

Welcome



Not a Bad Life Really

I've said it before but it bears saying again. There are times when I'd have just loved to have been a greenkeeper.

Just last month the programme for Harrogate Week was circulated and the buzz that is created by that one week in January is almost palpable. It would be great to have something similar in my walk of life – a week in the year when you can just immerse yourself in your job, meet friends and colleagues, attend workshops and seminars and do some business for the up-coming season. Sure there are journalistic equivalents but they are far more expensive and the chances of my meeting people I knew would be remote. The fine turf industry is just the right size and because so much of Harrogate Week's education is subsidised, costs are kept down and affordable and more people can justify attending every year – that, and the time of year, means a few days in North Yorkshire can be built into a timetable without the worry of too many traumas back home.

So you have Harrogate Week to enjoy but there is also so much more. I'm just back from the National Championship, sponsored by Kubota, when around 85 of our members had the opportunity to play two of the finest courses to be found anywhere, in Dundonald Links and Kilmarnock Barassie, and enjoy yet another sociable few days. The great thing for the guys was that if they weren't playing with someone they already knew, they would have some new friends by the end of the round.

And that's just at National level. At Section and Region level there is so much going on as well, with some of the Sections, with the support of Headquarters, putting on their own high quality training courses. Next month, turkey trots will be in full swing up and down the country and wives and partners will be charged with picking up merry BIGGA members, some carrying ready plucked prizes, from clubhouses late into the evening. Yes it's a great life you guys lead.

Of course, I'm not ignoring the pressures you are under. I'm all too well aware of what is going on at golf clubs throughout the country and some of what you hear is truly shocking, but BIGGA's legal support services does a great job in assisting members with employment problems and gives you the best chance of a positive outcome.

However, much of what BIGGA stands for comes into its own in those times of adversity. There are the formal services in place to assist but the informal network of support is often the best form of comfort. A sympathetic ear over a quiet pint can often soothe some of the concerns and I can't think of another profession which offers up such support quite so readily.

As I said at the beginning, greenkeeping's not a bad life and there are times when I wouldn't mind swapping a laptop for a handmower.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

NEW FOR THE UK

Aquatrols and Farmura Environmental have formed, new for the UK distribution, Aquatrols water management products including market leading brands such as Revolution®, Primer®, Dispatch®, Aqueduct® and Fifty/90™.

"These two product ranges ideally complement each other and suit the growing environmental approach to greenkeeping," said Jonathan Harmer, Managing Director of Farmura,

Aquatrols products are well researched and their benefits are proven by greenkeepers in many countries with differing climates. With increasing concerns over the availability and cost of water Aquatrols Water Management products can make a major contribution to turf quality both on the greens, approaches and fairways. With the Aquatrols range of products, water management programmes can be preventative, curative or problem specific with application via sprayer, hand applicators or injected into irrigation systems.

"We are very pleased about the partnership with Farmura Environmental. After more than 25 years of working in the UK, our goal continues to be provision of excellent service and support for our distributor and end user customers. We are confident that this partnership is a positive development in that direction," said Tracy Jarman, President and CEO of Aquatrols

Aquatrols, based in Paulsboro, NJ, USA has been engaged for more than 50 years in the discovery, development and commercialisation of uniquely effective products and technologies that improve the rootzone environment and increase water and input efficiencies for better growing conditions. Aquatrols products are backed by research and technical support, and are available worldwide.

HARROGATE WEEK 2008

The Scottish Region once again offers their members a subsidised package deal for Harrogate Week 2008.



The Package includes: Entry to Continue to Learn Seminars (six in total), three nights Bed & Breakfast in en-suite twin rooms on 22nd, 23rd and 24th January, 2008 in the Holiday Inn (formerly Moat House Hotel).

Package cost: £236.00, accommodation package only: £164.00.

To obtain booking forms contact the Regional Administrator, Peter J.Boyd on 0141 616 3440 and 07776 242120 or email at pj.boyd@btinternet.com

ROYAL APPROVAL

HRH The Earl of Wessex visited JCB's World Headquarters recently to present a Queen's Award for International Trade to the company's Loadall Business Unit.

The JCB Loadall is the world's top-selling brand of telescopic handler. Last year, JCB became the first construction equipment manufacturer in the world to build 100,000 telehandlers.

The Prince was welcomed at the World HQ, in Rokester, Staffordshire, by schoolchildren from Dove First School and Rycroft Middle School, Rokester, and went on to meet employees during a tour of the factory. He then made the presentation to Matthew Taylor, JCB's Group Chief Operating Officer. He also made a special presentation to JCB employee Fred Egerton, one of nine people who have been with the business unit, formally known as JCB Materials Handling, since its formation in 1977.

The other eight men who have been with the Loadall Business Unit since its formation were also given mementoes afterwards. They were Kenny Kirkland (42 years service to JCB), of Tean, Frank Rowe (31 years), of Tean, Chris Chell (31 years), of Uttoxeter, Stuart Summers (30 years), of Uttoxeter, John Muirhead (30 years), of Ipstones, Eddie Press (34 years), of Uttoxeter, Dave Jones (33 years), of Cheadle, and Terry Brain (33 years), of Tean.

The Loadall Business Unit was among three within the JCB Group to be honoured with Queen's Awards for International Trade in 2007. The others were JCB Compact Products, of Cheadle, Staffordshire, and Wrexham-based International Transmissions Ltd, the third party sales arm of JCB Transmissions. In total, the JCB Group has won an impressive 21 Queen's Awards since its first in 1969.



JOHN DEERE IRRIGATION

John Deere has announced the expansion of John Deere Golf Irrigation to include selected John Deere dealers across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East next year, following the launch of the company in north America early last year. With the launch of a full range of golf heads, valves, control, sensing and communications systems John Deere believes that it will be offering a genuine alternative to Toro and Rainbird in the irrigation sector.

"We are pleased to offer this new product line to our golf customers," said David Thorne, Director of Sales and Marketing at the press launch in Mannheim, Germany.

"Up to now our customers in this region of the world have been offered limited irrigation products and solutions and we believed that coupled with John Deere's industry leading equipment we will have the ability to provide comprehensive solutions for golf and turf industry professionals.



As part of the Feedback event being run in Germany during September Course Managers were given a demonstration of the new John Deere irrigation equipment, which provides remote, web-based monitoring, the Aurora Intelligent Controls, troubleshooting, performance monitoring and service scheduling.

Graham Williams is co-ordinating the European launch of John Deere Irrigation and has been in discussions with irrigation consultants and contractors. Product and service will be provided through John Deere's 44 dealers, who are currently receiving extensive training he believes will give the customer excellent service.

Around 700 greenkeepers and groundsman from 37 different countries and five continents attended John Deere's Customer Feedback event in Germany in September with the opportunity to view and comment on the latest and potential developments to the John Deere product range. The main purpose of the event is to give customers the chance to experience personally new products and technology on the golf course.

The majestic St Leon-Rot Golf Club, host to the Deutsche Bank/SAP Open previously won by Tiger Woods, was the venue with six Stations each displaying a different array of new or developmental machinery to view. Once they'd been shown what it could do customers provided feedback to the on-site engineering team by filling out survey questionnaires and discussing any issues which arose.

"The size and diversity of this programme accurately reflects John Deere's growing global commitment to the golf and turf industry," said David Thorne, Director, Sales and Marketing for Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

"We are honoured to be hosting this event in Europe and we are taking every opportunity to demonstrate John Deere's global capabilities to our attendees," he added.

As well as the on course feedback every guest was treated to an extensive guided trip around the Mannheim plant to witness the production of John Deere machinery and enjoyed a superb dinner in the new training facility at the plant.

CUBS CAUSE GOLF MAYHEM

A family of foxes is putting on a show for golfers at a Surrey golf course – and their amusing antics are proving to be a hole lot of fun for members and staff.

Two foxes and five cubs have set up home close to the clubhouse at Addington Court Golf Centre and they've taken to using the course and its facilities as a playground.

Hogging the bonnets of the golf buggies for a spot of sunbathing and sneaking out of the bushes to steal players' balls is all par for the course at the Featherbed Lane, Croydon, complex.

Glen Halsey, Addington Court Golf Centre General Manager, said: "The foxes are extremely cheeky, but very cute and people-friendly. They don't mind at all that there are golfers walking and playing within yards of them. In fine weather the cubs can be spotted sunbathing on the buggies or larking about on the greens. They're just like a bunch of rowdy teenagers."

Like many other players at the club, Glen has fallen foul of the foxes' penchant for pinching balls.

"I was enjoying a round with our Food and Beverage Manager, Michael Matthews, and I had just landed a ball on the 9th green when one of the fox cubs legged over and ran off with it into the bushes," Glen said.

Michael went in hot pursuit of his boss' ball and couldn't believe his eyes when he scrambled into the undergrowth.

Said Michael: "I went to fetch the ball and instead of just one I found 30 in the bushes.

"The youngsters are just like dogs playing fetch – but unfortunately they don't bring the ball back again. They hide them instead!" Glen admits he has received some complaints from club members about the foxes' ball-stealing.

"Fortunately, they've been light-hearted and players don't really mind. In fact they often stop during a round of golf to watch the cubs playing. The foxes have caused a bit of damage by digging up the greens, but nothing we can't easily put right and there's no inconvenience for players.

"We reckon the youngsters are about four to five months old and will be moving on soon - so everything should get back to normal," he added.

Addington Court Golf Centre is one of the top golfing venues in Southern England, boasting an 18-hole championship course, a further 18-hole course, a nine-hole course, and an 18-hole pitch and putt, all located in picturesque parkland. It is also an Official Venue for PowerPlay Golf. The centre also features two golf shops and excellent teaching facilities for players of all abilities in addition to an attractive function room.

NEW RECRUIT

Scotts has demonstrated its commitment to making further investment in Ireland with the appointment of Colman Warde to the new position of Area Sales Manager for the Republic of Ireland.



A well-known face in the industry, Colman brings a great deal of experience to the role. For the past nine years he has been with Scotts' distributor partner in Ireland, National Agrochemical Distributors Limited, where he was both Technical Manager and Technical Area Sales Manager. He also has a Diploma in Commercial Horticulture and has developed a strong technical reputation with key professional end-users in Ireland, which will help to further develop and grow the company's business in the area.

ROAD SHOW

DLF Trifolium, are running a series of seminars titled "Practical Sustainability" to help turf managers achieve a quality, sustainable turf surface. The seminars, the next one being held at Wilmslow Golf Course on October 23rd, will demonstrate the benefits and use of more frequent overseeding within any prudent turf management programme.

The events will cover all aspects including: Why oversow and which grass? - Derek Smith, DLF Trifolium; Creating a receptive rootzone - Martin Ward, Symbio; Effective overseeding (practical) - Keith Kensett, R & K Kensett; Primo Maxx – Simon Barnaby, Syngenta; Managing for a quality sward - Andy Cole, Henry Bechelet, S.T.R.I.

The events will be free of charge but numbers will be limited, therefore tickets will be on a first come, first served basis. The course is recognised by BIGGA and greenkeepers will qualify for points towards Master Greenkeeper/3 CPD professional credits. The event will start at 9am and finish at 2.30pm.

Please contact us on the details below if you are interested in attending. Tel: 01386 791102, Email: amenity@dlf.co.uk or visit www.dlf.co.uk/amenity

NEW RECRUIT

Kawasaki Motors UK has appointed a new District Manager. Recent recruit, David Edwards, will be exclusively catering for the company's commercial products dealer network within the North of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.





NEW APPOINTMENTS

Toro distributor Lely UK has made a number of appointments aimed at further improving its customer sales and technical expertise and helping address calls for the creation of more apprenticeships in the turf machinery industry.

Simon Gale has joined in the newly-created role of Key Accounts Support. He works in tandem with the service department, and is responsible for liaising with Key Accounts Manager, Trevor Chard, providing him with technical support for Toro's large machinery fleet customers.

Meanwhile, in a move to help address the turf machinery industry's need for more apprentices, Lely has started its own Apprenticeship Training Scheme with the recruitment of five trainees from Cambridgeshire. Dean Rook, 18, is from Papworth; while Andrew Ireland, 16, Sam Drew, 19, Laurence Moody, 17, and Adam Hubbard, 17, all hail from St Neots.

The five work across Lely's many departments, learning about all aspects of the distributor's business. The apprenticeship mixes academic, workshop and field experience into a superb work package lasting four years. Students can attain a Grade 3 NVQ in Engineering. Writtle College, in Essex, is Lely's partner in the initiative.

Three of the new Lely apprentices, from left, Dean Rook, Andrew Ireland and Laurence Moody



Call to discuss your requirements: 01883 344244

Email: info@eagle.uk.com Website: www.eagle.uk.com



INNOVATION IN IRRIGATION

A new company, Enviropro h2o, has been formed – it claims to be environmentally aware of the importance of managing water effectively within the fine turf industry and is committed to the needs of its customers and clients as well as the continued professional development of its staff.

Heading the company are two familiar faces who got together to serve a perceived need: Simon Leathley is Operations Director with 15 years irrigation engineering experience at both Wright Rain and Par 4; Duncan McGilvray is Managing Director with more than 37 years experience in golf greenkeeping/course management, as well as experience in commercial, health & safety and advisory management.

A key policy of the new company will be to give free helpful advice with no obligation on all aspects of irrigation needs with the company's website giving visitors the opportunity to sign up for a free regular e-newsletter.

OUTING

The BIGGA East Section held their Autumn Outing at Ratho Park GC recently, with 24 golfers in attendance. Weather conditions were ideal and as a result the golf scores were good. Our thanks go to Ratho Park for granting us courtesy of the course, the catering staff for keeping everybody well fed and watered and last but certainly not least to Tom, Billy and the team for presenting the course in excellent condition.



The golf results are as follows: Best Scratch – S. Cunningham 75; 1.1 T Murray, 75-7-68; 1.2 C. McArthur, 76-6-70; 2.1 R. Murdoch, 85-12-73; 2.2 C. Yeaman, 86-12-74; 3.1 S. Dixon, 92-19-73; 3.2 B. Hudson, 101-24-77; Best Nett - T. Murray 75-7-68; Veteran - A. Holmes, 77-3-74; Trade Prize - H Fraser (Huxleys), 69-3-66; Longest Drive - C. McArthur; Nearest the Pin at 15th - G. White.

Mike Dooner

ELLON PRO-AM

The Ellon Pro-Am, situated east of Scotland between Aberdeen and Peterhead, was held recently.



Team Daval: L to R: James Peace, Paul Lawrie, Brian Hunter and John Geddes

The Ellon Pro-Am is one of the oldest in Britain and was in its 20th year this year. Paul Lawrie played and drew a large crowd with him. A good day was had by all and few drams passed over the lips for good measure.

The team pictured would like to thank Alec Cruickshank, from Daval, for his sponsorship on the day.

NEW DEPOT MANAGER

Rolawn have appointed Steve Pilcher as Manager at their Sevenoaks Depot.

Philip Cuthbert, Commercial Director commented "Steve has a strong background in customer service and logistics and is keen to use his skills to build on our success. Our customers have increasingly high expectations, and achieving customer satisfaction is a key objective in our drive to build on our market leading position."



NEW HEAD GREENKEEPER

Norwood Park Golf Course Ltd recently welcomed Grant Lee as their new Head Greenkeeper.

Although Grant will only be 28 this month, he has already had considerable experience in the greenkeeping sphere. Starting his career at the prestigious Huddersfield (Fixby) Golf Club in 1997, he has been Deputy Course Manager at Leeds Golf Club, and Head Greenkeeper at Midgley Lodge Hostel and Golf Course, Yorkshire. He has also spent an 18 month internship at East Lake Golf Club, USA, where he gained valuable experience in the day-to-day management of a very exclusive golf club ranked 60th in the USA by Golf Digest.

SOUTH EAST REGION TEAM CHALLENGE

The South East Region has held its inaugural team challenge, sponsored by Ernest Doe and Sons, recently.

Teams from Essex, Surrey and Sussex took part in this the first of many we hope, aimed a joining fellow greenkeepers in a game of golf and a chance to meet and discuss the merits of our profession.

On a windy day at the end of September, the teams congregated in North Essex at Colne Valley Golf Club. The course was in excellent condition and the golf was well organised, with teams of eight players going out in three's.

With the lead switching from Section to Section towards the end of the day, Colne Valley's fine scoring system with a screen in the club house kept those around the bar up to date with the scores as the players arrive from the course. A last ditch move by Essex pushed their noses in front to producing a fine win for the home side, the team captained by Nick Gates were honoured to take the trophy and look forward to the next year's matches.

Results: 1st Essex, 224pts; 2nd Sussex, 215pts; 3rd Surrey, 199pts; Nearest the Pin in two (7th Hole) Andy Cracknell, Essex; Nearest the Pin (17th Hole) Dan Beard, Sussex.

BUTTERFLIES, MOTHS AND GOLF COURSES

This book has been devised as a practical guide to golf course management. The needs of butterflies and moths are described together with the different habitats likely to be found on the golf course. Management techniques are explained in order to encourage the growth of a variety of food plants to attract as many species of butterfly and moth as possible. By increasing the variety of food plants and establishing shelter and over-wintering sites, the number of butterflies and moths can dramatically increase. Potential habitats include grassland, woodland, wetland and hedgerows. Also included is an identification guide for 20 of our regularly seen butterflies and a few day flying moths. The life cycles of the species covered is included together with a habitat 'threats and actions' list.



The book is available from the Cheshire and Peak District Branch of Butterfly Conservation at a cost of £5.95 plus 75p post and packing.

For more information please contact: Brian Cornelius on Tel: 01270 842363 or email: brian.cornelius44@tiscali.co.uk

PARKS AND GROUNDS OPEN DAY

At their recent Open Day at Dorridge Cricket Club in Warwickshire, Parks and Grounds Machinery Ltd of Bidford-on-Avon, invited in the region of 200 people not only to come and see their wide product range but also have specially arranged guest speakers, in conjunction with excellent hospitality. A lot of time, trouble and energy by the PGM directors and staff had gone into the preparations for this day and the attendance was encouraging.

One of the guest speakers for the day – Steve Rouse, from Edgbaston CCG – had, because of his long association with PGM, been happy to come along and support them, but was unable to attend after all due to a sudden vital commitment at the ground. But John Deere were there, as ever, to help out, in this case with Maurice Tomkinson presenting the astonishing array of statistics as to their parts supply capability via their UK, Germany and American bases.

The other speaker for the day was equally as interesting and fact-based. Paul Woodham is an extremely dedicated Course Manager at Gay Hill Golf Club, Birmingham, and certainly showed the complexity and science that lies behind the golf turf maintenance calendar. But an equally interesting aspect was his explanation as to how his profession does not lose sight of global awareness. Their gradual introduction of a policy of reduced chemical involvement and with the movement towards longer cut grass blade length was extremely interesting and encouraging.



NEW KUBOTA WEBSITE GOES LIVE

Renowned Japanese Global Tractor and Groundcare machinery manufacturer, Kubota, is delighted to announce the recent launch of its new website: www.kubota.co.uk

Designed and developed as the ultimate resource for customers, dealers and industry professionals, the new website boasts in depth product and specification information, simple and intuitive navigation, and a slick design.

"The new website is very easy to use, ensuring information can be accessed quickly and easily. In addition to the obvious facelift, the new site offers far more content regarding the Kubota machines, providing an information rich resource for those who want to know more" commented Kubota UK Tractor & Groundcare Marketing Co-ordinator Rhian Kendall.

Substantially more powerful than the previous site, Kubota's new website incorporates a host of new features including a Quick Address Look Up Dealer Locator and with additional search facilities, finding the information you require couldn't be easier.

Dynamic contact forms have been incorporated to further enhance communication, ensuring enquiries are channelled to the relevant departments immediately.

TERRAIN AERATION DISCOUNT

Terrain Aeration is offering a 15% discount to all BIGGA Members, with immediate effect.

The discount is applicable to all members of the Association on production of a current Membership card, and covers Terrain Aeration's specialist, 1-metre deep compressed air aeration/de-compaction treatment of fine and amenity turf, and around tree roots.

For further details contact Terrain Aeration on Tel: 01449 673783, Email: terrainaeration@aol.com or visit the Membership section of the BIGGA website: www.bigga.org.uk