Impact on golf courses

Trees are an important and integral part of virtually all golf courses in the UK and their continued health is vital to the structure and appearance of the course as well as the health and safety of members, players and staff.

Common ash is spread throughout the UK. The ash tree population was recently estimated at 80 million but this is almost certainly a gross underestimate.

Common ash is a pioneer tree which freely germinates from naturally dispersed seed to establish in groves where opportunities arise in woodland, copses and rough open land.

Many if not most golf courses will have ash trees that have naturally established in this manner.

Common ash is also widely planted on golf courses, prized for its fast growth, an open and light shade casting canopy which does not kill the turf grass beneath. And a light leaf load which rots away quickly in autumn and is relatively easy to clear away.

PC and Fera are now recommending that landowners who have planted ash trees in the last five years should inspect them for symptoms of Chalara ash dieback disease.

Greenkeepers should follow this advice even if the trees were purchased from a UK nursery.

The nature of trade between EU nations means they could have just as easily come from any one of 26 other EU countries the vast majority of which have endemic Chalara dieback disease.

Help is at hand...

Greenkeepers who suspect they may have Chalara ash dieback disease on their courses should contact:
Forest Research Tree Health Diagnostic and Advisory Service.
Tel 01934 331414, E-mail planthealth@forestry.gov.uk

Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspection
Tele 01904 665625, E-mail planthealth.info@fera.gsi.gov.uk

GI NEWS FEATURE

BIGGA AND GCMA DATE
The BIGGA and GCMA seminars were played by the South West Section on Thursday October 18.
Chipping Sodbury Golf Club is the venue for host of speakers including former British Amateur Open champion Vivien Saunders and Tom’s Andrew Brown who will be looking at water resource management.

Looking forward to hearing from Tom, the event will conclude in the evening with networking opportunities and an informal social event. Lunch and refreshments are covered.

By attending this seminar, BIGGA and GCMA members will receive Continuing Professional Development points.

ABOVE: Bark canker on common ash caused by Chalara fraxinea (Picture courtesy Thomas Kirisits)

North East Competition Venue Change
Please note the venue has changed for the North East Autumn competition. It will be played on October 10 at Tynehead GC. This replaces the original venue of Wooler GC.

BIGGA Welcome Communications Exec

BIGGA are delighted to announce that Steve Castle has joined the Association as Communications Executive.

An appointment that strengthens the editorial team at Greenkeeper International, Steve has bedded in comfortably, finding his feet in his new role, whilst mixing in very quickly and easily with everyone at BIGGA House.

Steve, who even managed a game of golf with his new colleagues, one night, brings with him experience of working as reporter for Ross Parry Agency Ltd, which syndicates news stories to national newspapers and magazines.

“I covered court cases, inquests as well as anything from press conferences with lottery winners to exclusive and sensitive interviews with members of the public,” Steve told us.

Looking forward to writing for GI, Steve also expressed interest in finding out more about you, the member.

HELP PEOPLE CATCH UP...

“Having really enjoyed my first two weeks working at BIGGA House, it is clear that the editorial directive is all about BIGGA members - I’m very much looking forward to getting to know you as a member, what they are doing in and outside the club.”

“From the stories I’ve received so far, it’s clear that all sorts of interesting things are taking place, and we encourage every BIGGA member to feel free about approaching me with anything which might be worth a mention on these pages.”

Julie Wilkins Joins BIGGA as Assistant Accountant
Julie has a wealth of experience in the financial area, starting off as an office junior. Her last position was at VMC in Warwickshire as Finance Assistant.

She said: “I’m really looking forward to the opportunity and have been made to feel very welcome by all the team. I’m particularly looking forward to increasing my financial knowledge working with Finance and Procurement Manager Steve Wragg.

“I’ve also moved to a lovely part of the world which is a bonus, and am looking to join a local golf club.”

Julie, who hails from Staffordshire, is also a keen cyclist.

Jack and Rita award McMillan Tankard to Ernest Doe’s Steve
Steve Akabafer scooped the McMillan Tankard at the recent Surrey Section golf tournament.

North in its 23rd year, the popular tournament again attracted many competitors and their guests to the New Course at Sunningdale Golf Club.

Scoring proved tough on a breezy day with many balls finding the heater off the fairways. However, Steve defied the conditions, finishing level on 34 points with Mark Brooks from Sunningdale. Steve emerged victorious after enjoying a better score on the final six holes.

Mark did win the nearest pin competition with Anthony Freeman from Merit Wood winning the longest drive.

Many thanks to Murray Long and his team for producing another magnificently prepared course fully appreciated by all on the day.

PICTURED: Jack and Rita McMillan present the winner’s tankard to Steve.
September is turning out to be a busy old month for the members of the Learning and Development team with SalteX, the Assistants Development Programme, the final of the Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award and the final checks on the Continue to Learn at BTME 2013 brochure.

SalteX

Rachael will be at SalteX, along with several other members of the BIGGA offer, to answer any questions you may have about your membership or the benefits that BIGGA offer.

BIGGA are also presenting three seminars on Wednesday 5 September, held in the Grandstand, from 10.15 am. Featuring presentations from Chris Haspell from Castle Stuart Golf Club, David Cole from Loch Leven Golf Club and Paul Lowe from Symbio. CPD points are available for attendance at these seminars.

The BIGGA Stand is E33. Pop along and say hello!

Assistants Development Seminars

The L&D department has been tasked by the Board of Management to develop a seminar to help those in the role of greenkeeper or first assistant who want to improve their skills for developing a career in the greenkeeping industry.

The project, being coordinated by our new recruit, Stuart Green, will initially see 10 course managers trained, here at BIGGA House, to deliver the seminar. The seminars will then be run in each region this Autumn/Winter.

The seminar will cover areas including:
- Communication
- People skills
- Responsibilities
- Thinking like a manager
- Developing greenkeeping
- Curriculum vitae
- Interview techniques

Dates of the seminars are yet to be confirmed, look out for announcements in future issues of GI and on the BIGGA website.

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

The National Final of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year will take place on Sunday 16 and Monday 17 September here at BIGGA House.

The finalists will be asked to complete a written assignment based on a task that will be given to them at 9.00 am on Monday morning. They will also have a 45 minute interview with a panel of four judges from Toro and BIGGA.

Look out for the Winner on the cover of the October issue of GI. The sure you’ll join me in wishing “Good Luck” to all the finalists.

Personal Development Zone at BTME 2013

What information would you like to get from the Personal Development Zone at BTME in January 2013?

The content of the Continue to Learn education programme is now in the hands of our Designer, Tom Campbell, to turn into a printed brochure providing you with all the information you’ll need to plan your educational visit to Harrogate.

The brochure will be dropping on your doormat with the October issue of GI. Full details of the programme will also be available on the BIGGA website where you will also be able to use our online booking system to secure your place for the Workshops, Conference and Focus On sessions.

With over 180 hours of education available, over four days, there is sure to be something of interest for everyone attending.

The Continue to Learn Education Programme at BTME 2013 will run from Sunday 20 January to Wednesday 23 January. We look forward to seeing you there!

Calling all Full and Affiliate Members of BIGGA, are you ready for the challenge of this years BIGGA National Championship 2013, sponsored by Crowne Plaza and Kubota?

Last month’s issue of Greenkeeper International gave a great overview of this year’s venue for the BIGGA National Championship, The Irvine Golf Club at Bognor in Scotland.

A true links challenge, the course sits on sand with fairways divided roughly by thick grass, bushes and heather. Built in 1897 some of the present character of the course comes from James Braid’s designs in the 1920s and will provide even the best golfers with an opportunity to shine or despair.

The dates for this year’s championship are Sunday 8th and Monday 9th October 2012 and as the course sits in a wide location, the neighbouring Gulf Stream ensures your round will.

Why not pitch yourself against some of the best golfing greenkeepers from up and down the Country and be in with a chance of getting your name on the coveted Challenge Trophy, along with last year’s winner Jason Hunt (Adare Manor GC) and 2010’s winner Paul Frith (Birstall GC).

Entry fee is £60 and this includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening (accommodation is not included).

The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, match play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member, the greenkeeper player with the lowest net score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

For full details see August’s magazine or contact Rachael Duff at BIGGA House. Deadline for entries is 11th September 2012.

As a BIGGA Member you can access the limited resource in the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) where members can gain access to a vast collection of turfgrass educational material.

This is a great benefit for all members who are currently in study, so whether you are studying at Level 2, 3 or 4 or studying for a diploma or degree this is definitely a resource you will find useful.

To access the TGIF log in to the members area of the BIGGA website, select ‘Member Resources’ from the options on the left hand side, scroll down to ‘Turfgrass Information File (TGIF)’ and download the Getting Started Guide or click on the link which will give you access to the file directly.

The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) 2013

Dates for your diary – 22nd – 24th January 2013 at Harrogate International Centre (HIC). With FREE entry to BTME 2013 you cannot afford to miss coming along to the must attend event for anybody interested in turf.

Education Seminars and Workshops

Continue to Learn at BTME 2013 runs from Sunday 20th to Wednesday 23rd January 2013. With assistance of the Student Greenkeeper of the Year Conference on Monday 21st January at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate and a fantastic choice of one day and two day workshops and various seminars, Continue to Learn 2013 promises to offer everybody something of interest.

Keep an eye on the BIGGA website for details of the full programme.

Regional Conferences

Confirmation has been received from Jane-Jones of the South West and South Wales Region that the theme of this year’s Conference is ‘Turf Management in All It’s Glory’.

Speakers include Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist - presentation title “Biology and the Effects of Parasitic Nematodes”, David Cole, Course Manager Loch Lomond Golf Club with “Winter Kill In West Scotland”, Cameron MacMillan, Course Manager Queenswood Golf Club with “Mis-sion Impossible”, Robert Willis First Assistant Remedy Oak Golf Club with “Changes in greenkeeping as seen by a First Assistant”, Richard Comedy Director of Product and Marketing at Ransomes Jacobsen with “Perceptions in Greens Management”.

So be sure to put the date of 15th November in your diary for your Greenkeepers Support group meeting, get your booking in early as this Conference gets busy.

September 2012
September is turning out to be a busy old month for the members of the Learning and Development team with Saltex, the Assistants Development Programme, the final of the Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award and the checks on the Continue to Learn at BTME 2013 brochure.

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The seminar will cover areas including:

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Look out for the winner on the cover of the October issue of GI. This year’s winner will feature in an article called “Good Luck” to all the finalists!

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For full details see August’s magazine or contact Rachael Duff (rachael.duffy@bigga.co.uk) before entry is 13th September 2012.

As a BIGGA Member you can access the University of Roehampton’s research in the Turfgrass Information File (TGF) where members can gain access to a vast collection of turfgrass educational material.

It is a great benefit for all members who are currently in study, so whether you are studying at Level 2, 3 or 4 studying for a diploma or degree this is definitely a resource you will find useful.

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Please be sure to date the 15th November in your diary at Dalryrie Highfields in Ayrshire, get your booking in nice and easy as this Conference gets busy.
Rod retires after 48 years with Bernhard

Bernhard director, Rod Mayes, pictured receiving a retirement gift from Stephen Bernhard, started work with the company nearly half a century ago as an apprentice.

Rod, Works Director at the Haverhill factory, spent 48 years with the firm and said in a final farewell during this special presentation.

Rod said: “This was the only engineering business in the town when I joined, and they took on a number of apprentices and gave them good training.

“My wife and I love travelling, so I would like to spend more time doing that, and enjoying our grandchildren. But, it is hard to imagine life without Rod,” said his wife, Phyllis.

Rod will be sorely missed by everyone – and the staff at Haverhill and the Rugby office came together to celebrate his service to Bernhard.

The day began at the old factory – where the team gathered, perhaps for the last time – before the move to the new site is complete.

After lunch, and the presentation of a gold watch to Rod, Company Chairman Stephen Bernhard made a speech of thanks and appreciation at the new factory.

Stephen said: “Rod has been part of the company’s history. He is not only a loyal and committed colleague, but a good friend, and we will all miss him.”

Wiedenmann lauch six new products in Berlin

Wiedenmann UK launched six new products at a special event held at a glorious five-star spa resort on the outskirts of Berlin.

The launch, well attended by 60 dealers from across the UK, was the seventh of its type but the first to feature half a dozen entirely new machines.

Delegates were first introduced to the Terra Clean 100 and the Terra Clean 160 at a ‘3G’ surface. The 100 – a budget level machine – was given a demonstration as was the more advanced 160, which features a sliced separation system with a dust extraction system designed to ensure a completely clean and groomed surface.

The next day saw the attendees take to an on-site golf course where they were again given impressive demonstrations. This time, the stars were the Core Recycler – which clears cores from greens following hollow coring aeration – and the Super Pro FXL-H230 Commercial Out Front Mower featuring new ‘fold on the fly’ wings.

Other exciting new products unveiled were the Super 600, a cut and scarify collector, and the impressive Mega Twister, a very powerful large capacity blower.

The delegates listened to a speech from David Rae, Company Founder and Managing Director, outlining his hopes for the continued fruitful working relationship between Wiedenmann and the dealers. It was then the turn of the amiable Jurgen Wiedenmann, joint managing director, to officially close the meeting. He received congratulations on his products and much gratitude for his team’s superb hospitality.
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Bernhard director, Rod Mayes, pictured receiving a retirement gift from Stephen Bernhard, started work with the company nearly half a century ago as an apprentice.

Rod, Works Director at the Haverhill factory, spent 48 years with the firm and said in a final farewell during this special presentation, “This was the only engineering business in the town when I joined, and they took on a number of apprentices and gave them good training.

“We’ve been at the same factory building for all these years. Mr Atterton, of Atterton factory building for all these good training. We appreciate the support that Ransomes Jacobsen afford us and look forward to their continued support next year should it be needed.”

Ransomes Jacobsen provided tournament support at the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open held at the Castle Stuart Golf Links near Inverness. The European Tour event was won by Jeev Milkha Singh with a 12 foot birdie putt at the first extra hole during a sudden-death play-off with Francesco Molinari.

Course manager Chris Haspell and his team use Jacobsen SLP: 1880 light fairway mowers on the links and these were supplemented with four additional machines plus Cushman utility vehicles. Chris said: “Having additional technicians on site is fantastic during the week, especially when they have a wealth of knowledge like the guy from Jacobsen. Without the availability of the additional 1800s along with the run-arounds it would make the week much harder to run. We really appreciate the support that Ransomes Jacobsen afford us and look forward to their continued support next year should it be needed.”

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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: Demelza Hartley
Company: Lowe Maintenance
Position: Trainer

How long have you been in the industry?
I have been in the land based sector of over 10 years however for far longer if you count that I’m from a farming family.

How did you get into it?
I have had a varied history to date which started with horticulture, which progressed into environmental conservation, agriculture and arboriculture. You may well ask how this is relevant to greenkeepers, well in the main because I trained as a firefighters, tractor driving and chainsaw maintenance and felling all skills that are needed on the golf course.

What other jobs have you done?
I have taught within a land based college environment for over ten years in all the sectors mentioned previously as well as a local arborist in felling and working on trees.

What do you like about your current job?
I like the feasibility of being in different places each week. I love meeting new people and teaching them new skills as well as learning new skills and techniques myself.

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?
The world of green keeping goes from strength to strength with more women involved slowly but surely.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
I like working in my vegetable patch, taking care of my many rare breed hens, walks with my little Jack Russell and making cakes.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?
Still teaching and training hopefully more women in the green keeping industry.

Who do you consider best friends in the industry?
The green keepers at Shipley West Yorkshire were very helpful, informative and professional it was refreshing to be treated as an equal.

What do you consider to be your lucky number?
7

Demelza has picked Steve Dyne at Invicta Groundcare
The 11th BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard’s, will be heading to the second-largest city in California for a week in February 2013.

San Diego is the eighth largest city in the USA and the second largest in California. It’s on the Pacific coast and enjoys warm, mainly dry weather – ideal for golf!

You will visit the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, there will be an opportunity for golf course visits and also the chance to attend seminars at the GCSAA Education Conference.

Accommodation and flights are free for the ten lucky delegates. This unmissable opportunity is open to all current BIGGA members – as long as you have not been on a previous trip. All you have to do now is return the form which is attached to the front cover of this edition.

We’ve had fabulous feedback from past events with BIGGA members returning with magical memories from the likes of Orlando and Los Angeles.

Here’s just a small selection of the superb feedback from last year’s group who visited Las Vegas…

“Every BIGGA member should apply for this trip of a lifetime. Every aspect of the trip catered for all levels of candidates within the industry.”

Daniel McGrath MG, Course Manager, North Foreland GC.

“I’ve been greenkeeping now for over half my life, and in that time I’ve made some great friendships and had some fantastic experiences, but I have to say being part of the Bernhard’s Delegation tops them all. The camaraderie within the group was superb and the trip gave me the opportunity to broaden my knowledge through top class education and networking.”

Jamie Acton, Head Greenkeeper, Woblebury GC.

“Spending a full week with nine very knowledgeable guys was a fantastic experience. I’ve learned a lot from them and made a great bunch of friends.”

David Gray, First Assistant, Ladybank GC.

So what’s stopping you? Fill in the form and return to BIGGA House and we’ll be in touch with details about the next stage of the application process.

You can also apply at www.bernhard.co.uk/bigga2013

The closing date for entries is October 7 2012.
A fantastic opportunity for all BIGGA Members, courtesy of BERNHARD

California dreaming

Don’t miss your chance to jet off on a dream trip across the Atlantic to sunny San Diego – fill in the form attached to the cover of this magazine.

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For an excellent range of high quality fertilisers and seeds designed to meet the specific needs of the amenity industry, simply buy direct from the specialists at www.bshamenity.com

Professional Turf Care & Amenity Solutions

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Haltwhistle, Northumberland
Tel 01434 323134

Neave, Litchfield
Tel 01638 721888

Lynn, Cheshire
Tel 01925 758886

Perth, Scotland
Tel 01738 621512

web: www.sherriff-amenity.com
e-mail: info@sherriff-amenity.com
The eyes of the world will be on one particular course this month when the 39th Ryder Cup rolls into Illinois. GI talked to Curtis Tyrrell, Director of Course Operations at the Medinah Country Club...

Curtis Tyrrell has been eagerly anticipating Friday September 28 2012 since his first day in his current role four years ago. On that morning, the first tee shot will signal the official start of his “once in a lifetime” opportunity to host one of the world’s greatest sporting events.

However, while Curtis and his team have made many alterations to the course over the last four years with the Ryder Cup in mind, he’s keen to stress that the 600 members will also enjoy the benefits long after the champions are crowned.

Ironically, while BIGGA members in the UK have battled one of the worst summers in memory, Curtis and his colleagues have been left cursing exactly the opposite problem – as excitement reaches fever pitch.

He said: “It’s a once in a lifetime experience for me and the team – it’s the pinnacle of all our careers and we’re working our butts off”

The greens are USGA Spec with 100% Creeping Bent of 007 and SR119 and the tee areas also use a sand-based construction with a USGA rootzone, also 100% Creeping Bent.

Greens preparation will involve light topdressing once a week up to ten days before the event with rolling six days a week and rolling the day before the tournament for deep aeration and overseeding, and some areas are being returfed.

“The preparation’s been pretty intense. We’ve had the hottest July ever recorded, it’s been over 100F during the day and 80F through the night.

“The greens have come through okay, although some fairways with bight Poa annua have suffered.

“A lot of people don’t realise we have three courses here and it’s number three that’s hosting the Ryder Cup. To help recovery after the summer’s unprecedented heat, we’ve closed this course a month before the tournament for deep aeration and over-seeding, and some areas are being returfed.

“The greens are running at 11 on the stimpmeter and green speed will be decided nearer the time by the US captain Davis Love III.”

Curtis was not slow to make alterations soon after his arrival at the club, which opened in 1925. The all-important third course has previously hosted the PGA Championships and US Open.

“Medinah is a family club, and when I arrived I felt we needed to set it up for the future. Of course we knew we had the Ryder Cup on the horizon so that obviously played a huge part in our planning.

“But I also want our membership to be proud of the course and proud of how well it plays while the world’s greatest players are here.

“Course three will be open to members the day after the tournament ends.

“We rebuilt all the greens in late 2009. Some were already USGA constructed greens so we brought all the others up to the same standard.

“We then re-grassed all the fairways, rebuilt all the bunkers and entirely rebuilt the 18th hole.

“These changes were mainly for the members’ benefit. They love this course and want it to be the best that it can be.

“We carried out extensive work last winter. We did some fan installation to help us with air movement and temperature management around certain greens.

“Then in June we started bringing in the infrastructure for the tournament – grandstands, corporate hospitality and paths. This will all span 63 acres so it’s quite an undertaking.”

During the tournament Curtis will be assisted by 100 volunteers including BIGGA members Lee Strutt, Course Manager at the new Q West Golf Club, and Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper from Gleneagles which hosts the next Ryder Cup.

While some may expect Curtis to be on the golf course, they’re facing them and tackling them.

“I didn’t think my career would progress to the point where I was preparing the Ryder Cup course. There are so many talented guys over here in your average country club, you never think you’ll get to this level so it really is a dream come true for me.

“I want everyone here to be proud of their contribution towards the Ryder Cup.

“We’re lucky to have a fantastic team and they’re really excited, everyone’s really enthusiastic and energetic. “After that, my only remaining wish is for an American victory!”

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The Ryder Cup Preview
The eyes of the world will be on one particular course this month when the 39th Ryder Cup rolls into Illinois. GI talked to Curtis Tyrrell, Director of Course Operations at the Medinah Country Club...

Curtis Tyrrell has been eagerly anticipating Friday September 28 2012 since his first day in his current role four years ago.

On that morning, the first tee shot will signal the official start of his “once in a lifetime” opportunity to host one of the world’s greatest sporting events.

However, while Curtis and his team have made many alterations to the course over the last four years with the Ryder Cup in mind, he’s keen to stress that the 600 members will also enjoy the benefits long after the circus leaves town.

Ironically, while BIGGA members in the UK have battled one of the worst summers in memory, Curtis and his colleagues have been left cursing exactly the opposite problem – as excitement reaches fever pitch.

He said: “It’s a once in a lifetime experience for me and the team – it’s the pinnacle of all our careers and we’re working our butts off.”

“After that, my only remaining wish is for an American victory!”

The greens are USGA Spec with 100% Creeping Bent of 607 and Sf 117 and the tee area also a seed-based construction with a USGA rootzone, also 100% Creeping Bent.

Greens preparation will involve light topdressing once a week up to ten days before the event with some areas being returfed. Curtis bases his fertilizer on a solid agronomic philosophy of soil testing and mixing his fertilizer from bulk purchased liquid nutrients, adjusting according to environmental conditions. He also uses an organic fertilizer based on chicken manure for his grassland programme.

Medinah has a significant fleet of equipment including a couple of TruTurf rollers and items from Toro.

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The all-important third course has previously hosted the PGA Championships and US Opens.

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While some may expect Curtis to have several weeks off to recuperate after the Cup, nothing could be further from the truth. The very day after the champions are crowned, Curtis first caught the greenkeeping bug while working at the Country Club in Woodmore, Maryland, and after graduation he was moved to Southern California to work as an assistant at PGA West in Palm Springs.

He then took on two superintendent positions before moving on to the Lake of the Isles Golf Course in Connecticut, and finally secured his current role in 2009.

Curtis is a proud member of BIGGA and added that his membership is crucial for keeping up to speed with developments in the UK.

“I’m a BIGGA member because I wanted to expand my knowledge, and learn as much about greenkeeping on the other side of the pond as I could. I wanted to cover all bases, and that’s exactly how it’s turned out.

“I’ve learned so much from the BIGGA members I’ve met, it’s been awesome.

“The magazine every month has been invaluable, I’m keen to know what challenges are facing people in our industry in the UK and how they’re facing them and tackling them.

“I didn’t think my career would progress to the point where I was preparing the Ryder Cup course.

“There are so many talented guys over here in your average country club, you never think you will get to this level so it really is a dream come true for me.

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Ryder on Curtis!

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PICTURE SPECIAL: The mouth watering course that is Medinah Country Club.