



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

George Brown, the “retiring” Golf Course & Estates Manager at Turnberry, having fronted his third Open Championship, must have been a proud man at the prize giving ceremony, especially receiving the well deserved recognition from the R&A.

George, as a past Chairman of BIGGA and a great ambassador for the profession, as well as Turnberry, has always supported education and training, and heaped praise on his staff, never seeking self glory.

The world felt for Tom Watson during what surely would have been his finest hour but for George and his staff the pride and satisfaction of setting the stage and everything coming together as it did, must have given them a great feeling and for George personally, mixed feelings.

It will be a lasting memory for George and as he hands over the reins to Euan Grant I know George will have so many happy memories of his experiences both as a top greenkeeper but also as a top golfer.

We heard so much of the Duel in the Sun between Watson and Nicklaus during the recent Open, but what about all the duels between Woods and Brown?

Great rivalry both on and off the course, great friendship, camaraderie and for those younger readers I had better explain!

Not Tiger Woods or the increasingly golf course friendly BBC commentator Ken Brown but our own George Brown and Walter Woods the former Links Superintendent at the worlds most famous golf course St. Andrews.

The friendship and golf rivalry between these two characters has become legendary within the older ranks of greenkeepers but above all, the support, understanding they have given each other when things have been tough is what the greenkeeping community is all about.

In showing how two of the most famous names in greenkeeping have helped each other as have many more, too many to mention

in this article, never has it been so important at a time when the sport in many countries is in recession that we look to continue their great example of how friendship and communication provides support and often a solution.

On a positive note the climax to the recent Open will help grow the game to more people world wide.

The career of greenkeeping will also have a higher profile in schools through a closer partnership with the Golf Foundation whose Chief Executive, Mike Round, I met during my recent brief visit to Turnberry.

Mike and his Golf Foundation team have promised to help explain to youngsters in schools the role of the greenkeeper using our career literature and this support will be very much appreciated.

The GTC has helped develop the 14-19 Environment Diploma and the very successful apprenticeship programme giving youngsters a clear career path should they choose to work outdoors and all the pleasures that greenkeeping can give as a career.

Hopefully the PGA, the PGA European Tour and the Home Unions will, through the various partnerships help to promote the career of greenkeeping, therefore securing youngsters as the future Course Managers and greenkeepers.

The team ethic that has held greenkeeping in such high esteem for many years, even when George and Walter, pictured, were training, is the foundation on why golf course conditions have improved so much in recent years.

The support given to George and his staff from BIGGA members travelling from all corners of the globe is also a great example of the fantastic community that is, greenkeeping!

We at the GTC have continually encouraged golf club employers and Course Managers to develop a team culture to assist their business aims and specialist trainers have assisted to support us with bespoke courses aimed at developing people skills to be better team leaders, supervisors and managers.

The GTC is funded by:



The training courses on communication, presentation skills, team building will be complimentary to the agronomic education available and we hope our Centres will offer short courses using not only their own staff but also those Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers who have really been at the sharp end of our industry.

The short courses can be fun but also so beneficial in many ways as lasting friendships have often started at a seminar or workshop, and long may they continue.

That reminds me I must ask George and Walter how they first met.

Happy retirement, George, and look out Walter, he has more time to practise his golf!

Keep talking folks, remember, a problem shared can be a problem solved.

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