

# GI

# GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

£5.20 SEPTEMBER 2011

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## SMART MANAGEMENT

How to keep a well maintained golf course in times of austerity measures

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING

John Deere is this month's Gold Key sponsor profile

**Featured**

## BACK IN TIME

We take a look at this month in 1972

# One man bands

Life as a lone greenkeeper can be tricky yet rewarding



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## It's never time wasted

**Making the most of resources is something we've all had to become more proficient at in recent times. That's not to say that we were overly cavalier with our own, or our employers', money, prior to that.**

It is just that whatever slack may or may not have been there, in the halcyon years of the 80s, 90s and early noughties, has well and truly been tightened up.

Wouldn't life have been so much more pleasant during those times if we had known how well off we actually were?

But with the recession biting and not looking like coming to an end any time soon, golf has had to become used to operating under reduced circumstances. However, one thing that can't be allowed to happen is for course presentation standards to drop.

Hence the need to become better at the work that is carried out. This month Master Greenkeeper, Kerran Daly, who is now Senior Consultant for Greensward Sports Consultancy, has written a practical, yet thought provoking, article on managing your golf course and how to make the most of whatever budget you have.

As you would expect from someone of Kerran's experience, the article is packed full of useful information some of which you may already know and be putting to good use, but there will undoubtedly be something new that you might be able to incorporate into your own practices.

Taking time to assess how you do things is never time wasted.

One way in which any money worries would be banished for good would have been to have had an accumulator on the winners of this year's four Majors. Whereas a couple of years ago no-one would have been overly

impressed if you'd predicted two or even three of the year's Champions, this year, if you got just one of them, people would have expected Nostradamus to pop up somewhere on your family tree, if you were ever to appear on, "Who Do You think You Are"

True Charl Schwartzel and Rory McIlroy were regarded as fine up and coming players, but Masters and US Open Champion? Perhaps not quite yet. Darren Clarke and Keegan Bradley would certainly have been extra long shots for their respective Open and US PGA titles. Darren was widely regarded to have peaked a few years ago, while Keegan was playing in his first ever Major.

That is the beauty of golf. Anyone can win over 72 holes strokeplay and whereas the number of potential winners of major sporting events in other sports can be counted on the fingers of one hand golf is now far more unpredictable.

Even more reason then, to get your application in for the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota. You still have a little time to do so. It is always a fabulous event and open to all standards of player. This year it is to be hosted by West Lancs GC, one of the finest courses in the North West, and one with a reputation of being particularly challenging.

So get yourself entered. You won't regret it.

Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**

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## One man bands

Working as a lone greenkeeper on a nine-hole course can be a tricky yet rewarding business, as Jim Cook found out, after speaking to Chris O'Dowd, of Cambridge Lakes Golf Club, and Miles Skehan, of Ampleforth College Golf Club, in North Yorkshire

**The number of bicycles which can usually be seen parked outside Cambridge Lakes' clubhouse give a sound indication of the state of the club, everybody is welcome.**

From students cycling down to a meal before lessons, to groups of children coming to get the guns on the town at the club, which is just one-and-a-half miles south of Cambridge city centre, public schools when on going all a warm greeting.

Tommy, as he is known at this nine-hole, par-three club and although Chris O'Dowd is the sole greenkeeper, he has the backing of numerous volunteers to help deliver quality throughout the year.

Chris mentions he does receive "Normally first thing on a morning I come out, there are dew, water, pitch marks, check the fens and tiller the bushes while cutting the grass. I usually prepare during the week and on a weekend we have some school children come in and do more work around the course. Then I'm back in Monday morning getting the course ready for the following weekend. We handle around 20,000 rounds a year here and cater for everybody. Anyone can stroll in and play so we try and make it a bit of a challenge but also fairly generous to any standard of golfer."

Cambridge Lakes' greens now contain around 500,000 and Chris said he, Club Owner, Bob Burton, and the rest of the team at the club worked hard to bring them up to standard, with minimal use of nitrogen.

"To limit our use of nitrogen on the greens, our main supplier is Synthes and we work with them to try and improve the soil biology. We're keen on it for about a year now and it's going really well."

"It has reduced the number of times we need to cut the greens as well because you don't get the unsuitable growth from the nitrogen. It's more sustainable. We can compare us once a month to help with some recovery. It sends a bit of a message to the club greenkeepers."

Chris spoke about the advantages of being the sole greenkeeper: "You get a lot more involvement in what goes on. I make a decision based on what I think and because I've got eyes, I know what needs to be done."

For handicapper, Chris also happens to be the joint holder of the course record, along with the club's pro, James Burton.

A qualified greenkeeper himself, James has been mentoring Chris since they began working on the course and as a team along with Bob, they are a positive example of how a group can work together at a



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Harrogate The place to be **FDU** Tuesday 24 to Thursday 26 January 2011 at the Harrogate International Centre

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The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.

# Trade Show Resolution

Many people will be aware of the formal discussions that have been taking place between representatives of BIGGA, The Institute of Groundsmanship and The Agricultural Engineers Association over the last couple of years with reference to the future of trade shows in the grounds and turf care sector. Below is a statement from the group on the outcome of those discussions.

## Statement From The Grounds And Turf Care Industry Forum (GTCIF)

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG), The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), and the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) under the independent Chairmanship of David Gwyther of the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) have conducted an extensive review of trade events for the sector. We have considered carefully the location, frequency and composition of the trade events available to manufacturers and retailers of grounds and turf care products.

The HTA has independently analysed the details of both SALTEX and BTME and the demographics of both exhibitors and visitors who have attended these events in the past few years. This indicated that there are significant differences between the events, that they are not directly comparable. Clearly there exists an overlap in both exhibitors and visitors but in all cases this is a small minority. They also concluded that market forces will continue to dictate the demand and make up of these types of events.

The opportunity for the aforementioned stakeholders in the grounds and turf care industry to review their activity and discuss wider issues has been extremely positive and productive. The talks have highlighted a number of areas of mutual concern outside the trade event discussions and it has been heartening to find that in many areas there are potential opportunities to collaborate, share resources and expertise and to generally have a positive impact on the industry.

Consequently, the IOG, BIGGA, HTA and the AEA have agreed that:

1. They will continue to keep the future of Grounds and Turf Care Events under active review



2. They will work in collaboration through a new Grounds and Turf Care Industry Forum

3. This Forum will provide a platform for these Trade Associations to work together to pursue areas of interest where a common voice will have a better opportunity to be heard.

4. They will actively look to engage with some other Associations in the Grounds and Turf Care Industry.

5. The Forum agenda will encompass areas such as:

Careers and personal development, Communication, Events, Health & Safety, Market research, Recruitment and Training, Better Regulation, Relationships with the companies in the industry sector, Providing a common voice to government in both the EU and UK.

The independent Chairman, David Gwyther of the HTA said:

“HTA’s independent and objective analysis of the industry’s two main shows has made it clear that there is, in fact, little real overlap in target markets and each has a distinct sectoral focus. Merging them in somewhere like central England would only increase the costs. There is no market appetite for further, new shows. Working together on this issue has led to the recognition that all parties have much to gain from developing such collaboration

into other areas. I am very pleased with these positive outcomes from our joint meetings this year, which demonstrate that this industry can and does work sensibly together.”

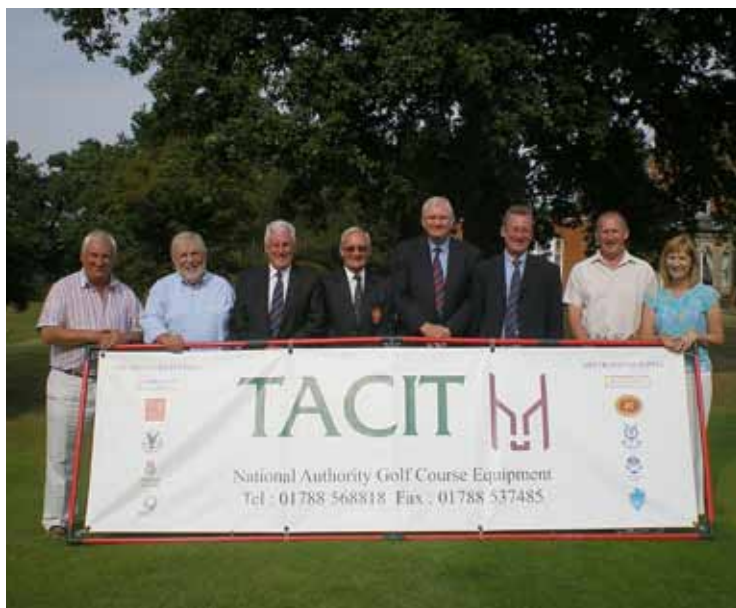
The Grounds and Turf Care Industry Forum will draft Terms of Reference in the next few months and issue general information about the Forum’s work.

The Chairman of BIGGA, Andrew Mellon, who attended the discussions said:

“It is very important that all businesses take an objective look at their activities on an ongoing basis, the formal discussions presented an excellent opportunity for BIGGA to assess all aspects of BTME. Careful study showed that the Exhibition is an important showcase for the sports turf industry and particularly for the golf course maintenance sector as well as providing a valuable platform for BIGGA’s Continue to Learn programme and a hugely important networking opportunity for all those involved in the maintenance and management of golf courses.

“We are delighted that this process has validated the relevance of BTME in today’s market however we are mindful that we need to continually strive to ensure that visitors and exhibitors achieve maximum value from the event. We will continue to listen to all the key stakeholders to ensure the event evolves to meet the needs of all.”

# TACIT GOLF TROPHY



A Midland Region Golf Management Trophy Day, sponsored by Tacit, was held at Brickendon Grange Golf Club last month.

Teams from 11 golf clubs enjoyed a great day on a superbly presented course prepared by Course Manager, Trevor Booth and his staff.

Thanks are extended to all at the Club for making the day enjoyable and successful.

Highlight of the day was a 2 on the 337 yards par-4 3rd hole by Dave Thompson, from Buckingham Golf Club, who drove the green and sank the putt!

The competition is based on four man teams, comprising a BIGGA member, Secretary, Captain and Chairman of Green, playing Stableford. Verulam Golf Club, led by Course Manager, Chris Carpenter, won the event on a countback from the host club with a score of 85 points.

Both golf clubs progress to the

National Final to be held at Mere Golf Resort & Spa later this month. The top three won equipment for their clubs.

The photograph shows some of the two team members who are progressing to the final; with Trevor Booth and Chris Carpenter, 2nd and 3rd, from the right respectively.

The South West and South Wales Region's final Section Golf Management Trophy event was held in the South West Section at the Players Club.

Twenty-two teams took part which was a record number for this Section. Despite a deluge of rain towards the end of play, the day was enjoyed by everyone.

Ogbourne Downs Golf Club was the winning team securing a place in the final together with runners up the Players Golf Club both teams on 86 points. In third place with 84pts was Long Ashton Golf Club.

## Harry Diamond Quaich

The Quaich is held every year at Belleisle GC to preserve the memory of Harry Diamond, former Course Manager at Ayrshire Council Course, and who was instrumental in promoting education in Scotland.

Held in July, the course was in excellent condition and the presentation to the highest standard.

As is the usual custom, players were walking to their respective tees at 8.30am to await the klaxon for the start of the Stableford competition and, unlike the weather of the previous year, everyone enjoyed a beautiful summer morning and the pleasure of playing in a competition for all ages.

Harry's family were all in attendance to take on the allotted tasks that go to make it such a well run event.

Harry's brother, Hugh, presented the prizes to the players who came second and third while Harry's wife, Jessie, presented the Harry Diamond Quaich to the winners – Patricia Lambie, Steve Arrandale, Murray Cowie and Stephen Renshaw, who came in with an excellent 97 points.

It was announced that Harry's family had donated £500 to local hospitals and, at a time when everyone is tightening their belts because of the credit crunch, it is good to see that the Harry Diamond Memorial Fund can still afford to give donations to worthy causes.

Cecil George

## CHAIRMAN OF GREENS

The GTC, in association with the EGU, is hosting three Chairman of Green workshops aimed at providing volunteer and paid golf club officials who have responsibility for working with head greenkeepers/course managers with advice information and best practice.

The workshops will be held at: Temple Golf Club, on Thursday, September 8; Gatton Manor Golf Club, on Tuesday, September 13 and Northumberland Golf Club, on Thursday, October 6.

The GTC has engaged the services of Laurence Pithie MG, and one of its Quality Assured Training Providers to present these workshops. Laurence will share his vast experience and knowledge of working for both private and commercial golf clubs. Comprehensive course notes will be given to all delegates attending the workshop.

To view the programme in detail visit [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk). The cost of the workshop is £50pp to include refreshments, lunch and course materials.

## Retirement

Brian Willmott, Area Manager for Tacit in the South East of England, is set to retire after 10 years services with the company and 25 years within the Greenkeeping Industry.

While slowing the pace, Brian will continue to keep his hand in by working as a consultant from home.

"We would like to thank Brian for his sterling efforts over the years and wish him all the best in his retirement," said Tim Webb.

## BIGGA Competition

There are still places available for anyone wishing to compete for the title of BIGGA's Champion Golfer. The BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, at the fabulous West Lancashire Golf Club takes place on October 3&4.

As well as the main prize, players can compete for the Best Nett prize over the 36 holes plus daily team and individual prizes over 18 and 36 holes. There is also a Stableford competition on the second day for those who perhaps didn't do themselves justice on the first day.

To enter, or for further information, please contact Pauline Thomson, at BIGGA HQ, Tel: 01347 833800 email: [pauline@bigga.co.uk](mailto:pauline@bigga.co.uk)



## Turf science brought to life at The Belfry

The Belfry played host to the second Turf Science Live in July - an interactive event that showcases the latest research, development and technological innovations in turf agronomy.

Organised and run by Everris (formerly named Scotts) and Syngenta, the educational day of presentations and practical demonstrations was attended by 96 golf course managers, head greenkeepers, turfgrass consultants and contractors.

Small groups of delegates spent half an hour at each one of seven learning stations discovering more about turfgrass seed development, the art of application, irrigation management systems, the science of stress, optimising greens for performance, the latest electric greens mower technology and converting annual meadowgrass greens to bentgrass greens using the Graden.

The technical teams at Everris and Syngenta worked with Course Manager, Kenny McKay, and industry specialists Complete Weed Control, Rain Bird, Harper Adams University College, STRI, Jacobsen and Kensett Sports to provide a hands-on experience that brought learning onto the golf course.

Chris Sealey, Course Manager at Chippenham Golf

Club, was attending his first Turf Science Live. He said the format was a great way for turf managers to learn.

"It was a really enjoyable and informative day. I found the station about turf stress, presented by Dr John Reade and Harry Mbah, particularly interesting. I work at a course with red clay greens, so springs for me are very difficult, but this year we've gone from dry and cold, to dry and hot with little rainfall, so the turf has stayed stressed and I've hit a time of the year when I want it to be actively growing. They explained about stress, its impact on

turf and how to alleviate it, as well as showing us about some practical solutions to help manage performance under difficult environmental conditions."

Neil Ballingall, Superintendent at Fairmont St Andrews, made the journey south to the West Midlands to attend his first Turf Science Live.

"Everything I've learnt today will help me when I return to my golf course," he confirmed.

"I much prefer this interactive format to sitting in a seminar, it was great to get out on to the superb course here at The Belfry."



## IGCEMA Support

BIGGA has signed on in full support of the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association Certificate Programme.

The programme is part of the IGCEMA's commitment to educating its members around the world. The Certificate Programme consists of six core competencies including: hydraulic troubleshooting, electrical troubleshooting, internal combustion engines, drivelines, soon-to-be released are sprayer troubleshooting and cutting unit technology and set-up.

IGCEMA's CEO, Stephen Tucker, stated: "It gives us great pride to know that golf greenkeepers around the world are signing on in support of our programme. A lot of effort went into making this available to everyone. Having the support of BIGGA shows that greenkeepers are behind what we are doing. The support of BIGGA in this way will give the programme much credibility."

BIGGA's CEO, Jim Croxton, said: "BIGGA is committed to recognising excellence and giving recognition to those that strive for it so we are delighted to support the IGCEMA Certification Programme and appreciate the benefits that come from a close working relationship between our two bodies.

"Top quality greenkeeping is only possible if the machines used to do the job are maintained and repaired to the highest possible standard and the work that the IGCEMA does to raise the bar in this regard is to be applauded." BIGGA has not only signed on in support of the IGCEMA programme but has pledged to become an invigilator and also assist with promotion of the programme in the UK and across Europe by accrediting the programme for its CPD scheme. The IGCEMA's President, Patrick Callaby, Workshop Manager of the Celtic Manor Resort, said: "I am so pleased that BIGGA, under the leadership of their newly-appointed CEO, Jim Croxton, has come out in support of the certificate programme."



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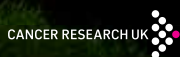
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## Luck of the Draw

The Open at Royal St. George's was the venue for a draw to find out who had won the Rigby Taylor/Pinseker competition.

Forty five clubs throughout the UK who purchased a specific range of Pinseker equipment qualified to be entered into the draw and Jim Croxton, CEO of BIGGA, drew out Corhampton Golf Club, near Southampton, as the lucky winners.

The prize for the club is a round of golf for two and lunch at any course within a 50 mile radius of its location, or an alternative cash prize.

Included in the competition was an award for the most successful Rigby Taylor sales representative and it was Derek Cunliffe who won a similar prize.

Photograph shows Richard Fry, Marketing Director of Rigby Taylor, left, with Jim Croxton, right.



## WIEDENMANN MILESTONE

Wiedenmann UK celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The company, synonymous with the Terra Spike brand of deep aerators, has set an industry benchmark, respected for its technical excellence and quality service.

To mark this milestone, Wiedenmann UK has fashioned a bespoke, platinum coloured Terra Spike GXi8 HD, which will be sold off this season. Proceeds from the sale will be split jointly between charities, Cancer Research and the MS Society. The GXi8 HD is precise and efficient and since its launch has become a best seller.

Founder, David Rae, was just 23 when he and his father, Alistair, met the Wiedenmann family at The Turf Industry Show, in Germany in 1989.

The Wiedenmanns were launching a prototype deep aerator while the Raes were looking for a machine for their contracting business. Within two years Wiedenmann UK was formed given

the distribution rights for Britain and Ireland.

"My enduring memory of that important phase was the strong respect and friendship with the Wiedenmann family," said David.

Crucially, in the last 20 years, both families have been acutely aware that success only comes from supplying products backed by fair, honest customer support. Wiedenmann UK has benefited from the German company's focus on product development with a large sum reinvested to design and test future machines. Wiedenmann GmbH has expanded its distribution network around the world and has become market leader through innovation.

Twenty years on, Wiedenmann UK grows stronger promoting an ever expanding range of specials grounds maintenance machinery. David is proud of what the company has achieved, however, he is aware of the challenges that lie ahead.

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## Leatherjackets Addressed

The problem of leatherjackets and chafer grubs on turf was highlighted to a group of amenity sector professionals at a recent insecticide training presentation for Amenity Land Solutions in Telford.

Hosted by Bayer National Account Manager, Dave Orchard, the training provided the area sales managers with an understanding of the common pest control problem.

Dave explained, "Populations of chafer grubs have increased dramatically over the last 10 years and they are now a major problem in the UK. Left untreated, they can cause severe destruction of turf, and often secondary damage is caused as birds and other animals search out the grubs to feed on."

The training stressed the importance of using a programmed approach in order to fully gain control of these insects and maximise control.



## Cricket Champions

Ashley Cricket Club, in Cheshire, saw the North West and North Wales Sections play their first 20-20 Cricket match.

The North West Captain was Ashley Bennett, of Rigby Taylor, and the North Wales Captain was Andy Peel, from Bull Bay Golf Club. The toss was won by Andy Peel who elected to bat. Runs came slowly with a number of players making steady progress. North Wales at the turn had made 104 runs off their 20 overs.

It was then time for the North West to show off their batting skills. Batsman and bowlers were restricted to four overs each, the batsman then had to retire. However, if the batsmen were all out, the retired ones could come back in. In the 19th over, North West lost their final batsman with the score on 101 runs, which allowed Mark Price, CEO of the Bathgate Group, to come back in and he duly nudged a ball to the boundary for four runs, and a narrow victory to the North West. The Match was sponsored by Bathgate Silica Sand. Thanks to Mark Price and also to Nick Gray, lastly to Ashley Cricket Club for their hospitality.

Chris Sheehan

## THE FUTURE OF SPORTSTURF MANAGEMENT

STRI Research 2011 is a new event being launched this year by STRI. The event is free, will be held annually, and has been designed to give sports turf managers an opportunity to see, first hand, the innovative products, machinery and techniques that are being developed that will directly influence the world of sports turf management over the coming years.

The one day event is being held on Wednesday, September 21 in Bingley and will follow the successful format used at research events worldwide, which splits the research focus into separate demo areas, referred to as 'stations'. The event for 2011 is focusing on turf management for golf courses, with seven separate stations, giving an insight into new products and methodologies for disease and nutritional management, new grass varieties, aeration, overseeding and amendments, rootzone properties and the latest technology and machinery.

STRI is currently working with a number of companies on R&D sportsturf projects and has invited a selection of these companies to support the event, based on their focus on current research, and their investment to help improve the future quality and management of sportsturf. The companies attending this year's event are Bayer, Everris (formerly Scotts), R&K Kensett, Ransomes Jacobsen, Syngenta, Becker Underwood and Sherriff Amenity.

The deadline for bookings for the STRI Research 2011 event is 31 August 2011 and STRI is expecting more than 120 attendees for the day. Invitations have been sent out to all golf clubs across the UK and Ireland.

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# Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

## Planning ahead for a new term

**It seems like only yesterday we were coming out of a long cold winter and looking forward to summer, and before you know it I'm looking at my diary and we are approaching September, and trying to plan and implement all the autumn maintenance.**

While the growth slows and we get more time for other activity, at Elmwood we move in to a very busy period as our students arrive looking to learn all they can about Greenkeeping and Golf Management and Performance.

Numbers have grown steadily over the years, and while it's useful having extra hands about the place for some types of work, most of the students on the entry level greenkeeping course are raw recruits, who need to be taught everything from scratch, and there are a lot of them, so planning and control are very important.

As many of you will know, you can get great satisfaction from successfully training a new member of staff, but it is not without challenges.

Imagine having 75 of them every week.

We have a busy programme planned for them and it will be good to see their excitement and enthusiasm as they start their careers.

We also have over 100 students studying performance golf, many of them excellent plus handicappers and they place a heavy demand on the golf facility, and on the turf, at a time when recovery is very limited through the winter, but the challenge is to manage that to the best of our ability and try and ensure that all the students get a worthwhile experience.

Education is a constant as far as I'm concerned, and you will find elsewhere in this magazine information about the upcoming Harrogate event and the education on offer there.

I'm looking forward to it, and hopefully I'll get some time out-with my duties as Chairman to benefit from some of what's on offer.

I believe that in any line of work, in order to be the best you can be at the career you have chosen, you must constantly develop and, "Continue to Learn."

You will also see within our news sec-

tion that we have been working with other Associations within the UK sector and have formed a group to facilitate closer working relationships, bringing the opportunity to engage with stakeholders in considering decisions that will impact on the future of the industry and its Associations.

I was extremely fortunate to spend a week in China this month.

On behalf of the college I delivered some lectures to groups of students we have there, and also met with groups of Superintendents for discussions and with potential University partners.

My hosts were fantastic, and I'd like to thank everyone I met for welcoming me so warmly and sharing their time with me.

I arrived in Hong Kong and drove to Shenzhen, a city of thirty million people, which is only really about thirty years old. The climate there was very hot and humid.

I also flew to Kunming province in the

sustainable manner, with water resource a premium, and use of agricultural land very restricted.

Estimates put the number of golfers at 300,000, set to grow to 20 million by 2020.

Despite a government ban on course development the number of courses grew from 170 in 2004 to nearly 600 by 2009 and continues to grow at a phenomenal rate.

How that progresses will, I imagine, be determined by whether the golf industry can convince the government that they can address their concerns and develop in a sustainable manner.

That presents opportunities for those with such knowledge and experience, whilst it became very apparent to me how much we take our Association for granted.

When meeting with them there was a lot of interest expressed in BIGGA and a real hunger for the aspects of sharing good practice and networking.

**Whether you are a single Greenkeeper working alone at a 9 hole course, or a Course Manager, running a multi course facility you will find someone in BIGGA who can share their experience with you, and lighten the load**

South West of China where the climate was more temperate and similar to the UK.

The different grass types and management techniques required were very interesting to see and the standard of presentation on all the courses was very high.

In all I toured seven courses, witnessing the difference between Paspalum, Bermuda, Creeping bent, Rye, and yes, even Poa. They face many of the challenges we do, though golfer demand currently outweighs supply so they are not facing that problem yet.

Labour costs have increased considerably in only the last few years, and that was a common challenge to all the superintendents.

Golf is booming there, but it is not without difficulties as the government seeks to ensure that courses are developed in a

While sitting in a group meeting it dawned on me that the group actually had over 100 years experience between them and were able to give each other advice and help with many of the problems they have. Sometimes we fail to recognise how useful something is.

I know that in my time in greenkeeping BIGGA has been the best source of information and contacts for me to meet and seek advice.

Whether you are a single Greenkeeper working alone at a 9 hole course, or a Course Manager, running a multi course facility you will find someone in BIGGA who can share their experience with you, and lighten the load.

That is of value not just to the individual, but to owners and employers and ultimately the golfer in ensuring staff get the necessary support to fulfil their potential.



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, GTC Education Director, examines how government funding can attract apprenticeship schemes

**Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers often think, if only I had another pair of hands...well maybe they can find that additional help through explaining to their employer the benefits of recruiting an apprentice.**

Successful businesses often refer to the fact that during difficult economical times they invested in staff development and there is no better way than using the nationally accredited Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Scheme to ensure the course team has a committed, enthusiastic new employee being trained, educated and assessed to the industry agreed national standards.

Many of today's top Course Managers started as apprentices in the UK and now are maintaining and managing golf courses all over the world.

My friend of many years, Mike O'Keefe, known to many as the man from Ohio State University who opens doors in the USA for British greenkeepers to gain lifelong skills and experience, sums up how British greenkeeping apprentices are sought after by the Superintendents across the pond.

Mike explains, "In over 20 years of working with the GTC, BIGGA and our friends at the approved Centres and colleges, literally hundreds of British trained greenkeepers have travelled across, to hopefully enjoy the experience of working on golf courses in the States.

Mike adds, "It has to be acknowledged that the promotion for many years by the GTC of vocational, work based training and qualifications in Britain has resulted in outstanding competent greenkeepers whose all round skill level is admired by the American Superintendents.

The ability to do so many tasks when they arrive for their internship period is a tribute to the apprenticeship programme in Britain."

Apprenticeships continue to be very popular with British employers and the learners as it is a clear career progression and it all revolves around the golf course.



The greenkeeping apprenticeship framework not only includes the work based vocational qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 but additional requirements to ensure the apprentice has the functional skills which arguably should have been taught and achieved during school days.

Numeracy, literacy and communication skills are all now wrapped up into what the Government calls core or functional skills!

Please rest assured the GTC and its Quality Assured Centres are working within current Government policies of the day to ensure the funding support, albeit reducing, still makes the apprenticeship a very cost effective option for employers.

The GTC is currently involved in discussions to have a Higher Apprenticeship in greenkeeping.

A Higher Apprenticeship could include the work based Level 4 Management qualification and more news will follow as discussions with the relevant bodies hopefully come to fruition.

There are still many people looking to enter the profession of greenkeeping and with a clear career pathway available from apprentice

to Course or General Manager how best do employers look to recruit an apprentice?

Short of the GTC offering an apprenticeship placement service, an option the GTC is currently considering, many golf clubs have found a suitable apprentice within their clubs Junior Section, maybe a chance career change application letter received direct, a local advert or in association with a GTC Quality Assured Centre.

We are aware of apprentices of all ages working on golf courses and thoroughly enjoying the experience and with support funding finally becoming available for all ages currently in most areas of Britain there doesn't appear to be a recruitment problem.

The GTC's Quality Assured Centres are all there to assist employers select and recruit an apprentice and explain what funding is available.

Check out the Quality Assured Centres on our website [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk)

For any greenkeepers looking to enjoy the experience of the Ohio State programme please contact Mike O'Keefe on email:

[okeefe.1@osu.edu](mailto:okeefe.1@osu.edu)



The GTC is funded by:



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# Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, with an update on education issues

September already? I have no clue where this year has gone!

## IGCEMA Certification Program

The International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) launched their Certification Program in May this year. In July, BIGGA pledged support for the Certification Program and are now registered as Proctor (examination invigilator) for the program.

The Certification Program consists of six core competencies:

- Hydraulic Troubleshooting
- Electrical Troubleshooting
- Internal Combustion Engines
- Drivelines
- Sprayer Troubleshooting - in development (expected Jan. 2012)
- Cutting Units - in development (expected Feb. 2012)

To achieve the IGCEMA Certificate, individuals will purchase the study guides and will then take an online test for each of the competencies. The study guides are available from the IGCEMA website at a cost of \$18 per guide. Each online test costs \$50 (this give you two attempts at the test). Payment for the test is made by credit card before the test begins.

On completion of all of the six competencies, individuals will be awarded the IGCEMA Certificate.

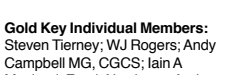
BIGGA CPD Credits (number to be confirmed) will be attached to each of the competencies and will be awarded on successful completion for each of the tests.

For further information visit the IGCEMA website [www.igcema.org](http://www.igcema.org) and click on Certificate Program.



## Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year

The final of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2011 will take place on 11 and 12 September at BIGGA House. The eight finalists will undergo a 45 minute interview and will be required to complete a



**Gold Key Individual Members:** Steven Tierney; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Frank Newberry; Andrew Turnbull; Ian MacMillan MG; Ian Morrison; Antony Calvert  
**Silver Key Individual Members:** Ade Archer; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Richard McGlynn; Sam Langrick; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie; Michael Beaton; Douglas Duguid; Derek Grendowicz; Jaey Goodchild

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.



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written task based on an area of the Aldwark Manor Golf Course. The eventual Winner will be awarded the Toro Scholarship to attend the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts and a trip to the Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas in early 2012. Two runners-up will win a trip to Continue to Learn and BTME at Harrogate Week 2012. All of the finalists will receive one year's free membership of BIGGA courtesy of Toro. This year's finalists are:

- Rob Mills, Sunningdale Golf Club representing Merrist Wood College
  - Miles Todd, Rhuddlan Golf Club representing Deeside College
  - Justin Howard, Cranham Golf Centre representing Myerscough College
  - Blair Somerville, Helensburgh Golf Club representing GOSTA
  - Rhys Williams, Royal Porthcawl Golf Club representing Pencoed College
  - Jon Watson, Burgham Park Golf Club representing Myerscough College
  - Matthew Perks, Ham Manor Golf Club representing Plumpton College
  - Ben Hunter, Baron Park Golf Complex representing Myerscough College
- Good Luck to all the Finalists!



## Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2012

The Continue to Learn Education Programme will be hitting your doormats with the October issue of Greenkeeper International. Featuring the Turf Managers' Conference, Workshops (three, two, one and half day) as well as a wide range of Seminars.

The full programme will also be available at [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk) where you can also book your education online.

Frank Rossi Ph.D (right) will be presenting a one day workshop on Progressive Cultural Management Programs, a session at the Turf Managers' Conference on Practically Sustainable Golf Turf Management and a Seminar on Redefining IPM; Reduced Chemical Management of Golf Course Turf.

Once the programme is launched, remember to book early to secure your place on the Workshops and Turf Managers' Conference.



BTME returns to the Harrogate International Centre next January, and things are hotting up already. This special 4-page feature gives you at taste of what is to come

**With over 2,300 eager visitors pre-registered already momentum is building towards BTME in just over five months time.**

The occasion of the 24th consecutive annual Turf Management Exhibition in Harrogate will be one to remember particularly as it coincides with the joint milestones of 100 years of Greenkeeping Associations and 25 years of BIGGA. Whilst it is appropriate that we take time out to reflect on all that has been achieved in greenkeeping and turf management in that time there is no doubt that BTME 2012 will maintain its position as a forward looking event focused on improving knowledge and skills and demonstrating the latest cutting edge technology and turf maintenance techniques.

Allied with the unique environment provided by the town of Harrogate which means the Exhibition Centre, accommodation, restaurants, and bars are all in walking distance of each other, BTME really is the place to be for all Golf and Sports Turf professionals.



## How to get to Harrogate



### Direct Train Service from London-Harrogate



It has never been easier to get to Harrogate from London.

East Coast trains has announced the start of new services to provide a long awaited direct link, from London to Harrogate. Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce has led the campaign to bring the new direct train services, which will be welcomed by the thousands of delegates and visitors coming to Harrogate. The new Sunday evening northbound service will enable delegates coming to Harrogate for Conferences and Exhibitions to travel up on Sunday evening ready for an early start on the Monday Morning.

The direct trains are shown on the East Coast timetable:

[www.eastcoast.co.uk](http://www.eastcoast.co.uk)

Southbound: 07.28 Monday-Friday; 08.13 Saturday; 17.05 Sunday

Northbound: 17.35 Monday-Friday; 17.35 Saturday; 18.05 Sunday

### Park & Ride

BTME & ClubHouse provides a FREE 'Park and Ride' service from the Great Yorkshire Showground to Harrogate International Centre on all three days of the exhibition.

If you are planning to drive to Harrogate, this service will help you avoid the traffic problems in town and save you looking for a parking space. From the A1(M) take the A59 towards Knaresborough. Follow the ring road to Harrogate. The 'Park and Ride' will be fully signposted. The journey in from the Great Yorkshire Showground (YEC) to the HIC normally takes around 10 minutes but does depend on traffic conditions.

The shuttle service will run at the following times:

\* Tuesday 24 January 08.30 to 17.30

\* Wednesday 25 January 08.30 to 17.30







**Tuesday 24 to Thursday 26 January 2012**  
at the Harrogate International Centre



### Personal Development Zone

The popular Personal Development Zone will return to the BIGGA Stand for the duration of BTME. Experts in recruitment and career development will be on hand along with management trainers and experienced BIGGA members to offer advice on a whole range of Personal and Career Development issues.



### Awards and Competition Winners

As always BTME will offer the opportunity to recognise outstanding achievement by BIGGA members. The latest Master Greenkeepers will be presented with their certificates and CPD Diplomas will be awarded to those members who have demonstrated consistent commitment to continuing education. Additionally during the week the winners of the following will be revealed:

- Edwin Budding Award
- BIGGA Photographic competition
- STRI Environment Awards



## BIGGA 25th Anniversary Celebration Dinner



Plans are well in hand for a celebratory dinner which will take place in Harrogate on the evening of Tuesday 24th January. The dinner will be a celebration of all that has been achieved over the 25 years of BIGGA's existence and will represent the focal point of the Association's Anniversary celebrations. Details of venue, format and how to purchase tickets will be available shortly.

management exhibition in Europe

# Continue to Learn 2012

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**Book Early**  
To avoid disappointment

## Continue to learn 2012

at Harrogate Week

Sunday 22 to Thursday 26 January 2012  
Harrogate International Centre, North Yorkshire, UK

Your guide to education and events at Harrogate Week



A 24% increase in people taking part in the Continue to Learn programme in 2011 demonstrated how important education is in today's environment. Increasingly BIGGA members are taking the opportunity during Harrogate Week to add further strings to their bow or ensure their current skills are applicable in the modern age.

Over these two pages we look at some of the highlights of the 2012 programme which following extensive feedback from delegates includes some hardy perennials alongside some important new additions to the seminar and workshop programme

## Turf Managers' Conference



By popular demand the Turf Managers' Conference will make its return to the Continue to Learn Education Programme in January 2012. This year's one day Conference will include presentations on...

### Identifying and Managing Plant Parasitic Nematode Problems in Turfgrass

by Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

Plant parasitic nematodes can result in serious problems for the management of golf turf. This seminar will examine the symptoms normally associated with plant parasitic nematode attack and highlight ways to identify the problem if present. The recent loss of many traditional nematicides/pesticides has led to an interest in alternative methods for managing these pests and this session will examine some of the newly developed methods for reducing the impact of plant parasitic nematodes in turfgrass.

### Golf Course Photography – The Job, Purpose and Challenges

by Iain Lowe, Golf Course Photographer, Iain Lowe Photography

This session will offer an examination of the various purposes of golf course photography, experiences from around the world and the impact that greenkeepers can have on the success of a shoot.



### The Effects of Climate Change and Climate Phenomenon on Greenkeeping Practices

by Mark Hunt, Technical Director, Headland Amenity

In this session Mark will look at the effects of climate change and climate phenomenon on modern greenkeeping practices including growth patterns, aeration and disease management.

### Employee Engagement

by Helen Bennett, Managing Director, Human Reality

This session will identify what employee engagement actually means, why successful companies bother to invest time and energy into it. Helen will then share some of her thoughts and ideas for staff engagement in greenkeeping teams.

### The Power of Social Media for Your Golf Club

by Lesley Wood, Principal Consultant, Targeting Innovation Ltd

This session will also offer hints and tips on how social media could help your golf club attract more business. Offering a general introduction to social media, the evolution of marketing and consumer buying habits.

### Practically Sustainable Golf Turf Management

by Frank Rossi Ph.D. Professor, Cornell University

This session will address practical aspects of sustainable golf turf management with emphasis on climate change, carbon economy and easy to implement management practices that demonstrate your courses commitment to sustainability.



# Sunday 22 to Thursday 26 January 2012

at the Queens Suite, Harrogate International Centre



## Seminars



Seminar Sessions will include the following presentations:

### Managing Winter Kill in West of Scotland?

David Cole, Golf Course/Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club

### From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years

Chris Haspell, Course Manager, Castle Stewart Golf Club

### Let's Re-build 20 Greens in 10 Days - Mission Impossible?

Cameron McMillan, Course Manager, Queenwood Golf Club

### Being a Professional and Living It

Bruce Williams CGCS, Owner and Principal, Bruce Williams Golf Consulting

### The Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses

Dr David Jones, Research Scientist, The Natural History Museum, London

### The Biology and Effects of Parasitic Nematodes in Sports Turf

Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

### LinkedIn - A Masterclass

Lesley Wood, Principal Consultant, Targeting Innovation Ltd

### Redefining IPM; Reduced Chemical Management of Golf Course Turf

Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

Many other workshops and seminars will be taking place. Further information on the Continue to Learn Education Programme is available at [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk)

## Workshops

After the successful introduction of the **How to be an Outstanding Manager** workshops, the 2012 programme will once again feature Shona Garner, Director of Shona Garner Coaching Services Ltd, offering **Part 3: Performance Management; How to Get it Right**

Following feedback a couple of workshops that were originally offered as one day workshops, have been extended to two days:

**So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager** by Peter Jones and Kevin Munt, Golf Course Consultants

**Irrigation System Management and Design** by Adrian Mortram, Irrigation Consultant, Robin Hume Associates and Dennis Mortram

New workshops will include:  
**Essential IT Business Administration for Greenkeepers** by Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

**A Practical Guide to Setting Up a Social Media Presence** by



Lesley Wood, Principal Consultant, Targeting Innovation Ltd  
**Progressive Cultural Management Programs** by Frank Rossi Ph.D, Professor, Cornell University

**Successful Project Management** by Bruce Williams CGCS, Bruce Williams Consulting

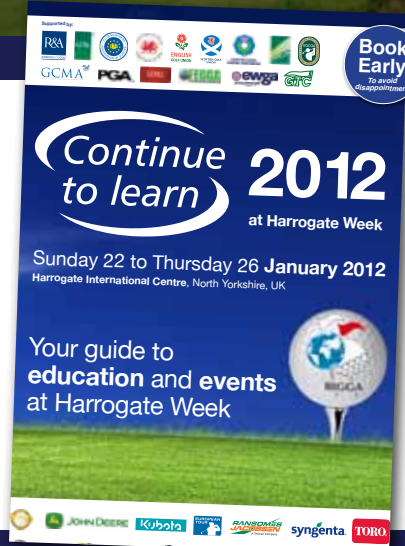
A mainstay of the GCSAA's Education Programme, we are delighted that Bruce will be presenting this workshop on the Continue to Learn programme.

## Fringe Seminars

Once again many of our loyal exhibitors will be providing Fringe Seminars free of charge in their specific areas of expertise. These seminars are accredited for the BIGGA CPD scheme.



For the latest comprehensive listings and details of all seminars and workshops, look out for the Continue to Learn 2012 brochure, with next month's GI





## NEW VITAX APPOINTMENT

Jon Welling has joined Vitax Supaturf as Technical Sales Advisor for the South East of England.

With over 15 years industry experience behind him, Jon followed a diploma from Merrist Wood College with a post managing a 1,200 acre county estate before working with major machinery dealers.

"I'm dealing mainly with schools, contractors and Local Authorities and come across many familiar faces," said Jon.

"He's technically minded and that's a great asset, especially for a company that's continually developing new products," said Mike King, Sales and Marketing Manager for Vitax Supaturf.

## New 'Short Game' Practice Facility Proposal in at Ipswich Golf Club

Grassform Group has secured a contract with Ipswich Golf Club at Purdis Heath in Suffolk to construct a new short game and practice facility.

The work is estimated to be worth around £100,000. The facility has been designed by Hawtree Ltd.

Mark Dunning, Director of Grassform Group, commented:

"We are delighted that Ipswich Golf Club has chosen us to assist them with this particular project. We are well on schedule to complete this project within the allotted time and within budget."



## Happy Retirement

Tony Cundall, General Manager at Campey Turf Care Systems, has retired on his 65th birthday.

Tony joined the company as a sales rep and went on to become GM, where he oversaw the reception of goods into the yard and was responsible for preparation of all machinery in readiness for dispatch and delivery to customers.

"In an age when strength of character, loyalty and conscientiousness are not always given the recognition and appreciation they deserve, we are delighted to acknowledge the sheer hard work and reliability Tony has displayed in the past 22 years," said Richard Campey.

"He has proven himself to be a loyal and dedicated member of our team and Campey's will not be the same without him. We wish him a long and happy retirement."

Tony was presented with number plates and spare keys to his works vehicle at the Campey 25th Anniversary party in July and his wife, Dinah, received a bouquet of flowers.

Steve French, currently Spare Parts Manager, will be replacing Tony.



## SHEPHERD JOINS AVONMORE

Avonmore Associates has appointed John Shepherd with a brief to consolidate the Fine Turf Maintenance and Construction Departments along with developing the Irrigation and Water Management Departments.

John, 45, joins Warwickshire based father and son management team, Brian and Philip Buttler, who have grown Avonmore Associates to be a national supplier of bowling greens, golf greens, lawn tennis courts and croquet lawns

Brian said, "John has had an exceptionally interesting and successful career to date and we have worked closely with him on a number of projects. His expert knowledge of design and management of irrigation systems will undoubtedly strengthen our management team and we are delighted to have him on board."



## New TurfCare Appointment

Tom Kenny joins TurfCare Group as technical sales representative for Kent, Sussex and the South Coast.

Pictured here with Daniel Jones (on right) from TurfCare, Tom will be bringing with him over nine years Course Manager experience and over 15 years within the golf industry some of which was as an assistant professional.

"We are delighted to have Tom on board as he has a wealth of knowledge and experience within the industry, and he will further increase our market presence and customer service in the South East," said Daniel.

## What's your number?

*Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...*

**Name:** Bruce Jamieson

**Company:** B Jamieson Golf Advisors Ltd

**Position:** Managing Director

**How long have you been in the industry?**

I started as an apprentice greenkeeper in 1975 so about 36 years.



**How did you get into it?**

By accident really, I had resigned from a job in retail and my father insisted on me having a summer job raking bunkers at Turnberry Hotel and Golf Courses until I decided what to do with myself.

**What other jobs have you done?**

I worked for a brief period in retail, in a tailors in Ayr, and hated working inside. I have also been a Greenkeeper, Head Greenkeeper, Course Manager and Director of Agronomy for the European Tour. I am also retained as a consultant to the Toro Company giving advice to key clients and working with colleges and training providers.

**What do you like about your current job?**

I like travelling and meeting people. I also like visiting golf courses all over the world and working with dedicated professionals who wish to present their courses to the highest standards possible within the budgets set by their individual clubs.

**What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?**

Everything: education, irrigation, machinery, specialised products such as wetting agents, fungicides, pesticides etc. The biggest change is probably the machinery, cutting heights and their frequency and the way we communicate with mobile phones, text messaging, internet and e-mail.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I like spending time with my family, cycling, fishing and playing golf.

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?**

Who knows what the future holds but probably doing the same thing as I enjoy the challenges.

**Who do you consider as best friends in the industry?**

I have a lot of very good friends in the industry but I suppose Mark Black who is the Superintendent at Quail West in Naples Florida.

**What do you consider to be your lucky number? 5**

**Pick a number**

43.

*Bruce has picked Andy Russell, of Headland.*

## All-New Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Available as a Hybrid



**MAIN PHOTO:** The Toro Greensmaster TriFlex 3400 and TriFlex Hybrid 3420 greensmowers are completely new, only the DPS cutting units having carried over from the existing range. Reduced and eased maintenance plus round profile tyres are among the new features. First hybrids should appear in the UK next year.

**INSET BELOW:** Detail shot of new cast alloy double A-arm suspension fitted to the new Toro Greensmaster TriFlex 3400 and TriFlex Hybrid 3420 greensmowers. In action, the mountings allow the units to follow complex contours for a claimed boost in overall cutting performance.

The latest Greensmaster TriFlex 3400 and TriFlex Hybrid 3420 greensmowers are to be made available in the UK following a successful launch in the USA. New features include a unique Flex double A-arm suspension system for the units. Claimed to ensure the standard DPA cutting units float across contours, the new suspension system is also said to keep the units parallel to the ground for a consistent and quality of cut across the most challenging of greens.

Other new features include redesigned balloon-style tyres that are designed to make tyre tracks virtually invisible and enhanced clippings capture system to leave the course clear of stray cuttings. Those looking after the new models will also appreciate the lift-gate footrest that provides eased access to the central cutting unit and the tool-free, quick-change cutting units. There are no daily grease points either to reduce maintenance.

The mowers can be fitted with spiking or verticutting units without the need for tools, with Toro offering cutting units in 8, 11 and 14-blade versions to suit requirements. These can be set to mow from a 1/16inch to 1inch height of cut. Faster transport speeds and improved ground clearance further increase versatility while saving time.

Both mowers are powered by Kubota 24hp/17.5kw diesel power units, the TriFlex Hybrid 3420 featuring electric cylinder drive with up to 3hp driving each reel.

A stored energy feature on these models eliminates clip marks at start-up, with improved braking power and safety when cylinders are disengaged. Toro has not gone down the all-electric route for these new models, the company stressing the new hybrid models ability to deliver an outstanding cut quality above other advantages.



“We’re prouder than ever to introduce these models,” said Lely’s Toro UK Sales Manager Jeff Anguige. We’ve worked closely with The Toro Company’s research and development team to create a greensmower with the UK golf market in mind. Of course, greenkeepers are excited to see Toro’s first hybrid, but the overall benefits of both mowers are just as impressive.”

[www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com)

# NEW RANGER CREW DIESEL FROM POLARIS



The new Polaris Ranger Crew diesel shares the 904cc, three-cylinder Yanmar diesel engine with the Ranger Diesel, coupled with the ability to carry six adults.

The fully-sealed, fixed centre distance clutch drivetrain keeps water out of the clutches and provides excellent

performance. Inside the cab, the vehicle has the ability to carry six adults comfortably due to its superior comfort and ergonomics, including a slide-through cab design for easy entrance and exit that also provides lots of leg room.

The Ranger Crew Diesel includes a 55

amp alternator that gives the operator the ability to run many hard working, higher electrical load accessories, such as ploughs, extra lights, cab heaters and fans at the same time.

[www.polaris-britain.com](http://www.polaris-britain.com)

## Terra Groom New from Wiedenmann

Wiedenmann UK has added another brush to its product list that is equally suited to both synthetic and natural grass use. The Terra Groom shares similar characteristics with the Terra Brush; however, it is lighter and offers a different 'zig zag' brush arrangement.

Fitting units 15 hp and up, the 1.87m wide brush can either use 3pt linkage or there is a trailed option with electric lifting.

The 3pt linked version weighs just 90kg while the trailed just 110 kg.

There are three rows of brushes configured as a solid

row, a zig-zagged row and a final solid row.

On natural grass, the Terra Groom is ideal for removing early morning dew. It can help turf to look its best by presenting it really well, leaving it as the name suggests, groomed.

The Terra Groom is ideal for either light or heavy dressings on all natural surfaces. The trailed option also offers the operator the opportunity to adjust the pitch from the front brush to the back brush allowing dressing in, rather than spilling down both sides.

[www.wiedenmann.co.uk](http://www.wiedenmann.co.uk)

## NO MORE SLIPPAGE

Grassform Group has launched Grasslok, a safety surfacing for grass covered play areas, which is designed and manufactured in the UK. The product can be cut to any size or shape and is quick and easy to install. It can also aid with grass and land retention by controlling erosion. Grasslok comes with the highest rated slip resistance certification, promotes natural play and is exceptionally hard wearing.

Mark Dunning, Director of Grassform Group, commented: "At Grassform Group, we are constantly striving to improve our offering and service to as many industries as possible. We are confident that the launch of the Grasslok will allow us the opportunity to expand our client portfolio."

As well as supplying ground protection solutions, Grassform Group supplies plant hire equipment, land drainage systems and natural grass sports surfaces.

For more information on the new products

[www.grassform.co.uk](http://www.grassform.co.uk)

# One man bands

Working as a lone greenkeeper on a nine-hole course can be a tricky yet rewarding business, as Jim Cook found out, after speaking to Chris O'Dowd, of Cambridge Lakes Golf Club, and Miles Skehan, of Ampleforth College Golf Club, in North Yorkshire

**The number of bicycles which can usually be seen propped outside Cambridge Lakes' clubhouse give a sound indication of the ethos of the club; everybody is welcome.**

From students cycling down for a round before lectures, to groups of children curious to give the game a go, the team at the club, which lies just one-and-a-half miles south of Cambridge city centre, pride themselves on giving all a warm greeting.

Teamwork is the key at this nine-hole, par-three club and although Chris O'Dowd is the sole greenkeeper, he has the backing of sagacious colleagues to help deliver quality throughout the year.

Chris explained his daily routine: "Normally first thing on a morning I come out, clear the dew, repair pitch marks, check the tees and rake the bunkers while cutting the greens. I usually prepare during the

week and on a weekend we have some school children come in and do some work around the course. Then I'm back in Monday morning getting the course ready for the following weekend. We handle around 30,000 rounds a year here and cater for everybody. Anyone can stroll in and play so we try and make it a bit of a challenge but also fairly generous to any standard of golfer."

Cambridge Lakes' greens now contain around 80% fescue and Chris said he, Club Owner, Bob Barnes, and the rest of the team at the club worked hard to bring them up to standard, with minimal use of nitrogen.

"We limit our use of nitrogen on the greens. Our main supplier is Symbio and we work with them to try and improve the soil biology. We've been on it for about a year now and it's going really well.

"It has reduced the number of times we need to cut the greens as well because you don't get the unnatural growth from the nitrogen. It's more sustainable. We use compost tea once a month to help worn areas recover. It smells a bit funky but does the job."

Chris spoke about the advantages of being the sole greenkeeper: "You get a lot more involvement in what goes on. I make a decision based on what I think and because I play golf myself, I know what needs to be done."

Five-handicapper Chris also happens to be the joint holder of the course record, along with the club's pro, James Burton.

A qualified greenkeeper himself, James has been mentoring Chris since he began working on the course and as a team along with Bob, they are a positive example of how a group can work together at a







club to support the greenkeeper out on the course.

Bob and Chris have undertaken mechanical courses to get themselves up to speed in case of a breakdown.

Chris added: "I like fixing things, it's always good fun and I do a bit of everything, which is something else positive about being the solitary greenkeeper; you get to do all kinds of jobs."

This 'Jack-of-all-trades' mentality must be one of the most important traits for a lone greenkeeper of a nine-hole course and one that Miles Skehan, of Ampleforth College Golf Club, shared.

"It was a bit of a shock to the system when I first started because I wasn't trained on the mechanical side of things, but I found that I had to very quickly learn it," he said.

"I've got to plan every week that something is going to go wrong with the machinery.

"If something doesn't go wrong in the week, I'm ahead of the game.

"I try and use the rule that if something is broken, I fix it straight away. I'm also trying to have a backup for every piece of machinery, for example after I got the new greens mower, I kept the old one in good condition as a reserve in case there is a problem."

He emphasised the importance of planning as a lone greenkeeper and said: "I've learnt a lot of skills

**"We limit our use of nitrogen on the greens. Our main supplier is Symbio and we work with them to try and improve the soil biology. We've been on it for about a year now and it's going really well"**

**Chris O'Dowd, Cambridge Lakes Golf Club**

for maintenance, organising and planning.

"It is vital to plan a structured week. I plan absolutely everything and it is all on my mobile phone and computer; I put nothing on paper."

Miles said these organisational, structure and planning skills originated from a spell at Loch Lomond and his education at Myerscough College. He added his previous job, as manager of a large clothing retailer, also helped.

"I have been out of the game for a little while doing business management and I learnt so much there. I feel as though I've brought my business head into the world of golf and I reckon if I hadn't have done that, I couldn't have run this golf course. In terms of researching cheapest prices, materials, suppliers and having the confidence to go to the committee and the manager of the club and say 'this is why we're doing this'."

This planning helps him stay in

control and if there happens to be a problem, he is in a position to deal with it. Miles saw this as being integral to effective lone greenkeeper golf course management.

"I've tried to make every single part of what I do everyday as efficient as I possibly could. It really is the key. One of the major ways I've gone about this is by managing the golf course culturally rather than using large doses of fertilisers and chemicals and excessive amounts of water.

"I've also introduced large areas of conservation, because they're in out of the way places so there's no point in cutting it when it could be perfect for flora and fauna."

While anybody in this situation will have their own methods for getting the job done, Miles was geared toward using every piece of modern technology available to him.

"Everything I do is digital. It saves time and ensures it's recorded. If I see a problem while driving out on the course, I email myself from



TOP LEFT: Ampleforth College  
ABOVE AND MAIN ABOVE:  
Cambridge Lakes



my phone as a reminder to sort it when I can. I make myself a list of jobs for the week on my PC, so any issues encountered can be added to the calendar and either resolved myself or reported to the appropriate person.

“I have a parts book up in my workshop, but if I’ve broken down out in the middle of the course, I get my phone out, find the part, get the number and get it dealt with.”

He saw prioritising as an essential ingredient of lone greenkeeping.

“I prioritise jobs using a really simple system of A, B and C on a spreadsheet. The only ones I give A to are health and safety issues that have to be done straight away. B is something that needs doing and C is a job to be done if possible.

I love this system, it works for me and that’s the key of finding some-

thing that works and personalising it to your needs.”

Miles has two other people, including his dad, who are on zero contracted hours, but step in to help out when necessary.

“They are both fantastic because they are both flexible. If I have a machine break down and can’t cut a part of the course I can ask them to do it. It works because I am flexible too.

“I can’t work from 6am-2pm every day because if it rains when I’m due to cut, I’ll go home and come back to get a better finish. If we’ve had a really bad week of weather and been unable to do the jobs at the start of the week, I’ll work 12-hour days or whatever is required to catch up. I couldn’t do this job if I wasn’t flexible.”

As well as this support, he has

the support of the members.

“I’m very lucky on this course because there are a lot of passionate, helpful members who are always willing to come and help. They care about the course and just want to get stuck in.”

Miles highlighted the advantages of lone greenkeeping.

“When I’m out there by myself, I know what I can do, I’m not having to manage other people and I can just get on. Because I’m organised and clear in my planning I feel I couldn’t be any more in control than I am now. The one thing that stops me being in control is the weather.

“I feel I’m very much involved in the golf course because I have to check green-fees as well as maintaining it. Because of this, I’m the face of the course and I feel I’m



Ampleforth College



Ampleforth College

trying to sell it every time someone is playing. If I see someone on green-fees, I'm always trying to sell them membership."

Loving the vocation, as with any greenkeeping job, is a prerequisite for lone greenkeeping.

"I love this course passionately and I can't describe how much I enjoy being out there doing my job. It's never going to be a championship 18-hole golf course with our budget, but it is a great little 9-hole course.

"I work harder now than I've ever

worked in my life and that is vital for the course. It wouldn't survive otherwise. I have to be willing to take on responsibility for everything. If something goes wrong and I need to work until 9pm to fix it then I'll be working until 9pm because it's my responsibility.

That's the sacrifice you've got to make in this business. If there is a problem with anything I deal with it straight away otherwise it will cost money in the long-run.

"You can't come into greenkeeping and take on a course on your

**"You can't come into greenkeeping and take on a course on your own if you don't love the job. But you can't achieve everything and I am by myself. There just aren't enough hours in the day. You want to make it perfect, but it can't always be. You've got to stop somewhere"**  
**Miles Skehan, Ampleforth College**

own if you don't love the job. At the same time though, you can't achieve everything and I am by myself. There just aren't enough hours in the day. You want to do everything and make it perfect, but it can't always be. You've got to stop somewhere."

This attitude was common to both solitary greenkeepers featured here. What shone above all the organisation, planning, versatility and humour, was their love for the role they had taken on and the clubs they represented.

Whether it was Chris stealing onto the course in the dead of night to water his parched greens, or Miles labouring over a broken fairway cutter late into the evening, both strove toward achieving a standard of golf course maintenance they could be proud of calling their own.



Miles Skehan



Chris O'Dowd

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THIS PAGE (BOTH IMAGES)  
A stake was provided for the  
hornbeam (12) and the pine  
(12A) but no-one bothered to  
secure the trees with a tie and  
they are consequently bent.

# What's at stake for newly planted trees?

Dr Terry Mabbett offers some advice on how to maximise success from your tree planting

**Trees are an important and integral part of sports and amenity facilities and none more so than golf courses. Trees are positioned and planted for maximum playing and visual aesthetic effect, and to enhance the ecology of the facilities, directly through their presence and indirectly through the wildlife which they harbour and support.**

Actual planting material and inputs including the labour required to plant and manage the trees does not come cheap.

Greenkeepers should strive for speedy and sound tree establishment and steady growth thereafter, interrupted only by pruning intervention to ensure mature tree canopies are of appropriate size and shape for their position, with respect to playability and negative impacts on turf such as shading of greens and encouragement of turf diseases like Fusarium patch.

Newly planted trees require a balanced integrated programme of care and maintenance including irrigation, fertilisation and support, the latter supplied by staking and tying.

## Stakes and ties for newly planted trees

Newly planted trees lack the inherent stability of those in situ having grown from seed or natural vegetative propagation. As such they may require support and stability from staking and tying while forming a firm root anchorage.

Staking and tying is used to secure and steady trees to avoid undue stem movements and their transmission underground which may disrupt root anchorage and thereby reduce stability. Tree movements can tear newly developed roots from their tenuous anchorage around soil particles, and especially fine microscopic root hairs absorbing life-giving water and mineral nutrients.

The decision whether to stake and tie trees depends on size and condition of planted stock, site conditions, planting practice and maintenance and function of the planting site. It invariably comes down to cost versus benefits because staking and tying trees will significantly raise overall planting and establishment costs. Indeed it is not always worth the trouble and can be more cost





## Double staking and tying is more appropriate for this substantial tree in an exposed situation

effective to plant replacement trees in the event of failure.

Trees planted on wind susceptible sites and sloping ground are most likely to benefit from staking and tying especially when planted in shallow sandy soils. Trees planted in locations prone to wind funnelling (eg. between buildings) are particularly at risk, as are those in public places prone to vandalism and incidental impact and damage from maintenance machinery and mowers. Underground guying of root balled trees may be the only practical way to avoid such impact and damage and therefore be justified even at the much higher cost.

The most appropriate method will depend on site condition and the size, structure and value of the tree, but also how it was raised in the nursery (e.g. container or field grown) and whether it was removed as a root-balled or bare-root tree.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) recommends use of an angled stake or a pair of stakes for container-grown and root-balled trees and a single low stake for bare-root trees. Flexible stemmed trees should receive more support during the first year from a long stake which is cut lower in the second year. Large transplanted trees are sometimes secured with guys that can be attached to the lower branches or by using an underground guying system. Angled staking is recommended for trees planted on sloping sites.

Stake length depends on height

of tree and proportion buried in the soil, as determined by stake dimensions (length and diameter) and ground condition. Tying a secured stake to a planted tree will create tensions within the stake, the tie and most importantly the tree. Position of the tie in relation to tree height is important because it creates a pivotal point from which leverage is exerted by wind and periodically by vandals.

### How long for and how high?

Choosing stakes and ties for planted trees is essentially a 'horses for courses' decision which has generated a wide variety of materials, products and methods for use within the surprisingly broad and innovative mixture of art and science that is the hallmark of tree staking and tying.

Small and low value tree stock rarely justifies the cost of staking and tying. By offering less wind resistance and minimal flexibility small trees are less likely to move. It is even claimed that some wind-caused movement stimulates root growth probably by opening up otherwise compacted soil. Whips whether they be seedlings, transplants or one year hardwood cuttings, typically with a 1 metre high central stem and little or no side branching, are unlikely to require staking.

On average newly planted trees need two to three years of growth before the root-ball becomes

securely anchored in the ground. Tree stakes and ties are correspondingly required for three years at least, depending on the tree species and nature of soil in which they root. Wood for stakes and synthetics used to manufacture ties should maintain material integrity throughout this period. Position of stakes in the ground and ties around trees should be checked during regular maintenance and adjusted as appropriate.

Stakes are best made of hardwood but not all 'native' hardwoods withstand wet soils like common alder one of few that can resist extended waterlogged conditions. Given the cost and relatively short working life, compared with fence

**TOP LEFT:** A single stout stake and one secure tie is appropriate for this small exotic oak tree

**ABOVE LEFT:** Trees tied to short stakes are vulnerable to vandalism like the remains of the silver birch shown here

**ABOVE:** Secure support and protection is entirely appropriate for this expensive to purchase exotic flowering cherry tree

**BELOW:** If there is no will or way to monitor staked and tied trees then it is best to invest in a tree restraint like the one fitted to the horse chestnut shown here

**ABOVE RIGHT:** A triangle of support for this Robinia in a high [public] pressure location

**FAR RIGHT:** These hornbeams along the fairway could benefit from staking and tying







posts, tree stakes are generally made of softwood machine rounded from 'roundwood' (wood too thin for sawmill use) and treated with preservative to extend durability. Larch is widely used.

Amenity trees will invariably receive fertiliser to stimulate early growth. Such dressings are known to enhance available food substrates in root zones which stimulates and speeds up wood destroying organisms. It may be worth investing in specially treated and cured stakes to combat this problem. Scots pine which is full of natural preservative resins is particularly appropriate for making stakes which will be exposed to aggressive soil conditions.

### Tree ties and tying

High ties on tall stakes are claimed to create weak points just below the crown causing trees to snap off more readily at the tie. Risk may be reduced by using short stakes and correspondingly low-positioned ties, so that the lower stem remains rigid to give root stability while allowing top of the tree to sway in the breeze. This may offer long term benefits but where vandalism is a problem trees are more frequently snapped off at low ties on short stakes.

Tree ties should be sufficiently

tight but not too tight and display the right blend of plastic and elastic stretching in response to the fast increasing girth of young trees. Ties with insufficient 'give' soon give in, rupturing under the force of increasing tree girth. Alternatively they may slacken and fail to secure the tree to its stake and at worst leading to rubbing and chaffing of the soft bark with movement.

Best compromise is adjustable/releasable tree ties. These are straps or belts fitted with buckles and spacers for release and readjustment with increasing tree girth during routine maintenance.

For such a seemingly simple task there is a huge range of materials and products on the market. 'Home-made' ties can be generated quickly and cheaply using strapping cut to length and simply stapled, pinned or nailed to the stake. Three basic choices are plastic, rubber and hessian. The main disadvantage is no practical way of adjusting ties to accommodate growth. Unless untied loss of restraint when no longer required relies on degradation, weakening of the tie and subsequent rupture through forces created by increasing tree girth. Biodegradable ties overcome this problem.

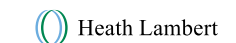
Custom-made ties come in a range of types including cable ties (releasable and non-releasable),

plastic buckled belts and highly popular plastic buckled ties custom made with hoop collar and spacer. Spacers are small but vital components of the tying process to prevent contact and damage between tree and stake. Several spacers are frequently used or collar spacers which are equivalent in length to three or four individual spacers. Super-soft ties made of very soft plastic which acts as a cushion between tree and stake eliminate the need for spacers.

Biodegradable ties made entirely of natural plant materials avoid the problem of removing and disposing synthetic plastic and rubber ties after they have performed their function. Material stability is maintained for two years, begins to breakdown after three and biodegrades soon after.

### Tree restraints

Tree restraints offer an engineered solution to securing trees and a generally maintenance-free option throughout their required working life. They are double-wire devices with one end secured by stapling to the top cut surface of the stake. The other end opens out into a plastic-cushioned and flexible double wire placed around but not in contact with the tree stem about half way up its height.



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Manufacturers claim clearance between restraint ring and tree promotes natural growth responses to wind movement. They are essentially maintenance free and dispense with re-visits to release, re-adjust and sometimes refit straps. Restraints are designed to last throughout tree establishment and will continue to restrain and support trees with stem girth (circumference) up to 20 to 24 cm.

### Tree-tying methods

A single low stake usually driven into the ground prior to planting is standard for bare-root trees. Stake height above ground should be a maximum one third of the height of the tree with a gap of 2.5-3cm separating tree stem and wooden stake. The single low-stake provides sufficient stability and root anchorage at the base while allowing the stem to sway and become thicker from wind-induced, growth-promotion movement.

For root-balled trees two stakes are inserted opposite each other on either side of the tree or three stakes spaced equally around the tree each secured to the tree by a tie. Sometimes a horizontal cross bar is nailed across the two stakes to provide added stability for the

structure, and the tree which is tied to the horizontal bar. All stakes must be inserted outside of the root-ball. This 'belt and braces' option is particularly useful for planting trees on windy sites.

Guying and angled stakes offer specialist options for securing large transplanted trees on difficult sites. Low stakes inserted at a 45 degree angle away from the tree and used to attach secure strong wire (the guys). A rubber hosepipe or other suitable cushion must be used where the wire is in contact with the tree stem or branches, to prevent rubbing, abrasion and cutting.

Angled stakes can also be used with tree ties. They are driven into the ground before or after planting at a 45 degree angle and always leaning into the prevailing wind. Trees are secured to the stake using flexible tree ties which should be monitored during the growing season and adjusted accordingly.

### Innovations and practical problems

Innovation risks trial and error and the latter is sometimes evident. One observed innovation for a group of maple trees involved a buckled belt around two opposite stakes and the centrally positioned

tree in helical style, so the tree was restrained by the crossed over straps. It was clearly quicker than securing each stake to the tree with separate ties, but if one stake dislodged it tended to take the other one with it and deprive the tree of what was only tenuous support in the first place.

Tree staking and tying is 'bread and butter' stuff but not as basic as the need to frequently water newly planted trees. I recently observed some sensible proactive replacement planting of young trees adjacent to 50 year old red flowering horse chestnuts in terminal decline from bacterial bleeding canker. Choice of species was sensible and pleasing. No more horse chestnuts to become infected with bacterial bleeding canker but beech trees three metres high and healthy.

Each was secured by plastic buckled tie to wooden stake and protected for good measure from vandals with black painted iron/steel guard two metre high and stapled to the stake for stability. Each planting represented well in excess of £100 for each tree and its 'tackle' but no-one bothered to water the trees. The diseased horse chestnuts have since been felled to leave a line of dead beech trees and a lot of wasted time and money.

**TOP LEFT:** A field maple literally breaks free from its tie  
**LEFT:** Narrow plastic cable ties are particularly appropriate for bushy conifers with low situated branches  
**ABOVE:** Small native tree planting material sited close together in a drift pattern to produce a thicket does not need staking and tying  
**BELOW:** The string is of no consequence to the support of this hornbeam or the English oak and moreover poses a real hazard to wildlife



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# History in the making

John Deere has a heritage to be proud of but, as Scott MacCallum found out, there is no resting on laurels



**John Deere's personal history goes all the way back to the early 1800s when the then soon-to-become household name from Vermont, USA, started an apprenticeship in a local blacksmith shop. The UK Turf division of the company, however, is much younger and is celebrating its silver anniversary this year.**

It is interesting that 25 years on from its launch, a photograph of the John Deere UK turf pioneers displays a group of vibrant young professionals, nearly all of whom are still connected to the company – no longer quite so young, but still vibrant and professional in every way.

Included within that number is current John Deere UK Managing Director, Richard Johnson, as well as Howard Storey, Richard Charleton, Phil Tong and Ivan Millar, who all still hold key roles within the UK and European business. The other member of the team in the photograph is Graham Williams, who recently retired, having launched the European irrigation division before being fitted for his slippers.

"The people who started the business are still an integral part of the team and I think that speaks volumes," said Joedy Ibbotson, who was recently appointed Turf

Division Sales Manager for the UK and Ireland, having been with Deere for over 12 years.

"Our wealth of experience and relationship with our customers is undoubtedly our biggest asset. We've got five Territory Managers and they've been with us for an average of 15 years," said Joedy.

One of the more recent recruits, however, is Paul Trowman, National Account Manager for Turf Equipment, who took on the role two years ago.

"It's a big company but everyone is so welcoming and wants you to succeed. We are all proud to be working for John Deere," said Paul.

It may be a large multi-national company but as Joedy explains everyone who works for John Deere is aware of what the name stands for.

"We never stray away from the core values of integrity, quality, commitment and innovation. They are at the heart of everything the company does and that will never change," he explained.

Joedy has taken on his new role at a time when John Deere has set itself the task of doubling in size by the year 2018. It sounds a mountain to climb, even more so when you learn that currently Deere has a turnover of \$25 billion, and the target is to hit \$50 billion annual turnover within the next seven years.



The golf business in the UK will provide a relatively small amount of that growth, with the hard yards being made by the agricultural side, but it will still be expected to add its share.

"The agriculture business is very cyclical, and successful years tend to be driven by commodity prices. The beauty for us, as a turf business, is that it's much less prone to fluctuation," said Joedy, speaking from the UK Headquarters at Langar, near Nottingham

So where will the new growth be achieved?

"Overall it will come from the emerging markets – Brazil, Russia, India and China. The world's



population is expanding rapidly and needs to be fed, so we will need to grow more food and become more productive. That's where our agricultural business is going," explained Joedy,

Making in-roads into those new markets is made slightly easier for John Deere as it has one of the most distinctive brands in the world and its leaping deer logo is one of the most recognisable around. Very few people, in very few countries, will not be familiar with it.

"On the golf front it is very difficult to see where any huge expansion will come from. Ultimately it comes down to the number of people playing the game and how many new courses are being constructed. So it will be on market share that we will be looking to make ground."

With every aspiration, or target, must come a strategy designed to make it possible and, in John Deere's case, a two pronged attack has been identified.

"The first very much surrounds new products and innovation and the company is investing very heavily in new technologies. Globally we invest over \$3 million every single day of the year in research and development so you can see how important it is to us.

"We were first to market with Hybrid technology back in '05 and this has been extremely successful for us," he said.

"When we introduce new technology it's always a case of how quickly it will be adopted but I believe that the greenkeeping industry, as a whole, is very quick to embrace new ideas," said Joedy, who also revealed that just last year the company turned out the 500,000th model of the popular Gator utility vehicle from its Wisconsin factory.

The company recently took dealers to Portugal to show them some of the new machines in the pipeline including a robotic mower which is aimed at the domestic market but whose technology could conceivably be transferred to the golf market offering the option of silent night time mowing.

The second prong towards the 2018 target is those John Deere dealers.

"All the main manufacturers make high quality products but the real differentiator is how well you support that product," explained Joedy.

With that in mind, John Deere has created a programme named "Dealer of Tomorrow" as the key to developing this element of the strategy.

"It is a really strong programme and revolves around the support, training and development of our dealers to ensure that they have all the skills and knowledge so that John Deere customers are provided with exactly the service they expect from us."

And that is not as easy as you might think as John Deere's dealer network across UK and Europe extends to an incredible 20,000 people.

Being a division of a mighty company has its advantages when it comes to the ever-vital spare parts service.

"We have an on-line parts services so, much like Tesco and Asda, our customers can go onto the net, select a part and identify that it is correct on screen before ordering. We launched this a few years ago and we've had a lot of positive feedback.

"If we don't have a particular part here in the UK we have a plane that comes over every night from Germany which lands at Birmingham Airport. We have the part with most UK mainland dealers by 8.30am the next morning.

"In this regard we are very fortunate that we can piggyback on the back of the agriculture business. If we didn't have that there is no way as the turf business we'd be able to provide such a service. The business just wouldn't stack up. We are a large agricultural manufacturer and we are very fortunate that it means we can provide such a service to our turf customers. It's certainly not something we would apologise for.

"We utilise the scale of the agriculture business but we are rigorously focused on the turf business. We have 13 people whose core responsibility is golf but then the roles of the back room staff are shared," explained Joedy.

The irrigation side of the business was launched four years ago and John Deere can now point to the number of clubs with full systems in the UK alone as well as many others who have purchased replacement heads as to how quickly John Deere Irrigation has established itself.

But establishing is something at which John Deere is particularly adept.

"When we started out, we could only have dreamt about being involved in events like The Open Championship and the Solheim Cup but we've just come off a successful Open Championship, at Royal St George's, where we were a Preferred Supplier, and later this month it is the same with the

Solheim Cup at Killeen Castle, in Ireland," said Joedy, who also revealed that they had recently signed a machinery deal with Donald Trump for his new course in Aberdeenshire.

"That we now regularly support major tournaments is testimony to how far we've come as a division and it makes us extremely proud.

John Deere is equally keen to support BIGGA and has been a Gold Key supporter since the early days of the programme.

"We want to be involved with the learning and development side of BIGGA as it fits well with our core values and desire to build long term relationships," said Joedy.

Another event which may make a return to the golf calendar is the popular John Deere Team Championship which, for a number of years, provided additional funding for BIGGA's education programme based on the number of teams which entered, and whose last playing culminated in a spectacular final at Turnberry.

It does all make you wonder what the young Master Deere, who started his apprenticeship back in 1821, would have made of it all. Now, 190 years on, his name is known the world over and appears on the side of sophisticated, beautifully-liveried green machinery at clubs of a global sport which barely existed when he was alive.

John Deere UK may have a more modern heritage but the progress would have made their founder proud.

**"We want to be involved with the learning and development side of BIGGA as it fits well with our core values and desire to build long term relationships"**

**Joedy Ibbotson**





# Smart management

Kerran Daly MG looks at how you can keep a well maintained golf course in times of austerity measures





**In a profession where growth is an essential prerequisite for quality work and happy customers the last thing greenkeepers want or need is low or, even, no growth. Growth is an absolute necessity for the health of the turf and the development of smooth, true playing surfaces.**

Out in the wider world of business the same rule applies. Very low or no growth in the national economy spells trouble for all. The recent recession and the current austerity measures illustrate the point well. More unemployment, less disposable income and less corporate hospitality all add up to less golf being played and less income for golf clubs. This, of course, does not apply in all cases but as a general rule times are difficult for the average golf club.

It is at times like these that golf clubs look very closely at their budgets in an effort to identify areas in which they can increase their income and reduce their costs. Greenkeeping budgets may come under even closer scrutiny with requests from clubs to reduce expenditure.

**Proactive management**

First and foremost the greenkeeping department must recognise that doing all they can to help the club financially is in their best, long term, interests. Trying to maintain unrealistic budget levels, which

were set in more financially sound times could be seen as negative and unhelpful by the club. On the other hand, a positive concern to assist in reducing the club's financial burden will be appreciated and gain respect. Indeed, in the most severe of cases it may also keep the club in business and protect greenkeepers' livelihoods.

Course Managers should therefore be proactive in developing realistic, sustainable budgets. Indeed the manager of any department in any business has a responsibility to produce the goods in the most efficient way possible. Under the current economic climate this has become one of the most critical aspects of the job.

**Build in flexibility**

It is important to note that it is not the Course Manager's job to set the budget. That duty falls to whoever is in charge of the overall finances of the club, be it the Owner, the Treasurer or the Chairman of

the Board. The job of the Course Manager is to prepare budgets for the Club to accept, reject or modify. Note the plural 'budgets'.

If you were recommending a new piece of machinery one method would be to put forward at least four options:

The most expensive, with all the bells and whistles, which you probably cannot afford.

The machine you want and think you can afford.

The cheaper option which has its disadvantages.

And finally, the 'staying as you are' option, without a new machine and the consequences for the condition of the course.

When constructing the budget the same objective should apply. While you do not need to put forward four distinct and different budgets, you should be giving as much variation and options for the club to suit its current financial position.

This may best be achieved by setting out your preferred proposal for each area of the budget in a spreadsheet as you would normally do and then listing the variations to your proposal immediately after each section, clearly stating the additional cost or the possible saving and the consequences it will have for the course.

See table.

Topdressing makes up the major part of the greens budget. If asked to make savings in the materials budget we could put forward:

Reduce topdressing for greens to 50 tonnes @£46.00 per tonne for this year only = £2,300.00. This results in a budget saving on greens of approximately 20%. This will slow down progress on soil exchange and improved surface drainage targets, but will not cause lasting damage as long as we return to optimum dressing quantities when funds become available.

Alternatively you may decide that maintaining the greens topdressing is imperative and decide not to put forward this proposal and instead suggest the necessary savings in other areas of the budget.

*The four main areas of the budget are labour, materials, machinery and course improvements. Some points of note when you are being asked to make savings are:*

**Labour**

It is clear that reductions in labour are the most crippling and will have the biggest impact on the condition and presentation of

**Materials for greens budget (figures for demonstration purposes only):**

Allocation	Area	Qty	Unit	Unit Cost £	Total Cost £
<b>Greens</b>					
Fertiliser	1 hectare	40	20kg	35.00	1400.00
Top-dressing	1 hectare	100	tonnes	46.00	4600.00
Seed	1 hectare	10	20kg	100.00	1000.00
Herbicide	1 hectare	2	litres	28.00	56.00
Wormkiller	1 hectare	4	litres	15.00	60.00
Insecticide	1 hectare	1.5	litres	25.00	37.50
Wetting agent	1 hectare	100	litres	12.35	1235.00
Fungicide	1 hectare	100	litres	15.00	1500.00
Conditioner	1 hectare	10	20 litres	41.60	416.00
					<b>10304.50</b>





any detrimental long-term consequences.

- Similarly as already mentioned above with topdressings. Indeed, it is prudent, if you are intending to deep scarify on a dressing-based rootzone, to remove a heavy application of top-dressing from the budget showing a saving of at least £1000 and simply recycle the rootzone which is brought to the surface by the scarifier. Make the point, in writing that this saving can be set against the cost for hiring a machine to do the work. (See photo)

- The cost of dressings for tees and fairway divotting may be reduced by sourcing local materials and mixing and screening on site. This could be investigated and costed out, as could the use of your own homemade compost.

- Spot treating or individually treating turf areas for weeds, pests, diseases and wetting agent for dry patch can reduce usage dramatically. One has to be alert and responsive but it is more efficient and less expensive if budget reductions are required. Blanket

the course, as such, they should be considered as a last resort. It is therefore most important that managers are in a position to justify the labour requirement as they will surely be asked to do.

Managers should carry out a straightforward exercise in totalling man-hours currently available. This is a simple matter of multiplying the number of men by the number of days they work per annum and the hours they work each day. Remember that they do not work during rest breaks. This will give a total man-hours figure per annum. It is simpler if weekend overtime is justified as a separate item.

It is then a case of listing each area of the course and all operations carried out. It is easier to do this in two separate blocks of April to September and October to March as the work carried out in these periods is quite different. For each job state the man-hours it takes and multiply it by the number of times it is done.

Eg. Triplex mowing greens (April to September) = 1 man x 3.5 hours x 120 times = 420 man-hours.

Topdressing greens (April to September) = 3 men x 6 hours x 6 times = 108 man-hours

Add the totals for the two six month periods together to get the total annual man-hours required to maintain the course.

The result of this exercise should clearly show that all staff are gainfully employed and any cuts will

have severe consequences for the course. Having these facts and figures to hand will greatly strengthen your position in any negotiations on staffing levels.

Weekly time sheets are also very useful in justifying these figures and clearly showing the work carried out. Staff should be encouraged to see the benefit of having a record of the work they do.

It is also prudent to discuss with the staff any financial pressure and remind them that their importance to the club will be all the more apparent if they are multi-skilled and fully professional in their attitude. Taking on new skills and training will increase their value and their work opportunities for the future.

### Materials

Material purchases can be an area where greenkeepers tend to follow what for them has been a successful formula year on year and there is a reluctance to change greatly from it. This is the entirely understandable 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' syndrome. For this reason it tends to be the last area to look for savings, apart from ensuring you get quality products at the best price from suppliers. However, areas to look at might be:

- Reduction of the intensity of an overseeding programme, cutting down to half rate or missing one year altogether will slow up improvements but should not have

**Topdressing makes up the major part of the greens budget. Reduced costs here will slow down progress on soil exchange and improved surface drainage targets, but will not cause lasting damage as long as we return to optimum dressing quantities when funds become available**



applications where they may not be strictly necessary can be very wasteful of resources and money.

- Fertiliser rates may be historic and therefore it could be worthwhile suggesting experimentation with reduced rates as a trial. High fertiliser rates on large areas such as fairways eat up the cash. It is important to be sure that this is strictly necessary.

Reducing excessive growth may also have knock-on effects in reducing fuel bills, machinery wear, fungicide requirement and the need for expenditure on PGR's.

### Machinery

In difficult financial times the machinery replacement budget is often the first to be hit. Greenkeepers are asked to make machinery last just one more year but this can be costly in repairs and downtime and can lead to a serious decline in the fleet, which can prove even more expensive to rectify the following year.

- Dealers should be asked for competitive tenders for hire purchase, lease hire or contract hire as these are essential in offering the club an alternative funding strategy.

- Rather than replacing machines, which are used less frequently, it may prove cheaper simply to hire them until funds for purchase become available. Another alternative might be to purchase such machines by agreement with one or two other clubs in the local area for multi-site use.

- Suppliers should also be asked for all figures related to repairs and running costs as this should be a serious consideration, more especially as fuel costs continue to rise.

As an example, where funds simply are not available to replace a ride-on fairway mower, which needs extensive costly repair, then it might be worthwhile costing out a tractor-mounted hydraulic, or set of gangs towed by a tractor which is currently standing idle most of the summer.

While these machines are not as efficient as ride-on mowers, they are much cheaper both to purchase and to run and produce a good, and in some cases better finish.

They are also much easier and cheaper to maintain and if cash flow is the problem they may fill a gap, which your club may appreciate. Such alternatives, while not ideal, may greatly reduce the necessity to look for savings elsewhere in the budget such as staffing levels.

### Course Improvements programme

Course improvements eg new tees, tree planting schemes or bunker refurbishment should not take funding priority over basic maintenance of the main playing surfaces. It is not for Course Managers to decide this but it is important to make the case so that all are aware of the consequences of building new tees, which you then do not have the resources to maintain properly. Some may not see it this way but they may thank you later for pointing it out even though it may seem obvious to you. Spending time and money on a conservatory when the house is falling down is not good business.

Serious budget reductions can be made by doing course improvements in-house, as opposed to contracting out. The cost of training staff and hiring machines or purchasing used machines is soon recouped with construction works coming in at a half to two-thirds less than the contracted out price. There is the additional benefit that staff derive greater satisfaction from learning and practising new skills and completing a whole job rather than tidying up behind others.

# Instrata

## contact

The power of three actives provides fast, *year round* curative and preventative disease control at your fingertips. Instrata is the simple one-product solution to keep *'on the shelf'*.

**Don't forget**

Staff are the main asset in any organisation. You can have the best school facilities in the world but if you do not have enough well-trained, qualified teachers the kids will learn nothing, so budget reductions should be aimed at those areas which will least affect the course and have minimal long-term detriment.

If asked to produce 10% savings, aim to produce 15% and offer several ways of achieving this.

Be clear, by explaining in writing, the consequences of any proposed reduction and in stating the need to return to optimum budget levels as funds become available.

Matching budgets to income can be a stimulating, creative and rewarding endeavour. Remain positive. Some of the best quality courses have historically been run on a shoestring. This could be why they are some of the best quality courses.

**Kerran Daly MG, is Senior Consultant for Greensward Sports Consultancy**

[www.greenswardsports.co.uk](http://www.greenswardsports.co.uk)



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# Oh Carolina!



Rob Clare is the former Course Manager at Skipton Golf Club and current Course Manager at Brough Golf Club in Humberside. In July 2010 he graduated from Myerscough College as top student on the Turf Science course and was nominated to attend Jacobsen's Future Turf Managers programme in the USA. In this short article he describes his trip to North Carolina.

**Back in the summer of 2010, I graduated from Myerscough College with a Foundation Degree in Turf Science. It had been a challenging three years, as I had been a part-time student whilst fulfilling my role as head greenkeeper of Skipton Golf Club. A few weeks before graduation, I received a letter telling me I had won the Ransomes Jacobsen Cup for best part time student in my cohort.**

I was really taken aback and honoured to win such a prestigious award. I imagined the award took the shape of a trophy in recognition of the work I had put in, so it was with great delight that I learned that I'd been nominated for an all-

expenses-paid trip to the USA. I was off to Charlotte in North Carolina on Jacobsen's Future Turf Managers programme and I was privileged to be the first European student to be invited.

I was going to their head office and manufacturing facility where I would meet up with 27 students from American colleges who had been recommended by their professors as being top level candidates with great prospects of becoming future leaders in the turf care industry. Since its inception back in the 1970s, over 700 students have participated in the programme.

So, in the middle of May I flew out to America where I was to experience a fantastic four day programme,

which was both educational and fun. We worked hard throughout, starting each day at 6.30am with breakfast then onto a coach for the day's scheduled events.

We began with a tour of the facilities at the two Jacobsen plants in Charlotte, experiencing the production process of mowers and utility vehicles from raw steel and component parts to the finished product.

This was followed by classroom presentations by Roch Gaussoin, Professor of Horticulture at the University of Nebraska and Steve Randall, Senior Manager, Chapter Outreach at the GCSAA.

After lunch we re-boarded the bus for the short drive to the Quail Hollow Club, where Course Super-



Rob receives his students at Sage Valley certificate





Some of the group at Jacobsen's



Ride and drives at Quail Hollow Club

intendent, Jeff Kent, explained how he prepared for the recently completed Wells Fargo PGA Tour Championship and the reinstatement he was doing following the tournament. We were then able to ride and drive a selection of Jacobsen equipment on a dedicated area of the course.

In the evening we were taken to a local kart racing track for rest and relaxation, but in America everything is competitive, so it was a great night racing karts in teams in a Le Mans type endurance race.

The following day we again boarded the bus immediately after breakfast and drove a couple of hours south into South Carolina, for a visit to Sage Valley Golf Club in Graniteville.

The story goes that the owner was refused membership just over the state line at Augusta National, so having made his fortune as the builder of virtually every Walmart store in the USA, he decided to construct his own course that would rival its illustrious neighbour.

The course at Sage Valley is incredible and we were fortunate to walk the course with Chuck Green, the highly entertaining Superintendent at this ultra-exclusive private members' club.

He doesn't allow rotary mowers anywhere on the course, so the rough is mown with cylinder mowers and as you would expect, it's immaculate as is the whole complex.

After a buffet lunch and tour of his greenkeeping facility we got



back on the coach heading for the state capitol, Columbia.

Here we visited to the sports facilities at the University of South Carolina. They are known as the Gamecocks and we toured the new baseball stadium and the hugely impressive 80,000-seat football stadium with Clark Cox, Field Manager. He explained the techniques he uses to maintain the different playing surfaces at both venues.

We spent the early evening at a local bistro in Columbia, before returning to the hotel in Charlotte. Some of the group went to bed and some didn't!

The final day saw a later start with a mid-morning brunch and presentation of certificates of atten-

dance and a complimentary one-year subscription to the GCSAA, courtesy of Jacobsen. Jacobsen's President, Dan Wilkinson, presented the certificates and in a closing speech thanked us for our attendance and wished us well for the future.

Overall it was a fantastic experience; we were looked after extremely well by all of the Jacobsen staff and although we worked hard, Jacobsen also made sure we were well entertained in the evenings.

I would like to thank Jacobsen for the great opportunity this trip provided, it was a real learning experience and good friends were made. It certainly made the last three years worth all the hard work!



# Tank-mixing

Graham Paul offers another opportunity to earn valuable BASIS points

**To mix, or not to mix – that is the question. In this article we shall consider the legal position regarding the practice of tank-mixing chemical pesticides and look at why we may need to adopt this strategy in the management of amenity areas.**

The Amenity industry has traditionally been a haven for 'pure' chemical sprays; one product to do one job. The complication of combining two chemicals together to get a more complete result has not been a priority for most Groundsmen in the past. However, in the agricultural market it has been a different story. Intensively farmed arable crops demand a variety of inputs to control weeds pests and diseases whilst the cost in fuel, manpower and the lost yield caused by disturbing the crop with machinery need to be kept to a minimum to maximise profit, so now is the time to consider this working practice more seriously. The question often asked is; are you legally allowed to tank-mix two or more approved pesticides together? When the Control of Pesticides Regulations were first drawn up and agreed by Parliament in 1986, the rules regarding tank-mixing of approved products appeared to be stricter than they are today. Under Schedule 3 of the original regulations, section 2 declared:

"No person shall combine or mix for use two or more pesticides except in accordance with the conditions of the approvals given in relation to those pesticides."

On paper this looked 'cut-and-dried' and was interpreted by many as meaning; if a mixture was not officially sanctioned ie. on the label or on a list of approved mixes, then it was outlawed. The regulations were updated in 1997 by The Control of Pesticides (Amendment) Regulations 1997 which made the position a bit clearer:

"No person shall combine or mix for use two or more pesticides unless —

(a) all of the conditions of approval given in relation to each of those pesticides, and

(b) the labelling of the container in which each of those pesticides

has been sold, supplied or otherwise marketed to that person, can be complied with."

The answer to the question; "Are you legally allowed to mix chemicals?" is "YES you are". Tank mixing, when referring to a distributor or contractor backed tank-mix recommendation, is perfectly legal provided all the label requirements are followed for the tank-mix constituents and partner products. This is called a 'convenience tank-mix' and allows a reduction in the number of spray operations.

However, if a manufacturer or approval holder wishes to claim enhanced activity or biological compatibility from a specific tank-mix (called a 'positive tank-mix'), this must be demonstrated to the Chemical Regulation Directorate (CRD) to be allowed to be part of the label claims. This is not required when referring to a distributor or contractor backed tank-mix that does not feature on the product label.

There are separate rules governing the mixing of anticholinesterase compounds:

"No person shall combine or mix for use two or more pesticides which are anticholinesterase compounds unless such a mixture is expressly permitted by the conditions of the approval given in relation to at least one of those pesticides or by the labelling of the container in which at least one of those pesticides has been sold, supplied or otherwise marketed to that person."

In order to stay legal when tank-mixing it is important to stick to the following guidelines:

- Check with your supplier that the proposed mixture is suitable for the intended use. A supplier offering to support a mix should have tested it and will know if there are any compatibility issues or effects on the performance of the products.

- Note that when mixing two or more pesticides in a tank-mix all conditions of approval on all of the product labels and safety data sheets must be complied with.

- If any product in the mix is subject to a LERAP requirement, then this applies to the tank-mix as well.

- Two or more anticholinesterase compounds should not be mixed unless such a mixture is expressly permitted by the conditions of the regulatory approval on at least one of the products.

Once all ingredients have been carefully mixed the tank must be continuously agitated and the mixture applied immediately. It must not be held as a mixture in the tank for longer than necessary as there is a risk of components reacting with one another or precipitating out of solution and blocking the filters and pipe work in the sprayer.

So why do we need to consider a change to the way chemicals are applied in the Amenity sector? The main reasons are:

- To reduce the chance of fungicides developing resistance – many of the new products that contain a single active ingredient have been assessed by Government scientists as having a greater risk of encouraging the development of resistant strains of fungal pathogens. (See Table 1 below)

- To improve the effectiveness of fungicide applications – increasing the reliability of control and in some cases reducing the overall cost involved.

- To increase the weed spectrum of selective herbicides sprays so that the job can be completed with one application.

- To improve the efficiency of spray application by reducing the frequency of operations.

The practice of tank-mixing is especially important in producing a strategy for control of fungal diseases of turf. Many of the new active ingredients being introduced are likely to develop resistance if used too frequently as a single product. The table below shows the data used to assess the likelihood of a single active ingredient encouraging the development of resistant strains of fungi. The work is carried out by the Government sponsored 'Fungicide Resistance Action Committee' (FRAC)

In high disease situations, where the infection is already established within the plant, the pathogen will continue to express itself through leaf symptoms even after the application of a fungicide and they





of Iprodione to control Anthracnose is a relatively recent addition to the Chipco Green label. This trial demonstrated excellent control of the foliar blight stage of the disease, especially when applied with 'P-Kursor'. The results were particularly impressive, as the Chipco Green in the mix was used at 10L/ha (half the normal rate) - a factor that has implications for cost savings as well as in reducing the impact of chemicals in the environment. The excellent performance of this treatment is attributed in part to the beneficial effects of P-Kursor in encouraging rapid recovery of the health of the grass plants after the fungicide has cured the disease.

The third area where tank-mixing can be extremely useful is in the control of weeds in turf with selective herbicides. The variability of weeds present in turf combined with the diverse growing conditions such as climate and soil type; make it difficult for manufacturers to come up with a product that suits all weeds in all situations. A sports pitch with deep-rooted weeds such as thistle or docks might benefit from an application with extra 2,4-D or MCPA to improve the effectiveness against these species.

Selective weedkillers may also benefit from the addition of a liquid fertiliser to give a weed and feed application. This can sometimes be accomplished by the addition of a liquid fertiliser product or a soluble fertiliser such as Urea to the mix. If using a soluble product, one should ensure that the fertiliser is completely dissolved before adding the herbicide. Weed and feed can often give faster, more complete weed control than using a selective herbicide on its own.

As a general rule, do not mix selective herbicides with fungicides, as the wetting systems in the latter are very powerful and can produce severe scorch in the grass. Turf managers should seek advice on this from a technically qualified supplier before mixing selective herbicides.

will continue until the life cycle has been arrested. Mixing a product that has curative properties with a fast acting systemic fungicide can provide an answer in this situation.

Many fungicide products now contain two or more active ingredients to give a broader spectrum of control with reduced risk of resistance eg. 'Astute', 'Dedicate', 'Headway' and 'Instrata'. However, tank-mixing gives complete freedom and flexibility to choose exactly the right treatment for the situation in hand – providing it is backed by reliable recommendations from a technically competent supplier or contractor.

Research has shown that the effectiveness of some fungicide applications can be improved by adding growth stimulants to the spray mix. These can work alongside the fungicide, encouraging rapid healing once the disease has been treated. In such a trial, conducted by the (STRI) the fungicide iprodione (Chipco Green) was applied with the 'P-Kursor', a product designed to promote plant health and support the plant's natural defences.

The recommendation for the use



## SELF ASSESSMENT

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim two BASIS points if the questions are answered correctly!

Circle the correct answer(s)

1) When did the Control of Pesticides Regulations first appear on the statute books?

- a) 1985
- b) 1997
- c) 1986
- d) 1984

2) In the amended Regulations, which group of chemicals is governed by special regulations when it comes to tank-mixing?

- a) Anti-coagulant compounds
- b) Anticholinesterase compounds
- c) Antifoaming products
- d) Anti-cholesterol agents

3) If a pesticide manufacturer or approval holder wishes to claim enhanced activity from a specific tank-mix involving one or more of their products they must provide data to which of the following organisations?

- a) The British Crop Protection Council
- b) The Environment Agency
- c) The Chemical Regulation Directorate
- d) Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

4) In the trial data for the Anthracnose tank-mix trial, how long were the results recorded after the initial treatment?

- a) 3 months
- b) 2 months
- c) 34 days
- d) 83 days

5) As a general rule when tank-mixing selective herbicides, which type of product should be avoided to prevent problems with scorching?

- a) Insecticides
- b) Fungicides
- c) Growth Regulators
- d) Liquid Fertilisers

Active Ingredient	FRAC Code	Fungicide Group	Risk of Resistance	Mobility	Products
Azoxystrobin	11	QoI (Strobilurin)	High	XMS	Heritage
Fludioxonil	12	Phenylpyrrole	Moderate	C	Medallion
Iprodione	2	Dicarboximide	Moderate	C/LS	Chipco Green
Myclobutanil	3	DMI	Moderate	XMS	Masalon
Propiconazole	28	DMI	Moderate	XMS	Banner Maxx
Pyraclostrobin	11	QoI (Strobilurin)	High	LS	Insignia,
Mascot Eland					
Trifloxystrobin	11	QoI (Strobilurin)	High	LS	Scorpio

### NOTES:

• FRAC (Fungicide Resistance Action Committee) codes indicate the biochemical target site of action. Products with the same code, target the same biochemical site and are therefore cross resistance could occur

• Fungicide Group: Products are grouped together by their mode of action against the fungi. DMI = demethylation Inhibitor; QoI = 'Quinone outer Inhibitor'

• Mobility: C = Contact (= protectant) fungicide; LS = locally systemic; XMS = xylem-mobile systemic (sometimes called 'acropetal penetrant')

Table 1 - FUNGICIDE PRODUCTS USED IN AMENITY – CONTAINING ONLY ONE ACTIVE INGREDIENT

# A QUICK GUIDE TO...

## SUCCESSFUL OVERSEEDING

To ensure that you get the most from your overseeding programme there are a number of issues to take on board

### 1. Planning

Make time for your operation. Realistically evaluate what you want to achieve and draw up a schedule of how to get there. Included in this schedule should be comprehensive evaluation throughout the year after application. Part of your research should include that you are buying the correct mixture, species and variety of grasses for your situation.

### 2. Buy the best you can afford

As with all things in life not all grasses are the same, within any species there are different varieties known as cultivars. In trials some cultivars perform better than others when assessed for traits such as wear tolerance, recovery, shoot density etc.

Know the traits that are important to you and research the best cultivars or mixture of cultivars that suit your situation.

You will pay a premium for a mixture of the better performing cultivars, but you wouldn't expect to pay Ford Mondeo prices for a Lamborghini, and the same is true of grass seed.

### 3. Timing

Throw away the general rule of thumb for overseeding, that it is best carried out in early Autumn.

This can work at any time the soil temperature is favourable. If you have a comprehensive, efficient irrigation supply the warmer soil and air temperatures the better. Alternatively, seeding in advance of warm weather or moisture allows utilising quieter times and waiting patiently for germination.

### 4. Application - Ensure good seed soil contact

Having bought a bag of quality grass seed you want to make sure that you get good



germination in order to take advantage of all the desirable traits you have selected it for.

There is no right or wrong way to create the correct environment for germination, seeding into linear grooves, hollow cores or tine holes can all work, the most important thing is to ensure that the seed has good contact with the soil.

In order to germinate a seed has to take in moisture through its permeable outer coating, as the seeds swell a chemical reaction takes place and germination is initiated. It is vital that the seed remains moist throughout this process in order for the process to take place as quickly and as smoothly as possible.

Fluctuation in available moisture can hinder the process and as with all plants, grass seedlings that have a stressful germination are less likely to ever be as healthy as plants that germinate under most favourable conditions.

Seed that is left on the surface risks being dried out and becoming unviable, similarly seed will not germinate well in thatch and seed that does germinate will be weak and won't survive long, because it hasn't rooted into a good growing medium.

### 5. Work to seed at the required depth

It is important that seed is not sown too deeply. A seed only has a small store of energy for the emerging plant to use during the germination period.

The emerging shoot, called a plumule, needs to be able to push through the soil surface and begin the process of

photosynthesis as quickly as possible, to start processing it owns energy and establishing. If a seed is sown too deep then the plumule has a long way to travel to the surface and risks running out of energy before it gets there. Ask your seed rep what depth you should be aiming to sow your chosen mixture at.

### 6. Watering

Assuming adequate soil temperatures and good seed soil contact the seedlings of some species can appear within seven days although generally 14 -21 days is more likely.

During this period irrigation is really the only controllable resource you have. Ideally the surface should be permanently damp and as soon as the surface feels dry and no material particles stick to your hand the surface should be covered with a light sprinkling of water.

### 7. Establishment

When seedlings start to appear and the sward is forming, applications of water should become less frequent and heavier, allowing drying time between applications in order to prevent damping off.

With regards to first cut it is obviously an advantage to raise the height of cut especially for bent grasses, this need not be as drastic as you think and many newer cultivars of bent grass can take a first cut as low as 7-9mm, for ryegrasses on tees 10-12mm is fine.





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# Back in time

## to this month in... 1972

Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by?

Perhaps your grandad was a greenkeeper and has something stored away in the loft? Maybe an Association tie, or a journal? If so we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in the early part of the last century, but anything you have would be worth considering for future editions of this article.

Please contact us on 01347 833800 or email Elliott Small, BIGGA Past Chairman,

elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk

*Back in time* looks back at cuttings of greenkeeping news from days gone-by. 2012 will be a landmark year, as it will be the centenary of Greenkeeping Associations, as well as 25 years since BIGGA was formed. Each month we will look back at the current month, but in a different year, from over the last hundred. This month we travel back to September 1972.

## The British Golf Greenkeeper

The September 1972 issue of *The British Golf Greenkeeper*, the official magazine of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association, edited by Fred Hawtree, contained an article (below) from the Chipman Chemical Company on The Treatment of Fungal Diseases.

Included in the advice was "By knowing the conditions which fungi find most desirable it is possible to produce a non-conductive environment by good cultural turf management practices."

The tractor shown on the cover is a Howard Bolene 1477, which is being seen towing a barge on the Grand Union Canal.



SEPTEMBER 1972

5p

### The treatment of Fungal Diseases

*The CHIPMAN CHEMICAL COMPANY* condenses much useful advice on avoiding and treating fungal disease.

Late Summer and Autumn marks the opening of the season for unvisited and unwanted guests of British golf greens. These are the fungal diseases and the reluctant hosts are our very hardworking turf grasses. Fungi are parasitic and being unable to synthesize organic food, attack the plant material of their host, penetrating the cell wall or entering wounds or natural openings and leaving the characteristic symptoms of disease in the grass plant when the infected cells die.

Some common turf fungi depend solely upon living grasses for support, whereas others are able to continue to survive after the host has died, living on the dead plant material. Both can produce thousands of spores capable of infecting a fresh host. In addition some fungi can form a 'resting body' which is able to persist for many years, even in unsuitable conditions and carry over disease from one year to the next. There are therefore many sources of infection, and if allowed to develop and spread these fungi can cause severe damage.

By knowing the conditions which fungi find most desirable it is possible to produce a non-conductive environment by good cultural turf management practices. It is significant that the conditions which discourage fungi and also those which most favour the healthy growth of fine grasses. Worthwhile measures can be summarised as follows:-

*Aim to reduce surface moisture*

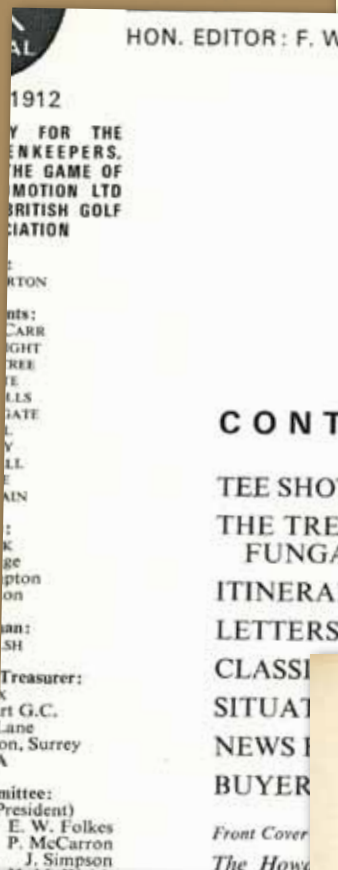
- Improve drainage where necessary.
- Carry out spiking, slitting, raking, mowing regularly and at the optimum time.
- Switch dew from grass.
- Remove any barriers to the flow of air across the turf.
- Reduce shade.
- Avoid leaving grass long in winter.
- Avoid smothering turf with top dressings.

*Maintain fertility and acidity*

- Use balanced fertilisers at the correct time.
- Avoid the late use of fertilisers high in nitrogen as compared with other elements.

*Avoid mechanical damage*

- Remember that spores enter through the wounds.



News



from the Sections

Special occasions

Sept. 6 Southern Section Autumn

**Third Annual Dinner/Dance**  
Will be held at The Empire Hotel, Fosse Road, Leicester on Saturday 14th October 1972 at 7.0 pm for 7.30 pm

**New members**  
I would like to welcome to this section the following new members: D. McTurk Esq, 94 Melrose Road, Thringstone, Leics. (Lingdale Golf Club), J. C. Stonebridge Esq, 80 Winslow Drive, Wigston, Leicester. (Glen Gorse Golf Club).

**NORTH-WEST**

**Chairman:**  
R. Vickers,  
Lough Golf Club

**By H. M. Walsh**  
Hon. Secretary  
Hortobury Cottage,  
Old Links Golf Club,  
Montserrat, Bolton,  
Lancs.

**Autumn tournament**  
DUE TO THE KINDNESS OF THE Captain and the Directors of Old Links Golf Club Chorley Old Road, Montserrat, Bolton, our Autumn Tournament will be played over three courses Thursday will be

LEFT: Around the Green circa 1972

BELOW: An advert for the IOG's Exhibition at Motspur Park, New Malden, prior to its move to Windsor Racecourse. Catching the attention of many a greenkeeper, sits a close-up of a pretty young female. It's unknown whether this was part of the promotion for Supaturf Fertilisers or a cheeky addition by the magazine Art department!

RIGHT: A series of adverts from the issue, with Ransomes appearing separately from Jacobsen, in the days before they merged

**Easy Guider**



**Warren's A-34 Kentucky Bluegrass Comes Back Faster!**

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SEPTEMBER 1972

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**MAKE A DATE FOR....**

*The Institute of Groundsmanship International Exhibition 1972*

to be held at  
*The University of London Athletic Ground,*  
*Motspur Park,*  
*New Malden Surrey*  
*on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> of September*



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The British Golf Greenkeeper

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**Letters to the Editor**

Flat 20 Eastmoor close  
Foley Road East,  
Streety,  
Sutton Coldfield  
7th July 1972

Dear Mr. Hawtree,

I am very interested to read in 'Tee Shots' in the current issue of The British Golf Greenkeeper, your reference to Golf Clubs on Common Land, and in particular, Bulwell Forest (not 'Bitwell') near Nottingham and Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham.

You may be interested to know that I started my golf at the former, and now play at Streety, Sutton Coldfield, the Sutton Coldfield Club.

What is more interesting, however, is the fact that my Grandfather, Edmund Williamson who was the station master at the Bulwell Forest Railway station, offered the use of his 'parlour' in 1887 to the few gentlemen of Nottingham who decided that Bulwell Common was an ideal place for their game of golf, and his son Tom aged 7 acted as the first caddy, carrying a few clubs (loose) under his arm with which to make the tees.

Son Tom (my own father) eventually became the first Club, at the age of 16, after having learnt the art of Berwick, Scotland. This was in 1896, he later moved to Hollinwell. He remained pro. until his death in 1950, Club, although he had many tempting offers to move else.

My father was actually appointed on a 3 months' trial any further reference to this, he used to joke that he was 'It is further interesting to note that his first Midland Club was at the Sutton Coldfield Golf Club in 1897, when he was As leading Midland Professional, on the occasion of Midland Amateurs', he was always drawn to play Carl B

P.S. I believe there was a time in the early 1900's when had designed and made, or altered, nearly every course Nottingham.



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Dear Sir,

May I refer to Mr. C. A. Moore's letter in the April issue. I would endorse the opinion of Mr. Adrian Robertshaw (January issue). The automatic pop-up sprinkler system of watering greens only accentuates the development of soft greens, thatch, black slime and fusarium when it and other treatments are abused or neglected.

There can be no doubt that the pop-up system is the irrigation system for all modern golf courses. Its use should pose no special problems for progressive greenkeepers. Minor drawbacks may arise on some older courses.

The combination of good greens and the pop-up system is not due to 'good fortune' but rather skilful methods of greenkeeping as outlined by Mr. Robertshaw in conjunction with automatic watering.

Obviously it takes time to adapt to any new method. After the first year most problems should be ironed out. So one must be patient. As one gains experience with the automatic pop-up system one will be pleasantly surprised.

Yours faithfully,  
R. J. LANE

7 Houghton Road  
Shifnal  
Shropshire  
TF11 8DD

Dear Sir,

I reply to Mr. Moore's letter in the April issue of the British Golf Greenkeeper about the pop-up system.

I have read with interest about pop-ups in the magazine and in my opinion soft greens thatch, black slime and fusarium are caused by mis-use of the pop-up system.

I've had this system for two years at Blairgowrie Golf Club and would recommend it to

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Specialist

James de Havilland takes a closer look at the intricacies of current machinery

# The anatomy of... Top dressers



When choosing a top dresser, job one is to select between broadcast and direct drop designs. Each has its merits. Try and think beyond the unit's most obvious use and consider alternative applications, such as filling a bunker or moving bulk material.

Modern top dresser units have enough design variation within them to make selecting the right one more involved than it may at first appear. We look at the all-new Rink SP950 pedestrian and Rink DS800 trailed models from Charterhouse Turf Machinery

## Charterhouse Turf Machinery Rink top dressers

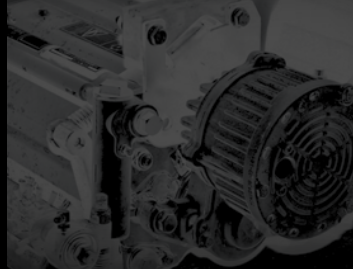
Rink DS top dresser model numbers helpfully indicate the unit's level load hopper capacity in cubic metres. So the DS800 has a capacity of 0.80m<sup>3</sup>, the DS1200 offering 1.2 m<sup>3</sup> and so on. The DS range is offered in capacities of up to 3.8 m<sup>3</sup>, with the DS800 coming in both trailed or mounted versions, fitting kits for the latter enabling them to bolt directly to turf trucks such as a John Deere ProGator or Toro HD Workman. Trailed model Prices range from £9,000 for the trailed DS800, the extra high capacity DS3800 listing at £26,778. Mounted DS800 units are £8,800 plus a mounting kit specific to a given turf truck costing £938.

Rink direct discharge models are offered in mounted and trailed versions with spread widths from 1005mm through to 2020mm – as indicated by the model number. Prices start at £8,000 for the Rink 1000.

New for 2011, the pedestrian SP950 is a direct discharge design with a capacity of 0.33 m<sup>3</sup> and a spread width of 950mm. It is ideally suited to top dressing bowling greens and any turf with restricted access. Priced £7,600, the SP950 is powered by a 6.5hp Vanguard petrol engine and features a hydrostatically driven tricycle undercarriage. This is designed to enable the unit to turn within its own length.

## Step-by-step Analysis...

### Top dressers



**Top dressers fall into two main designs types; those that broadcast using spinning discs and those that 'drop' the material to a spread determined essentially by the width of the unit. It also follows that these designs can be offered in versions that are trailed, turf truck mounted or, as is the case with the Rink SP950, pedestrian controlled.**

With a broadcast design you can vary the spread width, with some models spreading up to 16.0m dependent upon material and the capacity of the unit in question. A Rink DS800 has a spread width range of between 2.0 to 12.0m. If the aim is to discharge in a 'windrow', the discs of a broadcast machine can either be slowed right down to narrow the spread width or, as is the case with the Rink DS models, removed completely for a direct discharge to the conveyor width.

A 'drop' discharge top dresser works at a fixed width. Once the desired application rate has been determined by the rate of flow from the hopper and the forward speed of the unit, it should be relatively easy to match each bout pass for an even application of top dressing material. Direct discharge machines are ideal where the spread material needs to be tightly contained.

Where wide areas need to be covered productivity will typically increase using a broadcast machine. For some jobs, such as top dressing a golf green, some users will set the unit to dress the total area in a single or dual pass. This can save a great deal of time. The appeal of a machine that can spread material wide needs to be countered by the requirement or ability to accurately match bouts at these widths.

Once the type of machine has been selected, other top dresser points that may need to be considered will include versatility. As an example, several higher capacity trailed machines can be readily converted into a bulk loader, the addition of a rear conveyor allowing them to discharge directly into a smaller spreader, trailer, a bunker or even into a heap or windrow on the ground.

On trailed models, the variety of wheel and tyre options to consider varies too; choices can include a relatively narrow track but with four wheels across the width of the dresser body. A conventional axle with wide flotation rubber may also be offered.

On smaller models, both mounted and trailed, there may



The drawbar of trailed Rink spreaders can be adjusted to suit the towing vehicle, the unit suiting tractors of 25hp plus with one double acting remote valve and delivering 25 l/min hydraulic flow.



Pictured in its storage bracket, the single lever control for Rink DS top dressers will control the discharge conveyor; the rear discs continue to spin when the discharge conveyor stops. The conveyor, rear shut off and discs draw power from a single hydraulic outlet, this ensuring the unit cannot be operated without



The contra rotating spinning discs can be set to spread at widths from around 2.0 to 12.0m, with variable application rates from light to heavy. Quick couplings enable the discs to be removed for direct dropping into a windrow for trench filling or be replaced with a cross conveyor.



Swing axles ensure the wheels of trailed Rink DS models retain full ground contact over undulations. With any model of top dresser, the amount of material loaded can be cut down to reduce ground bearing pressures.



By spreading the load across four wheels, a trailed top dresser can offer a low ground bearing pressure. In the case of the Rink DS800, the four 24x13.00-12 tyres are inflated to 0.8bar.



The Rink SP950 runs on six 13x6.50-6 tyres, four at the rear and two up front. The full width nylon brush helps ensure spread material is applied in an even layer and follows the same design as existing Rink top dressers.



The Rink SP950 controls are simple, the operator engaging drive by raising the 'T' bar. In work, the units forward speed can be adjusted via the engine throttle, the unit proving simple to operate and match up between bouts passes.



New to the UK, the pedestrian controlled Rink SP950 has a capacity of 0.33 m<sup>3</sup> and a spread width of 950mm. Powered by a 6.5hp Vanguard petrol engine, the units is ideally suited to spreading over small greens and areas of turf with restricted access.

be a choice of an integrated power unit. These 'self-contained' models can often be used in conjunction with equipment that would otherwise not have the power, hydraulic flow or PTO to drive a spreader but are otherwise ideally suited to top dressing and spreading duties.

Next up are hopper capacities. It is all too easy to assume that a large trailed top dresser will be too heavy, but it is always worth remembering a nominal 3.0m<sup>3</sup> capacity machine can be partially loaded when working on sensitive turf.

In fact a 'big' top dresser filled with 1.0m<sup>3</sup> of material may offer have a footprint that is less than a smaller machine on narrower tyres with the same load on board.

This leads on to the issue of tyre types and inflation pressures. Without getting into the complex territory of how much load a tyre can take at a given inflation pressure, a simple guide is that a tyre will impart the same ground pressure as its inflation pressure.

This is perhaps a bit of an over simplification, but a big trailed

spreader and tractor combination running on tyres inflated to 0.8bar may well exert less pressure on the ground than a turf truck with its rear tyres blown up to 1.0 bar to enable it to take a fully loaded mounted spreader.

So, if you are looking for a new top dresser, you have a few pointers to consider beyond the spreader type.

Entry-level direct drop tractor mounted models with a 3.5m<sup>3</sup> body and a nominal spread width of 1.5m will retail from under £5,000, utility vehicle equivalents listing between £6,500 and £7,500.

Spinning disc broadcast spreaders occupy a diverse range, those designed to fit a utility vehicle retailing from £7,500 for a top specification machine. When it comes to trailed models, prices may well start at under £6,000, large trailed units costing over £20K.

With grateful thanks to: Gareth Roberts, Course Manager, Hankley Common Golf Club and Nick Darking and Tim Franklyn, Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

**To help whittle down your options, it can be useful to set out a few requirements and preferences. These can include:**

- Mounted or trailed. Consider units designed to fit to a turf truck
- Vehicle driven or fitted with own power pack
- Direct drop or broadcast
- Ability to spread range of top dressings
- Application rates and hopper capacity
- Versatility. Will you want to spread solid fertiliser?
- Tyres sizes and inflation pressures
- Compatibility with existing equipment
- Projected workload and capacity
- Type and area of turf to be dressed
- Additional options offered to improve versatility
- Ease of operation and setting up
- Fitting and removal from tractor or vehicle
- Local support and budget
- Electric and remote control options



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# DEALER OF THE MONTH

The series aimed at celebrating the great work done by dealerships up and down the country

## GODFREYS

### Location:

Sevenoaks and Hailsham

### Employees and size of premises:

40 employees. Sevenoaks  
18,000 square feet, Hailsham  
12,000 sq ft on a 3 acre site

### Number of service vans:

7 plus 2 parts vans

### Brief history of company:

Godfreys was founded in November, 1933 by Sir William Godfrey. W M Godfrey and Partners started life supplying sprayers and Allen Scythes to local fruit growers from a site in Brenchley, where it grew to be one of the largest horticultural equipment suppliers in the UK. W M Godfrey & Partners set up satellite stores in Sellenge and Sevenoaks and represented Ransomes and other leading brands of the day. It was bad export sales to Nigeria, the dry summer of 1976 that eventually brought a halt to W M Godfrey & Partners in 1980 after 47 years of trading. The site in Sevenoaks was purchased with the name changing to just, Godfreys. Under new ownership, Godfreys grew again to be a leading regional retailer in the garden machinery industry; however in 1995 a devastating fire destroyed much of the Old Otford Road site. Godfreys re-emerged 250 meters down the road, after acquiring a new building.

In 1998, Godfreys was appointed John Deere Turfcare dealer for Kent and South-East London and in 2005 was purchased by Peter Bateman a



former employee. In 2009 in the teeth of the recession, Godfreys purchased Palmer's Turfcare, the John Deere Turfcare dealer based in Hailsham. We now have two major locations and we cover 2 counties and South-East London for John Deere.

Godfreys was set up in 1933 with the following ethos: "a refusal to sell the next best, if the best was not available" (as expressed by founder, Sir William Godfrey) and 78 years later we still stand by these words.

### Key services offered:

Sale of grounds maintenance equipment to golf course, local authorities and their contractors, landscapers, estates, schools and home owners plus other leisure and industrial markets, supported by full after-sales. We offer finance and leasing arrangements.

### Specialist services offered:

Lantra and NPTC operator training courses

### How has the dealership changed over the years?:

We acquired Palmers Turfcare, the John Deere Turfcare dealer for Sussex in 2009. As a result we now have two adjoining territories for John Deere, which has strengthened our ability to service our customers and at the same time become more efficient.

### What would you like to see changed?:

Improved profit margins!

### Do you support customers who have in-house service facilities?:

Yes

### Major customers:

The Royal St Georges Golf Club, East Sussex National Golf and Heath Spa, Lingfield Park Race Course and Golf Club, BAA Heathrow, The London Club etc...

### Franchises

• John Deere for Kent, Sussex and South East London

To nominate a GI Dealer of the Month contact Scott MacCallum with your reasons why the dealer of your choice should be featured...  
Email [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)



# Don't Miss out on the chance of a lifetime...

The BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard's, will this year see the 100th lucky BIGGA member



make the trip across the pond since the very first trip, to the Canadian Golf Superintendents' Exhibition, in 2001.

The opportunity to take part in this trip of a lifetime is open to all BIGGA members and the first step towards becoming one of the lucky 10 to board the plane to Las Vegas for the 2012 Golf Industry Show is filling out the form which comes with this issue of Greenkeeper International.

And if you have any doubts about what you would get out of such a trip just take a few minutes to read what two former Delegates got out of their particular weeks.



The quite magnificent Ritz-Carlton, visited in 2011, Orlando

**Robert Sandilands – Head Greenkeeper, Grange-over-Sands GC. 2011 Delegate to Orlando.**



"I would, without hesitation, rate the BIGGA Delegation as one of the major milestones of my career. At the time of the trip earlier this year I was a Deputy Head Greenkeeper, actively looking to move up to a Head Greenkeeper's post for the first time; as the only Deputy on the trip, what I gained was a great deal of advice and interaction with some of the best Course Managers from the UK and the States which, I believe, played a big part in me achieving my first Head Greenkeeper's position at Grange-over-Sands Golf Club in May.

To represent Bernhard & Co., BIGGA and greenkeeping in the UK was a great privilege, as was being given access to GCSAA seminars, The Golf Industry Show and some great golf courses and their impressive facilities.

I would encourage anybody looking to gain new experiences, knowledge and networking opportunities with greenkeepers from all backgrounds and nationalities to apply for the trip, especially those who are looking to further their career, as I was. The trip was an invaluable experience for me as a greenkeeper, but I also met some great friends who I have since met up with and regularly call on for tips

**Glenn Kirby - Deputy Course Manager, The London Club. 2007 Delegate – Los Angeles**



"I was lucky enough to be selected to go with the Bernhard's Delegation to the GCSAA Show in Los Angeles. The whole trip was a fascinating experience and extremely well organised.

Our group ranged from young Assistant Greenkeepers to experienced Head Greenkeepers. For me, meeting, spending time and getting to know such a wide group of people from our industry with similar problems and different solutions was a highlight.

Having worked in the USA prior to this visit it was an excellent opportunity for me to meet up with old friends and make some more. I had chance to spend time at the show allowing me to discuss new developments and innovations with all concerned.

The visits to other courses such as LA Country Club gave me a chance to look at greenkeeping from a different angle, an American angle. This made me think and question different styles of greenkeeping and opened up some lively debate among our group.

We were entertained and educated during two days of Seminars selected by the Bernhard team. These were interesting subjects that kept the whole group interested, not an easy task when you consider the wide and diverse range of people within the group.

On my return home I was asked to put together an article about my experiences which was published in the GCSAA magazine, Golf Course Management, this was a rare opportunity to have an article published in such a highly acclaimed magazine.

The trip was a tremendous experience, I bought back new ideas from both the USA and my British colleagues, made new friends and visited some great courses. If you're interested in Greenkeeping, no matter what stage of your career you can only benefit from such an opportunity. I am still very grateful to Bernhards for giving me the chance to go."

## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 5th  
of the month

All the latest news from your Section

# Around The Green



## Scottish Region



### North

We start the news report this month with news of our committee member, Ben Brookes, leaving his post as the North Section News Reporter due to work commitments. Ben has recently left Murcar Links Golf Club and moved to the new Trump course further along the road, to be a part of the fantastic new set up. We wish him all the best for the future in his new job.

I should add that Ben has agreed to stay on the Committee for the time being, so Robert Patterson and I will be doing the Section news until the end of the year. We have someone in mind for the news job, so watch this space.

I will be sending out the entry forms shortly so hope to see a big turn out at Peterculter Golf Club. That's all for this month as it was just to let the members know what was happening, so hopefully we will have a full Section news next time.

Hope we get a big entry for the autumn outing at Peterculter GC on Thursday September 22.

Robert Patterson, Chairman,  
and Dale Robertson, Secretary,

## Northern Region



### Northern

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well. Nice to see the hot weather carrying on into August. It would be nice to think this

could be the start of an Indian summer. The green fairways at Cookridge seem to have vanished, to be taken over by a nice shade of brown. On July 21 it was the annual Northern v Sheffield match, played at Renishaw Park GC. We had good weather and played on a beautifully presented course. Sadly, after retaining the trophy for the last few years, we were beaten by a good Sheffield side 4:2. Our thanks also go to Rigby Taylors for kindly sponsoring the day.

On the news front. Congratulations go to Ben Knowles Jackson on passing his driving test on his first attempt. Hope to see you at a few golf events, Ben.

Next Section golf event is the Autumn Tournament to be held at Huddersfield GC, Fixby, on Sept 28. This will also be the venue of our AGM. Please book early by contacting me, Frank Stewart, 72 West Park Grove, Roundhay, LS8 2DY.

Mob: 07947 401278, email  
[frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk).

Frank Stewart



### North East

Well here we go again! It's that time again for Section news. I just don't know where the time goes these days. Anyway here goes, Assistant Greenkeeper David Thompson, of Hexham Golf Club, has just recently competed the gruelling Ironman Challenge. This comprises of a swim, cycle ride and a marathon.

It was held at Nottingham Water Sports Centre where David swam 2.4 miles in 1 hour 9 minutes followed by a 112 mile bike ride in 5 hours-49 minutes. Then, just to round the day off, he did the marathon 26.2 miles in 4hrs-13mins. Here at Hexham we were very proud of David

considering he told us he would happy to do this event in 13 hours-30 minutes but did it in 11 hours - 22 minutes and finished 106th out of 650 competitors. He had trained for 20 hours a week for the last six months but he followed by a week's holiday. Reckon he deserved that.

Other news fresh in comes from Newcastle College where James Curry, of Prudhoe Golf Club, who is completing his Apprenticeship, James was one of only 29 candidates who was selected for the Regional interviews for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award out of thousands of greenkeeping students. Unfortunately James was not selected to go forward to the National Final but this was still a great achievement nevertheless.

And finally, don't forget that the Autumn Comp. is on at Longhirst Hall on September 21. Let's hope there are a lot more members turn up.

Jimmy Richardson



### North West

Firstly, let me apologise for the lack of notes in previous months. This is mainly due to the fact that I have had very little to write about, combine that with a memory like a sieve and the busiest year I have had to date and hopefully you will forgive me.

But the aforementioned brings me to another point; as a committee member, surely it's down to me (and others) to organise something to write about and make the North West Section proud. This will be discussed at the next Section meeting and an update will be posted in due course. Anyway, here goes:

As we enter September, many of us will be looking forward to

the Winter programme and all the joys it brings. The last major comps will have been played and, if you are like me, you will be itching to get that shovel in the ground. Hopefully you will find time to break away from the workload to play in the Autumn tournament. This year it is being played at the wonderful Dunham Forest GC. on September 29, and the tee is booked from 13:10. It would be great to see some new faces at this wonderful location.

During the winter months, we are hoping to arrange some training. Some of the thoughts at present are the likes of welding, excavating and first aid. If any of these are of use to you please let me know.

Another item in discussion at the moment to keep you entertained over the winter is an education seminar this will consist of a morning of talks from some of the best in the business followed by a course walk. Once again talks are ongoing but there should be more news in the near future.

Finally, for this month, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a dryish, warmish winter and all the workload you have planned is completed on time and that the snow stays away long enough to make this a fruitful year.

Cheers

Peter McVicar  
[pdmv@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pdmv@hotmail.co.uk)  
07885347818

## Midland Region



### East Midlands

Results first from our inaugural par-3 competition. This was played at Nailcote Hall, home to the National par-3

Championship, and sponsored by Rigby Taylor. Nine teams took part and, in the case of at least one, were undone by the small intimidating greens! Third place went to a team put together by Nigel Colley; second to a team of "drifters", put together by Simon Banks. But the real stars of the day were the winning team from Market Harborough, consisting of Lee Wenlock, Chris Weir, Glyn Buckby and Mick Miles, with particularly impressive displays coming from Chris and Lee. Bottles of wine were put up as prizes for Nearest the Pin on each hole and between them Paul Frith and Derek McJannett took all but three of the prizes. They were last seen heading of to open a new Off Licence! Thanks again to our sponsor for the day, Rigby Taylor.

Moving on the Headland Pairs competition and we are now into the Quarter and Semi Final stages, with the final being played at Bearwood Lakes GC on Sept 21. By the time you read this the Quarter Finals will have taken place, so a quick well done. Commiserations to all of you that have got this far and may still have further to go these people were the teams of: P. Frith & N. Colley; F. Kempster & A. Porter; I. Hurst & P. Kendal; P. Sands & M. Bunney; D. Branson & A. Henshaw; M. Marvel & G. Thurman; C. Weir & I. Wenlock and G. Buckby & S. Banks.

You will all be soon receiving your entries for the Autumn Comp and AGM. This will be held at the excellent Forest Hill GC. If anyone has any questions for the committee and would like to help out, please contact me or Nick Miles, I can be contacted on [pds1@btinternet.com](mailto:pds1@btinternet.com)

Regards to all  
Pete Smith



## Midland

The Section held its Summer Tournament at Kenilworth Golf Club on Monday, July 11. The course was in super condition as presented by Course Manager, Richard Dorrington, and his fine team. Thank you to the club for allowing us the day, and to you, Richard, for a very well presented course, as a great day was had by all.

A large thank you to Farmura

for the main prize table on the day, together with Farol's who again provided the refreshments around the course (well done Russ, when we can find you!) and the four Nearest the Pin prizes, sponsored by Sherriff Amenity x2, Global Sales and Rigby Taylor.

The results were as follows: 1. Steve Thompson, 42pts; 2. Ed Stant, 39pts; 3. Mike Hughes, 35pts. Division 1 Paul Evans, Division 2 Dave Fellows, Division 3 Ian Holborn. Trade was won by Paul Tanner, Crocodile Golf, and Gross won by Ed Stant.

The Scotts Doubles Final is played later this month so best wishes to the four lucky players who are going to enjoy the magnificent Wentworth West course. Good luck to you all.

The Section has an Education Day to Tiller's Turf, through Tony Cheese and Rigby Taylor, arranged for September 28. So if you have not already done so, please contact Rhys Thomas to reserve a place on 07775 581615.

Finally, while you are on to Rhys to arrange coming to Tillers Turf, why not book your place for the Autumn Tournament, at Sandwell Park Golf Club on Wednesday, October 5? Sandwell is a very good golf course and well worth a visit, so please come along. For all information, including education dates and golf results etc. please head to [www.biggamidlandsection.com](http://www.biggamidlandsection.com)

Well, at last it has rained. My apologies to those who have been flooded-out, and as I sit here in Stratford writing this edition, I can see the grass changing colour from brown to green. It always amazes me how grass can recover so quickly. However, I dare say that there will be some areas that will have been too badly damaged and will require over-seeding. Happily this month's kind calendar sponsor is Matt Gresty/Professional Amenity Grass Seed Specialist. You can call Matt on: 07767 278 335 or email him: [matthew.gresty@limagrains.co.uk](mailto:matthew.gresty@limagrains.co.uk).

My thanks to our Chair, Ed, for almost all of the above, which he managed to send me while overseeing an extension to Stant Towers, and, wearing his Estate Manager hat, alter its grounds. By God, Mrs Stant has you well trained.

Sean McDade

## South East Region



### East of England

Our latest golf day was held on Thursday, July 28 at Stoke Rochford Golf Club. The warm weather encouraged a good turnout to play on a golf course presented in excellent condition by Gareth and his staff. The day was sponsored by Toro and many thanks again go to Nigel Lovatt and Chris Sellars for their continued support of the Section and impressive array of prizes on offer. Many thanks also to everyone on the bar and catering front who again looked after us very well. Many thanks also to Tracey Maddison, from BIGGA HQ, for paying us a visit and talking to us about membership and any other concerns. Whether she will return after being escorted around the golf course by Gary Cooper is another matter!

Prizes on the day were as follows: 1. Bryan Robinson; 2. Steve Hopkins; 3. Rob Welford; 4. Ron Bingham; Trade. Russ Latham, Mansfield Sands. Ladies. Tracey Maddison. Nearest the Pin. Steve Hopkins. Longest Drive. Rob Welford

The winners of this year's Order of Merit are as follows:-

Greenkeepers. Bryan Robinson. Trade. Ian Collett, Rigby Taylor.

Qualifying for this year's BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, are Graeme Macdonald and Bryan Robinson. Congratulations to all concerned.

Our next golf fixture is the eagerly anticipated Greenkeepers vs Trade match to be played this year at Gainsborough on Wednesday September 14. Greenkeepers available to play should contact Allan Walker, while Trade members should contact Gary Cooper.

A note to all about our Christmas event at Belton Park on Thursday, December 8. This year's event will be a Texas Scramble made up of teams of four. However, members are asked to bring their own teams where possible to ensure even numbers are present. This team can be made up of anyone associated with your golf clubs or even involve greenkeepers and trade members from other Sections.

Again, contact Bruce Hicks for more information.

Finally, congratulations to Graeme Macdonald, of Newark Golf Club, who has managed to notch up yet another stamp on his passport without actually having to pay for it himself! This time he is the winner of a trip to Barcelona, courtesy of Toro, after winning their "Spot the Ball" competition (Yeah, I hadn't heard about it either!).

Many thanks

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.



### Mid Anglia

Another month gone by and time to put pen to paper once again!

A very warm and sunny day welcomed 24 players to Mount Pleasant Golf Club for our Summer Tournament.

Presented in excellent condition by Gavin Simkin, and his team, the course proved a tough challenge to most of us, as always with a few exceptions, notably S. Moss, a member of Gavin's team, who, with local knowledge, secured first place with 42pts; 2. M. Fahy, 40pts; 3. K. Armstrong, 34pts; 4. M. Scullion, 33pts. Longest Drive S. Wooley and Nearest The Pin Clive Parnell, Clive also taking the trade prize with 35pts, on countback from Mark Ellis.

Thanks to the in-house staff at Mount Pleasant excellent new clubhouse. What a superb acquisition this is to the members and

visitors alike.

A big thank you to Mark Day, of Tacit, our main sponsor of the day for supplying and presenting a great prize table to the lucky winners.

Thanks as always to the other trade representatives for their contributions also.

Our next Golf Day is the Autumn Meeting at St. Neots GC, on Thursday, September 22. The AGM will follow the golf so a chance for you to have your say and make any suggestions to the Committee please come and support this day and your Section. Hope to see you there

Nigel Phelan.



# THE HOW TO SERIES

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Exclusive to BIGGA members

**1. 'How to Cascade Goals to Teams and Individuals'**

**Introduction**  
The formation of goals that set out what a business is aiming to achieve is a key part of business planning. Teams and individuals throughout the organisation need to be briefed about what the goals are and what they should do to help achieve them. This requires a management process to be in place that cascades top-level goals down through the organisation.

**Definition**  
A goal describes a measurable outcome or result that needs to be achieved.

**1. Cascading goals**  
Cascading goals means breaking down the organisational goals into a series of smaller goals that describe what each unit or department needs to achieve. These goals are then broken down further until each individual in the unit has their own performance goals. In this way, progress throughout the organisation is measurable.

Profit goal - to reduce waste by 10% across the whole site, by December 200X

- Manufacturing Team: To reduce scrap/reject components off CNC machines by 2%, by June 200X
- Warehouse team: To reduce part order deliveries from 22 per month to less than 5, by September 200X
- Finance Team: To agree 12 key supplier agreements which result in a 2% stock reduction, by October 200X

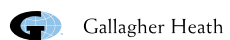
In some areas of the organisation, it may be enough to cascade goals down to the team level (e.g. in administration or production teams where they work together more as a team than as individuals). For some it is more appropriate to agree individual goals (see 'How to Develop an Appraisal System', and 'How to Prepare for an Appraisal'). What is important is that you get it right for your organisation.

instep logo and BIGGA logo are present at the bottom of the page.

“How To...” guides are now available exclusively to BIGGA Members, on a range of Human Resource topics.

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The 'How To...' guides are a new benefit of BIGGA membership and are brought to you thanks to the continuing support of the contributors to the Learning and Development Fund.





## Essex

Another month has passed us by and yet again a change in the weather.

Antony Kirwan and I travelled down to Royal St George's to join the Open Championship Support Team in the middle of July. A five day trip of long, hard, wet and warm very enjoyable days. Antony was lucky enough to get a round with the overall winner Darren Clarke, plus sample the delights of an early morning out on the course with the course staff doing the normal pre-completion course preparation. Both of us had a fantastic time, met new friends, renewed old acquaintances and learnt a lot. We would both recommend the experience to anyone who has the time to spare.

I am sorry to have to report that our Secretary, Dominic Rodgers, has decided to resign from the position; the committee accepted his resignation at the last committee meeting held in July and have written and thanked him for all he has done for the Section, over the past couple of years.

At that meeting we discussed the forthcoming Regional Conference being held by our Section in November. We have written to a number of speakers and await the outcome of these preliminary enquiries. I hope to be able to make an announcement in next month's magazine of the full itinerary.

The Summer Trophy at Chelmsford will have passed when you read this but don't forget to enter the next event at Langdon Hills Golf & Country Club. Thursday, September 29. It is our Autumn Trophy.

Entries to Andy Cracknell please by Sunday, September 25.

Sorry it's short and sweet this month but there is not that much to report.

If you have anything for inclusion in Greenkeeper International or on the Section's Website [www.essexbigga.co.uk](http://www.essexbigga.co.uk) please contact me on 07764-862.337 or at [essexbigga@talktalk.net](mailto:essexbigga@talktalk.net)  
Arnold Phipps-Jones



## Kent

I must start this report by giving full plaudits to the fantastic work done by all who staged a fantastic Open Championship in our fair county in July. The course was applauded by everybody, including the players, and proved that the whole Open experience is one we should all be proud of. As for the eventual winner, I think the whole world would salute Darren Clarke for overcoming the adversity he went through in recent years to triumph in an emotionally charged championship.

I would like to add some notes from Steve Thompson, of Bearsted Golf Club, who was one of the many gallant volunteers for the event.

I thought I would drop you a few lines regarding my experiences at the Open. This was the first time that I had done any match raking and I enjoyed it immensely. I found the whole experience absolutely awesome, from meeting all the other greenkeepers on the Support Team, to being between the ropes with some of the world's top golf professionals.

Thursday - I raked two bunkers for Graeme McDowell, Jason Day, and Bubba Watson.

Friday - I helped my Pod prepare the bunkers for the day's play. Later I raked eight bunkers for Charley Hoffman, Gregory Havret, and Markus Brier. Saturday - I raked three bunkers for Steve Stricker and Webb Simpson. Sunday - Unfortunately, I didn't get selected to match rake on the final day.

My greatest memory was following Graeme McDowell's group between the three grandstands at the 18th green and hearing the thunderous applause. Seeing the sunrise over the empty grandstands early on Friday morning will also stick in my mind.

I'd like to thank - Scott MacCallum, Rachael Duffy and everyone at BIGGA for allowing me such a fantastic opportunity, Graham Royden and the greenkeeping team at Royal St. George's, and all the members

of the BIGGA Open Support Team, especially Billy McMillan and the rest of the Green Pod.

Steve Thompson, Bearsted Golf Club.

Lastly, please don't forget our next event at Sittingbourne GC on September 26. Please see website for all the details. We shall also be playing the final of our Pairs' Knockout competition on the day. Well done to all who played in this event in its inaugural year for making it such fun and well done to our finalists.

Please feel free to drop me a line with any news, views or comments as usual. Hope to see as many of you as possible at Sittingbourne.

Rob Holland  
[grassyars@hotmail.com](mailto:grassyars@hotmail.com)  
[www.kentgreenkeepers.com](http://www.kentgreenkeepers.com)



## Surrey

Gavin Kyle, yes the good looking and now lucky one from Knoll Park GC, has won a new set of golf clubs, bag, new putter of his choice and full custom fitting in a competition on some obscure radio station answering questions on golf. His old set of clubs are to be sold on 'E Bay' with a reserve price of £5 and his application to join 'Mensa' is in the post.

Dave Johnson, Head Greenkeeper at New Zealand GC, is well known to most Surrey members for he has worked there, man and boy, for the past 37 years. I understand that he has decided to take early retirement from the club but will still continue to live locally and offer his gardening and other skills to the residents of West Byfleet and surrounds. Good luck and a long and happy semi-retirement from us all.

Brian Turner arrived here 65 years ago plus 1 day. As an OAP, he will receive in this short paragraph only the respect that he and other OAPs in this era deserve. They are collectively called the 'baby-boomers' and have lived with ration cards, Muffin the Mule, the Cold War, the three day week, Mrs Thatcher, the onset of mobile phones the size of suitcases - and Tiger Woods.

## Assistant Profile

*Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...*



**Name:** Sam Evans  
**Age:** 22  
**Club:** Heythrop Park Resort  
**Position:** Assistant  
**Nickname:** Sambo

**1. How long have you been greenkeeping?**  
Three years

**2. What was it about the career that attracted you?**  
Job satisfaction

**3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?**  
Cider Connoisseur

**4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?**  
Topdressing by hand because it is hard work

**5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?**  
Rough mowing because it is boring

**6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?**  
More courses and further education

**7. Hobbies?**  
Cricket, Fishing and Rugby

**8. Favourite Band?**  
The Overtones

**9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?**  
Swindon Town FC.

**10. What is your claim to fame?**  
Chatting to Rob Andrew and Sean Fitzpatrick on the 8th tee, regarding their shots, club selection and the course in general.

## BIGGA welcomes the following new members

### Scotland

Timothy Leitch, North Section  
Paul Livingstone, West Section  
Kenny Nisbet, Ayrshire Section  
Stewart Smith, West Section  
Scott Wells, Central Section

### Northern Region

Simon Smith, North Wales Section  
Kevin Wright, Cleveland Section

### Midland Region

Stuart Aho, Mid Anglia Section  
David Ball, Mid Anglia Section  
Antony Calvert, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section  
Claire Matthewman, Midland Section  
John Ratcliffe, East Midland Section  
Gary Wood, Midland Section  
Jackson Woolley, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section

### South East Region

Phillip Beeny, Surrey Section  
Tony Greenwood, Kent Section  
Josh Kelly, Sussex Section  
Ben Kemp, Kent Section  
Matthew Kemp, Kent Section  
Matt King, Surrey Section  
Adam Mortimer, Surrey Section  
Roy Willis, Kent Section

### South West/South Wales Region

Sam Ampleford, South Coast Section  
Martin Coleman, South West Section  
John Ray, South Coast Section  
Mark Young, South Wales Section

### N Ireland

Phillip Snellin, Northern Ireland

**For more information on new members log in to the Members' Area of the BIGGA Website.**

## BIGGA Regional Conferences

### Northern

29th November 2011,  
**Cookridge Hall Golf Club**

30th November 2011,  
**Birchwood Golf Club**  
Contact Peter Larter, RA,  
01476 550115

### South East

16 November 2011, **Stock Brook Manor Golf Club, Essex**

Contact Clive Osgood, RA,  
01737 819343

**South West & South East**  
17 November 2011, **Oaktree Arena, Highbridge, Somerset**

Contact Jane Jones, RA,  
01454 270850

### Scotland

6 March 2012, **Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline**  
Contact Peter Boyd, RA,  
0141 616 3440

Brian's career started, some say at 7, in the coal-mines but his deputy and now successor, Paul Robinson, assures me that it was at Sunningdale GC, followed by a disliked stint in the insurance industry, then Wentworth GC, Worplesdon GC, then Sunningdale again before returning to Worplesdon in 2005.

Brian has won many amateur trophies in his golfing career, has played off plus 1 and who knows, if he puts in enough practice in retirement, may return to that level of excellence. Worplesdon GC gave him a grand send-off recently with a BBQ attended by some 120 members and friends. He and wife, Doreen, will be moving to their new home down in the New Forest, at New Milton, and will both be playing golf as members of Barton on Sea GC.

I have myself reached that time in life when the State will repay money that I have lent to them over the past 49 years in the way of an old age pension. This, although gratefully received, will not keep me in the style of life to which I have become accustomed and so, if you are the recipient of a message from yours truly, please do not treat it as junk mail. Read carefully, follow the instructions and leave cash only please in the specified hiding place for my later collection. Doing this will mean that you will still be able to enjoy reading every month, in this exceptional journal, stories of my travels to far away places with "her indoors".

Since my last jottings, Darren Clarke has won The Open at Royal St George's, Simon Dyson did likewise in the Irish Open and Russ Cochran won the Senior's Open at Walton Heath, but it will be next month when I will report the winner of the McMillan Tankard at Sunningdale GC. My prediction is that with my vastly increased clubhead speed, slow backswing, hours of practice and my repaired electric trolley, the Tankard will not be won by me but by someone with the same qualities that have made both Dougie Fernie and Paul Weston the great players that they are. They will be my playing partners at Sunningdale so that I can report first hand if we manage to get all the way round.

Let me know of any news titbits that you would like to contribute to this article. Brian Willmott 07879474038 email [brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk)



### London

Summer is flying by at a rate of knots and August renovations have been and gone for some of us. Those fortunate enough to carry out their renovations first week in August were blessed with ten days of sunshine, before renovations and a nice 11mm of rain at the end of renovation week to settle all the dressing down. I have never carried out renovations this early before and was amazed at the rate of recovery. Many things to get through this month for a pleasant change, so I will get straight on with it.

Congratulations to our London Section Chairman, Aaron Percival, on his new appointment at Stokley Pines. All the best in your new venture. Lee Cox, at Muswell Hill Golf Club, has just got engaged, I am sure that there are many happy times ahead for him. Congratulations to Kevin O'Neill, Deputy at Muswell Hill, whose better half has just given birth to a new baby boy. With four out of seven staff at Muswell Hill all with little ones on the way over the next few months there will be plenty to talk about in the mess room I am sure, that's if they're not all fast asleep.

The summer meeting at Finchley Golf Club has just been played and all players were most impressed by the condition, particularly the greens. Thank you to Finchley for hosting our summer tournament and Craig and his green staff for their hard work in presenting the course. Thank you to Mark Day, and Tacit, for sponsoring the day and putting up some great prizes, also thanks to Johnny Beck, of Sherriff Amenity, for keeping us fed and watered half way around. So to the winners. 3. Lee Cox 34 pts; 2. Kane Stone, 34 pts; 1. Finchley Golf Club's very own Ben Williamson, 37 pts. Trade. Mark Ellis, 34 pts. Well done and I hope you enjoying your wine. That's it for this month; enjoy the last of the sun while it's here.

Any queries, questions, feedback or information for the column please email:

[adamcoll@hotmail.com](mailto:adamcoll@hotmail.com)  
Adam McColl

## South East Region



### South West

When it was said "Golf. A good walk spoiled", they clearly didn't walk around Royal St George's during the 2011 Open....I did, and it was remarkable! Being part of BIGGA's Support Team, was again a great experience. I don't want to bore many of you with stories from The Open. Firstly, you would have read all about it as you've flicked through this month's magazine and secondly I'm sure many of you were glued to the TV watching it for yourself in any case. While I was away at The Open, I made many new friends....You guys know who you are (I would consider it unfair advantage to comment about you in this article), but honestly, thanks to everyone who made it such a fantastic week!

I feel that this is the perfect opportunity to remind you all of our fixture at Cotswold Hill GC, in October. This year we visit Cotswold Hills for our AGM. Your attendance would be very important if you would like to have your say within our Section. It's your chance to stand up and say what you would like to happen.

With the football season just moments away (or has it already started....?) you wouldn't believe how excited I am. Don't get me wrong, I love the summer and having some time away from the game, but now that it's back, I am very much in love again!

I would like to thank our patronage partners for all of their support for 2011, Ecosol, Irritech Ltd, Countrywide, British Seed House, Headland, Avoncrop and Martyn Lane Golf Signs, Your support is very much appreciated by the whole Section.

Remember that we also have our own South West Section Facebook page, proving to be very useful, only for it grow as more of you become involved. If you are not a member of the page, its time you were, ask for the link and I'll happily forward it to you.

See you all very soon,  
[adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk)  
07732503855



## South Wales

Our summer tournament this year was held at Wenvoe Castle Golf Club. It was a really good day with 24 golfers playing and 26 eating. We were joined on the day by Club Captain, Tony Cumming, who was very welcoming and our RA, Jane Jones, who toured the course on a buggy with Iain Grant.

The golf course was in great shape thanks to Mark Wilshire and his team so well done to them. The weather was good in the main apart from a few sharp showers. The meal following the golf was first class. Steve Minton, from Tacit, was on hand to present the prizes as follows: 1. Andy Roach, 37pts; 2. Rhys Williams, 34pts; 3. Steve Chappell, 33pts. Best Trade/Guest: Peter Lacey, 31pts. Nearest the Pin: Tony Lafrate. Longest Drive: Ian Kinley

Mr Captain was presented with a BIGGA Tie as a thank you for Wenvoe hosting the event.

Just a quick reminder of our up and coming events the R/T final at Green Meadow which take place on September 16 and a reminder that the Autumn Comp & AGM will be at Trefloyne on October 14.

Our very own Daryl Jones, from Glyn Neath Golf Club, has become their Club Champion. Congratulations from everyone at the Section.

Last, but by no means least, I hope I get to see many of you guys at Saltex this year Sept 6-8. You know where our stand is situated - by the park and main eating area. So if you pop by, I might just get some beers in!

See you soon

Peter Holmstrom and, mainly this month, Steve Chappell.



## South Coast

Hi, all,

It's pouring with rain as I write this which is a perfect excuse for not being outside. Much needed rain, I must add, as it has been

seriously warm over the last few days. My beach hut has welcomed many visitors recently, some of whom even ventured into the water!

Our summer invitation competition was played at Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club. Although the sun didn't shine, the few spots of rain certainly didn't dampen the day. The course was in excellent order and a credit to our tournament organiser, Kevan Glass and his team. Truly faultless. Sponsor for the day was Tacit. Thanks as always to Tim Webb and Brian Wilmott for their support and prizes of some very good wine. The competition was an 18 hole Stableford with  $\frac{3}{4}$  handicap allowance, 60 entrants.

1. Ben Bishop & C. Richards, Paultons Park, 42 pts; 2. Colin Pardey & Sandy Barnett, Sherbourne, 41pts; 3. Derek Cunliffe & James Norris, Blackmore, 40 pts. Nearest the String; Tony Locke. Nearest the Pin; Scott Waddingham.

The annual match against the South West will be played in late August, the results of which will be in next month's mag. Our next competition and AGM is at Waterlooville GC, on October 6. I have heard great reports from people that played there recently so try and support the Section and be there.

Here at Barton it's all happening again, more cliff falling into the sea and plans to move one hole 50 metres inland. Not really a problem, except that it involves moving a green, two tees and all the relevant irrigation pipe work. Meanwhile we are having the silt from one of our ponds removed. A real health and safety nightmare as there are thousands of golf balls in the sludge and, no matter what you say to the members, the sight of free balls is too tempting. So the nice new signs warning of deep mud "Keep Out" are totally ignored.

Lastly, the Section Seminar, cancelled from February, is now to go ahead on October 26, at Milton Abbey School, in Dorset. This is a new venue and should be an excellent educational day out with top notch speakers along with walks around the livestock and school facilities.

Until next month.  
Tony Gadd



**Jim Croxton**  
Chief Executive

**I have recently had the opportunity to attend a couple of BIGGA Regional Board meetings and it has been heartening to discover that so many members are prepared to give up their time to play a part in the Association's governance.**

As a committee based organisation it is vital that information, opinion and debate is channelled effectively from the coal face of the Sections through Regional Boards to the National Board to keep the activities of BIGGA relevant to the needs of the members.

At both of the meetings there was healthy debate on a wide variety of issues, with communication and education being recurring themes. These two tenets are prevalent in what I consider to be one of the key benefits to BIGGA membership - the website Bulletin Boards. Every day members post enquiries and discussion points that are read by hundreds and in nearly every instance the responses are well reasoned and informative and prove helpful to both the original contributor and the many others facing similar issues at their facilities. I am a huge advocate of sharing best practice and the BIGGA Bulletin Boards are a fantastic example of the willingness that practitioners in this industry have to help one another. Access to this massive well of knowledge and experience is a major benefit of BIGGA membership and I would urge anyone who has not ventured in to the member's area of [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) to do so. In future editions of this magazine we will endeavour to focus on some of the many success stories this forum has produced.

The more public face of our members sharing best practice is the annual gathering in Harrogate for the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME), registration for 2012 is open so go to [www.harrogateweek.org.uk](http://www.harrogateweek.org.uk) to register now. You will see elsewhere in these pages details of the education programme and, for the first time visitor, how to get there and plan your stay.

BTME is the important event in the calendar for all those in the golf course maintenance industry, we are fortunate that the exhibition continues to be well supported by the manufacturers, suppliers and contractors who value spending time face to face with our membership and many others involved in sports turf care. We as an association need to show them our support by encouraging all of our friends and colleagues in the industry to attend the event.

In the News section earlier you will have read of the outcomes of discussions with the IOG and the AEA over the future of grounds and turf care trade shows. In objectively looking at our own show it was clear that whilst overlap exists with other shows, it is a small part of the overall picture. The discussions were positive and all sides are very comfortable with the outcome which will see BIGGA looking to collaborate with all of the other bodies in the sector as widely as possible. An excellent example is the BIGGA organised educational seminars taking place at the IOG's show - Saltex - this month from which I expect to see greenkeepers and groundsmen alike taking valuable knowledge and information to help them in their day to day working lives.

**Jim Croxton**



# Membership

Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update

**Well that's August out of the way! Saltex this month then it will be countdown to BTME. Have you registered? If not, you can go and register online now.**

## Register now for BTME 2012

It's that time of year again, time to think about Harrogate Week and if you haven't already, register now. Visit [www.harrogateweek.org](http://www.harrogateweek.org) and click on the 'Register Now!' button.

Put the dates in your diary/smartphone/mobile to remind you, they are 24 – 26 January 2012. See last month's Greenkeeper International, pages 56 and 57 for an insight into what you can expect next year and lookout for the Continue to Learn brochure which will be available next month.

Visit the show next year and help to celebrate 25 years of BIGGA and 100 years of Greenkeeping Associations. The Association has come a very long way since 1987, thanks to the outstanding work of so many of its members, supported by HQ and Regional Administration staff.

Do you want to help BIGGA move forward in the next 25 years? Why not get involved at Section level? Volunteers make invaluable contributions to the Sections, Regions and at National level and play a crucial role in BIGGA's existence.

## Why are volunteers so important?

Volunteers are vital to BIGGA because they:

- Provide added value and enable services to be delivered which might not otherwise be possible;
- Act as a link between the membership, the Region and HQ;
- Bring in new skills and a different perspective; and
- Believe in the service and are great advocates within the BIGGA community.

How do you get involved?

- Make a note of your Section's AGM date and go along and meet fellow members and the Section Committee;



- Express an interest to get involved to a member of the Section Committee;
- Find out what 'job' roles exist on the Section Committee;
- Ask to shadow a current member of the Committee

Be reassured, you don't always need relevant experience. Enthusiasm and having new ideas is key to any role on the Committee.

There will be plenty of people to support you from the Section and Region.

## BIGGA Website – Members' Area

Within the 'vault' that is the Members Area there is a wealth of information available to members of all categories.

Bulletin Board – if you are wanting some technical, educational or just general information why not ask your fellow members?

Recent topics in the 'Talk about Turf' bulletin board include constructing new greens; sleepers for ponds; green speed targets and thatch fungi. Topics in the 'Talking Shop' section include job interviews, overtime and first cut in semi rough amongst others.

Download the BIGGA Field Guides or the EGU Model Course Policy Document, check out information regarding the Working Time Regulations or use the handy Converter Tool. In the Members Area members will be able to locate the "How To..." Guides.

Make sure you access the BIGGA members area on a regular basis to benefit from the services and benefits on offer.

## "How To..." Guides

Do you ever get involved with recruiting, how do you recruit the right staff? Or maybe you are looking at revising or writing a job description or you are in charge of conducting a team briefing or a one-to-one meeting but you are unsure how best to go about undertaking any one of these tasks. Help is at hand!

BIGGA Members can log into the members area and download various "How To..." Guides which will help them tackle topics similar to the above, all are free (thanks to the continuing support of the contributors to the Learning and Development Fund) and available to ALL BIGGA members.



## Contact Details

Tracey Maddison  
[traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk)

Tel: 01347 933800  
(option 1 for Membership)

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### South East

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### South West & Wales

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Mobile: 07841 948110  
[jane@bigga.co.uk](mailto:jane@bigga.co.uk)



Peter Boyd Peter Larter



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

## OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

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0800 177 7891  
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0800 174 319  
Debt Counselling Helpline  
0800 174319





# Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2011 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
<b>SEPTEMBER 2011</b>			
September 10 and 11	Walker Cup	Balgownie Links of Royal Aberdeen Golf Club	
September 13th	Essex Section Autumn Trophy	Langdon Hills Golf Club	Andy Cracknell at andyacknell@hotmail.com or Mobile: 07709 347312
September 14th	East Scotland Section Event	Braid Hills Golf Club	Stuart Ferguson at stuferg@btinternet.com or Mobile: 07961 630553
September 14th	Central Section Autumn Outing	Kingsbarns Golf Links	Gordon Moir at gordonmoir@standrews.org.uk or Mobile: 07850 139799
September 14th	East of England Section Event	Gainsborough Golf Club	Bruce Hicks at brucehicks1@gmail.com or Mobile: 07931 714922
September 15th	West Scotland Section Event	Williamwood Golf Club	Gavin Jarvis at jarvisgav@aol.com or Mobile: 07725 363715
September 15th	Operation Pollinator	Burnham & Berrow Golf Club	www.greencast.co.uk or email operation.pollinatoruk@syngenta.com
September 21st	North East Section Event	Longhirst Golf Club	Jimmy Richardson at jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com or Mobile: 07500 528542
September 22nd	North Scotland Section Day	Peterculter Golf Club	Dale Robertson at daleturnberry@aol.com or Mobile: 07711 274525
September 22nd	Mid Anglia Section Autumn Meeting	St Neots Golf Club	Gerald Bruce at gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk or Tel: 01442 8658323
September 26th	TACIT Golf Management Trophy Final	Mere Golf Club	
September 28th	Northern Section Autumn Tournament	Fixby Golf Club	Frank Stewart at frankstewart3@hotmail.co.uk or Mobile: 07947 401278
September 29th	Essex Section Autumn Trophy	Langdon Hills Golf & CC	Andy Cracknell at andyacknell@hotmail.com or Mobile: 07709 347312
September 29th	North West Section Autumn Tournament	Dunham Forest Golf Club	Chris Sheehan at jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk or Mobile: 07840 706738
September 29th	Kent Section Event	Sittingbourne Golf Club	Kevin Morris at kmlegal1@aol.com or Mobile: 07801 554548
<b>OCTOBER 2011</b>			
October 3rd and 4th	BIGGA National Championship sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota	West Lancashire Golf Club	BIGGA HQ on 01347 833800 or info@bigga.co.uk
October 4th	Ayrshire Section	Turnberry Hotel	Derek Wilson on 07770 734360 or email derwlsn@aol.com
October 5th	Midland Section Autumn Golf Event	Sandwell Park Golf Club	Andrew Smith on 07977 145091 or email andysmithace@hotmail.co.uk
October 5th	South West Section Autumn Event and AGM	Cotswold Hills Golf Club	Adam Matthews on 07732 503855 or email adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk
October 6th	GTC Chairman of Green/Secretary Managers Workshop	Northumberland Golf Club	Fiona Lyttle on 01347 838640 or Fiona@the-gtc.co.uk
October 12th	East of England AGM and Golf	Orton Meadows Golf Club	Bruce Hicks on 07931 714922 or email brucehicks1@gmail.com
October 13th	East Midlands Section Autumn Golf Day and AGM	Forest Hill Golf Club	Nick Miles, email biggaeastmid@gmail.com

# Letters



Please email your notes to: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

## Jimmy Richardson

Regarding Jimmy Richardson's retirement from Hexham Golf Club. I first met Jimmy at Ponteland GC in 1967. He has always been friendly, sociable and willing to help others. He is conscientious and has been a marvellous servant to both golf and the North East Section over his 41 years.

I have also enjoyed his monthly reports in the magazine. I wish you well Jimmy and thank you for your reliability.

**Bruce Burnell**  
Eaglescliffe GC

## Many Thanks

BIGGA Open Support Team

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the BIGGA Support team for all their hard work during the Open Championship.

I can honestly say that during my 19 years at Royal St Georges I have never seen the bunkers so well presented.

I was also delighted to be able to give a few of you the chance to hand cut some of the greens for me, an experience I hope you enjoyed.

On a personal note it was great for me to meet you all and I particularly enjoyed speaking to the younger members of the team, which makes me feel the future of our industry is in good hands.

Once again many thanks for your valuable assistance, it is much appreciated.

**Graham Royden, Head Greenkeeper**  
Royal St Georges Golf Club.

## Many Thanks 2

I am writing to offer my personal thanks to Ransomes Jacobsen and BIGGA and their continued support of the greenkeeping industry.

I will give you a brief insight into myself further on in this letter, but first I think it would be appropriate to say that without both Ransomes Jacobsen and BIGGA's innovative thinking and forward planning then I do not expect greenkeepers would be seen in the same light as we are today - By this I mean we are heading towards a greater appreciation by the general golf public and the way we are viewed.

As indicated at the head of this letter, my name is James Hutchinson and three years ago I was lucky enough to be given a RJ scholarship to study for an On - Line degree through Myerscough College. I am writing to inform you that I have recently completed the said degree and that I passed with a marvellous grade. I have also been invited to study for a BSc and I have of course accepted!

Since being awarded your scholarship, I have won numerous golf course related awards and I was also accepted onto the R&A's scholarship programme. The R&A's scholarship helped with funding for my second and third year's study but it was RJ's and BIGGA's initial help that set me onto this winning path. Without your backing, I may not have developed this mindset and I thank you for your foresight in developing the scholarship.

So please accept this letter as my way of thanking Ransomes Jacobsen and BIGGA for all your help and please, please keep up the super work.

**James Hutchinson,**  
Fairhaven Golf Club.



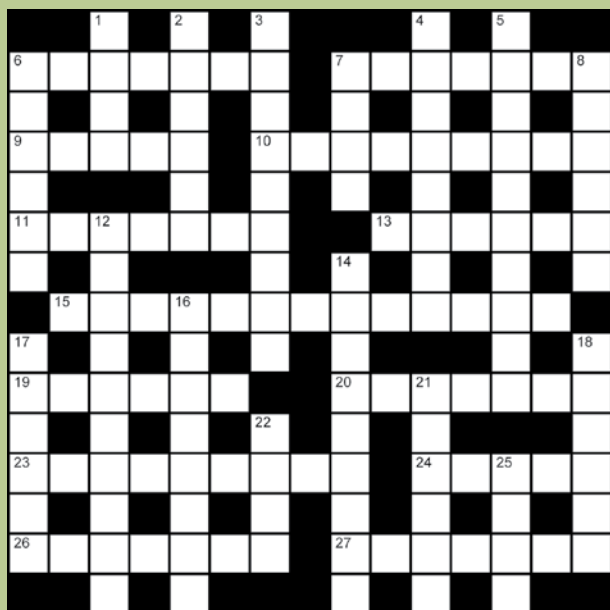
The 2011 BIGGA Open Support Team on the 18th hole after Darren Clarke's wonderful victory



# in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors..

## CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

- 6 Fictional language in which NuqneH is used as a greeting (7)
- 7 Scorer of the winning goal in 2010 World Cup final (7)
- 9 Smooth transition (5)
- 10 Place of seating for the morally superior (4,5)
- 11 Can be A, one of eight Bs, C, D, E or K (7)
- 13 Loads (6)
- 15 1992 film featuring Mr Blonde and Mr Pink (9,4)
- 19 Cover (6)
- 20 The \_\_\_\_\_ Inn, Marco Pierre White's Newbury restaurant (3,4)
- 23/24 Siblings born from a single egg (9,5)
- 26 Control (7)
- 27 Tier (7)

### DOWN

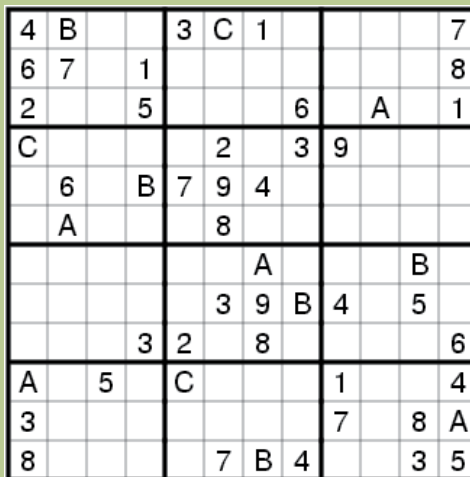
- 1 Married name of Monica Geller in Friends (4)
- 2 Shining (6)
- 3 1979 hit for Village People (2,3,4)
- 4 State capital of Virginia, USA (8)
- 5 A compiler of horoscopes (10)
- 6 Disputed territory which declared independence from Serbia in 2008 (6)
- 7 Principle schemer in Othello (4)
- 8 Biased against the mature (6)
- 12 1971 cult novel by Luke Rhinehart (3,7)
- 14 Three-nippled London songstress (4,5)
- 16 Nepalese age of majority (8)
- 17 Tighten one's belt (6)
- 18 Victorious admiral who was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar (6)
- 21 Informal greeting (6)
- 22 Repeat (4)
- 25 Small isolated land mass (4)

## QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

Keegan Bradley's stunning win in the US PGA Championship was achieved in his first Major. Can you identify these surprise winners?

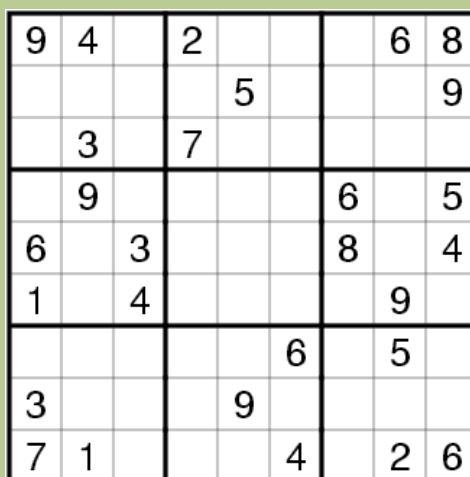
1. Name the 42-1 underdog heavyweight boxer who defeated Mike Tyson in 1990
2. Who was the 17 year old who defeated Serena Williams in the 2004 Ladies Singles final at Wimbledon?
3. Which country earned a last minute invite to the 1992 European Football Championships and then won?
4. Which country is the current Rugby 7s World Champions despite not having won another major IRB tournament before or

- since?
5. Who were the last team outside of the top division to win the FA Cup?
6. Who was the unheralded American who defeated Ernie Els in a play-off to win the 2004 Open Championship at Royal Troon?
7. Name the racehorse who survived carnage at the 23rd fence in the 1967 Grand National to record an unlikely win at odds of 100-1.
8. Which football team defeated Real Madrid in the final of the 1983 European Cup Winners Cup?
9. Which FA Cup round is the furthest reached by a non-league team in the last 60 years?



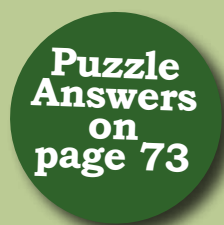
## MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



## SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



# BUYERS' GUIDE



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Photo courtesy of Rudding Park  
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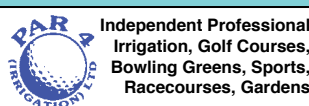
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# Recruitment



## Head Greenkeeper

Following our Head Greenkeeper moving to an internationally renowned venue, Neath Golf Club, a James Braid designed course, is looking for a new expert to join this private members club.

We are looking for an ambitious, highly motivated individual to manage the golf course and implement and improve our long-term development programme.

This job offers the applicant a great opportunity to be part of a progressive private members club that wants to keep going forward and adapt to the changing needs of its members and visitors.

For more information about Neath please look at the club website [www.neathgolfclub.co.uk](http://www.neathgolfclub.co.uk).

Applications to be received by Friday 23rd September 2011

Starting Date: ASAP

Interested applicants please apply in writing or by e-mail including CV's to:

Mr Damion Gee, Secretary, Neath Golf Club, Cadoxton, Neath, West Glamorgan SA10 8AH

Tel: 01639 632759

E-mail: [secretary@neathgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@neathgolfclub.co.uk)

## WORKSHOP MANAGER

The Club Car and TORO Distributor in the Middle East is the market leader in the Region. A career opportunity has arisen to experience expat life in a dynamic and demanding part of the world. The company has operated in the Middle East for 16 years, so this position offers a long term career opportunity for the right candidate.

The vacancy would suit a person with at least 5 years golf course or agricultural machinery experience.

The job will be to provide a quality machinery service to customers, build the after sales support for both TORO machinery and Club Car golf & utility vehicles, supervise a small team of mechanics and should also have the personality to meet with customers and generate sales.

### TAX FREE PACKAGE

Expat status, usually benefits from tax free income in addition to accommodation allowance, company vehicle and return air tickets to the country of origin.

Please send your CV and covering letter to:  
[office@hydroturfinternational.com](mailto:office@hydroturfinternational.com)



## Murcar Links Golf Club, Aberdeen Course Manager



Murcar Links is seeking an experienced Greenkeeper to manage and maintain/develop its two golf courses and practice facility. Murcar Links Championship course has hosted a number of prestigious events. The applicant needs a good understanding of Championship golf and what's required, with knowledge of soil chemistry and a modern approach to the game and its needs.

The applicant should be:

- Fully qualified in all areas to a minimum standard of level 3 with all spraying certificates
  - Competent with machinery maintenance
- A good understanding of Links golf i.e. grass species and their development etc.
  - An underlying knowledge of golf design and construction
  - Knowledge and competence of a TW2 irrigation system
    - Up to date with H&S requirements and budgeting
- An experienced people manager who has the ability to bring out the best in a team and plan work schedules effectively
  - A keen eye for detail with a desire to exceed members' expectations

Overall the applicant must have a passion for the game and a willingness to keep taking the course forward. This job offers the applicant a great opportunity to be part of a club that wants to keep going forward and adapt to the changing needs of the industry.

Salary: to be discussed on application

Starting date: ASAP

Applicants are invited to send CV's to:

Carol O'Neill, Murcar Links Golf Club, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, AB23 8BD or email [golf@murcarlinks.com](mailto:golf@murcarlinks.com)  
Closing date for applications is Friday 23 September



## ROYAL CINQUE PORTS GOLF CLUB

### Links Superintendent

Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club located at Deal on the South East Kent coast has an outstanding 18-hole championship links course, host to many prestigious events, including The Open in 1909 and 1920. In 2012 we are due to host the Carris Trophy and in 2013 The Amateur Championship.

We seek a highly capable Links Superintendent who will be responsible for all aspects of course maintenance and will join our existing management team to further develop the course's potential.

Applicants for this position should be highly motivated and experienced and should possess the following attributes:

- A minimum of 3 years experience as a Course Manager or Deputy, gained at a high profile links course, to include tournament experience
- Proven leadership and man management skills to motivate the green-keeping team
- Appropriate agronomic experience and the ability to develop effective course management strategies
- Financially aware, computer literate and able to create and operate budgets
- Good knowledge of and ability to implement Health & Safety legislation

The successful applicant would be joining a golf club committed to excellence and to the on-going development of its staff. The remuneration package offered would reflect the importance of this position and is negotiable, depending on experience and qualifications.

Please send your CV with covering letter detailing your experience to Martin Bond, Secretary by email at: [martin.bond@royalcinqueports.com](mailto:martin.bond@royalcinqueports.com) or by post to Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, Golf Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6RF.

**Closing date for applications is Monday 3rd October 2011**





Malden Golf Club is a friendly private member's club in Surrey with a fine 18 hole parkland golf course that was created in 1926. The course has been lovingly cared for by our Head Greenkeeper who is retiring at the beginning of 2012 after 30 years service. We are now looking for an ambitious, highly motivated individual (to work with our Committee) to manage the golf course and implement a long-term development programme.

This position is ideally suited to someone who wishes to establish a reputation for creativity and excellence. We are, therefore, offering a very competitive salary, relocation and benefits package which is negotiable dependent on the experience, qualifications and circumstances of the right candidate.

The Club seeks someone who can offer the following skills and experience:

- Five years golf course management with at least two years at a senior level.
- Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent.
- Spraying certificates PA1, 2 & 6.
- Detailed knowledge of health and safety regulations.
- Understanding of ecological management.
- Computer literate.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to supervise and motivate a team, and plan work schedules effectively.
- Experience in managing costs within agreed budgets.
- A keen eye for detail with a desire to exceed members' expectations.

Interested applicants please apply including CV's to: manager@maldengolfclub.com, Or write to: Mr N. Coulson, Malden Golf Club, Traps Lane, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4RS

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## intheshed answers

### QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Buster Douglas
2. Maria Sharapova
3. Denmark
4. Wales
5. West Ham United in 1980
6. Todd Hamilton
7. Foinaven
8. Aberdeen
9. 5th Round

### CROSSWORD

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### MONSTER SUDOKO

4	B	8	A	3	C	1	2	5	9	6	7
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C	1	7	8	5	2	6	3	9	4	A	B
5	6	3	B	7	9	4	A	8	2	1	C
9	A	2	4	B	8	C	1	6	5	7	3
7	5	6	2	1	4	A	C	3	8	B	9
1	8	A	C	6	3	9	B	4	7	5	2
B	9	4	3	2	5	8	7	A	1	C	6
A	2	5	7	C	6	3	8	1	B	9	4
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8	C	1	9	A	7	B	4	2	6	3	5

### SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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2	6	1	4	5	8	7	3	9
5	3	8	7	6	9	1	4	2
8	9	2	3	4	1	6	7	5
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4	8	9	1	2	6	3	5	7
3	2	6	5	9	7	4	8	1
7	1	5	8	3	4	9	2	6



# On the Soapbox

As a start of a mini series, people from the industry discuss what they have gained from attending Harrogate Week. This month, Jim Brown, Course Manager at Oulton Hall GC gives his thoughts



Jim Brown, Course Manager at Oulton Hall GC

*Jim Brown*

**I always make sure there is time in my calendar to attend Harrogate Week. I've been to the last 18 shows in my capacity as a Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager and before that a couple more as an Assistant.**

Harrogate is on my doorstep so discovering that the town hosted a management exhibition in my chosen profession was fantastic.

At one of my first shows I attended an Irrigation Workshop which was excellent.

From an educational perspective it was great, however I also made a couple of friendships on that course that I still have to this day. That is a huge part of BTME for me.

It's not only about meeting new people but it's about maintaining those relationships even if it is with people you only see once a year at Harrogate.

I've been fortunate to have worked at private members' clubs, individual proprietor clubs and large corporate groups so I've met a great many people and it's superb to be able to give them a call, ask if they are going to be at BTME and arrange to meet up with them.

We are very lucky in this industry that we can call upon the experience and knowledge of others whenever we need help.

That camaraderie comes from being a member of BIGGA and the excellent Bulletin Boards on the Website but also from attending BTME.

Whilst the education programme is excellent, in recent years, the Laurence Pithie's, Jim McKenzie's and Greg Evans's of this world have demonstrated a willingness to talk about their experiences and share information.

I am aware that they also talk at Section and Regional events, but to have the opportunity to listen and learn from these guys, and all under one roof is perfect. And to top all that in most cases it is free of charge.

There is even the opportunity to bump into these people later in the day and continue the conversation.

I don't believe there is any aloofness or a hierarchy in this industry and we can all share similar experiences whether you are delivering a Ryder Cup or a Club Captain's Day – along with the BIGGA message forums and, of course, BTME, the opportunities to gain valuable first hand advice is well worth the subscription alone.

It is always a great place to catch up with equipment innovations that come into the industry, and in the early years it was

fantastic to see the aeration equipment and dedicated mowers that were coming on stream. At the time it was all the things that you would have loved to have had but couldn't – now everyone owns and uses the equipment.

Times have changed. As part of my responsibilities I manage the suppliers for the De Vere Group and I arrange to meet up with those who have shown an interest in presenting to the Group.

I usually spend half an hour over coffee, chatting through the proposals prior to them making their pitches in March.

I have done this at BTME over the last couple of years and it is perfect for me because everyone is there and under one roof and from a process point of view, it is incredibly fair.

Going back 10 to 15 years Head Greenkeepers were encouraged by the trade representatives to place annual orders whilst visiting their respective stands.

The emphasis has shifted a little over the years, but you can still do business at the show, some times in a different fashion.

Living fairly close by I used to travel to the Show daily but latterly I've been staying

over in the town because it has given me the opportunity to spend more time with people later into the evening.

I was lucky enough to be invited to the Bernhard Reception last year and when I walked into that little pub it was like a Greenkeeping Who's Who. I'm certain you don't get those sorts of opportunities anywhere outside of Harrogate. If I could say one thing to anyone thinking of going to Harrogate next year it would be to do so, but take some personal responsibility to ensure that you get as much out of your visit as you possibly can.

The show is large so planning your visit is important, whether it be seminars, the exhibition or meeting up with old friends.

If you are going to truly benefit from visiting BTME, plan ahead.

Being a relative local and knowing Harrogate as I do, I can also say that with traffic restrictions getting tighter and tighter in the town, BIGGA's Park and Ride service means it has never been easier to get in and out of the show.

I've already pre-booked my ticket and I'm looking forward to Harrogate Week 2012 already.

**The emphasis has shifted a little over the years, but you can still do business at the show, sometimes in a different fashion**



The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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