

## YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

Send to: Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email them to: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk).

## INTERNATIONAL EQUIPMENT MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

On September 1, 2006 (12) Equipment technicians were involved in a conference call to deliberate on starting an Equipment Technicians association. During that phone call we decided that not only is this type of association long over due, but it is increasingly necessary for the development of this position. The equipment technician's role over the past 20 years has developed into much more than just a person on the staff who keeps the equipment operational. With the increase in golf courses around the world there simply are not enough skilled technicians to meet the needs of every course. That is because there has never been anything to work from. How can you tell the difference between a skilled and unskilled technician? Is it the way they look or dress? Is it how quickly they can get a piece of equipment up and running? Is it the organisation they have or maybe the management skills they possess? Also is not everyone's perception of a skilled technician different? The GCSAA helped develop the Superintendent position into one that's matured over the years as well. They have taken on more responsibility and have in turn gained much more respect.

It is for these reasons that an equipment technicians association is needed. An equipment technician is responsible for all the equipment that maintains the golf course on a daily basis. With that being said the equipment technician has a duty to make sure every member and guest experiences a golf course that is in beautiful condition everyday. The position they hold can determine whether that guest returns to the golf course to play again or if today is the last time they see your golf course.

The golf course technician is an integral part to the success of a golf management team and it's for that reason that professionalism, standards, education, and achievement should be recognised, nurtured, and respected. It is the goal of an association to grow this idea and to expand it all over the world. We feel that by doing this it will encourage others to enter our profession and to do so with the previous statements in mind. We intend to work with Superintendent Associations and manufacturers to further develop this association into one that gains the respect and recognition that is long overdue and much needed in our industry.

We would like to invite everyone to join us in creating an association that is long overdue and that will encourage our growth as industry professionals. The development of our website is currently in the beginning stages and can be located at [www.gcema.org](http://www.gcema.org). We would like to encourage everyone to be apart of this association today and help grow our industry and the equipment technician profession so everyone can experience what a top-notch golf operation should be.

Regards,  
Stephen Tucker

## TORO STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Dear Scott,

I am writing to pass on my sincere thanks to Ken, Sami, Pete, Bruce, Iain, John and everyone else at BIGGA House for their kind hospitality that I received while competing in this years Toro student of the year final.

I have to say that the staff at BIGGA House are a credit to the association with their professional and welcoming manor.

I really enjoyed my stay at Aldwark Manor, making the last eight was a massive achievement for myself and getting to meet and compete against such a great bunch of greenkeepers was fantastic, congratulations to everyone who competed and especially to Mike for winning.

Once again please pass on my sincere thanks.

Graham Brumpton  
Ipswich Golf Club, (Purdis Heath)

# Letters ▶▶▶

## THANKS BIGGA!

Dear Sir Michael

Thank you so much for the generous donation of £807.95, made by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, towards The Prostate Cancer Charity's work. Please pass our thanks to everyone that contributed; your support is invaluable to us and the donation is gratefully received.

The Prostate Cancer Charity was established in March 1996 to improve the care and welfare of people whose lives are affected by prostate cancer. The Charity is the only organisation in the UK both to fund scientific research into the disease and to provide support and information to men with prostate cancer, their families and the public.

The Charity's support and information services include a range of printed information, a telephone helpline service (0845 300 8383) staffed by specialist nurses, and a website at: [www.prostate-cancer.org.uk](http://www.prostate-cancer.org.uk) Additionally the Charity also has a nationwide network of men with prostate cancer and their families, who are willing to talk to other individual and the media about their experiences.

Thank you once again for showing your support for our work. If you would like any further information regarding the work of the Charity, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,  
Gemma Cornwell  
Community Fundraising Officer

## POSITIVE THOUGHTS FOR ELECTRIC UTILITY VEHICLES

I am writing in reply to the October article "All charged and Ready to Go."

After reading this article on electric utility vehicles, I feel the need to pass on my own recent experiences to fellow greenkeepers.

In the spring of this year I purchased, for the first time, an electric utility vehicle for the purpose of running our 150 litre 12 volt boom sprayer, which was previously fitted to a petrol driven utility vehicle. The sprayer worked fine on the petrol unit apart from the inconvenience of not being able to hear the electric motor running and the inability of the petrol unit to spray at very low speeds without jerking.

My only concern before purchasing the electric unit was, would it have the guts to run the electric sprayer as well as itself for several hours a day without running out of steam. In view of this I contacted both John Deere and Toro to see if they could shed any light on the subject. To my horror, they both replied saying they did not know of any other club or organisation running a 12 volt boom sprayer on an electric utility vehicle, although John Deere stated that they did not foresee a problem.

At this point I decided to consult the sprayer manufacturer hoping they could shed more light on the subject. They explained it was all to do with amp hours and between us we worked out it should be ok, so I decided to throw caution to the wind and order a John Deere TE Gator. To lessen the risk of failure I had the unit fitted with heavy-duty batteries as an optional extra.

Now we come to the crunch issue. Did it work? The answer is a resounding yes. Not only does the sprayer operate without a hint of giving up the ghost, but also the smoothness and control of operation is vastly superior to that of the previous set up using the petrol driven unit. The sprayer unit has been adapted so it can be easily removed from the transport box to enable the Gator to be used as a conventional utility vehicle. The new electric edition to our fleet has become the number one choice for the greenkeeping staff, as they genuinely prefer to travel around the course without engine noise disturbing the peace and quiet of their surroundings.

Robin Bryson  
Head Greenkeeper, Rugby GC