JANE JONES TO DEPART BIGGA

Sadly we are announcing the resignation of Jane Jones from her post as Regional Administrator for the South West/South Wales Region. Jane has worked dedicatedly for BIGGA for eight and a half years, joining us in November 2004. She has been a hugely valuable employee and we are sad to lose her.

Jane still intends to work within the golf industry on a more local level. Jane’s last day will be 31 May 2013 and we would like to wish her all the best in her new ventures.

SANDY’S BLOG AT GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

We’re continuing to receive details of blogs greenkeepers have started across the UK – proving furthermore that blogging can be a very useful tool for communicating with golf club members, visitors and even committees.

This month we focus on Cumbria – specifically Grange-over-Sands Golf Club. Head Greenkeeper Rob Sandlands started his blog just a couple of months ago and has already noticed some significant benefits – such as the site initiating conversations with interested members. The blog is also well promoted on the club’s website, something which would be welcomed at other clubs! Rob said:

“The blog was started in February, mainly because I know how much more support and understanding you get as a greenkeeper when you keep people informed of what you are doing and why you are doing it. It’s a 21st century version of a newsletter or newsletter. As a club, we are in a process of change in many departments, among them greenkeeping and marketing, so setting up the blog was something I felt would better connect us with the membership and also act as a good marketing tool for the club. We are also stepping up our efforts to maintain a presence on social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook for daily updates on course condition.

“People react very positively to being kept informed – not only what and why you have done certain things but what you plan to do and why. You can also include before and after pictures of projects and links to other articles on things such as winter greens and flooding which have been very topical lately.

“Members have been constantly stopping me and commenting on how much they enjoy the blog, many of whom I’ve never properly spoken to before. Other friends within the industry have commented on how they find similar benefits from their own blogs and had good things to say about ours.”

You can check out Rob’s blog for yourself at www.gogreenkeeping.blogspot.co.uk. Keep the blog suggestions coming in – email steve.castle@bigga.co.uk with details of yours and we may feature you in the magazine!
OPEN Q&A

Last month we featured a Q&A on the Open Support Team. This month we’ve spoken to a member of last year’s team and an excited first timer to a member of this year’s team. This month we’ve spoken to an excited first timer to the Support Team and beyond so you can hear from us...

What is your claim to fame?

I’ve played a part on support teams at the BMW PGA Championships in the past, and got so much from it, but The Open is the ultimate really and I can’t wait for July to come round.

What advice would you give?

Go on enjoy! Also, ask questions. You’ve got a hell of a lot of experience there in the BIGGA Support Team and beyond so you can learn a lot from them, and also seeing how things are done at one of the world’s top courses.

What are you hoping to gain from the week?

I’m looking to get an insight into tournament preparation, the presentation and the operational side of things. We do hold some quite high profile tournaments at Bowood – but obviously these are nowhere near as prestigious as The Open! I’m sure I’ll learn a lot from the week and maybe even bring some knowledge back which I can use on my own course.

What are you most looking forward to?

I’m looking forward to experiencing the buzz of the whole event. I know it’s going to be an intense few days but I’m looking forward to the adrenaline rush when I’m there.

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ALFA MALE GREG BACK ON THE ROAD THANKS TO BIGGA

In future editions we’re hoping to feature examples of how BIGGA members have taken advantage of the various ways BIGGA membership has helped in difficult times. Whether it’s personal accident guidance, legal assistance, debt counselling or general support we want you to tell us what we did for you.

First up is Greg Skinner, Head Greenkeeper at Forest Hill Golf & Country Club, who contacted our dedicated (and free!) Legal Assistance line on 0800 177 7891 after having a series of problems with his car. Greg takes up the story...

Those of you that know me will have heard me curse my car over the last year for its desire to be pampered in the garage. I have learnt two really important things during my ownership of my Alfa GT. Firstly, never buy an Alfa Romeo and secondly the BIGGA Greenkeepers’ Legal Assistance phone line is absolutely fantastic in terms of giving quality legal advice free to full members.

“I bought it on finance and had endured numerous problems with it, yet the garage insisted I had to pay £1,000 despite it still being under warranty. I knew they were in the wrong but I needed the legal ammunition to respond to them.

“The Legal Assistance team advised me exactly where I stood with the garage and the correct terminology and Acts of Parliament to quote. I was then confident enough to relay this to the garage. They immediately backed down and agreed to repair it, as a result I’ve been able to exit the finance agreement due to the issues I had with it. Making that one phone call made such a difference to me and for an annual subscription of £140 I would suggest incredible value for money. BIGGA membership has many valuable benefits... use them to your advantage.”

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Matthew Forster, Blairhall Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper north East Section

Malcolm Howie, East Kilbride Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper west South Scotland & Northern Ireland Section

Claire Byers, North Berwick Golf Club, Assistant Greenkeeper North East Section

Scotland & Northern Ireland Regional Offices

Tel: 0131 248 1164
Fax: 0131 248 1165

Northern Region

Grahame Taylor, The Groves Hotel & Golf Resorts, Greenkeepers Contact Section

Northern & Midland Regional Offices

Tel: 01525 270850
Fax: 01525 581697

Midland Region

Neil Adair, Toro Commercial Products Ltd UK, Midland Section

Mid Anglia

Kirstin Vivian, 1st Assistant Greenkeeper, Mid Anglia Section

South East

Tori Tedeschi, Senior Assistant Greenkeeper, South East Region

South East/ South Wales Region

James Work, Greenkeeper, Hillingdon Golf Club, South West/South Wales Section

South West/ South Wales Regional Office

Tel: 01737 819343
Fax: 01737 819344

0800 177 7891

12 MAY 2013

BIGGA Website.

The Members’ Area of the BIGGA Website.

Asst Greenkeeper, West Sussex Golf Club, Asst Greenkeeper, South West Section

Greenkeeper, Sussex Section

Daniel Gibb, West Sussex Golf Club, Asst Greenkeeper, South West Section

Greenkeeper, east of England Section

Greenkeeper, North West Section

Greenkeepers getting the recognition they deserve for the hard work they put in...
Steve Hopkins, Head Greenkeeper at Bowood Golf Club, took time out from being tormented by badgers on the course (see the photo) to share his experiences – so whether you've won a golf competition we want to hear from you!

What was your reaction to getting the call to take part in The Open?

Steve Hopkins: It's fantastic. You're never going to wait for July to come round. I've never attended The Open but I'm looking forward to the near as prestigious as The Open!

What do you think you'd be?

Steve Hopkins: I'm sure I'll learn a lot from the members and beyond so you're going to be an intense few days for me. I'm looking forward to experiencing the buzz of being on a golf course all day making it fun, playing golf, and being on a course that's amazing.

We do hold some quite high profile tournaments at Bowood – but obviously these are nowhere near as prestigious as The Open! I’m sure I’ll learn a lot from the week and maybe even bring some knowledge back which I can use on my own course.

What are you most looking forward to?

Steve Hopkins: I’ve never attended The Open even as a spectator so I’m looking forward to experiencing the buzz of the whole event. I know it’s going to be an intense few days but I’m looking forward to the adrenaline rush when I’m there.

What is your claim to fame?

Steve Hopkins: In the last three years I’ve been to T in the Park and been on TV a few times in the crowd.
The Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Take The Initiative

Future Turf Managers Take The Initiative

The Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Initiative got off to a flying start early last month with delegates and mentors returning delighted by the two day course held at Ransomes Jacobsen’s Ipswich HQ.

Twenty Deputy and Assistant Greenkeepers travelled from various courses across the UK to attend several professional seminars designed to equip them for a future in management. It proved to be an intense yet hugely successful event!

The FTMI kicked off with an ice breaking session, led by BIGGA’s Learning & Development Technical Executive Stuart Green, where the candidates were tasked with putting a CV and Careers advice, posters and course leaflets, the lending library, how to manage a team, as well as the pressures, challenges and changes you will face when managing a team, as well as the pressures, challenges and changes you will face when managing a team.

The first morning saw Lorna Sheddick present ‘Interview Techniques and Writing a CV’. Graham Wiley, Michael Beaton, Nick Gray, Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas

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“This course has provided me with priceless information to guide me through what I hope is going to be a busy couple of years. The speakers were fantastic and very helpful. The skills and experiences the mentors passed on will only improve us all and move us on to where we want to be in our careers. Who knows - it could be us doing the mentoring one day!” – Dan Scott, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Woburn Golf & Country Club.

“The content of the course from start to finish was first class. The skills learnt in a few short days are going to last me a lifetime and hopefully help me reach my goal of managing a course of my own. I love keeping on giving back to the community. My only complaint I have is that the other 19 guys on the course - all of whom were both great people and ambassadors to our industry - now have the skills I also acquired. Oh well, the competition for that Course Manager’s job I was after just got a lot tougher!” - Robin Cheshire, Deputy Course Manager, Falcough GC.

“Opening my eyes to some new ideas and made me appreciate what aspects I need to work on to take the next step. Meeting so many greenkeepers who are passionate about the industry was also very refreshing.” – Michael Sawicki, Club Manager, Farleigh GC.

“I am sure you would all agree that all of us at times feel low at work particularly when you may be surrounded by individuals who are not as motivated as yourself or who are not actively involved with BIGGA. “Learning comes from experience, using that experience and then reflecting on how that experience can be built on. That way we grow as individuals, not just in our work sense but as human beings.” – Robin Cheshire, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Close House Golf Club.

“The purpose of the course can be clearly seen and the passion and enthusiasm for the industry was outstanding. It was inspirational to see all the delegates and mentors learning and growing as time went on.” – Robin Cheshire.

“This level of training was excellent and the participation outstanding. It was inspirational to see all the delegates and mentors learning and growing as time went on. The level of training was excellent and the participation outstanding.” – Robin Cheshire.

“This scholarship has therefore allowed me to realise my ambition of becoming a Head Greenkeeper and be able to buy the many much needed textbooks and other equipment I need to complete my studies.” – Sebastian Cavilla, Club Manager, Farleigh GC.

“So thank you for all your support of my passionate, my academic journey. I am certain I can trust this foundation that you are your institutions have given me and I am very proud of my choice to study at Myerscough College. He told GI: “I was elated to hear that my application had been successful. It really is encouraging to see that there is huge support out there from the likes of BIGGA and Ransomes.” – Michael Sawicki, Club Manager, Farleigh GC.

“I am sure you would all agree that all of us at times feel low at work particularly when you may be surrounded by individuals who are not as motivated as yourself or who are not actively involved with BIGGA. Learning comes from experience, using that experience and then reflecting on how that experience can be built on. That way we grow as individuals, not just in our work sense but as human beings.”

“I am very proud of your work, inspired choices of subject matter and fantastic speakers. “And finally to the delegates, you guys were amazing and it is very clear that the future of the industry is very bright. It was a pleasure to work with all of you. My message to all delegates would be to keep working hard and to show the same passion you showed over the two days, you will get there in the end.”

“We have hundreds of books and a selection of DVDs available – and we received was superb and far from the likes of BIGGA and Ransomes.” – Michael Sawicki, Club Manager, Farleigh GC.
5 Years assessed as being competent to maintain turf and will be you attend college, learn how or how it's maintained. So have little knowledge of grass enter the industry, you may it really means. When you established let's discuss what Right, now that's been C - CONTINUING CONTINUING CONTINUING C - CONTINUING D - DEVELOPMENT

What is CPD?

So where should you start? Firstly, join the BIGGA CPD Scheme. This will help and it should be the first step on your development plan. The next step is to sit down with a piece of paper and think about where you are NOW. What skills do you have, what are your strengths and weaknesses and what are your goals? At this point, be really honest with yourself. Now take another piece of paper and draw a line across it. Start at the far end, with what you would like to achieve. It could be Course Manager, Club Manager, Stockbroker or Film Director. Then work backwards along it putting down what steps you need to reach your desired goal. This is where you may need to do some research or take some advice, because you will need to decide what skills you need to develop to achieve this goal.

For example, completing a course in management or undertaking an evening class in French.

So in truth, greenkeepers have been carrying out CPD for years but didn't know it and also didn't know they could be recognised for it.

CPD Commitment

A commitment to CPD is really a frame of mind rather than a process. You are probably doing all the right things - CPD is the way of formalising this frame of mind and being recognised for your commitment. By committing to CPD it identifies you as a competent professional. Your commitment to your own development, both personal and professional, is up to you. It could take five minutes or five hours – it depends on how much time you are willing to invest.

Learning

I have taught many sports turf students, over the years, who have varied hugely in age, yet apart from turf care, they have all learnt some-thing about themselves. It may have been how they learn best, they may have improved their reading or writing or how to ask the right question. It should be remembered that learning is deeper than just knowledge; it is a fundamental part of our evolution. Without it, I may have been chiselling this article out of stone! CPD provides the opportunity to explore and develop not only our professional skills but to discover who we are, what makes us tick or how we can challenge ourselves.

C - CONTINUING

P - PROFESSIONAL

D - DEVELOPMENT

Registration forms can be found at: www.bigga.org.uk/education/continuing-professional-development

At this point, you can begin to break this down into years or months and schedule them. This is called ‘chunking’. Breaking down your plan into manageable chunks makes the end goal more attainable, as you will be completing steps towards it. Your goal is to be a Deputy in five years and a Course Manager in ten, break that down by achieving your Level 3 by your two and then even further by achieving a unit by July.

That’s just an example, but research has shown by achieving smaller goals on the way to a bigger goal, you are more likely to achieve it. Fig. 1 shows an example of this timeline.

So everything you do to achieve this goal will be classed as CPD. Also, it is now compulsory in all Level Two, Three and Four qualifications to complete a Personal Development Plan, so by completing one now you will have the evidence already in place. It can also be good to include personal goals in this process, such as starting a family or saving for a car.

One of the most fundamental tasks is REVIEW it on a regular basis. Your goals and feats are not cast in tablets of stone and need to be flexible, especially in the current economic climate.

CPD - A Cunning Plan…

So, after five years of struggling to fill in the journal, the pen is finally dropped and I still maintain one now. Depending on my circumstances, I may put entries in on a daily/weekly basis or after a seminar. However, I find it refreshing to take a step back and reflect, which is a great way to improve learning and reflect on what you feel you need. Evaluation is a CRITICAL and OBJECTIVE review of a course, such as filling in the feedback forms after a seminar. As Fig 2 highlights, reflection comes after the evaluation.

Reflection is a very personal thing and is a great benefit to your personal development. During my own teacher training course I had to maintain a Reflective Learning Journal for two years. It took me three years to actually work out how to use it! However, by using reflection in a formal structure, it greatly improves learning and the depth it takes place.

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Next month: New changes to CPD and what constitutes CPD
What is CPD?

...and how can it benefit your career? BIGGA’s Learning and Development Executive (Technical) Stuart Green explains how CPD will transform your personal and professional development.

C - CONTINUING
P - PROFESSIONAL
D - DEVELOPMENT

Right, now that’s been established let’s discuss what it really means. When you enter the industry, you may have little knowledge of grass or how it’s maintained. So you attend college, learn how to maintain turf and will be assessed as being competent to use the equipment.

However, it doesn’t stop there. You are then put on a spraying or chainsaw course. Then the following year you may go to BTME, attend seminars and/or go to a regional conference. You get your copy of Greenkeeper International each month, read articles on subjects, such as, aeration and disease identification.

That’s a small example of what CPD may be. You are updating your skills and knowledge, boosting your confidence, strengthening your professional credibility and ensuring your employer has a competent and well-motivated employee.

However, CPD is not only for your employer, it is about YOU. It is a strategy to help you succeed and go succeeding.

Let’s look at CPD and what it means to you, your employer and to the industry. The profession of greenkeeper has greatly improved in the last 40 years, with the introduction of formal education specifically designed for the turf professional, the establishment of a professional body to act as a voice for its members, and the commitment of its members to continuing self improvement to drive up standards of turf care. This ultimately has led to a greater respect for the profession from all corners of the industry. Perhaps the most significant part of this journey has been for BIGGA members and their desire to be recognised by their clubs and members as a professional.

So, in truth, greenkeepers have been carrying out CPD for years but didn’t know it and also didn’t know they could be recognised for it.

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A commitment to CPD is really a frame of mind rather than a process. You are probably doing all the right things - CPD is the way of formalising this frame of mind and being recognised for your commitment. By committing to CPD it identifies you as a competent professional. Your commitment to your own development, both personal and professional, is up to you. It could take five minutes or five hours – it depends on how much time you are willing to invest.

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Breaking down your plan into manageable chunks makes the end goal more attainable, as you will be completing steps towards it. Your goal is to be a Deputy in five years and a Course Manager in ten, break that down by achieving your Level 3 by year two and then even further by achieving a unit by July.

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So everything you do to achieve this goal will be classed as CPD. Also, it is now compulsory in all Level Two, Three and Four qualifications to complete a Personal Development Plan, so by compiling one now you will have the evidence already in place. It can also be good to include personal goals in this process, such as starting a family or saving for a car.

One of the most fundamental tasks is REVIEW it on a regular basis. Your goals and ideas are not just in tablets of stone and need to be flexible, especially in the current economic climate.

CPD is about YOU taking responsibility for your career and personal development and aspiring to the highest standards

Review

You have your plan and are undertaking CPD activities. How do you ensure that the activities are of benefit and how could you use what you have learnt? This is something called REFLECTION. Fig 2 shows the CPD cycle. It is very easy to confuse evaluation and reflection, so what’s the difference? Simply put, your Personal Development Plan is a reflection on what you FEEL your needs are. Evaluation is a CRITICAL and OBJECTIVE review of a course, such as filling in the feedback forms after a seminar. As Fig 2 highlights, reflection comes after the evaluation.

Reflection is a very personal thing and is a great benefit to your personal development. During my own teacher training course I had to maintain a Reflective Learning Journal for two years. It took me three years to actually work out how to use it! However, by using reflection in a formal structure, it greatly improves learning and the depth it takes place.

So, after years of struggling to fill in the journal, the penny finally dropped and I still maintain one now. Depending on my circumstances, I may put entries in on a daily/weekly basis or after a seminar.

However, I find it refreshing to take feelings out of my head and put them on paper. It makes them easy to refer back to and I needn’t worry about forgetting what I felt. My best piece of advice is to try it. I was sceptical until I started doing it.

In summary, CPD is a state of mind, it is the basis to a lifelong journey of learning and a commitment to your personal and professional development. By embracing change it will ensure your profession grows and strengthens.

Next month: New changes to CPD and what constitutes CPD
VERSATILE WIEDENMANN SUPER 500 TACKLES GLENEAGLES' ROUGH

As you would expect, a clear focus and a precise plan underpins course preparations at Gleneagles ahead of the 2014 Ryder Cup.

A Wiedenmann Super 500 was purchased in June last year by Steve Chiappe, Head Greenskeeper at the PGA Centenary Course, with a very specific role in mind.

The Perthshire team chose the Super 500 CHD which comes with a high dump feature as standard. Flail mowing, collecting, verti-cutting and scarifying make this a truly multitasking machine. The container lifts via a parallel system to a height of 2m while rotating the hopper to completely discharge collected material.

Additional scarifying blades and the optional golf course contour kit completed the package supplied by dealers, Fairways GM.

“Some of the roughs hadn’t been cut for 20 years so there was an immediate requirement to take them right back and clean them out. The main purpose at time of purchase was its flail mowing and harvesting capabilities but its general duties will switch to scarification and grooming of fairways and roughs,” said Mike James, Wiedenmann UK’s Northern Sales Manager.

It requires an investment on the part of the golf course, but it’s an investment that delivers a return and positions the course as a leader in quality and experience.”

Club Car is the world’s largest manufacturer of small-wheel, zero emissions electric vehicles, making its world renowned Precedent golf cars and utility vehicles at its factory at Augusta, Georgia, USA.

Colin Mayes, Chairman of the UKGCOA, a growing organisation with nearly 200 members, said: “Our members include public golf courses, private golf clubs, resort groups and resorts.”

“Golf course owners are often surprised to find out just how much additional revenue they can make from even a small fleet of just five to ten golf cars,” said Kevin Hart, Club Car Sales Director Europe, Middle East, India and Africa.

“At time when clubs and courses are having to work really hard to add value to both their member and visitor experience, a fleet of high quality vehicles can help differentiate a facility and bring in valuable additional revenue.”

GOLF COURSE BUSINESSES

CLUB CAR HELPS DRIVE UK GOLF COURSE BUSINESSES

ClearWater, the leading washdown water recycling system, is celebrating ten years of sales with 10th Anniversary Special Offers.

The much acclaimed full biological, below ground system was introduced ten years ago by Highspeed Group Ltd, and now has an enviable reputation for performance and reliability.

Highspeed Group Ltd has developed the system and installation package since the launch and has worked hard to ensure it is the most affordable system of its type. The special offers include a free upgrade to the latest washing, five special ClearWater barrow and free year’s supply of micro-organisms.

Highspeed Group’s MD David Means said: “We’ve introduced more powerful pumps, added extra filtration, improved access and ease of operation. One thing we have not done is to compromise our original concept of producing an uncomplicated system that is very effective, reliable and real value for money. To mark ten years of supplying ClearWater, we thought we’d celebrate and make choosing ClearWater that bit easier.”

QUALIBRA BATTLES THE ELEMENTS

Last year’s climate proved a testing time to cope with the huge variability in British weather conditions. James Braithwaite, Course Manager at Long Ashton GC in Somerset, tested the attributes of Qualibra for his greens and club members.

QUALIBRA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

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QUALIBRA BATTLES THE ELEMENTS

Last year’s climate proved a testing time to cope with the huge variability in British weather conditions. James Braithwaite, Course Manager at Long Ashton GC in Somerset, tested the attributes of Qualibra for his greens and club members.
VERSATILE WIEDEMANN SUPER 500 TACKLES GLENEAGLES’ ROUGH

As you would expect, a clear focus and a precise plan underpins course preparations at Gleneagles ahead of the 2014 Ryder Cup.

A WieDemann Super 500 was purchased in June last year by Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper at the PGA Centenary Course, with a very specific role in mind. The Perthshire team chose the Super 500 CHD which comes with a high dump feature as standard. Flail mowing, collecting, verti-cutting and scarifying make this a truly multitasking machine. The container lifts via a parallel system to a height of 2m while rotating the hopper to completely discharge collected material. Additional scarifying blades and the optional golf course contour kit completed the package supplied by dealers, Fairways GM.

“Some of the roughs hadn’t been cut for 20 years so there was an immediate requirement to take them right back and clean them out. The main purpose at time of purchase was its flail mowing and harvesting capabilities but its general duties will switch to scarification and grooming of fairways and roughs,” said Mike James, WieDemann UK’s Northern Sales Manager.

Keeping putting surfaces firm

The original soil-based greens of Long Ashton Golf Club have always posed a challenge for Course Manager, James Braithwaite, to keep the course open and avoid the use of temporary greens as much as possible.

So James (bottom right) carried out a trial with Ray Hunt of ALS by using Qualibra on nine greens, and another market leading wetting agent on his other nine. He applied both on a monthly basis, at exactly the same time and according to their recommended application rates.

James reported that, despite using Qualibra on the more difficult greens, the results were that they were firmer and dryer at the surface than his other nine holes, resulting in faster, more consistent, putting surfaces.

ClearWater celebrates 10 years

ClearWater, the leading washpad water recycling system, is celebrating ten years of sale with 10th Anniversary Celebrations. The much acclaimed full biological, below ground system was introduced ten years ago by Highspeed Group Ltd, and now has an enviable reputation for performance and usability.

Highspeed Group Ltd has developed the system and installation package since the launch and has worked hard to ensure it is the most affordable system of its type. The special offers include a free upgrade to the latest washing, five special ClearWater barrow and free year’s supply of micro-organisms. Highspeed Group’s MD David Mears said: “We’ve introduced more powerful pumps, added extra filtration, improved access and ease of operation. One thing we have not done is to compromise our original concept of producing an uncomplicated system that is very effective, reliable and real value for money. To mark ten years of supplying ClearWater, we thought we’d celebrate and make choosing ClearWater that bit easier.”

 QUALIBRA BATTLES THE ELEMENTS

Last year’s climate proved a testing time to cope with the huge variability in British weather conditions. James Braithwaite, Course Manager at Long Ashton GC in Somerset, tested the attributes of Qualibra for his greens and club members

Water conservation

Ray also recommends the dual action of Qualibra can help greenkeepers make better use of irrigation scheduling, and conserve of water resources in a dry season.

He said: “Applying more water less frequently helps to rehydrate the soil more effectively to depth, and significantly reduces the effect of evaporation from the soil surface in hot summer conditions.”

Ray advocates the dual action of Qualibra for eliminating the risks of creating soft surfaces after a heavy rain or irrigation and help alleviate Dry Patch or hydrophilic soils more effectively.

“Creating a dry surface, whilst holding greater soil moisture reserves deep and evenly in the root zone, gives more efficient utilisation of water and encourages root development further down into the soil profile, which can further aid plant health,” he said.

Water warning

Golf courses and other sports facilities are going to have to stop using mains water for irrigation within the next five years, according to latest reports, warns Roger Davey of Somerset-based Intrec. He said: “Golf courses will have to prove they have an efficient and sustainable policy for their use of irrigation water, if they want to get and keep an abstraction licence.”

Whilst the cost of borehole water can be as low as five pence per m3 and could pay for the investment in just three years, greenkeepers and clubs have to be aware of the potential risks of water quality. Other sources for stored water, including rainwater harvesting and treated grey water or sewage effluent from a hotel complex, for example, could also provide valuable alternatives.
Double take at Muirfield

How is Colin Irvine preparing for staging the greatest golfing show on earth - 11 years after his last experience of The Open? How have expectations changed, and what are the technical challenges? Steve Castle found out.