

# GI

# GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

► 26 Weeks to BTME 2013

*Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA*

£5.20 **AUGUST 2012**

**Inside...**

## The heat is on

**BIGGA  
National  
Champs  
Preview**

The BIGGA National Championship 2012 is coming to Ayrshire. Are you up for the challenge?

### Also Featured Inside

Irvine Golf Club, Head Greenkeeper, Derek Wilson (right) talks to Jim Cook

### Open Championship 2012 Review

## BIGGA SUPPORT TEAM JOYOUS AT THE OPEN



All the news, pictures and stories from Royal Lytham & St Annes, inside

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## BACK IN TIME

The Open at Royal Lytham & St Annes back in 2001

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**ALSO INSIDE... DOUBLE THATCH FEATURE : AERATORS : BACK 9**



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# Open support

**Ernie Els was rightly hailed for his brilliant back nine that piled pressure on Adam Scott and brought him his first major for ten years, but congratulations must also go to Paul Smith, his team and all the volunteer greenkeepers including the BIGGA Support Team who fought the elements to provide a first class examination at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club for the 141st Open Championship.**

Last year's Open passed in a bit of a blur for me coming so soon in to my time with BIGGA so this year it was immensely gratifying to have the chance to be involved with the Support Team from the very beginning and to witness the extraordinary teamwork and determination from all concerned first hand.

The Open is a great opportunity to remind the golf industry of just how vital quality course management and the thousands of skilled practitioners who provide the excellent playing conditions are particularly bearing in mind the standards that modern golfers have come to expect.

**Recently though we have spent too much time counseling and advising members facing redundancy at golf clubs that are undergoing financial hardship. The golf industry is not immune to the effects of the global recession but it is surely a false economy to place at risk the effective management of a facility's prime asset – its course.**

Deterioration in course condition, as we have read in previous editions, has a major downward impact on club revenue so golf clubs are placing their very existence in jeopardy by making skilled, educated, professional course managers and head greenkeepers redundant.

Attending the Championship at Lytham provided the opportunity to make

representation to many industry bodies that can attempt to influence decision makers at club level and I am delighted that our message was heard loud and clear and was well received. We continue to work hard with our various industry partners on this crucial issue.

**As Andrew Mellon departs for warmer climes we welcome Tony Smith as BIGGA's 25th Chairman and look forward to working closely with him and his Vice Chairman Chris Sealey to continue to implement the Board's vision for the Association.**

Both men have considerable experience in the industry and at Board level and I know they are hugely committed to the success of BIGGA.

**With The Open behind us it is now time for the team here at BIGGA House to begin the detailed planning for BTME in January 2013.**

In this edition we preview the Turf Managers Conference which is shaping up to be a must attend event for next year for all course managers and head greenkeepers. Pencil Monday 21st January in to your diary now!

Enjoy the read.



**Jim Croxton,  
BIGGA CEO**

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**The BIGGA test**

The BIGGA National Championship 2012, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, will be played at the glorious Irvine Golf Club, at Bogside, in Scotland. In this 25th year of BIGGA, Irvine GC is 125, so the championship in October should be a celebration to remember. Jim Cook returned from the trip north with splendid photography and words to match.

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**BTME**

**The BIGGA Turf Management**

incorporating:

**BIGGA Seminars & Workshops**

**20-23 January 2012**

**Continue to learn**



**Continue to learn**

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**TORO** Toro Student of the Year 2012

**The National final**

The finalists for the annual Toro Student of the Year competition, held at BIGGA House, have been now been chosen.

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## Change at the top for BIGGA

New BIGGA chairman Tony Smith officially took the reins from outgoing Andrew Mellon on the first afternoon of the Open Championships.

Andrew Mellon, who is departing to become general manager of Hydroturf in Qatar, handed the badge to current vice-chairman Tony Smith, of Teeside Golf club, who has been a member of the Board of Management since 2007.

Tony thanked the now ex-chairman for his terrific efforts during his tenure, adding: "I hope to keep the flag flying for the Association."

Andrew said: "The members are the strength of the Association. The work you do can't be underestimated – without you there wouldn't be any golf courses."

"We've got a fantastic, diverse and passionate team and wish you all the best for the future."

The Board have formally elected Chippenham Golf Club's Chris Sealey, who has been the Board Member representative of the South West and South Wales Region for four years, to be Vice Chairman in support of Tony Smith. Chris (right) is delighted to accept and has the full support of his Golf Club who are thrilled with his appointment.



## A Technical Move for BIGGA L&D



As the focus of BIGGA continues to be on developing the Learning and Development pathway for members it has moved to strengthen the L&D Department.

Stuart Green, formerly of Askham Bryan College, has joined as L&D Executive.

He joins long serving L&D Manager, Sami Collins and L&D Executive, Rachael Duffy.

Stuart brings a wealth of technical greenkeeping knowledge alongside his

valuable experience within the greenkeeper education system having had more than eight years service as a greenkeeper including time at Gleneagles and Bushey Hall Golf Club."

"I'm really looking forward to working for BIGGA," says Stuart.

"Education is fundamental to the professional standing of greenkeepers and BIGGA is at the forefront of delivering and supporting its members.

"This is where I want to be."



11th hole at Carnoustie Golf Links

## A Hole in Honour

As reported in last month's Greenkeeper International, Carnoustie Golf Links has made the momentous decision to honour the work of John Philp MBE, recently retired Links Superintendent, by naming a hole in his honour.

On Friday 29 June the 383 yard par four 11th hole on the Championship Course, host to seven Open Championships, was officially renamed John Philp. The 11th hole was chosen as it is close to the Greenkeepers' Maintenance Facility, the nerve centre of John's operation for the past 27 years.

Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee chairman Gordon Wilson said: "I think everybody knows how important John has been for Carnoustie and bringing The Open back here.

"There was a lot of talk about hotels, access and improved facilities, but the most important thing was the condition of the golf course.

"He is the man who secured that."

Greenkeepers, caddies, the Golf Links Management Committee, friends and family joined chairman Gordon Wilson to express the great depth of appreciation felt for Mr Philp and his contribution to golf.

Colin McLeod, golf services manager at Carnoustie Golf Links, said: "This is a rare thing in golf and even rarer on an Open Championship course.

"The last renaming of a hole on the course was in 2003, which marked 50 years since Ben Hogan won The Open Championship at Carnoustie."

BIGGA Chairman, Andrew Mellon said, "I am so pleased to see John's lifelong efforts recognised

with such a significant honour. I have met and talked with John several times in the last few years, and his passion for greenkeeping is always apparent.

"His kindness and willingness to share his experience and knowledge with you also knows no bounds. I've been fortunate enough to attend several events at Carnoustie and I have not seen better turf condition anywhere."

During his speech at the 11th hole John thanked many people including his mentor and greenkeeping legend Walter Woods BEM who was present and the late Dalhousie Golf Club captain Jock Calder, who played a leading role in bringing The Open back to Carnoustie.

He also highlighted the role played by the links staff. John said: "I accept this tremendous honour on behalf of everybody on my team, because at the end of the day it is a team effort, and I am just a team leader.

"That is what has made it all possible, along with the investment of the management committee over the years."

He was a spectator during the 1968 Open at Carnoustie, and explained he had no idea where his love of golf would lead him. He said: "Little did I know when I came here in 1968 to the Open Championship to watch Gary Player in the final round that I would end up here.

"It's been a great privilege and pleasure working at Carnoustie, just as I did at St Andrews.

"I have a great many happy memories from my career and a lot of them are from here in Carnoustie."



## BIGGA Member hits the Headlines in Local US Newspaper

International member, Sean Sullivan, golf course superintendent at Billings Country Club in Montana, north USA, was featured ahead his involvement in the BIGGA Open Support Team this July.

The coverage shows the interest that being part of this prestigious event can generate, and one of the many rewards being a BIGGA member can bring.

Congratulations to Sean for making his local media aware of his involvement, and of the contribution from the entire BIGGA support team

A full review of the Open, from Royal Lytham & St Annes, featuring photographs and quotes from the support team, is on pages 32-37.

# Turf Science goes Live!



Turf Science Live, held at De Vere Carden Park in Cheshire last month (3-4 July 2012), provided a practical, hands on, in-sight into some of the latest technologies and pioneering future developments geared to managing sports turf and enhancing the playing experience for users.

Organised by Everris, Jacobsen and Syngenta, the event focussed on exploiting the potential of integrating all facets of turf management.

Syngenta Turf & Landscape Manager, Simon Elsworth, said: "Turf Science Live brings together three like-minded companies, where investment in research and development is integral to the creation of effective and efficient new products, along with the knowledge to put them into practice."

104 Course Managers and Groundsmen from across the country attended the event, experiencing seven showcase presentations and picking up 2.25 BIGGA CPD credits in the process:

- Turf Application on Target
- Wetting Agent Technology

Unravelling

- Where did my Nutrients Go?
- Innovation in NPK
- True Measure of Reliability
- Clip Rate Masterclass
- Integration in Action – an integrated turf management approach to improve plant health and reduce disease



The informative day was topped off by an excellent evening of hospitality from Everris, Jacobsen and Syngenta allowing all attendees the opportunity to meet and network with their peers and key players within the industry.



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## BIGGA Announce Seminar Programme for SALTEX 2012

BIGGA is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2012, from The Grandstand, Royal Windsor Race Course, on Wednesday 5 September 2012.

The line-up is as follows...

**10.15 am – 11.15 pm: Managing Winter Kill, David Cole, Golf Course/Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club**

In the winter of 2009/10 the greens at Loch Lomond suffered from devastating winter kill. This session will give an insight to the damage that occurred and the precautions that were taken in

2010/11 to prevent similar problems.

**11.30 am – 12.30 pm: From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years: Chris Haspell, Course Manager at Castle Stuart Golf Club**

In this session Chris will discuss his experiences of building a links golf course and it's grow in. He will also describe the journey towards the Scottish Open 2011, the event, the rain and the recovery.

**1.00 pm – 2.00 pm: Organic Matter – Friend or Foe, Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager, Symbio**

Measuring organic matter levels is becoming very popular, almost an industry standard procedure. This

information can be invaluable to green keepers and grounds men.

However, how do we decipher between thatch and organic matter and why it is important to do so. This seminar will discuss the various differences between problematic thatch and beneficial organic matter, the problems with working to a figure, the difference between drainage and percolation rates and how you can turn the thatch to your advantage.

**BIGGA CPD Credits - 0.5 CPD credits are available for each seminar. A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.**

## ONCE AROUND THE PARK AND HOME, JAMES!



Oake Manor Golf Club course manager James Williams, left, and deputy course manager Ian Larcombe with their new Toro mowers.

A popular course in Somerset, managed by BIGGA member, James Williams, has bought two new Toro greensmowers to help maintain its 18-hole golf course.

After a competitive demonstration to James, Oake Manor Golf Club in Taunton invested in a Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid 3420 riding greensmower and a Greensmaster 1000 pedestrian greensmower.

TriFlex is one of Toro's

newest innovations, with its all-electric cylinder drive system – virtually eliminating hydraulic leaks – particularly appealing to James.

“Our greens are the most important thing to us,” he says, “so we don't want to jeopardise them by risking hydraulic leaks. We felt we could use the TriFlex on the greens with confidence, making it a better investment for us than a hydraulic machine.”

And having invested in the

very latest greens-mowing technology, James is appreciative of Toro's commitment to building the TriFlex from the ground up and incorporating customer feedback.

“Toro have built their machines with the likes of me in mind. They listen to feedback from the people who are out on the course every day and have then created brilliant products that are comfortable and easy to use.”

But whether he's using the newest model or a popular classic like the Greensmaster 1000 – another new addition – it's the whole-life costs and long-term retention of his fleet's value that keeps James coming back to Toro.

“The robustness of a Toro is second-to-none,” he adds. “Whenever I renew my machinery I get demos from the top manufacturers, but Toro has always been a leader of the pack.”

# Glen Gives Verti-Drain the Seal of Approval



Faster operation with great quality results from the Verti-Drain 7215 is getting the thumbs-up at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club.

The fifth oldest club in England, the 27 hole complex near the major port of Felixstowe, Suffolk features the 18-hole undulating Martello Course, a 6379 yard Par 72 next to the sea with stunning views over the East Anglian coast and Deben River.

The nine-hole Kingsfleet course of 2986 yards Par 35 is available for 'Pay and Play' visitors, offering views across the River Deben and marshes and is as challenging as the Martello course, having two Par 5 holes.

The course is currently being returned to its original links condition, with firming up the greens an important task.

Head Greenkeeper Glen Rayfield explains: "We had a 7316

Verti-Drain for 13 years which was an excellent machine, but when it came up for renewal I was looking for a quicker operation, so the 7215 is ideal. Depending on the size of the tine used, we can save 2-4 hours on 18 holes."

He adds that the 1.5m working width 7215 can be used with a variety of tines from 10-22mm diameter, which he rotates throughout the year to achieve the optimum shattering effect, getting air into the turf and creating fissures which get water away and keep greens in play in the wettest of conditions.

"The extra speed makes a big difference, but the Verti-Drain can still work to 25cm (10in) deep and produce a really good quality, consistent hole, which other high speed machines can't achieve," he comments. "It is also very competitively priced."

Glen praises the build quality of the Verti-Drain, adding that he finds parts easily available and the machine simple to maintain.

"I would expect to get at least 10 years out of this machine – we will work it a bit harder than the previous Verti-Drain which is still going strong and has been kept as a back-up," he says.

Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club has also enjoyed an excellent relationship with local dealer Tomlinsons.

"Adrian Brown and his team have been fantastic, so it was an obvious choice to have another Verti-Drain supplied by them – they have always given us good support in the event of a problem or query.

"The Verti-Drain is a simple and effective machine – it does exactly what it says on the tin."

## Calling all BIGGA Members

Have you changed any of your contact details since you last gave them to us? If so, please get in touch with us at BIGGA Membership.

Our email address is [membership@bigga.co.uk](mailto:membership@bigga.co.uk)

Contact details can include your email address, phone number, change of address, change of club etc.

Thanks in advance, for keeping us up to date!

## An Open return



Head Greenkeeper Paul Smith, Royal Lytham & St Annes, explains the importance of the Open Championship and the role of the club in the tournament.



The Open Championship is a prestigious event that has been held at Royal Lytham & St Annes for many years. The club is proud to be part of this tradition and to provide a world-class experience for all visitors.

## An Open Return

Last month's preview of The Open Championship at Royal Lytham & St Annes, was written by Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith. The splendid photography which accompanied it was provided by BIGGA Affiliate Member, Alan Birch.

Unfortunately, due to an error on our behalf, Alan was not captioned within the piece. GI wishes to apologise to Alan and thank him for his contribution, and for the many other occasions he supplies BIGGA with complimentary photography.



# Precision Cutting For Greens

**Two experienced BIGGA members in charge at contrasting golf courses in Essex have invested in new John Deere machines introduced specifically to meet the demand from UK greenkeepers for faster, more accurate adjustment on their walk-behind greens mowers.**

Arnold Phipps-Jones, BIGGA South East Region Board Director, and course manager at Three Rivers Golf and Country Club, bought three of John Deere's new 220E hybrid electric mowers for the greens on the club's Kings and Jubilee courses, having first seen them at the BTME 2012 - The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition.

The Kings is a near 50-year old course with push-up soil greens, while the Jubilee was built just 12 years ago with sandy USGA specification greens.

The idea was to switch to alternating between ride-on 2500A triplex mowers and hand mowing on all 36 greens.

"A five-minute demo from the dealer was all we needed, and all the staff can do it very easily now.

"The mowers are exceptionally precise," he adds. Arnold handmows once a week – it's nearly always on a Friday, as he believes it's important that the greens look their best at the weekend. All six full-time greenkeepers, including Arnold, have to do six greens each. It's 'job done' for each of them in less than two hours.

He says he and his team of six full-time plus two part-time greenkeepers can cut 15 or 16 greens on a single tank of fuel.

Just 30 miles away at Colne Valley Golf Club, owner Tom Smith took delivery this spring of three new John Deere 220SL



walk-behind greens mowers (shown above). Tom, BIGGA South East Regional Chairman, has been a greenkeeper for 20 years, and before moving into ownership worked on the course at Merrist Wood College.

Since he bought the proprietary club 11 years ago, it had been his practice to hand cut the greens.

John Deere's previous 220C models had done the job well for the last five, but it was time to

upgrade and Tom also made his choice at BTME 2012.

"The C Series mowers had done a great job for us and the new SLs give us useful refinements," says Tom.

"I like the challenge of setting up the whole course, but the greens are the icing on the cake," he adds. "Nothing makes you feel better as a greenkeeper than when a player compliments you on the state of your greens."

## Celebrations at the Wentworth Club



Chris Kennedy's retirement was marked by a glittering evening in the Wentworth Club's Ballroom attended by hundreds of colleagues, suppliers, members and friends.

After a number of tributes from amongst others the Wentworth owner, Richard Caring,

Chris gave a moving speech in which he thanked many people who had assisted him along the way including some of his mentors from the greenkeeping fraternity.

Pictured from left: Chris Kennedy and his partner Jill, Rita and Jack McMillan, Brenda and George Brown.



# Chairman's Word

A welcome from newly appointed BIGGA  
National Chairman, Tony Smith

## An Open welcome

**It is an absolute honour and a privilege to have been elected by the Board of Management to the role of Chairman of this great Association. I have been a greenkeeper for 48 years and an active member of BIGGA from its inception, at Section (Cleveland), Region (North) and Board levels.**

I arrived at Royal Lytham And St. Annes Golf Club for the recent Open Championship as a member of the Support Team and minibus driver and left as Chairman. Pretty good promotion!

I have, of course, been Vice Chairman for the last eighteen months during which time Andrew Mellon has given an enormous amount of time and expertise to the Association – far over and above what any of us could have expected. He has guided us through some very stormy waters to such an extent that the general feeling of both staff and members is now one of optimism and excitement, looking forward to the future. Andrew will be a difficult act to follow and I know I speak for all of you in wishing him all the best in his new career overseas. He will be welcome to return at any time and will be sorely missed, not only by myself but also by the members, headquarters staff and his colleagues at Elmwood College and Golf Club.

When I began my career at Abbeydale Golf Club in Sheffield I never thought I would have an opportunity such as this to serve the profession of greenkeeping and I intend to work tirelessly along with my fellow Board of Management members, Jim Croxton and our dedicated team at BIGGA House and in the Regions.

My job at Teesside Golf Club, where I have been Course Manager for 32 years, will allow me to dedicate sufficient time to be an active and involved Chairman and I am very much looking forward to attending many BIGGA events and meeting as many of our thousands of members as I can. The golf industry is facing a difficult time and many of our members are coming under sometimes intolerable pressure as golf clubs deal with declining revenues. The Association must play a strong part in supporting those members whilst continuing to work with other industry stakeholders to remind them that no golf business can thrive without a



well maintained and managed course.

I am also fortunate that my personal circumstances, my wife Lorna and I have two grown up children who have given us three fantastic grandchildren, mean that I have the flexibility to fully commit to the role. Our social life including our passion for amateur dramatics may have to take a little bit of a back seat for the next year and a half though!

I am grateful that my employers are fully supportive of this opportunity and I would like to thank Gary Evans, the head greenkeeper, and the whole Teesside team in advance for all their hard work.

The Open Championship itself was fantastic, with the on site team, led brilliantly by Paul Smith, presenting the course in magnificent condition despite appalling weather conditions. I had the privilege of being part of the early morning set up team on the Tuesday and Wednesday and witnessed first hand the extraordinary attention to detail and hard work the team put in.

It was also great to see the BIGGA Open

Support Team once again do a first class job, it is humbling to witness so many BIGGA members take time out of their busy lives to play a part in the Open Championship, well done guys, you did the Association proud once again. I'd also like to congratulate Tracey, Rachael, Sandra and John on the excellent administration of the team before and during the event.

During the week there was a presentation made to the recently retired Regional Administrators, Peter Larter (Northern/Midlands Regions) and Peter Boyd (Scottish Region) who both served the Association with distinction for many years. It was great to have the opportunity to recognise both gentlemen for the important roles they have played and I wish them

well in their retirement.

I am delighted that my good friend, Chris Sealey of Chippenham Golf club has accepted the invitation from the Board of Management to be my Vice Chairman. Chris is a great man with greenkeeping at his heart and he has served on the Board with great passion and dignity. I look forward to working closely with him over the next 18 months or so.

As BIGGA moves forward it is vital that we continue to react to the needs of the industry and our members. I wish every single BIGGA member the very best during my time in office and would like to make it clear that I welcome any input or feedback on any topic.

The strength of this Association is the members and I will put you first at all times. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can.

**Tony Smith, BIGGA Chairman**  
**tony.smith48@ntlworld.com**

# Bearwood Lakes Golf Club GEO Certified™

Regarded as an “outstanding natural woodland refuge just outside London,” and one of the finest inland courses to be built in Britain in the past twenty years, Bearwood Lakes has added another important accolade - recently being awarded GEO Certified™, golf’s international ecolabel certifying comprehensive commitment and achievement around sustainability.

The 18-hole golf course in Berkshire meanders through a backdrop of mature pines, beech and cedar trees and three natural lakes that were originally part of Windsor Great Park and part of the hunting grounds of the Kings of England since the 11th century.

The original design by Gil Hockley under the direction of Martin Hawtree retained much of the original landscape, using tree coverage and nature of the area as a unique backdrop to the course that rolls around the Bearwood estate.

Managing Director, Carl Rutherford added: “We have integrated sustainability into our decision-making from every-day items like irrigation and pest-control, to purchasing decisions in the clubhouse and on the course, and certainly around the renovation work undertaken recently.

The natural lakes and forested terrain on historically significant land perhaps add to the responsibility we all feel, but environmental stewardship also helps set our course apart from others, and makes good business sense.”

Golf Course Manager, Daniel Lightfoot MSc added: “As part of a rolling 5-year Ecology

and Landscape Management Plan, The GEO OnCourse programme gave us an easy way to record and report this work. We are already focusing ahead on new ideas, including a new irrigation storage reservoir which will become another open water habitat.”

“A great golf experience should draw on nature in many ways. And whilst we no longer have the bears here from past centuries, deer can be regularly seen along with badgers, grass snakes, and a variety of aquatic wildlife.”

**Jonathan Smith, GEO Chief Executive added that** “Bearwood Lakes is a great story of a club that has been factoring sustainability into their operations for years and we’re delighted that the

OnCourse programme and GEO Certified ecolabel have helped them tell this story more publicly.”

**Jim Croxton, Chief Executive Officer of BIGGA shared his endorsement:**

“BIGGA members are passionate about the environment they manage and we see a lot of value in participation in the GEO OnCourse programme as a great roadmap to improved environmental stewardship.

The GEO Certified™ label makes a strong statement to golfers, local communities, and the overall golf industry regarding dedication to continued sustainable golf course management and we commend Daniel Lightfoot and

all his colleagues at Bearwood Lakes for their achievement.”

**Dino Minoli, GEO Sustainability Associate (GEOSA), and accredited independent Verifier:**

“The environmental performance of golf facilities is an important issue. This ecolabel signifies commitment to environmental governance and positions the game of golf at the vanguard of sustainable sport and leisure. This certification recognises the pro environmental values and actions of their excellent Course Manager, responsible Owner, pro-active Management and supportive Club Members.

*Full reports can be viewed at <http://www.golfenvironment.org/clubs/bearwoodlakes>*



Daniel Lightfoot receiving GEO Certification

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

## Grass Agronomics

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# Learning & Development

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

**I'd like to begin this article by congratulating Rachael on the extraordinary efforts that went into the organisation of the Open Support team last month. Rachael faced several challenges during the week and survived them all!**

Congratulations must also go to Paul Smith and his team at Royal Lytham and St Annes and to the entire volunteer support team.

Congratulations must also go to Chris Haspell and his team up at Castle Stuart and to all those who volunteered for the Scottish Open.



**Toro Student  
Greenkeeper of the  
Year Award**

Last month, I headed off to interview candidates for the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

Following my whirlwind trip of the country, where I took in St Albans, Tonbridge, Bristol, York, Stoke on Trent and Perth, we selected six candidates to go forward to the National Final taking place at BIGGA House on 16 and 17 September.

The finalists are:

Christopher Watson from Peterculter Golf Club, representing Elmwood College

Peter Thompson from Sunningdale Golf Club, representing Oaklands College

Neil Ivamy from Trevose Golf & Country Club, representing Duchy College

Stuart Imeson from Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club, representing Newcastle College

Aaron Launchbury from North Foreland Golf Club, representing Hadlow College

Thomas Flavell from Lingdale Golf Club, representing Myerscough College

Further details about each of the finalists can be found on pages 28-29.

The interview panel comprised of a BIGGA Regional Administrator, a representative from Lely (UK) Ltd




**Gold Key Individual Members:**  
Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS Ian MacMillan MG, Ian Morrison Andrew Turnbull, W J Rogers, Sam Langrick, Antony Calvert, Espen Bergmann


**Silver Key Individual Members:**  
Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn Douglas Duguid, Ade Archer Jaey Goodchild, Graham Wiley Michael Beaton, Paul Jenkins

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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www.bigga.org.uk



on behalf of Toro, a BIGGA greenkeeper member and myself.

My thanks go to: Clive Osgood; Jane Jones; Sandra Raper; John Young; Larry Pearman; John Pike; Nigel Lovatt; Gerald Bruce; Alan Pierce MG; John Keenaghan; Gary Cunningham and Stuart Taylor for their involvement in the interview and selection process.

I wish all six finalists the very best of luck and look forward to welcoming them to BIGGA House in September.



**Continue to Learn  
at BTME 2013**

The education programme is shaping up to be another not to be missed event!

We will be welcoming Dr Thom Nikolai, The Doctor of Green Speed, from Michigan State University.

Thom is a specialist in putting green management that maximizes turfgrass health, investment and customer satisfaction.

He will be presenting several sessions during the week including a one-day workshop on 'The A, B, C's of Putting Green Maintenance', a session on the Turf Managers' Conference and a Seminar Session.

The workshop programme will

also feature many of our very successful workshops and presenters including:

**So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager – Peter Jones and Kevin Munt**

**Moving into Management – Frank Newberry**

**Irrigation System Management and Design – Adrian and Dennis Mortram**

**How to be an Outstanding Manager Parts 2 and 4 – Shona Garner (above)**

**IT Business Administration – Jacky Lowe**

**Pesticide Update for NPTC Certificate Holders – Jon Allbutt**

**Basic Budgeting and Golf Club Finance – Jerry Kilby & Duncan Ritchie**

New and returning workshops include:

**Health and Safety Documentation – Jon Allbutt**

**The Grass Plant – Dr Paul Miller**

**The Soil – Dr Paul Miller**

**Basic Golf Mechanics – Hanfried Sievers**

**Diagnostics and Problem Solving – Hanfried Sievers**

With a full seminar programme and the introduction of Focus On sessions, this will be an education programme not to be missed!



# Membership

**Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update**

## The Open Championships 2012 – Thank you to the BIGGA Open Support Team

Last month I welcomed the BIGGA Open Support Team, this month I want to thank them for their commitment, hard work and team spirit. The team members this year were:

### Greenkeeper Liaison Role:

Richard Whyman, Burnham and Berrow GC

### First tee representatives:

Richard Whyman (as above)  
Paul Jenkins, Westridge GC

### Team Leaders and mini bus drivers:

Kevan Glass, Brokenhurst Manor GC; John Keenaghan, Chipping Sodbury GC; Billy Merritt, Beacon Park GC; Richard Saunders, Mowsbury GC; John Wells MG, South Herts GC

### Support Team:

Darren Abbs, Royal Norwich GC; Jamie Acton, Worlebury GC; Geoffrey Beauchamp, Staplehurst Golf Centre; Robert Bemment, Immingham GC; Beverly Blair, Southwick Park GC; Graham Blum, The Grange GC (Australia); Robert Bramwell, The Wentworth Club; Jason Brooks, Torquay GC; Mark Brooks, Sunningdale GC; Allan Donlevy, Ashton-in-

Makerfield; Asa English, Rothley Park GC; Simon Forshaw, Jack's Point (New Zealand); John France, Furstlicher GC Bad Waldsee (Germany); Mark Fry, Worplesdon GC; John Geddes, McDonald GC; Phillip Graham, Bishop Auckland GC; Paul Griffiths, Seaford GC; Bruce Hicks, Boston GC; Robert Hill, Chichester GC; Stephen Hopkins, RAF Cottesmore GC; Brian Hunter, McDonald GC; Matthew Hutchinson, Hassocks GC; Richard Jenkinson, Orchil Development - G-West; Darren Jones, Blackmoor GC; Ashley Marshall, Matfen Hall GC; Steve Mason, Stocks GC; Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC; Rhys Norville, Remuera GC; Paul Roberts, Baron Hill GC Ltd; Gavin Robson, Burton-on-Trent GC; Robert Sandilands, Grange-over-Sands GC; Ben Scrivener, Abridge Golf & Country Club; Andrew Slingsby, Halifax West End GC; Tom Smith, Colne Valley GC; Sean Sullivan CGCS, The Briarwood Golf Course; Scott Thomson, Wetherby GC; Miles Todd, Rhuddlan GC; Andrew Unwin, Rotherham GC; Tom Wood, Outlane GC; Daniel Woodcraft, Bradfield College Golf Club; Myles Woods, Berkhamsted GC; Mathew Wormald, Buckinghamshire GC; Paul Young, Whitefields GC

### Board Members

Andrew Mellon, Elmwood College Golf Club  
Tony Smith, Teeside Golf Club  
George Barr, Worthing Golf Club  
Gary Cunningham, Trentham Park Golf Club  
Stuart Greenwood, North Berwick Golf Club  
Jeremy Hughes, Vale of Llangollen Golf Club  
Arnold Phipps-Jones, Stock Brook and Three River Golf and Country Club  
Chris Sealey, Chippenham Golf Club

In addition to providing a greenkeeper to rake the bunkers for every match on Championship days, this year Paul Smith and the R&A asked BIGGA to provide an early morning preparation team and a late night divot team.

We also weren't without challenges this year due to the amount of rain that fell in a short space of time and the water table been so high. Many people were asking why the bunkers weren't emptied, they were but the water just kept rising!

All in all it was a fantastic week where the team showed true team spirit being called in to work at all sorts of early times, it just showed what a fantastic industry this is and when it's needed we can all pull together. So well done Support Team 2012, a good job done, roll on Muirfield 2013.



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**John Young** **Sandra Raper**



**Clive Osgood** **Jane Jones**



### OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

**Personal Accident Helpline**  
02075 603013  
**Greenkeepers Legal Assistance**  
0800 177 7891  
**Greenkeepers Support Services**  
0800 174 319  
**Debt Counselling Helpline**  
0800 174319

## Bringing Biology back to Turfgrass Management



Golf's sustainability movement strides forward as more and more people combine their commitment and action with innovation. New solutions – from supportive programmes to innovative products – work in tandem to make a real difference.

The two organisations have come together to help raise awareness and understanding, backed by practical solutions. The GEO Environment Organization (GEO), and The Great Turf Company, both started and headquartered in Scotland, are each focused on bringing greater sustainability into golf.

GEO is a stakeholder-funded not-for-profit organization working to guide, support and motivate the global golf industry around sustainability, administering golf's international ecolabel, GEO Certified™ and delivering practical guidance and programmes that are followed to earn the distinction.

The Great Turf Company has invested a great deal into developing biological solutions for the finest turf, with a unique 'Activated

Microbial Turf Management' methodology designed to restore natural balance in turf and soil.

"Their range of turf nutrition products includes compost tea systems and naturally sourced granular and liquid feeds formulated to optimise turf health naturally, reducing chemical dependency, 'feeding the soil' and maintaining a healthy soil environment, which is key to healthy turf. Current users of these products include Open Championship golf courses and Premiership football clubs.

Strong, healthy turf is fundamental for golf and achieving this in an environmentally-friendly, safe and cost-effective way was a motivator for Machrihanish Dunes who introduced The Great Turf Company's biological approach during the time they were working toward their GEO Certified™ award.

Estonian Golf and Country Club also recently began using Great Turf Company products, adopting an outlook in which sustainability is factored into their selection of products

and maintenance practices. The Club is currently in the GEO OnCourse™ programme and working toward GEO Certified™.

Ian Morrison, MD for The Great Turf Company commented:

"We have made it our mission to advocate the benefits of good soil biology for a safer, sustainable future for turfgrass management. Without biology soil is merely dirt; but with a thriving microbial population soil becomes the complete solution to plant health.

"We share GEO's belief in golf's potential to deliver real and valued results for sustainability, and we are very proud to support GEO in growing the business of sustainable golf."

GEO Chief Executive Jonathan Smith said of The Great Turf Company:

"As a growing, forward-looking business, it says a great deal that they would support the not-for-profit work that GEO does to foster credible sustainability progress in golf clubs and developments around the world."



## POPPY DAY

Allett Mowers has recruited Poppy Roe for the newly-created position of marketing executive, based at the company's manufacturing centre in Hixon, Staffordshire.

Reporting to sales director, Leigh Bowers, Poppy is now assisting with a full range of marketing activities for Allett professional and domestic cylinder mowers. These activities include liaising with and supporting Allett's appointed distributor and dealer networks, organising press releases, advertisements, promotional events and exhibitions as well as website management and digital marketing.

Poppy brings to her new position extensive experience gained within the automotive industry employing both traditional and electronic marketing techniques, skills that will be invaluable as Allett strengthens its position in existing markets and looks for additional business opportunities throughout Europe and further afield.

Poppy expressed her delight to be working for a British engineering company that designs, develops and manufactures products for distribution worldwide.

"Allett Mowers has a fantastic ethic and everyone is passionate about the business and the products they produce," she said.

# Kubota Arrive in Harrogate



Harrogate Borough Council is making good use of the powerful Kubota M9540 utility tractor covering some 540 square miles in the spa town itself, home to the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition each January.

Purchased principally to tackle mowing duties with a new Major TR1600 rotary trailed gang mower, the 95hp M9540 was delivered in time for the start of this season.

Transport Manager Alan Smith

explains: "The groundsmen have an eight-day mowing round to cover the large areas of grass in parks, playing fields and open spaces, and have to travel 20-25 miles from the depot for some jobs."

One feature of the M9540 which has met with particular approval from the operators is the 36x36 speed transmission with hydraulic shuttle, operated via a steering column mounted lever.

# E-Z deal for Bromsgrove



Bromsgrove Golf Centre, situated in the heart of Worcestershire, has taken delivery of their second fleet of E-Z-GO RXV golf cars from local dealer, TH White of Redditch. E-Z-GO is a Textron Inc. company.

Adam Morris is a director of the family-owned facility, which was formed in 1993 and is home to Bromsgrove Golf Club. Commenting on the new fleet he said, "As early adopters of the new RXV back in 2009, we were probably taking a slight gamble with the new technology. However, we needn't have worried as the fleet has performed superbly and we've only had five unscheduled service calls in the

past three years.

"The build quality is excellent; we've had very little damage and the number of rounds per charge has been surprising.

"They are certainly very economical to run and have definitely made a significant contribution to the bottom line.

"We expected good things when we purchased the initial fleet and have not been disappointed; reliability has been excellent, the support from TH White has been of the highest order and it was an easy decision to return to them for the new fleet."

For more information visit on E-Z-GO products visit [www.ransomesjacobsen.com](http://www.ransomesjacobsen.com)

# What's your number?

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

**Name:** Barry Eagle  
**Company:** Gripclad Limited  
**Position:** Managing Director



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

Since 1989 so that's 23 years in direct Leisure Sales. I had to use a calculator for that!

**How did you get into it ?**

I was approached by a veteran sales manager who saw my natural skill of communicating with others and suggested I should get into direct sales (no salary in those days, just commission earnings!) I have never looked back. I suppose you could say I am a people person.

**What other jobs have you done ?**

Financial Services and Banking

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

No day is the same and that every day is a challenge, so it keeps me on my toes. My business ethic is to have an ability to offer a no-nonsense service enabling problems to be solved with the products that we offer.

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

Enormous changes for me personally. Back in the day I used to cover seven counties across the south and doing at least 100,000 miles a year seeing customers old and new. My business is now website based which means I can offer our products on a National footing. I'm lucky if I do 10,000 miles in a year now. Long gone are the days of "repping" but the personal service is still to be found with Gripclad Ltd.

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

Sculpturing a fat free torso, or in other words I go to the Gym a lot. Charity runs, spend time with my boys, and play golf!

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

I don't, very simply I can't plan what will happen in the future, I live for the NOW. You never know what's round the corner!

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

24

*Barry has picked Demelza Hartley of Lowe Maintenance*

# GI NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

## NEW 4X4 GATOR FINANCE DEAL

John Deere Financial has announced a new interest-free finance programme for Gator 4x4 utility vehicles.

UK customers may order any new HPX or XUV Gator model from their John Deere dealer at any time until 30th September 2012. The offer is for 2 plus 22 monthly payments at zero per cent interest, with the amount financed limited to 60 per cent of the retail value.

John Deere manufactures the widest range of utility vehicles in the industry.

The four-wheel drive HPX and XUV Gator utility vehicles are ruggedly designed for a wide range of transporting, loading, hauling, dumping and general materials handling duties, especially in challenging off-road conditions.

Options include fully enclosed cabs, a wide range of tyres, a

road homologation kit, rear hitch, utility trailer, front and rear blades and a winch. Other manufacturers also sell a number of specialist attachments to further increase the Gator's versatility; these include seeders, sprayers, spreaders, trailers, line markers, snow blowers, containers and tool holders.

Other credit profiles are available on request, and the availability of finance is subject to status and to terms and conditions – further details are available at [www.JohnDeereFinancial.co.uk](http://www.JohnDeereFinancial.co.uk) or from John Deere dealers nationwide.

## GO WITH THE FLOW



No fuel, no oil, and that means no chance of leaks on turf and no fumes polluting the atmosphere, according to Broadwood International. The TurfEx MS2000 top dresser is electrically operated with a semi-sealed 12 volt DC motor and is designed to mount in the bed of utility vehicles.

Broadwood International will be at SALTEX 2012, displaying five ranges of snow, turf and amenity equipment. In the SnowEx range two new salt spreaders will be on show.

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



## THE GRASS GROUP ANNOUNCES ATT AND TRILO LINE-UP FOR SALTEX 2012



The Grass Group can always be relied upon to have new products at Saltext – and 2012 is no exception. No less than two new machines from Trilo and a SMART new multi-purpose mower from ATT.

Making its debut is the Trilo C15 (above), a fully mounted, PTO driven flail/scarifier collector with a working width of 1.5m. A multipurpose machine, this robust and compact unit will cut and collect grass from rough or fine areas, scarify and collect leaves, moss, horse droppings and other debris. Fitted with 3mm scarifying blades, the Trilo C15 will, in one pass, leave an aerated and well groomed finish – regenerating previously matted and stale ground. The 18 wind paddles fitted to the heavy duty, finely balanced rotor ensure a thorough uptake of material into the 1.1M3

capacity hopper. The material is discharged by operating the cab-mounted single acting hydraulic lever which raises the rear of the hopper, allowing compact tidy heaps to be deposited at disposal sites. Specifically designed for tractors of 28HP and above, the Trilo C15 has a single acting hydraulic system to operate the hopper emptying mechanism.

ATT's refined INFiNiCut pedestrian mower is SMART in many ways. A visually striking machine, INFiNiCut is a mower first and the world's only complete, walk behind, turf refinement cassette system second. Energised by INFiNiPower, the unit can be powered by a battery unit for those areas close to buildings, and then switched over to the hybrid energy/generator for locations further away – all in the field without the need to

return to the workshop. The electronic control offers three different forward speeds for user selection independent of the reel speed. This speed selection is critical for the different SMART cassettes available – be it cutting, scarifying, grooming, vibration levelling or any job that the nine cassettes can carry out.

Vanmac BV, the manufacturer of the Trilo brand, also announce the Trilo S3 (below) a smaller vacuum sweeper to work at 1.5 metres wide to work at hard to get areas where ground pressure and dimensions matter.



### CHARTERHOUSE LAUNCH REDEXIM VERTI-TOP 1200

The Redexim Verti-Top 1200, appearing at Saltext, will find use in confined spaces.

This high work-rate machine has a 1.2M (47.2") working width and weighs only 360kg that will only require a 25hp tractor with a 400kg lift capacity.

The infill material used in synthetic systems must be kept level for consistency, and the upper carpet fibres have to remain free of litter and detritus to avoid the accumulation of dirt and bacteria, as well as potentially harmful fragments like glass splinters. The Verti-Top 1200 maintains the synthetic turf by removing, cleaning and redistributing the infill material.

The Verti-Top's rotary brush ingeniously removes surface litter and the top 2 - 12mm of infill, and then filters out debris by using a vibrating mechanism.

The cleaned infill is then redistributed evenly over the surface, and an adjustable rear brush ensures a smooth finish. During the process a powerful vacuum system uses suction to lift the fine particles such as dust, hair and broken fibres into a filter bag.



Progressive Pro-Flex Rotary Mower



Trilo Vacuum Sweeper  
\*P/X available



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

# BTME 20

## The BIGGA Turf Management

incorporating:



**BIGGA Seminars  
& Workshops**

**20-23  
January 2012**



# The BIGGA show heats up

A look ahead to the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition, and Continue to Learn educational programme for 2013

**BTME is back at Harrogate for 2013, and is shaping up to be another must-attend event, with many exhibitors having already confirmed their spaces, months in advance, as the countdown to 22-24 January 2013 begins.**

The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition, incorporating Continue to Learn Education Seminars and Workshops, which start the week-end before and run for five consecutive days, is the ultimate experience for golf greenkeepers.

BTME, widely regarded as Europe's leading showcase for turf and groundscape professionals and buyers, offers a fantastic opportunity to browse, buy and seek advice from over a hundred of

the top manufacturers and service providers across the world.

Look out for details soon on how to pre-register for your free visitors pass.



# 2013

## Exhibition

22-24 January 2013  
at the Harrogate  
International Centre



**IMAGES:**  
A selection from BTME 2012,  
courtesy of SiRA Studio  
[sirastudio.com](http://sirastudio.com)



**5** days of  
education  
20-24 January 2013

**BIGGA Seminars  
& Workshops**

# Continue to learn at BTME 2013

BIGGA can already confirm a host of education seminars and workshops, coming your way in January 2013...

**Turf Managers'  
Conference 2013**  
Monday 21 January  
2013  
The Crown Hotel,  
Harrogate

**The Turf Managers'  
Conference 2013 will make  
its return to the Continue  
to Learn at BTME 2013  
education programme.**

Taking place at The Crown Hotel in Harrogate on Monday 21 January 2013, the new venue will offer delegates a more comfortable learning environment whilst cementing the success of the Conference as it enters its third year.

The programme will feature some familiar industry names and will introduce new subject specialists to provide an interesting and thought provoking range of topics for Turf Managers':

- **Dr Thomas Nikolai** - 'The Doctor of Green Speed' from Michigan State University, a specialist in putting green management to maximize turfgrass health, investment and customer satisfaction.

- **David Bancroft** - Turner from

3D Training and Development, a specialist in organisational politics.

- **Dr Kate Entwistle**, Turf Pathologist from the Turf Disease Centre, a specialist in disease and pest identification.

- **Lorna Sheldon** from CWI International a specialist in communication and presentation skills.

With prices held from 2012, this must attend event is being offered to BIGGA members at £99 + VAT (£195 + VAT for non members). To reserve your place at this popular event, telephone or email Rachael Duffy, Learning and Development Administrator on 01347 833800 (option 3) or [rachael@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rachael@bigga.co.uk).

## Continue to Learn Workshops

**The Continue to Learn  
Workshop programme  
will make its return to the  
Queen's Suite of Harrogate  
International Centre on  
Sunday 20 and Monday 21  
January 2013.**

Featuring a series of one and two-day workshops including:

### **Two-Day Workshops**

- Essential IT Business Administration for Greenkeepers





- Irrigation System Management and Design
- Moving into Management
- So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager

#### One-Day Workshops

- The A, B, C's of Putting Green Maintenance
- The Grass Plant
- Basic Golf Mechanics
- Health and Safety Documentation
- How to be an Outstanding Manager (Part 2)
- How to be an Outstanding Manager (Part 4)
- Diagnostic and Problem Solving
- The Soil
- Basic Budgeting and Golf Course Finance
- Pesticides Update for NPTC Certificate Holders

## Continue to Learn Seminars

**The Continue to Learn Seminar Programme will feature more than 25 sessions, all of which are free of charge to all visitors.**

There will be feature sessions including presentations from:

- Thom Nikolai, The Doctor of Green Speed, from Michigan State University
- Curtis Tyrrell MG CGCS, Superintendent from the 2012 Ryder Cup venue, Medinah Country Club, Chicago, USA
- John Philp, retired Course Manager from Carnoustie
- Steve Chappell, Course Manager, PGA Centenary at Gleneagles, host of the 2014 Ryder Cup
- Stuart Yarwood MG, Course Manager, Lymm Golf Club
- Richard Jenkinson, Deputy Course Manager, gWest



- Rob Wills, Assistant Greenkeeper, Remedy Oaks Golf Club
- Les Howkins MG, The Richmond Golf Club

This year we will be introducing a seminar pre-booking system for BIGGA members. Look out for further details in the Continue to Learn brochure.

2013 will see the introduction of 'Focus On' sessions. These 1.5 – 2 hour sessions will home in on specific areas, split into different strands including:

- Management
- Technical
- Environmental
- Information Technology

For further details on all of the education on offer, see the full Continue to Learn at BTME 2013 education programme that will be delivered with your October issue of Greenkeeper International.

ABOVE: The Turf Managers' Conference from Continue to Learn 2013

## Accommodation

### Are you planning your trip to BTME and Continue to Learn 2013?

Reservation Highway is the officially appointed accommodation agent for BTME 2013 providing a centralised point of contact for all your accommodation and travel enquiries.

By following the link on the BTME website you can gain instant access to all of the accommodation rates that have been specially negotiated for the event. All of the rates shown are what you will pay, with no hidden extras. In addition to special nightly rates, Reservation Highway also offers special deals such as 3 night specials, advance purchase and early bird rates.

Reservation Highway can be contacted on +44 (0) 1423 525577.



# The BIGGA test

**The BIGGA National Championship 2012, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota**, will be played at the glorious Irvine Golf Club, at Bogside, in Scotland. In this 25th year of BIGGA, Irvine GC is 125, so the championship in October should be a celebration to remember. Jim Cook returned from the trip north with splendid photography and words to match



**The course offers a behemoth of a challenge and as it has been known to reduce professional golfers to whimpering wrecks is definitely not one for the faint hearted.**

Head Greenkeeper, Derek Wilson, said: "The Scottish pro Alan Tait brought three young pros down to play and they were saying 'it's only six-and-a-half thousand yards, it must be easy' then in the clubhouse at the end of the round he said 'tell them what you scored' and one, in tears, admitted he hadn't broken 100!"

A true links challenge, the course sits on sand with fairways divided roughly by thick gorse bushes and heather which lay in wait for any wayward shots.

"If you hit the ball straight you'll get a good score. Accuracy off the

tee is a must because if you end up in the bushes, you're in trouble," Derek added.

It was built in 1887 and some of the present character of the course comes from James Braid's designs in the 1920s. His use of nature as a tool is greatly in evidence around Irvine GC and part of its individualistic charm can be attributed to the great Scottish course designer.

The course has not changed much since then and all the bunkers still sit in their original positions. In the past 25 years, new tees have been built at the 2nd, 6th, 12th, 17th and 18th.

Derek said: "The basic shape of the golf course hasn't altered and with some of the lengthy carries we have around here, can you imagine trying to hit them with hickory golf clubs? It's the same with all of the courses down this stretch and you





The 12th at Arran

look at the scores they made back then it's incredible."

One man who can imagine this is Derek himself as he often plays in the Hickory Championships.

He started as a greenkeeper at Irvine GC in 1975, went to Turnberry in 1981 and stayed there until 1986 when he was offered the job of Head Greenkeeper back at Irvine.

Irvine GC is regularly used by the R&A as a Final Open Qualifying Course and in 2003 the club co-hosted the Amateur Championship with Royal Troon. In 2007, the British Seniors Open was co-hosted with Turnberry and in 2009 the Ladies Home Internationals were hosted at the club.

One of the many pros who have played Irvine was the charismatic Christy O'Connor Jnr, now on the senior tour. "He's well known for



hitting that two-iron on the 18th at the Belfry and he must have sold that two-iron ten times in the clubhouse here! He qualified no bother by playing conservatively with irons off the tees. He said that you cannae win the Open here, just get into it, so he didn't do anything silly."

Out on the course itself, the greens consist of around 60% bentgrass and 40% Poa annua and the fairways are mainly bentgrass with small bits of fescue. "We say around here that you don't play fairway shots from grass, you play from turf," added Derek.

He explained the reasons as to why sleepers were installed on the faces of several bunkers around the course: "The ones on the 18th fairway have been in over 20 years and the reason we put them in is because they last longer. It's

normally very windy here and the wind erodes the turf. Then you have under-hanging lies in the bunkers, so we went with an experiment with sleepers after we had seen them at Prestwick Golf Club. For a traditional golf course like ours, it suits it because they are fitted into the banking."

Earlier this year, sleepers were installed into the large bunker in front of the green on the par-three 16th. This work was done in-house by the six staff on the course and took about two weeks.

"All the front sleepers have wires attached to ones at the back so they can't fall, so there's a lot of work in it. If one fell it could cause serious injury so we've got to make sure they can't move at all. We decided to use traditional rail sleepers rather than new ones as it looks



18th hole



better when they are weathered. New sleepers just tend to look like plywood,” said Derek.

The only maintenance the sleepers require is a coat of creosote once-a-year.

When playing the course, each hole offers unique challenges and it is interesting to note that there is just one par-five and two par-threes at Irvine. Five of the par-fours are over 400 yards and the overall yardage is 6423 yards from the white tees.

The 4th runs parallel to the main West Coast railway line which also acts as out of bounds to the left. The raised green can be tricky because a long approach may find the River Irvine and a short one will leave a difficult chip.

Number five is menacingly

called ‘Sandface’ and lives up to its name with a gigantic bunker set at the foot of an incline in front of the green. This 279 yard par-four requires a 250 yard carry in the air if a player wants to be bold and go for the green.

The 7th hole runs alongside where the old Bogside racecourse used to be. The racecourse was one of the oldest in Scotland with a history dating back to the 17th century. It was the home of the Scottish Grand National until it was moved, due to the closure of Bogside railway station, to Ayr Racecourse in 1966.

Of the 119 bunkers on the course, the 8th boasts six of them. This, one of the two par-threes, is 180 yards and once again demands an accurate tee shot.



16th With new sleepers in bunker



The par-four 14th is called 'The Specs' because of the resemblance of two bunkers in front of the green to spectacles. It is also worth noting that the 14th at Carnoustie's Championship Course is named 'Spectacles' for the same reason. There are two flags on the pole on Irvine's 14th green. This is because it is two-tiered and two flags indicate a pin placement on the top tier, whereas one indicates a lower tier pin position.

When you stand on one of the higher tees out on the course, such as the 15th, the industrial past of the area is still in evidence as well as the beautiful nature offered by this part of Scotland. The Arran Mountains rise in the distance on one side whilst the now defunct ICI factory, that made munitions during the Second World War, can be seen between the course and the Firth of Clyde. A busy train track runs alongside parts of the course and smoke rises from factories across the river in Irvine.

The 15th is named 'Bartonholm' after a now-demolished mining village which lay just north of the 16th hole. The story behind this miner's row is interesting as three Scottish amateur champions lived here during the last century. Hammy McNally, Jack Cannon and Jimmy Walker all honed their golfing skills at Irvine GC and the latter was the last amateur to play Jack Nicklaus in the 1961 Walker Cup.

This golf course demands accurate shot-making and nowhere is this fact more apparent than on the final three holes. The par-three 16th has the large bunker, complete with new sleepers, guarding the front whilst a slope at the back means recovering from a long shot is tricky.

The par-four 17th is probably the hardest hole on the course. Off the tee, heavy rough and gorse awaits a shot leaked to the right, whilst a sloping fairway punishes shots which are even slightly too far to the

### **"The par-four 14th is called 'The Specs' because of the resemblance of two bunkers in front of the green to spectacles"**

left. A tee shot hitting the left side of the fairway is destined for the rough or heather, so an accurate iron shot to the right hand side of the fairway is required here.

The 18th poses a formidable test of golfing skills. From the tee the player is greeted by the sight of two very ominous looking bunkers with gorse jutting out to the right and the rail track to the left. The blind tee shot to reach the fairway must carry 190 yards from the back tees to clear the bunkers. A good target to aim for off the tee is the right hand side of the clubhouse. Even after breathing a sigh of relief due to an accurately placed tee shot, the



golfer will notice a green guarded by seven bunkers and a gully at the front.

Even under calm conditions these holes require precision, but imagine the golfer approaching these final holes with a good score under their belt, perhaps with the nerves jangling and palms sweating. Add blustery conditions into the equation and the perils are heightened to a frightening level.

As BIGGA celebrates its 25th year what better way to mark this than to have the National Championship at a course celebrating its 125th year. The record of previous successful National Championships combined with the challenges of the fabulous links course that is Irvine GC make this year's competition, on 8 - 9 October, one not to be missed.

### *Irvine GC Kit Inventory*

*John Deere 3235B fairway mower  
Toro Sidewinder with rotary heads  
John Deere triple mower  
Jacobsen Mk 4 greens cutter  
6 x Jacobsen 523B hand mowers  
(3 older model and 3 newer)  
Iseki Tractor  
John Deere 955 compact tractor  
Wiedenmann Terra Spike verti-drain  
John Deere Aercore aerator  
Ransomes 180 diesel*



The par-four 14th: called 'The Specs' because of the resemblance of two bunkers in front of the green to spectacles



Blowing clumps of grass near the 12th green

**Book your spot now...**



### Challenge Trophy results from the last five years of the National Championship

Last year's championship, at West Lincs Golf Club, saw Jason Hunt, an Assistant at Addington Palace Golf Club, keep his composure in blustery

conditions to win by one shot from Kevin Boxall, of Guildford GC, whilst Garry Duncan, of Carnoustie Links, came third.

**2010:** 1st - Paul Frith  
**2009:** 1st - Derek McJannet  
**2008:** 1st - David Simpson  
**2007:** 1st - David Simpson

## BIGGA National Championship 2012, The Irvine Golf Club, October 8-9 • Entry Form

### Please select the relevant category:

- ☐ Full Member  
☐ Affiliate Member

The entry fee of **£95** includes all golf fees, lunch both days and dinner on Monday evening. Please note that there is no accommodation provided.

Name .....

Address.....

Post Code .....

Mobile.....

E-mail.....

Membership No. ....

Handicap .....

BIGGA Section.....

Golf Club .....

### Payment method (please tick)

- ☐ I enclose my cheque made payable to 'BIGGA Ltd' value **£95**  
☐ Please debit my Mastercard / Switch / Visa / Delta card with the fee of **£95**

Card number .....

Start Date ..... Expiry Date .....

Last 3 security digits .....

Issue No. (Switch/Delta only) .....

Signature.....

Date .....

Or E-mail your details to:

**rachael@bigga.co.uk**

Ensure you receive confirmation of entry by return email.

### Deadline for entry is 11th September 2012.

Completed entry forms should be sent to:  
**BIGGA National Championship, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**



The main tournament for the Challenge Trophy will be played over 36 holes, medal play, with the best overall gross score producing the BIGGA National Champion, who must be a greenkeeper member. The greenkeeper player with the lowest nett score will be presented with the BIGGA Challenge Cup.

There will be prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd over 36 holes in both the nett and gross categories, additionally after each day of 18 holes there will be prizes for winners of handicap divisions. The BIGGA Regional Team Cup and prize will be calculated from the 8 best nett scores over the first day of play. If you have a poor first day an alternative Stableford competition will be held on the second day of play.

# Joint support

Charterhouse and Kubota, joint sponsors of BIGGA's premier golf event, the BIGGA National Championship 2012

**The BIGGA National Championship 2012, once again, comes to you courtesy of Charterhouse Turf Machinery and Kubota, who have a long history of working together. This amalgamation of Power Source and Implements is enhanced in their joint sponsoring of BIGGA's premier golf event.**

Kubota has been established for more than 30 years in the UK. Their world class excellence ensures they are at the forefront of innovation and one of the leading manufacturers of tractors, groundcare equipment, utility vehicles and mini excavators.

The company is constituted into three main product categories of Engines; Construction Equipment; Tractor & Groundcare. Earlier this year the company completed a restructuring of their management team with the creation of a new role for Dave Roberts. Dave left the company in 2010 after 21 years of service and has been enticed back to head up Kubota's three product sectors as Sales and Marketing General Manager.

In addition he has direct responsibility for the tractor division, which has a Kubota Compact Tractor to perfectly suit every need. The 'B' series covers the range 12 to 32HP, with the 'L' series and 'STV' series covering the range 32 to 41HP. They deliver exceptional



power output, a host of performance enhancing features, unrivalled reliability, durability, and economy. They exhibit consistent performance in all seasons over all applications, both in confined and open areas.

With optimum reliability, proficient fuel economy and outstanding versatility, the Kubota range of 'F' series out-front rotary mowers and 'G' series ride-on cut and collect Mowers are of particular interest to Greenkeepers. In particular, the G26 mower finds application in mowing high presentation areas like the front of golf club houses and entrances. These areas demand a clean, clip-free finish and for this purpose a ride-on rotary mower with an efficient collection system is the ideal solution. Kubota's G26 is the ultimate grass cutting machine for this type of work, with its 25.5hp Kubota three-cylinder ETVCS water-cooled diesel engine and 20.5 litre fuel tank, offering exceptional power and efficiency for demanding mowing operations. The 1.37m (54in) deck offers great productivity for open spaces and larger lawns. The G26 is simplicity itself for any member of staff. Featuring a single pedal operated HST transmission with a top speed of 17kph, it can travel quickly between mowing sites whilst the hydrostatic power steering optimises performance to reduce fatigue during a long day's operation.

Joint sponsor, Charterhouse Turf Machinery, has also been providing Grounds Professionals with Redexim maintenance machinery for the last 30 years.

Probably best known for its iconic Verti-Drain™ aerator, the company's range is constantly evolving and expanding to not only offer aerators, but also top dressers, overseeders and scarifiers for natural turf.

The company has been developing maintenance equipment for Synthetic surfaces during the past few years and have one of the best ranges on the market.

Together, they suit the needs of all Greenkeepers from pedestrian units to treat small areas economically, to PTO driven commercial units for larger spaces.

The newest product to come out of the Redexim stable is the Verti-Drain 1517, larger sister to the 1513. It is a high speed Verti-Drain offering increased output to ease busy workloads.

With a working width of 1.76M, it can handle depths of up to 50mm (6"), but weighs in at only 520kg so a small tractor from 28hp is man enough to pull it.

It is small enough to find an application on golf courses where it can reduce the need for expensive drainage works and offers uninterrupted year-round play without resorting to temporary greens.



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# Open all hours

The BIGGA Open Support Team 2012 worked tirelessly from dusk until dawn at a rain-soaked Royal Lytham & St Annes GC in July. Here are the snapshots and memories from another joyous occasion, writes Steve Castle





**Thirty minutes after Ernie Els remarkably captured the most coveted prize in golf, a large matching red polo-shirted group attracted bemused glances as they posed for photographs on the 18th fairway close to the spot where Adam Scott's dreams finally crumbled.**

The BIGGA Open Support Team 2012 wearied by a challenging week knew they had played an important part in the success of the event whilst many lasting friendships had been cemented.

As The 141st Open ended, the exhausted but happy group reflected on their vital role in preparing the bunkers each morning - a mammoth task as the famous old links boasts over 200 traps, match raking, divoting and attending to the practice areas. As the week progressed and the weather finally improved they were able to enjoy the sight of the sun rising across the course during one of their regular 5am starts, something they will treasure for the rest of their days.

The home greenkeeping team led superbly by Paul Smith consisted of his own regular crew of twelve, a further twenty or so local volunteers, four John Deere staff and six more provided by the R&A from other Open Championship venues fully embraced the BIGGA team, including greenkeepers from across the UK and as far afield as Australia and America.

The advance BIGGA team assembled on the Monday to begin bunker preparation from Tuesday onwards. The remainder were all present and correct in time for the traditional Wednesday afternoon start and their first sight of the glorious links during the R&A Briefing by Grant Moir, Director of Rules.

The course was already damp after a horrendous summer, which has left greenkeepers cursing across the land. But it was tested to



the absolute limit after hours of torrential rain throughout Thursday night and into Friday morning.

Head Greenkeeper Paul Smith described watching the rain clatter down as "probably the worst feeling of my life" - but the tireless work of his extended team and the BIGGA boys and girls ensured that miraculously, play began on time on the second day.

The walkways between holes were at times reminiscent of a particularly damp Glastonbury, and the incredibly high water table meant that some of the bunkers retained standing water despite everyone's best efforts, illustrating quite how much rain had fallen. But there was not a murmur of complaint from the players, showing what a professional job had been done.

They then trod the same meticulously prepared fairways as Tiger Woods, Tom Watson and Rory McIlroy, springing into action when a hook or slice found the sand. In many cases the divot team worked until 11pm - a whole 18 hours after the first members of the team had been on the course.

	1995 St. A's	1996 Lythm	1997 Troon	1998 B'dal e	1999 C'stie	2000 St. A's	2001 Lythm	2002 Mfield	2003 St.Gs
Bnkrs	112	185	84	117	115	112	197	148	106
Rd 1	214	501	344	355	539	148	557	359	388
Rd 2	201	577	272	406	468	164	547	372	405
Rd 3	130	269	107	226	202	65	224	175	149
Rd 4	156	271	136	153	265	71	257	169	181
<b>Total</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1618</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>1140</b>	<b>1474</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>1078</b>	<b>1123</b>

	2004 Troon	2005 St. A's	2006 Hlake	2007 C'stie	2008 Birkdale	2009 T'berry	2010 St A's	2011 St Gs	2012 Lytham
Bnkrs	93	112	96	113	123	85	112	104	205
Rd 1	393	252	352	442	472	272	149	291	453
Rd 2	371	203	353	482	379	332	200	391	456
Rd 3	148	100	183	189	219	172	77	175	260
Rd 4	185	121	204	198	198	185	85	159	268
<b>Total</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>1437</b>

### Support Team Statistics

**Bunkers on course - 205**  
**Prepared by BIGGA** early morning support team six times - 1230

**Repaired each day by BIGGA Support Team -**  
Thursday 453, Friday 456, Saturday 260, Sunday 268, Total 1,437

MAIN TOP IMAGE: Bev Blair observes Tiger Woods and his entourage. FAR LEFT: Asa English. LEFT: Richard Whyman and Graham Blum; TOP RIGHT: Richard Whyman and Andy Unwin



**Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA**





Open letters  
of thanks  
from Royal  
Lytham &  
St Annes  
GC Head  
Greenkeeper,  
Paul Smith  
and Grant  
Moir, The  
R&A's  
Director -  
Rules of Golf

## *A BIG thanks to the BIGGA brigade*

*The Open Championship was a fine example of team work across the board. I have nothing but praise for the active support at silly o'clock in the morning when faced with dealing with variety of bunker conditions. The BIGGA support team did a sterling job of preparing the bunkers each morning, which was a difficult task under the circumstances.*

*The course that the spectators and competitors were met with on the Friday morning, was not the same course that the Home and BIGGA team faced. Several intensive bands of rain fell early Friday morning, which had not been forecast. It felt as if the weather gods had conspired against us.*

*Our spirits had truly been dampened and although feeling numb, the whole team rallied with pumps, pipes, generators and squeegees to clear the course and tented village of standing water.*

*Despite the weather the course stood up extremely well, and started to show its true colours over the weekend as conditions and drier weather prevailed.*

*My thanks go to all those volunteers who assisted the Club and R&A in preparing the course under difficult conditions. A job well done by all the team!*

*Paul Smith, Head Greenkeeper, Royal Lytham & St Annes GC*

## *To the team*

*Thank you for everything that you did to assist at Royal Lytham & St Annes.*

*It was not an easy week, and it was reassuring to know that we had the back-up of the BIGGA team, and great that I could make an emergency call at 4am and get an immediate response!*

*The team did a great job in the mornings in very difficult circumstances with, firstly, wet bunkers and then wettish bunkers drying out.*

*I hope that things will be less complicated at Muirfield next year.*

*Grant Moir, R&A*



# BIGGA Open Support Team 2012

**Back Row:** Stephen Hopkins, Robert Bemment, Jamie Acton, Paul Griffiths, Rhys Norville, Simon Forshaw, Ashley Marshall, Jez Hughes, Gavin Robson, Gary Cunningham, Alan Donlevy, Richard Saunders, Darren Jones, Darren Abbs, John Keenaghan, Asa English, Daniel Woodcraft, John Young.

**Second Row:** Jason Brooks, Graham Blum, Geoffrey Beaucham, Matthew Hutchinson, Ben Scrivener, Robert Hill, Andrew Slingsby, Rober, Bruce Hicks, Tom Woods, Tony Smith, Chris Sealey, (Kneeing Down) - Billy Merritt, John Wells MG, Steve Mason, Douglas McIntosh, Mark Brooks, Robert Sandilands, Brian Hunter, Scott Thomson, Richard Jenkins, Steve Castle, Sean Sullivan, John Geddes, Jim Croxton

**Front Row:** Andrew Unwin, Kevan Glass, Paul Young, Miles Todd, Mark Fry, Bev Blair, Miles Wood, Rachael Duffy, Tracey Maddison, Sandra Raper, Phillip Graham





TOP LEFT: Jason Brooks;  
MIDDLE ABOVE: Royal Lytham  
Greenkeeping Staff  
LEFT: Robert Bemment and  
INSET LEFT: Miles Todd



*Celebrating 25  
years of BIGGA*

Steve Mason, from Stocks Golf Club, knew he was in for a busy opening morning when his three players all found separate bunkers with their opening tee shots on the notorious par three first – and he went on to rake 17 in total, the highest of the day.

He said: “You have to be on your toes, and I knew it would be a long day from the first three shots. But that’s what we’re there for, and it was an honour not only to walk alongside the players but also to work on The Open course.”

Some enjoyed unexpected surprises, like Miles Todd from Rhuddlan Golf Club. He was expecting a quiet final day when he joined Andres Romero and Chad Campbell’s early morning pairing – so imagine his amazement when footballer Carlos Tevez suddenly appeared as caddie for his compatriot.

Miles said: “I thought it looked like him and I went up and had a little chat with him. He was a really nice bloke and loves his golf.

“From very few spectators at the start, word quickly got round and it had become a circus by the back nine. People were calling out to him and there were photographers running around everywhere, numbers swelling after every hole.

“I’m not sure Chad Campbell was too happy about it. Tevez kept standing behind him as he played and at one point Romero had to stop Tevez from slamming a club into the bag as Campbell was taking a shot!”

Paul Griffiths of Seaford Golf Club added: “It’s been an amazing experience. It’s my first Open and it’s been out of this world. People would pay thousands to experience this.

“It’s really hard work and everyone finishes the week absolutely shattered. But I enjoyed it so much. I might tell the lads at the club it was rubbish then I’ll get to go next year too!”

John Keenaghan from Chipping Sodbury Golf Club was given the honour of accompanying odds-on favourite Adam Scott up and down the fairways on the final day, and raked the final bunker of the tournament on the 18th where the luckless Aussie allowed the Claret Jug to slip from his grasp.

The team spent their rare spare time recuperating in the BIGGA marquee, with the internet access provided by Sheriff Amenity proving popular yet again.

The marquee itself was a bustle of activity throughout the week, with Head of Membership, Tracey



Maddison and Learning and Development Executive, Rachael Duffy holding the fort admirably.

The first day of play saw the ceremonial passing of the BIGGA baton from outgoing Chairman Andrew Mellon to new Chairman Tony Smith.

Andrew, who is departing to become General Manager of Hydro-turf in Qatar, handed the badge to previous vice-chairman Tony in the BIGGA marquee.

The tournament ended with Paul Smith personally thanking the team for their terrific efforts, a sentiment that was echoed by Chief Executive Jim Croxton.

See you at Muirfield 2013!



**TORO®**

# Toro Student of the Year 2012

# The national final

The finalists for the annual Toro Student of the Year competition, held at BIGGA House, have now been chosen. Those lucky enough to make the cut are revealed by our new L&D resident, Stuart Green...

**The annual Toro Student of the Year Award, now in its 24th year, offers student greenkeepers the opportunity to expand their experience by meeting and competing with the best.**

One lucky winner of this annual award will soon be heading to the USA on an all-expenses-paid study trip of a lifetime, thanks to BIGGA's Gold Key Sponsor, Toro.

Acknowledged as the highlight of the student greenkeepers' year, the winner will receive an eight week trip to the United States, starting next January that includes a six week study course at the University of Massachusetts and trips to visit the GCSAA's Golf Industry Show, in San Diego and Toro's Californian base.

Two runners-up will receive an expenses-paid trip to the Continue to Learn Education programme at BTME 2013 in Harrogate, next January.

The judges interviewed 29 students greenkeepers during a series of local interviews and had the tough job of selecting only six candidates to progress to the National Finals being held at BIGGA House on Sunday 16th and Monday 17th September.

One of the final six (pictured), have the incredible opportunity to follow in Matthew Perks' footsteps to become the 24th Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

The six finalists will arrive at Aldwark Manor on Sunday 16th September and will join the judges and BIGGA staff for an informal dinner. Monday 17th September sees the finalists being provided with a written task to complete during the day and attending a formal interview in front of a panel of four judges who represent both Toro and BIGGA.

Following final deliberations by

the judges the 2012 winner and two runners-up will be selected. The announcement of the winner and runners-up will take place at 5pm. Following a photo shoot, the day concludes with an evening of celebrations, including a meal at an Italian restaurant and a game of tenpin bowling.

To be eligible for this award in the future, you should be a greenkeeping student studying for a qualification, up to Level Three. Entrants are nominated by their course tutor, with their entry sanctioned by their college or training provider.

Our thanks go to all those who entered the 2012 Award and who continue to make this Award a flagship event of the greenkeeping calendar.



Continue to Learn seminar at BTME 2012 (left) and Vegas trip (above)

## GI Further reading

GI June 2012 (pages 24-26) featured 2011 winner, Matt Perks, and his three page account of his trip to the States



# Six of the best

**TORO®**

**Name: Stuart Imeson**  
**Age: 20**  
**Golf Club: Dunstanburgh Golf Club**  
**Position: Head Greenkeeper**  
**College: Newcastle College**



Stuart joined Dunstanburgh Golf Club when he left school, after undertaking his work experience he felt this was the career he wanted to follow. After completing his Level 2, the Head Greenkeeper left and Stuart took the opportunity to inquire about the vacant position. The owner took a risk and Stuart has now been in the role for two years and is relishing the challenge.

Stuart is currently studying for his Level 3 and wants to continue on to the Level 4 at Newcastle College. Stuart has a handicap of 20 and enjoys football.

**Name: Thomas Flavelle**  
**Age: 23**  
**Golf Club: Lingdale Golf Club**  
**Position: Greenkeeper**  
**College: Myerscough College**



Thomas began greenkeeping at Lingdale Golf Club in 2007, as an apprentice, following in his father's footsteps.

He is currently undertaking his Level 3 and is wanting to progress onto the Foundation Degree.

He is also very much interested in golf course architecture.

Tom is a talented golfer, with a handicap of 2. He won the scratch competition at The Leicestershire Golf Club and has represented his county.

The golf club uses Thomas's golf knowledge to provide a golfer's opinion on the roll of the greens, as part of the weekly course rating.

**Name: Christopher Watson**  
**Age: 18**  
**Golf Club: Peterculter Golf Club**  
**Position: Assistant Greenkeeper**  
**College: Elmwood College**



Chris got his passion for greenkeeping after spending his work experience at the golf club. He went back after leaving school, in 2010, to work during the summer, before being taken on as a full-time apprentice later that year. Whilst at Elmwood, Chris awarded the BIGGA Scottish Level 2 Award.

Chris has recently taken up golf and is slowly improving. His other passions are Scouts and sailing, where in 2011 he was on the lead boat of the Tall Ships, which left Greenock.

**Name: Peter Thompson**  
**Age: 25**  
**Golf Club: Sunningdale Golf Club**  
**Position: Assistant Greenkeeper**  
**College: Oaklands College**



Peter has been in greenkeeping for five years and is currently working towards his Level 3 Diploma, at Oaklands College.

Peter started greenkeeping at Old Fold Manor in 2007, but chose to further develop his skills at Sunningdale, under Course Manager, Murray Long.

Outside of work, Peter holds a season ticket for Manchester United and is a very keen cook.

Had he not followed his current career path he would have trained as a chef.

**Name: Aaron Launchbury**  
**Age: 27**  
**Golf Club: North Foreland Golf Club**  
**Position: Assistant Greenkeeper**  
**College: Hadlow College**



Aaron came to greenkeeping later in life after a career in the print industry and as a painter and decorator. Aaron joined North Foreland Golf Club as an apprentice and hasn't looked back, completing his Level 2 in twelve months.

Aaron has been working closely with his Course Manager, Dan McGrath MG, on the Operation Pollinator project. He assisted Dan in researching design ideas for alternative habitats for pollinating insects.

**Name: Neil Ivamy**  
**Age: 28**  
**Golf Club: Trevoze Golf & Country Club**  
**Position: Assistant Greenkeeper**  
**College: Duchy College**



Neil started greenkeeping at 16, at the Merlin Golf Club, where he completed his Level 2. He is currently working towards his Level 3 at the Duchy College.

Neil took some time out to indulge his other passion of cricket by playing club cricket in Western Australia. He returned to the UK and spent some time working as a landscaper before joining the team at Trevoze Golf & Country Club.

Neil is the club professional at Redruth Cricket Club and has represented Cornwall at Minor Counties level. He also plays golf and has a handicap of 10.

# What is thatch?

This month, GI offers a beginner's guide to thatch, for those relatively new to greenkeeping. Thatch is all a question of balance, writes Dr Terry Mabbett. A more advanced look at thatch, is featured on pages 44-45



**Thatch is the layer of intermingled and entwined dead and dying grass stems, leaves and roots which accumulates naturally in between the actively growing turf grass plants and the soil beneath. Thatch is a perfectly natural, normal and important part of a sports turf sward but like all things in life and nature it's all a question of balance.**

An appropriately thin layer of thatch creates a safe cushiony surface for sports or playgrounds, while protecting both turf and soil from traffic that can damage grass stems and leaves and compact the soil. Moreover it can insulate turf

from rapid changes in soil temperature and moisture to protect against extremes and deliver more uniform growth. However, once thatch exceeds the optimum in depth and density all sorts of downsides will come into play and cause serious long term problems.

#### **Effect of thatch on turf quality and resilience**

Thatch has a marked effect on the quality of sports turf. A too thick thatch layer restricts air movement in the sward, and ability of water, nutrients and other applied materials to reach the grass root zone. Now unable to access oxygen

and water and nutrients turf grass plants will readily root in the thatch itself to obtain these essential things for growth. Turf grass with roots restricted to the thatch layer becomes very susceptible and prone to drought stress and once it has dried out becomes very difficult to re-wet.

Even when the thatch stays moist other equally serious problems may arise. This dead layer of turf grass (and weed) material, is a natural reservoir for usually dormant fungi but when provided with the right conditions of temperature and humidity will 'step up to the plate' and become aggressive disease causing pathogens.





Conditions inside thick moist thatch are ideal for the disease-causing activity of plant pathogens. If the temperature is right and humidity is high with grass plants in a weakened and stressed state, then this combination of conditions is ideal for fast fungal growth and infection of the grass plant to cause disease.

***Microdochium nivale* (Fusarium patch) and Colletotrichum graminicola (Anthracnose)** are permanent features of the thatch layer, although they usually 'tick over' as saprophytes (fungi that live and feed on dead and decaying plant matter) or as weak parasites.

However, when presented with the right conditions they will suddenly become aggressive pathogens infecting grass leaves and spreading quickly to cause Fusarium patch and Anthracnose diseases, respectively.

The overall consequences of excess thatch is an unthrifty and unhealthy grass sward failing to respond to otherwise good turf management practice and vulnerable to long term damage from inclement weather (drought, surface water and frost), as well as infection by disease-causing fungal pathogens.

### How thatch forms and accumulates

Failure of turf management practices are the major cause of excess accumulation of thatch. Adopting practices that reduce populations of decomposing organisms and, by the same token, selecting those that do is a recipe for excessive thatch. Key decomposers in the soil under turf are invertebrates like earthworms and microorganisms including both friendly fungi and bacteria.

Ideally rates of thatch formation and destruction are comparable and only when the former becomes faster than the latter do problems set in. Research shows how both earthworm and microorganism activities play a vital role in preventing excess thatch accumulation. Good aeration, a soil pH around 6.5 (very slightly acid) and adequate moisture favour the build-up and activity of these beneficial soil animals and microbes.

Problems with thatch are more frequent and acute in compacted soils and those with a clear acidic pH simply because 'decomposers' and especially microorganisms cannot flourish under such conditions. Poorly balanced fertiliser regimes and the indiscriminate use of fungicides and insecticides are two key factors which can impact negatively and heavily on soil animals and microbes with thatch decomposing capacities.

For instance fertiliser applications skewed too heavily towards nitrogen (nitrate and ammonia) promote not only the development of lush green grass growth but also insect pests and disease that take advantage of this abundant food supply. As the new lush growth is devoured by insects and infected by fungi it becomes dead and dying grass debris adding to the layer of thatch.

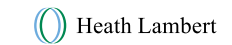
Many turf grass pathogens like ***Microdochium nivale* (Fusarium patch) and Colletotrichum (anthracnose)** have a quiescent or passive stage where they tick over on thatch as saprophytes and graduating into strong and aggressive parasites (feed on living tissue) when conditions are right. Simply put the thicker the thatch layer then the bigger and better the substrate to support these potential pathogens.



ABOVE TOP: Thatch development in soils close up  
INSET ABOVE: Anthracnose in action (Images courtesy of STRI)

Generally speaking failure to remove grass clippings during mowing will encourage the build-up of thatch especially if the clippings are long. Leaving very short clippings on the turf is less of a problem, the argument being that any addition to the thatch layer by what is an ultra- fine biomass with a large surface area is essentially neutralised and compensated for by the promotion of thatch decomposing bacteria. They feed on the clippings to produce soluble nutrients which is a valuable natural resource fed back into the turf. Naturally fed turf is healthy and resilient turf and clearly requires less synthetic fertiliser and fewer applications of fungicide and insecticide.

Species and varieties of grass traditionally used in turf differ markedly in their capacity for thatch production. As a general rule of thumb, perennial creeping grass species spreading by rhizomes (underground stems) and stolons (stems spreading over the soil surface) are high thatch forming species. Smooth stalked meadow grass (*Poa pratensis*) and creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) with



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aggressive rhizomes, and creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*) which has stolons are all classic high thatch forming species.

Annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) (in spite of its common name) is found in turf as biennial or even perennial biotypes spreading by stolons with accordingly high thatch accumulation. Other species such as perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) with 'bunch type' growth habits accumulate considerably less thatch.

### How much is too much

The right depth of thatch is essentially a 'horses for courses' matter related to species and varieties of grass in the sward, soil growing conditions and the exact use to which the turf is being put. Some texts say up to one inch is okay but general consensus appears to be that anything much over one half inch of thatch, and even one quarter inch for turf on some cold and heavy soils, will start to create problems.

*Poa pratensis* and especially the aggressively growing and spreading varieties are reported to accumulate up to one fifth of an inch of thatch per year. This may not sound a lot, but when using the one half inch limit there is clearly not a lot of leeway to play with.

Proactive measures are clearly the best foundation for trouble free turf in this respect. Careful selection of turf grass species for the growing conditions presented and judicious use of fertilizer, irrigation, aeration and top dressing all help to minimise thatch accumulation.

Action in the form of de-thatching using dedicated machinery, such as a scarifier or hollow tiner, is something that will invariably be required sooner or later. General recommendations surrounding de-thatching are not to de-thatch when the turf is wet and not trying to remove all in one go.

Ideal time for de-thatching is spring or late summer/autumn and preferably the latter because weeds are more likely to invade a de-thatched area of turf in spring.

**INSET LEFT ABOVE:** Thatch removal and an overseed process carried out on a West Sussex green, and **MAIN ABOVE:** the same green 10 days after the work was done.

**BELOW:** The green immediately after thatch removal, overseeding and sweeping.

*Pictures courtesy Kensett Sport*

De-thatching is commonly part of a wider, integrated turf restoration and re-invigoration programme including top dressing, core aeration and over-seeding.



# Playing with thatch levels

Stephen A.G. Prinn MSc, lecturer at Askham Bryan College, York, with an alternative look at thatch

**With today's budget constraints that many clubs are imposing it may seem ironic that the members and visitors to the course are also demanding more and more from the greenkeeping staff.**

It is the greens where most of this focus would seem to lie and given that each hole allows for two putts per green it may be surprising to note that an allowance of 50% of the game is played on the greens. That's 50% of the game played on a little over 1% of the golf course. So the greens are often what greenkeepers are judged on, rightly or wrongly! This means the effect the green has on the ball, the playability of the surface, is of great importance.

When too much thatch is present the turfgrass environment changes and the effects of this can be seen in the way the ball interacts with the surface. Should levels of thatch become excessive then the disadvantages far exceed the, often stated, advantages of; providing a level of protection and resiliency against traffic stress and ball impact.

Several problems are associated with excessive thatch and need to be understood, the most notable issues as outlined by Beard (1973);

• **Increased disease and insect problems**

ABOVE: Thatch build-up on a putting green. Top dressing has been applied but a lack of mechanical removal has resulted in a layer forming.

Steve Prinn MSc has been lecturing at Askham Bryan College since 1995, starting under Nic Bisset, he is now the Senior Sports Turf Lecturer and manages the L3 Advanced Apprenticeship programme. Steve started out as an apprentice greenkeeper at Close House, in Newcastle, before heading to Mysercough College and an intern programme in the USA. Subsequently, Steve became involved in golf course design and construction, spending many years working with Howard Swan and building courses all over Europe. Steve is currently involved in building three new holes at the college, which utilises the only solar-powered irrigation system in Europe.



- **Localized dry spots**
- **Soft, often referred to as, 'spongy' surfaces**
- **Decreased heat, cold and drought tolerances**

Thatch provides some pathogens with an ideal environment for the development of disease. Development of diseases will cause a thinning out or dying of the grass plants which in turn leads to uneven ball roll.

Localized dry spots occur when thatch dries out and becomes hydrophobic, preventing water, irrigation or rainfall, from reaching the soil surface, lack of soil water moisture will result in poor root growth and possibly the eventual dying of the turfgrass.

Soft surfaces can have several detrimental effects on the quality of the greens sward. The potential for scalping increases leaving uneven mowing heights across the greens and damage to the grass plant. Foot-printing may also occur, affecting the ball, which does not hold the line of a putt.

If a golf club has small greens, coupled with limited space for walk on and walk off areas perhaps due to surrounding bunker placements or the proximity of the next tee, or have limited hole placements within the green and this green has

high thatch levels, then those areas which receive the greatest amount of wear will compact the thatch in these areas.

This will increase the ball roll distance in these zones, leading to a putting surface which has variability across the surface for ball roll. There will, therefore, be a variation in ball roll distance across the same green. Even without small greens high thatch levels may lead poor ball roll due to the softness of the surface.

It should also be noted that when greenkeepers attempt to combat the slowness of the thatch by double cutting; Nikolai (2005), found that scalping was much more prevalent on the second pass, resulting in a decline in the turfgrass quality and poorer ball roll.

While an equal increase in ball roll distance could be obtained from rolling rather than double cutting and that may be considered an option, studies by Nikolai (2005), have also shown that the effects of an increase in ball roll distance on a heavily thatched surface only last around 24 hours whilst compared to a green which is relatively thatch free where the effects of rolling may last up to 48 hours.

High thatch levels will also elevate the crown and roots of the grass plant above the soil surface,



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this exposes the key parts of the grass plant to extremes of weather that may subsequently weaken or kill off the plant.

Higher thatch levels therefore can be seen to lead to poorer playing surfaces, either directly through the surface becoming soft, or indirectly through the side effects of a weaker, or perhaps more stressed grass plant which is less able to deal with environmental factors and this subsequently causes a decline in grass cover.

Decline in grass cover may be addressed with over-seeding, but, seedlings that develop in thatch are more susceptible to injury from weather conditions, traffic and other stresses than seedlings which develop in soil (Turgeon 2007). Producing a weak sward in an already weak sward!

Therefore, it is vital to realise that there is an inverse relationship between thatch accumulation and putting green performance.

Thatch can be kept at bay with good maintenance regimes, but invariably mechanical methods will be brought into play. There are many terms that are used in the industry; scarification, verticutting and grooming have all been with us for many years.

Forms of aeration such as hollow coring could also be considered.

They do all have one thing in common; they disrupt the playing surface to a greater or lesser extent.

Disruption of the playing surface will affect the playability of the surface.

These operations should also be carried out when the environmental conditions are suitable.

Unfortunately this usually coincides with periods of better weather and subsequently more golfers and just maybe with an increase in the comments from the players about the "state of the greens".

Greenkeepers may suddenly find ourselves in a no win situation, the club don't want the work carrying out, because of the amount of play, whether from members or visiting parties. The greenkeeper may not want to do the work and face the comments about the greens. As for the initial problem, the thatch just continues to get worse and the putting surface quality is once again on the decline.

In conclusion, learn what causes thatch, learn how to deal with it without sacrificing the playability of the surface.

If thatch is a problem, there may need to be some changes.

But change is good. Remember, If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to keep getting what we're getting.



**ABOVE:** Thatch should be regularly maintained through mechanical means along with top dressing, which will help dilute the organic matter layer.



**LEFT:** In low maintenance turf, thatch build-up occurs at a significant rate over a growing season. However, some thatch is good as it provides protection against moisture evaporation and resilience to wear and tear.

# Aerator options



MAIN ABOVE: The Terrain Aeration Terralift injects air via 2.5cm probe and is claimed to send a blast of sufficient force to work down to around 1.0m. A Terralift can be used to inject dry materials to include dried milled seaweed, osmocote and slow release nutrients.

The increasing availability of sub-soil aeration techniques can literally breathe new life into tired turf. So before looking to strip off the old turf and starting again, consider if some form of aeration can help. James de Havilland writes

**It would be unfair to single out any item of equipment as the ideal aeration tool. Not only a wide range of aeration systems, from slitters to air injection systems but an endless array of problems too.**

So what follows is a general overview of some kit that is on offer with a general truism. If you are experiencing an aeration problem with your tees, greens or fairways, the chances are someone has been through similar problems too!

The **Wiedenmann Terra Spike** range comprises ten machines with widths spanning 1.35m to 2.1m with working depths of up to 220mm or 400mm depending on the model. As to work rates, this

can be as high as 9km/hr; fast enough to make fairway aeration feasible.

To help indicate a given models performance, Wiedenmann rank its models into XF for units able to work at a high forward speed, XD for extra deep, and XP for extra penetrative. Models with a G prefix are suitable for use on greens and other fine turf.

Terra Spike aerators have evolved to make it easier to set both working depth and, as applicable, the degree of heave. There is no need for tools either. As to tine changing, it should be possible to switch between different sets in around 15 minutes.

This is important as one machine can be employed for soil decompac-

tion and coring for soil exchange.

Launched in autumn 2009, the Wiedenmann GXi8 HD is interesting from a mechanical standpoint. Wear and tear is inevitable on all types of equipment, but it is how it is minimized that can really be of value. On the GXi8 HD, key moving parts to include springs and heave linkages are positioned behind cover at the front of the machine. The claim is that this keeps them out of the 'dirt zone' which in turn can help reduce wear and tear. As a bonus, it also helps to make the unit quieter too.

The centre of gravity is also closer to the tractor, a small point that in practice can really help stability. The tines on the GXi are closer to the



## Groundsman Industries

*Groundsman Industries deep tine aerators feature sealed bearings, to reduce maintenance, and have a shock absorbing system on the crank to help reduce noise and vibration. Tractor mounted models are offered in 1.2 and 1.8m working widths and can be fitted with a full range of solid and hollow tines.*



### Sisis

**ABOVE:** Up to 9 different types of tine, spaced at 150mm centres, can be fitted. Maximum working depth is a useful 127mm and the working width is 1,500mm.

**INSET RIGHT:** The Hydrovane compressor pump has its own integral cooling pack. Designed to deliver compressed air in demanding industrial applications, the pump is well within its operating capacity with the Aer-Aid system, delivering 88 litres per minute at a pressure of up to 10 bar.

eter. These can be set to operate as shallow as 25mm to 450mm (1 to 18in).

In itself, the drilling process is claimed to improve drainage by penetrating and piercing compacted layers in turf subsoil. By extracting material, lateral soil movement is also encouraged and this can allow re-establishment of capillary pore space in the root-zone area.

The drilled holes can also help improve rooting at the interface between turf and subsoil. Where turf has been laid over packed subsoil, it is unable to get adequate rooting and will tend to



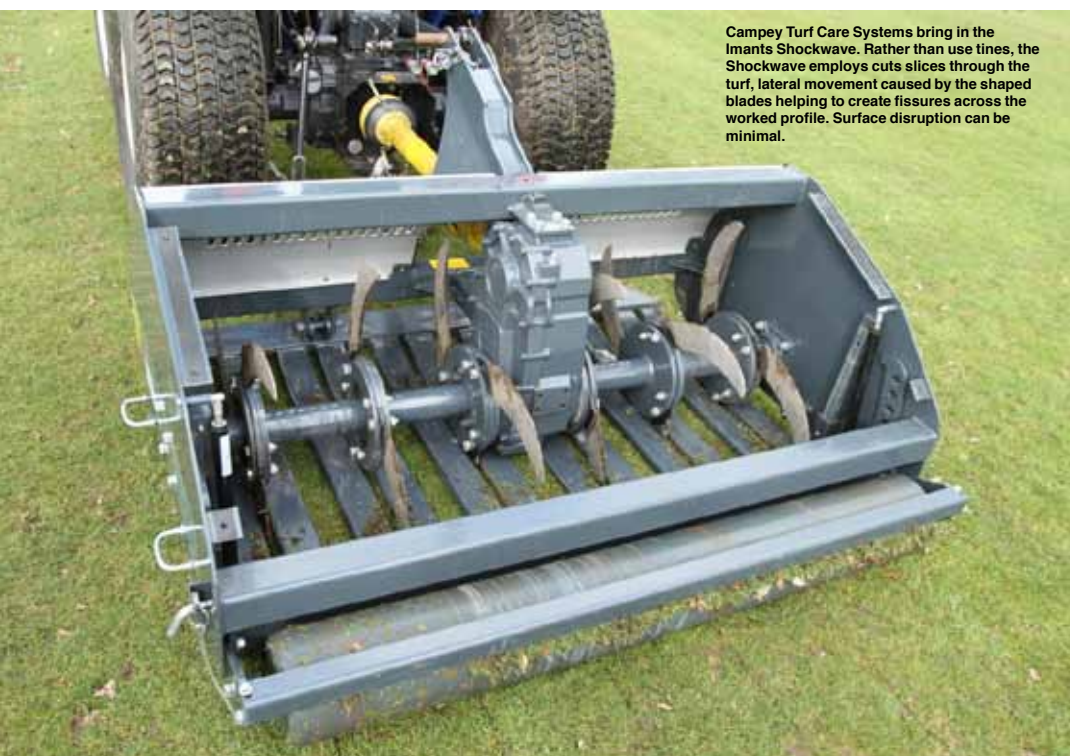
**BELOW:** Although developed to work on golf greens, the Wiedenmann GX18 HD is 'fast enough' to be worked over wider areas. Aerating approaches and compacted areas of fairways is just one of the uses to which such equipment can be put.

front roller too, this being claimed to ensure a uniform job on undulating greens. Further, although the machine is mainly designed for greens, tees and fine turf it will also cope on fairways which aren't built on rocky sub soils.

**Ecosolve** are specialist contract operators with the **Drill n Fill aerator** and Deep Drill 60/18 aerator. These two machines, which are also marketed by the company, are specifically designed to provide sub-soil aeration. The Drill and Fill is claimed by Ecosolve to be unique in its ability to not only create aeration ducts but also backfill them. This is carried out immediately, with materials that can be added including soil amendments, such as sand and gravel, nutrients or even bacteria.

In outline, the Drill n Fill drills 24 vertical ducts 30cm deep by 20mm in diameter over an area of 0.85m<sup>2</sup>. The Deep Drill 60/18 aerator has 60 drill bits of 15 to 20mm diam-





Campey Turf Care Systems bring in the Mantis Shockwave. Rather than use tines, the Shockwave employs cuts slices through the turf, lateral movement caused by the shaped blades helping to create fissures across the worked profile. Surface disruption can be minimal.



The now ubiquitous Verti-Drain, from Charterhouse Turf Machinery, is designed to relieve deeper compaction. The pictured Verti-Drain 7521 has a 2.10m working width and can operate down to a depth of 400mm. A choice of hollow and solid tines are available.

#### Contacts

[www.ecosolve.co.uk/golf.html](http://www.ecosolve.co.uk/golf.html)  
[www.terrainaeration.co.uk/](http://www.terrainaeration.co.uk/)  
[www.sisis.com/golf/](http://www.sisis.com/golf/)

#### Other aeration equipment suppliers include:

EP Barrus Ltd (MTD), Campey Turf Care Systems  
 Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd  
 DJ Turfcare Equipment Ltd  
 Groundsman Industries

John Deere Ltd  
 JSM Distribution  
 Lloyds & Co Letchworth Ltd  
 Logic Manufacturing Ltd  
 Mantis UK Limited  
 Pinnacle Power Equipment Ltd  
 Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd  
 RECO  
 Ryetec Industrial Equipment Ltd  
 SCH (Supplies) Ltd Toro  
 Commercial Products  
 Tracmaster Ltd

rest on the soil and not root. Holes drilled through the turf and into the subsoil will act as penetrable ducts into which turf roots can grow, fastening the loose top zone to the subsoil.

Where the Drill n Fill departs from standard drill type aerators is its ability to remove soil and replace it with fresh material. By adding sand, gravel or a specialist drainage medium, this process can also be used to make the drilled holes semi-permanent.

Another innovative aeration system is the Terralift aerator. This type of equipment works by blasting compressed air down into the subsoil, the sudden blast of air opening up fissures and helping to alleviate a range of subsoil problems including compaction.

A Terralift injects air via 2.5cm probe, and is worked on a staggered grid based on 2.0m centres. Said to send a blast of sufficient force to work down to around 1.0m, a Terralift can also be used to inject dry material. This can include dried milled seaweed, osmocote and slow release nutrients as well as various fungal and microbe-based materials.

The system can also be used to treat areas damaged by oil spills, sending in a bacterial formulation that can be used to digest oil within the soil. It is this type of specialist application that is often overlooked, with digging out problem areas typically being seen as the only answer.

As an aside, the Deep Drill 60/18 can also be used in conjunction with Terralift type equipment. Here, drilling in holes to perforate the surface before using the Terralift will prevent the compacted layer acting like a 'membrane'. This helps reduce surface uplift and is particularly useful when working on playing surfaces.

Based around its established Javelin vertical action aerator, the SISIS Javelin with Aer-Aid system uses compressed air to help relieve compaction in the rootzone of all types of sports turf. In simple terms, as well as pushing a hole into the turf with its tines, the Aer-Aid element also injects a blast of compressed air too. The aim is to offer a degree of additional decompaction right where it has most benefit.

Aeration is a fascinating subject. The adoption of existing equipment and new techniques continue to broaden the ways in which aeration can be used to help keep turf in good shape. Of equal importance, aeration can be used to rejuvenate tired turf economically.

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Please email your notes to  
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by the 15th  
of the month

All the latest news from your Section

# Around The Green



## Scotland



### Central

Congratulations to Craig Perry of the Dukes Course who leaves shortly to take up the position of Head Greenkeeper at South Staffs GC. Craig like a lot of guys in the area, was recently on a busman's holiday helping out at Castle Stuart for the Scottish Open. David Dukelaw also the Dukes and Fraser Robertson, St Andrews Links were in Paris helping out at the French Open. Michael Riddell, (St Andrews) was at the Irish Open, Derek Robson (Dukes) was at the US Women's Open and Phil Hind (St Andrew Links) was helping at Lytham for the Open Championship. It's fantastic to see our members being asked to assist in this way but perhaps they were all just hoping to escape this miserable weather we're experiencing. Our best wishes to all members who still have some large competitions to get through this season, it's been a hard slog so far. All I've heard these past few weeks is about the rough, pity the golfers at our Club's can't utilise the Professionals skills more and learn to hit the ball straight! Richard Windows of STRI is going to present at a seminar on the afternoon of 30 October prior to the AGM which will be held at Elmwood.

The Pairs competition is just starting the knock out stage and there will be new names on the trophy with last year's winners not qualifying from their group. Results are on the website [www.biggacentralsection.org.uk](http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk) where you will also find an entry form for the autumn outing at Piperdam. Hopefully Shaun Anderson, Course Manager at

Piperdam will be back to work by then following paternity leave. Congratulations Shaun on becoming a dad, you'll be up 22 hours a day now instead of the normal 20!

Gordon



### North

As I am writing this report the weather for June and July has been awful and I stay hopeful that this weather will stop and we can get some heat. There has been some movement in the greenkeeping world. John Merchant is now Head Greenkeeper at Aspire Golf Centre and Stewart Brown has moved onto the Silverburn Course as First Assistant at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, we wish them all the best in their new jobs.

Christopher Watson from Petercutter Golf Club has won Scottish Region Year 2 Award and also has been nominated for the Toro Student of the Year Award and we wish him all the best for this award.

I also have to say sorry for not posting the results from The Spring Outing at Royal Aberdeen. Better late than never so here are the results;

Nearest The Pin

Winner Gary McCandless, 8th Rigby Taylor

Winner Bob Hardie, 11th Craibstone Golf Club

Winner Josh Lester, 17th Longside Golf Club

Sweep

4th Neil Metcalf, Craibstone Golf Club

3rd Jocky Urquart, Rothes Golf Club

2nd Robert Paterson, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

1st Neil Sadler, Portlethen Golf Club

Trade Winner

Pat Allen Symbio

Committee Winner

Robert Paterson, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

Veterans

2nd Peter Boyd

1st Brian Cocker

Apprentice Trophy

Jack Craig, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

Class 3

3rd Niall Bruce, Montrose Golf Club

2nd Steve Frost, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

1st Scott Ribbeck, Kings Links

Class 2

3rd Stewart Brown, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

2nd Steve Macrae, Deeside Golf Club

1st Brian Cocker, Alyth Golf Club

Class 1

3rd Neil Metcalf, Craibstone Golf Club

2nd Douglas Elrick, Hazelhead Golf Club

1st Robert Paterson, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

Scratch

2nd Jocky Urquart, Rothes Golf Club

1st Neil Sadler, Portlethen Golf Club

That's all for this month hope everything is going well for all of you.

Regards

Ross

Mobile: 07588896635 email: [ross.macrae@hotmail.com](mailto:ross.macrae@hotmail.com)



### East

This year the summer months have failed to deliver any kind of weather resembling the summer's we've been used to and come to expect. The Links has more of a crop of grass than I have ever seen in June/July so the maintenance is full steam ahead day after day. All you

guys inland must be busy and with the demand on man and machine increasing there's no sign of any let up soon. Precipitation levels are through the roof together with humid conditions making disease a concern in weeks to come. Still it's all part of the challenge of being a Greenkeeper and it will be interesting to see what happens later in the season.

I've had many messages of sympathy that curiously resembles jokes about my football team (Rangers) It's tough time's for Gers fans but the jokes make it SO much easier to take (NOT!) Stop laughing Shaun Cunningham!!

Hopefully you've all had your summer update delivered to you. Thanks to Stuart Ferguson for that so see you all at Mortonhall GC for the Willie Woods Trophy. Do you have any interesting stories about the weather? Contact me [s.crawford@live.co.uk](mailto:s.crawford@live.co.uk) or phone 07873464097 remember no more Gers jokes please!

Stewart Crawford



### West

It is great to have such fantastic weather year on year, something we've come to expect of Scottish summer's, but how depressing is this summer? When can we get some sunshine again? Well as you can guess it's pretty awful weather in the West of Scotland with rain, rain and more rain, but I'm sure we can expect an Indian summer. First item on the agenda is the results from the spring outing held at Cardross Golf Club on 10 May. Surprisingly enough it was raining cats and dogs! Thanks to all the brave souls who made the day worthwhile by turning up to get drenched! Congratulations

to John Barr and his staff for the condition of the course which was superb considering, thanks also to the catering staff for providing lovely food on the day and finally to the club for allowing the section to play your excellent golf course. Prize winners were scratch A Reid 73, 1st class winner S McCall (Drumpellier) 36 points, 2nd S Taylor Glasgow 34 points, 3rd C Littlejohn Bearsden 32 points, 2nd class winner J Steadward Blairbeth 34, 2nd C Wyllie Glasgow 30 (BIH), 3rd D McKechnie 30, 3rd class winner S Brawley East Kilbride 35, 2nd P Livingston 31, 3rd M Maxton EK 28 points. I would to say well done to all the competitors for their efforts during a very trying day, the total entrants of 34 was a bit more refreshing. Hopefully we can get a few more to turn up for the autumn outing at Fereneze on 18 September courtesy of Peter Boyd who is Captain.

The Scottish outing at Ratho Park saw a disappointing entry of 42 players compete for a wonderful variety of prizes on a lovely golf course which was a joy to play even if a few of the pin placements were a bit challenging. Congratulations to Billy Hudson and his staff for providing such an excellent test of golf. Thanks go to the Vice Captain for saying a few words during the presentation on behalf of the Club and the catering staff for providing an excellent meal. May I also take the opportunity to say thanks to Jim Croxton and Rachael Duffy for helping to run the event as this was John Young's first competition as Regional Administrator and finally thanks to John for making things run nice and smoothly.

Last but not least, a mention is due to Kerr Hunter at Gleddoch House for recently finishing five years distance learning to complete a Degree in Turf Science,

he is now a Bachelor of Science with Honours. Kerr has studied at Myerscough College for five years whilst bringing up a young family and maintaining a full time position as Head Greenkeeper. Well done on a fantastic achievement and thanks to Kerr for passing on the information to me, allowing the section to share in his good news. Should anybody have any interesting news for me to pass on please contact me on 0141-942-5554 or 07790823914 or my email is [stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com](mailto:stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com).

Stuart Taylor

## Northern Region



### North East

The John Deere Team Championship was played 24 June at Darlington GC, 21 teams turned up, Parklands GC won the event with a nett 5. Their team consisted of Head Greenkeeper Tom Alexander, General Manager Joe Fleetwood and Chairman of the Greens Gavin Jobe. They will go on to represent our area at Slaley Hall, September 20 where they will have the opportunity to win a trip to play Myrtle Beach. Nearest the pin went to Simon Coultras from City of Newcastle GC and longest drive went to Gavin Jobe of Parklands. I received a phone call a couple of days later on from our new Regional Administrator Sandra Raper who is looking after the Northern and Midlands Regions. Sandra asked me to attend the John Deere Team Championship at Windermere GC in Cumbria, July 3, on her behalf as she was attending another meeting elsewhere.

What a lovely part of the coun-

try to live in and what a great course to play. It was not a long course but can be tricky, great views and guess what not a sand bunker in sight! The course was in great condition considering the wet summer we have had, in fact when I met the Head Greenkeeper David Wilkinson he gave me some notes on annual rainfalls dating back to 1981 for his course. This proved very interesting reading it was from year 2000 to present day their average rainfall has been almost 1990mm and last month in June alone it was 308mm! It is thought we were supposed to be having drier summers according to the experts.

The Team Championship winners were none other than David Wilkinson, M. Lawton, K Barrows of the home club with a score of 56 gross nett 55. I think you lads better get some bunker practice in for the finals at Slaley Hall as there's plenty of them. Finally I would like to thank Richard Charlton of John Deere and also to the team from local dealers Henry Armer & Son of Leece, Ulverston for making me very welcome on the day.

That's all for this month, sorry I didn't have any news for the July magazine but should any greenkeepers from Cumbria want any news put in just let me know.

Jimmy

North East section  
[jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com](mailto:jamesrichardson217@btinternet.com)



### Northern

What a lovely start to the day at our Presidents fixture at

Scarcroft.... fantastic weather, super course and good old Ben from Scarboro bumping into

Frank Stewart's car.... priceless. Good turn out chaps, thanks again for your support especially to the old swinger Mr. Guy, it's been far too long top man good to have you back. Many thanks to Mat and the boys for their hard work and to Billy and his staff for looking after us and not forgetting our sponsor Rob from Full Circle Irrigation.

The winners....

Div 1...1st D.Gosney  
2nd R.Harris  
3rd A. Baxter

Div2...1st J.Walsh  
2nd J.Watts  
3rd F.Stewart

Div3 1st K.Christie  
2nd B.Jackson  
3rd G.Street!!

Trade winner...Mel Guy and G.Baxter

Nearest pin...D.Gosney and Duncan Campball

A big thank you to Sandra our regional rep for popping down to see us and helping us out ...the raffle ticket sales were very good so the job is yours for Horsforth if you like it!!

We had a brisk EGM for the vacant treasurers position and Joe Walsh stepped in and gladly got voted in. I have known Joe for a while now and he will be a good lad to have on board. I had got together a very strong team for our little match up with our friends from the Sheffield section but the poor weather did us and it was cancelled. Rumor has it that pressure was put on the lads at Howley Hall from a 'very big chap' from another region to get it called off because they knew they were in for a mighty big kicking from us!!

Next up for us is the invitational day at Horsforth, 22 August, another afternoon kick off so I am hoping for a big turn out please. ...And finally I have a few copies of Walter Wood's book which I got from a old

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# Around The Green

friend of mine, Monkey Harris says they are in good condition and at only £3.99 to you guys is a steal! Cheques made payable to me please....tee hee!

Andy Slingsby  
07506407867

Andy.slingsby98@googlemail.com



## North Wales

Is anyone else fed up with being soaked to the skin, day in and day out? I'll be completely honest, I love my job but the forever growing grass and hellish conditions we have to try and keep it tidy and under control in are driving me and the other members of our team to distraction. Ok I'll stop whinging but I'm sure we're not the only greenkeepers at the moment that are feeling the pressure.

On a brighter note, 19 June we finally played the mid-summer / spring tournament at my home course of the Vale of Llangollen golf club and 48 competitors played in the sunshine, yes there was sunshine! With a very competitive field the results are as follows; 1st Richard Lewis of Machynllech GC 39 pts, 2nd Jez Hughes (home advantage) 37pts, 3rd Paul Sandalls of Heswall GC 34 pts, 4th Neil Oxtan also of Heswall GC 33 pts, 5th Andy Noon making a Heswall treble on runners up 33 pts. Best gross, Paul Roberts of Baron Hill round in 74. Trade prize, John Mooney with 35 pts. Nearest the pin went to Paul Sandalls not only on the 6th but on the 18th as well! The day was played in Great Spirit and a mention to Haydn Jones of Chirk GC who chipped a great shot in on the 13th.

We fight as a section on two fronts between July and August, 27 July we play the inaugural North Wales v South Wales match at Aberdovey GC. 7 August we play the annual North Wales v North West match at Lymm GC, best of luck to all our players.

The North Wales v North West cricket match took place on 18 July, a big thank you goes to Nick Grey for organising the event. Full results for all these events will be in next month's column. The autumn tourna-

ment takes place on the 11th of September at St Melyd GC. Really looking forward to visiting Eifion Ellis's course, remember when you book in that your replies go to Carl Crocher not Jez Hughes, the address for entries are on your three comp entry form.

On a sad note we hear that Jeff Allinson of Patshull Park GC passed away recently after a short illness, our condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues. Allen Lewis of Llanymynech GC celebrates 40 years of service this year and the club recognised this achievement with a celebration night and uncovered a plaque naming their new academy short course the 'Allen Lewis academy course'.

Well that was a bit more of an essay than a short note to keep you informed, so I'll sign off with all the best until next month!

Pete Maybury 07756001187  
e-mail petemayb66@aol.com

## Midland Region



### Midland

Well here we are again, same old story, rain, rain, and then some more rain. The one thing I love doing is putting on my chest waders, however of late they have been employed to try and keep me dry at work and not so as I can go fly fishing. I have always wished that I worked on a course with a river running through it, be careful what you wish for. I do not envy those that have such at the moment.

The summer tournament at Oxley Park on 11 July was postponed due to the monsoon type weather we have been getting throughout July. The new date is confirmed as Wednesday 5 September. We shall keep any entries and re-enter you for the new date unless you require a refund, if so please contact Gary who will be happy to oblige.

The autumn tournament at Druids Heath has also been moved back a week due to a clash of dates. Please note the new date of Thursday October 25 for your diaries, which will also include the section's AGM.

Entries for the golf days this

year have been disappointing to date, so please consider supporting your section if you can. We welcome new faces and would love to see you at any of our golf days or education events throughout the year. You can get further information through our web site [www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk](http://www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk) <<http://www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk>> or contacting Rhys Thomas on 077774164173. Please note this number for Rhys is new, due to his recent appointment as Course Manager at Blackwell Golf Club. Many belated congratulations on your appointment at Blackwell, we are sure you will be a big success.

This month's calendar sponsor is our longstanding friends and supporters of the section Rigby Taylor/Tony Cheese. Please consider them for your chemicals, fertilisers, grass seed and specialties particularly by Mascot. Tony can be contacted on: 07778 665 506 or [t.cheese@rigbytaylor.com](mailto:t.cheese@rigbytaylor.com).

And finally, I would like to welcome a young buck to our profession, a certain Master Marcus Davis has joined the team at Stratford-Upon-Avon GC. He is straight out of school at 16 and then dives into the complex world of greenkeeping. Baptism of fire comes to mind. We were all there once, I wouldn't choose any other.

My thanks to our Chair Ed for the real content of the above.

Sean McDade.



### East of England

By the time you read this we should have just played our latest golf event at Belton Woods, results will be here next month. The big news in the section this month does not involve the weather (more on that later), but the departure of our section chairman for pastures new. Allan Walker has been our Chairman for the past few years, too long according to the secretary! Over the past couple of years he has been moving further and further away from us here at East of England, however he just keeps coming back! He has now taken up a

new position in Holland and not even he will be able to make it here for a golf day just to N/R after 9 holes! Joking aside Allan has to be thanked by everyone involved for the drive and enthusiasm he has brought to the section. His passion and forward thinking meant that we were the first section to have their own website and a groundbreaking "twinning" with the GCSAA Peaks and Praries Chapter. His unique style will certainly be missed at section events and golf days (although the presentations may be a bit quicker now!

At Section level Vice Chairman Graeme MacDonald will take over as Chairman for the time being.

Allan was also Midland Region Chairman and Vice Chairman Rob Welford will now assume this position. On behalf of everyone in the section I would like to wish Allan all the very best in his new venture. Quite how the Dutch will ever understand his Scottish tones is beyond me but I am sure they will all find common ground. I am quite sure that he already has his tickets and hotel booked for Harrogate next year and am sure the section will extend an invite to him at our drinks reception at Hales Bar.

As for the weather, constant rainfall has once again left us with areas only accessible by boat! Not quite as bad as 2007 but not far off. 40mm of rain in less than half an hour made a real mess. Two days pushing up bunker washouts and cultivating bases was followed by another 35mm of rain putting us back to where we started. All this coupled with warm temperatures has sent our grass factory into overdrive leaving the course resembling a silage field once it has been cut. Here's hoping for a dry August!

Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club.

## Around The Green Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[media@bigga.co.uk](mailto:media@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 15th of the month

## South East Region



### Mid Anglia

I apologise for the lack of news in the magazine of late, we've just found out Nigel Phelan is no longer a member of BIGGA and has stepped down from his role on the committee. We wish him well in whatever he chooses to do and hope he can get back into greenkeeping soon.

Darren Mugford will be taking the responsibility of getting some news out to you through this article, so if he is at your course and you may have some news yourself, please let him know and he'll be able to get it aired.

By the time this article reaches you we will have played our second competition of the year. Gerald has sent an email with entry forms and if, for some reason you didn't get one please let us know and we will get you in on the list. I will let Darren do the results from the spring and summer comps when he takes over, as it can be hard to find things to put in the magazine.

Once again I can only apologise for not having any news lately but things are moving forward and you should be kept up to date from now on.

Many Thanks, and now onto Darren...

Steve Mason

Hi my name is Darren Mugford and for those who don't already know me I am from Rigby Taylor Ltd and I have been asked to fill the vacant position of providing a monthly update on the Mid Anglia Section. Firstly I would like to thank Nigel for his contribution and wish him all the best in future ventures and hope to see you back with the section soon.

Our first event of the season was the Spring Tournament held on 31 May at Letchworth Golf Club and despite the constant threat of rain the 33 players largely managed to stay dry and enjoyed the challenges

of a superbly presented course. Our thanks go to Matthew Towler and his team for their outstanding efforts in getting the course into such great condition considering the crazy weather we have all been experiencing this spring/summer.

The results from the Spring Tournament were as follows

1st Place – John Haley from South Beds GC with 38 points.

2nd Place – Simon Woolley from Brickendon Grange GC with 37 points.

3rd Place – Peter Briars from Knebworth GC on 36 points.

Nearest pin on 14th went to T Smith.

Longest drive on 4th went to Gerald Bruce.

Just incase anybody didn't know the hosepipe ban has now been lifted! Since it was implemented there has been record rainfall for April, June and July all a total washout. Let's hope the sun shows itself at some point soon to lift all our spirits and help to produce the kind of putting surfaces we all crave.

If anybody has any info for the section please email me on [d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com](mailto:d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com) and I will aim to include in any future editions.

Stay Dry! Darren



### Sussex

Our first tournament of the year was played at Willingdon Golf Club where the hospitality and the course were top drawer. The course seemed to favour the local talent more than others. The Trade & Guest prize was won by Henry who I believe is ex-Willingdon.

1st Nett went to S Fuller from Lewes GC, 2nd Nett to Peter Negus from Willingdon GC and 3rd Nett to Matt Webb from Willingdon GC. Could this be inside information?

The Best Gross 1st was clinched by Peter Ray from Haywards Heath GC, 2nd was earned by Chris Wells from Seaford Blatchington and Mike Gould of Copthorne GC won 3rd. Thanks once again to Pete and his team for the great condition of the course and to

the Club for the splendid meal afterwards.

I would once again ask all in the Sussex Section to drop me line, ring me or email me with any news of interest to the section. I can only keep you all informed with information received. Let's hear your news!

Cheers for now,  
Eric Green  
Beauport Park Golf Club

01424-214600  
07805-024001  
[TheGreens837@aol.com](mailto:TheGreens837@aol.com)



### Kent

Not much to write about this month I'm afraid as the rain continues to pour and the grass continues to grow. On my own course just trying to get out between showers proves to be a big challenge as barely a day goes by without another cloudburst soaking us again. It's times like this when you really appreciate good drainage. I hope that those of you reading this column from other parts of the country that have been hit far more severely than us are managing to cope with the extreme conditions and that, when the weather finally turns and the waters recede, you still have some resemblance of a golf course to work your magic upon.

Our summer pairs knockout is now in full swing and many thanks to all those who entered this great, fun championship. Check the website for up to the minute results.

Don't forget to contact me with any news that you would like included in this column.

Best of British  
Rob Holland  
[www.kentgreenkeepers.com](http://www.kentgreenkeepers.com)



### South Coast

Firstly, an apology that our section missed an entry into last months GI, don't know what happened but I will take

## Assistant Profile

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

**Name:** Alan Campbell  
**Age:** 53!  
**Club:** Carrickknowe Golf Course (Edinburgh Leisure)  
**Position:** Assistant Greenkeeper  
**Nickname:** Ham/Hamey



**1. How long have you been greenkeeping?** 17 years

**2. What was it about the career that attracted you?** I fell into it by chance, then fell in love with greenkeeping.

**3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?** International man of mystery or in retail/sales!

**4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?** Being involved with redesign/remodelling which improves the hole/course or helps with safety, traffic flow, speed of play etc.

**5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?** Emptying litter bins - dog poo central!

**6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?** Improved liaison with teachers and careers advisors, etc, to educate them in the opportunities available and skills required in greenkeeping/golf course management.

**7. Hobbies?** Curling (playing and coaching), and pub quizzes.

**8. Favourite Music?** I enjoy John Otway.

**9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?** Jedforest R.F.C.

**10. What is your claim to fame?** Caddied in the European Open at Sunningdale, my man finished 2nd!

## BIGGA welcomes the following new members

### Scotland

Fraser Jardine, North Section  
Alan Thomson, West Section

### Northern Region

Daniel Richards, North Wales Section

### Midland Region

Tim Willson, East Midland Section  
Stephen Marsden, Midland Section  
Fred Sines, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section  
Maurice Sines, Berks/Bucks & Oxon Section  
Jeffrey Donovan, Mid Anglia Section  
Michael Finn, Mid Anglia Section  
Michael Goddard, Mid Anglia Section  
Pat Manning, Mid Anglia Section  
Simon Williams, Mid Anglia Section

### South East Region

Kane Smith, Surrey Section  
Paul Sheridan, Surrey Section

### South West/South Wales Region

Adam Brackley, South West Section  
Benjamin Sparks, South West Section  
Jason Stevens, South West Section  
Kevin Brown, South West Section  
Ashley Phillips, South Coast Section  
Jonathan Pickett, South Coast Section  
Josh Collins, South Coast Section  
Raymond Lester, South Wales Section

### Northern Ireland

Philip Montgomery, Northern Ireland

### Overseas

Stephen Casburn, Republic of Ireland  
Jan Larsson, Sweden

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



## Calling all BIGGA Members

Have you changed any of your contact details since you last gave them to us? If so, please get in touch with us at BIGGA Membership.

Our email address is  
membership@bigga.co.uk

Contact details can include your email address, phone number, change of address, change of club etc. Thanks in advance, for keeping us up to date!

the blame because, I can put it down to age and the fact that I have never seen so much grass, so there has been little time to think about anything other than cutting. Barton, here on the cliff top has never been so green at this time of year, our fuel costs will be sky high as all the kit is constantly out.

As I write this in mid-July it is raining again with top temperatures around 16c and it feels like autumn.

The John Deere invitation was held at Rushmore Park Golf Club on 10 July, 20 teams competing for a place in the National final to be held at Slaley Hall later this year. The winning club was Broadstone, in second place was Remedy Oak and third went to Barton-on-Sea. The course was in great condition a credit to Clive Browning and all of his staff on what has been a difficult year. The few showers we all endured did not dampen the atmosphere on a very enjoyable day. Happy retirement to both Clive Browning and Tony Crouch from Rushmore, have a well deserved rest!

Our summer golf tournament was played at Blackmore Golf Club on 11 July, with a field of 44 which was a good number considering the pressure most greenkeepers are under. Most of us travelled through torrential rain to get there but we were blessed with a dry afternoon on one of the best courses I have played for a long time. All credit to James Norris and his team for presenting the course in first class condition, truly great.

Winners, with an obscene better ball score of 49 points were Alan and Tom McGee. In second place with a respectable 42 points was Charles Troth and Steve Kattenhorn. Third went to Dave Ross and Tony Kebby also with 42 points losing out on a count back. Yours truly got very close to the 'booby' prize but was piped at the post by Bill Ridgley and Mike Vann with a score of 27 points. Longest drive went to Lee Blackburn and nearest the pin was Alan Digweed. As always many thanks go to our sponsors Tacit for presenting us with some great prizes, long may your support continue.

Our annual match against the secretaries had to be cancelled due to bad weather and has been re-scheduled for 2 August at Rushmore Park Golf Club, the results of which will be

in next months issue. The next golf date is the match against the South West at Salisbury and S. Wilts Golf Club on 20 September. If you are interested in playing contact myself or any committee member for details. The autumn comp and AGM is at Weymouth Golf Club on 4 October, more details in the next issue. Meanwhile, back to cutting grass in the rain until next month.

Tony Gadd

## South West and South Wales



### South West

Firstly, I don't like to start on such a negative note, however recently the section had to cancel its summer tournament. This was due to be played at Cumberwell Park GC. Apologies go to all members at Cumberwell, including Matt and his staff, I hear and believe the course was in fantastic condition. Although canceling the event was not something we wanted to, it was very understandable giving the recent conditions, greenkeeping has been a very difficult job recently, it's all cut, cut, cut...and rain, rain rain. During these conditions, if you have staff like we do at Minch, consider yourself very lucky!

Back to a more positive note, dates that you should make a note of are Friday 10 August, a section match v South Wales to be played at Royal Porthcawl GC. This may include an overnight stay that evening. Please contact section captain Wayne Vincent for more details and to show your interest.

We have also had some interest in training workshops; please contact Paul Worster or myself should you have an interest in this. A spraying course (pending numbers) could be possible early autumn. Please, if you have any information you would like to share with the section please contact myself, at the very least that'll really help me with this article...

Many thanks to all our patronage partners for their

support during 2012.

See you all very soon

Adam

07732503855

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk



### Devon and Cornwall

Our summer meeting this year was held at Launceston Golf Club, Cornwall. The day consisted of our yearly grudge match between Devon and Cornwall as well as individual prizes for best Stableford scores.

A course walk was also organised and lead by Graeme Gallimore, Head Greenkeeper. Graeme has been at Launceston for 8 years and has been an active member of the section, being heavily involved with the education and training over the years. Graeme and the team have worked hard to improve the surfaces and overall presentation of the course at Launceston and considering the recent heavy rains, the course was looking fantastic!

A big thank you to our sponsors for the day, Symbio and Farmura. Both companies have been very strong supporters of the Section over the years.

The match was won by Devon after a 3 year drought and the trophy was presented to Gavin Moore, Devon Captain for the day. The individual prizes went to Jamie Gregory (Launceston) in 1st place with 36 points, winning on count back. 2nd was Andy George (Trethorne) with 36 points and in 3rd place was Adam Bridgewater (Yelverton) 35 points. The prizes were donated and presented by Paul Lowe (Symbio). Nearest pin on the 9th was won by Andy George and on the 15th by Martin Samuels (Blade Amenity). Longest drive on the 6th was won by Rob Cook (Bowood) and on the 11th by Neil Ivamy (Trevose). Prizes for nearest the pin and longest drive were donated and presented by Peter Lacey (Farmura).

The day was finished off with a BBQ, which was enjoyed by the members attending. A very successful day, with big thanks going to Graeme and his team for presenting a fantastic course

and to Launceston Golf Club for their hospitality. Also, thanks again to our sponsors for the day, Farmura and Symbio.

An evening course walk was organised at Trevoze Golf and Country Club on Wednesday 11 July. Jon Wood has recently taken over at Trevoze as Course Manager and has been preparing for the upcoming McGregor Trophy which is the Boys under 16 Open Championship, played at the same time as the Open itself.

Thanks to Jon for taking time out of his busy schedule to organise this and I am sure that all the attendees found it extremely informative and interesting. If any other Course Managers or Head Greenkeepers would like to stage an Evening Course Walk at anytime, please contact me and we can arrange some dates and times.

Thank you to all the members, trade representatives and sponsors for supporting another fantastic and successful season of events. I am now working on next season's events where venues have been shortlisted. Please contact me ASAP if you would like to be considered or if you as members would like to have an event at any specific venues.

George Pitts  
Section Secretary  
BIGGA Devon & Cornwall  
07929 754401  
gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com



**South Wales**

I would like to say we're enjoying a beautiful summer, but most mornings throughout this last month have felt like the middle of November and we should be getting ready for Christmas when in fact we should be looking forward to our summer holidays. All I can

say to all you head greenkeepers, course managers, grounds managers and all assistant staff keep your heads up every one of you are in the same boat (literally), but you are all doing a fantastic job and there's nothing any of you can do better apart from pray to the man upstairs for him to turn the tap off!

Our summer competition was held at Creigiau Golf Club and we were fortunate to play on a day where we only had the wind to deal with. This was our first visit to the golf course and a huge thank you to Robert and his staff for the fantastic presentation and very good putting surfaces, you would not have thought 24hrs previous we had over 30mm of rain. With over 20 competitors out on the course trying to steer between the old trees scoring was difficult.

In 1st place Marc Anderton who scored 32 points off a handicap of 1, 2nd went to Nigel Ruck with 28 points and 3rd was Barry Smith also with 28 points. Longest Drive went to Andy Roach and the nearest the pin Stuart Clayton.

But the best prize for the Trade Winner myself with a massive 36 points get in! It was nice after golf to see so many of us back in shirts and ties for the evening meal I think it does bring the professionalism back to us off the course as well as on it.

A huge thank you again to Creigiau Golf Club for your generous hospitality show all day and again Robert for the excellent course set up. Thanks also to all patrons of the section, without your support prizes and events like these couldn't take place thank you.

Our next event is October 11 at Clyne Golf Club, the AGM starts at 11am followed by golf at 1pm. Please guys book this time in your calendars and try and support the AGM to air your views and support section golf event.

Thanks all, Peter H

## **Around The Green Section Notes**

Please email your notes to  
**media@bigga.co.uk**  
by the 15th of the month

# **BIGGA**

are delighted to be at  
**IOG SALTEX**  
4-6 September 2012  
**Windsor Racecourse**  
**Berkshire**

# **Stand E33**

*Come and  
say hello!*





# Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2012 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
<b>AUGUST</b>			
August 1st	East Anglia Golf Event	Royal Norwich Golf Club	Ian Willett Tel. Mobile 07929 205398 or email: info@biggaeastanglia.co.uk
August 2nd	East of England Event	Belton Woods Hotel & Golf Club	Bruce Hicks Tel mobile: 07931 714922 or email: brucehicks1@gmail.com
August 9th	Midland Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Verulam Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
August 16th	Scottish Team Event Golf Day	Auchterarder Golf Club	Gordon Moir Email: gmoir@standrews.org.uk
August 16th	Essex Section Day	Rochford Hundred Golf Club	Arnold Phipps-Jones Tel mobile: 07764 862337 or email: essexbigga@talktalk.net
August 22nd	Scottish East Section Tournament	Mortonhall Golf Club	Stuart Ferguson Email: stuferg@btinternet.com
August 22nd	Northern Section Event	Horsforth Golf Club	Andrew Slingsby Email: slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com
August 22nd	Northern Region Golf Management Event sponsored by Tacit Golf UK	Birchwood Golf Club	Sandra Raper on Mobile: 07866 366966 or email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
September 5th	BIGGA Seminars	Saltex, Windsor Racecourse	BIGGA House, 01347 833800 option 3 or info@bigga.co.uk
September 11th	North Wales Section Event	St Melyd Golf Club	Jez Hughes, Tel mobile: 07876 776265 or email: jezpro69@aol.com
September 13th	North West Section Event	Penwortham Golf Club	Chris Sheehan, email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk
September 13th	East of England Section Event	Blankney Golf Club	Bruce Hicks Tel mobile: 07931 714922 or email: brucehicks1@gmail.com
September 13th	Scottish North Section Golf Day	Granton-on-Spey Golf Club	Dale Robertson, email: daleturnberry@aol.com
September 18th	Scottish West Section Golf Day	Fereneze Golf Club	Fraser Ross, email: Karen.ross@tesco.net
September 19th	Scottish East Section Autumn Event	Murrayfield Golf Club	Stuart Ferguson, email: stuferg@btinternet.com
September 19th	Scottish Central Section Golf Day	Piperdam Golf & Leisure Resort	Gordon Moir, email: gmoir@standrews.org.uk
September 20th	South Coast Section v's South West Section	Salisbury & South Wilts Golf Club	Alex McCombie, email: southcoastsecretary@gmail.com
September 26th	Essex Section Event	Stoke-by-Nayland Golf Club	Arnold Phipps-Jones, email: essexbigga@talktalk.net

# BTME is back

for it's 24th year, at the Harrogate International Centre

► BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION ► 22-24 JANUARY 2013

# BIGGA Seminars at SALTEX 2012

**Wednesday 5 September 2012**

at The Grandstand, Royal Windsor Race Course

**BIGGA** is delighted to have once again, been invited by the IOG to present a series of seminars at SALTEX 2012. This year we will be bringing you some of the greatest hits from the extremely successful **Continue to Learn at BTME 2012**.

**10.15 am – 11.15 am**  
**Managing Winter Kill**

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

In the winter of 2009/10 the greens at Loch Lomond suffered from devastating winter kill. This session will give an insight to the damage that occurred and the precautions that were taken in 2010/11 to prevent similar problems.

**11.30 am – 12.30 pm**  
**From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years**

Chris Haspell, Course Manager, Castle Stuart Golf Club

In this session Chris will discuss his experiences of building a links golf course and it's grow in. He will also describe the journey towards the Scottish Open 2011, the event, the rain and the recovery.

**1.00 pm – 2.00 pm**

**Organic Matter – Friend or Foe**

Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager,  
Symbio

Measuring organic matter levels is becoming very popular, almost an industry standard procedure. This information can be invaluable to green keepers and grounds men. However, how do we decipher between thatch and organic matter and why it is important to do so. This seminar will discuss the various differences between problematic thatch and beneficial organic matter, the problems with working to a figure, the difference between drainage and percolation rates and how you can turn the thatch to your advantage.

**BIGGA CPD Credits**  
0.5 CPD credits are available for each seminar.  
A CPD register will be available at the end of each seminar.



# Back in time

## to this month in... 2001

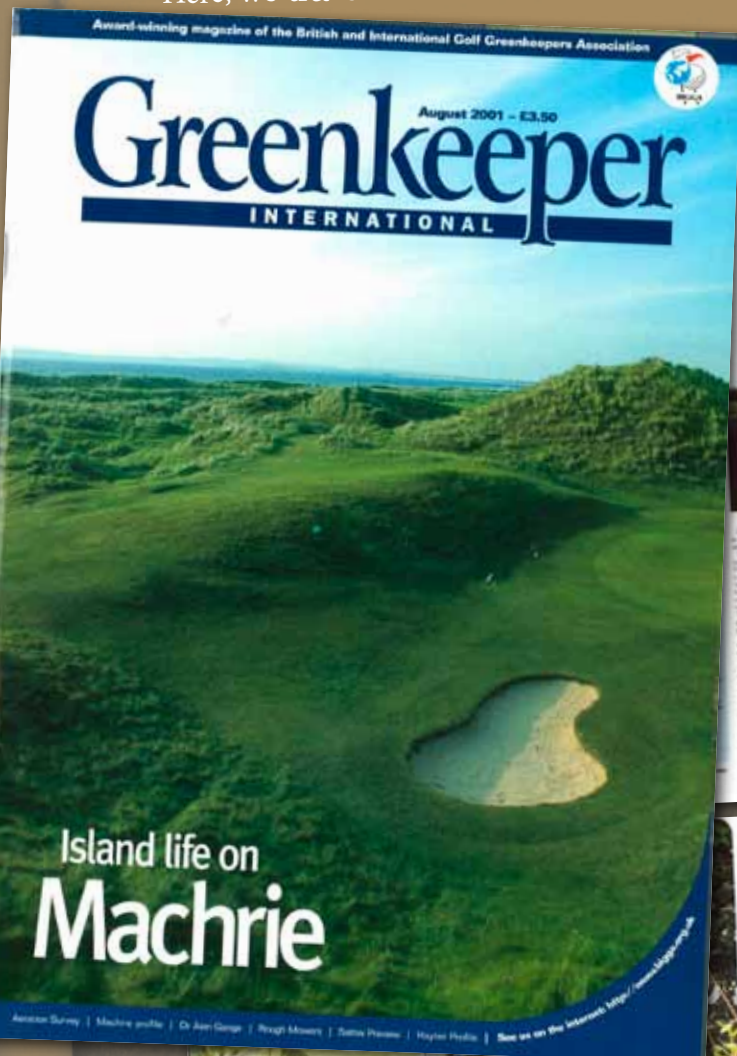
Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by?

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 is a landmark year, being 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. Here, we travel back to the not-too-distant August 2001, when the Open also happened to be at Royal Lytham and St. Annes



**It's amazingly now eleven years since David Duval won the 2001 Open, at Royal Lytham and St Annes, his only major championship, three strokes ahead of Niclas Fasth.**

This August edition of GI featured a final page column from then Chairman, Clive Osgood, entitled 'Lytham Delights'. The current Regional Administrator praised the BIGGA support team for their work at the Open and also Paul Smith, who had then just completed his first Open Championship as Course Manager.

A feature on the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award (top right) highlighted the finalists of that year and an article by the 2000 winner, Jonathan Cleland, revealed how enjoyable and useful his prize of a trip to the US had been.

This issue also included a survey about aeration by Ray Clark, of Harleyford GC, and Martin Gunn, of Temple GC, an announcement that Roger Black M.B.E. would be speaking at BTME 2002 and a feature on BIGGA's support team at Lytham.

In the news section it was reported that Ian Willett, Course Manager at Thorpeness GC, had collected a certificate for academic achievement and Brian Sullivan, Superintendent of the Bel Air Country Club in LA, had flown to the Open at Lytham to collect his Master Greenkeeper blazer.



AUGUST 2012 **GI** 59

# Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director,  
with a monthly update



This month David looks at the education and training ladder for greenkeepers with a particular emphasis on career progression once you have joined the greenkeeping profession

**Stepping onto the first rung of a ladder for the first time can be a hairy moment and often it is with uncertainty as to how high you will eventually climb the ladder, but when it comes to a greenkeeping career, the GTC can help you climb the ladder to the very top!**

The golf club employers in Britain have, for many years, been very well served by the tried and tested Greenkeeping Apprenticeship Scheme which has produced many of today's top Course Managers, and long may it continue.

Government funding has and continues to help many employers opt to employ an apprentice and with the valued input from the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, progress with the chosen GTC Quality Assured Centre, can be rapid.

The Apprenticeship includes the Level 2 Work based Diploma in England and Wales, SVQ Level 2 in Scotland together with some additional qualifications to benefit the apprentice and progress onto WBD/SVQ Level 3, which often is the natural progression route.

The Government is forever changing its funding priorities, but 16-19 year olds always qualify for some funding support, however some QA Centres have introduced some level of employer contribution, as subsidies continue to be reduced for all ages.

The GTC firmly believes that many employers will invest in training if the courses and certificates/qualifications meet both their needs and those of the learner.

At this point, we have to highlight that more and more enquiries to the GTC, on becoming a greenkeeper, are from the more mature person

and many feel they are too old to become an apprentice greenkeeper. The Apprentices Framework is there to be used for all ages; it is the funding support which varies between age groups.

Some employers offer placements for volunteers and again education and training to become a greenkeeper can commence on day 1 of "employment".

The GTC's Level 2 Training Manual and CD-Rom of knowledge is the best "tool" any apprentice can use in association with their chosen Quality Assured Centre to have their skills and knowledge assessed and recorded.

For those not able to gain any sort of work on a golf course there are courses such as the National Certificate in Greenkeeping offered by several Centres.

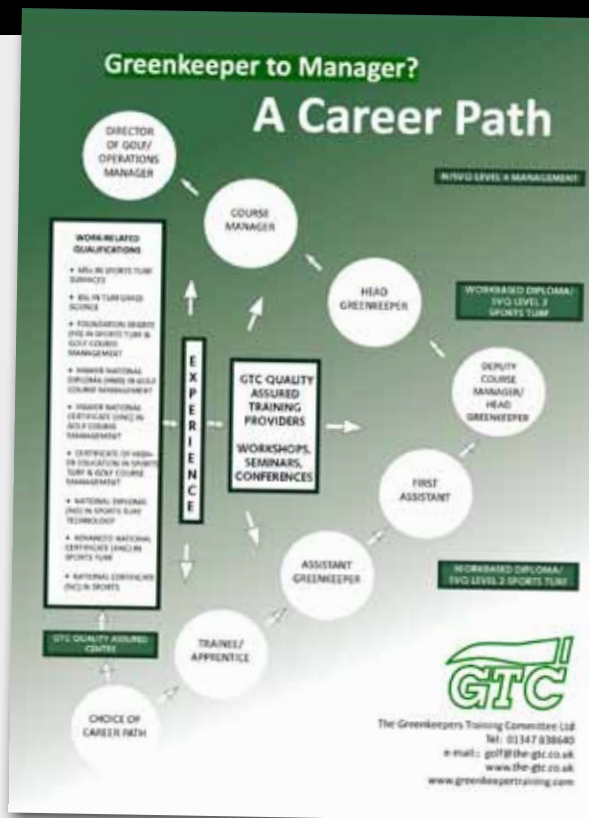
This qualification very much compliments the Level 2 Work Based Diploma/SVQ as there is both the knowledge and practical elements included with either experience gained at the college's golf course or work experience organised for the learner on a golf course.

Progression from Level 2 to Level 3 can be smooth IF the employer allows their learner to gain the required experience on the job but often the learner struggles if they are not allowed to become involved in Supervisory duties.

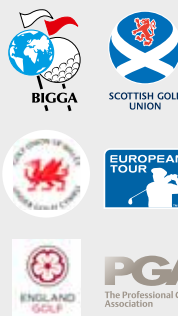
However, this is not always possible if the learner is say 17 or 18 years of age.

This is when a training plan agreed between the employer, learner and Centre should allow for progression up the career ladder.

The same progression "stumble" on the career ladder can occur from Level 3 to Level 4/5 but it should



The GTC is funded by:



## Contact Details

David Golding  
GTC Education Director

01347 838640  
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC  
Aldwark Manor  
Near York  
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk



You can follow the GTC on  
Twitter @TheOfficialGTC

never be two steps forward one step back!

Whether progression is through a formal course leading to a qualification offered by a QA Centre or a more informal education and training programme, GTC and its Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers are there to help.

Short courses, seminars and workshops are excellent and are often hosted locally by BIGGA's Regions and Sections not forgetting as well as the Continue to Learn programme in Harrogate every January.

It doesn't have to be the work based route to get you to the top rung of the ladder but experience and the practical skills, as you climb the ladder, are crucial.

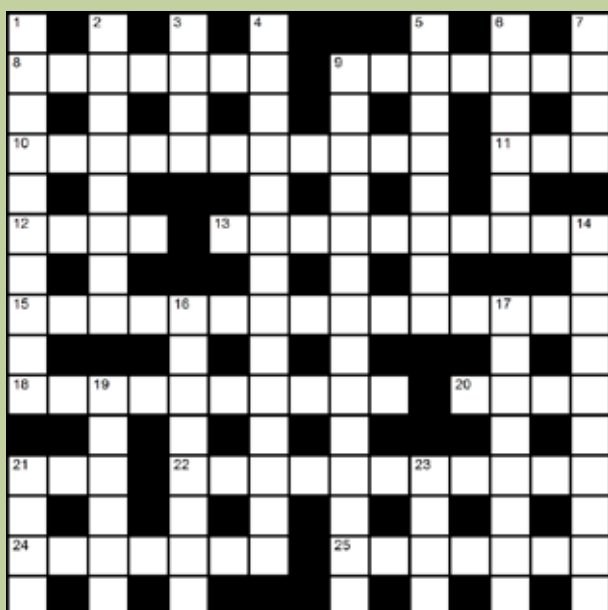
Higher Education has become more and more popular as colleges make the qualifications more accessible.

When it comes to formal qualifications this sector has all bases covered, from the work based apprenticeship to a Degree and everything in between!



# in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors..



## ACROSS

- 8 Grotesque (7)  
 9 Plant of the genus which includes cowslip, oxlip, cyclamen etc (7)  
 10 European perennial also called cuckoo flower (6,5)  
 11/21 Kool & the Gang hit of 1982, follow-up to Get Down On It (3,3)  
 12 Female name associated with pity or remorse (4)  
 13 Provided something necessary or helpful (10)  
 15 The car driven by Burt Reynolds in the 1977 film Smokey and the Bandit (7,8)  
 18 Homeless vagrant child (6,4)  
 20 German car company associated with the UK company Vauxhall (4)  
 21 See 11  
 22 Noisy spectral being (11)  
 24 Kilt accessory (7)  
 25 British police drama which aired from 1984 to 2010 (3,4)

## DOWN

- 1 Disparagement of something you can't have (4,6)  
 2 City in which Abba won the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest (8)  
 3 Greek goddess of victory (4)  
 4 With Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and D W Griffith, founder of United Artists in 1919 (7,7)  
 5 Small illustrative sketch (8)  
 6 Wood roughly sawn into planks; trouble (6)  
 7 Snake's venomous tooth (4)  
 9 Post-punk band fronted by John Lydon after the break-up of the Sex Pistols (6,5,3)  
 14 Central character of Hugh Lofting's children's books (2,8)  
 16 Unskilled (8)  
 17 Suggested but not plainly expressed (8)  
 19 Arbitrary, haphazard (6)  
 21 Stage name of Marillion singer Derek Dick (4)  
 23 --- area, an ambiguous subject matter (4)

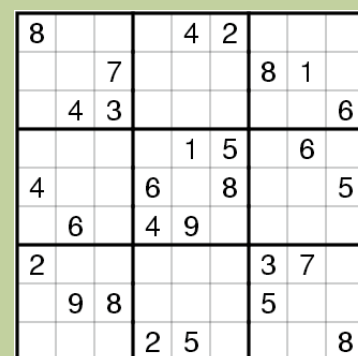


## MONSTER SUDOKU

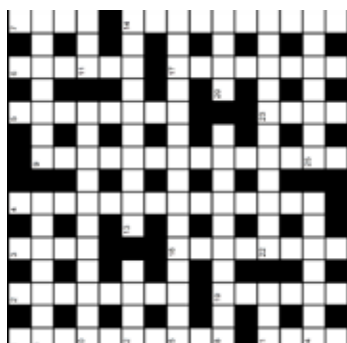
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

## SUDOKU

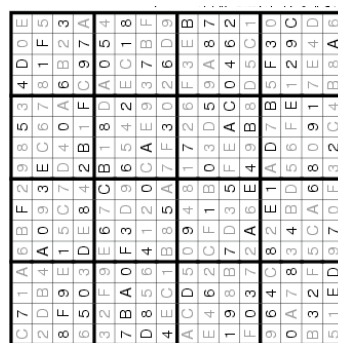
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



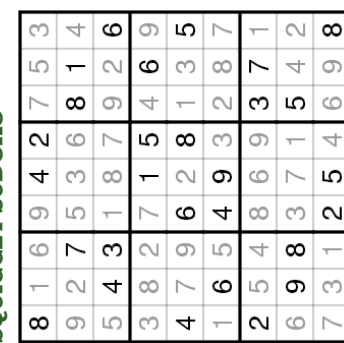
## CROSSWORD



## MONSTER SUDOKU



## SQUIGGLY SUDOKU



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# The Back Nine

A new column for writers and members to air and share their views on golf greenkeeping topics

This month, BIGGA Past Chairman, Paul Worster talks about empowering the team...

**A well-qualified staff team is an obvious asset to any company. But is this enough? Does simply “sending your guys to college” to gain NVQ-type qualifications, completely meet the needs of the modern workplace?**

Sure, the College system plays an important role in every greenkeepers personal development. The pathway of his or her evolution from raw apprentice into fully-fledged Assistant Greenkeeper is greatly smoothed by the type of qualifications which impart the skills, the task-specific knowledge, the introduction to Health & Safety at Work and various underpinning Acts, which are all part of today's workplace. But can we do more?

I believe we can, and with a little time and planning, can really set out along a path of empowerment for our staff.

As an example – a while ago one of our Assistant Greenkeepers wrote in appraisal about feeling stale and stifled. He had realised, as I suspect greenkeepers up and down the country do at times, that career progression can be slow with opportunities sometimes being limited. I can still remember feeling exactly the same in my mid-twenties – feeling as though I'd hit the wall in terms of personal development, because vacancies and opportunities for advancement were difficult to come by.

In the case of my excellent Assistant I was able to say that I didn't think he was stifled at all and that there was plenty of development work that we could do for him which would help his self-confidence, and eventually his career. This included:

- His participation in an Autumn evening presentation to club members about recent work on the course – so he will need to work on a PowerPoint and as a result improve presentation skills.
- The annual update of our Health & Safety System – we agreed that he would carry this out, and then make a presentation to the whole staff.

- Attendance at Green Committee Meetings – to help him appreciate the complexities of committee, and how the Chairman and the agenda are crucial to running a good meeting and making progress.

- Assisting other senior staff in the delegation of daily duties throughout the greenkeeping team – to help his appreciation of the importance of teamwork and the difficulties often faced in delegation to a staff team, each member of which has his own aims and expectations.

- Most importantly my Assistant worked with other members of the team to design and deliver a number of “toolbox” talks and demonstrations for the staff team. These are little basic refresher techniques – e.g. best practice in hole changing, bunker raking, tee marker positioning, greens mowing – all those little things out on the course where attention to detail makes all the difference. He and other colleagues presented these to the whole team out on the course, e.g. in real life workplace situations, and with the proper equipment.

As they were doing this I realised they were actually taking responsibility for the standards at which those tasks should be carried out – not just at that specific time, but in general from that moment onwards. Having taken the time and trouble to design the talks, and then to have stood up in front of the others meant they had invested in the work and these tasks were now their babies.

This is about empowerment. These guys are now empowered to confidently watch over others in various elements of routine golf course presentation. These are the points we need to get across to our people – the building of self-confidence and awareness is crucial to personal development. Developed greenkeepers make a larger contribution to the team, and also to an overall professional culture within the golf club.

Most importantly the Assistant and I are both in agreement that he has developed as a team member



and is also better equipped for promotion within the team or if he pursues career progression elsewhere.

It is also about engagement. As managers and greenkeepers – we need to be engaged with the objectives of our business. We need to understand how our actions and output impact upon the success of the business and the objectives of Committee and members. Golf Clubs are no longer minor institutions, but are serious businesses and need to operate as such at all levels.

Greenkeeping itself as a profession has developed rapidly in recent times, and the signs are that it will continue to do so in the years to come. Now, with the recession and

**With planning, we can set out along a path of empowerment**

## about the author



Paul Worster has been on the BIGGA Board of Management since 2009

the spectre of economic downturn never far away, a greater pressure is brought to bear upon the manager, which requires the delivery of far better products and services than ever before.

Against this background, it is empowered and engaged greenkeepers who will spread a Culture of Professionalism throughout their whole organisation, and deliver course conditions which align perfectly with the expectations and aspirations of committees and members alike.

The views expressed within this column are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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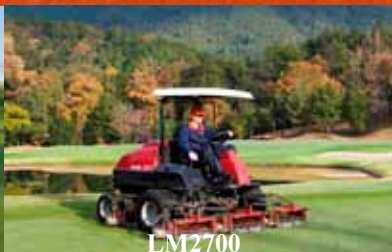
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