



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

**As the dust settles on the European Ryder Cup team's win at Celtic Manor, please excuse the pun, those of us working within greenkeeping would never have doubted Jim McKenzie and his team's skills and ability to present the course to the standards that had been planned for months and years.**

However, out of very adverse weather the spotlight well and truly fell on greenkeepers far more than anybody could have dreamed of!

Jim, himself a great supporter of greenkeeper training, quite rightly has had so much praise heaped on him and his tremendous team of in-house greenkeepers and the many volunteers for their unbelievable efforts and while extreme, it did help raise the profile of greenkeeping with Sky, BBC and the wider media all homing in on the work of greenkeepers.

It was also a pleasure to hear the First Minister of Wales and Colin Montgomerie pay tribute to Jim and his "ground staff" and greenkeepers for their work during the closing ceremony.

I was pleased to accept an invitation from the PGA to attend the Opening Ceremony and stand alongside the greenkeepers during a ceremony organised with military precision by the European Ryder Cup Committee.

What really struck me was how much closer the various factions of golf have become in recent years and maybe, just finally, greenkeeping and greenkeepers have at last earned the respect they have strived for over many many years.

Unsung heroes suddenly are now being recognised as skilled knowledgeable professional members of any golf club management team and whether it is Celtic Manor or the little 9-hole golf course with one greenkeeper I believe the profession is slowly but surely receiving the respect it truly deserves.

A watershed you might say!

I would like to think that some of this recognition is down to the opportunities now available for greenkeeper education and training but there are some very informal methods of communications, which, I believe are worth considering.

All the following I know have been introduced to raise the awareness of the role of the greenkeeper and have improved the status of the Course Manager and his/her staff at the same time "educated" the golfer.

- An evening with the Course Manager often with a supporting cast of Green Convenor/ Chairman of Green and advisor or agronomist.

- A Green Party – an evening when the clubs equipment and machinery is displayed for the members to view their investments and to question the Course Manager on which machine or piece of equipment does what on the golf course.

This I remember as being a huge breakthrough for Ed McCabe, Course Manager at Brockenhurst Manor Golf Club, and his great ally at the club, Arthur King, and was subsequently promoted by the English Golf Unions at a series of workshops along with the benefits of a Course Policy Document.

- Since those halcyon days technology has moved on not just in modern golf course machinery but the internet with many clubs now having their own websites.

I am sure many Course Managers have their own ways of handling members questions and answers however recently I was directed to the Royal Ashdown Golf Club's website where Chris Mitchell the Course Manager maintains a feature on; Course Manager – Frequently asked questions.

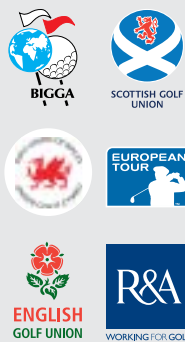
It is well worth a visit to see how Chris keeps his members updated on the work being done or about to be carried out on the course.

*The following link will take you there and is provided with the kind permission of the club and Chris.*

## In Brief

David looks at the various ways Course Managers have adopted to raise awareness to golfers on the work of the greenkeeping staff

The GTC is funded by:



## Contact Details

David Golding  
GTC Education Director

01347 838640  
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC  
Aldwick Manor  
Near York  
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk

<http://www.royalashdown.co.uk/html/about-us/course-managers-faqs>

Clubs, both private and proprietary, now produce Newsletters and these often feature a Course News section written by the Course Manager.

- Monthly or quarterly course reports to management seem very much part of a Course Managers job role and these or a summary appear on club notice boards hopefully for members and visitors to read.

*Note: To be sure members read a notice always make a spelling mistake, they are sure to tell you! This is at least a sign they have read it!*

All of the above thoughts and ideas are designed to assist with the education of the golfer by the Course Manager being very proactive in explaining the work of the greenkeeping staff and how it all is tailored to meet the policies for the course as agreed by the employers.

It is also appreciated, that for some, report writing and making presentations is not one of their natural skills for some Course Managers but with the help of staff within the GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers, help is at hand.

BELOW:  
Scenes from the Ryder Cup

