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THE DELEGATION



10 BIGGA members will be travelling to this year's GCSAA Golf Industry Show in New Orleans, as part of a Delegation thanks to Bernhard & Co. Melissa Jones reveals the lucky candidates...

Once again 10 BIGGA members will be flown to the United States for the experience of a lifetime, thanks to the sponsorship of Bernhard & Co. While in New Orleans, they will visit local golf courses, attend seminars, meet with Superintendents to discuss how greenkeepers operate on the other side of the pond, attend functions and, of course, be able to take in the GIS (Golf Industry Show) Conference and Exhibition.

About the Golf Industry Show

The Golf Industry Show is an innovative trade show designed for the owners/operators of golf facilities, and the professional members of the golf course and club management industries. Like our very own Harrogate Week, the event combines education, networking and solutions for Golf Course Superintendents, Owners/Operators, General Managers, Chief Operating Officers, Architects and Builders.

The 2009 trade show floor layout is designed to benefit every member of the golf facility team, and is segmented by products and services into three distinct areas: golf course solutions, clubhouse solutions, and range and outdoor facility solutions.

Several special features will spice up the floor in 2009: three networking parks, an interactive construction project and an indoor range.

GIS is presented by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA), along with other supporting organisations.

The 2009 event will take place from February 5-7 and is to be held at New Orleans Morial Convention Center. More than 25,000 golf industry professionals are expected to attend this year's show, which will feature more than 900 exhibitors.

Conferences. GCSAA's conference will take place from February 2 to 7.

The Delegation

Name: Graham Pickin
Club: Thornhurst Park
Position: Course Manager



Graham has a HNC in Golf Course Management and has been at Thornhurst Park Golf Club for the last eight years, where he is responsible for managing a team of six greenkeepers, plus one gardener, and maintaining an 18 hole course.

"The trip will undoubtedly open my mind to new techniques and thinking, and I would pass this information on to my staff," said Graham.

"It will revitalise me as a greenkeeper – every time I go to a show or demonstration, my enthusiasm levels go through the roof."

Name: Andrew Boyce
Club: Bath
Position: Course Manager



Andrew began his career as a trainee at Bath Golf Club, at the age of 16. He then went into full time greenkeeper training at Sparsholt College, with a year placement at Salisbury and South Wilts Golf Club. Before returning to Bath Golf Club as a Deputy Course Manager, Andrew worked as an Assistant at Lansdowne and a First Assistant at Castle Combe. Six years ago he was promoted to Course Manager.

"The opportunity to mix, not only with BIGGA delegates, but also Superintendents state side, will not be wasted on me, and I could bring much to the group while away and also to others on my return," said Andrew.

Name: Richard Cutler
Club: La Moye
Position: Course Manager



Richard has an ILM SVQ Level IV in Management, gained at Elmwood College and before joining La Moye last year, held the role of Course Manager at Montrose Links for five years.

"I will use this experience to broaden my knowledge of turfgrass management and industry developments, to network with other greenkeepers and industry specialists, and to help show how professional UK greenkeepers can be," said Richard.

Name: John Keenaghan
Club: Chipping Sodbury
Position:
Head Greenkeeper



John began his career as a Greenkeeping Assistant in 1996 at Filton Golf Club, where he stayed until 1999. John worked at three other golf clubs before joining Chipping Sodbury as a

Deputy Head Greenkeeper in 2003, and in 2006 he was promoted to Head Greenkeeper.

"I will use this experience to speak to as many people as possible, listen and learn, so that I may bring back any knowledge and ideas, and implement them on my golf course," said John.

Name: Jim Brown
Club: De Vere Oulton Hall
Position: Golf Courses & Estate Manager



Jim is a qualified D32-D33 NVQ assessor and L12 trainer with the GTC. He was also nominated to represent Askham Bryan College in the 1992 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards.

"Obviously the BIGGA delegation members are encouraged to participate in full interaction with our US colleagues, that experience will not be wasted – benefiting not only myself, Oulton Hall and hopefully the American greenkeepers I meet. Also with my willingness to harness the new ideas and knowledge I pick up from the visit, then use them in my environment, I will share them with my colleagues back home," enthused Jim.

Name: Nicholas Miles
Club: Market Harborough
Position: Course Manager



Nicholas, who began his greenkeeping career at Hellidon Lakes, has a HND in Golf Course Management from Reaseheath College.

"I am looking forward to experiencing the golf show State side, and seeing how education is taught over there. I would also like to see how a golf course is managed and the facilities made available to the greenkeepers," said Nicholas.

"I believe the whole trip will be invaluable in terms of experience gained – learning how a golf course is maintained on differing budgets would be an eye opening experience."

Name: Derek Robson
Club: The Dukes, St Andrews
Position:
Head Greenkeeper



Derek joined The Dukes as First Assistant before being promoted to Deputy, then Head Greenkeeper within two and a half years.

In 2008 The Dukes hosted the Scottish Amateur Strokeplay which, after re-building four greens in the winter of 07/08, was a real challenge to have them grown in time for the Amateur, "but one which my team relished and a superb achievement," said Derek.

"I view the trip as an excellent educational experience and one which will be beneficial, not only to me, but also to my team and the local BIGGA Central Section, which we are very proud of," enthused Derek.

Name: Stephen Chappell
Club: Neath
Position:
Head Greenkeeper



Stephen briefly worked as a groundsman before commencing his greenkeeping career in 1988 at Bath Golf Club.

"I would like to be selected as part of the BIGGA delegation because I feel I would be able to represent our Association in an honest, friendly and professional manner.

"I will share my experience by giving a talk at the South Wales education seminar which we hold annually, each spring. I will also use the experience to try to inspire and develop other greenkeepers, young and old, to get involved in the Association and to better their own careers," said Stephen.

Name: Robert Sandilands
Club: Elsham
Position:
Deputy Head Greenkeeper



Robert has a BTEC National Diploma in Forestry and Environmental Studies, and a BSC in Rural Resource Management.

"I am a forward thinking young Deputy, eager to learn and pick up new ideas and techniques to aid and improve our course and my skills in general," said Robert.

"This trip will be a unique opportunity to boost my skills and experience, and will be invaluable to someone of my age and current experience. I will share my new ideas with current and future workmates for the benefit of the course and golf club as a whole."

Name: Chris Haspell
Club: Castle Stuart Golf Links
Position: Course Manager



Chris, who has designed and constructed six golf courses in Denmark, moved to Scotland in 2006 to manage the turf at Castle Stuart Golf Links and the course itself opened last summer.

"I feel the ideas picked up on the trip will benefit the operation at Castle Stuart, from tee markers to fertilisers and from hydroponics to agronomics. I will use his experience to collect data and ideas, and to forge connections around the UK and Europe, and of course the USA," said Chris.

Education Conferences

Along with the show, GCSAA, NGCOA and CMAA will be presenting their annual Education