

# New! Greenmaster Pro-Lite. The best, just got better.



*Great service.*



*Fast delivery.*



*Accurate release.*



Greenmaster

Greenmaster Pro-Lite



*Perfect finish.*

The biggest player in fine turf fertilizers has a new winning formula. New Greenmaster Pro-Lite uses a new manufacturing process to create a unique micro granule containing Zeolite. Greenmaster Pro-Lite now provides you with:

- Better performance
- Increased longevity
- Improved colour response
- Improved particle distribution and dispersion

For a perfect finish, call 0871 220 5353 today.

Scotts UK Professional, Paper Mill Lane, Bramford, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 4BZ Tel: 0871 220 5353 Fax: 01473 830386 email: [profsales@scotts.com](mailto:profsales@scotts.com) [www.scottspromotional.co.uk](http://www.scottspromotional.co.uk)  
Greenmaster is a Trade Mark of The Scotts Company or its affiliates including The Scotts Company (UK) Limited.



*Growing success*





## A guide to who's who at BIGGA

President  
Sir Michael  
Bonallack, OBE

**BIGGA Board of Management**  
Chairman - Andy Campbell, MG CGCS  
Vice Chairman - Kerran Daly, MG  
Past Chairman - George Brown

**Board Members**  
Ian Semple  
Paul Jenkins  
David Walden  
Iain Macleod  
Bert Cross  
Walter Woods BEM  
Mark Dobell

**Chief Executive:** John Pemberton  
Email: john@bigga.co.uk

**Deputy Chief Executive**  
Education & Training Manager: Ken Richardson  
Email: ken@bigga.co.uk

**Communications Manager/Editor:** Scott MacCallum  
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

**Sales Manager:** Rosie Hancher  
Email: rosie@bigga.co.uk

**Membership Services Officer:** Rachael Palmer  
Email: rachael\_p@bigga.co.uk

## Contact us

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

**Post:** BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark,  
Aire, York, YO61 1UF

**Email:** reception@bigga.co.uk

**Internet:** www.bigga.org.uk

**Tel:** 01347 833800

**Fax:** 01347 833801



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

### Editorial

**Communications Manager/Editor:** Scott MacCallum  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801  
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

**Assistant Editor:** Gareth Jones  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801  
Email: gareth@bigga.co.uk

**Design:** AMS-Design 01347 811167

### Advertising

**Sales Manager:** Rosie Hancher  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: rosie@bigga.co.uk

**Advertising Sales Executive:** Amy Newport  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: amy@bigga.co.uk / sales@bigga.co.uk

### Printing

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

The advertising copy deadline for inclusion in the December 2004 edition of Greenkeeper International is Friday 12 November 2004

### Greenkeeper International:

Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Return postage must accompany all materials submitted if return is requested. No responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication.

Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork.

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association, and no responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information that may appear.

Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £42 per year, Europe and Ireland £55. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

ISSN: 0961-6977

© 2004 British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



12 Course Feature - Comrie Golf Club.



16 2004 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year final.



19 The 2004 BIGGA National Championship.



24 One mixture doesn't always fit all.

## November 2004

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by 4 December 2004

## REGULARS

**News**  
Pages 4, 5, 6 & 7

- 8 **Tip of the Month**  
BIGGA's Master Greenkeeper John Wells MG provides his tip to help you in your course management.
- 9 **Education**  
Ken Richardson is into the busy part of the education and training year, including making arrangements for the new conference.
- 10 **GTC News**  
David Golding clears the mist which sometimes surrounds the 'who does what' in terms of greenkeeper education and training.
- 11 **Membership**
- 26 **Continue to Learn:**  
**Where did my nitrogen fertiliser go?**  
Dr Brian Horgan explains the role of nitrogen in soil, its effect and how to minimise its loss.
- 31 **New Products**
- 36 **Letters**
- 37 **Health and Safety**
- 38 **News from the Chief Executive**  
John Pemberton keeps you up-to-date with the latest developments at BIGGA.
- 38-42 **Around the Green**
- 54 **As I see it ...**  
BIGGA National Chairman, Andy Campbell, reflects on a time-consuming month.



## FEATURES

- 12 **Aye, Aye Captain**  
Ally Philp is Head Greenkeeper and Captain of Comrie Golf Club as well. Scott McCallum met with one of the most contented men in the industry.
- 16 **Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award**  
Gareth Jones meets Alex Shore, the 2004 winner, and reviews the final.
- 19 **The 2004 BIGGA National Championship**  
Scott McCallum witnessed Graeme MacDonald's fine win in the Championship, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen.
- 22 **Don't sit on the fence**  
Roland Taylor sits on the fence, hedges his bets and looks at the alternatives for creating barriers and boundaries.
- 24 **One mixture doesn't always fit all**  
Lex van de Weerd looks at the factors when choosing grass seed for a new golf project.
- 29 **How to apply for that ideal job**  
In the first of a three-part series Frank Newberry provides a range of useful techniques to help you get the job you want.
- 34 **Pipe Dreams**  
Jim Crabbe looks at the world of drainage through the eyes of a contracts manager and offers some advice to clubs seeking to improve their courses.







## Welcome

### MEMORIES ARE SHORT

If you are anything like me you are much too busy dealing with the here and now to have any time left to look back. I say this because if we did I'm sure we'd be shocked at what we put ourselves through, and what we put up with, in previous lives.

I can think of extended periods in the last dozen years when I've worked away from home, living in rented or B&B accommodation through the week, eating less than wholesomely and suffering the consequences of a poorly sprung mattress.

Financially it was crippling and it was compounded by a long drive home on a Friday evening, followed by an early rise and the reverse journey on the Monday. But the thing is I coped and had some very happy times in what were less than perfect circumstances.

The reason I mention it is that there are times now, when stuck in a traffic jam on my relatively short journey home, or I've forgotten to put the Chablis in the fridge that morning, that I think I'm the unluckiest bloke on the globe. The old me would have scoffed at such a lily-livered approach to life.

It's the same with BIGGA as an Association. I can recall in the mid-90s climbing the stairs to my attic office in the old rented building and having to charge down stairs again every time I wanted to print something off my computer or send a fax – no email in those days.

Nowadays we are in the superbly appointed BIGGA HOUSE, and the Editorial department has grown to incorporate an Assistant Editor which makes editing the magazine far less of a seat of the pants operation. Illnesses don't have to be postponed until an appropriate time slot becomes available any more.

Back then BTME had already established itself as a superb event, but compared to now it was a fraction of the size and the busiest day was quieter than the quietest day nowadays.

BIGGA was seen in some quarters as very much as a young upstart in the world of golf administration. Nowadays we punch our weight, have a voice within the game in the UK and talk with other organisations on a regular basis on matters of shared interest.

On a personal level I'm sure many of you would find the same if you thought back. I'm not saying it would be as stark as, "Remember when we weren't even allowed in the clubhouse", although for some of you it may be the case, but there will be quite a number of improvements to your working life which have been introduced in recent times. Some of these will have been down to health and safety legislation but many will have come about as a result of your improved status within the club.

As I say, it does pay to think back on occasions, not just to recall how much we were capable of tolerating, but also to show just how much our lives have improved over the years.

Scott MacCallum  
Editor

### OLD COURSE VOTED NUMBER ONE

The Old Course at St. Andrews has been awarded the accolade of the best golf course in Britain and Ireland by Golf Monthly magazine.

The panel of judges, composed of golf writers, administrators, course designers and photographers, assessed over 500 courses and rated them according to the challenge presented to players, course condition, visual appeal and off-course facilities.

"It is only fitting that the Old Course stands on top of the pile as it prepares to host the Open once again in 2005," commented Jane Carter, Editor of Golf Monthly. "The off-course facilities for visitors

have improved out of all recognition at the Home of Golf in recent years and there really is no finer place to play."

In a further honour to St Andrews Links, the 107 year-old New Course was voted number 34 in the rankings.

"We are delighted to receive this recognition from so prestigious a source," said Alan McGregor, General Manager of St Andrews Links Trust. "All our courses, including the Old, are open to the public and clearly remain a favourite with golfers, even after 600 years of history and with so much high quality competition out there today."

### 75 NOT OUT

The STRI celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an open day and dinner for invited guests last month.

During the day the Bingley headquarters, the trial grounds and the Bingley St Ives Golf Club played host to 13 "zones" where STRI staff gave demonstrations on their departments and looked forward to what can be expected in the years ahead.

The 170 guests at the evening dinner at nearby East Riddlesden Hall heard speeches from STRI President Lord Griffiths and R&A Secretary, Peter Dawson.



Dr Gordon McKillop escorts the Lady Mayoress around the demonstration area.



Denis Lawson explains his stand to Lord Griffiths in the company of Jeff Parris and David Marsh.

### NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR UNSUNG HEROES

Terrain Aeration's unsung heroes Brian Payne and Tim Parker opened nominations for this year's awards as part of the STRI's 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations.

Dr Tim Lodge, Senior Agronomist and Southern Area Manager for the Institute, who hosted the proceedings, praised the awards saying that they acknowledged the hard work of ordinary groundsmen and greenkeepers that keeps the entire Turfgrass Industry moving.

"They are the absolute opposite of the self promotion that so often leads to less than ideal individuals occupying the limelight," he continued.

Dr. Lodge is one of a three man judging panel, including Gordon Child, of BIGGA, and Derek Walder, of the IOG, which will send one groundsman and one greenkeeper to the South of France next year for a week's holiday with their families.

Terrain Aeration's Unsung Hero Awards are open to all UK practising greenkeepers and groundsmen, judged by their contemporaries or clubs to regularly put in that little bit extra.

Nomination forms can be found on the pitchcare website or with Lynda Green at Terrain Aeration Tel: 01449 673783.



From the left; Brian Payne, Tim Lodge and Tim Parker open nominations for Terrain Aeration's Unsung hero Awards 2004.





## NEW MD FOR RANSOMES JACOBSEN

David Withers, a well known and popular figure within the industry, has become the new Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd.

He takes over from Steve Chicken, who continues in his role as Managing Director of Jacobsen International, Ransomes Jacobsen's holding company.

David has been with Ransomes Jacobsen – through the Jacobsen side of the company – since 1992 and for the last two years has been Sales and Marketing Director.

Following on from David's promotion, Alan Prickett has been promoted to Sales Director from the position of UK Sales Manager.



## CHANGING TIMES AT AMENITYWISE

Amenitywise are pleased to announce the appointment of Stewart Jeffs as their new Amenity Manager.

Stewart, who has over 20 years experience in the industry, previously worked for Rigby Taylor, as a Technical Sales Representative, and prior to that worked for Jacobson, in a similar role.

"I felt that I needed new challenges and Amenitywise seemed a very positive and forward thinking company," said Stewart.

His 'challenge' is to take Amenitywise forward, making them a market leader in the industry.

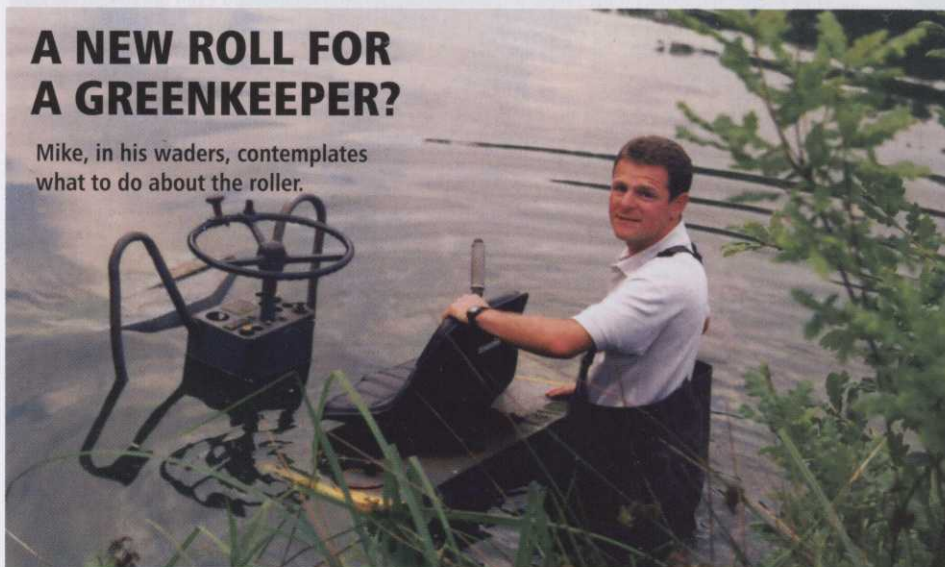
"Although Amenitywise have been in the market for several years now, the time has come to really push the business forward and one of our strengths is technical support we are now able to offer all our customers, along with an improved product range."

To help him in his new role, Amenitywise have also taken on Catherine Butler as the Amenity Administrator.

Previously from a marketing background, Catherine has been brought on board to assist in the marketing and running of the business.

## A NEW ROLL FOR A GREENKEEPER?

Mike, in his waders, contemplates what to do about the roller.



Mike Gash, of Moseley Golf Club, had an interesting problem to solve recently after vandals set a cricket roller running. The machine then ran over the cricket pitch, over the golf course and into a pond.

"Fortunately it avoided our greens otherwise it could have caused much more damage than it did

but it didn't prove to be easy to get out of the pond," said Mike.

When it was finally removed by a crane, the problems were not over as the pollution left by the roller caused the water to turn a particularly unpleasant colour.

## A SAD FAREWELL FOR TERRY

Broadstone Golf Club said farewell to one of its long-serving greenkeepers recently when Terry Elborn left to become a Conservation Officer and Ranger with Poole Borough Council.

The 30 year old had been at the club since 1990 and such has been his dedication to conservation on the course that Broadstone was presented with an environmental award in 2001.

"Terry was instrumental in us winning that award," said Club Secretary Colin Robinson, "He has done tremendous work on habitat projects, building dew ponds for dragonflies, installing bird boxes, making reptile and bat surveys and many other things.

"He has also organised course walks for members and visitors and been instrumental in aiding all the wildlife we have here."

After being presented with a commemoration plate by the Club Captain, Ian MacFarlane-Thompson, to mark his 15 years at Broadstone, Terry said, "The club has been very supportive with my conservation work. I've also had cooperation



Terry Elborn (middle, left) receives a commemoration plate from Club Captain Ian MacFarlane-Thompson and the greenkeeping team.

from my fellow greenkeepers which has sparked more interest among them about conservation. This has made the job so much more enjoyable.

"We are lucky to have so much land around the course which enables the wildlife to thrive. We have all three species of snake here as well as all the native reptiles. There are also many types of insect while we also have bats and many birds including nightjars and buzzards."





## A WIDER VARIETY FOR DAVID

Amenity Technology have appointed David Evans as their new Area Manager for the South Wales, Somerset, Wiltshire and Bristol regions and the M4 corridor to London.

David has been involved in the turf market for more than 12 years, with the majority of his time spent with Maxxi-Crop, and his vast experience will service his new company well.

"I'll be servicing the same sort of clients and I expect to continue along the same lines as I always have.

"What is different though is that I am able to offer a few ideas and avenues into a wider variety of sports turf.

"Yes, I am pleased to come on board and widen the scope a little bit," said David.

## SAFETY ON GOLF COURSES

A recent statement by Master of The Rolls, Lord Phillips stated that, "Many Councils are no longer providing everyday leisure activities because of the fear they will be sued if people hurt themselves."

This has presented a big question about the future of municipal sports provision, in particular golf courses.

Lord Phillips said that Councils were effectively 'blackmailed' into paying compensation because it was cheaper than fighting false claims.

However, he did warn that it would become harder for people to sue councils successfully if they were hurt pursuing a risky leisure activity, such as golf.

"What's called for is for the population as a whole to have a reasonably balanced approach to indulging in these pastimes.

"They should not expect if they have an accident, which is always liable to happen, that there must automatically be somebody else who carries the can.

"If you are too obsessed about the risk of getting sued, you can take steps which stop

people enjoying the kind of pastimes that people always have in this country," said Lord Phillips.

In the Best Value analysis demanded of local authorities, the future of local sports provision is likely to be affected by the consequences of accidents, as Councils decide whether to retain or dispose of the facilities they provide. Too often they cannot afford to fight claims and it is cheaper for them to settle.

With more proprietary pay and play golf courses and driving ranges they are bounded to ask themselves, is it right and proper to continue to own and operate our own golf courses and driving ranges?

PGA Design Consulting Ltd, the technical design and consultancy advisors to the PGA frequently act as Expert Witness. Bob Hunt, Managing Director said, "Recently, we have seen a considerable growth in accidents at golf courses and ranges and even greater increases in the level of claim settlements being awarded by the Courts. These accidents do not restrict themselves to municipal courses and ranges but are experienced at all types of facility including members' clubs and proprietary golf facilities."



Course Care's Area Manager, John Harwood, hands over the special barrel to Ian Pullan.

## SLICK SELLING SEES 5,000 BARRELS SOLD

Course Care has recently sold their 5,000<sup>th</sup> barrel of oil since David Mears and Andrew Vincent took control of the company in June 2001.

To mark the occasion a special barrel was produced. Finished in a red metallic paint and decorated with extra graphics the barrel was sent out to the 5000<sup>th</sup> customer.

The lucky recipient was Ian Pullan, Course Manager at Marriott Hollins Hall Golf Club near Bradford.

Said Ian; "I have been buying a number of lines from Course Care for years, but had only just decided to take their engine oil. I was amazed when the fancy barrel turned up!"

## FORSYTH THE WHITELAW WINNER

The Whitelaw Bowl was played recently at Penrith GC.

The day was sponsored by Rigby Taylor and there was a belter turnout this year than in previous years.

David Forsyth and his staff had the course in great condition and, after all the rain this year, looking much greener than usual.

The results were:

0 - 13. 1. David Forsyth, 38pts; 2. Aaron Watkinson, 37pts; 3. Peter Hogan, 36 pts.

14 - 28. 1. Gary Tomlinson, 31 pts; 2. Ian Holoran, 27 pts; 3. Tony Smith, 27 pts.



The overall winner of the magnificent Whitelaw Bowl was David Forsyth.

Many thanks to Rigby Taylor and especially John Molt for their sponsorship, which I hope will continue for many more years, the caterers for a superb meal and, of course, Penrith GC for allowing us courtesy of the course.

Barry Heaney, past Chairman of BIGGA, was also presented with a

gift for his support over the years.

There will also be a seminar at Penrith GC on November 25 entitled "Environment Issues". Anybody interested contact Peter Larter on 01476 550115.

**Bert Cross**



## GALLEY TAKES ON AMENITY GRASSES



Keith Galley has been appointed National Product Manager for amenity grasses for leading seed company Nickerson.

He will be responsible for the highly successful Top Green brand, which uses high performing cultivars in mixtures suited to every sports, amenity and landscaping situation.

Keith joined the company in 1990, spending two years in France working for Nickerson's parent company Group Limagrain - the largest plant breeding and seed development company in the European Union.

Keith will work from Nickerson's UK headquarters at Rothwell in Lincolnshire, and the company's seed mixtures production plant in Falkirk, Scotland.

## NEW APPOINTMENT AT PLM POWER

PLM Power Products dealerships in the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland will benefit considerably from the appointment of Roy Duncan as Area Manager.

Roy has a wealth of knowledge spanning 23 years in both the sales and technical side of the outdoor power equipment industry.

In his new position Roy's responsibilities will include the developing the sales of PLM's high quality outdoor power equipment ranges and providing full dealership support.



Johnny Beck with a tray of his pies.

## SO WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?

At Saltex last year we reported how Johnny Beck, of Sheriff Amenities, had successfully passed his catering exams to enable him to man a barbecue for visitors to their stand.

It was a huge success, not least because the wonderful smells and accompanying smoke ensured that everyone knew Johnny was about.

This year a new approach produced slightly less smoke but kept the visitors fed just as well.

Armed with an on-site oven, Johnny dispensed over 1200 pies and pasties of all descriptions over the course of the three days.

## INTURF CHOOSE SOUTH EAST REPRESENTATIVE

Andrew Lofting, formerly of Driving Force Leisure, has been appointed by Inturf to service existing clients and sell to new customers in Greater London and the Home Counties Inturf's comprehensive range of products for all sports and landscaping markets.

Andrew's wealth of experience and knowledge in the turfgrass industry is well known and will be a great asset to Inturf in an area that has been relatively untapped, apart from the high profile and prestigious projects synonymous with the turf growers from Yorkshire.

Andrew will be based in Kent and will be dealing with Inturf's general turf sales, the Custom Grown Turf products and the Installation Services available from this fast growing.

## TOUGH TEST FOR CENTRAL SECTION



Central Section held its autumn meeting at Downfield GC, in Dundee, and a full field enjoyed facing the demands of one of Scotland's toughest inland courses. The photo shows the cream which rose to the top during the day.



# Tip of the Month

This month by John Wells MG  
Course Manager, Brocket Hall GC



BIGGA's Master Greenkeeper John Wells MG provides his tip to help you in your course management.

## Avoiding fusarium patch



The autumn months are when many inland courses suffer from fusarium patch.

My simple tip is always carry out dew removal on the greens, including after light frosts, and always include the collar of the green as often fusarium will start in the collar before spreading to the green.

We at Brocket Hall Golf Club have two forms of dew removal, which are:

1. When cutting the greens we always finish off by putting the mowers out of cut and running them round the collar to remove the dew.

2. We use a large dewy brush, which again takes in the collar as well as the green.

This is a very simple but effective way to aid in disease control.



# BARONNESS

Total Quality from Tee to Green

The all new LM184 floating head triple mower for golf courses and sports grounds



**5 YEAR GUARANTEE**

THE BARONNESS RANGE IS GUARANTEED AGAINST DEFECTIVE MATERIALS OR WORKMANSHIP DURING MANUFACTURE FOR FIVE YEARS. SUBJECT TO ANNUAL DEALER INSPECTIONS AND MAINTENANCE AS RECOMMENDED.

[www.saxonind.co.uk](http://www.saxonind.co.uk)



### LM56GF Greens Mower

Fatigue free operation, highly productive mower with a close-coupled Bi-rotational groomer

### LM26TF Tees Mower

High quality mower, automotive style clutch with hand squeeze lever for superior control



### LM22GF Greens Mower

State of the art basic mower with all the quality associated with the Baroness brand

### LM180B Triple Mower

Robust, reliable, versatile, all describe this workhorse of a machine, ideal for numerous municipal or private applications



Saxon Industries, Everland Road,  
Hungerford, Berkshire. RG17 0DX  
Tel: 01488 689400 Fax: 01488 684317  
Email: [horti@saxonind.co.uk](mailto:horti@saxonind.co.uk)

**BARONNESS** Quality Guaranteed





## Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

Unlock the doors to progress through BIGGA's Education and Development Fund - the key to a great future for greenkeepers, golf clubs and the game of golf.

Golden and Silver Key Membership is available to both companies and individuals.

For details, please contact Ken Richardson on 01347 833800 or via [ken@bigga.co.uk](mailto:ken@bigga.co.uk)

### Golden Key Supporters



### Golden Key Company Members

Company	Tel: Head Office
Gem Professional	01254 356611
John Deere Ltd	01949 860491
Kubota (UK) Ltd	01844 214500
PGA European Tour	01344 842881
Rigby Taylor Ltd	01204 677777
Scotts UK Professional	01473 830492
Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd	01473 270000
The Toro Company/Lely UK	01480 226800
TurfTrax Group Ltd	01722 434000

### Golden Key Individual Members

J H Fry; J H Greasley; WJ Rogers; David S Robinson; Stuart Townsend; Andrew Cornes; Andy Campbell MG; CGCS; Roger Barker; Chris Yeaman; Iain A MacLeod; Bruce Cruickshank; John Crawford; Stuart Cruickshank; Frank Newberry; Terence Welch

### Silver Key Supporters



### Silver Key Company Members

Company	Tel: Head Office
Bernhard and Company Ltd	01788 811600
Ernest Doe & Sons	01245 380311
General Legal Protection Ltd	01904 611600
Hayter Ltd	01279 723444
Heath Lambert Group	0113 246 1313
RainBird	01273 891326
Syngenta Professional Products	0041 613 233 028
Wolf Garten	01495 306600

### Silver Key Individual Members

Clive A Archer; Douglas G Duguid; Robert Malbusch MG; Elliott R Small; Steven Tierney; Richard Lawrence; Clive Osgood; David Robinson; Richard Stillwell; Stephen Dixon; Ian Semple; Paul Jenkins; Robert Hogarth; R Steele; Lee Relf; Raymond Warrender; Nicholas Gray; Trevor Smith; Ian Barr; Richard McGlynn; Alex McCombie; Paul Murphy

# Education Update

Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, is into the busy part of the training and education year, including making arrangements for the new conference.

## Turf Managers Conference - speakers announced

Things are getting even more hectic in the Education and Training Department as Sami and I strive to present education and training opportunities for all members of BIGGA.

The Regional Conference season has begun. Regional/Section Courses are in full swing, BTME & ClubHouse is just around the corner and the British and International Turf Managers Conference is ready to launch.

## The British and International Turf Managers Conference

With so much happening at Harrogate during BTME & ClubHouse, the BIGGA Board of Management decided to move the Education Conference from Harrogate in 2005.

They also decided that we should concentrate on Golf Course Management and the title of The British and International Turf Grass Managers Conference (BITMC) was chosen.

Therefore BITMC, which is supported by Syngenta Professional and by the John Deere Team Championship and endorsed by the R&A, the Scottish Golf Union, the English Golf Union, the Welsh Golfing Union, the STRI, the GTC and the IOG, will take place over the weekend of 19 and 20 March 2005 at the Staverton Park Conference Centre, nr Daventry.

The draft programme is:

### Friday 18 March

Arrival and informal Dinner

### Saturday 19 March

Session One

Dr James Murphy, Specialist in Soil Physics, Rutgers University

Session Two

Mr Brin Bendon, Management Trainer

Session Three

Mr Peter Jones MSc, Greenkeeping Consultant

Session Four

Darin Bevard, USGA Green Section Consultant

Session Five

Dr Ruth Mann, STRI Scientist

Session Six

Mr David-Bancroft Turner, Management Trainer

### Sunday 20 March

Session Seven

Mr Steve Jones MG, Greenkeeping Consultant

Session Eight

Dr Alan Gange, Biological Scientist, London University

Session Nine

Mr Roger Greenwood, Broadcaster, Film Maker, Journalist

Session Ten

Mr Richard Hayden, Environmentalist

Session Eleven

Dr James Murphy

All the speakers have confirmed their attendance and subjects include: Research into Soil Biology, Current USGA Research, An Holistic Approach to Disease Management, The Use of Modern Technology in Golf Course

Management, Obligations to the Environment, People Management on the Golf Course, Maintaining Personal Relationships and Dealing with the Media.

Staverton Park is a purpose-built Conference and Training Centre that has four star accommodation, excellent food and full leisure facilities including its own golf course.

The intensive two-day learning programme will cost less than £400, including VAT, that includes two nights accommodation in a single room, all meals, including the Conference Dinner, two days of top level education and full use of the leisure facilities (except golf).

Full details of BITMC, together with a booking form, will appear in the December Edition of Greenkeeper International.

## Continue to Learn at Harrogate

Some people seem to think that Continue to Learn week at Harrogate has been diluted, but the opposite is true.

As you should have seen from the Continue to Learn Brochure in last month's edition of GI, the number of opportunities for education and training has increased, with more Workshops than ever before, three days of Seminars, instead of two days, plus a full day of presentations by the Association of Golf Club Secretaries.

Places on the Workshops are limited and we have received a large number of bookings already, so make sure of your place by booking early.

For further information, contact Sami at BIGGA House on 01347 833833.

## Regional/Section Courses

Some of this Autumn's courses are fully booked, whereas some are in danger of being cancelled. Remember, use them or lose them. Places are available on:

Essential Management Skills

Ross on Wye Golf Club 9 & 10 November

Communication Skills

Cleethorpes Golf Club 17 & 18 November

Management Skills for Head Greenkeepers

and Course Managers

Old Fold Manor Golf Club 22 & 23 November

Next Steps in Management Skills

Dunham Forest Golf Club 25 & 26 November

Negotiating Skills

Exeter Golf Club 30 November

Each two day course costs £99 + VAT (£116.33) and the one day course costs £49 + VAT (£57.58) thanks to a massive subsidy from the BIGGA Education and Development Fund.

## Regional Conferences

Education Conferences are being held at:

Midlands

Warwickshire College 10 November

South West & South Wales

Cannington College 17 November

North

Penrith Golf Club 25 November

Contact your Regional Administrator for details of how to book your place.



## David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, clears the mist which sometimes surrounds the "who does what" in terms of greenkeeper education and training.

Some things change for the better, some things change for the sake of change and some things never change, thankfully in greenkeeper training, work-based training remains the tried and tested method of giving staff the skills they require to maintain the golf course.

In my privileged position with the GTC I can offer any disgruntled greenkeepers a very optimistic outlook for the profession. More and more golf club employers are looking for professional Course Managers who can maintain and manage their course and are willing to pay for that talent.

The balance between spending time ensuring the course is to the required standard and the management responsibilities now demanded is a fine line.

However, I think most top Course Managers will agree that you are judged on the golf course and that might give you a strong clue as to where I see the priorities in time spent.

Hopefully most readers in recent years will have seen how the GTC has focused much of its resources in the training of Course Managers as work-based trainers/assessors and to ensure the sectors qualifications reflect the employers needs from craft to management level.

This initiative has received not only excellent financial support from the GTC's funding bodies, including the EGU, SGU, WGU, PGA European Tour, BIGGA and the R&A but also these bodies have actively promoted to golf clubs the importance of having a well trained, competent Course Manager.

In recent years we have seen the Home Golf Unions hosting seminars to inform the golf clubs they represent about many subjects, including the importance of having well trained staff, the various training schemes available and the link to legislation.

The R&A's website, [www.bestcourseforgolf.org](http://www.bestcourseforgolf.org), has clear references to the role of the Course Manager and BIGGA promotes professionalism as the key to successfully managing a golf course.

One of the most important skills a Course Manager must have is that of staff motivation or team building.

Who was it that said the manager is only as good as his team? If the team play for you, there will be more goals than own goals, but get it wrong and it will very soon reflect on the course! This cliché can also be attributed to employers; a happy staff is a productive staff.

Staff development, in terms of greenkeeping, often depends on how the Course Manager keeps the employer fully updated on the "team" and,

having identified training needs, they know exactly where these can be obtained, the costs and the benefits to both the club and the individual.

One slightly worrying aspect of the work-based training system is when I hear some headmen stating, "I'm too busy to train the staff, that's the college's job" or "the old system was the best."

Maybe at best they are not getting the right level of support from their chosen provider, but at worst they really do not see themselves as the right person to pass on their skills and knowledge to their staff.

As for the old system I presume the City & Guilds Phases is what the vocational qualifications are being compared to and, whilst I understand there will be

comparisons, we have to move with the times, hence on the job – vocational - training has been introduced to all industries.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss any issues regarding today's education system and let us not forget the colleges still offer the more academic awards such as the HNC and the Foundation Degree.

The GTC will continue to work on reviewing the turf qualifications, but the most critical part of a greenkeeper's education is what is actually being taught and, while we provide a list of Approved Training Providers, we have recently taken the decision to develop a standard set of learning materials to assist our providers.

These learning materials have been developed by sector specialists in their particular subject area and embrace the best principles and practices that are based on upholding traditional greenkeeping.

On-line learning is now an option available from a major provider and the tried and tested distance learning for a HNC still continues to be popular.

The more traditional part-time route of day-release or block release has somewhat been overtaken by the learning "on the job" option.

Many GTC providers now give the employer and Course Manager the options of which delivery system they chose in order to suit their needs, and the most successful providers are the ones who actually visit the employer to discuss these options.

The GTC is at the heart of all the developments in greenkeeper education and please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss the options and your club/staffs' training needs.

David and the GTC may be contacted on Tel: 01347 838640 or email: [golf@the-gtc.co.uk](mailto:golf@the-gtc.co.uk)

**'You are judged on the golf course and that might give you a strong clue as to where I see the priorities in time spent'**

**'One of the most important skills a Course Manager must have is that of staff motivation or team building'**

**'These learning materials embrace the best principles and practices based on upholding traditional greenkeeping'**