



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, Education Director,  
with a monthly update from the GTC

**Anybody with their “ear to the ground” hears the worrying message that 2010 will be worse than 2009 for many golf clubs as even more golfers look to relinquish their membership preferring to become a casual golfer playing occasionally and on different courses.**

This maybe is how today’s golfer is looking at his or her pastime but we must be pleased that we still have golfers during the ongoing recession whenever and wherever they choose to play.

It is difficult to generalise the state of play for golf, as there will always be those clubs who have a loyal membership.

Equally, the increase in proprietary courses and clubs during the nineties certainly has given golfers a choice and with it the need for owners and committees to work that little bit harder to attract members, visitors and where appropriate tempt them to become members.

Retaining members is also all about maintaining the product.

For several years I have been a casual, or, as we often are referred to today, a nomad golfer, and from my own experiences, I have to say, in visiting more courses you certainly look at the “package” offered both in terms of on and off course facilities.

I also know that more and more Course Managers, as part of the management team, are aware that it is the “whole experience” offered at the golf club that has to be attractive and it is therefore so important that we look to promote training in business management within greenkeeping courses and qualifications.

We will always ensure at the very heart of greenkeeper education and training are the best agronomic principles and practices however we must continue to promote the management training courses offered both through our approved providers and BIGGA on a regional and local basis as well as during Harrogate Week.

The GTC works to ensure the range of greenkeeping qualifications all include the skills and knowledge a golf club employer would require from the greenkeeper to Course Manager but during these difficult economic times, training can often be suspended or even cancelled, which still amazes me when so much training attracts subsidies.

From a greenkeepers perspective, the options to continue to access learning in this climate has never been better with on the job, distance learning and on-line learning as well as short courses being available.

Back to the golf “experience” few will argue that any golf clubs greatest asset is its course albeit we have to acknowledge the off course facilities are also important but let us continue to focus on ensuring that “our” side of the golf experience is as good as it can be given the resources made available to the Course Manager and the greenkeeping team.

Golfers have and will continue to compare the condition of courses and with the current mood it is more important than ever that your course is better than the competition.

This may be easier said than done as budgets vary, along with ground conditions from club to club as do human and physical resources that are available to you. But let us remain positive, as there are already tremendously talented individuals and greenkeeping teams on many golf courses but please take up every opportunity for continual professional development, as it could be your skills and professionalism, which gives, assists your employers business.

There is no better place than the annual gathering for our sector in January at Harrogate to catch up on all the latest news, products and education.

Please take a look at the education programme and I know there will be something for you which in turn will benefit your employer so don’t delay plan your Continual Professional Development for 2010

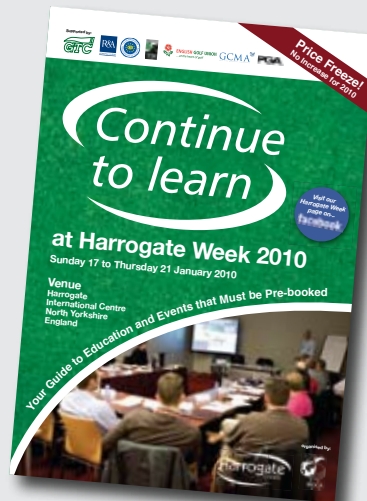
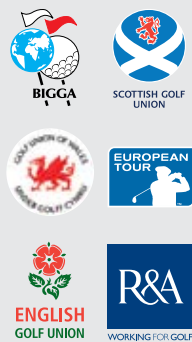
## In Brief

David continues to be positive as all the rumours seem to be that many golf clubs are going to have an even a tougher 2010 than 2009

now starting by looking at the Continue to Learn programme.

On behalf of the GTC I trust you enjoy the festive season, we can all look forward to meeting up at Harrogate in the New Year, as the greenkeeping community is still one we should all be proud to be part of.

The GTC is funded by:



## Contact Details

David Golding  
GTC Education Director  
01347 838640  
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC  
Aldwark Manor  
Near York  
YO61 1UF  
www.the-gtc.co.uk

