

Your Letters...

A Bright Future

I am 21 years old and I am a newly qualified greenkeeper. I started playing golf at Leyland Golf Club when I was 13 years old in 1997. I have grown up from a teenager to a young adult, coached by Head Professional Colin Burgess.

On July 20 1984 I was born in Bolton's special care baby unit, three months premature. I was on an artificial respirator to help me breath for two months. Through my life I have over come a lot of problems to live a normal life.

After I finished school in 2000 I went to Myerscough College in Lancashire. I started off on two Basics courses, NVQ level 1 & 2 in Horticulture before progressing into the sportsturf department. For two years I concentrated on getting my First Diploma and National Certificate. I have to thank my lecturers, Gary Andrews, Terry Robinson, Lance Butters, Malcom Eckton, Brian King and Robert Hughes.

As part of the First Diploma one day release I acquired work with my local golf club. I started my greenkeeping career off at my local golf club, Leyland Golf Club.

Head Greenkeeper, Charles Bevan, has over 25 years of experience and I would like to thank him and his team for all that I have learnt in two placements. One over the winter months and summer months.

Living just a short distance away from the club, it was easy to get to work with a 10 minute walk. There I learnt the basics jobs to progress and further develop, such as bunker raking, resanding, strimming, fly mowing and turfing tees. In the summer of 2004 I started my first seasonal post for six months.

March 2005, I started my first full time job at the Marriot forest of Arden Golf and Country Club, home to the European Tour's British Masters. This is my first time living away from home learning all the basics, such as how to look after yourself and lead a healthy life.

I have done my first Championship event and have loved every minute of it. I have respect for Robert Rowson, who has started his first Head Greenkeeper's post. In four months I have learnt how to tipple tees, cut semi rough and how to set up a course. I know the basics for these jobs, now I want to perfect these and get them spot on.

I want to work on getting my NVQ level 3 and PA2 Spraying Certificate. I have an ambition of becoming a Course Manager in 10 years time, where I end up that's up to me. No one is perfect at the end of the day. Two people were perfect, God and Jesus Christ. Everyone has got strengths and weaknesses, which they want to perfect in the greenkeeping industry.

Alastair Gauld

Many Thanks

I write to express my sincere thanks to the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team for their excellent work during The Open Championship. I'd also like to thank everyone on the St Andrews Links team who worked tirelessly for the months prior to The Open and during the week itself

St Andrews is known for its bunkers and the Support Team maintained them superbly during the hours of competitive play complementing the fine work our team did in preparing them at the beginning of each day.

I was delighted with the way the Old Course looked and played for the Championship and the feedback I've had since has been extremely positive.

Once again thank you to everyone involved with the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team your work was much appreciated.

Euan Grant, Head Greenkeeper,
Old Course, St Andrews

Chemical Error

What is the worst thing that could happen during a heat wave? Chemical burns on the course!

This is what happened to our course. One of my experienced staff carried out some routine spot weed spraying on the semi-rough areas of the course on a dull Friday in June. This was followed by a heat wave over the weekend. On the Wednesday I noticed some areas in the rough browning off and I thought it was the combination of the weed killer and the drought, but it got worse over the following weekend.

On closer inspection of the areas concerned, speaking to the member of staff in question and checking the empty containers I discovered the error. Total weed killer had been used instead of Selective. On checking the label the wording was not as clear as we would have liked. Yes, I know what should have been done - ask someone to check it properly before use and so on.

I suggest that a simple way to identify different products could be for companies to consider colouring the caps on all containers uniformly, i.e.

GREEN	Liquid fertiliser
BLUE	Wetting agents
RED	Total weed killer
BLACK	Selective weed killer
YELLOW	Pesticides
WHITE	Fungicides, etc.

The same could be placed on the seal itself, so you could tell what chemical it is before opening it. This is just an idea of a few examples to consider that would help reduce the risk in future. Pass on your experiences and thoughts to the relevant companies or to the BIGGA magazine to help others.

J. A. Smith (Tony), Teesside GC

Thank You

A big thank you to all members who provided such willing and able support at The Open in St Andrews. It was a tremendous Championship and the condition of the course and the teamwork shown by our dedicated band of greenkeepers was a credit to our profession.

Well done to Euan and all the team at St Andrews, fabulous stuff, and well done to BIGGA staff for keeping everything running smoothly throughout the four days.

It was a great pleasure for me to be back in my home county and to see the world's top golfers in action. It was an even greater pleasure to share in the camaraderie and spirit generated by the warm and generous people of our industry.

K Daly, Chairman

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

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