



South West

Hi people, hope all is well! You'll all remember me talking about a new set of workshops, that I'm sure will become available to you all, these being the work of Lawrence Pithie. In the South West the first workshop took place at Minchinhampton New course. This workshop was titled "Planning & Budgeting". It covered all aspects of the golf course a manager would need to take into account, from leadership skills to making your budgets in all the areas on and off the course. I attended the workshop myself and have to say how great it was and I'm sure that it will only help me to better my career (as it would for anyone who attends I'm sure).

This month we also reintroduced our Section's greenkeeper amateur. This was held at Woodlands Golf Club. At Woodlands they have 36 holes and we had the pleasure of playing the "signature course". It's just a shame that we played in heavy showers, although this did not affect a great day enjoyed by all. Woodlands is mainly a pay and play golf, this is clear to see that it is set up this way. With little rough and fewer bunkers and a huge fleet of golfing buggies, it makes for an enjoyable round of golf for all levels. This is by no means a criticism, far from it, David Knight (the owner of Woodlands golf club) has done a fantastic job in achieving such a popular venue for golfers in Bristol. I had the pleasure of partnering with Kyle Knight, playing alongside Chris Sealey and his Greens Chairman, Pete Schrader, I can only say that the weather on the day was more consistent than our golf, but we still had an enjoyable day, cheers guys.

The results for the greenkeeper amateur are as follows: 1. Tim

Morgan & Colin Snell, 44pts; 2. Simon Pearce & Mike McGarr, 43pts; 3. Roger Neale & Kieran Hector, 41pts. The Nearest the Pins were won by Tim Morgan, at the 15th, and Mike McGarr, at the 17th. It was great to see a rather impressive turn out for this event. Great stuff guys!

Remember that our next golfing day is at Lyme Regis, on June 23. Lyme Regis was featured in last month's Greenkeeper International, (read it, it's pretty impressive). Set on edge of Dorset, built on the biggest land slip in Europe. This will be our Summer tournament and as always a place for the National Championship is available to the winner. This year National Championship, sponsored by Kubota and Charterhouse Turf Machinery, will be played at the Berkshire.

For those of you that don't know, but I'm a football referee in my spare time. On the bank holiday Monday I had a trip to Luton Town v York City, in the blue square premier play off second leg. This fixture really was the most amazing experience I've had on a football pitch. In front of just under 10,000 screaming fans, the noise, the atmosphere.....everything was just amazing! The ground is set up so the crowd are right on top of you. The noise just echoed. I remember walking under the tunnel and onto the pitch and it just hit you, I had the hairs on the back of my neck standing on ends. I can't really comment on the game too much (nor the afterwards... as it went by before I knew it. You go the whole season wondering, is this really worth it, so much time, so much travelling, sometimes working with people who just hate referees...yes it's worth it, every minute of it. More of this please!

Look forward to hearing from you guys.

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John Pemberton
Chief Executive

More and more I see the term 'One show' being bandied about in relation to BTME and SALTEX, almost as if it is a foregone conclusion that the two events are going to merge.

The reality is that a number (as yet to be quantified) of companies are finding the current market place in turf management difficult and are therefore looking at ways of spending less, while at the same time trying to raise product awareness.

Pitchcare, wishing to broker a solution to the exhibition debate, invited exhibitors from BTME and SALTEX to a meeting at the NEC in March so that concerns by 'the Trade' could be aired. I hasten to point out that I had a senior member of the BIGGA staff attend merely to listen to what was being debated and not as a measure of support. Following the meeting I have had representations by a number of companies that were deeply concerned about the direction the meeting took and are not at all in support of the proposals made on the day. There remains a great deal of support for the status quo and I do not go along with the claim that there is an overwhelming support for a single show.

The industry is divided I admit but in some ways that is the nature of the industry. Everyone is looking for something different and as I keep on saying there is no one solution that will suit all. I know from my own research that the major manufacturers (often colloquially referred to as 'the Big Boys') would like to see one show but they are settled into a pattern of alternate years and are not pushing the issue. BIGGA and the IOG have been invited, somewhat under duress, to attend a meeting with this anonymous group styled 'the Trade' to listen to their concerns and discuss the options, although I understand that we are going to be presented with the option of moving towards one show or 'the Trade' will abandon thoughts of attending BTME and SALTEX and form its own new event. We have agreed to meet 'the Trade' and a date has been set for late July.

In the meanwhile plans continue as normal for Harrogate Week 2011. There are already a significant number of stands sold and if at any time you wish to see who is attending then visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk where there is a floor plan. The site can also be accessed from the home page of BIGGA's main website.

Bigger and better things are in the pipeline on the education front, building on the success of the event earlier this year with some high profile international speakers already booked. The full programme will be available in due course but it is guaranteed to contain something for everyone.

A word of caution to those companies that think it is clever not to book a stand but prefer to mix with the visitors and sneak sales talks in at every opportunity. That is not playing the game fairly and we will not hesitate to ask anyone caught doing this to leave.

One show or two shows it really does not count for anything if the visitors do not attend with their enquiries or cheque books. Over the years BIGGA has done a tremendous amount of work for the greenkeeping profession which has helped improve the status of the job and the quality of facilities. Has BIGGA really got it that wrong or do we need a wake up call to the members, their non member colleagues AND their employers about the consequences of holding back support?

Around The Green

Please send your notes to Scott MacCallum by the 5th of the month. Email: scott@bigga.co.uk