

## Welcome



### Miranda – The Truth Seeking Missile

What do, “The state of the planet”; “Boys with status dogs”; “Roadkill” and “Reality TV” have in common? Not an easy one, not for people who don’t read the Saturday Guardian magazine at any rate.

Well, they are four out of the five items which depress actress, Miranda Richardson – she of “Queenie” in Blackadder fame - as quoted in the regular Q&A feature. The other thing that gets Miranda depressed? “Golf Courses”!

Yes. Miranda has lumped golf courses in with four other items, which, if a little obscure, could easily be on the short list for Room 101.

Given that she has already expressed her concerns about the state of the planet I think we can safely assume that Miranda thinks golf courses are a haven for chemical abuse.

What we do learn is that her opinion must be formed from some sound investigation on her part because under the question “What is your most unappealing habit?” she told us that, “I am a truth-seeking missile. A lot of people find that unappealing.”

So I don’t know which courses Miranda must have visited to come to the conclusion that golf courses make her depressed but I’m fairly sure they wouldn’t have included many of our top ones. For example had she popped into Hollinwell, current holder of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Golf Monthly, she would have been elated, not depressed, to see some of the wonderful environmental work that has been, and is being, carried out.

The vision of golf courses as chemical dumps is one still accepted by a great many people, perhaps seduced by an ill informed and biased green lobby, without actually looking at the facts.

The truth is that the vast majority of golf courses are maintained by highly skilled professionals who genuinely care for the land in their custodianship. Also, who could possibly deny that some of the most beautiful spots in this country are found on golf courses? In itself that’s great, but the added bonus is that often the green belt created by golf courses is keeping developers away from building more flats and factory outlets.

I don’t doubt that, along with The Stage, Miranda is an avid reader of Greenkeeper International, so I would encourage her, as a genuine “truth seeking missile” to pop into her local golf club, with an open mind, take time to learn what goes on and witness the high level of responsible stewardship first hand. She was born in Southport so she could do worse than visit Royal Birkdale, which Chris Whittle and his team have in stunning condition for this month’s Open, Seeing how the golf course meanders through the dunes, and the flora and fauna it sustains, would gladden the heart of any blue thespian.

Before I finish I’ll tell you what depresses me. It’s all that bright light and neon in London’s theatre land, which leaves a much larger carbon footprint than you’ll find on any golf course.

But were it removed how would Miranda Richardson’s name stay up in lights?

Scott MacCallum  
Editor

## CELTIC MANOR RESORT UNVEILS TWENTY TEN COURSE

The only golf course in history to be purpose built for The Ryder Cup was officially opened on the eve of its first professional tournament recently.

The new Twenty Ten course and clubhouse were launched by the Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM,

First Minister for Wales, on Wednesday May 28 in the company of Sir Terry Matthews, Chairman of The Celtic Manor Resort, and George O’Grady, Chief Executive of The European Tour.

The Twenty Ten course, clubhouse and surrounding infrastructure have been built at a total cost of £16 million to meet commitments made by The Celtic Manor Resort as part of its successful bid to stage The Ryder Cup in 2010.

At a press conference prior to the plaque unveiling, Sir Terry Matthews said: “This is a very significant day in the history of The Celtic Manor Resort as we officially open this new golf course and clubhouse.

“We pledged to make the developments necessary to ensure we have the very best facilities for hosting The Ryder Cup in 2010 and we’re proud of what we have achieved with the Twenty Ten.”

The course has also been built with spectators in mind and the steep hillside which rises above the three closing holes offers unparalleled viewing of not only the decisive action at the end of the round, but also over many more holes in the valley below.



## GOLDEN AND SILVER KEY SPONSORS

A recent meeting at BIGGA HOUSE gave BIGGA the opportunity to inform members of the Golden and Silver Key Supporters Programme what the Fund has enabled the Association to produce, on behalf of its membership.

Chief Executive, John Pemberton was also able to thank all the companies and present them with their annual badges for their Golden and Silver Key plaques and, in the case of newest Golden Key company, Syngenta, the plaque itself which John presented to Simon Elsworth, Head of Professional Products for UK and Ireland.



## SUSTAINABLE GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT

High Post Golf Club near Salisbury in Wiltshire, has made a long-term commitment to sustainable golf course management and consequently the Environment Agency has put the club forward for a water conservation award.

The main objectives of the club's project are to make the golf course sustainable by reducing water consumption and spray irrigation, to reduce the use of non-environmentally friendly pesticides and fertilisers, to increase the use of the more drought resistant grasses on the golf course, and to save money.

The club is increasing the use of fine bents and fescue grasses on the greens, at present these cover 30 percent - it hopes to achieve 75 % coverage in the next five to 10 years. Such grasses are significantly more drought resistant, needing less water to keep them in good condition. In addition the club has introduced a £7,000 closed loop washdown system to clean machinery.

## BACK TO THE FUTURE

After some time away, Karen Coombs has returned to work at Tower Sport Europe as Scotland Sales Manager. During her absence the range of Tower's surfactant and specialist products has almost quadrupled with many golf courses already seeing the benefit. Karen starts work immediately and is looking forward to re-newing old acquaintances as well as meeting many of the new customers Tower enjoy a professional relationship with.



## BRITISH MASTERS 2008 TOURNAMENT SUPPORT

The Belfry requires volunteers for the Quinn Insurance British Masters, 21 - 28 September 2008.

Applicants should be qualified greenkeepers. Accommodation and food during your shift will be provided. Applicants must provide their own transport, boots and wet weather clothing. Applicants should possess a good knowledge of machinery and be willing to work long hours.

Please apply to: Kelly Dunkley, email: [kelly.dunkley@thebelfry.com](mailto:kelly.dunkley@thebelfry.com) or tel: 01675 470301.

## SPRING TOURNAMENT

On May 14, the North Wales Section played their Spring Tournament and National Qualifiers at Llanymynech Golf Club. During a glorious day at the Welsh/English border course, the eventual qualifiers where Paul Roberts of Baron Hill GC with 70 gross, and Andy Peel of Bull Bay GC with 39 points net, also a level par 70. Both players are pictured receiving congratulations from Section Secretary, Jeremy Hughes.

Paul Roberts (left) Jeremy Hughes centre and Andy Peel (right)



## STUDENT BEGINS GROUNDS CARE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

Rory Ferguson, 19, is the second student to take advantage of Ransomes Jacobsen's scholarship programme to help promote careers in the grounds care industry.

He is on a year's placement at the Ipswich-based turf equipment manufacturer and, under the watchful eye of Norman Fenwick, Course Manager at Ipswich Golf Club, he will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the company's three-hole golf course, which is nearing the end of its grow-in period.

In September he begins a day release programme studying at Writtle College near Chelmsford for his NVQ Level 3 qualification in Sportsturf Management. Together with his greenkeeping duties he will also be responsible for product demonstrations during customer visits at the company's European head office and manufacturing facility.

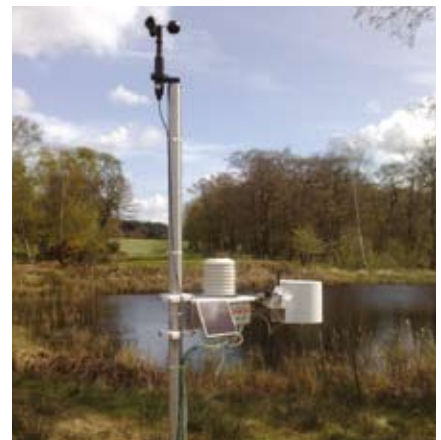
The previous beneficiary of the scholarship was Marcus Fuller, 18, who recently completed a year at Ipswich Town Football Club, under the tutelage of Grounds Manager Alan Ferguson as well as attending Otley College, where he studied for a diploma in Horticulture.

## NEW WEATHER STATION

Notts (Hollinwell) Golf Club, winners of last year's BIGGA Environment Competition - which provides the opportunity for the golfing community to show, and indeed be recognised for, its commitment to promoting a sustainable environment - have had their prize of a Scotts weather station installed. "It's proving very useful, we have identified that around 3am the wind usually dies down, we now set our auto irrigation for around this time. We can then check the next day, the actual wind speed to find out how effective our watering would have been. We have also used the soil temperatures recorded as evidence to support why the greens were slow to start growing this spring. I'm sure, as we get used to it, it will prove invaluable," said Course Manager, Phil Stain.

Notts (Hollinwell) Golf Club, also received £2000 prize money.

For more information on BIGGA's Environment Competition, please email Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, on: [sami@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sami@bigga.co.uk)



## DEBT INITIATIVE

An increase in the number of enquiries from horticulturists who are facing debt-related problems has prompted Perennial, the horticulturists' charity, to launch a new telephone Debt Advice Service. The charity provides help and support for all who work or have worked in the horticultural industry, and that includes grounds care staff and greenkeepers.

Staffed by the charity's Senior Debt Advisor, Sandra Owens, the telephone advice service is available on: 0800 2 944 244, or email: [debtadvice@perennial.org.uk](mailto:debtadvice@perennial.org.uk) at any time. The service is available to anyone who is working or has worked in horticulture.



## GRAHAM WOOD TESTIMONIAL: CELEBRITY PRO AM

Graham Wood, Dunbar's Head Greenkeeper for over 30 years, suffered a stroke over a year ago. Sadly, after 15 long months, Graham still remains in hospital severely disabled, and he will be unable to return to work. Hopefully he will be moving to a suitable house in the near future to cater for his disability, where his wife, Helen and his family, can look after him.

Graham joined Dunbar GC from Musselburgh in 1975, having already served his apprenticeship at Dunbar between 1966 and 1973, easily making him the longest serving greenkeeper in the Club's history.

It is the intention of the Club to raise money for Graham and his family through a Testimonial Pro-Celebrity-Am Event and an Auction on Friday, September 19.

For more information and for anyone wishing to make a donation or put up an auction lot please contact Stuart Greenwood, Course Manager at North Berwick GC Tel: 01620 893765.

## NEW AREA MANAGER

Tacit has announced the appointment of Gordon Peebles as their new Area Manager for Scotland.

In his new position, Gordon will be responsible for the development and execution of Tacit's business strategy in Scotland and the provision of a range of quality products on a bespoke level, while tailoring the service to the individual needs of each golf course.

Before joining Tacit Gordon has worked in the golf and aligned industries for more than 30 years. A keen golfer, playing off 2 and a long-standing member of the Fereneze Golf Club, Gordon has a wealth of industry knowledge.



## BIGGA NEW RECRUIT



Sharon Price has joined the Sales Department at BIGGA HOUSE, taking on the role of Sales Executive.

Having previously worked as a Marketing Manager for Sudo Professional Beauty, Sharon spent some of her four years in their employment in the Middle East and Europe, promoting and testing beauty products for the company.

A fitness fanatic, when Sharon isn't attending a yoga or pilates class she can generally be found snuggled up with a good book, or creating tasty treats in the kitchen.

Sharon, who is married and has two daughters, is keen to develop and enhance her sales role within the Association: "I am keen to use my marketing and sales knowledge to generate many new contacts for the benefit of the Association."

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

Stephen Miller has been appointed Projects Manager for Cleveland Land Services Ltd. Stephen is the son of



Managing Director, John Miller and joined Cleveland as a site engineer last year. He qualified as a Civil Engineer from Teesside University in May 2006 and hopes to complete his Technician Membership of the Institute of Civil Engineers (TMICE) in May 2008.

## UK FIRST FOR DISABLED GOLFERS

Pine Ridge Golf Club has become the first in the UK to offer disabled golfers the opportunity to experience the sport using specially-adapted clubs from America.

The leading Surrey complex has purchased two Adapta-Clubs from US company Golf Country, which are particularly effective for wheelchair users.

Adapta-Clubs feature a unique hinged hosel design which means they can be adjusted to lie flatter than conventional golf clubs. This helps disabled golfers to strike the ball effectively because the sole of the club always lies parallel to the ground.

Greg Brodie, the club's main teaching Professional, provides regular tuition for more than 20 clients from Camberley-based Disability Initiative, a charity which offers opportunities and support to disabled people to enable them to aspire to their chosen goals and release their potential.

Pine Ridge Golf Club, near Camberley, is home to one of eight Crown Golf Academies, the UK's largest network of golf coaching centres. The purchase of the Adapta-Clubs is part of the club's commitment to providing first-rate practice and teaching facilities for disabled golfers as well as more able-bodied players.

Anyone wanting to find out more about disabled golf tuition should contact Greg Brodie at Pine Ridge Golf Club on 01276 675444.

John Martin, a client and golfer from Camberley-based charity Disability Initiative, tries an Adapta-Club with assistance from Pine Ridge Golf Club Professional Greg Brodie.



## DIGGERS DONATED TO AID CHINESE QUAKE REGION

JCB has donated a fleet of diggers worth \$600,000 and sent a team of drivers to help with relief efforts in the south west region of China devastated by an earthquake. The gift of six 3CX backhoe loader diggers was offered by JCB Chairman Sir Anthony Bamford as the full horror of the earthquake unfolded.

JCB China also sent six operators, including British JCB employee Joe Cook, aged 30, who works for the company in Shanghai as Product Promotions Manager.

Employees at JCB China gather outside JCB's factory in Shanghai as the donated machines prepare to leave for the earthquake zone.



## BIGGA HQ TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

As you should already be aware, BIGGA HQ recently had a new telephone system fitted and went open plan. When you phone the usual number: 01347 833800, it will ask if you know the extension of the person you would like to speak to. For reference, the extensions of BIGGA staff are printed below (you can also find these on our website – [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)):

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## COVETED QUEEN'S AWARD

Bernhard and Company proved to be a cut above the competition recently when it received The Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category. The Queen's Award is granted to the UK's business elite for outstanding or continuous achievement.

Bernhard and Company claim they are the only business of its type in the golf and turf amenity sector to have been granted a Queen's Award during the 43 year history of this prestigious Royal scheme. The Award success was based on the continuous innovation and development of their highly-regarded Express Dual and Anglemaster sharpening systems. Used by leading golf clubs and sports turf facilities worldwide, this equipment produces surgically sharp blades on lawnmowers, allowing sports providers to create first-class presentation standards.

Managing Director, Stephen Bernhard, with The Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category



## BERNHARD AND COMPANY PARTNERS WITH GOLF ENVIRONMENT EUROPE

Bernhard and Company has become a Technical Supporter of Golf Environment Europe. The partnership recognises the shared values that exist between the two organisations towards environmentally and socially responsible golf course management.

The funding support will enable Golf Environment Europe to:

- Undertake the late stage development and launch of the new web based Environmental Resource Centre for Golf, this is a collaboration between academic and research bodies (golf's Innovation and Technology Network) to collate and disseminate technical environmental information to practitioners;
- Continue to administer the European Forum for Golf and Environment, which regularly brings together stakeholders in the golfing and environmental sectors to discuss policy and strategic projects on environmental issues;
- Further contribute to, and improve, environmental communications and information exchange on golf environment issues.

## WEARING TWO HATS

Alan Pooley, Assistant Greenkeeper at Cradoc Golf Club, was recently made Club Captain for the 2008-2009 season - a pretty unique situation to be in I think you'll agree.

It is tradition that the past Captains of Cradoc Golf Club nominate the new Vice Captain for the Club and when Alan was asked to see the Captain last year he had no idea what was in store.

"The situation was quite unusual in as much as the Vice Captain was unable to take on the Captaincy as he was to undergo heart surgery, so my nomination as Vice Captain effectively was straight in as Captain! - The first time in the Club's history," explained Alan.

"Conflict of interest is an issue, but with my integrity from working in Banking holds me in a good stead. The working relationship with the Head Greenkeeper is funny at times, but I simply discuss issues with the Chairman of Green outside of work hours and don't park my car in the Captains place during the weekdays. It's helped with team selection for Club matches as if I've had late cry offs I've been able to grab members on the course.

"The other staff have been great by dropping me from the weekend mowing rota as getting up at 5am and presenting prizes after medals at 9pm plus the various Club matches, would tire me out, although I still do a stint on the Driving Range every other weekend.

"There are times I think the members expect more from the course as the Captain is working on it, although it certainly helps the Committee members to better understand the Greens staff."

## EDUCATION COURSES - PESTICIDES UPDATE TRAINING

BIGGA Midlands Section has joined forces with Jon Allbutt Associates to deliver a one day Pesticides Update course at Gay Hill Golf Club on Wednesday, September 10.

The training is essential for all NPTC qualified operators as it will bring users up to date with recent changes in legislation and provide useful spraying and maintenance techniques.

The practical workshop will allow delegates to refresh their calibration and spraying skills on a range of mounted and hand held sprayers. Delegates will also be provided with lunch and a free CD copy of the Pesticides Code of Practice.

There are only 10 delegate places available at a cost of £90. Delegates can reserve places by contacting Paul Woodham on: 07880 734197 or: paul@ghgc.org.uk

The programme for the day can be found on the Education pages of the BIGGA website: [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

## IRRIGATION MASTERCLASS WORKSHOP

Following the great success of the previous irrigation training days, BIGGA Midlands Section are again joining forces with Evenproducts Ltd to present a one-day workshop focusing on irrigation performance at Gay Hill Golf Club on Monday, August 18.

The day will commence at 8.30am and end at 3pm with breaks for morning tea and lunch (after lunch will be divided between a course irrigation inspection and then more inside material).

Peter Robin, Evenproducts will deliver expert training in a comprehensive range of topics.

The programme for the day can be found on the Education pages of the BIGGA website: [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

The cost of the workshop is just £50 including lunch. Delegates can reserve their place by contacting Paul Woodham on 07880 734197 or email paul@ghgc.org.uk. Delegate places are limited to just 12 places.