

Welcome



News that a Heads of Agreement has been signed between BIGGA and the IOG has resulted in a few negative responses on the BIGGA website from some quarters within the BIGGA membership.

Such reactions are to be expected and I'd be very surprised if similar sentiments are not being expressed by elements within the IOG as well.

But it really is a case of standing back and looking at what has happened, what is happening and what is likely to happen in the future.

What has happened? Well, the golf industry is not getting any larger. Indeed, in some areas it has shrunk and everyone is beginning to feel the pinch. Golf clubs no longer have the comfort blanket of long waiting lists – more golfers now stay “unattached” and pick and choose the best golfing deal of the week. This has led to reduced revenue for clubs and smaller budgets devoted to maintaining the course, which, in turn, means machinery manufacturers don't sell as much - a consequence of which being their decision to alternate their attendance at Harrogate and Saltex. This has affected BIGGA's income, which means a knock on for the benefits and services we can offer members. It's a genuine vicious circle.

What is happening? Well, BIGGA could cut its cloth to suit and reduce benefits and services, or it could look at other ways of moving forward and protecting, and perhaps, enhancing those benefits and services. One way to achieve this may be to merge with the body which, while not exactly the same, has sufficient overlap - maintaining fine turf – to make a coming together an option, thus giving genuine economies of scale and more industry clout.

Both organisations are currently investigating whether such a merger is viable. I can tell you that there are some highly qualified and talented people from both sides involved in these talks - including representatives from the All England Tennis and Croquet Club and the R&A - and they are looking at all the implications of a merger as thoroughly and objectively as they can.

What is likely to happen? It may be that the working party's findings will result in a recommendation to continue as we are - that a merger is unworkable, or not of sufficient benefit to either organisation. In which case there would be no point in going any further.

However if the talks do highlight potential benefits and the logistics of it all are manageable, more work will be done with a view to putting a proposal to both memberships. It will be then down to the respective boards to put the facts forward to their individual members, who can then take a view based on what is placed before them.

So why the negative comment? Turn it around. Surely failure to explore all options for the future benefit of greenkeepers, could be seen as sticking their heads in the sand on the part of the BIGGA Board?

Scott MacCallum, Editor

Why not drop us an email with any news, press releases or new product updates you have –
Send them to Melissa (melissa@bigga.co.uk)



Ron Christie, Course Manager at Addington Palace GC, winner of The Raymond Day Memorial Trophy

ANNUAL GENTLEMEN'S DINNER

Over 100 members and guests sat down for dinner and an evenings entertainment recently, after a days golf on a Course superbly presented by Ian McMillan and his team at Walton Heath GC.

The Board for the South East Region of BIGGA would like to thank the Club for their hospitality, as always, and the following companies for their most generous support of this event and many others in the south east throughout the year: Avoncrop Amenity Products Ltd, The Art of Grass BSP Landscapes Ltd, CMW Equipment Ltd, Complete Weed Control, Ernest Doe and Sons Ltd, ESD Waste2WaterEurope Ltd, Grass Roots Trading Co Ltd, Harper & Eede, Headland Amenity Products, John Shaw (Machinery) Ltd, R & K Kensett Ltd, Rigby Taylor Ltd, The Scotts Co (UK) Ltd, Sisis Equipment Ltd, Symbio, Seol Nassau, Tower Chemicals Ltd, Tacit Golf Equipment Ltd.

ANDY COLE RETURNS

Andy Cole has returned to STRI after six years absence. He will join the Southern Agronomy Team and develop the Midland Region.

Andy left STRI in 2001 following 14 years service. He joined PSD Agronomy where he continued to advise golf clubs and also worked with Northern Racing and football clubs including Aston Villa and Birmingham City.

As a founder member of RIPTA, Andy is a popular presenter and a regular contributor at events for the English Golf Union, The Land Drainage Contractors Association, BIGGA and the Golf Club Secretaries.

TURF DONATED TO HOSPICE

Rolawn has donated its renowned Medallion® turf to Julia's House children's hospice, Broadstone, Dorset. The garden, which includes a sensory area, memorial garden and adapted play area was officially opened by celebrity gardener Alan Titchmarsh. The creation of the garden was supported by the Greenfingers charity which is dedicated to the creation and improvement of the gardens at UK children's hospices.



WINNING TREES COMBAT CARBON FOOTPRINT

Three hundred and forty new trees have been planted as a result of Headland's initiative to offset the company's carbon footprint.

Will Kay, MD of amenity spraying company Languard Ltd at Lutterworth in Leicestershire; Dave Burliston, MD of lawn care company Lawn Order at Oxenhope, West Yorkshire and Ian Pullan, Golf Course Manager at Marriott Hollins Hall, Golf and Country Club in Shipley West Yorkshire are three of five winners in Headland's prize draw conducted during Harrogate Week. As such, they have each received 68 ready-for-planting, native species, which are all now in the ground.

Ian Pullan has used his mixture of Sycamore, Flowering Cherry, Lime and Alder to fill in gaps in recently planted trees on his course, and augment his new shrub border; Will Kay, has planted his winnings on newly acquired council farm land, which he's earmarked for expansion, and Dave Burliston has donated his to his Local Parish Council.

"They're turning some re-claimed land into a wildlife area," he explained.

Headland's two other winners are Graham Wallace, of Hilton Puckrup GC, in Tewkesbury, and Keith Ratcliff, of Waterers Landscapes, at Whitchurch in Shropshire. The draw, the brainchild of Headland's Operations Director Mark De Ath, was designed as a bid to combat the company's part in global warming.

"The idea came as a response to calculations of Headland's annual CO2 emissions," said Mark.

AIRCRAFT ICE BALLS CREATE CRATERS

Paul Jenkins, Course Manager at Westridge GC, on the Isle of Wight, contacted BIGGA HQ after an ice ball fell from an aircraft onto his course.

Now famous for the fore-mentioned incident - due to the Isle of Wight County Press printing his story - poor Paul was only 12 foot away from the ice ball when it fell. The ice ball, around two feet wide, whooshed louder and louder before landing just outside the boundary of the course and smashing into pieces.

Second iceball strikes Island

By Clara Wall

ONLY around 35 ice balls fall from aircraft across the country each year. However, two of them have struck the Island in the last month.

After a football-size lump smashed through the roof of Janet and John Harrison's home in New Barn Road, East Cowes, on March 13, another made a crater next to Westridge Golf Course on March 26.

Westridge course manager Paul Jenkins was just 12ft away from the ice ball when it fell. He said: "It made a loud



Paul reported the fall to the Civil Aviation Authority and they are investigating the situation.

NEW RECRUIT AT BIGGA

Tracey Tyerman has joined our Accounts Department at BIGGA HOUSE.

Having gone straight into book-keeping from school, Tracey acquired and built on her accounting skills over time. She started work as a Purchase and Sales Ledger and after four years in this position went on to work for a haulage storage and distribution company. Over her 14-year spell at the company, Tracey worked her way up from Clerical Assistant to Operations Manager, working with budgets and finances etc, on a day-to-day basis.

As well as working part-time at BIGGA (three days a week), Tracey, who has lived in Boroughbridge for the past four years with husband of 15 years, Nick, also does her own book-keeping for clients.



Tracey enjoys going to the gym, socialising and as an animal lover, has two mad dogs, Bailey and Tara. She is currently looking into obtaining an accounting qualification.

"BIGGA is a nice Association to work for. Everyone at HQ was instantly friendly and welcoming towards me. I look forward to learning more about the organisation," said the new recruit.

SAD NEWS

Don Hunt, the Devon and Cornwall Section Administrator and a well known figure in the south west died suddenly on Monday, May 14. He was 69. A full tribute to Don will appear in next month's magazine.



JCB CELEBRATES TRIPLE QUEEN'S AWARD SUCCESS

JCB recently celebrated a triple Queen's Award success after three of its business units were honoured for export achievement.

Receiving awards were JCB's Loadall business unit, based at the company's World Headquarters in Rokeby, Staffordshire, JCB Compact Products, of Cheadle, Staffordshire, and Wrexham-based International Transmissions Ltd, the sales business unit within JCB Transmissions.

Each business unit has received the Queen's Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category. It means JCB has cemented its position as the UK company with more Queen's Awards to its name than any other, with a total of 21 since its first Award – for export achievement in 1969.

NOT SUCH A TURF LIFE FOR STUDENTS

Landscape students at one of the UK's leading colleges for the land-based industries, are set to benefit from sponsorship from one of the UK's leading growers of turf – and both are based in Yorkshire. The deal, between Inturf and Askham Bryan College, means that the best landscape craftsmen of the future can learn their skills using the best materials available.

"Askham Bryan College has a national reputation for producing highly skilled landscape craftsmen, the contractors, greenkeepers, and groundsmen of the future," said David Hugill, Director of Operations at Inturf, whose turf is specified at world class golf clubs and sports stadia, as well as in parks and gardens throughout the UK. Askham Bryan College landscape students

will be representing the UK at the WorldSkills Competition in Japan this year. "WorldSkills is a biennial event and is the largest skills competition in the world," said Stewart Ward, Horticultural Resource Manager at Askham Bryan College.

"Our students become the best by working with and learning from the best. We are hugely encouraged by the support we receive from Inturf."



OPEN DAY

Plumpton College, based in East Sussex, provide courses from school based programmes through to degree level.

They are holding Open Days from Monday, July 2 until Thursday, July 5. Potential students interested in subject areas such as: agriculture, horticulture and sportsturf, to name but a few, will be able to discuss the range of courses and careers available to them.

Visit www.plumpton.ac.uk for more information.

DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Specialist sales and service dealers from across the agricultural machinery, garden machinery, turfcare equipment and ATV/Quad markets were honoured when the 2006 Dealer of the Year Awards were presented at the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) Conference and Lunch, held at the Savoy Hotel, London, recently.

The winners were as follows: Farm Machinery Dealer of the Year – Hamblys; Garden Machinery Dealer of the Year – Higgott Ltd; Professional Turfcare Machinery of the Year – Cheshire Turf Machinery; 2006 ATV/Quad Dealer of the Year – Nick Davies Nduro, and the Bryan Peachey Award for Outdoor Power Equipment, Technician of the Year – Ian Green, Senior Technician at Congleton Garden Machinery, Cheshire.

The awards are organised by trade magazine, Service Dealer, and were sponsored this year by Briggs & Stratton, Hayter, Husqvarna, John Deere and Kubota.

MIDLAND SECTION WEBSITE

The Midland Section now have a new website. Primarily for the Midland Section, although anybody can register, there is a forum, news and information, golf day entry sheets, education and lots more.

Please log on and register at www.biggamidlandsection.com



TSADA GC, CYPRUS

Phil Helmn has recently taken on the position of Course Superintendent at Tsada Golf Club in Cyprus. The 18 hole golf course, which is situated within the grounds of a 12th century monastery on the outskirts of Paphos, set in the foothills of the Troodos mountains, has been completely redesigned by Tom McKenzie using all that nature abundantly had to offer and built by John Greasley Ltd to an exceptionally high standard. It is due to open for play at the beginning of this month.

The course boasts extensive vineyards, olive, walnut, lemon, orange and carob trees along with large naturally unspoilt areas of rosemary, lavender and oregano to name but a few. The new Toro irrigation system is fed from two large man made lakes situated on the golf course which catches water from the surrounding mountains.



A new clubhouse, with gym and spa overlooking the mountains and course is due to be completed by the end of the year. 250 villas and town houses are to be built in three phases - mountain views, sea views and of course golf course views.

The tees, collars, approaches and fairways have been overseeded with dwarf rye grass and greens with creeping bent grass. This mix combination is ideal for the slightly cooler sub climate higher up in the mountains which is always a couple of degrees less than that of the lower region around Paphos and next to the sea.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The 2007 Scottish National Tournament will be held at Berwick upon Tweed (Goswick) Golf Club, on Thursday, June 21, by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. The cost of the event will be £20, which includes coffee/tea, filled roll, evening meal and prizes. (Apprentice fee will be £12.) Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring Outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries with remittance to: Regional Administrator, Peter J Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA - by June 12. Cheques made payable to BIGGA Scottish Region.

The draw will be placed on the BIGGA website.



Tel: 01883 344244

Email: info@eagle.uk.com

Website: www.eagle.uk.com



QUALITY GOLF COURSE SIGNAGE

Dave and nine Grandchildren at this very sad time,” added Jim.

Peter was made President of the BIGGA Midland Section upon his retirement as Chairman in 2002. Peter was still an active member of the committee attending all committee meetings and golf days. He was a fantastic servant to the Midland Section and will be sorely missed by many greenkeepers around the Midlands.

BIGGA SCOTTISH REGION V SECRETARIES ASSOCIATION

This year’s fixture took place at Glenbervie GC on Monday, April 5 with BIGGA determined to regain the trophy they lost last year after being the holders for several years.

Glenbervie GC was in excellent condition thanks to the efforts of Joe Wallace and his staff, and everyone was looking forward to playing this fine course.

To the match itself, and I can report on a resounding victory for BIGGA. The match was won by seven points to three with the only losses coming from the Chairman, Stuart Greenwood and the Past Chairman, Iain Barr, with the Administrator, Peter Boyd and Donald Gardiner being the other losing pairing.

Wins for Archie Dunn and Steve Sullivan, Neil Cunningham and Kevin Hodges, Stephen Higgins and Marshall Sloss, Kenny Mail and Chris Yeaman, Robert Hardie and Jim McCormack, and finally Derek Scott and Dougie Barr. Two halved matches Colin Black and Gordon Howat, and Andy O’Hara and Hayden Chambers made the victory secure.

The Chairman, Stuart Greenwood, was delighted to receive the Trophy from the Captain of the Secretaries Team and thanked Alan Osborne of the Secretaries Association for organising this year’s match - we look forward to renewing our friendship with the Secretaries next year.

Finally, thanks to the Board of Glenbervie GC for the courtesy and the facilities at the club.



Wilson Morrison, Regional Sales Manager for Fairways (left) and Sam Wade, General Manager at Newmachar GC

DEALER SPONSORS MAJOR PRO-AM EVENT

Fairways (GM) Ltd, Ransomes Jacobsen’s grounds care dealer for Scotland, has signed an agreement with Newmachar Golf Club to sponsor the Club’s Pro-AM tournament, which is one of the largest event of its kind in the north of Scotland.

To be known as The Fairways Pro-Am supported by Golf Finance, the competition will be held on Friday, July 13 with up to 40 teams, consisting of three amateurs and one professional, competing for the trophy and prize fund of £6,000.

BIGGA AND IOG SIGN HEADS OF AGREEMENT TO EXPLORE STRATEGIC MERGER

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) and the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) have signed a ‘Heads of Agreement’ to investigate the merits of a strategic merger of the two organisations. The key aims of the ongoing discussions include:

- The provision of an improved, more comprehensive, service to members with enhanced benefits of membership;
- Increased membership numbers, which will lead to the development of greater influence commercially and politically;
- An increase in the skills, expertise and professional standards within the turf management sector through a wider ranging and more effective education and training programme;
- Increased professional status for all members;
- The development of strategic partnerships with related organisations and suppliers, for the benefit of members;
- Accessibility to sources of funding previously unavailable and increased opportunities for greater interaction between everyone employed in the turf management sector.

A steering group has been established and sub-groups are in the process of being established to investigate specific topics, such as organisational structure, education and training, membership, finance, marketing, sales and communications, and events and exhibitions.

“The signing of the Heads of Agreement is a major milestone and while there is a great deal of detail yet to be discussed there is a genuine wish by both bodies to reach agreement if at all possible,” said John Pemberton, BIGGA Chief Executive.

Geoff Webb, IOG Chief Executive, commented: “As the steering group moves forward and explores every avenue, it is clear that both the IOG and BIGGA are keen to investigate every opportunity that could benefit the members of both organisations. The fact that we have had two very successfully discussions, and with further talks planned, together with the signing of the Heads of Agreement shows the real potential for progress.”