



Profile

Usually the spotlight falls on the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper at a Club.

Now it is the turn of those whose work often goes unheralded to star.



Name: Ben Whelton

Club: Merrist Wood GC

Position: Assistant Greenkeeper/Irrigation Technician

Age: 21

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?

Four years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?

NVQ Level 3 and the BTLIA Certificate in Turf Irrigation

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?

Cutting Fairways

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?

Cleaning Sludge traps

5. What job other than greenkeeping might you have ended up doing?

Always wanted to work on turf

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Tom Smith, Head Greenkeeper at Merrist Wood

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?

A more understanding and closer relationship between greenkeepers and members

8. What are your hobbies?

Watching Chelsea and playing golf

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?

A good monthly magazine and an excellent show in BTME

10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?

Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper at a high profile course

BIGGA support group

The Midland Region has set up a support group on a trial basis. Because of the many factors involved in forming such a project, it was thought advisable to begin with a trial which would serve as a learning time, allowing us to assess demand and costs before embarking upon further training for support group (members) for other regions.

"The formation of this project comes from the many concerns we have about the high percentage of greenkeepers who are suffering from stress as a result of pressure at work. This often has a knock-on effect, leading to more serious illness, thus affecting families and also places of work," said BIGGA

Past Chairman Paddy McCarron.

"We are also aware that the demands on today's greenkeepers are many and varied and ever-increasing with all-year-round golf. People's expectations at times are too high for the greenkeeper to deal with and because of financial constraints and course limitations and/or poor communications, difficulties build up. It may be that the golf club and the greenkeeper are just not compatible," explained Paddy.

It is also a concern that too many greenkeepers are looking to change their jobs, often for the wrong reasons as many may be suffering from stress during the time that their grievances are

developing. What we are saying is: Talk to us first.

"Our desire is to see more greenkeepers happy in their work and more golf clubs happy with their greenkeepers. We do not promise success - that depends on you, but we are there to talk to," said Paddy.

The service will be totally confidential and the only cost to the caller will be that of the telephone call. Appointments will be necessary if someone wishes to talk in person.

Thanks to A.L.S. Amenity Land Services for their financial support of this worthy cause

Telephone: 0116 2739189 or 01480 437507

A Royal occasion for Chris

Christopher Rawlings, (right) who was a runner-up in last year's Toro Student of the Year Award, visited Buckingham Palace recently to receive a silver medal from the Duke of Edinburgh.

Chris (25), of Rodway Hill Golf Complex, Gloucestershire, was voted top Level 3 Sports Turf Maintenance City and Guilds NVQ student in the country after put forward for the award by Hartpury College.

"It was a great honour and quite an experience," explained Chris, who was working at Royal Birkdale with Alan Owen, the other runner-up in last year's Toro Student Award.

"Congratulations to Chris on his wonderful achievement. It really does show that our education system, including NVQs, is working well," said BIGGA Chairman, Gordon Child.



Hayter Harrier is voted "Product of the Decade"

Hayter's enduring Harrier rear roller lawnmower has been voted "Product of the Decade" by readers of Lawn & Garden Equipment.

The poll, which was commissioned by the magazine to celebrate its tenth anniversary, resulted in a clear win for a product that first entered the market in 1970.

Now in its fourth form, the Harrier was the trail-blazer of rotary mowers that make stripes. With thousands of satisfied and loyal users over the past 28 years, this accolade is a fitting tribute to the machine's place in

history. Commenting on the announcement of the award, Hayter's Sales & Marketing Director, Kim Macfie, said: "This is tremendous news - very exciting. We have always loved our Harrier model and this acknowledgment is a super vote of confidence for all our staff, our specialist dealers and our customers".

"What is doubly pleasing is that this award comes from the people who really know their products - those that sell them and those that use them. To be recognised for excellence by ones peers, is always very special."

BTME places filling up fast!

Places are filling up fast for the annual trip by the South West and South Wales Region to BTME to the extent that Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries, is considering booking a second coach to travel directly up the M1 to Harrogate from somewhere in Hampshire.

If there is space left this coach facility will be available to members from other Regions at a cost of £25 return. Hotel accommodation may also be available at £32.50 per person per night in a twin room sharing.

All enquiries should be directed to Paula Tel: 01363 82777.