



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

The GTC was back in attendance at this year's show after one year's absence as an exhibitor and for many of us it has been a pilgrimage since the first exhibition back in 1989.

So many faces who have attended since that first show are still committed to ensuring that greenkeeping is seen as a respected profession and they should be proud of their achievements over the years.

Prior to this year's show, there was much talk about there only being three halls and the recession will keep people away....well back in 1989 there were only two halls but that event signalled the start of something very special.

Those in attendance back in 1989 will remember the image of the greenkeepers and how BIGGA was continually encouraging members to buy Association blazers, sweaters and even giving ties away as a membership benefit, all designed to promote a more professional image.

There were even neck scarves for any lady members. You could say the Association was ahead of the sexism laws!

Image is so important and while we all accept greenkeeping is a very hands on job, often dirty, there must be the continual drive to be professional as it clearly has put greenkeeping in the spotlight.

Most recent, the greenkeeping team, admirably managed by Jim McKenzie at Celtic Manor, during the most atrocious weather imaginable, were all aware of the importance of image and wearing corporate effective attire was brilliant to see.

The site of the GTC stand this year meant everybody attending a seminar or workshop had to pass our stand and from the dress of delegates to the professionalism of speakers it spoke volumes for the industry.

Harrogate Week may be all about supporting the exhibitors whether they are in two halls or five, but many companies now contribute so much to the very soul of the

annual January gathering and that is EDUCATION!

It has been said by many who attended this year's event that the education programme had something for everybody and attendances were record breaking.

Those older readers may well remember the dynamic stunning speaker, Bobbie Gee, back at the 1991 exhibition giving a keynote address on, 'Image - understanding the role image plays in personal and professional success'.

If my memory serves me right, Bobbie's husband was a Golf Course Superintendant in the USA and she knew first hand how the profession, or image of the profession, had to be changed and she was inspirational for all of us at the presentation.

We have known for many years that the American Golf Course Superintendants are held in high esteem by their employers and golfers and thankfully I believe our Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers are now at least on a par with their colleagues throughout the world of golf course management.

For many years the GTC focused, quite rightly, on ensuring the agronomic aspects of the greenkeeper's job were covered in education courses and qualifications and rest assured this is still the number one priority, just look at the content of the apprenticeship scheme!

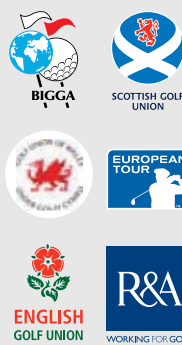
However since The R&A's discussion document The Way Forward was circulated to golf clubs and golfing bodies in 1989 which, among other matters stated: "that many Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers feel that advanced training in management skills is the greatest deficiency in their training" - times have changed!

During this year's Continue to Learn programme, there was a workshop for assistants hosted by Frank Newberry (nowhere near as attractive as Bobbie Gee!) which focused on the importance of good communication and image. It is by raising the awareness of the importance of image at the earli-

In Brief

David reflects on the recent Harrogate Week and also remembers the first show, European Turf Management Exhibition (ETME) in 1989 and how he believes the greenkeeping profession has moved forward in those 22 years and that professionalism is still the key to being a successful greenkeeper, Head Greenkeeper and Course Manager.

The GTC is funded by:



est opportunity in a greenkeeper's career that we will produce the Course Managers for the future.

Some 22 years on there is so much to be proud of in the way greenkeepers have progressed both in seeking knowledge to add to their skills to maintain the golf course and now we see many apprentices from the 1990's as today's Golf Course Managers and some stepping into General Manager positions.

The GTC will ensure the ranges of qualifications available within the sector include "communication" Units and that includes image.

We will work with our Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers to ensure there are seminars, workshops and short courses available leaving options for employers and learners to choose from.

BIGGA, I am sure, will continue to promote supervisory and management short course provision through its Sections and Regions, which are often subsidised through the Learning and Development Fund and the GTC will continue the drive for professionalism through greenkeeper training.

In closing please feel free to feedback any views you might have on current provision of education, training courses and any gaps you feel the GTC should be addressing.

Please contact us on:

Tel: 01347 838640 or email david@the-gtc.co.uk

For the latest news on greenkeeper education, training and qualifications including the up to date list of GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers visit www.the-gtc.co.uk

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