



Welcome

THE PERFECT BALANCE

If you were one of those who contributed towards the final attendance figure for Harrogate Week 2006 of 7757, I'm sure you will agree that it was a very good use of a few days in the second half of January.

It was my 11th Harrogate. I know I don't look old enough, but it's true, and I would honestly say that of them all this was the one where the balance between education and training and time doing business in the Halls was closest to being just about right.

Education and training is the bedrock of everything BIGGA does as an Association, borne out in the constitution and mission statement. It is the aim and duty of the BIGGA staff to provide members with opportunities to improve their education and add to their training. That said, Harrogate Week wouldn't happen if not supported by the many companies who take stand space and display their wares over the three days of BTME and ClubHouse and if everyone were to be involved in workshops or seminars and not in the Halls the trade would have no reason to attend.

By providing such a wide range of education and training, not just in the formal programme but with the newly introduced Fringe Programme to enable companies to give presentations, and by starting workshops on the Sunday, with more on the Monday, the needs of the Exhibitors, to have people passing their stands on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday area were met.

The highlight for many was the R&A's Maintaining a Sustainable Golf Course Debate on the Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. This may have had the benefit of retaining visitors who may otherwise have left for home and certainly added to the numbers in the Halls on the Thursday morning.

It was extremely pleasing to see a full house of 270 plus in the auditorium on Thursday afternoon listening to the presentations. It was perhaps even more so to see how many people remained until lunchtime on Friday to take part in the open discussion, which was conducted by none other than legendary television anchorman, Michael Barratt, now a consultant for the R&A.

The passion shown by those who contributed to the debate, from either side of the argument, was a pleasure to witness and proves that when all is said and done the issue which dominated Harrogate Week 2006 more than any other was one of pure greenkeeping.

To give us time to reflect the occasion properly Greenkeeper International will carry a feature on The Big Debate in a later magazine.

As is always the case thoughts now turn to 2007, which will be my 12th consecutive Harrogate Week. There is much to be discussed before then and plans to be made but you can be assured that everyone connected with the event will do everything to ensure that Harrogate Week 2007 offers as much for the visitor as its immediate predecessor.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

PATRONS' AWARD

On December 8 2005 the annual Patrons' Award and lunch took place at the Terraces Hotel, Stirling, where 47 members and patrons attended.

As in previous years, the Scottish Region has awarded prizes to 10 members of the Association who have supported their Sections during 2005. Each award winner received a book, attendance at Harrogate Week and three nights accommodation at the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate. This is possible only due to sponsorship provided by the patrons. Their generous and financial provision makes not only the trip to Harrogate Week possible but also so many BIGGA events throughout the season.

This year's Patron Award winners were: Dale Norquoy, Irvine GC; Alistair Storie, Beith GC;

Ian MacMillan, Murrayshall GC; Mike Lindsay, Scoonie GC; Stewart Crawford, North Berwick GC; Ryan McCulloch, Berwick-upon Tweed; George Mitchell, Newmacahar GC; John Geddes, MacDonald GC; Colin Scott, Glasgow GC; John Barr, Ranfurly Castle GC.

During the lunch the guests were entertained by John McKelvie, a former police officer who had a fund of stories of his days within the police and it was easy to see why John is in demand on the after dinner circuit. Chairman Iain Barr was an excellent Master of Ceremonies and ensured everything ran smoothly. Next year's lunch will be at the same venue on Thursday December 7 2006.

GOING FOR GOLD

Stephen Burroughs has achieved his ambition of completing his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. Stephen, who has been employed by Stock Brook The Country Club since he left school in 2004, was presented with his award at local level at Chelmsford Cathedral by Danny Crates, the Paralympic 800 metre Champion.

Part of his work towards the award included the NVQ in Sports Turf Level 2, where his Head Greenkeeper, Adrian Cornell, and Nigel Beckford, of Writtle College, put Stephen through his paces. The Staff and Management of Stock Brook are extremely proud of Stephen's achievement, and celebrated with him at a joint 18th birthday and award party recently.

"It has been a real challenge and I have learnt new skills, experienced new things. The next new experience will be seeing the inside of Saint James' Palace when I go to receive my medal from the Duke of Edinburgh," said a delighted Stephen.



Stephen, left, with Paralympian Danny Crates

CHAMPIONSHIP BACK ON



L-R: David Hart, C&CE Division Manager, John Deere Limited, with BIGGA's John Pemberton, 2006 Chairman Richard Whyman (seated) and Kerran Daly

The popular John Deere Team Championship Golf Tournament is going ahead once again this year. The Great Britain final is due to take place in September at East Sussex National, while the Irish final is booked for the new PGA National Ireland Golf Course at Palmerstown House, in Co Kildare.

In organising this event, John Deere Limited traditionally makes a cash donation to BIGGA and the GCSAI, based on the number of teams that take part. This donation goes toward supporting the respective Associations' educational activities.

McCOLM MOVES TO DUNSTON



Kevin McColm is the new Golf Course Manager at De Vere Dunston Hall, near Norwich. He has moved to Norfolk from Fife in Scotland, where he was Head Greenkeeper at St Michael's Golf Course, Leuchars.

Kevin, 27, joined the greenkeeping team at St Michael's as an Apprentice, aged 16. He moved up through the ranks and has been Head Greenkeeper for the last five years. Kevin also completed his SVQ Level 3 in Sports Turf Management in December 2004.

"I moved to Norfolk because I wanted to work for the De Vere Group. Everyone has been really friendly and I am looking forward to settling down in Long Stratton with my wife and two young sons. My ambition is for Dunston Hall to be the best golf resort hotel in East Anglia and for us to host a tour event within the next two years," said Kevin.

Dunston Hall Golf Manager, Peter Briggs said: "We are delighted that Kevin has joined us at Dunston Hall. It is excellent to have someone looking after the course with such a top golfing pedigree."

LORD AT CONFERENCE

Lord Bach, Parliamentary Under Secretary at Defra, will deliver the keynote speech to set the scene at the Amenity Forum Conference, which focuses on safeguarding the environment, complying with regulations and following 'Best Practice' in the Amenity sector. 'The Weed and Pest Control Challenge' takes place on March 1 at Warwickshire County Cricket Club's Edgbaston ground in Birmingham. The Conference is targeted at local authority managers with responsibilities for pesticide use, including managers in the utilities, sport and leisure, highways and landscape

construction and maintenance divisions. It will also be of interest to golf course and sports ground managers.

"We are delighted that Lord Bach will address our Conference. This confirms the importance that the Government is placing on supporting the implementation of best practice in the amenity sector. This Conference is an important opportunity for stakeholders to get to grips with the new Code of Practice as well as a range of environmental issues and solutions," stated Jon Allbutt, Chairman of the Amenity Forum.

HAT TRICK

Burrows Grass Machinery has clinched a hat trick of Dealer of the Year awards from French manufacturer Etesia. Their third successive award for the performance of their three depots, Leyland, Stafford and Denbigh, is their best Etesia achievement.

It was in 1991 that Burrows Grass Machinery won their first Etesia Dealer of the Year and it was their only success until the start of the hat trick in 2003. Burrows has been a dealer of the walk behind and ride on mowers and rough cutters since 1988 and is one of Etesia's longest-serving dealers in the UK.

"We are thrilled to win a hat trick of awards, which is recognition of our best ever Etesia sales performance," said Burrows Managing Director, Bill Nelson.

Bill Nelson celebrates yet
another Award from Burrows



LIFE MEMBER HONOURED

BIGGA Life Member Walter Jones has been honoured by his former club, Southerdown Golf Club. The greenkeeper, who retired from Southerdown 26 years ago, has had gates, which lead on to the course, named after him. As the photo shows, Walter, on his 90th Birthday, attended the official unveiling of The Walter Jones Gates.



Walter flanked by Southerdown's Club Captain
and Vets Captain at the newly named gates

HITTING THE ROAD

During March 2006, in conjunction with SGU, GTC and the STRI, BIGGA Scottish Region will, at three seminars in Scotland, be involved in a series of road shows that aim to improve the understanding of the role and duties of a Green Convener.

These Seminars will provide a forum for discussion and delegates who attend will have the opportunity to hear from Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers and Green Conveners who have been working together for a number of years. From their experiences delegates will gain an insight into the benefits of sound working relationship.

Notification will be sent out shortly by the Scottish Golf Union to golf clubs in Scotland inviting Greens Conveners to attend and hopefully the Head Greenkeeper/ Course Manager will accompany them also.

BIGGA Scottish Region endorses our involvement in these Seminars and would encourage as many Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers to attend and take part in meaningful discussion about the Role of the Green Convener.

Peter J.Boyd
Regional Administrator

NATURAL VERSUS ARTIFICIAL TURF

At Harrogate Week the ESA - European Seed Association - launched what is probably the most up to date comparison available for natural versus artificial turf for sports and leisure applications, claim the Association.

The report, entitled *Why choose natural turf?*, is designed as a discussion document for decision makers who are considering buying and installing a new sports pitch. It presents in clear factual detail why ESA believes natural turf to be the best long term solution for the industry. The full report is available on the ESA website, www.euroseeds.org.

In its report, ESA also shows how the dedicated research and development of grass seed breeders has ensured a healthy future for natural turf. Over the past decade, great strides have been made in the development of natural grass solutions that can tackle pitch problems such as shade, air circulation and persistency in almost every situation, however extreme the conditions.

"The evidence in favour of natural turf is clear it's better for the environment, healthier and safer for players, the most cost effective alternative to install and maintain, and the majority of football players and even spectators prefer it," stated ESA member Stephen Alderton.

ICE MAN COMETH



An eighth architect has now joined Swan Practice, International Golf Course Architects based in Essex. Snorri Vilhjalmsón, an Icelander, who recently graduated from the EIGCA accredited Masters programme in Edinburgh, has taken up a role at the company.

Vilhjalmsón, with a degree in Computer Science to complement his design qualification, brings to SGD an expertise in Autocad processing of drawings and documentation, with 3D capability. He will work alongside the seven other designers in the Swan team.

"I think this to be a great opportunity to put into practice what I have learned on my Masters Programme and to gain some real experience. I am excited to find that I am to be part of one of Europe's leading practices and am looking forward to my time at Swan Golf Designs," said Snorri.

SOUTH COAST GEAR UP FOR SEMINAR

The South Coast Section is busy preparing itself for what will no doubt be another hugely successful Seminar. Entitled 'Managing Expectations and Sustainable Golf' the Seminar will be held on Thursday March 2 at Canford Magna Golf Club.

Morning presentations will be made by Euan Grant, Old Course St Andrews; Alistair Beggs, STRI; Laurence Pithe, Crown Golf; and Paul Worster, Minchinhampton Golf Club. After lunch a presentation will be taken by Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre, while Sami Collins and Ken Richardson, from BIGGA HQ, will be providing an

update on everything BIGGA. They will also taking your questions. The day will be rounded off by the 2006 BIGGA Chairman, Richard Whyman.

The cost of the day is £15 for members and £20 for non members. For more information and to book contact Alex McCombie - 10 St Michaels Close, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset BH15 4QT or Tel: 01202 661106; Mob: 07966 386232. You can also download a schedule for the Seminar from the events page on the BIGGA Website - www.bigga.org.uk.

JOHNSON TAKES THE REIGNS FROM MCKEE

After 37 years of dedicated service to John Deere, Alec McKee has retired. He has been replaced as Managing Director of John Deere Limited by Richard Johnson.

After gaining an NDA from Harper Adams Agricultural College in 1967, and an NDAgrE from Writtle College of Agriculture in 1968, Alec worked for four years with a John Deere distributor in Zambia. He joined John Deere Limited in 1972 as a trainee territory manager, becoming business management adviser, credit manager and commercial manager. He was subsequently appointed general sales manager in 1991 and managing director in 1993.

Richard Johnson will take over responsibility for directing the activities of the UK and Ireland branch, including both the agricultural and commercial & consumer equipment (C&CE) divisions. Richard joined John Deere Limited in 1988 as a sales trainee after graduating from Harper Adams with an HND in Agricultural Engineering. He

then became a C&CE Territory Manager, firstly for Scotland and Ireland, and then for the east and north west of England.

"Alec's broad business experience will be greatly missed. While wishing Alec a happy and healthy retirement, we also welcome Richard to his new role. Richard brings strong commercial and leadership skills to this position, and we look forward to having him as part of John Deere's European management team," commented James A. Israel, Deere & Company's Vice-President.



Richard Johnson, left, has taken over as MD from the retired Alec McKee

ELSWORTH MOVES UP THE RANKS

Syngenta has named Simon Elsworth as its new Business Manager for professional products in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. Simon will focus exclusively on turf and ornamental markets in the region.

In his new position, he will be responsible for actively growing Syngenta's market share in the UK and Ireland. He will oversee the regional introduction of proven Syngenta products and will foster relationships with key industry associations, organisations and customers. Before assuming his

new role, Simon served as campaign team manager for Syngenta UK. He has worked for Syngenta in several sales and marketing positions throughout the United Kingdom.

"Simon's appointment is a clear signal of Syngenta's commitment to the turf and ornamental markets in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This move reiterates our commitment to growing the Syngenta presence in the turf management industry globally," stated Jose Milan, Global Business Manager.

PASSFIELD IN AS LEVETT LEAVES



DLF Trifolium has announced that Justine Passfield has joined the business following the retirement of Roger Levett.

Justine trained and qualified in agriculture at Writtle College in Essex obtaining an

HND Agriculture after three years. She initially worked on a large mixed farm before moving into horticulture and she has been in the professional horticultural industry for the last 12 years.

Justine will be supporting the Johnsons' brands and the national distributor sales force. She looks forward to learning more about professional grass and wild flower seed.

"Joining the Amenity team is an exciting challenge to broaden my knowledge and use my sales experience and training to support this sector of the industry," said Justine.

"I wish Justine all the very best in what has been a very enjoyable and challenging period in my career however I am looking forward to retirement and spending more time in the garden," commented the retiring Roger.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Carton House Golf Club has been awarded the Committed to Green Award by the international Committed to Green Foundation. Carton House is the first Irish Golf Club to win this international honour - a distinction which is awarded to European Golf Clubs that adopt best environmental practice.

The Committed to Green Foundation's mission is to promote environmental responsibility and sustainability in golf. The Foundation is actively working to encourage more golf courses throughout Europe to adopt best environmental practices. The programme, which is supported by the European Commission, was launched by EU Commission President Jacques Santer and Valderrama President, Jamie Ortiz- Patino, in 1997.

"This is a fantastic achievement for the team at Carton House and is the culmination of five years' hard work by our Green and Ground staff. All new developments undertaken at Carton, including the construction of two world championship golf courses have been done with great sensitivity to the environment and the existing landscape. At Carton we recognise that environmental matters are of utmost importance and our management approach ensures that environmental protection is central to all decisions, policies and practices," said Conor Mallaghan, Executive Director, Carton House Estate.

RANSOMES JACOBSEN MAKES MOVES



Rupert Price

Hallam University. One year of study involved work experience at Ransomes Jacobsen's Ipswich head office and he was subsequently offered employment when he graduated. He began his career in 1997 in export sales and was promoted to Business Manager in 2000.

"Rupert is the perfect example to demonstrate our commitment to providing career progression at Ransomes Jacobsen. We identified his potential as an undergraduate and he has proved himself in his various roles over the past eight years. He has the

Rupert Price has been promoted to the position of UK and Ireland Sales Manager for Ransomes Jacobsen.

Rupert, 31, obtained a Business and Technology degree following a four year sandwich course at Sheffield

knowledge, the experience and the management skills required for this demanding post," stated Alan Prickett, Sales Director.

Meanwhile, Richard Tyrrell, 38, has been appointed to the newly created position of General Manager, E Z GO Division. Previously International Sales Manager of Ransomes Jacobsen's Specialty Products Division, in this new senior role he will be responsible for all headline aspects of the E Z GO business.

Richard joined Ransomes Jacobsen in 1999 as UK Sales Manager, Golf and Turf Vehicles, from the industrial cleaning division of Karcher. In 2001 he was promoted to International Sales Manager, Specialty Products.



Richard Tyrrell

SPORTS TURF DRAINAGE SEMINARS

Three major seminars and demonstrations of sports turf drainage machinery are to be held at three separate venues in the South West of England.

Geoffrey Davison, a name that has been associated with solutions to sports turf drainage problems for almost half a century, will lead the seminars. Geoffrey is a regular contributor to many leading publications, including Greenkeeper International, and has produced a number of publications, dealing with the science of drainage and producing quality sports turf surfaces.

A working demonstration of a number of

specialist machines will support the seminars, giving delegates the opportunity to put the theory to the test and evaluate some of the options available.

These events are sponsored by WT & RJ Jones, BLEC, British Landscape Equipment Ltd, AFT Trenchers and TYM Tractor. Dates and venues are March 28, Bodmin, Cornwall; March 29, Bridgwater, Somerset; March 30, Bristol. Morning Coffee and a light lunch will be provided.

All interested persons are welcome and they should contact Tom Jones on 01823 665030 or 07785 295239.

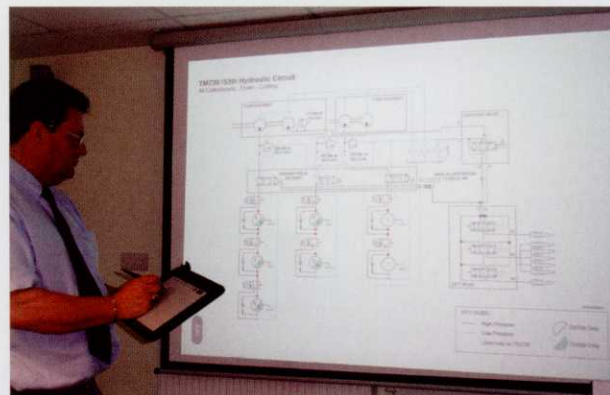
HAYTER HIT NEW HIGH

The acquisition of Hayter by Toro early in 2005 has been followed by significant investment in the Hayter factory at Bishops Stortford by the parent company. This includes a new laser profiling machine and the SAP management system, which brings together every aspect of the company's activities.

The development will boost technical training for customers and dealers, along with operator training. A new training room at Bishops Stortford, with the most up to date training aids that technology can provide, will ensure that Hayter continues its high level of training.

"Training is a time consuming and costly activity but done properly it pays huge dividends in terms of the safe use of machinery and reducing life time operating

costs. This new training room and the modern training aids that it incorporates will certainly help us achieve the highest standards of training which our customers and dealers demand as a matter of course," commented Robin Blackford, Technical Support Manager.



Robin Blackford in Hayter's new training room

INTURF GO EXPRESS



As part of a drive to increase and improve its nationwide distributor network Inturf has signed up the Johnsons of Whitley Xpress outlet at Chobham, in Surrey, to stock its high quality topsoil. Johnsons Xpress stocks a range of plants and trees to meet the needs of some of the top landscape designers, contractors, and property developers in the South East.

"From our point of view this association of two brands who share the same principles of quality and service makes perfect sense. Johnsons Xpress at Chobham is already meeting the plant supply needs of some important landscape contractors and designers, so adding our topsoil makes perfect sense," said Inturf Director of Sales, Andy Church.

Simon Lord, Xpress Centre Manager added: "I very much look forward to developing the relationship with Inturf."

NEW WAY TO MAKE A BUNKER

Digging a new bunker took an unexpected and hazardous turn for greenkeepers at Buckpool Golf Club recently. While creating the new course feature, Head Greenkeeper, Peter Fiske, and Deputy, Dave Murdoch, unearthed an unexploded World War II land mine.

The discovery sparked a security operation that witnessed a 100 metre area being sealed off for an entire day while Army bomb disposal experts carried out a controlled explosion. The blast, conducted by the Edinburgh Troop, 521 Squadron EOD Regiment, left a hole in the golf course that measured eight foot by three foot. No other damaged was caused to the course or the surrounding area.

The mines were scattered across the Moray Coast and local area during the early stages of World War II to repel the threat of a German Invasion. Once peace was declared in 1945 a concerted effort was made to clear all mines from the local area, but inevitably some escaped detection. The mine located at Buckpool GC contained 10lbs of TNT, designed to destroy a Military Vehicle, such as a tank.

"We were digging a new bunker up by the greenkeeping sheds when we hit something metal. The mine was about the size of a biscuit tin, so we took it up to the shed. We washed the muck off it to try and establish what it was," explained Dave Murdoch.

FROM SMALL SEEDS...

The Barenbrug sales team has its sights set on further growth following its best year ever. After achieving its highest turnover figure the team, now led by newly appointed Sales Manager James Ingles, announced plans to provide specialist

advice across a wide range of market sectors.

"Understanding the specific needs of our customers and how changes in their industry can effect their grass seed requirements is vital for our continued growth and success. Our market is very competitive and we need to underline that Barenbrug is offering much more than just a bag of grass seed. Now, with our team of dedicated specialists, we can select the right person to provide knowledgeable advice whatever the market sector," commented James.

Barenbrug has also appointed Jayne Leyland as UK Research and Development Manager. Jayne's appointment follows investment by the company in a significant trials programme in the UK, together with work by Barenbrug Research in Holland.



Barenbrug's sales team, front row L-R, Julie Whitelaw, Caroline Sadler, Jayne Leyland and David Linton; back row, Billy Nimmo, David Long, James Ingles and David Singleton

CRIMEWATCH COLUMN

Those unfortunate greenkeepers who have had machinery or equipment stolen from their clubs are invited to send in a description of the missing kit plus a serial number. We will then print the information. Hopefully this will lead to some recovery and perhaps make it more difficult to sell on the stolen items.

Anyone wishing to take advantage of this service should send the information to Gareth Jones at BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, YO61 1UF or email gareth@bigga.co.uk.

MASON BECOMES SHERRIFF

Sherriff Amenity has appointed Rebecca Mason as an amenity specialist covering the Yorkshire area.

Rebecca, who graduated from Leeds University, said she was looking forward to the challenges

ahead and meeting existing and potential customers in her new role.

"Rebecca will be responsible for sales with a high level of technical support, backed by an efficient and effective delivery network. Rebecca's appointment continues the growth and development of Sherriff Amenity in the UK," stated Mark Pyrah, Amenity Director.



BAYER GET NEW MARKETING MAN

Alan Morris has been appointed as the new Marketing Manager for Bayer Environmental Science, covering the company's Professional Products in Northern Europe. Alan was previously European Migration Manager, based at Bayer's European Head Offices in Lyons, France.

The new expanded marketing role sees Alan claim responsibility for both the Amenity market, which covers greenkeeping and grounds care, and Professional Pest Control, which provides products for public health markets. Alan takes over from John Hall, who has moved onto a global portfolio management role.

He will be based at the new Bayer Environmental Science Head Office in Milton, on the outskirts of Cambridge - the company moved in January 2006.