



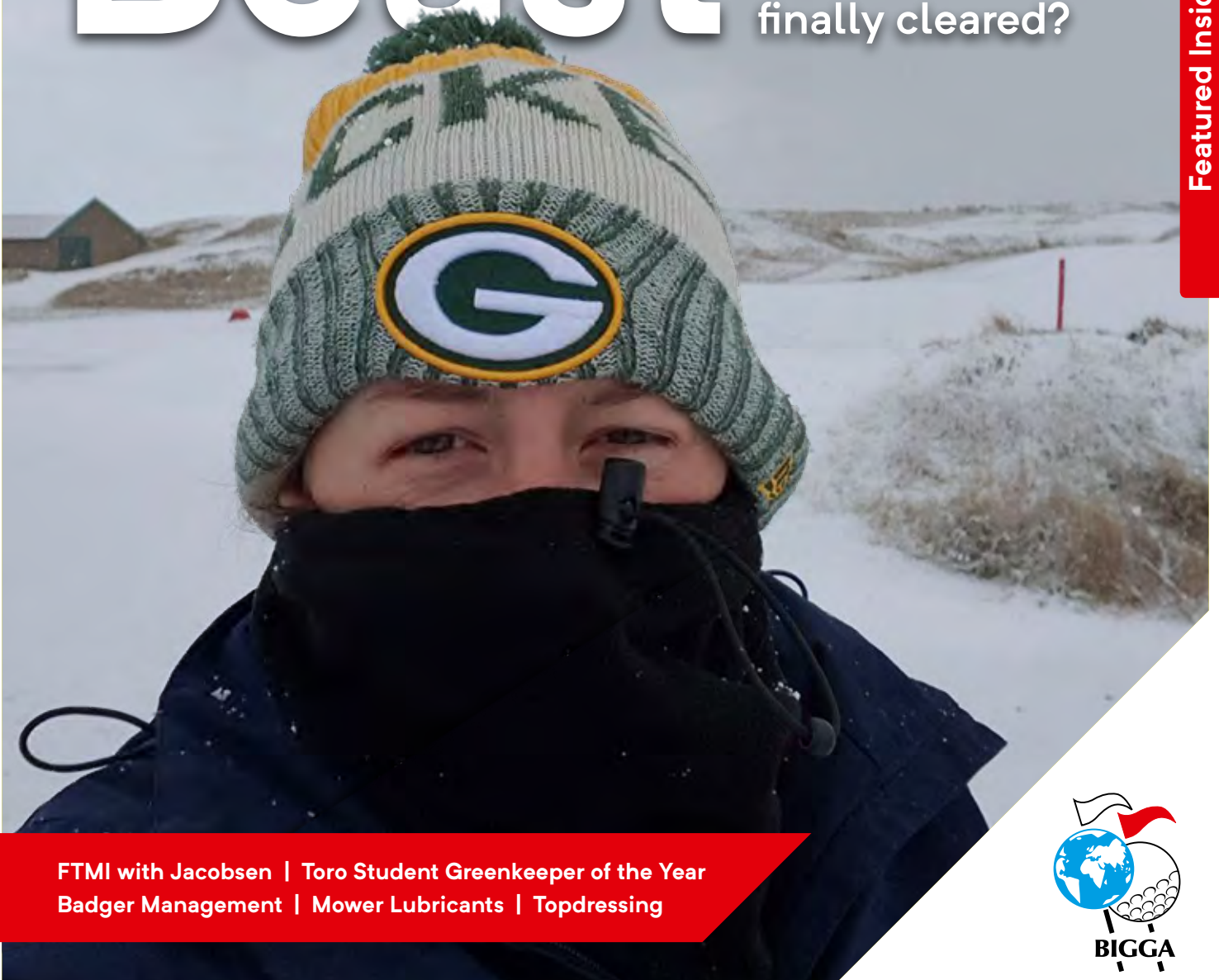
GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

£5.50 | APRIL 2018

After the Beast

What happened
when the snow
finally cleared?

Featured Inside



FTMI with Jacobsen | Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year
Badger Management | Mower Lubricants | Topdressing



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BIGGA Chief Executive Officer
Jim Croxton | jim.croxton@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA General Manager
Tracey Maddison | traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA Finance & Procurement Manager
Steve Wragg | steve@bigga.co.uk

Contact Us
BIGGA House, Aldwark, A1ne, York, YO61 1UF
info@bigga.co.uk | www.bigga.org.uk
Tel — 01347 833800 | Fax — 01347 833801

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Editorial

Editor
Karl Hansell
Tel — 01347 833829
karl@bigga.co.uk
@karlhansell



Production

Design & Artwork Production
Libbie Waddleton
libbie@bigga.co.uk
Tel — 01347 833817



Advertising

Business Development Manager
Lauren Frazer
Tel — 01347 833832
lauren@bigga.co.uk



Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane,
Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Tel — 01778 391000 | Fax — 01778 394269

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Welcome



FTMI Delegation 2018



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

Odd to have a snow covered image on the front of our April magazine, but then it has been an odd winter and early spring.

The dramatic weather conditions are covered in depth later in these pages so I won't add much further comment save for the fact that our efforts to educate golfers and the golf industry continue to be necessary. The challenging start to the year will put pressure on our members and we are keen to do all we can to help you deal with this. I'd also like to praise the BIGGA team who kept our operation going throughout the bad weather.

Our golfer magazine, Your Course, has been superbly received by members and golfers alike; and plans are underway for the autumn edition. Additionally, we are updating and adding to our range of information posters following the success of the casting earthworm materials we produced last autumn.

Next on the list is a similar poster and info booklet on the challenges posed by leatherjackets and chafer

grubs. These are slated to accompany the May edition of GI and will also be available on our website.

It is critical we also focus attention on those that are responsible for the governance of golf in the UK and I'm delighted to report the R&A has announced a significant project that should have a very positive influence in this area. Golf Course 2030 is an initiative designed to ensure golf clubs and golfers are aware of the current and future challenges that our industry faces, what is being done to meet them and what steps are necessary to reduce their impact. BIGGA is closely involved with this project and we very much welcome it. At the recent Golf Forum, a biannual event hosted by The R&A and attended by all the governing bodies in the sport, Les Howkins MG and I spoke to the assembled about the various challenges greenkeeping faces. This was not just limited to the obvious issues of climate change and increased regulation. We also highlighted impending resource scarcity (particularly water and sand), difficulties in attracting new labour, unrealistic golfer expectations and the decline in golf course etiquette. I am delighted to say these issues are very much on the broader industry's agenda.

Last month I again had the privilege of attending our Future Turf Managers Initiative, so generously sponsored by Jacobsen. As ever the delegates arrived determined to gain all they could from what is a truly career-defining opportunity. I was inspired to spend time with the delegates and the brilliant mentors who gave their time freely to put back into the profession. The education is heavily focused on leadership and communication, both of which are critical in these changing and high-pressured times. Huge thanks to all at Jacobsen for their support.

The FTMI is managed from our side by my colleague Sami Strutt who this month clocks up 25 years' service with BIGGA (I know I know, she doesn't look old enough!). It is a magnificent achievement and I'd like to add my congratulations and thanks to her. Sami has had and continues to have a significant influence on the world of greenkeeping.



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From the Editor



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

Keeping things in perspective

Unless it's a major event, we don't often do reflective pieces in Greenkeeper International, instead preferring to focus our attentions upon what's coming up ahead.

But when a weather event so significant that it gains its own nickname occurs, it's worth taking a little time to reflect on how BIGGA members all over the country have been affected.

You're probably reading this the week after the conclusion of the Masters, where the subtropical climate of Georgia has allowed the course maintenance team to prepare the most picture-perfect image of golf imaginable.

How many golfers do you imagine watched that tournament and were inspired to get out their clubs, but stopped to consider that the heavy snow we experienced just a month ago would have an impact upon their round of golf?

The answer's likely to be on or around zero, which is why we have taken the opportunity to talk to BIGGA members about their experiences during "The Beast from the East" and its smaller cousins who followed in its wake.

Perhaps some unenlightened golfer will approach you with complaints about the standard of the course compared to last year (a far more favourable year weather-wise). Well, after reading the feature you'll be reassured that you are not alone, and

hopefully you'll also be equipped with some factual knowledge about just why the course is lagging behind a little this year.

The Beast from the East provided a bit of excitement for the BIGGA staff who attended the BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference in Perth, with the weather hitting just as we made our way home. It made for one of the hairiest journeys I've experienced in my years as a journalist, but I have to say that it was well worth the effort.

Technical greenkeeping may not have been heavy on the conference agenda, but the topics up for discussion were far reaching and included how to identify signs of stress in yourself and your colleagues, and a repeated theme of working together for the better of our clubs and the wider industry.

These vital discussions proved how the modern course manager can no longer just focus on the golf course, but must also be an ambassador for his course and a beacon of professionalism for the industry. It sounds like a big task, but such status is actually a positive reflection of how the greenkeeping industry has been elevated to an increased position of respect.

Talking of elevating the industry; few people have done more towards this goal over the past 25 years than Sami Strutt, who celebrates her silver jubilee with the association this month. I'm sure you'll share with me in offering our congratulations to Sami, and saying 'here's to the next 25 years!'

In this Issue

Our contributors

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Mark has become the turf management industry's resident expert with regards to weather and the climate. This month, Headland Amenity's technical director helped us out with the facts and data as we took a closer look at how the snow storms of the past month will impact the preparations of greenkeepers ahead of the coming season.



38 James Hutchinson

BIGGA's resident ecology expert, James has spent the last few months visiting courses all over the country, hearing about the damage caused by badgers foraging for leatherjackets and chafer grubs. He's taken everything he's learned and put it together into this feature, asking whether there's anything greenkeepers can do to stop the destruction.



42 Nick Machin

Nick has come a long way since he quit his job working at a bottle factory four years ago. He made a career change, putting all his efforts into becoming an outstanding greenkeeper. But even he couldn't imagine that he would spend eight weeks in America, a life-changing trip he recalls within this magazine.



48 Lewis Arscott

Social media is a powerful tool, and for Lewis Arscott, a 20-year-old greenkeeper at Woodbury Park in Devon, it also opened up an incredible opportunity. Lewis responded to an appeal for help on Instagram and found himself whisked off to Dubai to help Stuart Horwood and his team undertake a programme of overseeding at The Els Club.



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How the impact of the snow could be felt for some time

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Is it possible to halt the damage badgers cause?

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Nick Machin reflects upon his eight-week scholarship

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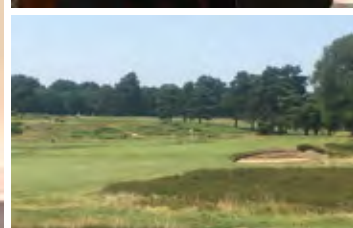
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Sami Strutt

Looking back on Sami's 25 years with the association

Walton Heath Golf and Dinner Day



The South East Region, supported by its Regional Partners, hosted its annual golf day at the prestigious Walton Heath Golf Club on Friday 9 March.

Walton Heath is due to host the British Masters in October, making this year's annual Region golf day especially exciting. Despite the Beast from the East doing its best to derail the event, a field of 112 were not let down, with course manager Michael Mann and his team presenting a superbly conditioned course.

The day saw a large field start from three tees and under still conditions the scoring was set to be good. However, Region Chairman Pete Smith said: "Unfortunately, some of us didn't live up to the early promise, preferring to play our better golf in the early afternoon drizzle."

A halfway BBQ with refreshments was laid on by Lister Wilder, with a meal following the golf with words from BIGGA President Chris Kennedy and Walton Heath Captain David Williams.



Left: Ron Christie and Neil MacPherson receive the Ian McMillan Trophy from Walton Heath's David Williams

Right (top to bottom)

Ron Christie receives the Ray Day Memorial Trophy from Walton Heath's David Williams

The Surrey Section won the Team Challenge

Walton Heath Golf Course

Course Manager Michael Mann said: "It was nice to hear so many positive comments from other greenkeepers about the condition of the course, and I have passed on these comments to the team who work hard to consistently produce fantastic conditions at Walton Heath. It has been a tough winter for the guys who have worked in some dire weather to complete our extended winter project programme in preparation for the British Masters in October."

The winners of the Ian McMillan Trophy for BIGGA members and guests were Ron Christie and Neil MacPherson.

The Team Challenge was won by the Surrey Section, for the

third year running, whose top three players had the best combined score to receive the Silver Salver.

The evening was concluded by the presentation of the Ray Day Memorial Trophy to Ron Christie from Addington Palace, who scored 70 for a two-under par total.

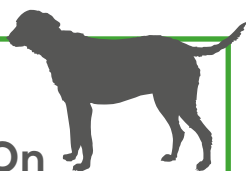
Pete added: "Needless to say, the serious golfers prevailed, allowing the rest of us to concentrate on the raffle prizes.

"The South East Region of BIGGA is most grateful to its Partners for their continued support."

The 2019 golf and dinner day will take place on 8 March at Walton Heath.



Dogs On Course



Name: Ben

Age: 9

Owner: Robin Williams

Course: Brean Golf and Leisure Park

Breed: Labrador/collie cross

Favourite treat: Any tasty biscuits or sandwiches

Favourite spot on the course:
His armchair in the workshop

Naughtiest moment: Showing his aggression to other dogs when walking on the lead.

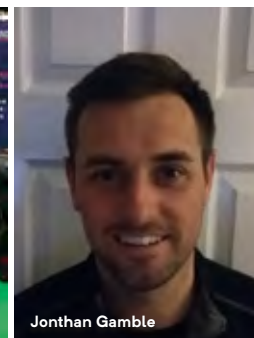
My dog is happiest when... Chasing the Canada geese off the course.

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

Scholarships



Blair Shearer alongside Carly Booth



Jonathan Gamble

A pair of BIGGA members are celebrating after receiving higher education scholarships on behalf of BIGGA Partner Jacobsen.

Jonathan Gamble, first assistant at Welshpool, and Blair Shearer, greenkeeper at Dunbar, have both received scholarships to assist with their studying as they work towards a Higher National Certificate in Golf Course Management at SRUC's Elmwood Campus.

Jonathan, 33, said: "The costs that come with undertaking education as a mature student are such that I would struggle to complete my studies without this support. Thank you to Jacobsen for continuing to support BIGGA members through these fantastic scholarships."

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This month @BIGGALtd



@CaddingtonGolfC

Another #wet start here so some #DIY and #hazard stake painting is in order



@CumberwellPark

We are pleased to be supporting our senior assistant greenkeeper Sam McQueen as he starts his NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Management with @Bridgwater_Coll @BIGGALtd #continuetolearn



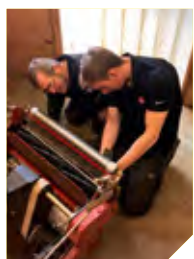
@J16THP

Nice work to make a start on the tees after some decent weather over the weekend. #Golf #Work #Greenkeeper



@jonwood1978

Two #photos from last night's #CastleCourse @TheHomeofGolf great to see the course in #lowlight #shadows #greenkeeperlife @BIGGALtd



@AnthonySunney

Our head mechanic teaching our apprentice greenkeeper how to adjust HOC. Passing on valuable skills and knowledge down the generations! This is what it's all about

👍 #Greenkeeping



@RSBGolfclub

@Ecology1BIGGA @GolfVreband spring is coming while a newt crossed the fairway to reach the pond. Players gave him/her a lift...



@JamesDawson1989

Does anyone have the feeling of déjà vu? #theresnoletup #beastfromtheeastpart2 #anothersnowday

John Deere and TPC Sawgrass



BIGGA's largest-ever TPC Sawgrass volunteer team is preparing to fly out to Florida next month to assist with the preparation of the famous course ahead of THE PLAYERS Championship.

And with the championship being brought forward from May to March in 2019, the application process for next year's event will soon get underway, giving you the best opportunity to get involved with this incredible experience.

For the first time, John Deere expanded the programme for 2018, allowing an international member of BIGGA to join the other successful applicants from each of BIGGA's five regions.

The BIGGA members who are preparing for this "life-changing" opportunity are: Paul Armour, Dunbar; Joe Barnes, Royal Lytham & St Annes; Nicholas Thorley, Little Aston; Jamie Blake, Broadway; Antony Kirwan, Romford; Craig Cameron, St Leon Rot in Germany.

The six BIGGA members join the team at the legendary venue for the entire championship, courtesy of BIGGA Partner John Deere.

While in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, the BIGGA members will join a volunteer course preparation team of over 90 volunteers from 14 different countries, who work alongside the home greenkeeping team in getting the course in shape for this event, considered by many to be golf's "fifth major".

We'll be featuring the adventures of the BIGGA volunteers in the June edition of Greenkeeper International, but if you want to get involved with this incredible experience, be sure to head to the BIGGA website from 1 May to complete an application form.

Proposed timeline for applications:

Stage one: Initial expression of interest via a short online survey, opens 1 May 2018, closes 31 July 2018

Stage two: Three-minute video submission, closes 1 September
Just three to four minutes in length, these can be filmed on your mobile phone and you need to answer the following questions:

Ambition — where would you like your career to go in the next five years?

Plans — what steps do you plan to take to achieve your ambitions?

Greenkeeping interests — what are your favourite aspects of greenkeeping?

Outside interests — what are your key interests outside of greenkeeping?

BIGGA — what should be BIGGA's key priorities over the next five years?

It's as simple as that!

Stage three: Regional interviews will be held during September.

Neath Golf Club and Wales Air Ambulance

The head greenkeeper of Neath Golf Club has raised money for Wales Air Ambulance after the charity saved his life when he was crushed beneath a mower.

While Mark Tucker was mowing the course, close to the club's 10th tee on Wednesday 23 August, the rear wheel of his ride-on mower slipped off the edge of the course, causing it to roll over and crushing him beneath it.

Wales Air Ambulance was called and Dr Jon Birks and Critical Care Practitioner Tracy Phipps treated Mark at the scene for extensive injuries, including a crushed torso and suspected dislocated shoulder, before airlifting him to hospital.

Mark said: "After recovering from my ordeal, it was a great honour to be invited to the



Mark Tucker presents a cheque to Wales Air Ambulance

Wales Air Ambulance base in Llanelli to meet the crew who saved my life."

After the accident, and as a way of saying thank you, members of Neath Golf Club raised money for Wales Air Ambulance. Various events were held, including a golf competition which raised over £800 for the charity.

Mark added: "I would like to thank the crew for saving my life and it was an honour to present a cheque for £845 to the charity."

WAA community coordinator Steffan Anderson-Thomas said: "It was a pleasure to welcome Mark to our base in Llanelli and to see him back fit and well after the accident.

"The money raised by members of the golf club will help keep our four helicopters flying across Wales."

Billy Mitchell

Perranporth head greenkeeper Billy Mitchell has retired after 48 years at the same club.

Billy, 70, joined the North Cornwall club straight from school and has been an active member of BIGGA throughout its existence, for which he was awarded life membership.

"The fact I proved it's possible to maintain a natural links course is my biggest achievement, and the thing I am most proud of," he said. "I hope I showed the next generation that sustainable, natural links greenkeeping is not only possible but viable, that I took the difficulty out of it and perhaps inspired them to try it, should they ever be in the privileged position of working in a links course.

"It's possible to get results with dedication, vision and



Billy Mitchell

hard work, just as much as it is from big budgets and large greenkeeping teams."

Greenkeeper International visited Billy ahead of his retirement in the July edition of the magazine and he added: "On many occasions I have been urged to adopt different practices to make the course more defined and more forgiving, but I have resisted these and stuck to traditional links maintenance, albeit with modern equipment and techniques."

Budding Photographer?



Look out for the BIGGA photography competition being launched in the May edition of Greenkeeper International

BIGGA Support Team chosen for Wentworth adventure

The first major volunteering opportunity of the year awaits the BIGGA members who have been selected to join the Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship.

The greenkeepers will be on hand to assist Director of Golf Courses and Estates Kenny Mackay and his team throughout the European Tour's flagship event.

A selection of the team has been chosen to help out with early morning course work and preparation in advance of each day's play, while the remainder will be on hand to accompany each individual match throughout the tournament.

They will also be on standby in case of emergencies, such as was the case in 2017, when Tony Bartram, greenkeeper at The Richmond Golf Club in West London and amateur beekeeper, was called into action to remove a swarm of bees that had settled on the 18th fairway prior to the final day's play.

Tony will be joining the team again this year and said that when he saw Kenny at BTME in Harrogate, he made sure to mention that he would be bringing along his beekeeping equipment, just in case.

Tony said: "It's such a great experience. I used to pay to watch the tournament every year, so if you could say to my 17-year-old self that I'd get to go inside the ropes with the players to provide greenkeeping assistance, I would have leapt at the opportunity.

"In England there's really only two big tournaments that regularly take place, the PGA every year and the Open every couple of years, so the opportunity to be a part of that experience, you can't beat it. I just love everything about the whole week."

The BIGGA Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship 2018 is:

Henry Aggar, Windlesham;	Glenn Dyer, Huntercombe;
David Angus, Newmachar;	Michael Elderfield,
Adam Baldwin, Lilley Brook;	Sandy Lodge;
David Ball, Thetford;	Sam Evans, Fulwell;
Anthony Duffield, Ham Manor;	Sam Ewing, Crane Valley;
Josh Dunn, The Belfry;	Ceri Fearnley, The Bristol;
Luke Elgie, Rushmore;	Dean Franks, Littlehampton;
Daniel Evans, Llandudno (Maesdu);	Andrew Gibbs, Sunningdale;
Joseph Frampton, Pyle & Kenfig;	Luke Green, Littlehampton;
Robert Patrick, Stoneham;	Lee Hall, Hampstead;
Philip Slater, West Herts;	David Haselgrave, Ely City;
David Taylor, Thornbury Golf Centre;	Kevin Hensman,
Kevin Tigg, South Winchester;	Rowlands Castle;
Ryan Wilson, Mill Green;	Steven Hiron, Kirtlington;
Craig Woodman, Bramshaw;	Dale Housden, Hollywood;
Adam Young, The Players Club;	Oliver Kirk, Links (Newmarket);
Martin Field, Buckinghamshire;	Matthew Lindsey,
Luke Harman, St George's Hill;	Highwoods;
Bradley Ashton, Prestbury;	James Lomas, Hadley Wood;
Russell Bain, Chislehurst;	James Lumley, The Wisley;
Andrew Baker, Ely City;	Michael Mead, Littlehampton;
Tony Bartram, The Richmond;	Peter Meek, The Wisley;
Mark Bettell, The Rayleigh;	Jamie Melham, Highwoods;
Iain Biggs, Chesfield Downs;	Chris Mitchell, Retired;
Samuel Bishop, Corhampton;	Brett Moggridge, Kirtlington;
Samuel Bolt, Huntercombe;	Steven Morgans,
Robert Boyce, Links (Newmarket);	Harrow School;
Aaron Buff, Queenwood;	Ryan Neale, Droitwich;
Harry Carvey, Heworth;	Jonathan Peacock,
Tom Coleman, Ellesborough;	Ullesthorpe Court;
Charlie Cripps, Wickham Park;	Jack Percival, Chipstead;
Joe Curtis, Chislehurst;	Carl Sharp, Queenwood;
Stephen Davey, Queenwood;	Blair Shearer, Dunbar;
Ashley Darnley, The Bristol;	Chris Shepherd, Chipstead;
Jeffrey Drake, Newbury & Crookham;	Jason Shepherd, Hendon;
	William Simmonds,
	Roehampton;
	David Smith,
	Links (Newmarket);
	Gemma St. John,
	Brokenhurst Manor;
	Justin Sugg, Whiteleaf;
	Kevin Weller, Mid Kent.

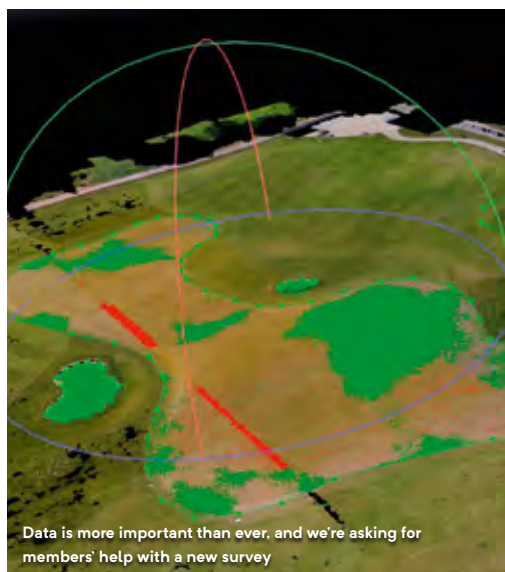


Important member survey

Data-based greenkeeping is a trend that has been rapidly increasing in popularity among course managers all over the world.

Rather than anecdotal referencing helping to define management practices, by gathering accurate data, greenkeepers are using various technology and tools to better track what methods work out on the course, and in turn use this information to better convince club managers about the resources they require.

Data is just as important here at BIGGA HQ, which is why we're going to ask for your help in the coming months to help us gather



Data is more important than ever, and we're asking for members' help with a new survey

a comprehensive database of information relating to greenkeeper salaries, employment packages and benefits as well as the number of people working in the industry and the prevalence of the various educational qualifications that exist.

Over the next month we'll be contacting you via email with a survey that will ask for your help to generate this information. As we seek

to improve the recognition and rewards our members receive, this information will be key in influencing employers and the broader golf industry.

We would urge you to take the time to complete the survey, either for yourself as an individual or, if you are privy to the information, for your whole team.

The survey will be anonymised so nobody's individual salaries will be revealed and there will be CPD credits available for completing it.

Keep an eye out for the survey in your email inbox, and we'll keep you updated within Greenkeeper International and on our website, www.bigga.org.uk



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Across the Board

Les Howkins MG | The Richmond | BIGGA Chairman

I can't believe it's April already, as it only seems like five minutes since we were all battling through the crowded halls of BTME 2018.

I know a lot of members have endured a brutal winter with horrendous weather conditions and lots of Growth Degree Days data showing we are at least four weeks behind 2017. All we can do is try our best to communicate with our clubs the best we can. Maybe it's time to consider working with other local course managers and producing a united message with facts, figures and data?

The support teams for the BMW PGA Championship and The Open have been selected and no doubt there will be lots of excited members of the teams. I hope you all have a fabulous time, enjoy the experience, make lots of new friends and share plenty of ideas. If you were not lucky enough to get selected this year, please keep trying. We are over-subscribed every year and always have lots of disappointed members. One of my team here at The Richmond applied seven years in a row before he got selected, so don't give up.

The National Board, along with the senior management team, have commissioned a new member survey that will be running over the next few months. It is our intention to make this the most important greenkeeper survey for a generation. The information we need includes salaries, working conditions, geographical location, and team size. We need you all to help us collect the information we need so we can help improve the

lives of greenkeepers using cold hard facts and not just hearsay. To give this survey and the outcomes the utmost credence and validity, we need to get a representative sample of members, and every completed survey helps to make it more accurate, so when you get the opportunity please take the time to fill it in.

The proposed changes for BTME 2019 are now well under way and early signs are very positive that the show will achieve the desired outcome. It won't be long before the education programme for Continue to Learn is finalised.

By now you will have all noticed the new look BIGGA website. It has been a long road and a lot of work has gone in to it. I believe that not only does it look much better and more modern, but the functionality of the site is greatly improved and it is now fit for purpose.

Over the coming months and years there will be many additions to the site and the plan is for it to be constantly evolving and updating, creating the go-to place for all matters related to greenkeeping and golf course management.

On a golfing note it has been nice to see the comeback of one Eldrick "Tiger" Woods. It's over 20 years since he burst on to the golfing stage and re-wrote the history books, and there is no doubt he now wants to write a few extra chapters. Will he win the Masters? Talking of which, it's that time of year where golf clubs and golfers up and down the country go a little mad with the effects of the annual "Augusta Syndrome". I have a feeling it could be a bad year this year as the winter has been so challenging over here in the UK. All we can do is communicate; clearly and with facts.



Funding your future

The Continuing Professional Development and world class education we provide would not be possible without the assistance of BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters. Ensuring our members stay at the forefront of the turf management industry takes considerable investment, and we are hugely grateful to the following for their ongoing support.



JOHN DEERE

BARONESS



BERNHARD



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



Ecology Roundup

James Hutchinson | BIGGA Sustainability Executive

GI Ecology
sponsored by
Rigby Taylor



Ecology

Quite a bird-related theme this month, with many of you sending in snaps of newly-built habitats and other exciting stuff via Twitter and email.

First off though, and a quick congratulations to the team at Cumberwell Park in winning the environmental section in the Bath Life Awards 2018.

Having seen at first hand the marvellous and hard graft John Keepen, Cumberwell's cutting edge ecology expert, and Matt James, courses manager, and the team have put in, it is not at all surprising that they waltzed off with the trophy. Here's a pic of a smart looking John with the trophy.

Even though the temperatures in the UK have been, shall we say, a tad nippy of late, sand martins are arriving in their hundreds, looking for a place to lay their hats. Nairn Dunbar and St Andrews know these acrobatic hirundines need the occasional assistance, so they have created martin walls for them. Sand martins usually dig horizontal tunnels to around one metre deep in the face of a steep, sandy bank, hence the greenkeepers carrying out this task. Great work all!

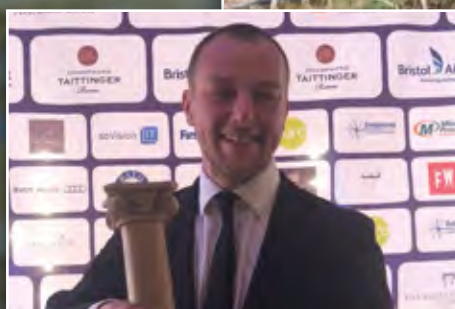
Still on the subject of bird habitats, here's Muswell Hill's fabulous collection of nest boxes.

Over at Purdis Heath, a great crested grebe is making a home for itself on the course, while West Wiltshire has a peregrine falcon just doing its thing.

I often ask people "where's the majority of wildlife?" Is it on the housing estates, farmland or industry areas? Nope, it's on the golf course, and it's snaps like these that prove that point.

I can't let a blog slip by without showing you a photograph of a bug hotel can I? Here's Sherfield Oaks' delightful den of wildlife wonders. Keep us informed on who moves in please.

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



Top to bottom: Sherfield Oak's bug hotel, St Andrews' sand martin wall, Muswell Hill's nest boxes, the peregrine falcon at West Wiltshire GC and finally John Keepen with the trophy from the Bath Life Awards. **Background:** great crested grebe at Purdis Heath GC.



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'We hae education, and we can learn...'

BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference 2018

The BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference took place at Perth Concert Hall on 27 February and, with snow falling outside, provided a fantastic opportunity for members to come in out of the weather and gain some outstanding education.

Around 300 members from all over Scotland came together to hear key note speakers such as The R&A's chief executive, Martin Slumbers, who spoke about the need for all levels of golf to work together for the success of the game.

Here are some highlights from the day:

The Team Dynamic

The team from Ladybank Golf Club, including Course Manager Colin Powrie and Head Greenkeeper David Gray, Club Manager Gordon Smith and Head Professional Sandy Smith, sat down to talk about how they work closely together for the betterment of the club.

Gordon Simpson, Ladybank Golf Club:

"It's vitally important that the members see us working as a team, day in day out, in all sorts of weather.

"There has to be a team choice to want to develop. It's not something you can force on people."

'Help is out there'

Jillian Milne, of Mindscape, introduced Perth Prison officers Alex McClintock and Adam Allison, who's charity, Andy's Man Club, encourages men to break the taboo of talking about their mental health problems and fears.

Jillian Milne, Mindscape

"Seventy-six per cent of suicides are by men and it is the biggest cause of death for men under 45. We are all great at hiding problems, but what we are not great at is asking for help."

Alex McClintock

"You are not a burden to your family, friends and colleagues. You shouldn't feel like it's a weakness, it's actually a strength.

"It's OK to talk, it's OK not to be OK, and guys, you are not on your own."



The State of the Game

Martin Slumbers, The R&A

"We have taken our eye off the ball as a sport. We stopped realising what our customer wanted."

"There are 100,000 people employed in golf on a full time basis. It's more important as an industry that we start to show a more unified voice to the outside world."

"I'm enormously positive about golf and I think the future is quite strong."

The importance of the Benevolent Fund

Chris Kennedy, BIGGA president, discussed the BIGGA Benevolent Fund and how it can support members who encounter difficulties in their personal and professional lives, including financial hardship. He touched upon the pressures imposed on greenkeepers, and how it's hard not to take things personally when criticism is received.

Chris Kennedy, BIGGA president

"One thing employers get wrong is how personally we take things out on the course. When you are having problems on the greens, it's like having problems in a relationship, it's that personal."

'Sustainability and The R&A'

Steve Isaac of The R&A chaired a pair of discussions, the first with Jonathon Smith, CEO of the

Golf Environment Organisation, and the second with Paul Murphy of Fife Golf Trust and Johanna Willi of Fife Council, who work together to improve the sustainability aspect of the Fife Golf Trust's seven courses.

Steve Isaac, The R&A

"You won't get anybody interested in sustainability unless there's a benefit to the club. But it is important that golf is seen to be playing its part."

Jonathon Smith, Golf Environment Organisation

"It's important to manage golfer expectations because some of those pressures and playing quality characteristics that golfers have got used to may not be possible in future."

'My life in golf'

Ronan Rafferty, former European Tour Order of Merit winner

"Golf is a game where lots of stuff goes wrong and you think the whole world is against you. But it's a game that makes you come back for more."



Stuart Ferguson MG, chairman of BIGGA Scotland

What were your hopes for the conference?

"We put a lot of work into the programme and we listened to the feedback of members, so it's great that they came, even though the weather was pretty poor. I hope they enjoyed the experience and take something away from it."

"It was a very productive day. The cast of speakers we had was fantastic and they covered a broad range of topics and issues, so I am sure everyone will take a lot of things back to their workplace."

How important is it that not just greenkeeping is discussed, but other matters such as mental health and the importance of teamwork?

"For me it is all related to greenkeeping. I have heard some course managers say there's not much greenkeeping on the programme, but further down the line these issues are going to be vital to their progression."

The conference was traditionally held in Dunfermline. What led to the shift to Perth, and Perth Concert Hall?

"It was down to feedback from members and where we wanted the conference to go. We compiled a ticklist of needs for the members, from transport links to just being comfortable at the show, and Perth Concert Hall ticked all the boxes. It's quite encouraging that we are able to fill a venue such as this, so onwards and upwards as they say."

Martin Slumbers from The R&A is here, as is former European Tour player Ronan Rafferty. How important is it for greenkeepers to work with other bodies within the golf industry?

"It's all golf-related isn't it, so we are pushing the objective that we all have the key. Let's join together and use that key. We all have the same objective, that of a thriving game, so let's do it together."

Pictured left top to bottom:

Ladybank Golf Club team

The Mindscape team promoting the #andysmanclub campaign

Martin Slumbers, chief executive, The R&A



YGC

Sorry!
In last month's magazine we labelled Jack Hetherington incorrectly. Sorry Jack!

Young Greenkeepers' Committee

Mitchell Jordan | Greenkeeper | Lingdale

The Future Turf Managers Initiative...Wow!
Having returned from the FTMI, it's nice to give my brain a rest, and I now consider my job to be light work!

In all seriousness, what a great, intense three days.

The FTMI gives you the opportunity to achieve skills and knowledge that you wouldn't necessarily be able to gain elsewhere to succeed in your career and learn from the industry leaders building your own personal brand.

The speakers are top drawer, with mentors chipping in with fantastic tips and advice all the time.

I thought before I went, that I would be pushed out of my comfort zone, and I was completely right.

There were times when I was taken far outside of my comfort zone, but I'm 100 per cent sure it will help me in my future career path. I loved 'crucial conversations' and will use the skills not just in greenkeeping but in everyday life.

The networking opportunity is brilliant, I made friends for life, and one of the best things is you get

put into an FTMI Facebook group with all the previous delegates, where you can share ideas, views and news.

BIGGA and Jacobsen have done an incredible job in putting the FTMI together and I feel so privileged to have been a part of it. The success rate of delegates making it into a leading role is no surprise.

I would encourage any ambitious greenkeeper to put themselves forward for the FTMI and apply. Take your time with the application and put lots of effort into it.

It really is invaluable, you couldn't put a price on it!

I can't thank BIGGA, Jacobsen and everyone involved enough!

The FTMI class of 2018 hard at work



Mitchell Jordan graduating from FTMI



BIGGA
Young Greenkeepers' Committee



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co.uk**

1. What is your job title?

Head greenkeeper

2. How long have you worked in the industry?

I have been in the industry for 23 years. Two years at Gifford then on to Royal Musselburgh for 10 years, where I completed my apprenticeship and gained my HNC in Golf Course Management before returning to Gifford.

3. I like working on a nine-hole course because...

A lot of people have the perception that nine-hole courses are short, mundane and in average condition. I get real pleasure when golfers feed back with comments like 'it's a proper golf course' and 'it's just as good as some of the big courses nearby'.

4. What is the most difficult part of your job?

Keeping the course playable in winter time. Being in East Lothian we are close to so many fantastic links courses that are almost as

good in the winter as they are in summer. Gifford has a very heavy soil with a large membership of 540 and trying to compete with links courses in the winter is almost impossible.

5. How many staff do you have?

There is myself and Colin Mowatt, who has been with me for over five years. Colin came into the industry late in his career but has an incredible passion for the job and golf course. We are also lucky to be able to call on a number of our members to help out with tasks such as greens renovation.

6. What is your machinery budget and what do you use?

The club is extremely supportive when it comes to our course machinery and we pretty much purchase a large piece of equipment annually. We don't always buy new but it's either ex demonstration or very good second hand to ensure good longevity and value. We are supported well by Thomas Sherriffs

and Fairways GM. We have also managed to pick up a few bargains from our well-known neighbours down the coast, and having good relations with other greenkeepers is very important.

7. What is your chemicals budget and what do you use?

We have been on a Terralift programme for the last five years, which has given me great control with my chemicals and we run the course pretty lean. I get great support from all the leading chemical suppliers and I use bits and pieces from most of them to compliment my Terralift programme. We started trialling Compost Tea last year in conjunction with Symbio in a bid to become fungicide free and I'm very impressed with the results.

8. What is the strangest comment a golfer has ever said to you?

I once added some drainage to a bunker and while the base was filled with gravel, prior to the sand going back in, a member asked if we were going to implement gravel bunkers throughout the course!

9. What is the best tip you have received?

Keep it simple and trust yourself to do what you think is right. I get the feeling a lot of greenkeepers these days are too quick to go searching for data and industry research instead of trusting the skills they have learned to do the job. Of course having data can back up what you are doing and help you get ahead of the game, but you have to remember to be a greenkeeper and have a feel for the turf and golf course.

The 7th tee at
Gifford Golf Club



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Win a trip to the USA

All sprayer operators in the amenity sector, including BIGGA members, have the opportunity to win an incredible trip to the USA, by taking part in the Amenity Forum Sprayer Operator of the Year awards.

The annual awards are sponsored by ICL and Syngenta, in association with BASIS.

"The awards seek to recognise best practice in amenity spray application," said Amenity Forum chairman, Professor John Moverley. "Past winners have demonstrated the high level of competence and attention to detail among sprayer operators. They have showed the skills necessary to get the best possible results from every application, and how to achieve it safely with due care for the environment."

Three awards categories seek to identify the best operators in all key areas of amenity spraying, with

the overall winner announced at the BTME Welcome Celebration.

The categories for the 2018/19 AFISOY Awards are:

- Sports turf using boom sprayer or hand held equipment
- Landscape & Industrial using vehicle-mounted equipment
- Landscape & Industrial using hand-held equipment

The 2017/18 overall award winner, Nathan Hume of S H Goss Ltd, will be flying to Louisville, Kentucky in October, to visit the Green Industry & Equipment Expo.

He said: "Just taking part in the awards was a great experience. As with all operations, it's important to review and appraise what we do and how we can continually improve. The recognition of the awards allows our customers to appreciate the effort that goes in to achieving a great result."



Nathan Hume with the STRI's head of research Ruth Mann at the BTME Welcome Celebration

syngenta.

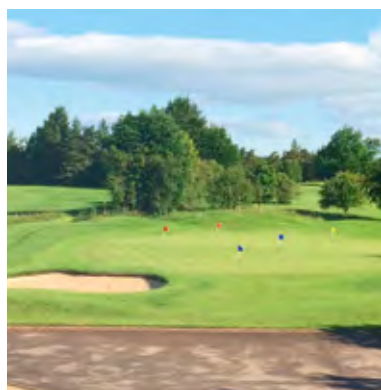


Entries are open until 30 June 2018, with an initial questionnaire. Selected category finalists are judged on best practice and innovative ideas to improve and enhance spraying operations. Category finalist are invited to the Amenity Forum Conference in October, with the overall winner announced at the BIGGA BTME event next January.

Entry forms and nomination proposals can be made through the Amenity Forum or the Awards sponsors' websites.

Minchinhampton

Gloucestershire's 128-year-old Minchinhampton Golf Club is to undertake major improvement works after receiving a £500,000 finance package from HSBC.



The club has major plans to build upon its recent success, having achieved GEO certification in March.

Funding will be used to purchase and install course equipment, with the remainder being used to upgrade the clubhouse facilities.

Minchinhampton has three courses and two clubhouses and the facility is located among several landscape designations, including the Cotswolds 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', 'SSSI' and 'Scheduled Ancient Monument Status'.

QHotels growth

QHotels, managed by hotel management company Redefine BDL Hotels, has reported double-digit growth at three of its UK golf resorts.

Overall the group has grown by three per cent, but the largest cause for celebration has been at Aldwark Manor in Yorkshire and Dunston Hall in Norwich, which both showed 10 per cent improvement, and Telford Hotel and Golf Resort in Shropshire, which recorded a growth of 16 per cent.

Alan Foley, RBH's director of golf and spa sales, said: "At a time when we are constantly seeing media and industry reports stating that golf is struggling, to record such year-on-year success is testament to the hard work our teams put in right across the group."

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Coul Links

The developers of a world class golf course have welcomed significant progress on their plans, with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency removing its objections to the project.

Former Castle Stuart course manager Chris Haspell is project manager of the Coul Links development team that submitted further information in support of its applications earlier this year.

In response, SEPA contacted the Highland Council to say: "This new information enables us to remove our objection to the planning applications."

Todd Warnock, developer of Coul Links, said: "We are very pleased with the thorough and professional dialogue we have had with SEPA over the last three years. We have taken the time to work constructively together to ensure the environmental integrity of the site and at the same time to advance one of the largest private investments in the history of Sutherland."

The team has submitted plans for a world class golf course near Embo in Sutherland, which will provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to stimulate the economy and enhance the environment locally.

Todd Warnock is proprietor of the Links House Hotel and Carnegie Courthouse retail centre in Dornoch and has been working on the project alongside course developer Mike Keiser. The course will be constructed with the assistance of architects Coore Crenshaw.

The project is backed by Embo Trust on behalf of the entire Embo community, which has expressed support and will receive an income stream from their direct investment.

Developers initially filed a planning application in September 2017 after a two-year process of economic and environmental assessment.



The present Coul Links site
by Richard Johnstone

Keith Pelley

European Tour Chief Executive Keith Pelley has encouraged golf clubs to share ideas and innovate to grow the game.

Speaking at the European Tour Properties Conference, Keith said: "I believe bringing venues together and sharing ideas is absolutely critical. We know that golf needs to modify itself and extend the demographic if it is to grow, and the best way to do this is to share ideas.

"Those ideas are not only coming from the European Tour; it is time for us to listen and hear to what is going on out there in the market place and then we can adapt."

During a question and answer session, Keith talked about the importance of new, entertaining formats of golf to reach and engage larger audiences,



Keith Pelley at the European Tour Properties Conference

emphasising GolfSixes and the opportunity for venues to adapt the format for their own club competitions.

He also encouraged venues to embrace customer-centric innovation, specifically referencing Topgolf, golf simulators and innovative apps such as eGull Pay, which enables golfers to play and pay by the hole.

Ransomes Jacobsen dealer

Andrew Symons Ltd has been appointed to Ransomes Jacobsen's dealer network, covering Devon, Cornwall and Somerset.

Andrew Symons is an agricultural, construction and groundcare business, set up in 1987 by owners Andrew and Lisa Symons.

Andrew said: "We are very proud of the addition of Ransomes Jacobsen to our groundcare portfolio. It is testament to the success of our business, after also opening a depot in Crediton

which offers parts, service and sales. Customers are the focus of everything we do, and we are excited to represent such reputable brands and back them up with fantastic customer service."

Nathan Walker, national accounts manager at Ransomes Jacobsen's parent company Textron Specialized Vehicles, said: "Andrew Symons Ltd is a well-established and highly professional business and we are delighted to welcome them as a distributor."



The Andrew Symons team

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Membership Team
01347 833800 (option 1)



Tracey Maddison
General Manager

traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk



Elaine Jones
Membership Executive

elaine@bigga.co.uk



Rachael Duffy
Events & Membership Executive

rachael@bigga.co.uk



Gil Mason
Membership Administrator

gil@bigga.co.uk

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For the love of links

This year the BIGGA National Championship returns to a links course in the Home of Golf for the first time since 2012, and boy have we lined up a corker of a venue.

Gullane will this year host the Aberdeen Standard Investments Management Scottish Open and Ladies Scottish Open, but it's the 8-9 October that will hold the most interest for BIGGA members, as that's when the BIGGA National Championship will be held at the historic links.

The winner will be following in the footsteps of Rickie Fowler, who won the Scottish Open at the East Lothian course in 2015 and lists Gullane among his favourites.

"Winning on a links golf course in the Home of Golf, it is a special week," said Rickie after his victory. "Gullane is a true test of golf. It's a great course, and the first time I saw it, I liked the way it fit my eye."

Golf has been played over the links at Gullane for more than 350 years. Today, Gullane is one of Scotland's most prestigious member clubs, making it truly special that BIGGA members have been given the opportunity to contest the BIGGA National Trophy at the venue.

Course Manager Stewart Duff said he'll be pulling out all the stops to ensure the course is in top condition for the visit of the UK's top golfing greenkeepers.

He added: "We try to create the best possible standards daily for each and every golfer with the resources available at the time, but for tournament play like the BIGGA National Championship on Gullane Number 2 we will have to bring guys across from the other two courses so we can have the course up to tournament condition, where everything is cut on the days of play.

"We would hope there were no adverse conditions which may hinder the daily preparation work or play,

but if there are, at least those playing will have an understanding of the difficulties faced!"

BIGGA members will once again contest the BIGGA Challenge Trophy, the best gross score over 36 holes, with Christopher Lamb of Trump International Golf Scotland winning the 30th anniversary of the competition in 2017.

Also up for grabs is the BIGGA Challenge Cup, Stableford over 36 holes, and the BIGGA Challenge Plate, Stableford over 18 holes, among various other competitions, ensuring everyone has a chance of coming away with a prize, no matter what their handicap is.

The BIGGA National Championship 2018 will be held at Gullane Golf Club, East Lothian, on 8-9 October 2018.


Application forms will be available with your May edition of Greenkeeper International.

'Winning on a links golf course in the Home of Golf, it is a special week'

Rickie Fowler



Membership


Insert: Rickie Fowler
won the Scottish Open
at Gullane in 2015.
picture courtesy of
Shutterstock.com




FTMI:

A journey to the top

FTMI 2018



 The FTMI Delegates of 2018

The Future Turf Managers Initiative took place at Jacobsen's manufacturing facility in Ipswich from 6-8 March.

The leap from greenkeeper into a management role can be a huge one, and the partnership between BIGGA and Jacobsen is intended to give up-and-coming members the opportunity to gain practical tools and guidance.

Competition is fierce for a place on the scheme, and potential candidates must show initiative, dedication to greenkeeping over more than three years in the industry and be actively involved in education at both a regional and national level.

Speaking before FTMI

Callum Goodhind, 24,
deputy course manager at
Prestbury in Cheshire

"I'm looking forward to learning the key aspects required to become a course manager. I am a deputy course manager, and I want to take that next step. I think FTMI will give me the necessary skills needed to make that leap.

"My dad was a course manager, so I was aware of the benefits BIGGA could give me, and he encouraged me to get involved in any opportunity. The application process was good; I just had to write a little bit about myself and why I would be suitable for FTMI. I'm very pleased that my application came across well and I was accepted as a delegate."

Michael Budd, 38, deputy course manager at
Westerham in Surrey

"I'm hoping to learn not only the skills to become a course manager, but also how to attain the position that I want at a certain golf course. My ambition is to be a successful course manager at a UK top 100 course. If you narrow that down to where I live in Surrey, there are fewer and fewer options, so I need a good plan of action!

"On the application, I tried to write as a course manager. I used lots of confident statements, rather than coming across as indecisive. I think confidence is the key to taking the next step in your career.

"When I joined BIGGA I had no idea about the extent of the opportunities available. I joined BIGGA for various reasons, more for the educational side, but quickly learned about other opportunities through reading the magazine, going on the website, speaking to people and attending BTME.

"I have been with BIGGA for about a year and it has already provided me with so many opportunities; it has been brilliant."

Continued over



FTMI 2018

JACOBSEN

The FTMI Class of 2018

Michael Budd, deputy head greenkeeper, Westerham

Darren Burton, first assistant, Royal Cinque Ports

Seb Cavilla, deputy course manager, Chippenham

Shaun Cunningham, first assistant, Mortonhall

Lyle Davidson, deputy head greenkeeper, The Carrick

Matthew Gallagher, assistant greenkeeper, Royal Mid Surrey

Callum Goodhind, deputy course manager, Prestbury

Graham Hastie, deputy head greenkeeper, Stoneham

Nathan Jones, assistant greenkeeper, Royal Porthcawl

Mitchell Jordan, first assistant, Lingdale

Andrew McIntee, assistant greenkeeper, Royal Troon

Scott McTaggart, deputy head greenkeeper, Ralston

John Methven, greenkeeper, St Andrews Links Trust

Chris Mullett, deputy head greenkeeper, The Belfry

Scott Parnell, assistant greenkeeper, Saffron Walden

Dean Reed, senior greenkeeper, Queenwood

John Reid, first assistant, The Duke's, St Andrews

Nick Roberts, deputy course manager, Hendon

Timothy Lewis Sethi, first assistant, Golfpark Zurichsee

Steve Thorne, deputy course manager, Rushmore



From the mentors

Guiding the delegates throughout the experience were a group of mentors, themselves course managers and therefore well placed to offer advice on how to make the next step.

The mentors were: James Bledge, Royal Cinque Ports; Grant Frogley, gWest; Euan Grant, JCB; Andrew Laing, Gaudet Luce.

Andrew Laing, Course Manager, Gaudet Luce

"I was approached by Jacobsen just after BTME this year and asked if I would be interested in getting involved. I was delighted to be asked and have been looking forward to the week.

"I think it's important for guys that are approaching management level to have some management training, as opposed to the



Scott Parnell and Stephen Alabaster on the factory tour

standard greenkeeping that we have in our everyday lives.

"That slightly different aspect is probably one of the biggest changes when you step up into a management role, the ability to actually learn to manage people and committees. I think this is a really important initiative to help give these guys that little bit of experience in preparation.

"I was looking forward to meeting guys from across the country and imparting as much of my experience as I can. I was also looking forward to receiving a few hints and tips on the way from the guys themselves."

Mentor Andy Laing giving guidance



'I think it's important for guys that are approaching management level to have some management training, as opposed to the standard greenkeeping that we have in our everyday lives.'

Andrew Laing



Education seminars

Tuesday

Presentation Skills Training, presented by Michael Astrop

Introducing candidates to planning, preparing and delivering a presentation. Useful when presenting your ideas to a committee and group of members at your club.

Wednesday

Crucial conversations

Learning how improvements to how you approach and frame important conversations can be life-changing. Gain acceptance rather than resistance, speak persuasively not abrasively, and resolve disagreements while promoting teamwork.

Presenting a professional image

From setting the tone with a handshake to the power of eye contact, candidates learned the importance of body language and personal appearance.

Interview techniques

Providing tips and techniques on planning and preparing to conduct interviews.

Interview role play with mentor

Taking part in a short mock interview, led by the mentor, in front of the mentor group.

Successful CV's, presented by Michael Astrop and Eddie Bullock

How an impactful CV will play a massive role in getting that big interview. What to include, and what to leave out.

Stress awareness, presented by John Ross GradiOSH MG

Stress is the number one cause of work-related ill health and absence. But what is it, how does it impact us, how can we recognise it in others, and how can it be managed?

Thursday

Building a budget, presented by Lee Strutt MG, CGCS, MS

Introducing the candidates to budgeting, how to formulate a budget and costings, how to sell a budget and how to deal with cutbacks.

Becoming a leader, presented by Eddie Bullock

What are the key attributes you'll need when stepping up to becoming a leader, and what does it mean to be a 'leader'?



Seb Cavilla and
Nick Roberts

Speaker profiles

Michael Astrop has been speaking, writing and coaching on communications and human behaviour for 20 years. He is a tutor for the Institute of Leadership and Management and has been working with BIGGA for five years.

Eddie Bullock has considerable experience in the golf industry, specialising in golf facility management. Eddie was managing director of Woburn Golf Club, where he brought his customer experience expertise and leadership qualities to deliver success.

John Ross GradiOSH MG is a safety manager and trainer with Compliant Grounds. Following a lengthy career as a course manager, he achieved the Master Greenkeeper certificate in 2009, before retraining as a health and safety adviser.

Lee Strutt MG CGCS MS is course manager at The Royal Automobile Club in Surrey. He is experienced in a range of course management skills and is a regular speaker on the Continue to Learn at BTME education programme.

Continued over

The education programme began on the Tuesday of the event, with the BIGGA members taken for a tour of the Jacobsen factory, before the first of the seminars got underway.

The education then reached its peak on Wednesday, with seminars taking place from 8am until 10pm.

On Thursday, the delegates were back in again for another full programme of learning, before being presented with graduation certificates upon conclusion of the education.

They will now go on to join an elite group of members who are graduates of the FTMI scheme. Since its inception in 2013, approximately a third of FTMI candidates have progressed into the role of head greenkeeper or course manager.

Speaking after FTMI

John Reid, The Dukes, St Andrews

"I can't believe it's all over. When I first came down I was quite nervous about meeting so many new people. I don't always have confidence, which I think is a word that everyone has used over the last few days, and I think FTMI has definitively improved that side of things.

"The content of the last three days has been really good. I'll take a lot away from the presentations, and I have picked up a lot of tips from all the mentors.

"I can't wait to get home and digest everything we've taken in over the last few days because there has been so much. I would really like to thank the mentors, BIGGA, Jacobsen, everyone involved, it has been a great experience and I will definitely be going back to my club and telling them all about it."

Graeme Hastie, Stoneham

"Thanks to BIGGA and Jacobsen for putting this on and inviting me, it's been fantastic.

"Confidence building has been the main thing I have taken away, and hopefully it's going to help me take



the next step in my career. I'm very happy to hear Lee Strutt say we don't have to be and do everything we learnt because I'm going to go away and really digest it all and take away what I need to focus on.

"It was great to meet everyone here and I'm looking forward to seeing them all over the next few years when our paths cross, so thanks to everyone."

Lyle Davidson, The Carrick, Young Greenkeepers Committee

"The Future Turf Managers Initiative is a truly unique and invaluable opportunity.

"FTMI is designed to provide practical tools and guidance, to help the delegates to pursue their career aspirations through a series of seminars, talks and workshops covering an array of skills that will become extremely beneficial in taking the next step in their career.

"The mentors and speakers brought incredible insight, balanced perspectives and at the same time challenged the delegates to leave their comfort zones and embrace the fantastic opportunity provided to them, as there is more to be gained from the experience than can be imagined. This created such a positive dynamic in the program.

"My conversations with my mentor, Euan Grant have proved to be very thought-provoking — they have allowed me to be open and realistic about career aspirations



Graham Hastie
receiving guidance
from James Bledge

with someone who is deeply respected within the industry for what they have achieved. They have made me look outside the 'obvious' career enhancements and, importantly, to focus on developing as a person.

"The Future Turf Managers Initiative not only provides a fantastic educational opportunity to all involved, but the ability to network with like-minded individuals from across Europe and create friendships.

"I strongly encourage any young greenkeeper to get in touch and take advantage of all BIGGA has to offer to them."

Tim Sethi, Golfpark Zurichsee

"It's been an absolutely great couple of days, and pretty intense with a lot crammed in and I don't think I've digested it yet. I think it will take a couple of weeks to go through it all. "Thanks to everyone who's been involved, this really is amazing. You can't learn this stuff anywhere else and it really is vital.

"Confidence, again, is a bit of an issue for me and I feel a bit better about it now.

"I still have a long way to go, but another big part of it is the networking opportunity. We are all in this together, we have shared the same experience, and hopefully we will all stay in contact, which is a great thing to take away from this. It's been great to meet everyone, so thank you very much."



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The Beast from the East:

What has it meant for BIGGA members?

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

As winter drew to a close, widespread snowfall caused major disruption for the UK, with businesses closing and roads grinding to a halt. But eventually the snow cleared and life got back to normal, for everyone except the nation's greenkeepers.

Such a major snowfall, when grass should have been emerging from its winter dormancy and when greenkeeping teams would have been putting the final touches to their pre-season preparations, has the potential to impact golf courses throughout the 2018 season.

We took a closer look at how the impact of the 'Beast from the East' could be felt for some time.

With an average temperature of 2.4°C, February was colder on average than February 2013, the last time there was major disruption during the month. The Met Office recorded how on the 28th, the temperatures plummeted to -11.7°C at South Farnborough in Hampshire, the same day as 21cm of snow fell at Copley in Durham, as the 'Beast from the East' arrived on our shores.

In the end, February would go down as one of the worst months for growth in recent memory, with 22 out of 28 days having frosts, and that was before the snow drifts arrived.

Located 330m above sea level, Queensbury in Bradford was hit hard by the weather, and Head Greenkeeper Jake Wass said: "We had a couple of people come up on a few occasions, asking if the

course was open even though there was six inches of snow on the course. I said 'what do you think?' and they had a decent sense of humour about it!

"Because a lot of our members are local, they appreciate that Queensbury does suffer when the weather turns bad. They expect here to be one of the worst in the area and they understand that as long as we can have the course open, it's open. They are quite understanding."

At Queensbury, the snow brought to a halt the renovation of a number of bunkers that was taking place. Larger machinery was unable to get out on to the course as it could have severely damaged areas of the course as we were getting to and from the site of work. Jake added: "We're going to finish



An example of the snow fall by Craig Boath, Carnoustie Golf Links

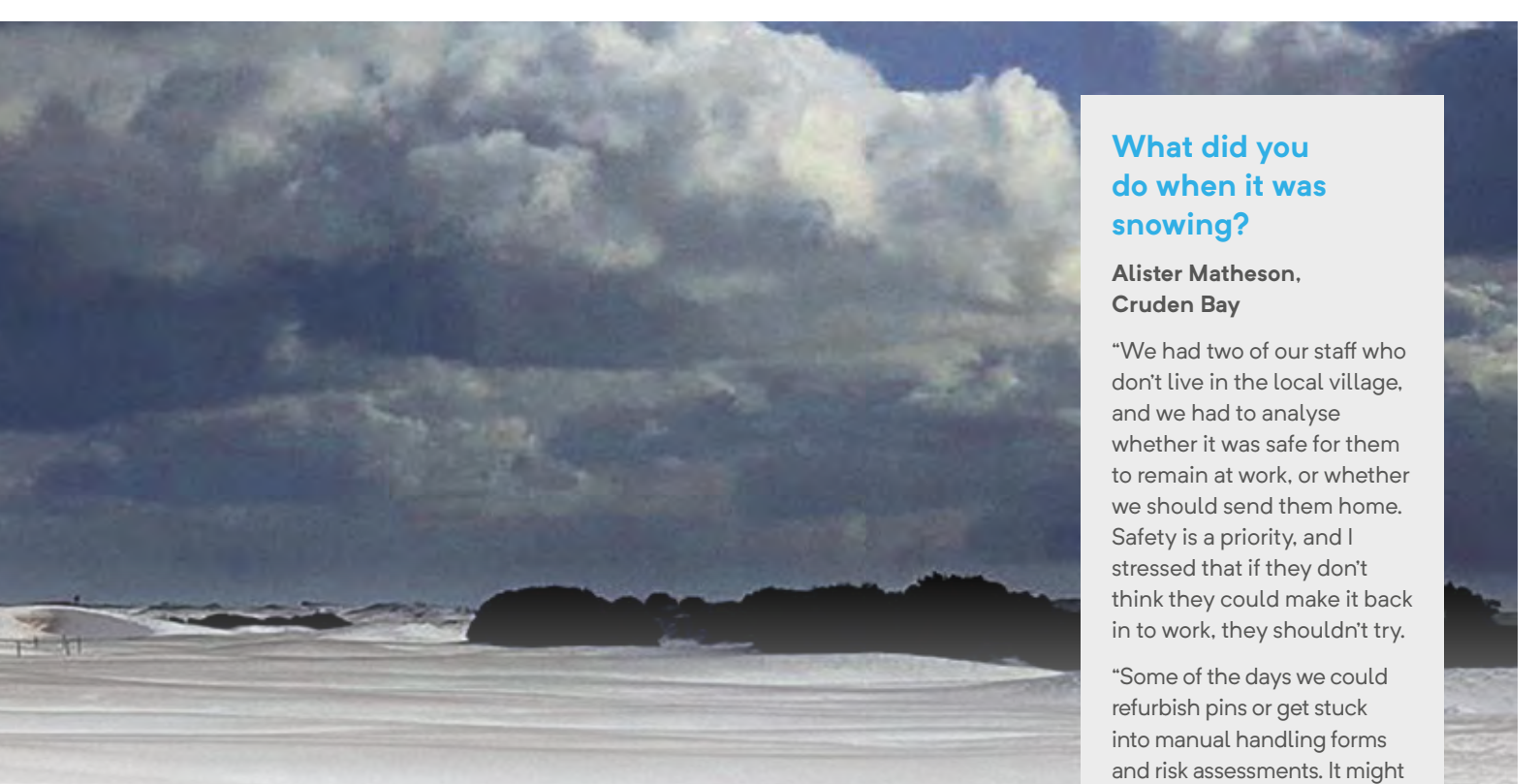
things up as soon as we are able, even if it means leaving one guy on the project going in to spring. But that's just how it is, and there's nothing we can do about it."

Coupled with heavy snowfall throughout winter, beginning back in mid-December, greenkeepers all over the country have been left scratching their heads as to how they can get their winter projects concluded ahead of the coming season. And with slow recovery, turfgrass growth is approximately a fortnight behind where it was at the same time in 2017.

"The members here have been very understanding," said Alister Matheson, course manager at Cruden Bay in Aberdeenshire. "There's never been any questions asked about the team and a lot of members recognised that if they couldn't get their own cars out, how do they expect the course to be open?"

Learning how to use the laser for tee levelling indoors by Craig Cameron, Golf Club St. Leon-Rot

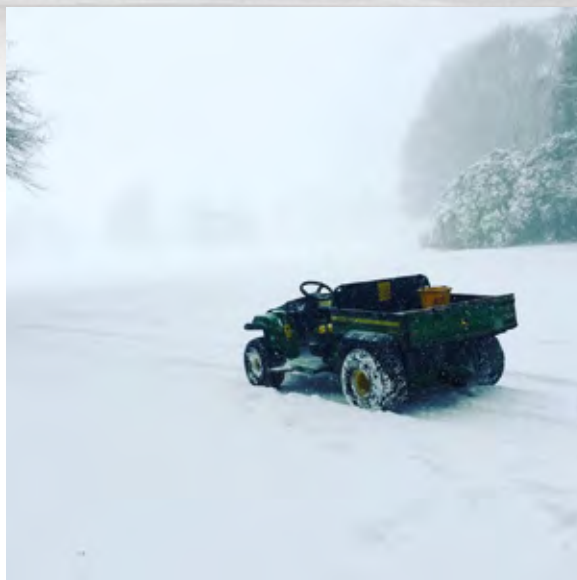




"During the worst of the weather, those of us who were able to get into work were able to get involved with in-house training and completing health and safety work. Publicising that we were doing that helped us a lot as it showed our employers that we are being proactive. A lot of people see social media and that has proven to be a big help to us."

In his regular weather blog, Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity's technical director, has estimated that the lack of growth potential for golf courses during February and March means that courses are going to struggle to recover as quickly as they would have in milder years. The main areas affected are those receiving wear over the winter, so that's tees, wear pathways from greens to tee and tight approaches. Soil temperatures, average air temperatures and hours of sunlight all contribute to the cumulative growth potential of the UK's golf courses, and so the awful weather will have set things back quite some way.

Everyone in the greenkeeping industry is aware of the US Masters, at the start of April, and how this is the traditional start of the golfing season, and Mark compared the Augusta, Georgia location to a course in Oxfordshire, to see what the practical differences actually are



 Gleneagles GC, by Chris Richmond

He said: "Whether rightly or wrongly, that's the benchmark we are judged against. When I took a look at things over there, in mid-March, the temperature was 15.8°C and the course had a cumulative growth potential of 36.1. Compare that to 6.7 for the course in Oxfordshire, and you get a deficit of 48 days.

"Even in the good spring of 2017, Oxfordshire didn't hit a cumulative growth potential of 36.1 until 26 May."

The above comparison features a course from the middle of the U.K, just imagine the deficit further north. In my mind the comparison is meaningless but that doesn't stop it being made.

What did you do when it was snowing?

Alister Matheson, Cruden Bay

"We had two of our staff who don't live in the local village, and we had to analyse whether it was safe for them to remain at work, or whether we should send them home. Safety is a priority, and I stressed that if they don't think they could make it back in to work, they shouldn't try.

"Some of the days we could refurbish pins or get stuck into manual handling forms and risk assessments. It might be quite sad that we weren't able to be out on the course, but it wasn't safe to be out there and it was good to think outside the box and get the whole staff on working on the administration side of things."

Jake Wass, Queensbury

"For starters we already had the staff on reduced winter hours, which was useful. We have been doing a lot of machinery maintenance, servicing repairs, and we have redone all the tee markers and hazard posts. A fair bit of our time has been spent trying to keep the clubhouse open when possible, including digging out access to the car park."

Jim Lake, Druids Heath

"The only ones who were on site during the worst of it were ourselves and the cleaners. When it was snowing we set to clearing the driveway, car park and clubhouse pathways. We also felled and chopped up 30 poplars, in addition to pines and conifers that the snow and wind had uprooted."

Continued over



But what does that mean in practical terms?

Mark added: "Imagine we aerated our greens on 1 March in both 2017 and 2018, and we were working on the basis of requiring 10 days of good growth for full recovery, equivalent to a total Growth Potential of 4.0. In 2017, in a good spring, we would be completely recovered in 18 days.

"In 2018, in what is a slow spring, after 18 days we would still only be halfway there, and I reckon we will actually need 5 weeks this year to gain the same degree of recovery."

At Druids Heath, near Aldridge, Jim Lake and his team got to work with deep spiking and hollow tining as soon as the ground thawed enough to make this possible. However, he's finding out first hand that the grass plants themselves are struggling to come out of dormancy.

"The grass just isn't budging at the moment as it is still so cold," he said. "I expect there's going to be a big impact as the season starts at the end of March and they play matches every day from then until

October. I expect we will get the usual early-season questions, such as why are the greens bumpy or why is the grass not growing?"

"We usually find that golfers quickly forget the last four months of rubbish weather."

For those who were encouraged to open the course as soon as the snow melted, there was the potential to cause serious problems. The upper region of the rootzone may have thawed, but deeper down it may have remained solid. This causes an unstable surface, with the upper layer shearing off the frozen lower layer. On a small scale, divots can have a longstanding impact upon course quality, but there is also the potential for larger health and safety problems on slopes and mounds.

In the aftermath of a sudden snow event such as the "Beast from the East", there are some things you can do to get things back up and running, explained Mark.

"First off, we have a pretty wetted-up moss plant," he said. "So now is the time to hit it with an approved high Fe moss killer if you were thinking about applying



Greenkeepers' experiences from around the country clockwise from top left:

George Mitchell, Newmachar

John Keenaghan, Chipping Sodbury

Lachie Kenna, RAC (Royal Automobile Club)

Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhall

Steve Lloyd, The Worcestershire

Adam Matthews, Moor Allerton

it in the spring. However, it's probably too early still for the chemical moss killers, until you are guaranteed good grass growth.

"If you are planning or have carried out aeration, you'll be looking for some growth or recovery. When it's cold, you're not going to get much growth as we know. But as soon as things start to warm up, it's a good idea to apply a liquid tonic when the air temperature is up to gain a fast, initial response. This supplements, rather than replaces the requirement for a granular feed, promoting growth for longer.

"It goes without saying that your nitrogen sources in your chosen products should be immediately available if you are looking for a plant response. At this time of year that's ammonium sulphate, nitrate or potassium nitrate, rather than something like urea which isn't immediately available to the grass plant."

Where possible, the key is to take as much time as you are able to allow the course to completely recover. And by summer, golfers will find that the course is thankful for the rest.

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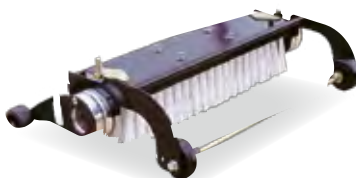
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Game, sett and match

Can anything be done to protect our courses from badger damage?

James Hutchinson BIGGA

Badgers

Badgers, how are we going to stop them digging up our beautiful golf courses? Simple actually. Remove the food source and it is job done. No more badger digging, in theory.

There is a small problem here however, and that is how do we remove the food source?

There was a time when we sprayed a pesticide and then all was hunky-dory, no more quarrying from our cuddly chums.

But this is just not the case anymore and you don't need me to tell you when and why the chemistry was removed, as this has been covered numerous times already with BIGGA developing an excellent poster highlighting what will happen now the chafer and other grub control has gone,

I'm guessing you probably know me by now that I take a light-hearted look at environmental, ecological and wildlife management. This is still correct, I do. But when issues like this arise, then it's time to put a serious head on and tell it like it is.

The following feature centres on badgers, relevant legislation, their foodstuff and potential methods of minimising the damage they cause on a golf course.

Continued over





Meles meles

The badger above was caught on film using BIGGA's wildlife camera at Lymm GC. If you are reading this after 8pm, then it is most likely rolling turf back at this very moment. These crepuscular omnivores eat pretty much anything they find, including berries, apples, small rodents and grubs, all of which can be found on a parkland golf course. But it's the autumnal/winter chafers that attracts them our way.

Badgers and their setts are protected here in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (with various amendments). In England and Wales (slightly different in Scotland), it is an offence to:

- **Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger (or attempt to do so)**
- **Treat them cruelly**
- **Interfere with setts**
- **Sell a badger**

There does appear to be exceptions to the above, which include new roads, housing and health and safety issues, however, I was made aware by Natural England that it is highly unlikely they would grant a licence to remove, or cave-in, a sett on a golf course because badgers were doing what they do naturally. It would have to be an extreme situation, such as a green or tee becoming unstable through

digging, and as a result, needs to become a health and safety issue before anything can be done. I am presently working with a course in the north of England, which is having a sett looked at, but it now appears that applications are on hold until after the breeding and nurturing of young season, which is likely to be June sometime. I fear we are wasting our time with this one.

I'll just add that if you are concerned that badgers, or any wild animal, are being unfairly treated on your site then call either the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999 or your local police station.

Another thing I'll add at this point is that 50 per cent of badger deaths are from car collisions. A long-term study at two sites in 1992 found 50,000 badger fatalities on the roads — it appears Mr Badger's future looks bleak.



Badger at
Lymm Golf Club

Left: Chris Epps from
Lymm Golf club
showing turf damage
from badgers

Right: This damage at
Lymm Golf Club is a
familiar site at courses
around the country



Nuisances

So, we know there aren't any products on the market to deal with the pests which the badgers are looking for, so be warned if anyone suggests other methods of management which involve a 'product'. If, for instance, a greenkeeper is using a product designed for something else, let's say, a soil conditioner, and is using it as a grub suppressant, then this is classed as 'off label' and **they will be breaking the law!**

I recently watched a programme on one of the more mainstream channels where a professor of entomology poured a water and pepper mixture into a grassed area.

Within minutes, numerous worms and other soil borne invertebrates made their way to the surface, where they were then picked off for examination. My point here is, unless you are undertaking a controlled experiment, **do not go off label to control the issue!**

I spoke with Daniel Lightfoot, Syngenta UK Turf Business Manager, who reported that the company is working hard to find an effective solution to control both chafer grubs and leatherjackets – which he advocated could be selectively targeted to areas with known problems, as part of an IPM strategy. However, he pointed out that the regulatory approval process can be drawn out and by no means assured so, in the interim, greenkeepers and managers of other sports turf, where chafer grub activity can also have extremely serious effects,

should continue to integrate all options to minimise its impacts.

Help is also on the way in other shapes and sizes too. BIGGA has hired Sentry Eco Systems to give talks at a number of our seminars regarding its pheromone product. Jennifer Kinch is their spokesperson and claims to have a repellent which will potentially move badgers away from problem areas on your golf course. How much is it? Does it actually work and if so are you just simply moving the problem elsewhere on the course? We'll have to wait and see what Jennifer says but I shall keep you informed when I know.

If the problem becomes so bad, and you have exhausted all avenues to dissuade badgers from your site, then the final option may be to encase the whole of your golf course with an electric fence.

I know what you are thinking: you're thinking of cost. But you have to take into account the amount spent on new turf, time to lay it and any other issues which

can be related to badger damage. I was surprised to hear of the cost to undertake this 'in-house' was in the low thousands rather than tens of thousands, but common sense will tell you that you cannot erect a fence if the badger setts are on your land to start with — they have to be off site. Remember that all setts are protected, so you cannot interfere with them.

I was impressed with Easingwold GC's fence however, at the time of my visit, badgers had found a way to navigate round the fence, under the car park barrier and then onto the course — crafty little badgers aren't they?

With that in mind, you would have to have a continuous loop in place to stop them at all entrances. "How would we get in?" I hear you say. I understand there may be teething problems but these things are sent to test us aren't they?

From what I can gather, talking to greenkeepers in the UK, badger damage starts to slow down in spring and summer, but we are

unsure as to why. My guess is twofold, in that there is more food elsewhere, including berries and other fruits. The other point is that grass begins to grow tighter and as a result is much more difficult to dig through.

I'm not a badger whisperer, but I'll do my best to find us a credible option to help keep the badgers away from our courses and from causing too much damage, and I will keep you updated on any progress that I make.

Chafer grub, courtesy of Syngenta UK



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Nick Machin

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year reflects on his experience in America

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

Here I am, sitting at Heathrow Airport on 7 January and I'm still trying to get my head around the fact I have won Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year and I'm about to embark on a seven-week trip that could literally change my life.

Ahead of me lies eight flights, across four states, visiting the Toro Factory, a trip to the Golf Industry Show in Texas, and a six-week intensive course at the winter turf school at the University of Massachusetts.

On the morning of our first day at UMass I found out 11 people are staying at the same hotel as me, all doing the winter turf school. It wasn't long before we all knew each other's names and after a bowl of Lucky Charms we left for class.

The first day helps to ease you in, but I soon found out the intensity of education was going to rise a little! Winter turf school is a very scientifically-detailed programme which encompasses topics such as pathology, entomology, physiology, soil science, weed science, fertility, arboriculture and

irrigation management, with guest speakers from around the world.

Each day you attend four two-hour lectures, with an hour for lunch in the middle. The exception to this is Fridays, when we got to leave at 12 noon to allow other students to go home for the weekend.

Each subject was taught by a specialist lecturer to an amazing standard and we soon discovered that what these guys didn't know, probably wasn't worth knowing.

Continued over





Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year



However even after a long day in class, homework was an ever-present — something I'm certainly not used to! But with everyone in the same boat, we would quite often sit together at the hotel and help each other out.

In order to assess how each student is coping with the course and to obtain your final grades, exams were taken on an almost daily basis, with three exams taking place on the same day on some occasions. Although all this may sound like a lot, it almost doesn't feel like it because you're learning about something you love and it is extremely fascinating! Don't get me wrong, the workload is massive and not paying attention in class isn't an option, but I was rewarded for my efforts by graduating with high honours and a much-improved knowledge of my job.

The university itself also plays a big part in your enjoyment of the course. UMass is a place with a great buzz about it, and at full capacity can house 25,000 students, boasting top notch

facilities. It's hard to explain the scale of this place, but it is bigger than a lot of towns where I live back at home!

My favourite place at the university had to be the Mullins Center, which hosted the basketball and ice hockey. The 10,500-seater stadium had a great atmosphere and offered up some good quality sport. There was even a special treat from one of the lecturers, Dr Vittum, who organised us front row seats for a basketball game, and I was quickly hooked.

Outside of the student life, I was lucky to have a great bunch of people to hang out with who were from all different walks of life. Among them were two other international students, from Austria and Pakistan.

Every evening in the search for food we found ourselves at many different pubs, restaurants and sports bars. This is where I felt I got a real taste of America, far from the experiences a tourist may have. I learnt that crispy fried chicken on a sweet waffle dripped in maple

Some of the
UMass facilities

The Mullins Center
hosts both basketball
and ice hockey matches

'Although all this may sound like a lot, it almost doesn't feel like it because you're learning about something you love...'



syrup is a legitimate meal, but not one I would recommend, and pickleback shots are disgusting and should only be consumed in small amounts!


On one of the nights, the Superbowl was taking place, and with the locals being mainly Patriots fans it was going to be interesting to see how they would celebrate the event. As it turned out, the result didn't go well, but it was a great experience all the same.

During my fifth week at UMass I had the opportunity to go to the Golf Industry Show, which was being held in San Antonio in Texas. I was looking forward to enjoying some warmer weather, but as luck would have it San Antonio was experiencing colder than usual temperatures. However, this didn't dampen what was a brilliant couple of days at the trade show. I met up with my boss, James Bledge, and a few others and caught up on all the news from home, before heading out for something to eat at one of



the many restaurants around an extremely picturesque area called the Riverwalk.

With the Golf Industry Show a short walk from the hotel, you are immediately hit by the size of the event as soon as you walk in the

 The Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas

door. A huge hall contained the show, which was a struggle to look round properly in one day. Luckily, I had two days to spend there and that meant I could really indulge in everything that was on offer. Among the things I got involved with was a couple of educational seminars and a chance to inspect all the latest machinery.

The time in San Antonio was also a great opportunity to do some networking and I met some great people who have been successful in our industry and were able to pass on some good bits of advice.

I arrived back to UMass a bit behind on the school work due to my GIS trip, but I was quickly able to catch up. The last week was a busy time, coming to a conclusion on the Friday with a presentation ceremony in the campus centre hotel. It was a bittersweet moment after finishing the course as we had to say goodbye to the people that had helped you have such a great experience.

Continued over

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

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NASCAR stock car at the Golf Industry Show

Historic Toro Machinery at the factory



For me, however, my experience wasn't finished yet and the last stage of my journey came with a visit to Toro HQ in Minneapolis. The size of the operation at Toro is immense and it's really hard to explain the scale of the buildings, which house everything from construction to research and development. Every employee I met was more than willing to explain their part in the process and really took pride in their work, which is definitely shown in the

final product. I also visited the distribution warehouse, which was a two-hour drive down the road but well worth a look to see the rows upon rows of brand new Toro machinery ready to head out the door.

After my tour of the facilities, a day trip to the Mall of America and a visit to the U.S. Bank Stadium, which had recently hosted the Superbowl, it was time to head for home.

Reflecting back on my trip, I feel so lucky to have met some amazing people and experienced some amazing things.

My knowledge of the job I love has raised dramatically and I feel as if I can really improve at being a greenkeeper. Knowledge really is power and I look forward to using the things I have learnt at UMass throughout my career.

Special thanks must go to everyone at BIGGA who organise this award, David Cole and Christine Wilson at Reesink Turfcare, the sponsors, Kyle who looked after me from Toro, the whole team at Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, fellow students Kevin Fasulo and Ryan Richards and anyone else who helped me to gain this awesome experience. I cannot express my gratitude enough and I feel truly privileged to have won Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

'Knowledge really is power and I look forward to using the things I learnt throughout my career.'



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Member of Royal Reesink 

Overseeding at The Els Club, Dubai

Lewis Arscott, Woodbury Park, Devon.

I was lucky enough to be able to visit Dubai for the ryegrass overseeding process at the Els Club.

The golf course superintendent, Stuart Horwood, advertised on Instagram (@greenkeeperstu) that he was looking to bring a young, keen greenkeeper over to the UAE to experience the overseeding and help out where possible. I knew this would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity where I could learn, meet new people in the industry, gain experience in another country and help progress my career.

Like many other greenkeepers, I contacted Stuart from my personal Instagram, asking for more details and how to apply. I filled out a

selection of details about myself and answered some questions, then sent it to Stuart over email. I was delighted to receive an email at a later date saying I had been chosen.

On 19 October I set off for the UAE from London Heathrow and met Stuart at Dubai international airport. Then I was driven to the Els Club to meet some of the staff, have a quick look round the course and then helped set up for a greenkeepers' revenge day, which was good fun.

Then the overseeding programme began. We used ryegrass imported from America to overseed the

rough, tees and putting and chipping areas, with a double pass on rough and normal tees and a triple pass on the main tees.

Around bunkers and path edges we used pedestrian drop spreaders to apply the seed in full rate (nearest to bunker and path edges), half rate and quarter rate and double passed the areas between with the pedestrian spreaders. This was done as we hoped the spreaders would stop between the half and quarter rate, so the seed coverage would be consistent.

We used 382.5 bags of ryegrass, which were 23.68kg each, to overseed the course and chipping and putting areas. When spreading the seeds we would double pass the rough and triple pass the tees, as they are high traffic areas.

*Stuart Horwood,
Lewis Arscott and
Javier Farran*

*Hand mowing greens
at The Els Club*



For more photos
of my trip to
Dubai check out my
personal Instagram

@greenkeeper
arscott

Meeting Craig Haldane at
Emirates Golf Club

A hawk was used to scare birds away from the course, otherwise they would have eaten a lot of the ryegrass seeds.

After two long days of seeding it was time to apply water. As the course was closed for overseeding we could water on a regular basis.

We worked round in hole order and once we had completed a hole we would radio the irrigation technicians, who would turn on the irrigation.

The irrigation staff worked in shifts, so there was someone working 24 hours a day for the first couple of days during and after the overseed.

It's very important to get a good germination and in a hot climate the seed requires lots of water. For example, there were 10million litres of water applied on the Tuesday after the overseed.

During the week I painted the outline of the fairways, helped calibrate the spreaders, overseeded tees and rough, undertook course checks including moisture and stimp readings, cut greens, fairways, approaches. I undertook irrigation for the ryegrass and

logged spray sheets, attended management meetings and much more.

I was pleased Stuart trusted me and gave me responsibility on the course during the overseeding process and throughout the time I was in Dubai.

During the week I was lucky enough to visit the Emirates Golf Club and meet the course superintendent, Craig Haldane, who took me around the top-class courses and then we had a look round the impressive complex. We also had a good chat about all stuff greenkeeping.

I met Ben Griffins, the course superintendent at the Trump Dubai golf course, who gave me a tour of the course and the greenkeeping sheds.

Along with Stuart and Javier, assistant superintendent at the Els Club, Craig and Ben gave me some very good advice and shared with me some knowledge about the courses they manage and greenkeeping in general. Later on in the week, Stuart took me to see Helgardt Muller for a tour of the grounds of the well-known Palm Hotel and Waterpark.

The Els Club

Outside working hours I got to see the sights of Dubai on foot and by boat, visited Dubai mall, went go karting, jet skiing and I enjoyed a desert safari.

I am very thankful for a great week that I will remember for the rest of my life. Stuart, Javier and all of the Els Club staff made me feel very welcome and welcomed me into their great team.

The Els Club

Tackling island conditions

Provo Golf Club tackle island conditions with the versatile Koro FIELD TOPMAKER and Universe Rotor

Campey Turfcare

Golf courses find their home in a variety of places, but Provo Golf Course, based in the Turks & Caicos Islands, is on the edge of a 40-square mile island.

This makes it an extremely interesting location, bringing with it the unique challenges of Caribbean weather.

While thoughts of an endless summer bring golfers to the resort, the perpetual heat allows thatch to grow in vast quantities. This leaves Course Superintendent Tim Mack seeking an alternative, more effective machine than his current system, to remove thatch from his fairways and roughs.

Online research and further examination in person at a GCSAA tradeshow culminated in the



Work in progress at Provo Golf Club

Far right: Koro Field Top Maker at work



decision to use the Koro FIELD TOPMAKER (FTM) with Universe rotor, with a particular focus on removing thatch rather than removing the surface completely.

"Providenciales has an arid and hot climate," said Tim. "We have 365 days of growing weather, so nothing goes dormant, which means we produce an ample amount of thatch.

"Also, weed and insect pressures are high due to no eradication from temperature changes.

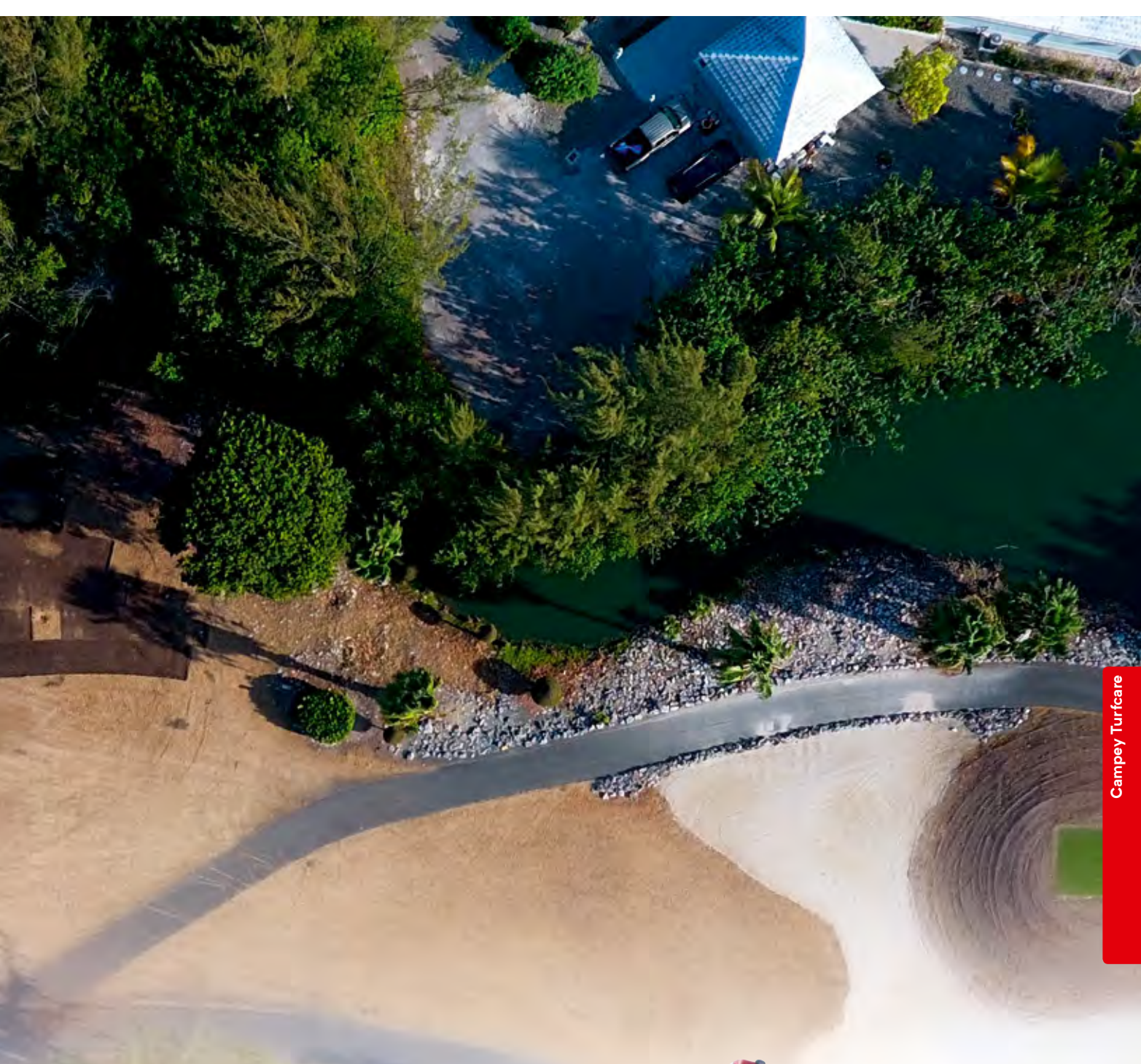
"In other words, everything is a perennial, there are no annuals.

"Some other challenges relate to being on a 40-square mile island in the middle of the Caribbean Sea. We have no natural fresh water sources, so we utilise Reverse Osmosis water — which is very expensive — blended with well and reclaimed water, which is both brackish. Salt management is a major component of our management strategies.

"I think the Universe rotor for the Koro FTM is a fantastic tool for thatch management. We are also using the FTM with Universe rotor for a turf conversion project, changing from Bermuda to Seashore Paspalum.

Working together with our partners





After eradicating the existing turf with several pesticide applications, we were able to strip 30 acres on our front nine holes with the machine in three weeks, which we were very impressed by. We will use the same strategy for the back nine next summer."

Despite the initial purpose of the machine being to remove thatch, Tim has used it on a number of other areas around the course, taking full advantage of what the patented Universe Rotor and KORO FTM offer. In replacing his previous machine, he believes he now has much more powerful, efficient and cleaner end product, something that's vital for surface hygiene in a continuous growing environment.

"Using the Koro to its full extent means with the 10mm Universe blades, I have been able to strip the first nine holes, and with the 3mm Universe Finesse blades we will be going into future operations for verti-cutting fairways and larger tees a couple of times a year, as well as other plans. It is a very versatile and well-built piece of equipment, and we are very happy that we chose to purchase a Koro FIELD TOPMAKER complete with Universe rotor.

"We are very pleased with the efficiency and accuracy of the machine. Also, Richard Campey and his team have provided great support."



'It is a very versatile and well-built piece of equipment, and we are very happy that we chose to purchase a Koro FIELD TOPMAKER.'

What's protecting your golf course machinery?

Paul Morris, managing director, GBR Technology

Lubricants are required in golf course maintenance equipment — typically engine oils, hydraulic fluids, greases and two-stroke oils.

But what goes into the lubricants you buy and why can there be a marked difference in quality?

Mechanics and course managers have the option to buy original equipment manufacturer-branded lubricants, such as John

Deere, or the major brands, such as Castrol, Shell, Texaco, or less well-known brands from blenders and smaller marketers of lubricants. Whichever route is chosen, there are real differences in product quality on the market and much of the difference is down to the base oils used.

Lubricant base oils

Mineral oils used in lubricants and greases are formulated with various additives to confer the required properties. Additives may include such things as anti-oxidants, extreme pressure

additives, corrosion inhibitors, dispersants and anti-foams for the product to perform its function and meet the performance requirements of a number of specifications and standards.

Although the additives play a vital role in the performance of the lubricant, so too does the type and quality of the base oil. It is actually the base oil which relates most strongly to longevity and performance.

Base oils have been classified by the American Petroleum Institute into five internationally-recognised base oil groups. Hydrocarbon mineral oils, produced from the refining of crude oil, fit into Groups I, II and III. Synthetic fluids made from poly alpha olefins (PAO) comprise Group IV. All other base oil types, be it esters, silicones, polyalkylene glycols (PAGS) or fluorinated materials, fit into Group V.

Recycled oils may also be used on occasion, especially by smaller companies blending lubricants. Recycling oil can involve re-distillation or other processes including filtration. Recycled oils are cheap and have inferior properties. Some lower priced lubricants may contain a percentage of recycled oil as standard.

Thermal oxidation of lubricants create carbonaceous deposits



Group I

These use a solvent-refining process where some of the aromatic and chemically-unsaturated components of the oil have been removed. The process is a solvent wash and a significant amount of unsaturated material and some sulphur compounds are left in the base oil. The oil will have an appreciable colour and odour and a relatively low viscosity index.

The viscosity index (VI) is a measure of how much the base oil viscosity will change with temperature. High VI is desirable since the lubricant properties will change less over a wider temperature range. Think of an engine oil that needs to perform on start up in winter when it might be very cold, and then the same oil performing well when the engine is up to its normal running temperature.

With the exception of recycled oils, Group I oils are the cheapest base on the market.

Group V

Any chemistries that are not in the other four groups. Some of the chemistries have exceptional properties, while some might be inferior in other aspects.

One range of fully-fluorinated oils and greases manufactured by Chemours (formerly DuPont) is called Krytox. These materials, first used commercially in the Apollo space programme, are highly stable at elevated temperatures.

These fluorinated materials also have extreme water and fuel resistance, are non-toxic, do not support microbial growth, have very widespread elastomer compatibility and are very resistant to a wide range of reactive chemicals. Further, they also have an unusual property of having a static coefficient of friction below their dynamic one and are highly effective at preventing 'stick-slip' and 'squeak and rattle'.

Fluorinated materials are expensive but a small 56 gram tube is very affordable and has a myriad of general purpose lubricant uses.

Group II

These base oils typically get the unsaturates content down further by using a hydrotreating process. This chemically reacts some of the unsaturated materials with hydrogen and turns them into saturated materials. The base oils have less odour, less colour, less unsaturates, less sulphur and higher viscosity index.

The unsaturated material in base oil is more reactive than the saturated material. Over time, especially at high temperature, it will oxidise faster and the oil will become acidic and begin to break down. This can affect viscosity and form varnishes and sludge, leading to corrosion and a drop off in performance.

Biodegradable oils

These are normally esters, such as natural plant oils like rapeseed oil, or synthetic esters derived from plant material. However, other chemistries and materials can be used in biodegradable lubricants.

Biodegradability is normally determined for lubricants in relation to an OECD 301B test (modified sturm test). This laboratory test exposes the material to a bacterial inoculum and measures carbon dioxide evolution. A material is classified as 'readily biodegradable' if at least 60% of the theoretical carbon dioxide that could be released by its biodegradation is released within 28 days under the test conditions. If under the test conditions greater than 20% but less than 60% is achieved in the 28 days, then the test fluid is classified as 'inherently biodegradable'.

Sometimes an 'inherently biodegradable' fluid might be the preferred option if it shows less toxicity to the turf than a readily biodegradable fluid.

Group III

Production of these base oils may use additional refining steps including hydro-isomerisation and iso-dewaxing, the latter being a chemical process to render liquid some of the waxy material present in the oil and so benefit low temperature performance.

An additional claimed benefit to highly refined base oil is better response from the additives used with them.

Products based on more refined base oils are more expensive than those based on solvent refining alone, but they have superior properties. Refined products will give better

equipment protection and longer service life. In most cases these cost benefits can more than cover the extra product cost. If you consider lower replacement filter costs, less maintenance, better protection and longer machinery lifetime, then the benefits can be very significant.

It's a shame that in many cases the decision is taken to go with the cheapest base oil due to the lower price per litre, without further consideration.

Group IV

These are poly alpha olefin (PAO) products. These materials are essentially synthetic hydrocarbons made from alkenes, which are then polymerised to make longer chain materials, and have very good properties but at significantly higher prices.

Greases

Greases provide lubrication through release of the base oil that makes up the largest component of the product. A thickener is used to turn the base oil into a grease. Most greases are made to NLGI grade 2, giving a soft butter consistency.

The type of thickener plays a key role in the temperature range the grease can operate to, as well as its water resistance. Lithium complex greases are widely used on grease points and bearings on grass cutting equipment. However, they do not have the water resistance of calcium sulphonate-thickened greases and the latter offer advantages for machinery used outdoors.

A complex grease is made using two or more carboxylic acids, as opposed to one. This imparts a good high temperature characteristic to the product. For example, a lithium soap grease will be cheaper, while a lithium complex grease would be superior at higher temperatures.

Summary

- Ask what your supplier means when describing a product as semi-synthetic, but be aware he might not give you a clear answer.
- Higher quality base oils — those in Groups II and III — will protect your equipment better for longer.
- Cheaper base oils — in Group I or recycled oils — can quickly lead to corroded surfaces, varnishing and accelerated equipment wear.
- Inherently biodegradable oils exist with lower turf toxicity than readily biodegradable oils.
- Consider the use of a water-resistant grease over a lithium complex grease for outdoor application.



Mowers

Where can you look next?

GBR

GBR Technology Limited

GBR Technology Ltd has been established since 1993 and entered the amenity market, initially with wetting agents, eight years ago.

With particular expertise in surfactants, wetting agents are a core area for the company with direct sales, and sales through distributors. Products are also manufactured and filled for an increasing number of other amenity companies in the UK and overseas.

Our heritage lubricant sales stream is 25 years old this year and continues to grow into a wide range of industrial sectors as well as into amenity markets.

GBR Technology is also a significant supplier of lubricants to the UK Ministry of Defence. Lubricant sales focus mostly on higher quality oils and greases – we are authorised distributors of Petro-Canada, Anderol and Krytox — who are all performance leaders in their fields.

The company holds the ISO 9001 quality standard and prides itself on a high level of customer service and technical support.

The aim in the amenity sector is to continue to grow strongly, bringing high quality products to market and providing value to distribution companies, direct end-user accounts and bringing benefits to the sector overall.



Kubota



Achieve the perfect cut with Kubota

For greenkeepers looking for a ride-on mower that delivers high productivity and efficiency, Kubota's F90 Series out-front mowers are the ideal machines, specifically designed with the UK's grass growing conditions in mind.

Offering two ride-on mowers at 30HP and 38HP, the economic F90 Series provides outstanding navigation across all types of turf, fitted with hydrostatic steering and HST transmission with all-wheel-drive to cut larger areas of grass quicker and easier.

The machines' high torque rise is also designed to ensure faster, smoother recovery under sudden loading, enabling the machine to power through tall or wet grass with ease.

Specifically designed for greater productivity, the efficient 3-cylinder Kubota engine (F3090 model) and 4-cylinder Kubota engine (F3890 model) are combined with two-range hydrostatic transmission and a 61-litre fuel tank to provide complete autonomy at a reduced fuel cost.

The models can also be fitted with grass collectors, which both feature an impressive 900 litre high capacity.

Mower deck widths of 1.52m / 1.83m are available with side or rear discharge and optional mulching kit to ensure a clean precision cut that is easily converted to mulching. Easy maintenance is at the forefront of the F90 Series' design, featuring a quick-release engine cover and 90° tilt mower deck, with every element of the machine designed to limit downtime.

Both models feature wide tread tyres for greater stability and maneuverability, while also minimising turf damage due to less ground compaction.

Comfort and ergonomics has also played a central role in the series' design, equipped with a large operator's platform, deluxe seat and easily located High/Low speed lever.



Reesink

Toro Greensmaster 1000



Sometimes things happen — new products are launched, new technology is developed, or in perfect harmony the two combine — and the result is something that just can't be beaten. A classic example of this is the revolutionary design of Greensmaster 1000, which is still influencing greens cutting 28 years later.

This Toro classic is as popular now as when it launched in 1989, bringing with it no less than four revolutionary and innovative design features that are now widely seen in professional pedestrian greens mowers across the world.

The loop handle design and the 'Dual Klick' adjust of the bedknife were industry firsts. As was the front weight bias, which offsets the operator's natural tendency to place weight on the handle, allowing the cylinder to better follow the ground's contours for a consistent cutting height. A wide kickstand for stationary stability to change transport wheels was new too, and all together they combined to deliver a superior quality of cut that remains unmatched today.

Its smooth drums are gentle on the greens and grass baskets distribute clippings evenly for optimal mowing on each pass.

whether the conditions are wet or dry. Even at the lowest height of cut setting, the GR1000 provides a beautifully consistent finish thanks to the machine's well-balanced weight distribution that ensures straight-line tracking with minimal operator guidance.

This, taken together with all its other features, produces the smoothest, most uniform cut possible in a greens mower.



Enhanced disease resistance

Germinal's bentgrass mixture offers enhanced disease resistance

Germinal has added a greens-specific blend to its range of golf seed mixtures.

Designed for use on soil or sand-based greens, Forefront Greens is made up of three bentgrass varieties — 35% AberRegal (Browntop Bent), 35% AberRoyal (Browntop Bent) and 30% 007 DSB (Creeping Bent). All three have been selected to offer increased wear and heat tolerance, vigorous growth and good all-round disease and stress resistance.

AberRegal is the latest UK-bred bentgrass cultivar to come out of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences in Aberystwyth breeding programme. Bred from material originally sourced from Kent, AberRegal boasts superb disease resistance, particularly to Fusarium, as well as excellent shoot density, fineness of leaf and unrivalled winter and summer greenness.

AberRoyal, another UK-bred cultivar to come out of IBERS, was originally sourced from West Wales and complements AberRegal.

"AberRegal and AberRoyal work well together by offering a duet of Browntop bentgrasses which will thrive on soil and sand-based greens anywhere in the UK," explained Richard

Brown, amenity sales manager for Germinal. "This pairing provides greenkeepers with improved genetic diversity and a sward with higher resistance to key diseases such as Red Thread and Fusarium."

007 DSB was developed in the US using 24 parent plants to produce a single cultivar with a wide genetic base. This background enables it to deliver all the qualities of a top-rated Creeping Bentgrass, such as prostrate growth habit, high shoot density and good wear tolerance, in a range of conditions, from the extreme heat of Morocco to the harsh cold of Western Siberia.

007 DSB has been well-received wherever it has been used, including Ryder Cup and US Open courses, and was the variety of choice for the greens renovation ahead of the PGA Masters at Wentworth.

"Unlike older Creeping Bent varieties, 007 DSB does all of this with a lower requirement for water and nutrients," Richard Brown continues. "This means that, for the first time, a Creeping Bentgrass can be successfully blended with high quality Browntop Bent varieties to deliver an added-benefit but low input seed mixture."

Richard added: "As such, Forefront Greens is the perfect solution for progressive greenkeepers who are managing Browntop Bents, but who are seeking extra performance without the need for additional management inputs. The combination of cultivars ensures golf greens remain verdant throughout the year and, thanks to the inclusion of three top-performing varieties, avoids the risks associated with creating a monoculture of grasses."

To get the best results from Forefront Greens, Richard offered the following overseeding advice:

Timing

Overseeding work can be carried out any time between April and September, but the minimum soil temperature for bentgrass germination is 10°C, with the optimum range being 16–22°C. Greenkeepers can either elect to wait until the soil temperature has risen to an adequate level, or, to make best use of quieter times on the course, put seed down immediately prior to a forecasted spell of warm, wet weather.

Frequency

The UK's unpredictable weather patterns mean it is rare to encounter perfect conditions for germination and seedling establishment. It therefore makes sense to overseed at least two or three times in the season.

This doesn't necessarily mean using twice as much seed as, instead of a single application at 5g/m², two lighter overseedings of 2.5g/m² each could be applied.

Seed application

Broad-casting, using a custom seed drill, or precise drop-seeding into linear grooves, hollow cores or tine holes, will all produce good results. In all cases the key is to ensure the seed is sown to the correct depth of 2-5mm. This will allow the coleoptile to push through the soil surface and put out its first leaf before the seedling's energy stores run out. You must also ensure good seed to soil contact.

Watering and establishment

More often than not, overseeding is thwarted by low germination rates and poor seedling survival as a result of using inferior seed stock. In the right conditions, viable lots of quality seed will produce good populations of seedlings in as little as 7-21 days. The soil surface should be kept damp during this period.

When seedlings appear, applications of water should be less frequent but heavier.

First cut height should ideally be 6mm, although an increase of 1mm over the normal summer cut height will suffice. Aggressive management should be avoided until the sward is properly established, so light brushing, rolling and aeration should be the only techniques used while the root system is being developed.

'AberRegal and AberRoyal work well together by offering a duet of Browntop bentgrasses which will thrive on soil and sand-based greens anywhere in the UK.'

Forefront Greens produces a fine, dense sward with good disease resistance

Germinal

Seedling populations showing in as little as 7-21 days

Budgeting ahead of the season

Budgeting ahead of the season - Bayer

While many greenkeepers and course managers look to prepare their budgets ahead of the new financial year, Bayer technical manager and former head greenkeeper, Dr Colin Mumford, gives his advice on budgeting for fungicide applications.

Creating the maintenance budget is never an easy task, even for the most experienced in the profession. With numerous costs to consider, along with the unpredictability of weather conditions, it can be hard to decide how much to allocate to chemistry and related practices.

Due to regulatory changes, this autumn will be the first season for many years that the industry will be without iprodione-based fungicide products, such as Chipco Green. The active ingredient, iprodione, has been the go-to product for many when it comes to 'as and when required' disease control. With its withdrawal, a new way of thinking will be necessary.

Common practice previously meant greenkeepers would have a bottle of fungicide waiting in the chemical store, so it was available to use when disease symptoms

appeared. A contingency fund would be set aside to purchase more if the outbreak continued.

However, with this approach, there are often unforeseen purchases required, that can quickly reduce the fungicide contingency. I've seen this happen on several golf courses, leaving the greenkeeper to juggle the budgets. While this can be a solution in the short-term, it can quickly catch up on you, especially with high-value items, such as fungicides.

For this reason, the loss of curative chemistry isn't all negative, there is some good to come out of it in the form of new preventative fungicides coming onto the market, and the ability to forward-plan budgets with greater accuracy.

Streamlining the process

This step change in available chemistry provides the perfect opportunity to review the budget, before starting to implement a planned preventative disease control programme.

The use of preventative fungicides will allow you to plan exactly how many applications will be required throughout the season, so you'll know exactly how much money to set aside.

Many UK courses will typically require four applications in the autumn and winter, due to the weather conditions that are ideal for disease such as *Microdochium* Patch to thrive.

Assessing the risk

To help differentiate between preventative and curative disease treatments, I often use an analogy of different mortgages and the risks associated with them.

A preventative programme is like a fixed mortgage, you know exactly how much you're going to pay and when, allowing you to plan ahead.

A curative programme, on the other hand, is more like a variable rate mortgage. It may go down with low disease pressure, but it can

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also go up when disease pressure is high. You can be left uncertain, as you never know when a disease outbreak could occur, or how serious it could be.

It's also important to remember that turf that's been treated after disease has started to develop will have been weakened from a turf health perspective. This will mean it's less able to recover from the outbreak, making it prone to further outbreaks later in the season.

Bayer Turf
Solutions Team



Choosing the right product

To help avoid juggling budgets further down the line, selecting a suitable product rotation as part of the budgeting process, can help you to stay in control of disease management and budget expenditure.

There are several things to take into account when selecting the best fungicides to suit your course, but one of the most important is the mode of action, which is dictated by the chemical (fungicide) group.

For example, for the most effective preventative action, you'll want to

choose a systemic product earlier in the season, when grass is actively growing. These products are absorbed into the plant tissue and are transported around the plant, offering after-infection protection. So even when the tops of the grass plant are cut, the fungicide still resides within the plant.

You can then save your contact-acting products for later in the year, when growth rates have significantly declined or when the grass is dormant. The fungicide won't be cut off as the turf is mown less frequently.

Timings

While it's difficult to predict the exact dates of application this far in advance, you can monitor the weather conditions and look at other factors such as Growth Degree Days, which indicate when disease is likely, so you can be ready to apply your chosen fungicide.

Microdochium Patch thrives in still, damp conditions and temperatures in the range of

6–15.5°C. So, during these conditions it's recommended that a preventative treatment such as Exteris Stressgard is applied to stop the early stages of disease before it has a chance to take hold.

For more information, please contact the Bayer Turf Solutions Team at turfsolutions@bayer.com or on 00800 1214 9451.

GI Talking Heads

Topdressing

We ask turf managers to talk us through their topdressing tactics



Paul Oliver

Course Manager

Mid Sussex

South East

Here at Mid Sussex we use a traditional approach to topdressing our greens.

Our annual aim is to work 100 tonnes into the profile between April and October.

We have two maintenance windows to make the most of, which allows us get a large proportion of the 100 tonnes into the profile at each end of the season, by means of hollow coring or solid tining — hopefully we will be using a Graden next year!

Our first is at the end of April and the second is the end of August or beginning of September, which allows for quick recovery due to soil temperatures still being high.

Our maintenance programme during the playing season includes verticutting once a month, then dressing straight after to help fill any imperfections created by the verticutting blades.

We also pencil tine monthly, which creates minimal disturbance when the course is at its busiest, while allowing us to work seven or eight tonnes into the putting surface, keeping it firm and true.

We use a medium sand dressing with 65% medium sand content, 30% coarse sand and 4% fine sand, which has the same particle distribution as our USGA greens.



Colin Hopper

Head Greenkeeper

Elsham

Central England

My topic with regards to topdressing has always been the 'little and often' approach.

Although there are arguments for both, here at Elsham I find we can integrate a substantial amount of sand into the upper profile without disrupting play or quality of the putting surface.

The main reason why we can use the "little and often" approach is that we are fortunate to have the right equipment to achieve our aims. The two vital pieces of equipment we use are a Progorator and topdresser attachment, along with a sweep and fill brush. This allows us to apply 6-10 tonnes of sand on a two-to-four-week basis, dependent on weather conditions and amount of play.

With these pieces of equipment, this process can be carried out in under three hours, before the golfers arrive at the course.

In 2016 we managed to apply 120 tonnes of sand onto the greens with around 80 tonnes of this in the playing season using the "little and often" approach. By using this approach we are managing to keep our organic matter levels in the top 20mm in the 4-6% range.

We are also fortunate enough to own our own grinding equipment. With regular sand inputs, mower blades are likely to become blunt, so within a couple of hours the cutting units are sharpened to produce a quality cut again.



Nigel Thompson

Head Greenkeeper

Lilley Brook

South West & South Wales

We are trying to apply around 100-120 tonnes of sand onto our greens.

Since I've been at Lilley Brook, which is just over two years, I inherited greens (which are clay bowl greens) in a very soft condition, with very high thatch content!

So as a club we decided to tackle the situation with a new greens programme, in which I use Terralift products. The club has also been seeking guidance from Paul Woodham from the STRI. Together we agreed a plan of major greens renovations, such as hollow coring, scarification and the installation on drainage in our greens.

Since we started the renovation works on the greens, I basically put two weeks in the diary for greens maintenance. Ideally, I like to try and get my first week around the end of March or early April and my second spot in the second week in August.

For my first renovation I hollow core around three inches down and scarify down to around 15/20mm and then apply a heavy dressing of Chelford T28 sand, around 40 tonnes.

Then in August we hire in the Graden sand injection, along with 40 tonnes of kiln-dried sand at a depth of 25mm.

Since carrying out the major works on our greens, I also try to apply small dusting sod sand after a verticut and scarify and also solid tine. Since this work has been carried out, we have also installed drainage into our greens.

So far, five have been completed and with the additional work of topdressing, these greens have been transformed, which is very pleasing. So basically, I apply two heavy applications a year and also, when I do get a chance, a few smaller applications too!

The members are seeing great results and we have the majority of them on side when it comes to renovation work, but I leave the communication to the members to the chairman as he is great at sending updates about the work on the course.

Regarding the chairman, he and the club have been very supportive as we have invested in new groundcare equipment for the major renovation work, of which our greens, course and members are now seeing the benefit.



Bob Mackay

Course Manager

Southwick Park

South West & South Wales

We have religiously topdressed with pure sand for the past six years and intend to do so for many years to come.

The removal of organic material was a priority and the decision was taken to heavily sand initially, to fill up the resulting holes with a much more free-draining material.

As time went by and our surfaces began to firm up, we started to reduce the quantity per application, but increased in our frequency.

Depending on weather conditions, we will normally start with light fortnightly dressings as early as the end of January and increase to weekly by the end of February. We then

continue this procedure until early June, by which time we have produced a firm, true and consistent surface for the season ahead.

Only after autumn renovation to our greens, whether that be hollow-tining or verti-draining, do we now apply a heavier dressing. The little and often process undoubtedly suits our requirements best.

We have extended our sandings to our tees, approaches and fairways and in an ideal world if the resources were available we would extend the frequency of applications to these areas also.

Are you looking for more information?



Download a copy of the Earthworms leaflet and poster from the BIGGA website or scan the QR code to find out more



GKB Machines

Made for Golf

As a greenkeeper your primary target will be perfection from tee to green. Maintaining your course to the highest possible standards calls for specialist equipment you can trust. You need machinery that gets the job done in the minimum time, is durable and affordable, and above all, designed specifically for your needs. GKB Machines has been making a name for itself with high praises from greenkeepers and groundsmen around the UK.

Seeding and surface aerating in one pass

The GKB Combiseeder offers a fast, efficient way of seeding and surface aerating with virtually no surface disturbance. Creating over 1,500 holes per m², it provides accurate seed application at various rates to suit different seed mixes, with drag brushes to incorporate seed and topdressing. The Combiseeder can be used for overseeding and initial seeding and offers a fast and efficient way of seeding and surface aerating, with virtually no surface disturbance. There's a large seed hopper with agitator brush and you get accurate seed distribution from all seed mixes. There are models from 1.2m to 2.1m and there are options of a multi spike cast ring roller or Cambridge roll cast ring roller.

Improve and maintain drainage with the GKB Sandfiller

Every professional knows scarifying and sand filling are the perfect combination to improve and maintain drainage on the course. The problem is, it can be a time-consuming task requiring dedicated equipment for each process. GKB has come up with the ideal solution, saving you time and expense and leaving you free to get on with other jobs.

GKB Sandfiller combines in one operation scarifying, removal and sand filling. Which means the operation can be carried out by one person, saving on time and cost. The principle of the Sandfiller is based on the much-praised GKB-Combinator. The slitting rotor utilises carbide scarifying blades that create wind in order to lift the removed material. The blades remove thatch to a depth of 4cm and the debris is distributed to a sideways tipping container.



GKB SF120

Dried sand is applied from the hopper to the trench the moment the scarifying is complete. The result is the area is once again available for use immediately.

Topdresser that's always in fashion

The GKB SP100 has been developed on the back of the success of GKB's trailed versions and to meet your needs with straightforward mounting onto turf trucks using a simple bolt-on system. Stand legs allow the SP100 to be quickly set up or removed. With its 1m³ hopper capacity, the machine suits a variety of purposes, evenly distributing materials, such as sand and mulch with variable spread widths and depths. It's easily fitted with electro-hydraulic controls and runs directly off the hydraulics of the chosen turf truck. Furthermore, the Sandspreader is available in four different designs which range from 1m³ to 4m³. While the SP100 is suitable for assembling on a turf truck, such as the ProGator, Truckster or Workman, other designs are provided with four pivoting balloon tires, for the perfect distribution of the weight on your golf course.

If you would like to know more about how GKB Machines can help improve and maintain your course, call Tom Shinkins on 07495 883617 or visit www.gkbmachines.com



GKB CS200



GKB Sand Spreader 300

Jacobsen



Topdressers

Top dressing is an indispensable part of an overall turf maintenance programme. To be effective, it needs to be applied properly and, most importantly, uniformly to ensure that the desired turf quality is produced.

Ransomes Jacobsen markets an extensive range of equipment for turf maintenance, including topdressers from Turfco, the Minnesota-based manufacturer which created the first powered topdressing machine in 1961.

The Turfco WideSpin 1550 topdresser is a well-established multi-functional topdresser which can be truck-mounted or towed behind a tractor or utility vehicle. A new patented controller allows turf professionals to calculate rates while also providing a wider range of rates to choose from. There is also the ability to lock in the most frequently used settings with the controller's four presets.

Both versions of the WideSpin 1550 are capable of applying both heavy and light topdressings to suit the various needs of the operator. It combines the best

elements of a light topdresser with a spread of up to 12m (40'), and the patented WideSpin technology that allows the consistent delivery of heavy applications to 2.5m (9'), while delivering a consistent, even spread.

The brand new hopper design has 20% greater capacity and the widest opening in the industry, meaning that operators are able to refill faster and more precisely than even before while reducing the chance of spillages and wastage.



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Around the Green Scotland & N. Ireland



Chairman

Stuart Ferguson MG

07947 859062

stuferrg@btinternet.com

@stuferrgusonmg



Regional Administrator

John Young

07776 242120

johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

East



Grant Moran

@BIGGA_ES

grant@mortonhallgc.co.uk

So let's not talk about the weather and instead talk about what's to come in the East Section. We have our spring outing (I'm sure spring will come soon) on 19 April at Woll. I've never played there so am looking forward to that. The Willie Woods will be hosted by Newbattle, which is always in amazing condition, in June. We have changed the format to a three-man team Texas scramble. Everyone loves a Texas scramble as it means you only have to hit a few good shots.

The BIGGA Scotland Golf Industry Conference in Perth was on 27 February with over 200 in attendance. Thank you to all the keynote speakers and I look forward to next year.

Congratulations to everyone who will be at Carnoustie for the 147th Open for the BIGGA Support Team, as it's a special time in the calendar for BIGGA.

Special mention to Craigielaw, who will be hosting the Scottish Senior Open this year, what an honour for them.

Central



Craig Boath

@CraigBoath

cboath@carnoustiegolflinks.co.uk

And we are off into season 2018. The Beast from the East 2 has gone and passed... I hope!

Talking of sequels, Richard Windows and Adam Newton from the STRI were our guests at Carnoustie Golf Links for a seminar on The Disturbance Theory — Reloaded. This was a look back on where and what we have done over the last 10 years. This was another well

attended event by our section members, some even coming from Spain to witness this!

The spring outing is coming up, so be sure to get your entry in for Leven Links on the 25 April. If you have not had an email get your email address updated.

The draw has been made for the Pairs Competition 2018:

Group 1: J Watson and D Cooper; J Naylor and D Grant; K Gibson and C White; R Jenkinson and K Brunton.

Group 2: D Gray and C Powrie; R Colley and K Duncan; D Scott and T Harris; P Murphy and C Noble.

Group 3: G Neill and C Boath; A Dunn and C MacDonald; G Hood and M Kolberg; E Kay and P Hind.

Group 4: J Lindsay and W Saunders; K Niven and R Mackay; S McCalla and G McCandless; J Reid and S Lawlor. David Gray will have been in touch with rules and the format to those that have entered. Best of luck to all.

A few things coming up include an environmental walk in June at Montrose Golf Links with Les Rae. A course walk is taking place in July at Carnoustie Golf Links.

Look out for emails or updates on Facebook.

North



Neil Sadler

gkneil@sky.com

When will this weather warm up? Once again spring has been put on hold for the time being, with more snow and very low temperatures. With the season underway we really need a break and I hope Mother Nature starts to remember what season we are in.

I am going to be repetitive this month and give you the same information as I gave you last month, but it is important it reaches you all.

There will be a few changes in the way the section will be run this year and a

few things that we have planned. Firstly, some of you would have noticed a change in email address (northsection@bigga.co.uk). If you can use this address from now on that would be great. Moving on, we also have a new bank account. So for all of you that paid your outing entries and 200 Club by BACS, could you please delete those details and use the new ones which will be on the bottom of the entry form to our first outing of the year: account number 16950268, sort code 80 22 60.

Regarding the outings for this season, our spring outing will be at Nairn Dunbar on 3 May. This outing will be our normal Stableford format.

Our autumn outing will be at Banchory on 27 September, but for the first time we will be trying a Texas scramble format. If you wish to enter a team of four that's fine. If not, you can just enter and we place you in a team. Payment for the outings this year must be made in advance by BACS or cheque. No payment will be taken on the day and you will not be entered into the draw if payment has not been made. If for some reason you have entered but cannot play, a refund will be provided if we are notified seven days in advance.

The 200 Club will have a slight increase this year from £7 to £8, but the benefit is that we will be paying out more prize money. More information on that will be sent out in due course. Also, like the outings, we would like the payment for the 200 Club to be in advance of the Nairn outing and again by BACS or cheque.

There has been some more movement in our area. Paul Sharp has left Peterculter and joined Kenny Liddel at TASC. Mark Angus has stepped up from deputy to head at Peterculter. We wish both men the very best of luck to them.

Muir Ross has become the new head man at Golspie.

Alness has appointed Craig Campbell as their new head man.

What's on near you

See our events page for details of what's happening in your region

If you have any news please let me know and I can include it in next month's article .

Thank you very much and I hope to see you all at Nairn Dunbar on 3 May.

SW Scotland



Steven Carmichael

Twitter: @gkstevie79

Email: stevious79@icloud.com

As I write this I hope everyone has got over the Beast from the East and I'm hoping things are starting to move forward.

The bad news has continued down here in Dumfries and Galloway after Powfoot's fire damage last month.

Here at Dumfries and Galloway we have had some unwanted visitors and were broken into for the second time in six months! A considerable amount of hand equipment was stolen, ranging from backpack blowers to socket sets. The total cost to replace everything was around the £5,000 mark. We are looking into upgrading our security in different forms, so hopefully this will eradicate further break ins in future.

Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl@bigga.co.uk

West



Scott Davidson

Twitter: @BiggaWest

Email: headgreenkeeper@cathcartcastle.net

Northern Ireland



Andy Barr

Twitter: @3andybarr

Email: Andybarr_3@hotmail.co.uk



Phillip Snellin

Twitter: @PhillipSnellin

Email: philsnellin77@hotmail.com

We just had our Sports Turf Matters day at CAFRE and I can say it was a great success, with everyone I talked to really enjoying it, especially the talks. The first talk of the morning was brilliant, from Wendy Cole of The R&A. I loved hearing how they run and the help they give people. Next was Les Howkins MG who gave a really good talk about The Richmond and everything he does there and the

changes they're making.

After Les we had James Hutchinson giving us some great ideas on compost and reed beds around our courses. Just before lunch David Langheim MG gave us a talk on Wimbledon Golf Club when the tennis is on and the hard work they do.

After lunch we went around the stalls, indoors and outdoors, talking to everyone and watching two Eco Bunkers being built on the course. They looked great and I think they're definitely the way forward. I want to thank everyone who talked on the day and BIGGA who always help put on a great show.

As I write this, Tiger is on the prowl again and playing like his old self. He's great for the game and it's so good to see him back. It makes me want to go out and play and I can't wait for the golf season to start.

I've set up a Twitter page so please follow us @NirelandBigga

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Around the Green Northern



Chairman

Chris Sheehan
07531 760545
wdgcgreenkeeper@gmail.com



Regional Administrator

Sandra Raper
07866 366966
@BIGGANorthReg
sandra@bigga.co.uk

Cleveland



Anthony McGeough
amcgeough@
aol.com

Apparently spring is just around the corner — someone had better tell winter to do one then! The rolling ski slopes of Richmond Golf Club have been busy over the last few weeks and although it's great to see the course being used, it just isn't golf.

It's going to be a whirlwind start to the season when it finally dries out. The last time I cut a fairway or tee was

well before Christmas 2017. Safe to say we are looking a bit woolly! First cut this year may require a combine harvester.

On 7 March the section held a lecture on 'life without fungicides', which was interesting and thought-provoking. The lecture, as always, was well-presented by David Snowden and was received well by the room, which consisted of mainly course managers and head greenkeepers.

Catterick has just recruited Matthew Thompson as deputy head greenkeeper. Matthew had spent some time outside of the industry, but seems to have bucked the trend to come back into greenkeeping. Good luck with the new position.

North West



Steve Hemsley
@BIGGANorthWest
steven.hemsley1@
ntlworld.com

North East



Paul Walton
@paul_walton20
paul_walton14@
hotmail.co.uk

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W: bigga.xactassist.co.uk



XACT

Yorkshire



Rob Gee
 @Rob_Grn
 robgee.O3@blueyonder.co.uk

Well what a start to the season, when club drive-ins are taking place! Unfortunately our job is hard enough satisfying members' needs without Mother Nature throwing in her two penneth-worth.

Hopefully everyone is looking forward to our event at Bingley on 4 April.

Let's hope the weather changes and we can enjoy a good greenkeeping and golfing year!

Sheffield



Adrian Keys
 ajkeys79@hotmail.com
 @SheffieldBigga

So much for me saying in my last article that by the time you read this things will have picked up and we will be pushing towards a new season. With 100mm of rain and melted snow in March so far and no prospects of any upturn, these really are desperate times in our region.

The weather has unfortunately claimed a few demonstration days, with the vertical drainage demonstration at Lees Hall being cancelled due to snow. A rearranged date of Wednesday 10 April has been pencilled in for anyone interested in this event. If you haven't already registered your interest please contact Mike Brear.

Also, the Rainbird irrigation day had to be cancelled, although as of yet there is no rearranged date for this.

Congratulations to Nik Blesic on his new job with Rigby Taylor with effect from the 1 April.

Hopefully the weather will have picked up by my next article, as it really is getting frustrating now for everyone.

North Wales



Eifion Ellis
 @BIGGANorthWales
 eifionellis9@gmail.com

Hope you are all well and survived the rain, snow and freezing conditions that this winter has thrown at us. Then came the Masters and Augusta Syndrome — just what we all needed!

A huge congratulations must go to Darren Anderson MG, the staff and several members of Abergele GC on winning the outstanding environmental project of the year 2018 for their Tyr Gwyllt (Wildland) area. Well done lads.

For golf days this year we have three excellent courses in Harlech, on 13 June, Aberdovey on 27 September and Conwy on 5 December.

We need these events to be supported well this year. I understand it can be hard to have time off from work, but we need more numbers or these golf days will slowly disappear.

Not forgetting the non golfers, we are thinking of organising a cycling night at Marsh Tracks, Rhyl, which is a purpose-built cycling track. This will be held in the evening between 6-8pm, possibly on a Tuesday night, or a Sunday (May/June time). Please contact me with your thoughts or interest on this, or any other ideas to get the section together.

Forward any news/stories and photos of your courses to me via email on eifionellis9@gmail.com

New Members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Lorn Hood	GK - Turnberry
Mark Challis	GK - Trump It'l Golf Scotland
Terry McMaster	GK - Turnberry
William Robertson	GK - Trump It'l Golf Scotland
Craig Harvey	HGK - Brunston Castle
Mark Flood	AGK - Swanston New
Owen Lawrence	AGK - Banchory

Northern

Robert Smith	Affiliate - Worksop
Andrew Booth	Affiliate - Normanton
Connor Huffman	Affiliate - Reelsharp Services
Gordon Butcher	DHGK - Ashby Decoy
Alex Briggs	GK - St Annes Old Links
Gary Catley	GK - Ashby Decoy
Jeremy Ward	GK - Rotherham
Liam Atkinson	GK - Rockcliffe Hall
Paul Simpson	GK - Brancepeth Castle
Simon Becconsall	GK - Hanging Heaton
Ewan Jamieson	HGK - Heaton Park
Gary Chafer	HGK - Ashby Decoy
Samuel Shorrock	Student - Myerscough College
Gregory Whyley	AGK - Beverley & East Riding
Jacob Wright	AGK - Oulton Hall
Joseph Smith	AGK - Howley Hall
Richard Smithies	AGK - Ashby Decoy
Scott Gardner	AGK - Swinton Park

Central England

Paul Fairbrother	Affiliate - Market Harborough
Ashley Thompstone	Apprentice - Lichfield
Sam Hedgcombe	Apprentice - Uttoxeter
Mike Barnes	GK - Derby Sinfon
Miles Lynch	GK - Pottergate
Richard Lee	GK - Mapperley
Trevor Shiells	GK - Luffenham Heath
Scott Nightingale	HGK - Kettering

Thank you
to our section
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Around the Green

South West & S. Wales



Chairman

Steve Lloyd

07578 276082 | [@GreensMalvern](#)
coursemanager@theworcestershire
golfclub.co.uk

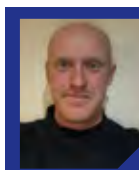


Regional Administrator

Tracey Walker

07841 948110 | [@biggaswsw](#)
tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk

South West



Dave Taylor

[@DaveTaylor101](#)
dt_taylor101@
hotmail.co.uk

What a crazy month it has been for everyone. With recent weather conditions, it has been made to feel like the peak of winter and not the beginning of spring.

The south west itself has experienced higher than usual snow fall. The first came in early March, with some areas covered with up to over a foot in snow. As I write this, the past weekend featured another wave of snow. This time not as serious and less disruptive, but all the same lots of courses shut. What was great to see though, was lots of greenkeepers still at work, making sure the roads and pathways were clear of snow and gritted so the businesses can still stay open and help generate income for the clubs, even when the courses are unplayable.

You are all a credit to your clubs, and everyone appreciates the work carried out in these difficult periods.

Recently the South West and South Wales held their second consecutive joint spring seminar. Another successful day with some great feedback. The day consisted of speakers such as Mark Hunt from Headland Amenity, James Edwards from EDI-Golf, Geoff Fenn from AGS and an outside demonstration from Husqvarna showing the future of robotic lawn mowers.

It was a great insight into how our industry is progressing towards a point where robotic mowers will start being used to help manage areas of the course. In this case the machine was really based on use in the garden, but already you can see the potential on a larger scale and the ability to be out cutting the rough in the late evening when there's no golf being played and less disruption to everyone. In my

opinion this is a great step forward. If we can even just reduce the man hours spent cutting rough by half then we have the opportunity to use the saved hours elsewhere, and in an age where everyone is feeling the strains of reduced staff, but the pressures of higher quality product, then I see this as a great step forward. But I won't be held responsible when the machines rise and we are doomed to just raking bunkers, if we're lucky.

On behalf of myself, the committee and all attendees, we wish to thank all the speakers and the patrons again for their loyal support. Without you, these days couldn't go ahead and we all appreciate the time you put aside for us. So, a big thank you to you all.

Moving forward, we are holding a golf day at Tracey Park in May. This is open to all sections and we really hope to see lots of you there, old and new. Further details will be coming out nearer the time.

South Coast



Mike Cartwright

[@mikehgc](#)
mikecartwright1
@hotmail.co.uk

As I write this I'm watching another blizzard out of the window falling on an already very white golf course. We've been closed more this year than any



Section News

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other I can remember, and the forecast doesn't look great for the rest of the week. After 26 years of greenkeeping, I think an indoor job may be on the horizon!

The South Coast seminar was held in February with around 100 people attending. It was a great day with some excellent presentations. Thanks to everyone who organised, attended and presented on the day.

The mechanics workshop held at Remedy Oak was also a success. Thanks go to Remedy Oak's mechanic Tim Selby and to freelance mechanic Lee Reed.

The next event coming up is the spring tournament to be held at Myrick Park, it will probably have been played by the time you're reading this.

The Greenkeepers v Secretaries match is also looming, at present I still need four more golfers. Please email me on mikecartwright1@hotmail.co.uk or call/text 07771 591791 if you'd like to take part. The day is free, all costs are sponsored by Course Care and our section.

South Wales



Andrew Hatcher
 @BIGGASouthWales
andrewhatcher1@msn.com

What a month we have had with the weather, starting with the Beast from the East. Then while writing these notes the mini Beast from the East hit the country again. We at the Coed were planning some renovations next week, but obviously they are on hold.

We have some movement within the section, with James Morgan moving to Tenby as head greenkeeper at Trefloyno. Greg Williams, previously at Newport, has started as technical advisor for Aitkens.

Mark Wiltshire is on the move, taking over a head greenkeeper at Llanishen. Emrys Nickels is returning to

greenkeeping at The Grove. Zac Thackery is leaving Southerndown to become Avoncrop Amenity's representative.

A shock here too, as Craig Campbell is leaving the Principality Stadium to move to a golf course in Inverness. Thank you Craig for your entertaining presentations regarding the stadium. Peter Mayes has started with us at Coedy Mwstwr after previously working at Llanishen and Cottrell Park, with experience at clubs around London. The section wishes you all the best with your new challenges.


Around 30 people attended this year's spring conference day between BIGGA South Wales and BIGGA South West at Thornbury GC. There were some brilliant speakers on the day, so thanks to everyone who contributed.

Congratulations to Paul Handy on turning 40.

Thanks to all the patrons for all their support.

The remaining fixtures for this year in will be in next month's edition.

Devon & Cornwall



Neil Rogers
 @buckaroo14
nrogers@advancegrass.com

The section is pleased to hear that Neil Rogers has made a good recovery from his stroke at the end of last year and is now on a 'phased' return to work. Neil will be working a couple of days a week and can be contacted by text or email.

The trip away to Liverpool planned for March was unfortunately cancelled due to the weather.

The section are hopeful that the weather improves for the section championships at Tiverton on Thursday 19 April. Keep an eye on your emails for more information.



New Members

Central England

Ben Hodson	AGK - Luffenham Heath
Daniel Neild	AGK - The Belfry
Steven Holliday	AGK - Bromsgrove
William Patrick	AGK - Kettering

South East

Stuart Franks	Affiliate - Sequoia
William Moore	Apprentice - Mid Kent
Haydn Drinkwater	CM - Redbourn
James Barden	DHKG - Wrotham Heath
Matthew Chapman	FA - Redbourn
Aaron Hauck	GK - Gerrards Cross
Lachlan Kenna	GK - The RAC
Luke Richardson	GK - Ashridge
Tom Dallender	Groundsman - Bancrofts School
David Taggart	International - Emaar Hospitality
Matthew Jordan	Student - Highwoods
Harry Schorah	AGK - Liphook
Joe Brown	AGK - West Hill
Aaron Dickson	AGK - Malden
Daniel Burnett	AGK - Lamberhurst
John Shelton	AGK - Beaconsfield
Liam Gould	AGK - Ashridge
Stephen Brown	AGK - Lamberhurst

South West and South Wales

David Barnes	Affiliate - Masons Kings
Peter Varlow	CM - Paultons
Geoffrey Cant	GK - Lilley Brook
Matthew Collis	GK - Bramshaw
Nicholas Edwards	GK - Meyrick Park
Robin Collins	GK - Avington Park
Christian Brain	Head Groundsman - Cheltenham College
Jacob Kennard	AGK - Milton Abbey
Joseph Pike	AGK - Tiverton
Carl Burley	AGK - Trevose
James Dimond	AGK - East Devon

Around the Green

Central England



Chairman

Andrew Laing

07870 188619 | [@andrewmlaing](#)
andrew.laing@gaudet-luce.co.uk



Regional Administrator

Roger Butler

07525 593359 | [@BIGGAcentraleng](#)
roger@bigga.co.uk

BB&O



Craig Earnshaw

[@craigdearnshaw](#)
craig@harleyfordgolf.co.uk

Happy spring everyone! By the time you are reading this, the long horrible winter will be long gone. Well, hopefully anyway! Yes it was a long winter and I'm sure you're all with me when I say I'm glad to see the back of it.

Our first golf meeting is coming up fast! The Toro Spring Cup is being held at Temple on 21 May and we will be sending out the registration form in the

next few weeks. Please can you fill it out and send it back to me as soon as possible. Ben will have the course on point so don't miss out, it's going to be a good one.

For the non-golfer, there will be a course walk, when Ben will talk through what he has been up to over the last three years at Temple.

This will only take place if we get the right numbers, so please drop me or Ben a line if this appeals to you..

Good luck to George Bell from Harewood Downs. He's taking some time out of greenkeeping to enter some professional golf events. I'm sure I'm not alone in wishing George all the best and hope he smashes it!

Please get hold of me if you have any stories that you think people would like to read about. I would like to hear from far and wide in the BB&O. Well, until May, have a good spring.

Mid Anglia



Darren Mugford

d.mugford@
rigbytaylor.com

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on near
you**

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your region

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BIGGA
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CHAMPIONSHIP

Midland



Glen Howard
howie8447@sky.com

The Christmas tournament at Trentham is being rerun on 18 April after being cancelled due to snow earlier in the year. Sponsor Banks Amenity, teeing off at 1pm, cost £25. Get entries in as soon as possible.

Spring tournament at Nuneaton on 31 May. Singles Stableford. Sponsor Campey Turfcare.

Team event, 10 October at Harborne, sponsored by Rigby Taylor and Working Turf.

Christmas tournament on 13 December at Copt Heath, sponsored by Banks Amenity.

Congratulations to Sam Hamer and his partner, Emma, from Drayton Park on the birth of their first child. George Hamer was born on 26 February, weighing 10lb 12oz.

The first Midlands Turf Club meeting was held at Penn by organiser Tim Johnson last month. Jon Handley from ALS/Maxwell Amenity gave an in-depth talk on fungicides and life without iprodione. The event was kindly sponsored by Jon Lewis from Reesink Turfcare. For information find Midlands TurfClub on Facebook.

A sad day at Redditch with Harvey Brooke, deputy, and Sam Bower, assistant, moving on to pastures new. We don't get rid of Harvey Brooke that easily though, as he's moved into a sales role with TH White. We wish him the best in his new role. (Remember the socks Harvey!)

The trips to New Holland with Campey Turfcare and to Man City with ICL have

been postponed due to lack of attendees. These will be rerun later in the year.

ALS/Maxwell Amenity are holding a seminar on Wednesday 11 April at Nailcote Hall, entitled 'Contemporary challenges for the turf manager'. Please contact your local representative for more information.

Check out the website www.biggamidlands.co.uk for more details.

East of England



Ian Collett
i.collett@
rigbytaylor.com

East Midlands



Paul Fowkes
@pazza20001
pazza20001@
gmail.com

I hope we all survived the 'Beast' and all its relatives and our courses are starting to grow.

Our first golfing day at Hollinwell will soon be upon us and I am looking forward to seeing you all and playing at such a brilliant course. Roger will be emailing details as soon as possible so please book it soon as I am sure it will fill up quickly.

Roger will be running both the secretary's and treasurer's role at the moment until a suitable candidate is found. If anybody wants any details or wants to stand for these roles please get in touch either on Facebook or Twitter or via email.

New Members

South West and South Wales

Kevin Kirk	AGK - Tiverton
Michael Travers	AGK - Lanhydrock
Ryan Leat	AGK - High Post
Sam Newbould	AGK - Carmarthen

International

Andreas Matzner	The Golf-Club Starnberg
Alan O'Keefe	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Bobby O'Keefe	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Cathal Browne	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Cathal Martin	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Che Maher	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
James Whelan	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Maitiu Sheehan	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Mark Cussen	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Peter Scannell	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Daniel O'Keefe	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Shane Madden	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Zach McElhinney	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Jim McGloin	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
Joe Rooney	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
John McDonogh	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa
James Holland	Student - Colaiste Stiofain Naofa

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Around the Green South East



Chairman
Peter Smith
Pds1@btinternet.
com.



**Regional
Administrator**
Clive Osgood
07841 948410
cliveosgood@
yahoo.co.uk



**Regional
Administrator**
Kerry Phillips
07715 672568
@BiggaKerry
kerry@bigga.co.uk

Surrey



Stephen Alabaster
@JacUKEast
salabaster@tip.
textron.com

For the majority of the Surrey members, March saw their first game of the year at Walton Heath for the South East Region Golf Day. Despite the weather the week before, which everyone had a taste of, the course was in very good condition. Kerry will give a full round up of the event in the magazine but congratulations to Surrey again for retaining the trophy!

We have finally got our list of events together and they are as follows:
Spring tournament, Tandridge, 26 April; Cresta Cup, Roehampton, 23 May; McMillan Tankard, Sunningdale, 16 July; Greenkeepers vs Reps, Worpleston, 20 September; England vs Scotland, Addington Palace, 9 November; Greenkeepers vs Secretaries, The Berkshire, 21 November.

Kent



Darren Burton
@BIGGAKent
dbawol05
@gmail.com

East Anglia



Mike Virley
@BIGGAEastAnglia
mikevirley@sky.com

Essex



Ian Wood
@essexbigga
ian.wood@
romfordgolfclub.co.uk

London



Kevin O'Neill
@kevodafone76
londonsection@bigga.
co.uk

Sussex



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

We will be holding another Turf Club on 26 April from 2-5pm at Ham Manor. The speakers for the afternoon are Henry Bechelet, Pete Smith and Robin Cheney.

The Sussex Section is also pleased to release the dates and venues of the golf events to be held in 2018. We have some excellent courses, some of which we haven't been to for a number of years. There is always a good turnout for these events and any members that have not played in them before are always very welcome.
Tuesday 24 April, Copthorne, breakfast from 10.30am, 1st tee from 11.30am.
Wednesday 27 June, Ham Manor. Tee booked 11.00am.
Friday 28 September, Piltdown. Tee time to be confirmed.
Friday 7 December, Turkey Trot, Worthing. Tee time to be confirmed. Please book your place with George by email to sussexsection@bigga.co.uk

If you have anything of interest please contact me on chris@collier-turf-care.co.uk or 07912 669457.



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For more information about BIGGA Membership and
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BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF
T: 01347 833800 | W: www.bigga.org.uk

[@golfgreenkeepers](https://www.facebook.com/golfgreenkeepers) | [@BIGGALtd](https://twitter.com/BIGGALtd)

Upcoming Events

Contact your section secretary to book a place

■ Scotland & Northern Ireland

East: 19 April, Woll, spring outing

Central: 25 April, Leven Links, spring outing

North: 3 May, Nairn Dunbar, section outing

South West: 10 May, Troon Portland, spring outing

North: 27 September, Banchory, autumn outing

■ Northern

Yorkshire: 4 April, Bingley St Ives, spring tournament sponsored by ICL

North Wales: 18 April, 10am-12.30pm, Henlle Park, demonstration day

North West: 19 April, Prestbury, spring tournament sponsored by Reelsharp and Pinseeker

Cleveland: 5 June, Ramside Hall, 'sprummer' tournament

North Wales: 13 June, Royal St David's Golf Club, Harlech, golf day

North Wales: 27 September, Aberdovey, golf day

■ Central England

Midlands: 11 April, Nailcote Hall, ALS/Maxwell Amenity seminar

East Midlands: 2 May, Hollinwell, golf day

East of England: 16 May, Holme Hall, spring golf day

Midland: 18 April, Trentham, Christmas tournament

BB&O: 21 May, Temple, Toro Spring Cup

Midland: 31 May, Nuneaton, spring tournament

Midland: 10 October, Harborne, team event

Midland: 13 December, Copt Heath, Christmas tournament

■ South East

Region: 19 April, Westerham, stress awareness seminar

Surrey: 26 April, Tandridge, spring tournament

London: 23 May, Stanmore, section golf day

Surrey: 23 May, Roehampton, Cresta Cup

Surrey: 16 July, McMillan Trophy, Sunningdale

Surrey: 20 September, Worplesdon, Greenkeepers vs Secretaries

Surrey: 9 November, Addington Palace, England vs. Scotland

■ South West & South Wales

South Coast: 12 April, Meyrick Park, spring tournament

Devon & Cornwall: 19 April, Tiverton, section championship

South Coast: 17 May, Corhampton, Greenkeepers v Secretaries match

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Upcoming Regional Events

For more information about events log in to the members area of the BIGGA website





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Lauren Frazer
Business
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Manager

01347 833832
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Buyer's Guide

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Learning &
Development Team
01347 833800
(option 3)



Sami Strutt
Head of
Member
Development

sami@bigga.
co.uk



Stuart Green
Head of
Member
Learning

stuart@bigga.
co.uk



Deb Burnett
L&D
Administrator

deb@bigga.
co.uk



The Greenkeepers
Training Committee Ltd.



Fiona Lyttle
Manager


01347 838640
fiona@
the-gtc.co.uk



Emma Willis
Administrator

01347 838640
emma@
the-gtc.co.uk

www.the-gtc.co.uk

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Sami Strutt:

25 years and counting

Twenty-five years ago a fresh-faced Sami Collins joined BIGGA as an administrative assistant.

It's safe to say that at the time no one could imagine the impact her work would have upon the careers of countless BIGGA members all over the country, and further afield.

As she marks her silver jubilee with the association, we spoke to Sami Strutt, as she is now known following her marriage to Lee, about the incredible changes she has witnessed to both BIGGA, and the education and professionalism of the greenkeeping industry.

"My interview took place in the old offices, which were situated in the old stable block at Aldwark Manor, during a power cut!" recalled Sami. "My mum had driven me the 16 miles from Harrogate in her Mini Metro and waited in the car while I was interviewed by the newly-appointed administration manager, John Pemberton, and executive director, Neil Thomas. At the end of the interview I was offered the job, mainly because I knew how to operate an Apple Mac computer and the rest, as they say, is history.

"I can still remember my first day at BIGGA, I was christened 'Sami' to avoid confusion with another girl called Sam. Never did I imagine that 25 years later, I would be known as 'Sami' worldwide!"

In 1993, the BIGGA office was a very different place. There was no internet, email or mobile phones, and social media was beyond the realms of imagination. It wouldn't be until two years later when the association went online, but only on one computer.

Working alongside Debbie Dale and David Golding, Sami described her first years with BIGGA as fun days, with many happy memories. She added: "When Ken Richardson joined BIGGA as the education and training officer, I never thought I would go on to work alongside him for 13 years, let alone take on the role of head of learning and development when he retired in 2007. It was his encouragement and belief in me that got me to where I am today."

Sami also credited past chairman Andy Campbell MGC, former chief executive John Pemberton and external trainer Brin Bendon. She said: "There have been many achievements over the years, but I think the best thing about my job is seeing our members achieve their career aspirations.

"My biggest professional achievement is definitely Continue to Learn at BTME. With the responsibility to develop and deliver the education programmes since



2008, we have featured more than 2,000 hours of education to more than 26,000 attendees. Quite an achievement and even after all these years, it never gets any easier."

Other successes have been the development of the Continuing Professional Development programme, the establishment of the BIGGA library, and the development of Refund of Fees, Higher Education Scholarships and Level 3 Scholarships.

In 2014 she achieved a foundation degree in business and management, which she credits as her biggest personal achievement.

Very early in her career, back at BTME in 1995, Sami met Lee Strutt, a greenkeeper and BIGGA member who would go on to become a



BIGGA board member and help out on the education sub-committee. Although she doesn't recall that first meeting (Lee does), the pair's friendship blossomed.

Sami said: "He became one of my 'go-to' gang when I had an idea, but needed to flesh it out," said Sami. "Never, in all those years, did it cross my mind that we would one day end up married! Since we got together in 2010, he has listened to my ideas and has helped me to shape and develop many of the initiatives that BIGGA offers today.

"I'm immensely proud of him and his professional accomplishments, we're a great team.

"I've made some incredible friends, from all over the world, including BIGGA staff and members, international association staff and company representatives. It's the people that make this such an amazing industry to work in.

"I can't believe I am celebrating my silver jubilee. There are far too many individuals to mention and stories to tell, but suffice it to say, I've had a ball and the story's not over yet."

Throughout Sami's time with BIGGA, she has witnessed...

Over **60** BIGGA members achieve Master Greenkeeper Certificate

27 Student (and Young Student) Greenkeeper of the Year winners

122 Future Turf Managers Initiative graduates

25 BTME's

21 BIGGA chairmen

5 BIGGA presidents

3 chief executives

More than **70** BIGGA staff members

More than **20** Golf Industry Shows



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

Craig Boath, Carnoustie; Andrew Laing, Gaudet Luce; Chris Mullett, The Belfry; Michael Budd, Westerham; James Bledge, Royal Cinque Ports; Levi Stoneham, Stoneham; Stuart Ferguson MG, Dundas Parks; Gordon Moir, St Andrews Links Trust; Graeme Davidson, Murrayfield; Scott Corrigan, Royal Troon; David Gray, Ladybank; Peter Dawson, South Essex G & CC; John Bowers, Crail Golfing Society; James Cleaver, Stratford Oaks; Scott Corrigan, Greenburn; Andrew Wilson, Whitecraigs; James Hawkins, Newport; Robert Wells, Ellesmere; George Pitts MG, Sunningdale; eteris Sadovskis, St Andrews Links Trust; Tom Smith, Colne Valley; Lee Strutt MG, RAC; Andrew Messenger, Longhirst Hall; Scott Reeves, Leyland; Simon Ashford, Upton-by-Chester; Craig Woodman, Bramshaw; Alex Brougham, Trentham Park; Kyle Cruickshank, Roxburghe; Anthony James, Perranporth; Daniel Dumbrell, West Sussex; Robert Phillips, Oaklands College; Tim Sethi, Golfpark Zurichsee; Nathan Woodward, Ham Manor; Jon Kiger, TurfNet.

Congratulations to the following members who achieved their CPD Milestone this month:

Andrew Laing, Gaudet Luce; Steve Thorne, Rushmore; Michael Budd, Westerham; Nicholas Roberts, Hendon; James Bledge, Royal Cinque Ports; James Lindsay, Stirling; Les Howkins MG, Richmond; Mark Broughton MG, Aldeburgh; Gwynn Davies, The Mere; Simon Ashford, Upton-by-Chester; Alex Brougham, Trentham Park; Anthony James, Perranporth; Scott Corrigan, Greenburn.



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

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



Apprentice Corner

Andy Wight | Oaklands College

If you would like to contribute to Apprentice Corner, get in touch by emailing karl@bigga.co.uk

Advice when using tractors at work

Tractors and inexperience can be a recipe for health and safety issues.

So the question of when staff should be trained in their use is an important one. Much will depend on the size and complexity of the tractor and the maturity of the individual combined with general driving skills.

Staying legal

As regard the legal aspect, the law says at the age of 16 you can, assuming you have passed the test, drive tractors less than 2.5 metres wide and tow two-wheeled trailers less than 2.45m wide on the highway. The laws regarding use of tractors on the highway and on private land are complicated and you must ensure you know if you are legal or not. A good place to research is the GOV.UK website.

Remember, when using tractors on the road it is the driver who is responsible for ensuring they are driving legally. When driving a tractor with a speed of less than 25mph on the road, you must ensure you have a flashing beacon fitted to the tractor if driving on an unrestricted dual carriageway. You must also have at least one external working mirror.

Also, check the club's insurance covers the use of tractors on the highway. Even crossing the road from one part of a golf course to another requires the tractor and driver to meet all highway use requirements.

Any insurance, lighting problems etc, will result in a penalty for you, the employee driving the tractor, not the employer who owns the tractor.

Understand your tractor

You should have a full understanding of every control of the tractor, such as the 4-wheel drive, gears, high and low ratio, handbrake, wipers, lights. The best way to do this is to: read the tractor manual; get an experienced operator to explain and demonstrate all the controls to you; and read the risk assessment and safe working practices document.

Then you should complete a course walk with an experienced operator who should explain the hazards of the golf course, such as driving too close to ditches, water hazards and slopes.

Check your tractor

Safety and maintenance checks must be carried out before use. These checks should include basics such as engine oil, fuel, coolant, tyres, cab is clear, pedals are clean, lights all work, seat and mirrors are correctly adjusted and the power take off (PTO) guard is in place.

Staying safe

You should learn how to drive a tractor in potentially dangerous situations, such as learning how to adjust your driving to suit weather and surface conditions, such as:

- **Icy conditions:** These can be a major risk so slow down, think about breaking distance, allow more time to break and wherever possible allow engine braking to slow you down.
- **Fog:** Slow down and use your lights.
- **Driving downhill:** Where there is a risk of the tractor running away or overturning, use 4-wheel drive and slow down. Use low ratio and low gear. Drive straight down the gentlest part of the slope. Avoid trying to turn on the descent. On steep slopes, never try to change gear as depressing the clutch could lead to a runaway situation.

Power take off shafts

You should also be aware of the extreme danger of PTO shafts. You should ensure the PTO guard is always in place and never use a tractor without a PTO cover. Never step over a running PTO shaft and always turn off a PTO before leaving the cab.

Hitching implements

When using the 3-point linkage you should connect implements in the following order:

- 1st**, the left link arm;
- 2nd**, the right link arm;
- 3rd**, the top link.

You can remember this as **London Rail Transport (LRT)**.

Always ensure the correct sized pin is used when connecting implements to the 3-point linkage and the pins are held in place with circlips to keep them in place.

Leaving the cab

Always ensure that when leaving a cab you exit backwards, not forwards, as if you trip you will hit the floor face first. When leaving a tractor, ensure that you:

- Put on a hand brake,
- Lower any implements,
- Stop engine,
- Remove the key.

A good guide for using tractors safely is: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg185.pdf



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Assistant Greenkeeper Callander Golf Club

Callander Golf Club welcomes applications for Assistant Greenkeeper for an 18 hole parkland course.

Requirements:

- Minimum of three years experience
- Educated to minimum of NVQ Level 2
- PA1, 2 & 6 desirable
- Excellent work ethic to a high standard
- Good communication skills and time keeping
- Must be able to work as part of a small team and on their own

- Must be able to work flexible hours
- Working on a rota basis at weekends

Salary will be based on experience and qualifications.

Please submit a covering letter and CV to:

Senior Greenkeeper
Callander Golf Club, Aveland Road,
Callander, Perthshire FK17 8EN

Or email CV to:

callandergolfclubgreens@btinternet.com

Qualified Greenkeeper Golf Club Fleesensee, Germany

Golf Club Fleesensee is one of the largest golf resorts in Europe with over 72 holes and hosts the European Tour Qualifying School stage 1. Due to the continued success of the business, the club seeks to recruit enthusiastic, highly motivated, capable and experienced Greenkeepers with a passion for golf course maintenance, who want to develop their careers and thrive in a dynamic and challenging international environment.

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Head Greenkeeper Bath Golf Club



Bath Golf Club was established in 1880 and is a fine course associated with Harry Colt. The 18-hole, downland course, is a members' club and is located within the UNESCO heritage city of Bath.

The club has ambitions to invest in restoring the golf course to its Colt heritage.

We are seeking to recruit an experienced greenkeeper with a minimum of 5 years' experience to lead the team of greens staff to deliver the best golfing experience, for our members and visitors.

Competitive salary. To apply for this position please apply in writing with a covering CV, to Nicky Perry, Bath Golf Club, Golf Course Road, Bath BA2 6JG or email clubmanager@bathgolfclub.org.uk

Greenkeeper - Rye Golf Club

Rye Golf Club invites candidates to apply to join our highly skilled greenkeeping team at their famous links courses comprising of the Old and Jubilee, which continue to host annually the Oxford and Cambridge Golf Society Presidents Putter and the Bernard Darwin Youth Salver.

The vacancy is for a Greenkeeper with a minimum of two years' experience who will have a good understanding of greenkeeping practices, is likely to be qualified to a minimum of NVQ level 2 or equivalent.

An interest in machinery maintenance would be a benefit with training available. PA1, PA2 & PA6 are preferred but not essential.

The successful candidate would be offered a competitive package.

Applications via e-mail to the Secretary: secretary@ryegolfclub.co.uk

Or in writing to: Mr A.B.W. James, Secretary, Rye Golf Club, Camber, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7QS

Closing Date: Friday 20th April 2018



Assistant in Training, Trump International Doonbeg



Trump International Doonbeg, Ireland is seeking a qualified, highly motivated, team oriented individual to join our team as an Assistant in Training. During this unique opportunity, the candidate will lead crews of golf maintenance staff in a wide range of activities involved in daily golf course maintenance

The ideal candidate will have

- Certificate to the SVQ Level 2 or equivalent
- Self-motivated with a positive attitude and proven leadership skills
- Must have prior experience as a successful A.I.T or Spray technician

- Experience of working on golf course for 5 years, links course beneficial
- PA1, PA2 & PA6 Spraying certificates or equivalent
- First aid training
- Tickets for JCB 3cx and Skidsteer
- Irrigation Knowledge

Cover letter and CV to smarr@trumphotels.com

Greenkeeper Wanted Feldon Valley Golf Club

Feldon Valley is undergoing an exciting period of investment and is looking to add to their team of Greenkeepers to help maintain and improve this great Cotswold golf course.

With a new restaurant, bar and hotel being launched in 2018, it is more important than ever to find the right person to join the team and help launch this ambitious new phase.

If you are an experienced and qualified Greenkeeper looking for a new challenge, please get in touch with us at lara@feldonvalley.co.uk, call 01608 685633 or visit our website career page at www.feldonvalley.co.uk

The suitable candidate will have proven experience as a Greenkeeper and be able to commute easily to Lower Brails (OX15 5BB).



FELDON VALLEY

Greenkeeper Vacancy Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club

Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club in Essex has an exciting opportunity for a Greenkeeper to join our existing team. The successful candidate will have experience in a good range of greenkeeping aspects.

Skills and experience

- NVQ Level 2 or equivalent in Sports Turf Maintenance.
- Practical experience and skills in machinery maintenance and setup.
- Competent in mowing techniques with high standards.

Applicants must be self-motivated, have a good work ethic and work well as part of a team.

It would be advantageous for applicants to hold spraying certificates and chainsaw licences.

The successful candidate will be a full time member of staff, with a salary based on qualifications and experience.

Send your CV and covering letter to office@burnhamgolfclub.co.uk





Here for you

If you notice your mental or emotional state getting worse, or you're worried about someone you know – help is available. You're not alone, so talk to someone you trust as sharing a problem is often the first step to recovery. BIGGA may not be the first place you consider asking for help, but help is at hand when you need it.

BIGGA's Counselling Assistance Helpline

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Completely confidential and provides you with support by telephone by specialist call handlers and counsellors — 0333 000 2082.

BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund

For the benefit of members when times get tough and need financial support by way of a grant, award or a payment. Details available through the members area of the BIGGA website at www.bigga.org.uk

Perennial

Perennial is the UK charity dedicated to helping people who work or have worked in horticulture including greenkeepers. BIGGA works very closely with Perennial to help any member who needs free and confidential advice, support and financial assistance on 0800 093 8543 (general advice) or 0800 093 8546 (debt advice).

Call BIGGA House

and speak to a member of the Membership Team on 01347 833800, visiting www.bigga.org.uk or by contacting your local BIGGA Regional Administrator.





Around the Globe

Are you an international member?
Email karl@bigga.co.uk to be featured here

Rodney Crouse | Old Town Club | North Carolina

What is the most interesting thing you would tell other BIGGA members about the USA?

Our country is very diverse culturally and the golf turf industry varies greatly in different regions of our country. There are many different climates and elevation changes in the US. It is fun to learn how turf managers go about achieving their desired goals in different sections of our country.

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

The course I manage is Old Town Club in Winston-Salem and has been described as Perry Maxwell's only true links design. Old Town's defining features are 70 acres of fairways and large native areas that are mainly planted in broomsedge.

How does greenkeeping in the US vary from the UK?

I believe greenkeeping is very similar around the world. The main differences are the climates and types of grasses that we manage. We maintain Crenshaw Bent greens and multiple cultivars of bermudagrass in our fairways and

surrounds. We average 44 inches of rain here annually and the high in July is on average 88 degrees Fahrenheit. Most summer days are spent managing the moisture and heat levels in the bentgrass greens.

What is the best part about living in the US?

Freedom. Freedom to choose how to worship, who to love, and how you choose to live your life..

How does the weather affect your work?

At times we have big temperature, humidity and moisture swings. Managing turf here, especially in the summer, is about finding the proper balance in moisture and canopy temperatures to keep your greens playable throughout the warmer months.

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

The job I held before I came to Old Town was home to large alligators and poisonous snakes. At Old Town we deal with the occasional poisonous snake, but nothing too extreme.

Old Town Club,
North Carolina



What is your club management structure like?

Our club has a general manager that oversees the majority of clubhouse operations. We also have a greens committee chairman that is in direct contact with our director of maintenance and the superintendent (which is myself).

What is the public perception of golf in the US?

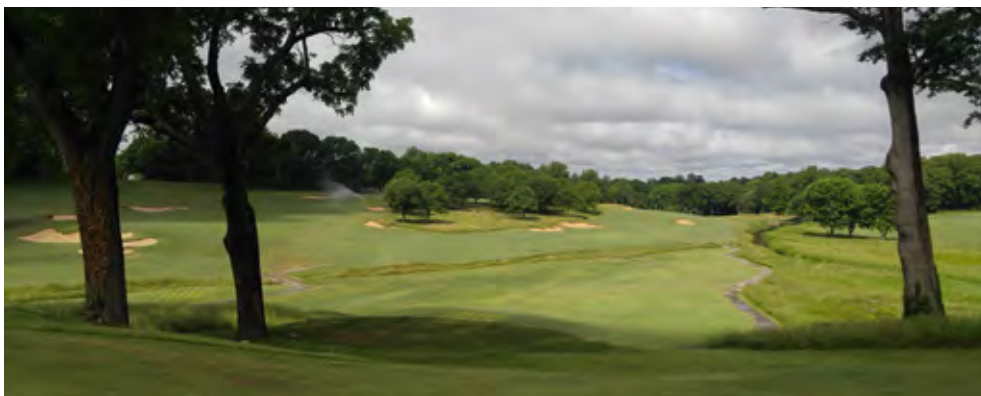
I think the public view of golf is an elitist pastime, however those who play golf will tell you otherwise. In the area I live in, we have several public and municipal courses that are very affordable to play. I choose to believe in the positive aspect of the golf industry. I think golf is fun and affordable for all who want to play. Our sport has the ability to save people's lives if they need a positive outlet for the troubles they face.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

Networking with new individuals and learning all I can about our industry. I feel as if you never stop learning in the golf turf industry. BIGGA does a fantastic job of communicating about their membership and research done in the UK.

What one tip would you give British greenkeepers that you have learnt in your country?

Always be willing to step out of your comfort zone and learn new things. There are many people that share our passion for growing turf. We can all learn from each other and it is imperative to keep an open mind.





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