Luck of the Draw

The Open at Royal St. George’s was the venue for a draw to find out who had won the Rigby Taylor/Pinseeker competition. Forty five clubs throughout the UK who purchased a specific range of Pinseeker equipment qualified to be entered into the draw and Jim Croxton, CEO of BIGGA, drew out Corhampton Golf Club, near Southampton, as the lucky winners.

The prize for the club is a round of golf for two and lunch at any course within a 50 mile radius of its location, or an alternative cash prize. Included in the competition was an award for the most successful Rigby Taylor sales representative and it was alternative cash prize.

WIEDEMANN MILESTONE

Wiedenmann UK celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The company, synonymous with the Terra Spike brand of deep aeration, has set an industry benchmark, respected for its technical excellence and quality service.

To mark this milestone, Wiedenmann UK has fashioned a bespoke, platinum coloured Terra Spike GNX8 HD, which will be sold off this season. Proceeds from the sale will be split jointly between charities, Cancer Research and the MS Society. The GNX8 HD is precise and efficient and since its launch has become a best seller.

Founder, David Rae, was just 23 when he and his father, Alistair, met the Wiedenmann family at the Turf Industry Show, in Germany in 1989. The Wiedenmanns were launching a prototype deep aeration while the Raes were looking for a machine for their contracting business. Within two years Wiedenmann UK was formed given the distribution rights for Britain and Ireland.

“My enduring memory of that important phase was the strong respect and friendship with the Wiedenmann family,” said David. Crucially, in the last 20 years, both families have been acutely aware that success only comes from supplying products backed by fair, honest customer support. Wiedenmann UK has benefited from the German company’s focus on product development with a large sum reinvested to design and test future machines. Wiedenmann GmbH has expanded its distribution network around the world and has become market leader through innovation.

Twenty years on, Wiedenmann UK grows stronger promoting an ever expanding range of specials from the German company’s range of machines. The company is synonymous with its technical excellence and quality service.

THE FUTURE OF SPORTSTURF MANAGEMENT

STRI Research 2011 is a new event being launched this year by STRI. The event is free, will be held annually, and has been designed to give sports turf managers an opportunity to see, first hand, the innovative products, machinery and techniques that are being developed that will directly influence the world of sports turf management over the coming years.

The one day event is being held on Wednesday, September 21 in Bingley and will follow the successful format used at research events worldwide, which splits the research focus into separate demo areas, referred to as ‘stations’. The event for 2011 is focusing on turf management for golf courses, with seven separate stations, giving an insight into new products and methodologies for disease and nutritional management, new grass varieties, aeration, overseeding and amendments, rootzone properties and the latest technology and machinery.

STRI is currently working with a number of companies on R&D sportsturf projects and has invited a selection of these companies to support the event, based on their focus on current research, and their investment to help improve the future quality and management of sportsturf. The companies attending this year’s event are Bayer, Evonik (formerly Scotts), R&K Kerness, Ransomes Jacobsen, Byngenta, Becker Underwood and Sherff Amenity.

The deadline for booking for the STRI Research 2011 event is 31 August 2011 and STRI is expecting more than 120 attendees for the day. Invitations have been sent out to all golf clubs across the UK and Ireland.

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Tom Kenny / 07917 805 669
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WHilst everybody sees what’s happening on top of your green, you have to look beneath the surface to understand what separates an average playing surface from a great one.

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Chairman’s Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

Planning ahead for a new term

It seems like only yesterday we were coming out of a long cold winter and looking forward to summer, and before you know it I’m looking at my diary and we are approaching September, and trying to plan and implement all the autumn maintenance.

While the growth slows and we get more time for other activities, at Blisswood we move in to a very busy period as our students arrive looking to learn all they can about Greenkeeping and Golf Management and Performance.

Numbers have grown steadily over the years, and while it’s useful having extra hands about the place for some types of work, most of the students on the entry level greenskeeping course are raw recruits, who need to be taught everything from scratch, and there are a lot of them, so planning and control are very important.

As many of you will know, you can get great satisfaction from successfully training a new member of staff, but it is not without challenges. Imagine having 75 of them every week.

We have a busy programme planned for them and it will be good to see their excitement and enthusiasm as they start their careers.

We also have over 100 students studying performance golf, many of them excellent plus handicappers and they place a heavy demand on the golf facility, and on the turf, at a time when recovery is very limited through the winter, but the challenge is to manage that to the best of our ability and try and ensure that all the students get a worthwhile experience.

Education is a constant as far as I’m concerned, and you will find elsewhere in this magazine information about the upcoming Harrogate event and the education on offer there.

I’m looking forward to it, and hopefully II get some time out with my duties as Chairman to benefit from some of what’s on offer.

I believe that in any line of work, in order to be the best you can be at the career you have chosen, you must constantly develop and, “Continue to Learn.”

You will also see within our news section that we have been working with other Associations within the UK sector and have formed a group to facilitate closer working relationships, bringing the opportunity to engage with stakeholders in considering decisions that will impact on the future of the industry and its Associations.

I was extremely fortunate to spend a week in China this month.

On behalf of the college I delivered some lectures to groups of students we have there, and also met with groups of Superintendents for discussions and with potential University partners.

My hosts were fantastic, and I’d like to thank everyone I met for welcoming me so warmly and sharing their time with me. I arrived in Hong Kong and drove to Shenzhen, a city of thirty million people, which is only really about thirty years old. The climate there was very hot and humid. I also flew to Kunming province in the South West of China where the climate was more temperate and similar to the UK. The different grass types and management techniques required were very interesting to see and the standard of presentation on all the courses was very high.

In all I toured seven courses, witnessing the difference between Paapaloom, Bersted, Creeping bent, Rye, and yes, even Poa. They face many of the challenges we do, though golfers demand currently outweighs supply so they are not facing that problem yet.

Labour costs have increased considerably in only the last few years, and that was a common challenge to all the superintendents.

Golf is booming there, but it is not without difficulties as the government seeks to ensure that courses are developed in a sustainable manner, with water resource a premium, and use of agricultural land very restricted.

If you put the number of golfers at 300,000, set to grow to 20 million by 2020. Despite a government ban on course development the number of courses grew from 170 in 2004 to nearly 600 by 2009 and continues to grow at a phenomenal rate.

How that progresses will, I imagine, be determined by whether the golf industry can convince the government that they can address their concerns and develop in a sustainable manner.

That presents opportunities for those with such knowledge and experience, whilst it became very apparent to me how much we take our Association for granted.

When meeting with them there was a lot of interest expressed in BIGGA and a real hunger for the aspects of sharing good practice and networking.

Whether you are a single Greenkeeper working alone at a 9 hole course, or a Course Manager, running a multi course facility you will find someone in BIGGA who can share their experience with you, and lighten the load.

While sitting in a group meeting it dawned on me that the group actually had over 100 years experience between them and were able to give each other advice and help with many of the problems they have. Sometimes we fail to recognise how useful something is.

I know that in my time in greenkeeping BIGGA has been the best source of information and contacts for me to meet and seek advice.

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Numbers have grown steadily over the years, and while it’s useful having extra hands about the place for some types of work, most of the students on the entry-level greenskeeping course are raw recruits, who need to be taught everything from scratch, and there are a lot of them, so planning and control are very important.

As many of you will know, you can get great satisfaction from successfully training a new member of staff, but it is not without challenges. Imagine having 75 of them every week. We have a busy programme planned for them and it will be good to see their excitement and enthusiasm as they start their careers.

We also have over 100 students studying performance golf, many of them excellent plus handicap golfers and they place a heavy demand on the golf facility, and on the turf, at a time when recovery is very limited through the winter, but the challenge is to manage that to the best of our ability.

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That is not just to the individual, but to owners and employers and ultimately the golfer in ensuring staff get the necessary support to fulfil their potential.
Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers often think, if only I had another pair of hands...well maybe they can find that additional help through explaining to their employer the benefits of recruiting an apprentice.

Successful businesses often refer to the fact that during difficult economical times they invested in staff development and there is no better way than using the nationally accredited Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Scheme to ensure the course team has a committed, enthusiastic new employee being trained, educated and assessed to the industry agreed national standards.

Many of today’s top Course Managers started as apprentices in the UK and now are maintaining and managing golf courses all over the world.

My friend of many years, Mike O’Keeffe, known to many as the man from Ohio State University who opens doors in the USA for British greenkeepers to gain like minded skills and experience, sums up how British greenkeeping apprenticeships are sought after by the Superintendents across the pond.

Mike explains, “In over 20 years of working with the GTC, BIGGA and our friends at the approved Colleges and colleges, literally hundreds of British trained greenkeepers have trained across, to hopefully enjoy the experience of working on golf courses in the States.”

Mike adds, “It has to be acknowledged that the promotion for many years by the GTC of vocational, work based training and qualifications in Britain has resulted in outstanding competent greenkeepers whose all round skill level is admired by the American Superintendents.

The ability to do so many tasks when they arrive for their internship period is a tribute to the apprenticeship programme in Britain.”

Apprenticeships continue to be very popular with British employers and the leaders as it is a clear career progression and it all revolves around the golf course.

Greenkeepers Training Committee
David Golding, GTC Education Director, examines how government funding can attract apprenticeship schemes

The greenkeeping apprenticeship framework not only includes the work based vocational qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 but additional requirements to ensure the apprentice has the functional skills which arguably should have been taught and achieved during school days.

Numeracy, literacy and communication skills are all now wrapped up into what the Government calls core or functional skills!

Please rest assured the GTC and its Quality Assured Centres are working within current Government policy of the day to ensure the funding support, albeit reducing, still makes the apprenticeship a very cost effective option for employers.

The GTC is currently involved in discussions to have a Higher Apprenticeship in greenkeeping.

A Higher Apprenticeship could include the work based Level 4 Management qualification and more news will follow as discussions with the relevant bodies hopefully come to fruition.

There are still many people looking to enter the profession of greenkeeping and with a clear career pathway available from apprentice to Course or General Manager how best do employers look to recruit an apprentice?

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IGCEMA Certification Program

The International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) launched their Certification Program in May this year. In July, BIGGA pledged support for the Certification Program and are now registered as Proctor (examination invigilator) for the program.

The Certification Program consists of six core competencies:

- Hydraulic Troubleshooting
- Electrical Troubleshooting
- Internal Combustion Engines
- Drivelines
- Mower Troubleshooting in development (expected Jan. 2012)
- Cutting Units - in development (expected Feb. 2012)

To achieve the IGCEMA Certificate, individuals will purchase the study guides and will then take an online test for each of the competencies. The study guides are available from the IGCEMA website at a cost of $18 per guide. Each online test costs $50 (this gives you two attempts at the test). Payment for the test is made by credit card before the test begins.

On completion of all of the six competencies, individuals will be awarded the IGCEMA Certificate.

Blended CPO Credits (number to be confirmed) will be attached to each of the competencies and will be awarded on successful completion for each of the tests.

For further information visit the IGCEMA website www.igcema.org and click on Certificate Program.

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Learning & Development
Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, with an update on education issues

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There are still many people looking to enter the profession of greenkeeping and with a clear career pathway available from apprentice to Course or General Manager how best do employers look to recruit an apprentice?

Short of the GTC offering an apprenticeship placement service, an option the GTC is currently considering, many golf clubs have found a suitable apprentice within their clubs Junior Section, maybe a chance career change application letter received direct, a local advert or in association with a GTC Qualit Assured Centre.

We are aware of apprentices of all ages working on golf courses and thoroughly enjoying the experience and with support funding finally becoming available for all ages currently in most areas of Britain there doesn’t appear to be a recruitment problem.

The GTC’s Quality Assured Centres are all there to assist employers select and recruit an apprentice and explain what funding is available.

Check out the Quality Assured Centres on our website www.the gtc.co.uk

For any greenkeepers looking to enjoy the experience of the Ohio State University programmes please contact Mike O’Keefe on email: okreffe.1@osu.edu

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For further information visit the IGCEMA website www.igcema.org and click on Certificate Program.

“Good Luck to all the Finalists!”

IGCEMA Certification Program for Golfers’ Equipment Managers

The IGCEMA Certification Program is intended for equipment managers who maintain greens, fairways and roughs on golf courses worldwide. The program is designed to assess competencies, individuals will be awarded the IGCEMA Certificate. Blended off site and online training (to be confirmed) will be attached to each of the core competencies and will be awarded upon successful completion for each of the tests. The study guides are available from the IGCEMA website at a cost of $18 per guide.

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With over 2,300 eager visitors pre-registered already momentum is building towards BTME in just over five months time. The occasion of the 24th consecutive annual Turf Management Exhibition in Harrogate will be one to remember particularly as it coincides with the joint milestones of 100 years of Greenkeeping Associations and 25 years of BIGGA. Whilst it is appropriate that we take time out to reflect on all that has been achieved in greenkeeping and turf management in that time there is no doubt that BTME 2012 will maintain its position as a forward looking event focused on improving knowledge and skills and demonstrating the latest cutting edge technology and turf maintenance techniques.

Allied with the unique environment provided by the town of Harrogate which means the Exhibition Centre, accommodation, restaurants, and bars are all in walking distance of each other, BTME really is the place to be for all Golf and Sports Turf professionals.

It has never been easier to get to Harrogate from London. East Coast trains has announced the start of new services to provide a long awaited direct link, from London to Harrogate. Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce has led the campaign to bring the new direct train services, which will be welcomed by the thousands of delegates and visitors coming to Harrogate. The new Sunday evening northbound service will enable delegates coming to Harrogate for Conferences and Exhibitions to travel up on Sunday evening ready for an early start on the Monday morning.

The direct trains are shown on the East Coast timetable:
www.eastcoast.co.uk
Southbound: 07.28 Monday-Friday; 08.13 Saturday; 17.05 Sunday
Northbound: 17.35 Monday-Friday; 17.35 Saturday; 18.05 Sunday

park & ride
BTME & ClubHouse provides a FREE ‘Park and Ride’ service from the Great Yorkshire Showground to Harrogate International Centre on all three days of the exhibition. If you are planning to drive to Harrogate, this service will help you avoid the traffic problems in town and save you looking for a parking space. From the A1(M) take the A39 towards Knaresborough. Follow the ring road to Harrogate. The ‘Park and Ride’ will be fully signposted. The journey in from the Great Yorkshire Showground (YEG) to the HIC normally takes around 10 minutes but does depend on traffic conditions.

The shuttle service will run at the following times:
* Tuesday 24 January 08.30 to 17.30
* Wednesday 25 January 08.30 to 17.30
* Thursday 26 January 08.30 to 16.30

Personal Development Zone
The popular Personal Development Zone will return to the BIGGA Stand for the duration of BTME. Experts in recruitment and career development will be on hand along with management trainers and experienced BIGGA members to offer advice on a whole range of Personal and Career Development issues.

How to get to Harrogate
Direct Train Service from London-Harrogate

BTME returns to the Harrogate International Centre next January, and things are hotting up already. This special 4-page feature gives you a taste of what is to come.

How to get to Harrogate

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Awards and Competition Winners
As always BTME will offer the opportunity to recognise outstanding achievement by BIGGA members. The latest Master Greenkeepers will be presented with their certificates and CPD Diplomas will be awarded to those members who have demonstrated consistent commitment to continuing education. Additionally during the week the winners of the following will be revealed:

- Edwin Budding Award
- BIGGA Photographic competition
- STRI Environment Awards

Plans are well in hand for a celebratory dinner which will take place in Harrogate on the evening of Tuesday 24th January. The dinner will be a celebration of all that has been achieved over the 25 years of BIGGA’s existence and will represent the focal point of the Association’s Anniversary celebrations.

Details of venue, format and how to purchase tickets will be available shortly.

Harrogate Week The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe
With over 2,300 eager visitors pre-registered already momentum is building towards BTME in just over five months time.

The occasion of the 24th consecutive annual Turf Management Exhibition in Harrogate will be one to remember particularly as it coincides with the joint milestones of 100 years of Greenkeeping Associations and 25 years of BIGGA. Whilst it is appropriate that we take time out to reflect on all that has been achieved in greenkeeping and turf management in that time there is no doubt that BTME 2012 will maintain its position as a forward looking event focused on improving knowledge and skills and demonstrating the latest cutting edge technology and turf maintenance techniques.

Allied with the unique environment provided by the town of Harrogate which means the Exhibition Centre, accommodation, restaurants, and bars are all in walking distance of each other, BTME really is the place to be for all Golf and Sports Turf professionals.

Plans are well in hand for a celebratory dinner which will take place in Harrogate on the evening of Tuesday 24th January. The dinner will be a celebration of all that has been achieved over the 25 years of BIGGA’s existence and will represent the focal point of the Association’s Anniversary celebrations. Details of venue, format and how to purchase tickets will be available shortly.

It has never been easier to get to Harrogate from London. East Coast trains has announced the start of new services to provide a long awaited direct link, from London to Harrogate. Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce has led the campaign to bring the new direct train services, which will be welcomed by the thousands of delegates and visitors coming to Harrogate. The new Sunday evening northbound service will enable delegates coming to Harrogate for Conferences and Exhibitions to travel up on Sunday evening ready for an early start on the Monday Morning.

The direct trains are shown on the East Coast timetable:
www.eastcoast.co.uk
Southbound: 07.28 Monday-Friday; 08.13 Saturday; 17.05 Sunday
Northbound: 17.35 Monday-Friday; 17.35 Saturday; 18.05 Sunday

The shuttle service will run at the following times:
* Tuesday 24 January 08.30 to 17.30
* Wednesday 25 January 08.30 to 17.30

New for 2012

The popular Personal Development Zone will return to the BIGGA Stand for the duration of BTME. Experts in recruitment and career development will be on hand along with management trainers and experienced BIGGA members to offer advice on a whole range of Personal and Career Development issues.

As always BTME will offer the opportunity to recognise outstanding achievement by BIGGA members. The latest Master Greenkeepers will be presented with their certificates and CPD Diplomas will be awarded to those members who have demonstrated consistent commitment to continuing education. Additionally during the week the winners of the following will be revealed:
• Edwin Budding Award
• BIGGA Photographic competition
• STRI Environment Awards

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A 24% increase in people taking part in the Continue to Learn programme in 2011 demonstrated how important education is in today’s environment. Increasingly BIGGA members are taking the opportunity during Harrogate Week to add further strings to their bow or ensure their current skills are applicable in the modern age. Over these two pages we look at some of the highlights of the 2012 programme which following extensive feedback from delegates includes some hardy perennial alongside some important new additions to the seminar and workshop programme.
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Workshops

After the successful introduction of the How to be an Outstanding Manager workshops, the 2012 programme will once again feature Sharon Coumy, Director of Shona Garner Coaching Services Ltd, offering Part 3 Performance Management: How to Get it Right

Following feedback a couple of workshops that were originally offered as one day workshops, have been extended to two days: So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager by Peter Jones and Robin Mortram, Golf Course Consultants

Irrigation System Management and Design by Adrian Mortram, Irrigation Consultant, Robin Hume Associates and Dennis Mortram

New workshops will include:

- Essential IT Business Administration for Greenkeepers by Jacky Lowe, Training Consultant

- A Practical Guide to Setting Up a Social Media Presence by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

- How to be an Outstanding Course Manager by Bruce Williams CGCS, Bruce Williams Consulting

- The Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

- The Biology and Effects of Parasitic Nematodes in Sports Turf by Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

- The Power of Social Media for Your Golf Club by Lesley Wood, Principal Consultant, Targeting Innovation Ltd

- The Effects of Climate Change and Climate Phenomena on Greenkeeping Practices by Mark Hear, Technical Director, Headland Amenity

- Employee Engagement by Helen Bennett, Managing Director, Human Reality

- Practically Sustainable Golf Turf Management by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

- The Benefits of Parasitic Nematodes in Turfgrass by Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

- The Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

For the latest comprehensive listings and details of all seminars and workshops, look out for the Continue to Learn 2012 brochure, with next month’s GI

SEMINARS

Session Sessions will include the following presentations:

- Managing Winter Kill in West of Scotland? by David Cole, Golf Course Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club
- From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years by Chris Hassell, Course Manager, Castle Stewart Golf Club
- Let’s Rebuild 20 Greens in 10 Days - Mission Impossible? by Cameron McMillan, Course Manager, Queenwood Golf Club
- Being a Professional and Living It by Bruce Williams CGCS, Owner and Principal, Bruce Williams Golf Consulting
- The Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses by David Jones, Research Scientist, The Natural History Museum, London
- The Biology and Effects of Parasitic Nematodes in Sports Turf by Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
- The Power of Social Media for Your Golf Club by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University
- The Benefits of Parasitic Nematodes in Turfgrass by Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
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Grassform Group has secured a contract with Ipswich Golf Club at Purdis Heath in Suffolk.

The work is estimated to be worth around £100,000. The facility has been designed by Grassform Group, commented: “We are delighted that Ipswich Golf Club has chosen us to assist them with this particular project. We are well on schedule to complete this project within the allotted time and within budget.”

Tony Cundall, General Manager at Campey Turf Care Systems, has retired on his 65th birthday.

Tony joined the company as sales rep and went on to become GM, where he oversees the reception of goods into the yard and was responsible for preparation of all machinery in readiness for dispatch and delivery to customers.

“At an age when strength of character, loyalty and conscientiousness are not always given the recognition and appreciation they deserve, we are delighted to acknowledge the sheer hard work and reliability Tony has displayed in the past 32 years,” said Richard Campey. “He has proven himself to be a loyal and dedicated member of our team and Campey’s will not be the same without him. We wish him a long and happy retirement.”

Tony was presented with number plates and spare keys to his works vehicle at the Campey 25th Anniversary party in July and his wife, Dinah, received a bouquet of flowers. Steve French, currently Spare Parts Manager, will be replacing Tony.

Avonmore Associates has appointed John Shepherd with a brief to consolidate the Fine Turf Maintenance and Construction Departments along with developing the Irrigation and Water Management Departments.

John, 45, joins Warwickshire based father and son management team, Brian and Philip Buttler, who have grown Avonmore Associates to be a national supplier of bowling greens, golf greens, lawn tennis courts and croquet lawns.

Brian said, “John has had an exceptionally interesting and successful career to date and we have worked closely with him on a number of projects. His expert knowledge of design and management of irrigation systems will undoubtedly strengthen our management team and we are delighted to have him on board.”

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What’s your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month’s lucky number...

Name: Bruce Jamieson
Company: Golf Advisors Ltd
Position: Managing Director

How long have you been in the industry?
I started as an apprentice greenkeeper in 1973 so about 36 years.

What other jobs have you done?
I worked for a brief period in retail, in a tailors in Ayr, and hated working inside. I have also been a Greenkeeper, Head Greenkeeper, Course Manager and Director of Agronomy for the European Tour. I am also retained as a consultant to the Toro Company giving advice to key clients and working with colleges and training providers.

What do you like about your current job?
I like travelling and meeting people. I also like visiting golf courses all over the world and working with dedicated professionals who wish to present their courses to the highest standards possible within the budgets set by their individual clubs.

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
Everything, education, irrigation, machinery, specialised products such as wetting agents, fungicides, pesticides etc. The biggest change is probably the machinery, cutting heights and their frequency and the way we communicate with mobile phones, text messaging, internet and e-mail.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
I like spending time with my family, cycling, fishing and playing golf.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
Who knows what the future holds but probably doing the same thing as I enjoy the challenges.

Who do you consider as best friends in the industry?
I have a lot of very good friends in the industry but I suppose Mark Black who is the Superintendent at Quail West in Naples Florida.

What do you consider to be your lucky number? 5
Pick a number 43.

Bruce has picked Andy Russell, of Headland.