about the trip is that it was worth the perseverance in getting on it. I took seven attempts and had four interviews before finally making the grade. Between three of us on the trip we racked up 20 attempts. So don't be disheartened if at first you don't succeed.

I was told by previous delegates that it would be a trip of a lifetime. They weren't wrong and we couldn't have been better looked after.

A bonus seminar was arranged by Bernhard's Kim Furnell for Wednesday morning. It really was pretty special. In with just the 10 delegates were Neil Cleverly, Rio Olympic Course superintendent, Chris Tritabaugh, Hazeltine superintendent, Jan Bel Jan, golf architect, Rob Kloska, director of golf course maintenance at Jupiter Island Club and Jason Zimmerman, director of golf course maintenance Pelican's Nest. We had three hours of their time to listen and ask questions as to how they went about with some big projects and renovations on their sites. It was fascinating stuff.

For me it was an incredible experience, I made nine friends from the delegation and met some fantastic people while over there.



Top left: Course visit

Top right: Paul Brown of Ham Manor

Bottom: Unwinding 'USA-style' before the flight home

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GREENING-UP THINE SWARD

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PAUL MORRIS, GBR TECHNOLOGY

GBR TECHNOLOGY

A dark green sward is almost universally desirable, but in many cases the natural colour isn't enough to give grass a striking appearance.

The green comes from chlorophyll, that porphyrin molecule with magnesium at its centre, which absorbs the red and blue elements of light and reflects back the green part of the spectrum.

It's rare to see over-development of the yellowing that is indicative of chlorosis on managed sports turf and caused by insufficient chlorophyll production from low iron, nitrogen or magnesium. But certainly it's common in late summer to see browned off and parched fairways.

Even without the appearance of chlorosis and parched fairways, that extra green-up is generally desired.

Iron

The number one treatment for green-up is applications of iron – over and above what's required for the healthy nutritional needs of the plant. Iron is an essential micro-nutrient, making up about 30-100ppm dry weight of the grass plant.

Although iron is not in the chlorophyll molecule, it is nonetheless essential in its production.

Nitrogen will give green-up, but also rapid growth, and in the disease season too much N is not a good idea. But with extra iron you get green-up with minimal growth stimulation.

For quick and fairly sustained green-up, foliar sprays of iron do the job very well.

One downside to over-application of iron and sulphates is the potential for black layer formation. Under anaerobic conditions, sulphate-reducing bacteria produce sulphides – the toxic, rotten egg smelling gas hydrogen sulphide – and this can react with the iron to form black insoluble iron sulphide.

So for good green-up, around 20-30 litres per hectare of a 6% iron liquid dissolved into 300-600 litres water and sprayed, will give a sustained green-up that may last for two to six weeks. Iron products can be supplied in solid form that you need to dissolve prior to spray application, solid granular form for spreading, and in liquid form.

Iron can be supplied as an inorganic salt, and ferrous sulphate is by far the most common in use. These inorganic ferrous salts will normally oxidise to the ferric form and produce highly insoluble compounds in the soil, which the grass plant has to work harder to access by releasing exudates.

This will have limitations, as the insoluble iron will be less mobile in the soil.

Chelate forms contain iron that is bound by “chelate” molecules, which protect iron from forming insoluble compounds. A variety of chelates exist with the ability to protect iron from these unwanted reactions. With foliar sprays we are aiming to get maximum uptake before the iron supplement has even reached the soil, but any residual iron getting to the soil will be more available over time if it is in the form of a chelate.

Green-up achieved with many iron products may also produce a degree of blackening and this will contribute to the grass darkening effect.

Ferrous sulphate at high level will blacken grass very noticeably and kill moss. Some of the chelated iron forms have much less tendency to introduce this blackening effect and give a different coloured green-up.

A top tip is that some formulated iron liquids do contain surfactants designed to aid the foliar uptake, however even greater effect can be gained by using a silicone “super wetting surfactant” as a tankside addition. The amount of iron used to get the same green-up can be dramatically reduced, perhaps

even by half. This could be a useful strategy for courses not wanting to put as much iron down. Iron supplements have the advantage of supplying a needed plant nutrient as well as a potential “hardening-off” effect.

Dyes, pigments and colourants

As an alternative to iron, you can ‘paint’ the grass. Spray pattern indicator dyes are routinely used to show the extent of spray coverage.

However, these are designed to be very temporary in nature, washing from the soil and fading quickly under UV light. Other dyes and pigments can be used to impart a longer lasting colour. For grass subject to foot traffic, the best products also incorporate a binder, which will apply a coating onto the grass sward.

This will generally remain until it is removed by mowing. One advantage to using turf colourants is a recent growth in the choice of colour from a range of shades of green. These products may use a combination of green pigments and carbon black – the latter adjusted to give darker shades. ■



Iron spraying

Iron Products from GBR Technology

Product	Form	Chelated?	Iron content	Notes
Ferrous sulphate Heptahydrate	Dissolvable damp grade solid	No	20.4%	Cost effective
Acti-Fe	Dissolvable powder	Yes	21.5%	Highly soluble chelate powder
Forti-Fe	Liquid	Contains chelated and inorganic forms	6%	Fully formulated product with K, Mg, Micros & some N
Emerald Iron	Liquid	Yes	6%	Strongly chelated DTPA iron
Spreadable Turf Hardener	Granular solid	No	9% & 12% versions	N, K and Mg versions
Influx Excel	Super-wetting agent to aid foliar uptake of iron – add to spray tank			

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Is Augusta **Syndrome** *a thing of the past?*

PETER JONES, GOLF COURSE CONSULTANT AND AGRONOMIST

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Main photo: Danny E Hooks - Shutterstock, Inc.



Due to the effects of global warming, parts of the UK are already experiencing weather conditions that allow courses to be presented to much higher standards earlier in the year than was ever envisaged.

When this is combined with work programmes that focus on attention to detail, Peter Jones asks whether Augusta Syndrome has become a thing of the past for many of the UK's greenkeepers.

April is just around the corner, and with it comes the US Masters. This event alone inspires both hardy and fair-weather golfers in the UK to get out on the course and enjoy all the splendours of spring.

Historically, Augusta appeared on television in all its immaculate glory just at the time when UK courses had to contend with cold winds, cold ground temperatures and limited grass growth – even if the sun may be shining. In times gone by it was common for golfers to criticise our British greenkeepers and ask why golf courses here in the UK couldn't be presented in better condition in early April, and this became commonly known in the industry as the "Augusta Syndrome".

But with changing weather patterns and a more concentrated focus on really good attention to detail, both on the course and around the clubhouse, are we far from reaching the point where our golf courses can look as well prepared and ready for play as Augusta, perhaps even on the 1st of March?

Augusta is as much about being a spectacle of colour as it is about being a highly manicured course. If you look at the lead image of this article and blank out the vibrant colours of the Azaleas, white blossom, crowd clothing, the reflection in the water, and the white caddie's overalls, then all you are left with is a well maintained, manicured golf course in the first week of April, which actually looks quite plain. Is that so difficult to achieve?

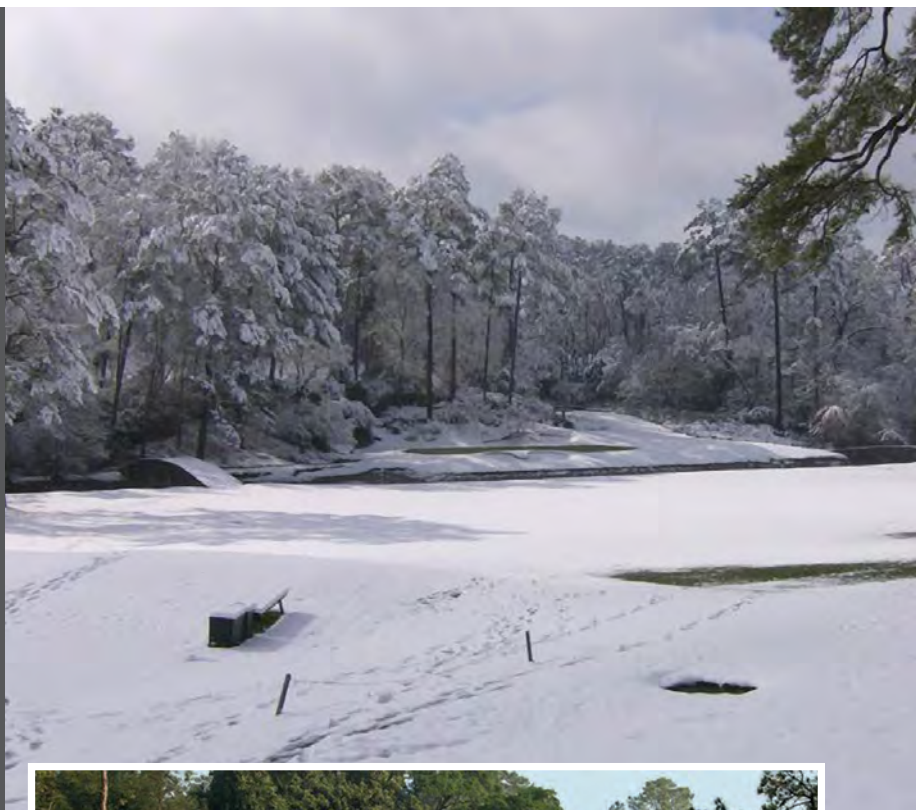
We know weather can vary enormously from Land's End to John O'Groats, but if weather events such as the spring of 2016 are put to one side, then in most years the answer to this questions could arguably be no.

Continued over

Top Tips to avoid The Augusta Syndrome:

- ▶ Set a target date on the calendar for having the course fully prepared for the season in terms of attention to detail and presentation. I would suggest 1 March.
- ▶ Plan the winter work programmes in great detail from the target date backwards to 1 October.
- ▶ Holidays – normal holidays are one thing, but time off in lieu banked hours can be a nightmare when it comes to dealing with winter work and early course preparation, so do away with this and get the hours paid for out of the budget, assuming the man hours are needed on the course.
- ▶ Attention to detail around the clubhouse, first tee, 1st and 18th holes is a good way to make the whole place look manicured.
- ▶ Look at what others have done with success around the clubhouse and 1st tee complex. Is there a similar 'theme' you can introduce?
- ▶ Edge bunkers and top-up all bunkers to correct sand depths in February.
- ▶ Do not plan over-ambitious winter projects that are not properly resourced. In clubs with a small workforce, try to get your construction and winter projects planned for completion by Christmas.
- ▶ Pimp the 1st and final holes to improve first and last impressions. This is especially important when limited labour and man hours are a constraint.
- ▶ Ensure there is no visible evidence on the greens of old hole-cup wads. This is a pet hate as it often demonstrates an inability to move a hole cup and replace an old wad or plug with expertise and finesse. You certainly won't find one at Augusta!

For more details on how to perfect the hole-changing technique with the aim of making old, highly visible or scalped wads a thing of the past, see the link from the PJA website at www.pjagolf.co.uk



It is not so difficult to achieve a well-maintained and manicured golf course early in the season, but it does require the right amount of planning and focus through the winter months. Money and manpower are always key constraints and these need to be available and targeted at early course preparation and presentation.

They shouldn't be consumed by over-run and over-ambitious construction projects which drag into March.

"Not so", some might argue, and it is fair to say many courses have more than their fair share of problems to contend with, such as poor drainage, shade from trees, persistent rainfall,

and the effects of unmanaged wear and tear from golf traffic.

Accumulated time off in lieu can also be a curse, where there is only a skeleton staff available to undertake early course preparation in January and February. But, more and more clubs have addressed these issues by investing in drainage solutions, tree clearance, trolley paths, winter tees, reconstruction, and soil structure management to enable the courses to remain open and playable throughout the year.

Greenkeeping practices and machinery are also extending the duration of the playing season on UK courses, and well executed 'wear management'



'I have been to Augusta in February and can say it was nothing to write home about in terms of course condition. Indeed, it was a world apart from what it looks like when fully pimped for the cameras in April.'

strategies help ensure key areas such as wear-susceptible grass tees, walk-ways, surrounds and approaches are protected from chaotic wear and tear through the winter months.

In their own defence, British greenkeepers would argue that Augusta National has a much better warm-season climate, and

so it is inappropriate to compare it with UK courses, but in reality things are not so different. I have been to Augusta in February and can say it was nothing to write home about in terms of course condition. Indeed, it was a world apart from what it looks like when fully pimped for the cameras in April.

Continued over

Top left: Snow at Augusta National
Top right: Hole wad
Bottom left: Bunker raking at Augusta

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Let's not forget that Augusta has its share of bad weather too from time to time. In my mind, the big differences between there and here are not so much the weather, but rather the four M's of manpower, money, machinery and materials.

If you break down the strategy of how to get ready for early April, it comes down to planning, target dates, and execution. This is something that comes with experience, and something your average golf committee would be unable to achieve without cocking things up due to their own individual whims and ideas – sound familiar?

Planning, target dates and execution of work over the winter months are what can make all the difference between whether a course looks manicured and in good condition ahead of the Masters or whether it looks sad, untidy, and a bit rough around the edges.

If you are still laying turf and dealing with winter projects in March, you have probably missed the boat in terms of managing key target dates for attention to detail on the course.

In my work, the 1st of March is the most important target date of the year, despite being a month ahead of the US Masters.

By having the course manicured in terms of bunkers, paths, mowing lines, new flags and cups, course furniture facelift, planting, and the de-restriction of some wear restriction measures, the course can be as good as it possibly can for the time of year. It will certainly give the competition a run for its money at a time when many are just coming out of winter hibernation. By achieving this one date by planning your calendar and work programmes from the 1st of March backwards, it is also possible to make Augusta Syndrome a thing of the past.

It is very difficult to compensate for the comparative lack of manpower without target dates and good planning of resources. And as pointed out earlier, heavy rainfall is the greenkeeper's biggest enemy when it comes to man-hours being swallowed up by bunker maintenance issues and washouts. It is true to say that one of the great things about Augusta for me has been the relative simplicity to which

the course seems to be presented in recent years. Can we match it here? Yes of course, and there is always room for improvement.

Therefore, one thing to concentrate on, irrespective of the location, is the attention to detail and daily presentation of the course, with the results of the work targeted for a month before Augusta hits the TV screens. ■

'Let's not forget that Augusta has its share of bad weather too from time to time. In my mind, the big differences between there and here are not so much the weather, but rather the four M's of manpower, money, machinery and materials.'

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WHY YOUR COURSE WON'T LOOK LIKE AUGUSTA

1

No summer golf

Imagine closing your course between May and October, as they do at Augusta National. The bentgrass struggles to survive the hot Georgia summer, so closing the course means it isn't put under undue stress, and golfers aren't damaging the hard, dry turf.

2

Greenspeeds

The greenspeeds at Augusta exceed 13. Maintenance costs aside, for club golfers this would lead to huge numbers of three- and four-putts, slowing play substantially.

3

Budgets

Between the TV money and the wealthy members, the greenkeeping budget at Augusta is astronomical. In a rare response to enquiries, a spokesperson is quoted as saying: "All budgets have limits. We can't speak to how other courses manage their resources. Also, most courses do not benefit from hosting one of the sport's most visible tournaments."

4

The blue water

In 1996 Golf Digest's Mike Stachura played the course, and even took a sample from the pond in front of the 15th. He had the water tested and found it contained blue food colouring.

5

Volunteers

Imagine the very best greenkeepers in the world coming to your club and multiplying your workforce by 10 for one week. That's not going to happen.

6

No buggies

Augusta National is walking only so there's no wear and tear from buggies. Additionally, although there are no exact figures, it would be unusual for the course to get more than five groups of golfers playing it each day.

An aerial photograph of Stoke Park, showing a lush green golf course with a winding river and a large, ornate mansion with a white dome. The title 'The Little things' is written in a large, white, cursive font across the top, with 'matter at Stoke Park' in a smaller, white, serif font below it.

The Little things

matter at Stoke Park

STOKE PARK

KARL HANSELL, BIGGA

When azaleas line your fairways and your 7th hole served as the inspiration for one of the holes at Augusta National, you're always going to be compared to the US Masters venue.



Sometimes that can be a burden, but for Alex Millar and the team at Stoke Park, it's a challenge they have embraced.

"When you go somewhere like Augusta you are blown away," said course manager Alex. "You know it looks lovely and you know it looks right, but you can't put your finger on what makes it special. You can't pick up on a single thing. It's beautiful, just a class act.

"That's what I want here at Stoke Park. I don't want anyone to know what I have done, I just want them to think 'that looks good'.

"That's what I took away from Augusta when I visited there last year. You can't put your finger on why it's brilliant, it just is."

Perhaps the key is attention to detail. Those little touches that almost go unnoticed but elevate a course above its competition.

With tongue in cheek, it has been said that the greenkeeping team at Augusta name every blade of grass. A common urban legend is that the azaleas are wrapped in bags of ice to hold off flowering until the week of the Masters. This is disputed by the club, but gives a sense of which the Augusta National team has a reputation for leaving no

stone unturned. It all builds the mythology surrounding Bobby Jones' famous club.

Theirs is a level beyond the means of almost every other golfing venue in the world. However, by picking out favourable characteristics of your course and enhancing them, you can take your club to the next level.

"When I went to Augusta for the Masters, I was surprised at how little planting there actually was," said Alex. "You don't see this on television, but the flowers are literally on 12, 13 and around the clubhouse and that's it.

"But what they do there is they make sure everything is consistent, and that's what I'd say to any greenkeeper to give themselves a chance of elevating their course. Make sure all your tee boxes, your bins, your rakes are all the same. Start with that and work bigger.

"But then, I can suggest things and say 'you can do this or you can do that', but if you haven't got the staff, it's simply not possible."



STOKE PARK

'When you go somewhere like Augusta you are blown away, you know it looks lovely and you know it looks right, but you can't put your finger on what makes it special. You can't pick up on a single thing. It's beautiful, just a class act.'



Top right: The grounds of Stoke Park

Bottom right: The 7th was the inspiration for a hole at Augusta

Continued over

IN THE SHED

AT STOKE PARK



BIGGA MEMBERS

Alex Millar, Course Manager
Matthew Parker, Head Greenkeeper
Daniel Spencer, Deputy Head Greenkeeper
Aaron Millar, Greenkeeper
Aaron Smith, Greenkeeper
Alan Baker, Greenkeeper
Alex Hall, Greenkeeper
Alex Smith, Greenkeeper
Brian Payne, Greenkeeper
Danny Morten, Greenkeeper
Dean Marshall, Greenkeeper
James Orr, Greenkeeper
Kieran Poff, Greenkeeper
Paul Lear, Greenkeeper
Stuart Swift, Greenkeeper
Tonderai Kennedy Nyemba, Greenkeeper

IN THE SHED

Machine

3 Baroness LM2700 fairway mowers
 3 Baroness LM315 greens triples
 4 Baroness LM180c Triple banks mowers
 3 GM2800 Rough/semi rough 5 unit rotary
 3 Baroness SP05 ride on bunker rakes
 6 Baroness LM66 pedestrian tees mowers
 6 Baroness LM56 pedestrian greens mowers
 8 Baroness LM26 pedestrian tees mowers
 13 tonne digger JCB
 3 tonne digger JCB
 15 Club Car buggies
 5 Kubota tractor
 3 tractor mounted blower

Between the budget, the level of staffing, the climate and the fact the course is closed between May and October each year, it's not hard to see why Augusta National is able to attain the highest possible standards. It has long been acknowledged that greenkeepers are not judged on a level playing field.

"The course isn't played that much, and that means they can make it perfect," said Alex. "Then people see that on television and expect their course to be the same, but they are trying to obtain things that are not possible."

Stoke Park has a reputation as one of the finest courses in the South of England. Famous for featuring in two James Bond films, among other movies, Harry Colt's design is defended primarily by huge stately trees, not unlike Augusta. Bernard Darwin also noted in 1910 how the club was also an ambitious early attempt to replicate an American country club. There is a story that the 7th hole at Stoke Park is the inspiration for one of the holes at Augusta National.

Those looking at course plans have spotted that the 12, with Rae's Creek running through it is a close fit, and the myth has evolved. But it is actually at Augusta's 16th hole where Augusta designer Alister MacKenzie drew inspiration from Stoke Poges, as the course used to be known.

Alex said: "The pond used to be on the other side of where it is now and in the very first Augusta programme it was actually written 'this hole was a copy of the 7th at Stoke Poges'."

So do you hide from this close link, or do you embrace it?

Azaleas planted behind the 7th hole provide a clear answer to that.

Once again, attention to detail is key and Alex said: "The azaleas spread out of our walled garden and we encouraged them, as we felt it was helping promote our little link with Augusta."

However, this is where the comparisons end, and Alex is keen to stress that while aesthetics such as flowers can be used to remind people of the famous link, their goals must be more reasonable on the course.

At Stoke Park the greens average 9.5 feet on the Stimp meter. At Augusta National for the Masters, they roll up to 14 feet – although the club never reveals the actual number.

"Our greens are quite contoured," said Alex. "We have many slopes, and with the amount of golf that's played on them, we don't want to be going much faster."

"If we have a big tournament, we can go quicker. But if we get beyond 10 feet, I am probably limiting myself to only two pin positions on each hole that I can

3rd green and bunker complex



use. That's no good if we have a major event and I have to change the pins four times during the week.

"I think what golfers also haven't realised is that when they buy putters that are used by the professionals, they are much softer than usual. The balls are too, and the combination means you have to hit the ball harder on normal greens. Golfers don't realise it's not the course but the equipment that's giving the impression of 'slow' greens."

So it would be counter-productive to try and match up to Augusta's greenspeeds, but what can they do at Stoke Park to give the famous old course its own identity?

Built on a 300-acre site, the course is located in the middle of an old deer park. The team have attempted to replicate that feeling around the course. Trees are trimmed up to a level called the 'browse line', the height to which deer could reach when feeding on trees. It's also a handy height to allow tractors to negotiate around trees.

The difference between Stoke Park and Augusta National here being that there are actually deer still browsing the Buckinghamshire estate, whereas in Georgia the television broadcaster CBS pumps bird noises from speakers during the Masters to give it a more natural feel.

Around the base of these trees, grass has been reintroduced and the team closely manages 280 acres of the entire estate. There are no long rough areas, and the mantra is that anywhere a golfer can hit, a greenkeeper will have been less than three weeks prior.

"Everything is cut tight because we want to be different," said Alex. "It's about being as good as we possibly can be. We just try to produce the best course we can for our members."

And isn't that all golfers can ask for from their greens team? ■

Mansion and
Tennis court west



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How has topdressing changed over the years?

It's a closely-guarded secret about how the team at Augusta National get their greens so fast. They won't even release figures of the exact speed during the Masters.

But what we do know is that they're fast. Very fast.

In fact, faster greenspeeds, made possible due to new species of grass cultivars, are becoming the norm across the globe. Every since Old Tom called for 'mair sand', topdressing has been a vital tool in helping greens achieve faster speeds.

But how has topdressing changed in the years since?

Douglas Karcher is professor of horticulture at the University of Arkansas and he explained how faster greens has meant changes to the way we topdress.

Faster green speeds have certainly affected topdressing, mainly due to the newer grasses required to achieve today's fast greens speeds. The new, ultra-dense bentgrass and bermudagrass cultivars tolerate mowing heights of less than 0.1 inch, which sets a foundation for faster greens speeds.

However, these newer cultivars produce a lot of organic matter near the putting green surface and so frequent sand topdressing is critical for maintaining firm, fast and healthy greens.

The thicker organic layer means today's topdressing sands probably should be finer than in previous decades, as coarse particles are very difficult to incorporate into dense surfaces.

I recommend that superintendents reduce the particle sizes of their topdressing sands only as needed for incorporation, while staying as close to USGA recommendations as possible.

If greenkeepers must topdress with a finer sand for incorporation, I recommend they use a sand that meets with USGA recommendations when core-aerifying their greens – ideally in the spring and the fall – so that continuous channels of coarser sand are regularly created from the surface to root zone below the organic layer. ■

How to improve the incorporation of topdressing sand:

1. Use dry sand
2. Dry the putting surface before application
3. Verticut or groom the putting surface before application
4. Apply topdressing more frequently at lower rates
5. Use sand with fewer large particles

THE BENEFITS OF TOPDRESSING

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We are all aware that thatch and soft areas in a green result in scalping and shorter ball-roll distance.

Topdressing helps to restore surface levels and corrects soil problems by providing a source of nutrition and protecting the crown of the grass plant, which in turn leads to a smooth, firm surface.

All-year-round performance

With golf being an all-year-round sport despite the great British weather, greenkeepers have the tough task of maintaining turf quality, with greens needing to drain well in wetter months, but retain water for drier ones.

It can also cause root break. Additionally, it might cap the surface of the green, reducing absorbency and inhibiting water and air movement.

There are many different grades of topdressings to consider based upon the conditions of each individual golf course, including soil type.

Making the right choice

Topdressing should match the profile of the rootzone to achieve compatibility in particle size, pH balance, hydraulic conductivity – the ease with which water can move through the pore spaces – and air porosity. Incompatibility can compromise a green's performance characteristics. Choosing the wrong topdressing can cause layering within the rootzone, inhibiting turf grass root development.

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The Problem with Progress

HENRY BECHELET, TECHNICAL
MANAGER, ICL TURF AND LANDSCAPE

THE PROBLEM WITH PROGRESS

When we conducted a survey of greenkeepers from the North of England on the subject of getting greens ready in the spring, it became clear there is a big difference between what greenkeepers thought was reasonable and what golfers were expecting.

Greenkeepers told us they generally manage to get their greens to their 'summer condition' by late May, but the problem was their members expected the greens to be ready by mid-April.

Why April? There won't be many of you who aren't familiar with Augusta Syndrome.

Having worked in our industry for 25 years, I never fail to marvel at the pace of evolution of course maintenance and the methods that are used to achieve the incredible playing surfaces we routinely see these days.

Progress has been driven by the desire of greenkeepers to keep pace with the expectations of the golfers and your willingness to adopt new techniques to bring about improvements.

If we looked at the current management practice of even the most staunchly traditional greenkeepers, I am sure we would see techniques and methods that would have been considered revolutionary 10-15 years ago but have now seeped into common use.

It is clear that all aspects of greens maintenance programmes have evolved radically in recent years. Mowing regimes have become more precise and regular grinding to keep blades sharp is increasingly common. Powered brushing has come to the fore, along with more regular top dressings and turf ironing to polish the surfaces fast, smooth and true. Pure sand top dressings are commonplace, regular aeration manages the upper soil profile, and air-injection is deployed to manage the soil lower down.

These were all radical innovations when introduced, but have become accepted methods in a short period of time. Not to mention the use of moisture probes, Clegg hammers and other objective measurement tools to guide decision making.

But even with all this progress, spring still remains a problem.

The problem with spring is there is usually a significant amount of pre-season preparation work required to get the greens in shape.

Greens need to recover from winter play and possibly disease activity and they must get



through hollow tine, aeration and top dressing work. Then surfaces will be refined with repeated top dressings, brushing, verticutting and grooming.

The problem is golfers expect us to do all this early, before the turf has even started growing. So a key requirement for successfully preparing the greens in the spring is to establish growth as early as possible.

Over the last four years, we at ICL have invested in trial work in order to understand what fertilisers are the most effective at initiating early spring growth.

The initial trial work was carried out at STRI in 2013 and found the best fertiliser – of those tested from our portfolio – for stimulating early turf colour and quality responses, coupled with the least Microdochium patch activity, was the Greenmaster Prolite Cold Start 11-5-5 +8Fe formulation.

Rather than being received as helpful, these findings were generally viewed skeptically by greenkeepers and agronomists as being an example of a fertiliser supplier giving irresponsible and cynical advice – mainly due to the perceived high nitrogen inputs for this time of year.

Undeterred, we carried on with the work and in spring 2015 we set up a rigorous on-course field trial. This work also confirmed the superiority of Cold Start compared to more traditional early spring feeds and it also cast doubt on potassium nitrate as being an effective way of generating strong growth at this time.

We communicated these results in early 2016 with written articles and seminars. At this time those greenkeepers who really wanted to take on the challenge of getting through the spring earlier and with a greater level of top dressing to come out in better shape pricked up their ears and adopted the advice.

Feedback from those who had used the Cold Start analysis was that they were impressed and felt like it was a real step forward for the spring schedule.

Last year we continued the trial programme to gain further insight. This time we set up our trial on a working green at Harrogate Golf Club, using a sand-based green with the sward comprising predominantly annual meadow grass, *Poa annua*. The trial tested various fertiliser treatments under different top dressing regimes. This time we were looking to get the greens 'good' through a spring preparation schedule, rather than just getting growth going. Easier said than done as it turned out.

The fertiliser treatments in this latest trial deployed different nitrogen sources and applied them in different forms to review their relative impacts.

They all applied the same amount of nitrogen over an eight-week period from the start of April, with some requiring a couple of applications to even out the N inputs. At this time the soil

'The problem is, golfers expect us to do all this early, before the turf has even started growing. So, a key requirement for successfully preparing the greens in the spring is to establish growth as early as possible.'



Untreated (left) versus Cold Start (right) at the start of May

Continued over

Trial Grid Plan

Treatment No	Product
1	Control
2	GM Cold Start
3	Pot Nitrate
4	GM Invigorator
5	GML Spring & Summer

2	1	4
3	4	3
1	2	5
4	5	1
5	3	2


temperatures were at 6-7°C and so we wouldn't necessarily have expected a growth response.

There was a micro granular fertiliser with the N coming solely from sulphate of ammonia, called Invigorator, and there was a micro granular formulation with sulphate of ammonia and urea, called Cold Start. There was also liquid applied urea and potassium nitrate. Top dressing was applied six days later at the equivalent of 10 tonnes/ha and 20 tonnes/ha to see how each of the fertiliser treatments generated recovery.

In terms of the strength of response – growth, colour and turf quality – the results were entirely consistent with the previous trials. The assessments showed that all the fertilisers produced a growth response, but it was Cold Start that was the best at generating recovery through the top dressings, while soil temperatures were still in single figures. The Cold Start plots also reached the NDVI target for healthy growth two weeks before any of the other fertilisers.

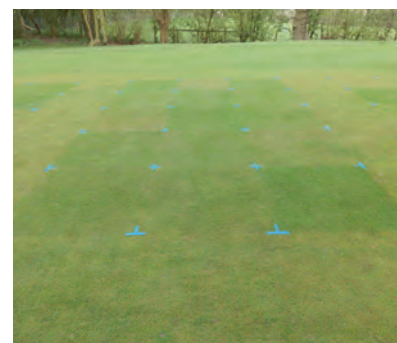
The unfertilised areas sat beneath the dressing and didn't move at all and so weren't in any fit state to



 Above: Heavy top dressing immediately after application

Top right: Recovery from heavy dressing nine days later

Bottom right: Second application of top dressing



consider further applications any time soon. But the Cold Start was streets ahead.

A second top dressing was applied three weeks later at a rate of 17 tonnes/ha and the same results were borne out. The granular feeds packed a bigger punch than the liquid urea and potassium nitrate, even though they were delivering the same amount of nitrogen. This would bear out our contention that properly formulated products perform better than 'straights'.

The passage of progression through the trial was hampered by the cold spring weather, with only short-lived warmer snaps occurring – daytime temperatures were only 12-14°C at the end of May. Pressure from *Microdochium nivale* was high during April and May and its development affected the progression of the surface preparation, as annual meadow grass is susceptible to the disease.

Interestingly, it was the untreated control plots that were affected by the disease first. But all were affected to some degree after three weeks from the start of the original outbreak. Where sulphate of iron was applied with the second application of Invigorator, the severity of attack was notably less.

The Poa seedheads then came with a vengeance to set the surfaces back even more. After making good early progress, the Poa seedheads had a shattering affect on the visual quality of the surfaces and also on the quality of the ball roll.

Despite getting through two top dressings, along with verticutting, grooming and more intensive mowing, the seedheads destroyed the playing qualities – and right at the time when Augusta Syndrome was in full force. The true nature of the Poa had revealed itself at its devastating worst, and it was then that I remembered why we wrote so many articles on sward species composition all those years ago. It also reconfirmed why I wanted to get all those "Phase 1" top dressings done and set the foundations in place for an agronomic change.

But I absolutely believe effective spring nutrition is a key part of a transitional plan because it widens the maintenance window and allows a far greater amount of top dressing to be applied. It has become clear that early spring nutrition is essential to help us get the greens through an early spring maintenance schedule.

We have also established that some fertilisers are better than others. It is interesting that the 'best' fertiliser for stimulating strong early season growth is not the analysis that anyone would have considered credible even five years ago. Cold Start won't be for everyone but if you need to get through some significant work in the spring then it might help you.

The problem with progress is that we sometimes have to change our beliefs to make it happen. But if we base our new beliefs on solid evidence and we keep monitoring, then I really don't see the problem. ■

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THE FUTURE OF AERATION?

ZACHARY LAPORTE, HEAD GREENKEEPER AT SON SERVERA IN MALLORCA.

AERATION

After a visit to the Congress of Spanish Greenkeepers Association in Malaga, I arranged a demonstration day with Campey Turfcare to learn more about the latest developments in turf aeration.

Campey Turfcare brought the company's Air2G2 aerator to the demo, which took place on the putting green and at first I was surprised, and a bit worried, by the impact the machine could have on the surface as the air was being injected. The entire surface around us rose up because of the amount of air being injected. This scared me at first but I was told it was normal. Imagine what was happening below the surface, with high-pressure air breaking and loosening the soil, eliminating compaction and allowing the roots more freedom to move through the ground. Son Servera opened in 1967, but in 2011 we opened nine new holes, and these have major drainage problems, so I realised purchasing an aerator would be logical.

But then came the tricky part – how could I convince my club committee to invest?

I knew there would be many questions about price and so I prepared a report. Every time we close the field in September for a maintenance week we lose about €20,000 in green fees – that's one week with the greens closed, and another with reduced costs until the greens recover. September is the high season in Mallorca so you can imagine how well the news of the aerification of the greens was received. Add in the cost of silica sand and the workforce, and the cost rises to €27,000. The committee was convinced, and we bought the machine. Since we've had that Air2G2 we have acted twice on the greens, with spikes of 15cm.

Two weeks after the first aeration, samples were taken on the root. The results showed it had grown from a normal depth of 5-8cm after the summer to an incredible range of between 10-15cm.

Many partners and guests ask me what this crazy machine is and what it does. Basically, I liken the blast of air injected into the soil with

that of hydraulic fracking but, of course, with air. This fracking has virtually eliminated soil compaction and created more space to allow the roots to grow and move down through the soil profile.

And of course, the air you inject helps create a healthier root zone. Secondary benefits are less diseases, firmer greens and ultimately a healthier lawn.

I have used the aerator in other areas around the field too. We receive more than 30,000 outings a year and most of them concentrate in three months in autumn, and four months in spring, so you can imagine the entry and exit areas of the greens suffer from a lot of traffic.

Prior to the purchase of the aerator we would be continuously tapping these areas to help ease compaction, but only achieved minimal results.

We act on these areas with our aerator and the results have been fantastic. These areas are almost perfect, they have no problem managing traffic and golfers say they have never seen them in such good condition.

The aerator also helps alleviate disease. I had an outbreak of brown patch on our 17th green and we used the aerator on the affected area. Surprisingly, the disease disappeared within a few days without any further treatment.

I am sure the list of benefits will go on and on, and the purchase of the aerator has already proved more than worthwhile.

Thanks to golfindustria.es for assistance in producing this article. ■



JACOBSEN

The Ipswich-based turf equipment manufacturer, Jacobsen, has introduced a range of aeration equipment. The first product to be released is the versatile GA600 aerator.

The deep tine aerator can work up to 3.4km/h at a working depth of 30cm and a width of 1.8m. If used with the AerStrike 4 Tine attachment system, productivity is further enhanced, allowing deep and conventional aeration in a single pass. Unique spacing on the AerStrike system creates tight 7.5cm patterns and eliminates the need for a turf guard.

The patented PerfectStrike tine arm motion provides perfect entry and exit of tines, achieving a straight hole. The geometry of the crankshaft and the tine arms allow for vertical entry of the tines into the ground. Coupled with cluster tine heads, keeping tines at a distance to reduce tearing of the turf, the GA600 produces unrivalled hole quality. The versatile unit can be used on greens, fairways and sports fields.



AERATION

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CHARTERHOUSE TURF MACHINERY

Sports surfaces across St Edmundsbury will benefit after the borough council invested in a Redexim Verti-Drain 7626 from Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

Landscape Supervisor Andrew Cobbold is in charge of the maintenance of these amenity areas and said: "We previously used a contractor to help us fulfil our commitment to aerating the sports pitches at least twice a year. The contractor also used a Charterhouse Verti-Drain and it was evident from the work he carried out what a great bit of kit it was." The decision was made to purchase the Verti-Drain to enable the council to aerate all of their own pitches as well as having the kit available to conduct extra external work, thereby generating additional income.

Andrew added: "With this in mind, we went for the large 7626 model, complimenting our John Deere tractors, which will not only do a great job and cope with deep aeration on our pitches, but will allow us to tackle any jobs that might be put our way." A number of key elements of the 7626 model helped Andrew justify the expenditure. He said: "Firstly, the weight of the unit is a big plus – it can really get to grips with heavy compaction. Pretty soon after we bought the machine we used it on a field which had hosted a fair. After one pass you could feel the difference underfoot between the areas aerated and those that weren't."



AERATION

GREENTEK

Did you know that grass roots do not actually grow in soil, but in the air spaces between the soil particles?

Compaction from regular play closes up those air spaces until the turf can neither breathe nor drain. Unless you relieve this compaction, the soil becomes stagnant and your turf will die.

Aeration is proven to restore the health of compacted sports turf. By opening up the soil structure, turf can begin to breathe once more. Aeration also improves drainage, enabling irrigation, wetting agents or fertilisers to penetrate. This stimulates deeper root growth and encourages stronger turf that is less likely to scuff off in winter and more likely to resist drought in summer.

As we begin to see the back of the cold, wet winter months, now is the time to consider a thorough aeration programme. Mike Stott, global sales manager for GreenTek, said: "Dyna-Spiker, part of our renowned Dynamics

Range, is a clever bit of kit that uses a power vibration principle, driving its spikes deep into the ground to open up a longer slit. This is perfect for allowing much-needed air, water or fertiliser to enter deep into the root zone.

"For those who use the Thatch-Away Supa-System, I would advocate the Star Slitter Cassettes as a fast way of aerating to a depth of approximately 20mm. These slitters are remarkably unobtrusive, leaving the surface undisturbed so that play can continue immediately.

"With the right kit and maintenance programme in place, your turf will aerate, breathe and flourish in no time."

GreenTek

GreenTek
Star Slitter



GreenTek
Dyna-Spiker





TERRAIN AERATION

Terrain Aeration has received a marked increase in the number of courses requesting specialist soil compaction and aeration service.

Normal aeration on fairways, such as verti-draining, is a fast, short term solution. But for many courses, recent weather patterns have resulted in the need for much deeper aeration than the usual six to eight inches of vertical draining. Such has been the experience at over 50 clubs, both private and municipal, including Newport, Southport & Ainsdale, Portsmouth City Council and Sherwood Forest.

Sittingbourne & Milton Regis was the first club to receive the Terrain Aeration treatment and it wasn't until 15 years later that they had four greens treated for waterlogging. This is testament to the fact the system of deep penetration aeration works in relieving compaction, panning

and waterlogging without any disruption. Terrain Aeration offers a deep drill service. Used principally on golf greens and tees, the Terralift machinery drills 16mm diameter, 250mm deep holes on a grid pattern, removing the spoil and facilitating soil replacement.

The deep drill treatment improves gaseous exchange and drainage in the top 250mm of the soil beneath the turf, improving rooting, firmness, rooting depth and durability.

The Terralift machinery used by Terrain Aeration is purpose-built to ensure excellent results without surface disruption or any loss of availability for play.

This specialist treatment improves drainage, cures anaerobic conditions and results in improved firmness and rapid drying. These improvements typically last between 10 and 12 years.

WIEDENMANN

Market Drayton has taken delivery of the first Terra Spike SL6, Wiedenmann's super light aerator for fine turf.

"It came along just as I was looking for extra depth," said Head Greenkeeper Simon Cotterill. "Our previous micro-tine machine operated to about 100mm, but going to 210mm suits us better."

No stranger to Wiedenmann aerators, this is the fourth Terra Spike Simon has purchased in 26 years at the parkland course, having bought an original P6 and two subsequent XP6s.

He added: "The plan is to use solid tines across all greens every three weeks or so, falling back to four to five weeks in winter. If we're out early morning and follow with a cut, no-one will know we've been out."

"We've also gone for coring tines for tees and surrounds and purchased a Groundsman Flexblade core collector to collect as it travels. Paul McIlDoon, our Wiedenmann UK sales manager, made all the arrangements with the Groundsman factory team in Northern Ireland so that the collector fitted snugly to the measurements of the SL and he fitted the brackets himself."

An innovative cover is one of several bespoke features designed to keep the SL's weight to just 470kg. An updated version of Wiedenmann's patented TwinDrive takes up less room and moves the centre of gravity closer to the tractor. Other developments include a built-in tine return system and additional shock absorbing facility.



Colin Goldfinch, Burrows GM, and Simon Cotterill, Market Drayton, with the first delivered Wiedenmann Terra Spike SL

ECOLOGY KEY AT THE STRATH'

JAMES HUTCHINSON,
BIGGA SUSTAINABILITY EXECUTIVE



STRATHTYRUM

Have you ever heard of Strathtyrum? It's a gem of a place squeezed onto that famous bit of golfing links that goes by the name of St Andrews.

I guess everyone who works in the greenkeeping industry is aware that the Old Course is usually ranked either number one or two in the world, with some of the others on the Links not far behind. But what of the Strath, as it is affectionately-known by those who know the area?

I had the honour of working alongside the ladies and gents of the 'Strath' a while back and there's more to this little course than meets the eye.

Opened in 1993 and running alongside the Eden course, the Strathtyrum only has 15 bunkers for the golfer to contend with. But don't let that lure you into a false sense of ease as there's a whole bunch of gorse waiting for the wayward shot.

St Andrews Links has a good number of expert ornithologists working in the area so you are never short of sound advice where birds are concerned. Malcolm Talbot, the links' head gardener, is a gentleman who I often found myself talking to regarding sightings in the area – linnets, yellowhammers, green finches, house sparrows, oystercatchers, lapwings and reed buntings are the norm for the Strath.



Top: Low lying wet hole on the Strath

Bottom: Yellowhammer among the gorse

The Strath has an abundance of wildflowers, with the Operation Pollinator section taking centre stage. Ox-eye daisy, selfheal and wild carrot all grow profusely



The gorse is managed on a five-year rotational basis so it rarely becomes weak. Keeping this evergreen trim means it generates a dense stand, which is ideal for the nesting birds to use. This method allows the gorse to produce more attractive yellow flowers throughout the year, while hares and rabbits are content to hide there. I know rabbits can become troublesome on a course with their constant digging in bunkers, but they are still an important part of the food chain so we should put up with them. Hares, on the other hand, are a welcome addition to any golf course as they nibble on undesirable grasses such as Yorkshire fog and meadow grasses, helping to thin rank areas out.

There's a well-manicured hawthorn hedgerow stretching along three of the Strath's holes. I walked this hedgerow early last year checking for wildlife activity and was surprised to count 22 old nests. Hedgerows are an important part of land management but avoid cutting them between April and

October as there may be active nests. It's worth pointing out that all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law.

If you do ever get the chance to play or walk the Strath then take a pair of binoculars with you as there's a good chance that you'll see either an osprey or a sea eagle on the Eden Estuary side of the course. The osprey is a real beauty to see, whereas sea eagles can reach about twice the size of a heron.

The Strath has an abundance of wildflowers, with the Operation Pollinator section taking centre stage. Ox-eye daisy, selfheal and wild carrot all grow profusely and the team have sowed in a few of the semi-parasitic yellow rattle into the rank grasslands in the hope of thinning out the unwanted grasses.

In terms of water usage, the team from the Strath have a brilliant holistic way to wash their machinery down – they use a common reed bed filtration system.

Continued over



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Reed beds are aquatic plant-based systems which allow bacteria, fungi and algae to digest unwanted baddies, thus cleansing the water. Wash-down water is fed into the reed bed system and taken up via the reed's stolon and rhizomes, where it is filtered by the aerial parts of the plant.

The process of cleansing water using floras is known as phytoremediation and requires little maintenance from the greenkeeping team. Not to mention a reed bed is an ideal habitat for all sorts of critters.

The reed bed was designed by the STRI but the guys built it in 'in-house' with other members of the greenkeeping team.

While I'm still on the subject of water, there's a pond on the Strath that has an abundance of life in it, including frogs, toads, dragonflies, darters and hawkers. Close by the pond is a collection of newly created low-lying wet holes, which are performing exceptionally well. The guys sent me a picture of hundreds of tiny frogs which had developed there and made their way onto the Eden's 13th green.



Above: The Strath eco-team next to the reed bed. left to right; Natasha; Frank; Jim and Richard.

Below: Natasha with one of their new frogs

Top right: Hare on the Strath

Bottom right: Operation Pollinator area





The Strath's 'eco team' are made up of Richard Devlin, Natasha Repinskaja, Frank Aherne and Jim Wilson and it's a pleasure to meet people who are not just great greenkeepers but also great ambassadors for the greenkeeping environmental world. It would be easy to simply come in and mow grass each day, but people such as these are using their own time to not only better themselves, but to enhance their workplace for others - their workplace just happens to be The Home of Golf.

During the Open, the Strath turns into a massive car park. With all these vehicles comes great compaction and grass damage. The team can handle this quite easily by roping off greens and tees and when the circus has gone a programme of aeration, decompaction and over seeding is put into place. But what of the wildlife? How does that cope? Quite admirably actually. There's more than enough gorse

to hide in when things get too hectic, whereas there are many rough areas and wildflower zones, which are not used by the public. You just can't help thinking that the wildlife has seen it all before and is not fazed by all this traffic.

During my visit to the Strath, the team mentioned that approximately 100 painted lady butterflies were noted on the thistles in an out-of-play area during summertime. Creeping thistles can be a real nuisance on a golf course but like many invasive species they do have their purpose. Whenever I visit courses I always suggest leaving scruffy areas where golfers do not go. Painted Ladies require all the help they can get so think about re-naturalising sections of your golf course for these, and other, butterflies to flourish. The team has also erected two bee boxes, which is providing great results, with one of them being inhabited by buff-tailed bees. ■

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Congratulations to Kenny Duncan of Dunfermline, who was presented with honorary membership for 25 years' service to the club. Well done Kenny.

As I am writing this, the emails for the spring outing, the pairs competition and the BIGGA Scottish Region conference are falling into my inbox. It would be great to see a great attendance at all three. See the events page for details of the spring outing.

We also have Paul Miller lined up to do a talk about fertilisers on 14 March at Elmwood Training Room. Emails will be sent out for that too.

YARA Farmers' Curling Championship took place at the ice rink in Perth and is an annual fixture in the Scottish farming calendar, attracting some of Scotland's top players. 2017's competition ended in a nail biting finish, as the championship was decided by the final stone in an extra end.

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Congratulations to skipper Sandy Reid, links superintendent from Carnoustie, with lead Hamish Robertson, second John Dunn and third Stuart Stark, taking the championship title trophy.

East



Alan Campbell
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demon.co.uk

Congratulations are due to members of the East of Scotland section committee. Daryl Burdett has become engaged and Ryan Beck welcomed baby number three into his growing family. Best wishes to you all.

Changes to the committee following our recent AGM are as follows: Graeme Davidson comes on to the committee and he and Ryan Beck will be responsible for education matters. Grant Moran takes over as vice chairman after Phil Butler's promotion to chairman.

The next committee meeting is on April 11, subject to confirmation. Any topics for discussion are welcomed.

Following on from his recent trip to Singapore and his R&A Scholarship award, Graeme Davidson will present at the Scottish Conference in Perth. Tickets for this are selling out fast.

Our spring meeting at Gullane No 2 is limited to 32 spaces, so get your entry in as soon as possible.

North



Neil Sadler
gkneil@sky.com

There are a few men on the move this month. Dale Robertson is heading up to Turriff, Jimmy Peace is leaving Newburgh to join the team down the road at Trump International, and Jack Darling is leaving us at Porthlethen to go and work on a new course in the south of Denmark. We wish them all the very best in their new ventures.

We would like to welcome Martin Turna to our committee. Martin is the deputy head greenkeeper at Fraserburgh. Anyone else who feels they could contribute to running the section will be welcomed.

Our 200 club tickets will be issued shortly, so look out for these. These are priced at £7, so help support our section and spread the word. We would like to thank Double A and TAS for their continued support of the 200 club.

For more details of our spring outing on 25 April see the events page. The cost is £25 for members and £10 for representatives and apprentices. You can pay through internet banking using account number 10823583 and sort code 83-26-16. The event will be followed by the AGM, which has a relaxed dress code so jacket, collar and tie are not required.

SW Scotland



Amanda Dorans
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amanda.dorans@
lochlomond.com

West



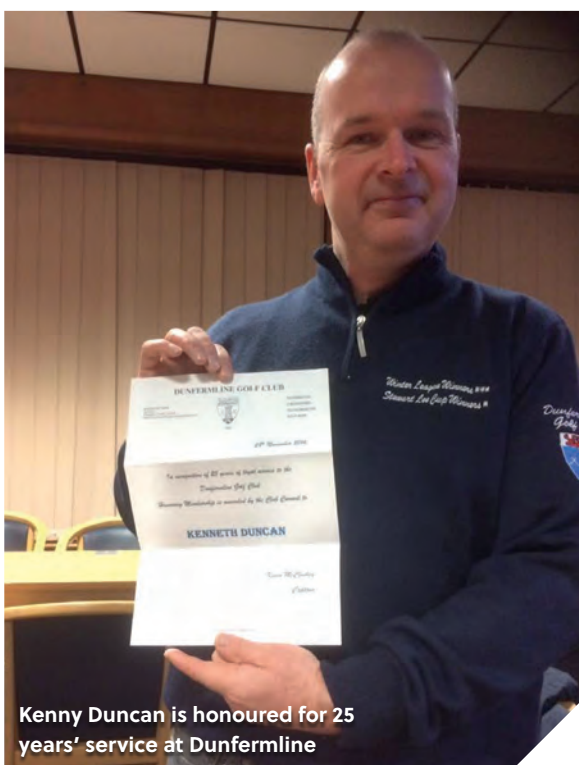
Scott Davidson
@BiggaWest
headgreenkeeper
@cathcartcastle.net

I hope everyone has been enjoying the dry January and February, getting plenty of winter projects finished. If you have any photos don't hesitate to tweet them to @BiggaWest.

Everyone from the West section would like to wish Mike Dooner of Thorntrees Amenity a happy retirement. Thank you for all the support over the years.

Our autumn meeting at Hags Castle is limited to 40 places, so please get your entries in early to avoid disappointment.

Thank you to Symbio for holding their soil biology seminar at Cowglen on 31 January. A great educational day was put on by Kerr Hunter and Gary Smith and enjoyed by 40-plus attendees.



Kenny Duncan is honoured for 25 years' service at Dunfermline



BIGGA NORTHERN REGION

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sandra@bigga.co.uk

NORTHERN REGION

North East



Jack Hetherington
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jack87heff@gmail.com

Congratulations to Whitley Bay on becoming runner up in the Environmental Awards.

Head greenkeepers have available to them, via Xact, a range of training services and safety package for manual handling, fire safety and food safety.

North West



Steve Hemsley
@BIGGANorthWest
steven.hemsley1@ntlworld.com

May I thank Lee Burton and Tom Wood for all their hard work on communications over the last couple of years.

The North West committee continues to work hard to provide you with any information, education and networking opportunities and we will communicate these through this page and on social media. Make sure you follow us on Facebook and Twitter too.

Our congratulations go out to mad Burnley fan Neil Cox and his new wife Kim, who got married on 17 December. Also to Dave Mycock, who is now head greenkeeper at Disley.

Finally, well done to all those who have been selected to join the Open Support Team at Royal Birkdale. Next month I will report back on the North Wales seminar day held at Deeside.

For any members looking for tournament set up experience, the PGA North Region Championship is being held at Bolton Old Links at the end of July. Email me to express an interest.

Cleveland



Anthony McGeough
amcgeough@aol.com

So in between feeds I'm starting to adjust to life with the newest member of the family, and I no longer feel like a zombie due to lack of sleep. Order is returning to my life.

As I am about to embark upon another role within BIGGA, I would like to offer the opportunity for anyone who fancies a go at writing the GI Around the Green section each month. I will continue to write this section until we find a substitute. Writing the Around the Green section is a great way to start if you want to see how the section is run and how BIGGA works. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Northern



Rob Gee
@Rob_Grn
robgee.03@blueyonder.co.uk

Congratulations to Rebecca Turner of ICL on the birth of Alexandria June Turner on Monday 30 January.

Congratulations to Gary Anderson on securing his first head greenkeeper role at Pontefract & District. Also, thank you to Tom Wood of Countrywide Farmers for organising an excellent education day at Pontefract and thank you to everyone who presented and attended the day. It was a great success.

All of the section events this year cost £20 with bacon butty and hot drink on arrival and food afterwards. Let's have a good turn out this year.

Plan your days, make arrangements and come meet fellow greenkeepers and enjoy the day. Afternoon tee times have been requested to give us the chance to meet fellow greenkeepers and enjoy the day.

We are now looking for 2017 sponsors.

Thanks again to 2016 sponsors Aitkens Sports Turf, Rigby Taylor, Cheshire Turf Machinery, Balmers GM Ltd, Greensman Ltd and ICL.

Thank you again to any sponsors who have supported the Northern Section.

Sheffield



Wayne Lazenby
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wlazenby5@gmail.com

There are many congratulations this month. Kerran Daly has been awarded BIGGA life membership, which is well deserved for all the years of hard work.

Good luck to Graham Pickin who is moving on from Phoenix Sports Club to Thorne Hirst Golf Club. I'm sure Phoenix members will be sad to see him go after all his hard work.

Wayne Poole has been voted employee of the month at Sheffield International Venues. Wayne had lots of votes from his colleagues and is a dedicated member of the team at Birley Golf Club.

We are pleased the Sheffield section has a new member, with Allen Donlevy joining the team at Abbeydale.

To book a place on the Bernhard demonstration with Steve Nixon, which is a free event being held on 23 March at Hallamshire, email sandra@bigga.co.uk.

North Wales



Craig Wheeler
@BIGGANorthWales
craig.wheeler@btinternet.com

Check out the events page for details of upcoming golf events during 2017.

The regional qualifier for the BIGGA National Championship at Verulam will be held at Prestatyn on April 27.

Next year's bus to Harrogate will be cancelled if there is not enough interest by 31 October.

SECTION NEWS

**WE WANT TO
HEAR WHAT'S
BEEN GOING
ON IN YOUR
SECTION**

Email your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk



BIGGA SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES REGION

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SOUTH WEST & S. WALES

South West



Seb Cavilla

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sebcavilla@

googlemail.com

We have been busy behind the scenes helping organise speakers for the regional conference and also securing a couple of great events for the forthcoming year for the section. Keep your eyes peeled soon for fixture cards and updates.

I have seen some interesting projects are ongoing around the section. If any of the following interest you, please email me or use your contacts to arrange a visit.

Chipping Sodbury is in the process of installing a reedbed system. Long Ashton is doing some very interesting bunker work using rubber crumb and artificial edging.

Here at Chippenham we are approaching a very exciting time, our new maintenance facility is progressing nicely, with the welfare provisions being built currently. Do get in touch if any of the above seem worth a visit to you.

After our dusting of snow over the weekend, we might be fooling ourselves but it almost feels like spring is within touching distance. The mowers have been out this week and it's definitely getting warmer.

Our section will hopefully be joining forces with our Welsh counterparts and share attendance with the South Wales spring seminar. More details will be available soon.

South Coast



Mike Cartwright

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I've just got home from the South Coast Section Seminar, and what a great day it was. The day started with Michael Sawicki, general manager at Parkstone.



Bunker renovation at Long Ashton



Reedbed system at Chipping Sodbury



The South Coast section seminar



Tony Gadd with Stuart Green

His presentation was entitled “Future Thinking” and discussed the changing game and how courses must become more appealing to modern members.

Next up was Ian Macmillan, who brought a plethora of experience from his many years in greenkeeping. He explained how the Macmillan Methodology is used in Germany and Holland and how he has had remarkable grow in times. This was interesting as we are going to be forced to change with fungicide withdrawals and suchlike.

BIGGA's Stuart Green was up next, expanding on the benefits of the CPD system. I enrolled on it immediately before writing this and it is very simple to do. As Stuart stated, we are earning points every day.

Andy Ewence, course manager at the Buckinghamshire, spoke next. Andy has been the driving force behind some massive changes at the club. If you get the chance, his talk is one not to miss.

Finally was the South Coast section's Matt Plested, course manager at Stoneham. Matt has only been at Stoneham for around 18 months, but has already implemented some great changes. I love Stoneham so it's wonderful to see how the team is working hard to revitalise a great track.

There was also a presentation to the BIGGA legend Tony Gadd. Tony has been a part of the South Coast Section committee for as long as I can remember. Stuart Green had the honour of presenting Tony with this prestigious award, and I'm sure that I speak for the whole section in thanking Tony for his many years of hard work.

Our first golf fixture of 2017 will be held at Parkstone on Thursday 6 April. We expect this to be a very popular event and with numbers being limited, will be dealt with on first come first served basis. To book, email southcoastsection@bigga.co.uk

Devon & Cornwall



Neil Rogers
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nrorgers@country-widefarmers.co.uk

The section held its spring seminar at St Enodoc. It was a very informative day with all of the local machinery dealers showing the most up-to-date technology in cutting, spraying and machinery.

The day was superbly organised and was obviously of great interest to greenkeepers as there were 90 attendees.



Insert and below: The Devon & Cornwall section's spring seminar was held at St Enodoc



The committee would like to thank Billy Mitchell for his hard work in putting the day on and for Scott Gibson and St Enodoc for hosting us.

South Wales



Andrew Hatcher
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andrewhatcher1@msn.com

As the daylight hours are becoming longer, and while we've had a better winter than the previous, we can now look forward to the spring.

Our section's spring seminar is going to be held at another venue this year, overlooking the 18th green from Celtic Manor's 2010 clubhouse in the Samuel Ryder suite. The cost of the day is £30 and more information on the day will be sent out by email.

The first golf meeting of the year will be played at Parc Golf Clubm with the cost of the day including a two-course meal. See the upcoming events page for details. Come along and support Rhys McDonagh in his new role.



SECTION NEWS

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN YOUR SECTION

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk

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cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk**BIGGA South East Region****Kerry Phillips**
07715 672568
@BiggaKerry
kerry@bigga.co.uk

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

**Stephen Alabaster**@JacUKEast
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textron.com

We very recently had our first meeting of the year, just before the GIS Show. Congratulations to all from the Surrey section who made it over to Orlando by the way. I managed to bump into some of you on the BIGGA stand at the show and it was great to see the good work you did promoting BIGGA in America.

We have some key dates coming up, with the South East regional dinner at Walton Heath on 10 March. Check out the events page for details of the other events and make sure you get your entries in early.

Our Turkey Trot will be held at Camberley Heath this year. As last year was fully booked, my advice is to get your team sorted and booked as soon as it opens. In light of this, I would like to add my favourite photograph of 2016, which I believe was taken on Christmas Day at Banstead Downs (below). I hope the member repaired the pitch mark.

The Surrey section would like to thank all the sponsors who enable us to put on some great golf events. I understand the sponsor forms are being sent out as we speak, which will need filling in and returning as soon as possible.



Picture by Ben Adams

Kent

**Ben Adams**@BIGGAKent
ben.adams@
talktalk.net

I can't believe it's March already, and yet still no sign of daffodils where I am. I'm sure that I would be right in saying that across Kent the first two months of the year have brought an array of weather. From heavy fog, rain, hard frosts and beautiful sunny days, not forgetting some snow mixed in there somewhere, let's just hope spring starts early.

As for education, by the time you read this the section will have had two seminars at Hadlow College. The first was on 2 February, where about 45 people attended. Thank you to everyone who came along, and thanks to our guest speakers.

The second was on 2 March. For now, that is all the pre-arranged educational events. However, the section will be looking to organise more, from golf course walks in the spring and summer to woodland management courses in autumn and winter.

For those who are not aware, we now have an active Facebook account (BIGGA Kent section), twitter page (@BIGGAKent) and email address (biggakentsection@gmail.com). Here you can find updates of forthcoming education events, golf days, and have the opportunity to share news, discuss topics and get to know fellow members of our Kent section.

There is a new South East regionals match event taking place in September. The winners of our golf days in March and May will have the opportunity to represent Kent against the other South East regions. This will take place on 26 September at the London Golf Club.

Thank you to all our section sponsors and thanks to the rest of the Kent section board: Barry Bradshaw, Anthony Stockwell, Mark Todd, Lee Sayers and Richard Wood.

WHAT'S ON

SEE OUR NEW EVENTS PAGE FOR DETAILS OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR REGIONEmail your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk**One reckless driver has some serious divot repairing to do at Banstead Downs**



Picture by Ben Adams

London



Kevin O'Neil
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londonsection@
bigga.co.uk

As the weather makes a turn for the warmer, the section gathered at Oaklands College for our annual greenkeeping seminar. Over 120 attendees were present to see first class presentations from Phil and John from The Grove, who gave an insight into hosting the British Masters. Adrian Mortram from Robin Hulme Associates spoke about the importance of irrigation system audits. Matt Plested made a welcome return to the section, taking us through the developments at Stoneham, and Dr Andy Owen explained the importance of soil characteristics in Sportsturf management.

Further education events are planned, with Kevin Munt and Peter Jones hosting a career benchmarking session at Northwood on February 28 March. Details of future events will be released via Facebook and email.

A big thanks to Andy Ewence at The Buckinghamshire for hosting a course walk and highlighting some of the course development works that have been taking place there.

Congratulations to Wes Lenihan of Ealing for earning a place on this year's BIGGA Open Support Team.

East Anglia



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Essex



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romfordgolfclub.
co.uk

We will have held our first two education events by the time you read this. The Bernhard factory tour and grinding training is fully booked and should prove to be extremely beneficial to those attending. This will be closely followed on 1 March by the afternoon seminar at Writtle University College with guest speakers Stanley Kosta from Aquatrols and Stuart Kerrison, head groundsman at Essex County Cricket Club.

Our first golf day is at Channels GC on Tuesday 28 March. Details on the events page.

To secure a place contact Michael Fance by text only on 07894 423086. Entries must be in by 17 March. We look forward to seeing as many faces there as possible to show your support to Ray and the team before this piece of Essex golf history closes its doors.

Sussex



Chris Humphrey
@CtcChris
chris@collier-
turf-care.co.uk

The Sussex section is looking forward to an enjoyable year. Head to the upcoming events page for more information, and look out for more details, to be sent through from George Morley nearer the time.

NEW MEMBERS

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

Fraser Robertson	GK - St Andrews Links Trust
Martin Clarke	GK - Bonnyton
Sam Barclay	GK - Charleton
Simon Wilson	GK - St Andrews Links Trust
Adam Black	Student - Elmwood
Alex Hodges	Student - Elmwood
Colin Gray	AGK - Loch Lomond
Gordon Bowman	AGK - Fairmont St Andrews
Michael Morasda	AGK - Greenburn
Ryan Robertson	AGK - Turnhouse

NORTHERN

Tom Smith	Affiliate - Tacit
Chris Gilling	Affiliate - Headley
Hilary Gradon	Affiliate - Alderley Edge
Daniel Morgan	GK - Rotherham
Lyn Slingsby	GK - Headley
Keith Callander	HGK - The KP
Martin Roberts	HGK - Royal Town of Caernarfon
Jacob Passmore	AGK - Howley Hall
Arwyn Oliver	AGK - Toyal Town of Caernarfon
Chris Scott	AGK - Ashby Decoy
Daniel Stephenson	AGK - Rockcliffe Hall
Joe Buckley	AGK - Harrogate
Tom Winder	AGK - Wortley

CENTRAL ENGLAND

James Cope	Affiliate - James Cope C'struction
Adam Castle	CM - Hinckley
Benjamin O'Hara	GK - Rochdale
Darren Hart	GK - Newcastle-under-Lyme
Mike Bryan	GK - Henley
Ross Carter	GK - Henley
Daniel Sellears	AGK - Lingdale
Joel Walsh	AGK - Newcastle-under-Lyme
Jordan Watson	AGK - Mack Golf
Joss Walmsley	AGK - Erewash Valley
Fred Bolt	AGK - Huntercombe

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

Paul Hawkins	Affiliate - Sports-net Ltd
David Farrow	GK - Broome Manor
Dean Curtis	GK - Came Down
Graham Sharpe	GK - Southwick Park
Matthew Walker	GK - Came Down
Matthew Moules	AGK - Stoneham
Max Drayton	AGK - Broome Manor
Mike Ray	AGK - Stoneham
Peter Gollidge	AGK - Burnham & Berrow

SOUTH EAST

Mike McDonnell	Affiliate - KAR UK Ltd
Chris Kibble	GK - The London
Liam Cash	GK - Stockport
Jonathan Taylor	HGK - The Grove
Bradley Stebbings	AGK - Coombe Wood
Bradley Warner	AGK - Hersham
Christopher Kriehn	AGK - Chingford
David Hunt	AGK - Sand Martins
Graham Caligari	AGK - Hendon

INTERNATIONAL

Fritz Lord	Affiliate - Compo Expert GmbH
Anthony Girardi	Rockrimmon
Bryce Fischer	Boston
Matthew Gourley	Colbert Hills
Peter Braun	The Minikahda Club
Pierre-Ed Macrez	Golf de Lavaux
Rodney hine	Boston



BIGGA CENTRAL ENGLAND REGION

Roger Butler

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roger@bigga.co.uk

CENTRAL ENGLAND

BB&O



Brett Moggridge

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bmoggridge@
hotmail.co.uk

The section spring golf day will be an 'away day' as we will be heading into Surrey to play Camberley Heath. The summer golf day will be sponsored by Lister Wilder, with Headland Amenity stocking the halfway hut. See the events page for details of both.

Ben Kebby is working hard on this year's education events. A workshop and demo day in association with Lister Wilder is being organised. So too is a trip to Tillers Turf to see the behind-the-scenes working of the turf manufacturing process.

Ben is also proposing a Scandinavian delegation to Iceland. This will entail course walks, workshops and more. Keep an eye on the Facebook page for further details on all these events in due course.

Mid Anglia



Darren Mugford

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rigbytaylor.com

Check out the upcoming events page for details of the spring golf day on 10 May and the summer golf day on 4 July, which will be American-themed!

We are delighted to be returning to Woburn for our Autumn competition on 25 October. This venue always proves popular so get the date in your diary.

We are yet to finalise the detail, but we have provisionally booked a section seminar in November - we should have the full details next month.

If you would like to host a course walk at your club or if you are having specific work carried out that may be of interest to other members, please get in touch with our education officer Geoff Fenn on 07774 416429 and we can arrange to promote them through social media.

Graham Downs will be looking after social media from now on, so please share anything interesting with him on our Facebook page - let's try to raise awareness of our section this year.

It is with much regret that Steve Mason has resigned from the committee after many years of exceptional service. We would like to thank Steve for all his time and effort over the years. A true gentleman and passionate greenkeeper, he will be missed.

Midland



Dave Collins

greendave2004
@hotmail.co.uk

A bit of sad news this month. We would like to pass on our condolences to the family, friends and work colleagues of Norman Lovell from Cocksmoor Woods in Birmingham.

Other sad news follows the closure of Burlish Park, formally Wyre Forest. Good luck to all the staff in finding new employment.

Contact me if you are interested in taking part in the football match against East Midlands, or if you would be interested in taking part in a fishing competition. Call Gary Watkins on 07738 199374 if you would be interested in playing in a cricket match.

Congratulations to James Harrison, at Redditch, in passing his NVQ 2, and welcome to apprentice Tom Andrews at Hollywood. I hope you have a great greenkeeping career ahead of you.

We are looking at visiting JCB in August, so watch out for that. Our friends at Countrywide will be sponsoring a November seminar with speakers and venue to be confirmed.

Please send your photos into us for the 2018 calendar.

In July we are looking to have another footgolf competition, so watch out for details coming soon.

East of England



Ian Collett

i.collett@
rigbytaylor.com

By the time you read this we will have had our spring seminar at Woodhall Spa. Full details in the next issue.

Bruce Hicks has been busy finalising the fixtures for the season and we will inform you all as soon as we can. We all wish Bruce a speedy recovery - he is out of action fighting viral meningitis at Boston hospital, but has not lost his dry sense of humour.

Talking about Facebook, remember to keep checking the East of England page for updates about all our events. Finally I would like to congratulate Adi from Lincoln and Graham from Louth on their selection to the Open Championship Support Team.

East Midlands



Matt Gilks

@gilksmatt
gilksmatt@farol.co.uk

I visited Cold Ashby this month and in addition to the golf, they now have foot and frisbee golf on site, which looks like a challenging sport.

Beedles Lake have been busy this winter, building a hotel for bugs. Greetham Valley have had a Laylandi cull, removing 80 in one hit. Let in the light!

I need numbers for the football match between the Midlands section and East Mids, so please look out on social media for the date and team sheet.

Free education day at Hinckley on 15 March. Check out the events page for details of upcoming golf days.

WHAT'S ON

**SEE OUR NEW
EVENTS PAGE
FOR DETAILS
OF WHAT'S
HAPPENING
IN YOUR
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Email your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTACT YOUR SECTION SECRETARY TO BOOK A PLACE

Scotland

North: 25 April, Cruden Bay, spring outing, 10.30am-12.30pm tee, £25

Central: 25 April, Golf House Club, Elie, spring outing

West: 9 May, East Kilbride, spring meeting

Northern

Sheffield: 23 March, Hallamshire, Bernhard demonstration with Steve Nixon, 11am-2.30pm, free

Northern: 20 April, Sandburn Hall, 1.30pm tee off, £20

North East: 26 April, Bamburgh Castle, spring golf day, 10.45am tee off

North West: 27 April, Hesketh, spring golf tournament

North Wales: 27 April, Prestatyn, regional qualifier for BIGGA National, 9.32-11.32am tee off, £20 members, £30 non-members

North West: 23 May, Hart Common, Campey Turf Care Pro-Am

Northern: 13 July, Howley Hall, 1pm tee off, £20

Central England

BB&O: 4 May, Camberley Heath, spring golf day, 10am tee off

East Midlands: 10 May, Morley Hayes, spring golf day

Midland: 10 May, Broadway, spring competition

BB&O: 12 July, Winter Hill, summer golf day, 10am tee off

East Midlands: 24 August, Beedles Lake, par 3 competition

South East

Kent: 16 March, Littlestone, details on section Facebook page

Sussex: 10 March, Walton Heath, region golf day

Essex: 28 March, Channels GC, 11am tee off, £15

Surrey: 18 April, St Georges Hill, spring tournament

Sussex: 25 April, Littlehampton, 11.30am tee off

Sussex: 29 June, Haywards Heath, 12noon tee off

Surrey: 17 July, Sunningdale, McMillan Trophy

South West / South Wales

South Wales: 16 March, Parc GC, Newport, £20

South Coast: 6 April, Parkstone GC

Devon & Cornwall: 26 April, Bovey Castle, section championship



Regions

- Scotland/Northern Ireland
- Northern
- Central England
- South West/South Wales
- South East



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MECHANIC/GREENKEEPER NORTH HANTS GOLF CLUB

Founded in 1904, North Hants Golf Club is a busy 18-hole private members club on the Hampshire/Surrey borders.

Home to the Hampshire Hog and the 2019 English Amateur Championship, the Club is in an expansive phase and currently has a vacancy for a reliable, hardworking and motivated person to manage all maintenance and servicing of the clubs machinery fleet.

The successful candidate will be fully qualified / experienced in all aspects of machinery maintenance, servicing, workshop management and ideally have some green keeping experience

Please apply with current CV to:

The Course Manager, North Hants Golf Club, Minley Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 1RF
E: coursemanager@northhantsgolf.co.uk

HEAD GREENKEEPER MOUNT PLEASANT GOLF CLUB

We are recruiting a full-time Head Greenkeeper for its 9 hole golf course, extending to 18 holes over the next 3 years. The Head Greenkeeper will oversee the team, be responsible for the maintenance, presentation of our course and developments planned

- NVQ Level 3 or equivalent in Sports Turf Maintenance
- Minimum of 2 years' experience as a Head Greenkeeper or Deputy Head
- PA1, PA2, PA6, CS30, CS31 certificates
- Knowledge of the use and maintenance of machinery and irrigation systems
- Knowledge of all H&S legislation and chemical and waste handling
- Record keeping, personnel and budget management skills
- Knowledge of construction for greens, tees and bunkers

Salary and benefits offered will be dependent on qualifications, experience and suitability. Please apply by email with a covering letter and CV to Gavin Simkins, Course Director: coursedirector@mountpleasantgolfclub.co.uk Closing date for applications is 24th March 2017

PRODUCT SUPPORT MANAGER

Location: Territory based from home. You should ideally be located in The Midlands/ North West, however this is not essential

Salary: £30,000pa, plus Company Car

The main purpose of this role is to provide information and training to the network of Iseki and Jacobsen Dealers/Distributors, and to monitor the service facility to enable the product to be properly and effectively supported.

THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- To maintain an in depth knowledge of the Iseki range of ride on mowers and tractors within your area, and having an appreciation of the remaining turf and vehicle product line offered through the business
- To handle dealer/distributor and customer complaints, and where appropriate implement a solution that will resolve the problem
- To provide accurate and detailed information to Engineering, Manufacturing and Quality departments as well as communicating with our third party product suppliers on product field issues that require action to resolve a quality issue
- Working in tandem with the Regional Sales Manager for the area you are involved in
- Working with dealers/distributors within your area to ensure the business and our customers' expectations are being met for after sales support. Assist dealers with understanding and utilising all business procedures and processes, and to help with the introduction of new dealers/distributors when required to support the complete product range. Carry out regular dealer surveys to identify current dealer standards and to identify actions for improvements
- Conducting service training courses for dealers, distributors and customers
- As well as being the main dealer/distributor contact for service matters, be aware of the market for the complete business with respect to dealer/distributor parts, training and warranty issues within your area

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- HND/HNC level, Mechanical Engineering Apprenticeship, or equivalent
- Minimum of 3 years related industry experience
- Good product knowledge, particularly of tractors
- IT literate
- Good commercial, inter-personal and telephone skills
- Full driving licence
- Willingness to travel

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01347 833800 or karen@bigga.co.uk
to book your space.

MOSELEY GOLF CLUB

Moseley Golf Club are looking forward to employing an ambitious, dedicated individual to join the established, motivated Greenkeeping team on a full time basis.

Situated just outside Birmingham, Moseley is well known as a fine parkland course, steeped in history.

The successful candidate will possess

- Ability to work to the highest standards with a keen attention to detail.
- Superb communication skills.
- Minimum 3 years experience working on a golf course.
- NVQ2 or equivalent.

Advantageous but not essential

- PA1, PA2, and PA6 spraying qualifications
- Golf handicap

Training and personal development programs are provided to promote continued learning and career enhancement. Full terms and conditions available during the selection process.

Please send a covering letter and CV via email to coursemanager@moseleygolfclub.co.uk

MALDEN GOLF CLUB

Malden Golf Club is a friendly private members club in Surrey, it's a traditional parkland course designed and laid out in 1926. The club are going through an exciting time, with considerable investment in machinery, welfare facilities and course improvements.

We are looking to recruit a highly motivated and enthusiastic individual. To work to a high standard, under the guidance of the Head Greenkeeper.

The candidates should have:

- Minimum 3 years experience.
- Minimum qualification of NVQ level 2 or equivalent preferred.

Desirable qualifications:

- PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates.
- Chainsaw licence.

Salary is dependent on experience and will be based on a 40 hour week. Weekend overtime will be paid at a fixed rate, bank holidays paid at double that rate. Further Education will be available and a Christmas bonus could be achieved. Both full time and seasonal roles are available **Please apply by e-mail with full CV and covering letter to:**
Derrick Johnstone Head Greenkeeper hkg@maldengolfclub.com

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GI & FINALLY...

BOXES KEEP BIRDLIFE STABLE AT LINGFIELD PARK

& FINALLY

The golf course at Lingfield Park, Surrey, is situated on the boundary of the world-famous racecourse which carries the same name.

The course is jam packed with wildlife, specifically the one's with the sharp beaks and claws.

Course Manager Kevin Weller and his team have produced a course of high standard while creating many habitats at the same time.

These habitats are now excellent hunting grounds for raptors including owls and kestrels, both of which are known to be in decline in the UK.

However, the most impressive thing about all this is the amount of large nest boxes which the team has erected and as a consequence, are inhabited with our aforementioned feathered friends.

The boxes, some of which have been used by the RSPB's Amber Listed kestrels, were purchased from the local farm shop in the hope of raising the number of raptors onsite.

It appears to have worked, with Kevin mentioning that one box produced 13 kestrel chicks over three seasons.

Another success story is Kevin witnessed a barn owl use one of their boxes, just 24 hours after being installed up a tree, which is smashing stuff.

At any given time, there are approximately 100 nest boxes on the 200-acre site with the majority being used by something or other. The course is alive with smaller birds including nuthatches, treecreepers, chaffinches, goldcrests and many members of the tit family. With this in mind, I wouldn't be surprised if there were other types of fast moving birds including sparrowhawks and peregrines using the course as a place to hunt.

It is projects such as Lingfield's raptor box programme which make all the difference to our dwindling medium sized bird population. You can count on the fingers of one hand the number of courses which have barn owl's nesting in a box onsite, so excellent work team!

Kevin Weller



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The Eclipse®2 walking greens mower is an excellent machine. We are able to programme the frequency of cut, which means that it always remains constant, no matter who is operating the machine.

Things like this provide me with peace of mind and give me confidence that every hole is being maintained in a uniform and precise way.

The quality of cut that the Eclipse®2 walking greens mower provides is incomparable to anything I have seen during my 30 year career in the turf industry. I am yet to discover a machine that even comes close.

Chris Haspell,
Course Manager, Castle Stuart Golf Links
Scottish Open 2016



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