

RANSOMES JACOBSEN^{LTD}

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The Key to Knowledge

BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, explains the background to the new BIGGA/Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Awards and highlights the lucky beneficiaries of the first trench.

Since its formation in 1987, BIGGA has always placed the Education and Training of its members as its highest priority. As the range of further and higher education courses has increased, many more greenkeepers have wanted to improve their knowledge and, therefore, their ability to produce the playing surfaces required in an increasingly competitive market. Higher education does not come cheap and most greenkeepers would struggle to find the fees demanded by colleges. BIGGA has, for several years, helped greenkeepers to pay for education and training through its Refund of Fees Scheme which is supported by its Education and Development Fund, which, in turn, is funded by contributions from its Golden and Silver Key Members. However, refunds from this scheme are limited to £250, far below the costs of most Higher Education courses. Now, thanks to generous support from Ransomes/Jacobsen, BIGGA is able to offer BIGGA/Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Awards to its members. Scholarships are awarded to BIGGA members who are on or about to start a course of Higher Education ie N/SVQ Level 4, Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, First Degree and Masters Degree. The amount awarded depends on individual need but usually meets half the cost of the course.

"At Ransomes Jacobsen, we are committed to the future of our business and the industry as a whole. By

setting up this new scholarship scheme with BIGGA, we can help existing greenkeepers continue to learn, carry out research and obtain recognised qualifications," said Ransomes Jacobsen Managing Director, Steve Chicken.

"We are also hoping that by offering to assist with further education costs, we can attract more students into the business and in the long term, raise the profile of greenkeeping as an exciting and interesting career choice," he added.

The first scholarships, totalling over £8000 have been awarded but Ransomes/Jacobsen have provided further funding for 2003 and 2004. Application forms for Higher Education Scholarships are available from BIGGA HOUSE.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Name:	Mark Zealander
Age:	25
Position:	Deputy Course Manager
Golf Course:	Botley Park H,G&CC

Course Undertaking: BSc Turfgrass Science and Technology, Cannington College

Reasons for taking course:

Mark is keen to study the science behind the industry and will build on the knowledge he developed while taking his National Diploma. He also hopes to use the qualification to assist other greenkeepers in their development and training and promoting the need for better education within the turf industry.



Name: Barry Dore
Age: 26
Position: Full time Student

Course undertaking: MSC in Sports Surface Technology, Cranfield University

Reasons for taking Course:

Barry has taken a year out of employment to undertake the course which he hopes will help him fulfil his ambition to become involved in turfgrass consultancy and research. He hopes to be a pioneer of future developments within the industry. He has been a BIGGA member since 1993 and has already achieved a National Certificate in Greenkeeping, at Elmwood College and a Higher National Diploma in Golf Course Management at Reaseheath College. He has worked at the Hertfordshire Golf Club where he reached the position of Deputy Course Manager.



Name: Peter Jones
Age: 45
Position: Consultant

Course Undertaking: MSC in Sports Surface Technology, Cranfield University

Reasons for taking Course: Peter has already passed the first year of the course and hopes to complete the degree by August. He feels that as his work primarily involves providing management support and training at all levels to greenkeepers across the country the knowledge he gains from the course is enabling him to pass on a greater amount of professional knowledge to other greenkeepers which, in turn helps them in their work. Peter has been a BIGGA member for almost 20 years and has lectured at many BIGGA seminars and workshops - including BTME - and supported over 30 NVQ modern apprentice candidates.



Name: Allen Blizzard
Age: 27
Position: Full time Student

Course undertaking: MSC in Sports Turf Technology, Cranfield University

Reasons for taking Course: Allen has always strived to take his career as far as possible and so far it has taken him to Los Angeles and Australia! He started work at The London Club and then was First Assistant at Royal Blackheath GC before taking part in the Ohio International Turfgrass Program during which time he worked at the Los Angeles Country Club and Pinehurst. He also undertook some courses at Pennsylvania State University before travelling to Australia where he worked on a newly constructed Greg Norman course. He returned to the UK to extend his studying in the UK with a view to becoming a top Course Manager.



Name: Laurence McCrory
Age: 39
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Golf Club: Mentmore G&CC

Course undertaking: HNC Golf Course Management, Elmwood College

Reasons for taking Course: With seven years in greenkeeping behind him and having acquired the basic underpinning skills to be a competent greenkeeper Laurence now feels it time to take the next step in his own development to further and secure his future career. He believes that the HNC will ensure that his practical skills are backed up with sound technical knowledge which will ultimately enable him to be more professional.



Name: Peter Lacey
Age: 36
Position: Head Greenkeeper
Golf Club: Pennard GC

Course undertaking: HNC, Pencoed College

Reasons for taking Course: Peter feels that continual professional development is a must for all forward thinking turf professionals as the industry advances at such a pace. It is therefore essential to keep up with modern technology and to further one's knowledge on relevant matters, while not forgetting the proved and time tested traditional methods. The afternoon/evening course, asked for by Head Greenkeepers and provided by the college will enable Peter to continue his education while at the same time being on hand to provide the high standards expected by his golf club members.



Name: Darryl Smethurst
Age: 34
Position: Head Greenkeeper
Golf Club: Saddleworth GC

Course undertaking: NVQ Level 4 Sports Turf (Fast Track), Reaseheath College

Reasons for taking Course: Throughout his career Darryl has understood the importance of further work related education and since moving to Saddleworth in 1990, he has been given the opportunity and encouragement to pursue this through college, BIGGA and other training providers. A D32 & D33 Assessor he is also able to provide support to other members of his staff at the beginning of their careers, while the NVQ Level 4 will allow him to advise others who may be considering taking that level.



Name: Lee Bridge
Age: 31
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Golf Club: Seaford Head GC

Course undertaking: HNC Golf Course Management, Elmwood College

Reasons for undertaking course: Lee is a great believer that education should play a part in the life of every BIGGA member. He sees his course as an ideal stepping stone to a position as Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager in the future as well as proving invaluable to him in his current position. He also feels that environmental management is the key to the future of the industry and that his education will support his thinking on the subject.

Name: Ian Somerville
Age: 39
Position: Course Manager
Golf Club: Heaton Moor GC

Course undertaking: MSC in Sports Surface Technology, Cranfield University

Reasons for undertaking Course: The course will enable Ian to achieve a higher understanding and gain more knowledge of sports surfaces. In addition to benefiting Ian himself, he feels that BIGGA also benefits from having higher qualified members, thus giving the Association a higher profile within the industry. The scholarship enables Ian, who is married with four young boys, to take on the course when otherwise financial restraints would have made it impossible.