Ken Richardson, Education and Training Manager, gives us an insight into Harrogate Week 2007.

Over 1500 delegates attended education sessions throughout Harrogate Week 2006, and Continue to Learn 2007, looks set to provide you with even more opportunities to expand on your knowledge and skills.

Ken and Sami have been busy collating feedback back from Harrogate Week 2006, to design an even more extensive, Continue to Learn Education Programme, for Harrogate Week 2007. The Continue to Learn programme at Harrogate Week 2006, supported by the GTC, broke all records with three times more education on offer. Delegates numbers also broke records with more than 1500 attending education sessions throughout the week.

Continue to Learn 2007, will contain even more opportunities for you to attend an educational session to help develop your knowledge and skills. The programme will include five more two-day workshops; four more one-day workshops; extra seminars and a range of ‘fringe events’. We have also looked at the cost of education events and we are planning to offer discounts for quantity ie. the more sessions you buy, the cheaper they get.

There will be two Harrogate Week programmes for 2007, one aimed at greenkeepers, groundsman and their managers and a second aimed at golf and sports club officials.

The R&A has agreed to be involved in Continue to Learn 2007 and they will be running a one-day Workshop and a one-hour Seminar on Sustainable Golf.

Please note that BIGGA will not be booking accommodation for Harrogate Week 2007 therefore you should use our Accommodation Booking Agents – Reservation Highway. You can use their web-site www.reservation-highway.co.uk (password bigga) to book you accommodation. Please remember to ask for January 2007. Reservation Highway can be contacted by phone on 01423 525577.

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Health and Safety

BIGGA and the AGCS are continuing to cooperate in producing an internet based, Example Health and Safety Management System. The System should be available later this year/early 2007.

It is not easy to obtain information on accidents, incidents or near misses on golf courses, or within golf clubs and we would appreciate your help in gathering some data.

If you have had an accident or been involved in a near miss, no matter how minor, then please let us know by sending the details to ken@bigga.co.uk. We shall then produce a data base to store and analyse the information ready to publish it to our members.
Membership Update

Rachael and Gemma from Membership Services would like to welcome 73 new members to the Association and talk about the car breakdown cover available to members.

Competitive Car Breakdown Cover

BIGGA members have access to a competitive car breakdown package from Europ Assistance. The package covers your vehicle and is remarkably good value for money, as you can see from the table.

There are three levels of cover to choose from so all budgets and requirements are catered for:

The first level is Roadside Assistance and this covers you for incidents occurring at least one mile from home, it includes one hour of roadside labour and transportation to the nearest repairer. Roadside Assistance is available for £19.04.

National Recovery and Doorstep is the next level of cover and this includes everything in the roadside assistance package, as well as cover for incidents within one mile or at the owners home and, if your car cannot be repaired at the roadside - can get you home, to your original destination or a repairer of your choice. You are also covered for 24 hour car rental or overnight accommodation up to £100 if necessary. Naional Recovery and Doorstep is available for £44.95.

Finally National Recovery, Doorstep and European includes everything in the last two packages, as well as European Cover for trips of no more than 31 days. This is priced at £63.66.

For more detailed policy information or to purchase cover please call 01603 828255 and quote BIGGA.

Price Comparison Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Europ Assistance</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>RAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Roadside Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Recovery, Doorstep and European</td>
<td>£63.66</td>
<td>Ring to obtain quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Prices quoted are for the nearest equivalent cover and do not include internet discounts.

*Prices quoted are for cars up to 9 years old. For older cars please call 01603 828255 for a quote.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

BIGGA National Tournament
Burton on Trent Golf Club ........................................... 2nd & 3rd October

Scottish National Tournament
Leven Links ................................................................. 22nd June

Golf Management Trophy
Northern Region
Sandiway Golf Club ................................................... 11th July
Hornsea Golf Club ..................................................... 2nd August

Midland Region
Verulam Golf Club ..................................................... 27th July
Boston Golf Club ....................................................... 9th August

South West Section
Minchinhampton Golf Club ........................................... 14th July

South Coast Section
Moors Valley Golf Club ................................................ 26th July

South Wales Section
Neath Golf Club ....................................................... 27th July

Contact your Regional Administrator for more information

JUNE'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a £10 Music Voucher. Our congratulations go to Nathan Kimings of Sutton Green Golf Club, who wins a Digital FM Scan Radio/Alarm.

BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION
Samuel Bothwell, West Scotland
Fisher Devine, North Scotland
Mark Gilles, East Scotland
Mark Halliday, West Scotland
Craig Jewett, Central Scotland
Jamie McPhay, Central Scotland
Blair Middleton, North Scotland
Ryan Queen, Central Scotland
Harry Rae, North Scotland
Edward Ralph, North Scotland
Matthew Smith, North Scotland
Terry Smith, West Scotland
Richard Sweeney, North Scotland
Gavin Watson, Central Scotland
Ian White, North Scotland
Steven Wilson, West Scotland

NORTHERN REGION
Daniel Butterfield, North West
Derek Chew, Northern
Morgan Fleck, Northern
Robert Hancock, Cleveland
Paul Harvey, North West
David Heather, North Wales
Derek Jones, North Wales
Paul McHearn, North West
Stephen Pope, Sheffield
George Senior, North West
Alan Smith, North East
Scott Wheatcroft, Northern
David Jones, BB&O
Alan Mitchell, BB&O
Matthew Morris, Midlands
Graeme Palmer, East Midlands

MIDLAND REGION
Simon Tunn, Mid Anglia
Martin Turcyn, BB&O
Robert Bond, London

SOUTH EAST REGION
Steven Cooper, Surrey
Paul Cox, Sussex
Roger Dobson, Sussex
Samuel Fromage, Kent
Graham Gardner, Surrey
Matthew Gray, Kent
Michael Haig, Surrey
Ben Jacques, Surrey
Paul Keen, London
Matthew Le Brum, East Anglia
Michael Medson, Sussex
Shane Plummer, Surrey
James Radford, Sussex
Hugh Sandeman, Sussex
Jamie Williams, Kent
Mark Cox, Sussex

SOUTH WEST/SOUTH WALES REGION
Alastair Cummins, Devon & Cornwall
Chadwick James, South Wales
Anthony Large, South Coast
Rhys McDonagh, South Wales
Robert Powell, South Wales
David Roberts, South Wales
Leslie Unicke, South Coast
Steven White, South West

NORTHERN IRELAND
Trevor Andrews
William McCann
James Pilkington

INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS
Andrew Filby, Norway
James Evans, USA

STUDENT MEMBERS
Christopher Cobb, North West
Sebastian Doca, London

CORPORATE MEMBERS
Paul Corne, West Scotland
Alan Morris, East Anglia
Yvonne Park, West Scotland
Sarah Perry, Middlesbrough
Harry Sinclair, West Scotland

SILVER KEY MEMBER
Joe Kinder, Midland

BIGGA National Tournament
Burton on Trent Golf Club ...........................................

Scottish National Tournament
Leven Links ..............................................................

Golf Management Trophy
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Sandiway Golf Club .............................................
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South West Section
Minchinhampton Golf Club ......................................

South Coast Section
Moors Valley Golf Club ...........................................

South Wales Section
Neath Golf Club ....................................................

Contact your Regional Administrator for more information
Eco-friendly, cheap to run and so quiet you can hear a pin drop!

Workman e2050 electric utility vehicle

Small on noise but big on performance, Toro's Workman e2050 electric mid-duty utility vehicle can be put to work wherever it's needed.

Highly productive, its powerful 500 amp drive-train allows for superior hill climbing under all load conditions, while Toro's unique twisting suspension gives it outstanding traction by flexing to keep all four wheels on the ground in uneven terrain. Automatic braking slows it on downward slopes.

Quieter and more environmentally-friendly than petrol-powered vehicles, this electric workhorse keeps disturbance to a minimum for the driver and players out on the course.

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Riders for Health

I am currently Golf Course Manager, for Chichester Golf Club, a 45-hole facility in West Sussex.

The reason for contacting you, was to inquire if anyone would be interested in supporting me in a charity event, this coming November.

I am a keen motorcyclist (my pressure release from work!) and I have been fortunate enough to secure a ride in "Enduro Africa" this November - this event is only available to 100 riders worldwide. I have attached some details of the event, but in a nutshell I have committed to raising £4500 for the charity "Riders for Health", the money I raise buys a trail bike that I will use on the 14 day rally around South Africa, I will then have the satisfaction of handing the bike over to a local African support worker, enabling them to deliver much needed medical aid and support to the remote communities. More details can be seen at www.enduroafrica.com - a link from this site will take you to the Riders charity site.

Many of my suppliers at work have already helped with donations and so far I have raised £1500. My £4500 will be paid to the charity in August, so they can purchase the bikes and start training the aid workers - so between now and then I am pushing to raise as much money as possible - any support Bigga or the magazine could give me, would be very welcome.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. If you require any more information I can be contacted at darrenjohnhomer@aol.com / mobile 07860748830 / home 01243780245 anytime.

Darren Homer

Free Legal Advice

I wanted to write to thank BIGGA so much, for the free legal advice service you offered me as a member of the Association.

For almost a year now I have been in dispute over issues relating to a previous employer - but the matter was concluded successfully for me with an agreed settlement during a recent tribunal.

I could honestly never have got to this stage, had I not been offered the advice and assistance of General Legal Protection Ltd and subsequent support from my solicitor and barrister.

I would wholeheartedly recommend this service to all members, and assure them of a professional and sympathetic service.

Thank you so much.

Will Bowden
As Easy as ABC

You never stop learning so, in conjunction with the GTC and lecturers from some of the UK's top greenkeeping colleges, GI has launched a new series which gives the developing greenkeeper the chance to add to their knowledge with some useful advice.

MOVING TEE MARKERS

One of the most overlooked and yet important operations on the golf course is the positioning of the tee markers correctly. Leaving them in the same spot for too long can lead to all sorts of problems including weakened, stressed turf, soil compaction and poor cosmetic appearance.

As a rule of thumb you need to move tee markers in accordance with the playing/competition programme for your course and the type of play being carried out on the teeing area. High-handicap golfers produce many large divots, so you should move the markers on a daily basis. On the other hand, if your course typically hosts above-average players, moving the markers every other day might be sufficient.

Remember, though, to co-ordinate the tee marker placements with the pin placements for the day, altering the length of the course too much could invalidate the competition being played!

Placement of the markers must also take into consideration the current tee position and the wear that has been currently received. Tee markers should be moved backwards away from the current position to allow the position to be divoted with seed and rootzone (if required) and allow the area to rest thus allowing a new clean surface to be available next time it is needed. Develop a tee placement plan highlighting the available positions that everyone on the team can follow.

Align the tee markers. Once you have determined the location of the tee markers, you must ensure that they are properly aligned. The goal is to align the markers so that when golfers stand between them in their normal stance, they are aiming at the landing zone in the fairway. The rest is up to them!
Only a decade ago, the majority of golf clubs considered running a fleet of golf cars as a pointless venture. This was due primarily to a lack of demand and interest from golfers, which meant investing in fleets would have been expensive and unnecessary. Now, in the 21st century, a growing number of golf clubs across the UK are introducing fleets for the first time, investing in brand new ones or expanding their existing golf car fleets. We examine the reasons why.

This shift in attitude can be attributed to various factors, such as adding value for members and attracting more corporate and society golf days. However, the most significant influencing factor in deciding to introduce or increase a golf car fleet, seems to be the creation of additional revenue. Club Car, the market leading golf car brand, has been carrying out extensive market research on a bi-annual basis for several years, and this clearly shows that attitudes have changed over the past 10 years. The most recent data shows that fewer clubs than ever now count themselves as golf car ‘abstainers’ and that once clubs have established that, their members and visitors will happily pay to hire a golf car, thus guaranteeing a return on investment and making investment in golf cars more likely to happen.

Neil Woodfin, Club Car’s Sales Director for Europe and North Africa, encourages clubs to look at the entire cross section of club members when considering investing in golf cars and to take a multi-tiered approach to examining the potential revenue opportunities. He says: "Whether you are in your twenties or eighties, golfers today are prepared to hire a golf car to enhance their enjoyment of the game. Courses that introduce golf cars experience immediate revenue growth, not just because of the new hire revenue but also by indirectly enhancing traditional revenue streams. In other words, clubs find that older players will start to regularly book more rounds, younger players will try and fit in a round after work, plus clubs with golf cars tend to attract more corporate golf days - the related revenue streams for which are key to increasing the profitability of the club."

We are still a long way from the US culture of expecting to have use of a golf car wherever we play, but golf cars have certainly become more acceptable and common place for golfers in the UK. Some speculate that over time, golfers have become accustomed to seeing them used at European Tour events and major championships, such as the Ryder Cup, which Club Car has been involved with for 10 years. The company is also the ‘Official Golf Car Supplier to the European Tour’, and provides at least 70 of its vehicles to every European Tour event. All of these vehicles are essential to the creation and smooth running of each tournament and the entourage is divided into 25 staging cars, eight rules cars, with the remainder used by television crews.

Ultimately, this acceptance of golf cars as commonplace has trickled down to club level and has certainly influenced buying decisions. However, according to the company’s research, there are two additional key factors that drive the decision to operate golf cars: provision of additional income and improving the club image.

Technological and sociological factors can be identified as significant reasons behind the shift towards golf car use. As golf club and ball technology has evolved, courses have been lengthened to ensure that they are still challenging enough. The downside of this, is that it takes even longer to play a round, so the provision of golf cars can be a big factor in maintaining enjoyment of the game. Younger, working golfers have less free time than ever, which means they want to play rounds in faster times, whereas older members are living and playing for longer, regardless of mobility - both elements of which have led to the increasing demand.

The final influencing factor is purely financial. Golf clubs are more commercial and as they are now run predominantly as businesses, are expected to make a profit. The general manager or club secretary, who generally has the final say in the decision-making process, has to consider and offset the short-term
Club Car - Investment and Return

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Golf Cars</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>Precedent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment 1 car</td>
<td>£59/month</td>
<td>£64/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£708/year</td>
<td>£768/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>£900/month</td>
<td>£1,200/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit</td>
<td>£10,800/year</td>
<td>£14,400/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest 15 cars</td>
<td>£885/month</td>
<td>£960/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>£10,620/year</td>
<td>£11,520/year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profit</td>
<td>£13,500/month</td>
<td>£18,000/month</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£162,000/year</td>
<td>£216,000/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit</td>
<td>£15,000/year</td>
<td>£200,000/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£162,000/year</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit</td>
<td>£200,000/year</td>
<td>£256,000/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Margin</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions:
- Each car hired for two rounds per day
- DS hire cost £15 per round
- Precedent hire cost £20 per round

Buying groups such as De Vere or Troon golf, without compromising their own purchasing power.

Club Car's research is the most comprehensive ever conducted in the golf car industry and spells out the potential return on investment. It is estimated that one of their DS cars, used just twice daily at £15 per round, will produce an annual gross profit of over £10,000. Even if a fleet of 15 cars is run at 50 per cent capacity, according to Club Car, golf clubs should still expect an annual profit between £70,000 and £96,000. Certainly a figure not to be sniffed at!

Another strategy that has brought golf cars to more golf courses and golfers, is the Walk to Ride scheme. This scheme, which is also available from some other manufacturers, was originally launched by Club Car in 2003 to help promote the potential revenue opportunities and related benefits of running a fleet of golf cars. The premise of the entire promotion was to allow clubs to trial cars and see for themselves with no obligation or risk. The scheme has been focussed primarily on introducing golf cars onto courses for the first time and clubs who had historically been reluctant to take on golf cars, were given the opportunity to take five cars for around six weeks and keep the revenue generated from them.

The Walk to Ride scheme, allowed the company to react to feedback from the clubs involved in the test and combine their experiences with the market research. The result was to introduce a new long-term sales and marketing strategy, designed to meet the needs of a very diverse client base, as Neil Woodfin explains: "Club Car's aim has always been to open up the golf car market to clubs and budgets of all sizes. User experience, combined with feedback from our market research has led us to develop a..."
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Perfect for the times you wished your fairways were half the size.
Scott MacCallum visits a golf club which has embraced the concept of ecological friendliness since becoming involved with the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition.

The story of Robert the Bruce and the spider is entrenched in Scottish folklore but it is also a tale which has resonance today and in particular, a certain Suffolk golf club.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Scottish warrior King and the arachnid, Robert, was holed up in a cave after a heavy defeat and was contemplating his future. On the verge of giving up he watched a spider attempting to create a web. It failed time and time again before one last attempt brought success. Robert took this as a sign, brushed himself down and went on to win the Battle of Bannockburn, having told his men: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again."

Ian Willett, Course Manager at Thorpeness Golf Club, in Suffolk, hasn't spent time in a cave, at least as far as I know, nor does he spend time studying spiders, but there are still similarities between him and Robert the Bruce.

Ian first entered the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, now sponsored by Scotts, Syngenta, Ransomes Jacobsen and Course Care, eight years ago and quickly began picking up Commended and Highly Commended awards. In 2003 they made progress by winning the Regional Award, but the National prize still eluded the club. Then, last year, they cracked it and Thorpeness Hotel & GC was announced as BIGGA's environmental champion for 2005.

"It's been a long road and we did get despondent on occasions when we thought we were there, only to find that the bar had been raised again, but we are absolutely delighted to have finally made it," said Ian, who credits much of the success to Managing Director, Tim Rowan-Robinson, the man who ensured budget was set aside to implement the changes and who was very much at the forefront of the Club's environmental push.

Indeed, while there were knock backs and near misses on the golf course something wonderful was happening at Thorpeness Hotel & Golf Club as a whole, for which the BIGGA Environment Competition could claim to be the catalyst and which, in turn, helped the club over that final hurdle and through the winning line.

The competition pricked Thorpeness's green conscious and the hotel has since introduced a plethora of environmentally inspired initiatives while the individuals involved have taken ideas back to their homes and become far more ecologically active.

"We set up a Green Committee within the Thorpeness staff and we look at all aspects of our work from an environmentally-friendly perspective," said Operations Manager, David James.

"For example we recycle our corks, which now go to a charity which turns them into shoes for African children; in the restaurant we don't use any fish which is on the endangered list, including locally caught cod; we use returnable crates for deliveries so we don't use cardboard; there are recycled pens beside the beds in the rooms; we're in the process of changing to environment friendly light bulbs throughout the hotel and also installing bubble showers which don't use as much water while the staff have helped tidy up the beach at Aldeburgh,' explained David, who has stopped using plastic bags for his own supermarket shopping preferring instead to load everything directly from his trolley into a box which he keeps in the back of his car.

Ian actually has a small windmill attached to his home which supplements the electricity drawn from the national grid.

"It would be fair to say that all this work started as a consequence of Ian becoming involved in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition and making us conscious of what we could do as a business," explained David.

Thorpeness is a village which takes you back in time. A haven for well heeled London residents the wonderful old cottages, traditional pubs and a boating pond, paint a picture of idyllic English life, while the quirky The Sizewell A and B Power Stations are nearby neighbours.
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