

Why it's never too late to learn



Education Update

BY KEN RICHARDSON

One of BIGGA's main aims is to encourage its members to gain nationally recognised education and training qualifications and to continue that education and training throughout their careers. Gaining recognised qualifications can improve your knowledge and skills, thereby improving your job performance, enhance your career prospects, help you to cope with change and improve the status of the greenkeeping profession.

For newcomers to the profession, college courses are usually the best option. Colleges offer Scottish and National Vocational courses on a block or day release basis and National Certificate/Diploma course on a full time basis. However, some colleges are now offering distance learning Higher National Certificate courses and the range of course and method of study seems set to diversify even more. This diversification means that all greenkeepers have the opportunity to study for a variety of qualifications. Moreover, the introduction of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications, the training of industry competent assessors and advisors and the approval by City and Guilds and SCOTVEC of the GTC as an "Approved Centre" means that experienced greenkeepers can now work towards and gain N/SVQs without attending college.

Experienced greenkeepers wishing to use their skills and knowledge to gain an N/SVQ should first register their interest with the GTC. They will then be introduced to an industry assessor, who will have been trained to match the candidates skills and knowledge against the criteria for an N/SVQ. In some cases, a candidates prior learning may match all of the criteria but in other cases, some "top-up" training or further assessment

may be required. "Top-up" training could be in a college, on a golf course or at another suitable site. Once a candidate has reached the required standards, the assessor confirms that he/she is competent and the GTC arranges for the delegate to be awarded the appropriate certificate. BIGGA, as a member of the GTC, has been fully involved in the design and introduction of N/SVQs and, as a major provider of greenkeeper training courses, seminars, workshops and education conferences it is in a unique position to identify and run "top-up" training courses as and when they are required.

BIGGA believes that education and training should be continuous and will continue to arrange education and training courses that meet the needs of its members. Continuing education and training will help all greenkeepers to adapt to change and ensure that the high standards of greenkeeping and, therefore golf courses continues.

If your qualification is out of date or if you do not have a formal greenkeeping qualification then contact the GTC today on 01347 838640. Don't get left behind, it is never too old to learn as training should continue throughout your working life.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT OF MAMMALS AND BIRDS COURSE

The first Ecological Management of Mammals and Birds Course was held at Walton Heath Golf Course on Monday 23 October 1995. To meet the demand for places, a second course has been arranged at Walton Heath, on Monday 27 November. For further details, or to reserve a place, contact Golf Training, Central Science Laboratory, Tanglely Place, Guildford, GU3 3LQ, on 01483 232581. Further courses are planned.

REGIONAL SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT COURSES

Since last month's magazine was published, I have had to change the dates of some of the Regional Supervisory Management Courses which are due to be held in February/March next year. The full list of dates and venues is as follows:

Location	Venue	Date
York	Dean Court Hotel	7/8 February
Chester	Gladstone Centre	12/13 February
Birmingham	Westley Hotel	14/15 February
Kettering	Kettering Park Hotel	5/6 February
Killarney	TBD	7/8 March
Dover	County Hotel	5/6 February
Brighton	Old Ship Hotel	7/8 February
Bournemouth	Moat House	19/20 February
Bristol	Thornbury Golf Centre	12/13 February
Plymouth	Moat House	14/15 February

GCSAA Conference and Show, Orlando, February 5-11, 1996

BIGGA's trip of a lifetime!

As in previous years BIGGA is offering you the opportunity to travel with us to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show at the Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida from February 5-11, 1996.

The BIGGA party will assemble at Gatwick Airport on Sunday, February 4 for departure to Orlando at 12.30pm. BIGGA is able to offer accommodation at the Holiday Inn, Gatwick at a cost of £39 per person for any members wishing to stay over the night before departure.

The Clarion Plaza Hotel, chosen by BIGGA to accommodate our party, offers excellent amenities including a heated swimming pool and whirlpool, three in-house restaurants, live entertainment and a night club. The Clarion Plaza has the added convenience of being a co-exhibitor hotel and is based next to the Convention Centre.

The GCSAA Conference and Show takes place between February 5-11 with the trade show on February 9-11. You will have the opportunity to attend educational seminars, programmes and the trade show bringing you up-to-date information on golf course management, technology and the latest trends in turfgrass management.

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Sunday, February 4

All participants will assemble at Gatwick Airport, for the 12.30pm direct flight with Virgin Airlines to Orlando arriving at 16.40 local time. The group will then transfer to the Clarion Plaza Hotel for a nine night stay on a room only basis.

Tuesday, February 13

Transfer to the Orlando International Airport for the direct flight at 19.10 arriving at London Gatwick at 08.15am on Wednesday, February 14.



The trip to Orlando will also give you the chance to see the sights: but there's nothing Mickey Mouse about the GCSAA show - it's the best there is. Picture: Walt Disney Company

PRICES

£530 per person based on twin shares or £710. per person based on single room accommodation.

Plus comprehensive travel insurance for the duration of £55. Included are: Return economy class flights Gatwick to Orlando, UK and US taxes, transfers to and from the airport to the Clarion Plaza Hotel, nine nights accommodation based on room only and US accommodation taxes.

Please note: Registration costs for the Pre Conference Seminars which run from February 5-8 and for the Education Programme which runs from February 8-11 are not included in the package and bookings need to be made direct with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Details are available from BIGGA upon request.

Please forward full payment of £585 or £765 (unless travel insurance is not required), adding £39 if accommodation is required for the night of February 3, to BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Airedale, York, YO6 2NF to arrive by Friday, November 17 at the latest, together with name, address and contact telephone number.