



UNITED AT LAST!

David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, looks forward to the 2007 Continue to Learn "experience" and having been involved in the early years of BIGGA's education programme, he commends this year's programme to readers...

While much of the GTC's day to day work is to do with the formal range of sports turf qualifications and developing the partnership with our Approved Training Providers, the Board, in representing golf club employers in Britain and greenkeepers, time is taken out to work closely with BIGGA when the programme for Harrogate week is in its developmental stage.

The GTC, as the main sponsor of the Continue to Learn programme during Harrogate Week, has had an input into the programme through its technical committee and I for one cannot remember seeing an education programme quite like 2007's!

Having taken on board all the various suggestions from members, trade associates and other interested parties Ken, Sami and the BIGGA education committee should be rewarded by many people from all sides of the sports turf sector, making their way to Harrogate in January.

With much debate in the sector relating to exhibitions, one thing that the golf sector cannot be accused of is not working together or being fragmented.

The list of contributors to the education programme proves that we can be united and my apologies if I have left any organisation out. Here come the acronyms!

The GTC representative bodies and funding bodies are the R&A, EGU, SGU, WGU, BIGGA and the PGA European Tour also present will be the PGA, STRI, AGCS, EIGCA, LDCA, GEE, and FEGGA or in more simple terms: Governing bodies, employer representative bodies, architects, constructors, advisors, professional golfers, secretaries and greenkeepers!

During my days working for BIGGA we had a separate conference and there still are very important Regional and Section events but the annual gathering of the specialists from the turf sector is THE important date in your calendar.

Not forgetting the added benefit of an abundance of quality trade lecturers who often are wrongfully accused of "just selling their products" and have a wealth of up to date knowledge to share.

The healthy debate, which can be heard both inside and outside the workshops and seminars, is priceless and the camaraderie in the turf sector is second to none.

We have all read the sustainable golf course opinions and the debates will continue prior to, during and following the Harrogate Week 2007 but one thing is

certain golf courses will be the winners as all the various factions involved in the sport come together to share their knowledge and experiences.

This year we have seen arguably the two most high profile events in golf the Open Championship and the Ryder Cup, played on very contrasting surfaces but both providing great publicity for the game.

Both clubs, in association with the organisers, set out an agenda to make the events successful and the Course Managers carried out their duties with great professionalism as did their team of greenkeepers but the point I would like to make is that for any successful event their has to be a team effort!

The Continue to Learn programme is just that and the range of workshops and seminars show there is something there for everyone.

The GTC is holding a seminar for its Approved Training Providers during the Harrogate Week and with many turf lecturers heading for this seminar they may well be arranging a visit for their students - after all, turf lecturers and registered students can attend seminars free of charge!

Given the excellent diversity of the programme my advice is to book early.

Oh and by the way, during the five days of education there is an exhibition!

To view the Continue to Learn programme online, visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk or www.bigga.org.uk

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