

GI

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA

£5.20 DECEMBER 2012

Farewell to 50 years

Alan Kite celebrates half a century at Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

Gold Key Profile

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Revealed Inside...

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Craig Boath's Carnoustie shot scoops 1st place



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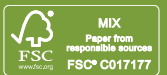
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Delegates enjoy the South West Assistants Development Programme

Looking forward to 2013

As the rain pounds down outside and much of the UK experiences yet more flooding I think it is safe to say this has been one of, if not the toughest years in living memory for greenkeeping.

Many of my conversations with members recently have centred on the importance of communicating clearly with employers, members and visitors to ensure they understand the true extent of the challenging conditions and the impact they have had (and are continuing to have) on course maintenance.

With the weather being so discouraging to golfers it is likely that revenues are down bringing further pressure on the greenkeeping team to get courses open and playable.

Never has it been more important for Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers to be able to effectively put across facts and figures in a way that is not seen as making excuses, and also to work with their employers to find ways of ensuring there is some revenue generation possible.

It is challenges just like this that has led BIGGA to endorse the Future Turf Managers Initiative that is being funded by Jacobsen (more details on page nine).

This initiative recognises that there is so much more to being a Turf Manager of any kind than agronomic knowledge.

The Initiative is looking to identify those with the desire and fundamental skills to make a career in the field of Turf Management and supplement those skills with high quality management training and mentoring by senior Course Managers who have themselves made the journey from apprentice greenkeeper.

The Initiative compliments our own Assistant Greenkeeper Development Programme, which has begun so successfully these last few weeks.

We genuinely believe, as do Jacobsen, that investing now in the future success of our membership is good for the golf industry and for the Association.

Many of you will have followed, as I did, the recent debates on the BIGGA Bulletin Boards about Soil Microbiology and Compost Tea programmes.

The threads generated over 7,000 views and at times opinions were heated.

The crux of the debate was the search for solid, scientific proof that the biological approach does benefit the turf so that a Course Manager has suitable grounds for asking their employer to invest in such a programme.

In this month's edition we feature a Course Manager in the SW (page 28) who has put his faith in the approach and like many is delighted with the results.

Next month and beyond we intend to continue the theme, we will feature scientific research and follow up information from the proponents of Compost Teas and the nay-sayers where available.

I would like to congratulate Alan Kite (page 16) on his extraordinary feat of 50 years' service at the same golf club and wish him a relaxing and enjoyable retirement.

May I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Harrogate for BTME 2013.



**Jim Croxton
Chief Executive**

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LAD FEATURE

More market choice for the clubhouse Christmas tree

Dr Terry Mabbett provides some timely advice on selecting the perfect tree to add the festive touch to your club



UK is fast approaching complete self-sufficiency in Christmas trees. Picture courtesy of CIMA

Options and choices for the clubhouse Christmas tree have changed out of all proportion over the last twenty years, in the range of trees on offer, country of origin, method of production and even in the method of marketing.

Childhood Christmas tree memories for those the other side of fifty will be of Norway spruce, the traditional and often gangly conifer that dropped its needles en masse as Christmas moved into the New Year. Norway spruce is still used to today and continues to take a healthy slice of the lower end of the Christmas tree market, but has long been overtaken by the Nordmann fir. Nordmann fir is a much more compact and better looking tree and providing it has not been harvested too early will retain its needles when taken inside for decoration.

Historically Norway was never the main supplier of Norway spruce as Christmas trees and in the same way the Nordic sounding name of Nordmann fir hides the tree's true native origin. The wild native distribution of the Nordmann fir is in the Caucasus where Europe borders Asia in countries like Turkey and Georgia from where the best seed originates.

Denmark was always the biggest producer and supplier of Christmas trees for the European market and is originally responsible for the runaway success of Nordmann fir as a commercial Christmas tree, not only in the UK but all over Europe as well. It was Danish Christmas tree growers who sent into Georgia and collected the seed which started the contemporary Christmas tree industry based on Nordmann fir.

The other big change relates to country of origin. Ten years ago a Christmas tree purchased in the UK, whether Nordmann fir or Norway spruce, would more than likely have been grown in Europe (probably Denmark), and shipped to the UK for Christmas. Today your tree's roots will almost certainly have been embedded in Britain for Irish soil.

The British Christmas tree industry is one of unqualified success with the UK going from dependency on European (usually Danish) grown Christmas trees to virtual self-sufficiency in little more than five years.

In yet another irony, we have the Doves – and the European Union (EU) – to thank for the UK's ongoing success in producing

Most British Christmas trees are now grown in the British Isles

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An early rise to the top

Craig Booth's Carronhill in the BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition 2012





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ALSO INSIDE... BTME 2013 PREVIEW : COMPOST TEA USE

Bigga 1st Photo

Craig Boath's Carnoustie shot scoops 1st place

Early rise to the top

Craig Boath scoops 1st place in the BTME 2012 Golf Photographic Competition



PHOTO COMPETITION RESULTS

1st Place: Craig Boath, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

2nd Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

3rd Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

4th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

5th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

6th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

7th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

8th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

9th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

10th Place: Alan Kite, Sutton Coldfield Golf Club


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



IMAGE: Left to right Stuart Greenwood, Stuart Taylor, Andy O'Hara, Jim Paton

ANDY O'HARA TAKES THE REINS IN SCOTLAND

During the recent Scottish Board meeting held at Terraces Hotel, Stirling, Andy O'Hara from Leven Links took over chairmanship from Stuart Taylor. At the same time, Jim Paton was selected as Vice Chairman.

Stuart Taylor said: "I was delighted to hand over the Chairmanship to Andy O'Hara but would like to thank all those in the Scottish section for their help and assistance

over the last two years as I have considered it an honour to serve the region and the association over that period.

Can I also express thanks to Peter Boyd and John Young for their help during this time along with all the staff at head office for their support.

I look forward to the association advancing in stature and professionalism over the coming years as responsibility seems to be in

good safe hands."

Andy added: "I am honoured to be given the opportunity to represent the Scottish region as chairman.

"I follow a long list of my respected peers and feel privileged to be in the company of such greenkeepers.

"I shall enjoy carrying out the various duties involved and strive to further the associations aims as outlined in our mission statement."

GRAHAM WOOD

It is with deep regret that we have been informed of the death of Graham Wood, BIGGA life member and former Head Greenkeeper at Dunbar Golf Club, at the age of 61. Stuart Greenwood from North Berwick Golf Club has paid tribute to his great friend.

He said: "Graham was Head Greenkeeper at Dunbar Golf Club for over 30 years before he suffered a major stroke in February 2007.

He was a BIGGA stalwart, who had served at Section and Regional level for many years, and at the time of his stroke was East Section Chairman.

He enjoyed nothing better than attending BIGGA golf days and functions, and mixing with his wide circle of friends and colleagues, and enjoying a pint of fine beer afterwards.

"Graham was well respected in all greenkeeping circles and always had the time and energy to pass on his skills and knowledge to future greenkeepers.

He was someone who loved the game of golf and played the game at a very high standard.

His other passion in life was supporting Heart of Midlothian Football Club.

"Our thoughts are with his wife Helen, daughter Lisa, son Paul and all his grandchildren, and I am sure that all his friends within BIGGA and the greenkeeping industry share their sadness following his death."

Everyone at BIGGA echoes Stuart's words and pass on our condolences to all his friends and family at this time.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

BIGGA volunteers are once again required to help Kenny MacKay and his team at The Wentworth Club for the BMW PGA Championship between May 23-26 2013.

Assistance will be required for any period of time during the tournament – from all four days to just one day.

The last two days will feature bunker raking.

It's a great chance to see at first hand the preparation for this European Tour flagship event, which will be held on the West Course.

All assistance will be greatly appreciated.

For more information please contact Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator at cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk or call Clive on 07841 948410 or 01737 819343.

BTME is back for its 24th year at the HIC, 22-24 January 2013

MICHAEL STARS AT DEAF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Golf is a sport of mind, body and soul where we attempt to utilise all our senses to try and outwit the little white ball at our feet.

But how many of you are aware of the golfers who manage to excel at the game we love without having all the attributed five senses?

I am referring to deaf golf and the English Deaf Golf team have just competed in the World Championships in Japan.

One of the stars of the English team was Kent section regular Michael Roberts, a 29-year-old greenkeeper at Knole Park Golf Club in Sevenoaks, Kent.

Michael (shown right) lost his hearing having contracted meningitis when only eight months old but it never stood in his way of forging a superb ability to play golf.

Having been introduced to the game by his father at the age of eleven, Michael quickly realised his potential and joined his local club to compete in their regular competitions.

In order to raise vital funds to represent his country Michael approached the Course Manager at Knole Park, Gavin Kyle, to see if he could earn a wage by carrying out work on the course.

Gavin was only too happy to get Michael out divotting the fairways, and he also worked hard to get his handicap down to 5.5.

A couple of years later Michael became a full-time assistant greenkeeper.

He relishes the regular in-house training sessions that Gavin organises for his staff.

At these events a 'signer' is brought in and some of his colleagues are now quite proficient at communicating in this fashion to ensure he does not miss out.

It's fair to say that Michael's recent trip to Japan wasn't one of his most successful events.

He told me that the Tsu Country Club in Japan was one of the toughest courses he had ever played.

This was probably compounded by the fact that five members of the English team shared one room in their cottage accommodation in order to keep costs down.

Michael is now firmly focused on raising his game again for the 2014 championships with qualifying next year at the Players Club in Bristol.

As mentioned above all funds have to be raised individually and Michael has planned to complete the 'Three Peaks Challenge' to raise much needed sponsorship and he would be very appreciative if his greenkeeping colleagues around the country would visit his 'just giving' page to help his and your country's cause.

For more details please visit www.justgiving.com/englishdeafgolf
Rob Holland



CONFERENCE SUCCESS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



Delegates at the South West & South Wales Regional Conference in Bristol

One of November's undoubted highlights was the quartet of BIGGA Regional Conferences held across England. All four were extremely successful and well-attended, with a range of highly interesting and engaging speakers speaking to hundreds of members in Leicester, Rotherham, Thorpeness and Bristol. Luminaries from across the turf industry gave presentations in a forerunner to the educational output on offer at BTME. Feedback from the conferences has been excellent.

Many thanks to everyone who attended, the speakers and of course the Regional Administrators and staff from BIGGA HQ who organised and supported these events.

All who attended and signed the CPD register also received two CPD points – yet another benefit.

Don't forget we've still got the Scottish regional conference to look forward to on Tuesday 5 March at the Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline. For more information please contact Regional Administrator John Young at johnyoung@bigga.co.uk or on 07776 242120.

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon



NEW COURSE MANAGER AT HOCKLEY

Glenn Kirby has been appointed as Golf Course Manager at Hockley GC. Glenn leaves his position as Assistant Courses Manager at The London Club where he spent nine years managing the Nicklaus designed Heritage course.

He brings with him nearly 20 years turf management experience gained from some of the top golf courses in

England, Europe and America. Glenn said: "Hockley is a fantastic piece of Braid architecture on a great downland site.

"This coupled with the management and membership's professional and progressive attitude seemed too good an opportunity to miss, I believe we can do something very special here."

Marc Dryden, General

Manager at Hockley, added: "We are very pleased to have someone of Glenn's calibre join our team.

"I know he will make considerable contributions helping the club work towards its goal of being one of the very best members' clubs in Hampshire and help place us amongst the very best downland courses in the South of England."

FREE MONEY FOR GREENKEEPERS!



Graeme Gallimore, Gavin Moore, Martin Cornish

A thrifty bunch of Cornish greenkeepers have claimed money back from the taxman after discovering a loophole online – and you can too.

Graeme Gallimore, Head Greenkeeper at Launceston Golf Club, was browsing Money Saving Expert when he found a page focusing on free uniform tax rebates.

Anyone wearing a work uniform who has to wash, repair and replace it themselves is entitled to a tax rebate.

Graeme and his colleagues filled in a form and received £60 each – well worth applying for.

For full details visit www.moneysavingexpert.com/reclaim/uniform-tax-rebate.



BIGGA AGM

The Annual General Meeting of BIGGA will once again be held during BTME on Wednesday 23 January at 5.15pm in the Queen's Suite at the Harrogate International Centre.

HELP AND ADVICE AVAILABLE TO BIGGA MEMBERS

In conjunction with BIGGA, York Wealth Management, financial advisers, now operates a free e mail financial help line. Simply e mail admin@yorkfm.co.uk with your financial question.

We can help you with any issue to do with money.

Be sure to enter in the e mail header FREE BIGGA MEMBER FINANCIAL HELP.

HELPLINE

The stress and debt helpline has been revamped and is now the 'Lifestyle Counselling Helpline & Online Support Service'.

There is a new telephone number – 0844 770 1036 – and a new online service.

All members and BIGGA staff can access this at www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst - both username and password are BIGGA.

It also features in the Members area of the BIGGA website under 'Member Services'.

BTME is back for its 24th year at the HIC, 22-24 January 2013



JOHN PHILP'S RETIREMENT MARKED

Prior to the Scottish Central Section's AGM there was a presentation to John Philp of Carnoustie to mark his retirement and for thank him for his marvelous efforts in raising the profile of greenkeeping.

John – who was awarded an MBE for his services to the

industry – had the 11th hole of the legendary course named in his honour upon his retirement, and at the AGM he was presented with a picture of the 13th hole from the 1999 Open.

Shown above, past chairman Derek Robson presents the picture to John Philp.



HUNT AND HARVEY SCOOP SURREY BOWL

After a close fought battle Jason Hunt of Addington Palace GC – a former BIGGA National Champion - and Mark Harvey of Epsom GC managed to beat last year's winners Ian Morrison of The Berkshire GC and Scott McMurray of Wentworth GC in the final of the Surrey Bowl.

A huge thank you to the sponsors Winchester Garden Machinery Ltd, and many thanks to Dave Wyborn and his team at Foxhills Club and Resort for a beautifully prepared course.

BIGGA ENDORSES JACOBSEN FUTURE TURF MANAGERS INITIATIVE



Some of the most experienced and high profile course managers in the golf industry have signed up to BIGGA and Jacobsen's new scheme to train and mentor the greenkeeping stars of the future.

The Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Initiative (FTMI) will target the next generation of greenkeepers who demonstrate the ability and drive to become leaders of their profession in the future.

A maximum of 20 students will be selected for FTMI in any one year to attend a three-day residential course in the early part of the year and then be mentored throughout by a high profile course manager.

BIGGA's Assistants Development Programme (ADP) has been rolled out across its five UK regions giving delegates in each region an insight into the key skills they require to move up the greenkeeping career ladder.

The ADP programme includes the 'So You Want to be Promoted' seminars which have already begun featuring presentations by the likes of Murray Long of Sunningdale Golf Club, Stuart Yarwood of Lymm Golf Club and Rob Hogarth of Remedy Oak Golf Club on subjects ranging from people skills to communication to interview skills and CV preparation.

The annual residential course will include hotel accommodation, all meals, half-day workshops presented by the various mentors and Ransomes Jacobsen staff, off-site visits and a round of golf on the RJ National par three short course.

A lunch and presentation of certificates on the third day will close the programme.

It will also highlight some of the other fantastic opportunities open to BIGGA members such as volunteering at The Open Championship, The Scottish Open and the BMW PGA Championship.

Open to BIGGA members who are first assistants and deputy head greenkeepers, candidates can be nominated for this superb opportunity by their general managers, course managers, head greenkeepers and staff at BIGGA HQ.

Candidates will be selected by a panel from BIGGA and Jacobsen, and they will be looking for greenkeepers who show initiative, are actively involved in education and have the potential to emulate their mentors and go on to enjoy successful and fulfilling careers.

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Tony Smith, gives his thoughts for the month

So – You Want to be Promoted?

November is conference month and I had the great pleasure of attending the Midlands and Northern regional conferences in Leicester and Rotherham respectively.

They were exceptionally well attended and the content was informative, interesting and entertaining. It's not just the educational aspect of these events that make them so valuable – I always look forward to meeting members old and new. I also attended the BIGGA Midland Team Challenge at Burton on Trent Golf Club.

Gavin Robson did an excellent job in arranging the sponsors, as did Sandra Raper with the running of the event.

It's really important that members across the Sections and Regions support these type of events – I'm well aware that everyone is extremely busy but without your support they will simply be unable to continue.

They also couldn't continue without sponsors - thank you to Toro for providing superb prizes for the winners and also Bearing Transmission and Pneumatics, Inturf, Complete Weed Control and North Staffs Irrigation.

The other main event for me this month was the South Wales Section dinner which was a great night with a considerable number of members in attendance, and an impressive amount of money raised for charity. Well done to all concerned.

We've also seen the 'So You Want to be Promoted' training and education programme begin across the country – see page nine for further details.

I'm absolutely delighted that we are able to support Jacobsen in this fantastic initiative and to get this very important project off the ground. There are many young members out there who want to

make greenkeeping a career rather than it just be a job and this scheme gives those individuals valuable information on how to climb the career ladder.

It's delivered by Course Managers who have trodden the same path so they can offer genuine insight.

Education is our lifeblood and I urge all interested members to find out more about this and other opportunities.

The picture accompanying my article this month shows me in the late seventies (where has the time gone?!) – at that time there were none of the educational opportunities which are available now so make the most of them. At my own Golf Club at Teesside, it's the autumn leaves which have caused

Education is our lifeblood and I urge all interested members to find out more about this and other opportunities

all the nightmares this month and I'm sure it's been a similar story for many of you.

There have been twice as many leaves as last year and we've had the additional problem of localised wet spots which we've needed to drain.

We've also had too much rain again throughout autumn. It really feels like we've only had about three days of good weather this year - the promised Indian Summer never materialised did it?

BTME is now firmly at the forefront of everyone's minds and for anyone still unsure about the logistical details, this issue has all the information you could ever



prepared for what I'm sure will be another hugely successful event. BTME offers so many educational opportunities - and places for the seminars and workshops are going fast so book now!

All that remains is for me to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I'd also like to congratulate all members on the all the hard work you've put in this year. We all know it's been such a testing year with the worst summer that many of us can recall.

But together we're a strong association and I'm very optimistic ahead of the new year.

Roll on 2013. Season's Greetings Tony.

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Learning & Development

Sami Collins, BIGGA Learning & Development Manager, with an update on education issues

As we approach the festive season (which seems to start earlier each year!) let's take your mind off fighting to grab that last Tracy Island or deciding if it's acceptable to watch the Great Escape on +1.

So curl up with your Continue to Learn brochure in front of a roaring fire with a glass of port and plan your education at BTME.

Continuing the overview, this month we'll concentrate on the Turf Managers' Conference and the workshops.

SUNDAY 20th JANUARY/ MONDAY 21st JANUARY

Once again the workshop programme is proving very popular and is a highly valued educational experience for those who have attended in previous years.

Two day Workshops

So You Want to be a Golf Course Manager, Peter Jones & Kevin Munt Moving into Management, Frank Newberry

Irrigation System Management and Design, Adrian & Dennis Mortram

Business IT, Jacky Lowe

One day Workshops

The ABCs of Putting Green Maintenance, Thom Nikolai

The Turfgrass Plant, Paul Miller Basic Golf Mechanics, Hanfried Sievers

How to be an Outstanding Manager Pt 4, Shona Garner

Health and Safety Documentation, Jon Allbutt

Basic Budgeting and Golf Course Finances, Jerry Kilby & Duncan Ritchie

Soils for Fine Turf, Paul Miller Diagnostics and Problem Solving, Hanfried Sievers

How to be an Outstanding Manager Pt 2, Shona Garner

Pesticides Update for NPTC Certificate Holders, Jon Allbutt Business IT, Jacky Lowe

MONDAY 21st JANUARY

The Turf Managers' Conference takes place at the Crown Hotel this year.

We have a wonderful line up, with



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, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray

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

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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presentations from Lorna Sheldon from CWI International on how to make Professional Presentations and How to Manage Politics in the Club from David Bancroft-Turner, The Academy for Political Intelligence.

We also have Kate Entwistle, from The Turf Disease Centre, discussing new cool season diseases.

Finally, Dr Thom Nikolai of Michigan State University will be presenting two papers.

Firstly, the Top 10 Reasons for Lightweight Rolling.

Thom has been leading the research into its effects for nearly twenty years.

His second paper will be on surfactants, covering soil science, hydrology and concepts including 'plant available water'.

This is a must-attend conference for all managers of fine turf.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

The month of November has been a busy month for conferences, with four of the regions holding theirs across the country.

They were really well attended and thanks go to all those who came, the speakers who gave up their valuable time to share their knowledge and experiences and the organisers, without whom, these events could not take place.

Please spread the word about the conferences and how valuable

a resource they are to members.

Plus all those who attended and signed the CPD register will receive two CPD points.

LIBRARY

The library has now been re-categorised and the database updated to include all the new books that have been recently purchased thanks to John Deere.

If you would like to view the library you can see and order online or you can arrange to visit BIGGA House and browse at your leisure.

BIGGA HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Four scholarships have been awarded this month to;

Peter Collins – NVQ Level 4 Sports Turf Management, Guildford College

Phillip Worth – Foundation Degree (online), Myerscough College

Craig Sanderson – Foundation Degree, Askham Bryan College

James Parker – HNC Sportsturf Management (online), Elmwood College

Haydon Drinkwater – Bsc Sports Turf (online), Myerscough College

FINALLY...

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from your Learning and Development Team!



BIGGA Membership

The membership team reflect on current news and affairs affecting you, the BIGGA member

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline and Online Support Service - upgrade service to Members and their families.

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline and Online Support is available to all BIGGA Members and members of their immediate family living at the same address.

This upgraded service can help with a range of problems from practical everyday matters to sensitive or emotional issues.

Specialists will help members deal with personal relationship problems, problems with colleagues in the workplace and other issues affecting their general wellbeing.

Counsellors and information specialists are also trained to help members with practical problems like debt.

The helpline is complemented by a comprehensive online information and support service, through which members can access information and advice on a range of issues and problems which often impact on everyday life.

Topics are diverse and include relationships, childcare issues, consumer issues, stress and health and fitness.

Information is updated regularly by a team of experienced counsellors and information specialists.

For details on how to contact the Lifestyle Counselling Helpline or connect to the Online Support Service via www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst please log in to the members area of the BIGGA website and select Member Services and Lifestyle Counselling Helpline & Online Support Service or contact the Membership Services Team.

BTME 2013 - Register NOW and avoid the queues

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click on the register now button, the BTME website also includes bags of information about the big week including who's exhibiting, travel tips and a product guide.

For Your Eyes Only.....

Come along to the BIGGA James



Bond evening to be shaken not stirred, with fantastic entertainment.

Further details coming soon...

To be held ~ Tuesday 22 January 2013 @ 7pm to 10:30pm at THE OLD SWAN HOTEL, Swan Road, Harrogate, HG1 2SR.

Tickets ~ £25 each including Carvery & Arrival Drink

Dress Code ~ Smart/Casual

To purchase tickets please call Elaine Jones on 01347 833800 (Option 1) or email moneypenny@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA Stand - Hall B stand 23

Come and see us on stand B23.

The stand will be packed with lots of information about BIGGA, meet the Membership Team, Tracey and Elaine, and pick up information about education and training.

Come and find out how BIGGA is split into five regions and 26 sections around the UK and meet your Regional Administrator, John (Scotland), Sandra (Northern and Midland), Clive (South East) and Jane (South West/South Wales).

We will also be selling BIGGA logo jumpers and windproof tops.

Showfloor Theatre 2013

The Showfloor Theatre, a new initiative for 2012 is making a popular return in 2013, keep an eye on www.btme.org.uk or www.bigga.org.uk for information and news on what will be happening in this area.

BIGGA Regional Conferences

Congratulations to Sandra Raper and the Northern and Midland Regions on putting on a splendid regional conference in both regions this year.

Clive Osgood and the South East Region ran an excellent regional conference at Thorpeness Golf & Country Club followed the next day by Jane Jones and the South West and South Wales Region running a fantastic and well-attended regional conference in Highbridge, Somerset.

We've had great feedback on all of them already and next year will be even better, watch out for dates so you can pencil them in your diary.

If you have any suggestions for topics to be discussed at the conferences please contact your Regional Administrator, or a member of your section or region committee or of course you can contact any member of the BIGGA headquarters team.

Keep up to date instantly with Twitter and Facebook

Keep up to date with all that's happening BIGGA wise on Facebook and Twitter.

You can find us on Twitter on @BIGGALtd and search for British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association Ltd (BIGGA) Facebook group.



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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



TORO SPRINKLERS CLINCH DEAL FOR WINDSWEPT LINKS COURSE

With its spectacular clifftop course regularly subjected to strong coastal winds, it's no wonder finding sprinklers that could cope in these challenging conditions became a deal-breaker for Royal Cromer Golf Club when choosing a new irrigation system – and course manager Mark Heveran has plumped for Toro's Dual Trajectory (DT) Series golf sprinkler.

The 18-hole North Norfolk coastline course has been installed with DT35 sprinklers across its greens, tees, approaches, fairways and walkways as part of an irrigation system upgrade to Toro's new Lynx control system software with Golf

Decoder Controller (GDC) field hardware.

DT Series sprinklers feature a clever 'selectable trajectory' that allows simple adjustment of the main nozzle to either 15 or 25 degrees so as to better withstand wind or avoid obstacles.

More flexible, advanced and durable than competitor models, its nozzle has also been designed to ensure uniform coverage.

Available in two types – full-circle-only or full- and adjustable part-circle – customers can opt for the most cost-effective solution for their course conditions.

For example, a full-circle-only sprinkler is more suited to fairways, where part-circle

capability is not needed.

Better yet, conversion assemblies are available so that existing systems can be upgraded to this far more efficient technology.

Commenting on the sprinklers, Mark says: "The real clincher for us was the adjustable trajectory sprinklers – they're vital in our windy conditions.

The course gets battered by the wind and, without effective irrigation, the most exposed areas just go bare because we can't get the root development to keep the fescue grasses alive.

But the way the DT35s throw against even the strongest gusts is so impressive."



BAYER LAUNCH TURF DISEASE MOBILE APP

As part of their planned series of new innovations Bayer has launched a dedicated smartphone app for the turf and amenity sector. The Bayer TurfXpert app has been specifically developed with turf professionals in mind and has been designed to help identify turf weeds, diseases and insects whilst in the field.

Bayer's Product Manager Claire Matthewman explains that this particular application is an evolution of Bayer's very popular turf weed, pest and disease wall chart. "We've taken all of the valuable information that our turf wall chart displayed, added in a simple to use weed and disease identifier tool and turned it into an interactive smartphone application.

"We had positive early feedback when we previewed the app to greenkeepers in September at STRI Research event, and so now we're working on a version for the iPad which we plan to launch at BTME in January next year.

We're confident there will be good take-up." The Bayer TurfXpert app is now available free of charge from the Apple App store; simply enter 'Bayer TurfXpert' into the Search facility.

An Android version will soon be available.

BTME is back for its 24th year at the HIC, 22-24 January 2013

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon



POLARIS MEETS THE BOSS

Polaris owners here can benefit from The Boss technology with its introduction by Farmquip, the UK and Ireland's sole distributor. The Boss set the bar in creating ground-breaking technology to make snow ploughing fast, easy and efficient.

The specially engineered plough for Polaris UTV and ATV use is built to the same standards as the full-size Boss ploughs and offers a tough, contractor grade solution to handling snow removal.

The hydraulics are enclosed to protect against corrosion and freezing, with a chainless lifting system to reduce snowplough bounce

during transportation.

A revolutionary hitch system makes the plough easy and incredibly fast to attach to a UTV. Teamed with a Polaris Ranger Diesel for example you have the traction and power to deal with the most extreme terrain and conditions, with in-cab control.

But clearing snow with the plough is only part of the story. The Boss TGS 800 tailgate spreader is quickly attached to the rear of the Polaris. The rotary 'paddle action' makes the spreader a true gritter, so you can spread rock salt, grit, sand and other de-icing materials to provide traction.

FANTASTIC FAIRWAYS WITH MULTIGREEN



In 2010, Telford Golf Resort Course Manager Matt Robbins was unhappy with the fairways. "We were using liquid feeds but getting poor results, and soil samples suggested that the fairways needed more nitrogen." Discussions with Headland Amenity's Area Manager Adrian Masters pinpointed Multigreen 425 as the ideal solution, giving a long lasting nutrient boost from a single application using Headland's temperature controlled release technology.

The 28:0:0 + 3MgO formulation gives a steady release of nutrients throughout the summer, boosting growth and vitality without the risk of flushes. The release of nutrients from Multigreen is solely controlled by soil temperature, giving a long lasting response from a single application, vital as fairway fertilisation is costly in terms of the amount of materials used and the labour involved.

"A contractor applied 140 bags to the 18 fairways using a tractor mounted spreader in April 2011, and the results were superb," comments Matt. "The fertiliser lasted all through the summer, and although the growth tailed off in the dry autumn, as soon as the temperatures and moisture levels improved this spring, we saw the effects of the fertiliser once again. So we gained almost 12 months' action from a single application."



NEW FACE AT EVERRIS

Everris has appointed Simon Taylor as Product & Business Development Manager, Grass Seeds, EMEA.

He will join the international marketing and business development team from January 2013.

Grass seed is an important part of Everris' product portfolio and an essential part of the company's iTurf integrated turf management solutions.

Reporting to Global Vice President of Marketing & Business Development, Joan Verhoeven, Simon will drive the growth of this category and the positioning of Everris' seed portfolio in the European turf & amenity business.

Simon has more than 20 years' experience in the grass seed sector in which time he has strongly driven the development of turf grass seeds mixture sales and marketing in the UK and Ireland.

Simon began his career studying an HND in General Agriculture.

In addition to being BASIS registered, he is a professional member of the British Association of Landscaping Industries (BALI), and is Chairman of the British Society of Plant Breeders steering committee for the turf grass trials at STRI.

Commenting on his appointment, Joan Verhoeven said: "We are very happy that Simon, with his experience and great grass seed know-how, is joining Everris to further strengthen our service and to enhance the role that grass seeds play in our integrated turf solutions for greenkeepers, groundsmen and landscapers".

Kite flies off into retirement

Steve Castle speaks to a greenkeeper whose highly eventful working life has all been spent at the same club



*Name: Alan Kite
Born: Coventry, 2 December 1947
Marital status: Married to Gill
with two sons
Handicap: 20
Hobbies: Cricket, football, golf,
walking*

It's a freezing December morning in 1962 and a 15-year-old boy is pushing his bike through thick snow to reach his first ever job at Sutton Coldfield Golf Club.

Trainee greenkeeper Alan Kite picked one of the worst ever winters to begin his career – with atrocious weather preventing any real work on the course from December to April. But Alan is now preparing for retirement after spending his entire working life at the same club.

He was just 21 when he became Head Greenkeeper, and during an eventful career he's had to cope with a devastating fire, various recessions and generations of irritating cattle.

The unusual heathland course commands 200 acres of the vast 2,400 acre Sutton Park, which is an SSSI protected site.

Joggers, dog walkers and families mingle with the cattle that roam the park – and the fairways – from April to October.

His tale is fascinating. He can recall a time where four greenkeepers would tine a green by hand over the course of a day, and golfers rarely ventured out in the winter months – and he reveals why he believes half a century in the same job is now impossible.

The biggest influence on his early career was former Head Greenkeeper Jack Toy. Amazingly, he also spent 50 years at the club – and Alan has emulated his mentor's longevity.

"I always wanted to work outdoors, and my mother knew Jack and mentioned I was looking for a job.

"But as soon as I got here, there was snow on the ground until April. It was unbelievable – I didn't see any grass for 14 weeks. I didn't have a clue where anything was – I remember disappearing into a bunker on the 14th when I was trudging round in this deep snow.

"All I did was shovel snow around the car park and I had to listen to these old men boring me about the past and as a young teenager, I didn't want to know.

"But later on I realised it had been the best education I could possibly have had. Formal education was non-existent so they gave me the benefit of all those years of experience.

"When I started we had three Gang Mowers, a little tractor, a spiker and some scythes which were used on the greens at that time. The rest were hand machines.

"The greens were pure fescue, cut twice a week.

RIGHT: Alan in 1968 and
BELOW: another of the course
from 1968



Four of us would take a day to tine a green by hand."

By now Alan had thrown himself into greenkeeping, and was determined to further his career.

He even took up golf – having previously never picked up a club in his life – and was quickly playing off a single figure handicap.

"Jack retired and I fully expected to take over from him at 18 – that shows the confidence of youth! I eventually took over as Head Greenkeeper at 21. People didn't pressure you and you learnt as you went along, and I also attended courses at the STI – now the STRI –

which was just starting up."

He was appointed Course Manager in 1979 – but three years before this appointment came the toughest test of his half-century reign.

Blazing hot summers in 1974 and 1975 had left the heathland like a tinderbox – and the famously scorching summer of 1976 triggered a series of fires which raged across Sutton Park, engulfing the course.

"There was no rain whatsoever for 11 weeks up to the end of August, and we'd had small fires here and there.





Alan Parton, Phil Rainsford, Alan Kite, Clayton Lee. Missing is Jim Guest

IMAGES ON RIGHT PAGE show Sutton Coldfield today and BELOW: cows

“Apart from foot and mouth and the year after the fire, we’ve had cattle on here every year. This year we’ve been picking up half a ton of muck a day”

Because the ground was bone dry, all it took was one fire and the embers would float off and start more fires.

“We held a big charity amateur tournament with the likes of Nick Faldo and Sandy Lyle, which we got through, but the tournament

ended and in the last few days of August the wind got up, a fire started and that was it.

“All the trees went, all the gorse, the fairways were burnt, it was horrendous. It was lapping over fences and people had to be evacuated from the nearby houses.

“We drew up a battle plan to repair the course, with the main focus on digging up scorched earth and replacing it with new soil. For months after, whenever you went out you would get black legs from all the ash.”

Remarkably it was closed for less than two months – although they were assisted by the scarcity of golfers as autumn turned to winter, something which has altered hugely during his tenure.

“We did so much of our work in the winter. People didn’t play much winter golf then, and they wouldn’t play if it rained because the rubber outfits golfers wore then weren’t waterproof. There’d be nobody out there from November to March, and even in the summer there was no play on Sundays.”

It’s safe to say that Alan has no plans to retire to a farm, or anywhere near cattle, after spending “48 years shoveling cow dung”.

“Apart from foot and mouth and the year after the fire, we’ve had cattle on here every year. This year we’ve been picking up half a ton of muck a day.”

However, Alan harbours a greater dislike of bunkers than of bovines.

“We should have designed inland courses to be without bunkers,

they’ve been the bane of my life. You’re told you’re never raking them properly and in the summer the finer sand blows away. Somebody should have said we’re not on the seaside and we don’t want or need bunkers. You can put other features in like gorse and bushes.”

He believes his generation will be the last to ever have ‘a job for life’.

“There’s no loyalty now either from the club’s side or the employees’ side. You’re not going to get people staying 50 years anymore. It’s not just this industry, society generally is more cut and thrust.”

He has no doubts when asked about the most satisfying part of the job.

“When everyone pulls together for a tournament. We do the best we can with what we have, and on the day the adrenaline’s flowing and it’s a great feeling.

“I do love this course. One of the best things is that it’s open to the public, so it’s not just the same old faces. I’ve got to know so many people down the years.”

Alan was a Midlands secretary for BGGGA – one of the forerunners of BIGGA – and was a big supporter of its 1987 amalgamation with the English and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Scottish and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

“I passionately believed we had to amalgamate, it was common sense. We’d have been in a much worse position without BIGGA, but there’s still a way to go.

“Two things disappoint me. One is the number of Master Greenkeepers who seem to leave the trade.

“These young men are returning to their clubs after this fabulous achievement but aren’t properly rewarded, so they leave to become agronomists, advisers or do contract work. That means they’re not ploughing their knowledge back into the trade.

“Secondly, when I started we were considered as nothing better than a gardener. I have to say that some things haven’t changed.

“When the financial pressure is on, as it is now, some clubs don’t help us and our skills are still undervalued.

“Cutting back on greenkeepers is short-sighted because it will obviously affect the condition of the course long-term.”

It’s been a humbling experience to meet a man who’s poured his heart and soul into the industry and he’s also given me a priceless insight into how greenkeeping has developed over 50 years.

Happy retirement, Alan.





More market choice for the clubhouse Christmas tree

Dr Terry Mabbett provides some timely advice on selecting the perfect tree to add the festive touch to your club



UK is fast approaching complete self-sufficiency in Christmas trees.



INSET BELOW: Colorado blue spruce is much admired for its attractive coloured foliage

Options and choices for the clubhouse Christmas tree have changed out of all proportion over the last twenty years, in the range of trees on offer, country of origin, method of production and even in the method of marketing.

Childhood Christmas tree memories for those the other side of fifty will be of Norway spruce, the traditional and often gangly conifer that dropped its needles en masse as Christmas moved into the New Year.

Norway spruce is still used to today and continues to take a healthy slice of the lower cheaper end of the Christmas tree market, but has long been overtaken by the Nordmann fir.

Nordmann fir is a much more compact and better looking tree and providing it has not been harvested too early will retain its needles when taken inside for decoration.

Ironically Norway was never the main supplier of Norway spruce as Christmas trees and in the same way the Nordic sounding name of 'Nordmann fir' belies the tree's true native origins.

The wild native distribution of the Nordmann fir is the Caucasus where Europe becomes Asia in countries like Turkey and Georgia from where the best seed originates.

Denmark was always the biggest producer and supplier of Christmas trees for the European market and is originally responsible for the runaway success of Nordmann fir as a commercial Christmas tree, not only in the UK but all over Europe as well.

It was Danish Christmas tree growers who went into Georgia and collected the seed which started the contemporary Christmas tree industry based on Nordmann fir.

The other big change relates to country of origin.

Ten years ago a Christmas tree purchased in the UK, whether Nordmann fir or Norway spruce, would more than likely have been grown in Europe (probably Denmark), and shipped to the UK for Christmas.

Today your tree's roots will almost certainly have been embedded in British (or Irish) soil.

The British Christmas tree industry is one of unparalleled success with the UK going from dependency on European (mainly Danish grown) Christmas trees (mostly Nordmann fir) to virtual self-sufficiency in little more than five years.

In yet another irony, we have the Danes - and the European Union (EU) - to thank for the UK's ongoing

success in producing of homegrown Christmas trees.

Around ten years ago changes in EU policy emanating from Brussels made it increasingly uneconomical for Danish Christmas tree growers (always the best in Europe) to ply their traditional craft and trade in trees. Many upped sticks and moved from Denmark to Britain to take advantage of our rich soil, kind climate and relatively low land prices as well as a ready market for Christmas trees.

The market aspect was not so important because Christmas tree production and marketing is now a highly integrated pan European business with increasing numbers of Christmas trees now shipped from the UK to continental Europe instead of the other way round.

However, not all is plain sailing because this overnight success for British (and Irish) grown Nordmann fir and its growers has led to the current shortage of larger trees which started to materialise two years ago. Such is the demand for Nordmann fir currently taking 55 per cent of the market that many UK growers have been cutting and lifting trees for Christmas sale before they have attained the most popular size of 2 metres.

This type of shortage will clearly pose a problem for buyers like golf clubs that will need a good sized tree of between 7 and 10 feet. To make matters worse, Nordmann fir is not a particularly fast growing tree and requires 8 years to achieve 2 metres in height. This has aggravated the shortage of 2 m+ trees on the market.

Timing of purchase

Christmas as a commercial rather than a religious and cultural event is being forced on consumers earlier and earlier.

The Christmas tree industry is not altogether without blame in this respect. Every year starting in July we hear the same old story urging buyers right along the chain to place orders and to purchase early to avoid disappointment. The industry obliges by forcing growers to harvest their trees earlier and earlier with the traditional first big delivery date of the first week of December now brought forward to the third week of November.

Those two weeks are crucial as far as living Christmas trees are concerned because these conifers require a period of sustained cold to make sure the needles (leaves) are firmly fixed (set).

What's more, harvesting in mid-November means the average tree

is going to be out of the ground and devoid of roots for almost two months before being finally taken down and hopefully recycled.

Even species like the Nordmann fir with one of the finest reputations for needle retention cannot cope with such a long pre-Christmas marketing period. Increasing reports over the last few years of 'needle drop' in Nordmann fir are ascribed to the industry marketing trees much too early before Christmas.

One way around this 'catch-22' situation for consumers, of either purchasing a Christmas tree too early or being left disappointed without a suitable tree, is to place an order early in the year and preferably with a grower that allows you to visit the farm and 'pick your own' tree.

Type of tree

Nordmann fir and Norway spruce at the top and bottom of the market, respectively, are not the only conifers the UK market can offer as Christmas trees. There are nowhere near as many as on the North American market (where believe it not Leylandii cypress is used as a Christmas tree) but nevertheless an increasingly interesting selection is available in the UK.

Scots pine, one of only three native British conifers (the other two are English yew and common juniper), and to a lesser extent lodgepole pine have niche markets in Scotland and northern England, while two North American favourites, noble fir and Douglas fir, are making their presence felt.

Each four of these conifer species, like Nordmann fir, has a good reputation for needle retention after harvest. Colorado blue spruce is always a firm favourite due to its attractive blue-green foliage and pleasant aroma (and good needle retention) while the more open canopied Serbian spruce, a favourite in central Europe, makes a good centre display.

The vast majority of Christmas trees are harvested by cutting and sold rootless but an increasing number of consumers are going for root-balled or container-grown trees on the basis that 'a Christmas tree is not just for Christmas', and subsequently chancing their luck by planting the tree and perhaps using it in years to come.

Colorado blue spruce has one of the best survival rates in this respect.

Increasing numbers of consumers are also opting for organically

grown trees without use of artificial fertilizers or pesticides. One possible problem with organically grown trees is that organic growers are not allowed to use chemical pesticides and may therefore find it hard to manage insect pests like aphids.

These insect pests may infest and damage new foliage in spring and spoil the shape of the tree and cause it to lose colour.

Time permitting you can't beat a visit to the Christmas tree farm to choose your own tree.

This will help you secure the right quality tree as near to Christmas as possible. One other interesting option is to 'rent' a container grown tree which will be delivered to your door shortly before Christmas, and collected after the '12th day' which tradition says is when the Christmas tree and decorations should be taken down.

You can even opt for a long term contract and rent the same tree year after year.

The supplier provides the tree with tender loving care on the farm throughout the year and will deliver the tree to your door the following Christmas.

Increasing cost

Real live, good quality Christmas trees do not come cheap.

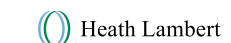
Two metre Nordmann firs, which set the market price, hovered below £50 for several years until 2010 when they broke through this ceiling.

There are significant regional differences in price with London consumers paying a hefty premium.

Customers using garden centres and other mainstream retailers should now expect to pay at least £50 for a 2m Nordmann fir, irrespective of location in the UK, with a same size Norway spruce somewhat less.

Golf clubs and greenkeepers are in an ideal position and situation to beat any shortages and price increases in Christmas trees.

Next time a small plantation of trees is planned for an area of rough on the golf course plant Nordmann fir, Norway spruce, Colorado blue spruce, Scot's pine, or whatever takes your fancy, and then harvest a Christmas tree for the clubhouse in December for years to come.



This article comes to you courtesy of the BIGGA Learning and Development Fund. Thankyou to all our key sponsors



ABOVE: Quality Nordmann fir now take around 55 per cent of the UK market

MAIN RIGHT: Predictions are for a shortage of larger trees in 2013.

Picture courtesy BCTGA

BELOW: Trees benefit from a period of low temperature prior to harvest.

Picture courtesy BCTGA



**“Predictions are for
a shortage of larger
trees in 2013”**



Behind the scenes at Toro



We lift the lid on the secrets behind the success of Toro, a BIGGA Gold Key sponsor, and its UK distributor Lely

If you follow sport, the chances are Toro's footprint will have made its mark on some of the famous competitions you've enjoyed from the comfort of your armchair.

As well as supplying machinery to the likes of St Andrews, The Belfry and Celtic Manor, Toro have a presence at Wimbledon, the Olympics and the Super Bowl as well as other glittering events.

The company's HQ is in Minneapolis in the US state of Minnesota, and also has manufacturing bases in Australia and across Europe.

My introduction to the UK operation begins in the hamlet of Spellbrook close to Bishop's Stortford at just one of these bases. Accessed via a narrow and winding lane and surrounded by rolling countryside, it initially seems an unlikely location for a manufacturer of large scale consumer and commercial products.

In 2005 Toro acquired the British mower manufacturer Hayter – who were based at Spellbrook – and now manufacture thousands of machines on site, as Chris Cooper, Product Marketing Manager, explains.

“The location may seem a little unusual but in fact it's ideal for us. Its close proximity to Stansted airport allows us to host manufacturers, clients and potential clients from across the world.

They can see how it all works and also see the machines in action.

“Although most machines manufactured and distributed here are for landscape contractors, councils and homeowners, it's a great insight into the Toro manufacturing process.”

Chris goes on to provide an interesting potted history of the Toro organisation.

Originally founded in 1914 to build tractor engines, they were

almost immediately mobilised to manufacture steam engines for merchant ships when the First World War broke out.

As if war wasn't enough of a hurdle, the Great Depression was approaching which slashed the company's agricultural sales.

However, in 1920 a Minnesota golf club approached Toro to create a motorised fairway mower. Five reel mowers were mounted on to the front of a Toro tractor – and the motorised golf course equipment industry was born.

“For us, establishing a long-term relationship with the customer is key. We talk to our customer base constantly – this is absolutely vital”

Over the last decade, Toro have acquired several organisations – including Hayter – to enhance various aspects of the business. The likes of Lawn Boy have helped them expand their consumer mower operation, while Exmark expanded their commercial mower line.

Chris takes me for an autumn stroll outside to cast an eye over the brand new GreensPro 1200 greens roller – and also points out a field on site where they're rigorously tested for hours on end in all weathers.

He says: “It's far from the most glamorous job, but it's an absolutely vital one.

In this industry it's common to see the fourth or fifth version of a machine, but that's not the way we operate. We insist that every product is tested intensely so the customer receives the finished article.

“It's a false economy to keep producing different versions to remedy problems.”

The next stage of my education sees me head north to St Neots in Cambridgeshire to Lely UK, long-term distributor for Toro golf, grounds and irrigation systems in the UK and Ireland.

It's based in a fairly unassuming building – but behind this quiet facade lies a hive of activity.

Intriguingly, turf machinery is just one arm of this organisation.

Another is the remarkable procedure of robotic milking.

I'm not sure words can do justice to this procedure which Lely have

led the way in automating so check out www.lely.com/en/milking for more if you're interested...

As well as the world of bovine manipulation, the company also offers forage harvesting solutions such as bales, rakes and harvesters plus much more – but it's the golf-related stuff I really want to get my teeth into.

It's a welcome opportunity to see the the likes of the Greensmaster TriFlex greensmower and other staples of the Toro range being painstakingly constructed, tweaked and finally completed before they become fixtures on golf courses across the world.

I also get the chance to meet the sales team who impress on me the importance of providing a friendly and personalised service.

Lely's Toro Key Account Manager Trevor Chard, who accompanies me on the visit alongside Marketing Manager Holly Jones, is particularly proud of this.





“For us, establishing a long-term relationship with the customer is key. We don’t conclude a transaction then abandon the customer. We’re proud of our aftercare service, and many of our customers are on first name terms with our colleagues which is superb.

“We talk to our customer base constantly – this is absolutely vital. We like to think we’re set apart by the quality of service we provide, our experience, product knowledge and ability to meet our customers’ long-term needs.

“The technology really has improved greatly during my time in the industry. It’s more durable as it’s of a better quality, is quicker, does a more professional job and is easier to operate.”

Lely was founded in 1948 and successful innovations such as the finger wheel rake and the Lely fertiliser spreader made an impact on the market.

But the big breakthrough came 20 years later with the launch of the Lelyterra power harrow – leading to a huge growth in sales.

Over the next decades, the company became synonymous with innovation, including patenting the unique modular cutting bar which was fitted to the Splendimo disc mower and various new versions of the aforementioned Astronaut automated milking system.

As always, the proof is in the pudding so the final destination is the prestigious John O’Gaunt Golf Club in Potton, Bedfordshire.

Here, experienced mechanic and workshop manager Stuart Hall demonstrates the benefits of the

machinery, explains the process of grinding and enthusiastically praises Toro’s new ‘myTurf’ fleet management system.

Each machine at John O’Gaunt is fitted with a wireless hour meter which transmits data to a control box – similar in size to a wireless router.

Every time the vehicle passes this it sends information to the box.

This means a greenkeeper simply has to log on to the myTurf system to get every imaginable detail about every vehicle on their fleet.

It also offers online access to Toro manuals – a real space saver – and the ability to order parts at any time.

Because each vehicle in the fleet is monitored, myTurf ensures the correct part is ordered.

The system is currently more widely available in the US, and John O’Gaunt is one of the test sites – something which has delighted Stuart.

Stuart says: “I can’t imagine why any club of reasonable size would not have myTurf. The key is, you can view how much a machine has cost you in labour time, parts and repairs.

“This means at the end of the year you can see that if a machine has cost you £500 it’s worth keeping. But if it’s cost you £3,000 you have a strong case with clear evidence to go to your committee and ask for a new machine.

“It’s a no-brainer and I hope more clubs get to take advantage of it.”

Thanks to Trevor Chard, Holly Jones, Chris Cooper, Stuart Hall and all at John O’Gaunt Golf Club.



UK clubs show world-class environmental credentials



Richard Stuttard from the STRI hands out the awards, supported by BIGGA, for 2012's most environmentally aware golf clubs

This year, golf clubs throughout the UK have shown STRI judges just how committed they are to adopting environmentally sensitive best practice management techniques. As always, after the difficult task of selecting 32 finalists from a large number of applicants the judging team have visited all corners of the UK witnessing the very best that environmentally focused UK golf has to offer.

This year more clubs new to the Golf Environment Awards have become involved, providing our team of assessors with a fascinating insight into how the role of environmental management is becoming an increasingly common factor among our course managers, greenstaff and club representatives.

For those not familiar with the Golf Environment Awards the premise is that by applying for this free to enter programme and informing the team of judges of all environmentally positive works you are undertaking, there are a number of benefits to both the individual golf club and the golf industry as a whole. Firstly, simply by applying, the club are sending out a message that the environment is important to them. Secondly, if you apply and become one of our 32 finalists, you receive a visit from an STRI consultant to view and discuss your work and provide advice on how things can progress even further. Accompanying this visit is a feedback report which you can use to help promote your achievements as a finalist within the programme and gain external support for the work you have been doing as well as using this as a valuable marketing



ABOVE and INSET ABOVE: Thorpeness Golf Club

2012 Golf Environment Awards, supported by BIGGA



RIGHT PAGE ABOVE AND INSET RIGHT: North Foreland Golf Club





tool. Finally, if you become a prize winner you will be exposed to a considerable amount of marketing publicity both in the media and at key media events including BTME and our own marketing event held at Wentworth.

So, if you haven't already, why not give it a try next year! Here are our ten winners from 2012:

Overall Achievement Award – Thorpeness Golf Club
Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year – Dan McGrath, North Foreland Golf Club
Scottish Region – Dundonald Links
Northern Region – Lee Park Golf Club
Welsh Region – Aberdovey Golf Club
Southern Region – Hankley Common Golf Club
Nature Conservation Award – John O' Gaunt Golf Club
Water Management Award – The Roehampton Club
Waste Management Awards – Fairhaven Golf Club
Turfgrass Management Award – Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

Many congratulations to all our winners - their attention to detail and enthusiasm was hugely impressive and we are delighted to see such a broad range of clubs involved.

Thorpeness Golf Club, located in an idyllic area of Suffolk, has long been an advocate of environmentally friendly golf course management and has been involved in the Golf Environment Awards for many years. Course Manager Ian Willett has stressed that it is the enthusiasm and dedication of his greenstaff that has enabled them to achieve so much in just a 12-month period – and they have certainly achieved a lot. The course supports a wealth of different habitats – from fine leaved grasslands and broad leaved trees, to heather, gorse, bracken and water features and all are being managed for the good of golf course strategy, visual appearance and biodiversity value.

The result is a golf course which provides great pleasure to all who play there.

Dan McGrath is a first time entrant, and over the last few years he's made quite an impact at North

Foreland. Prior to his arrival the classic chalk grassland characteristics of the course were becoming lost to an influx of coarse leaved grass species, scrub and ground ivy.

Dan has however managed to turn this around through the application of well-timed cultural management techniques include cutting and scarification and scrub removal. The club are now at a point where there are huge expanses of fine leaved grasslands providing stunning definition to the fairways and providing invaluable habitat for a wide range of species.

Congratulations again to all of our winners and on behalf of STRI I would like to extend our sincere thanks to BIGGA for their continued support of the awards and to our sponsors, Ransomes Jacobsen, Everris, Syngenta, County Turf, Golf Monthly, Greenkeeping and Operation Pollinator, without whom this free to enter scheme could not occur.

For more information on this year's winners and details on how to apply for next year's awards please visit www.golfenvironmentawards.com

ABOVE: North Foreland Golf Club

2012 Golf Environment Awards sponsors

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COUNTY TURF
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OPERATION

Pollinator

Compost tea use a case study



The question of adding soil microbes to an existing putting green surface has stimulated much discussion within the world of turfgrass management recently.

Those who are in favour of this 'organic' approach have been keen to advocate its use, whereas others have raised the question of the seemingly lack of independent evidence to support some of the claims being made.

In order to shed more light on this topic, Turf Master One visited James Braithwaite at Long Ashton GC in Bristol, to find out more about the use of Compost Teas and to look at what improvements have been made

Introduction

Long Ashton Golf Club was founded in 1893, first as a 9 hole course then extended to 18 holes twelve years later. The current layout largely dates back to a Hawtree & Taylor design in 1937 although more recent changes have since taken place, namely holes 6 and 7. Extensive views over Bristol, a mere 3 miles from the city centre, can be seen from the limestone ridge on which the course is located.

The site consists of around 220 acres, with 140 acres being maintained as golf course and the remainder consisting of deciduous woodland. Although the soil type is classified as Red Kyper Marle, clay/silt mainly, drainage is reasonably good with only a few low lying areas requiring drainage. With an average of 36,000 rounds per annum, it is a popular, private members club that attracts visitors throughout the south west. 15 of the greens which are 75 years old, are soil 'push-ups' with the remaining 3 being of a modern sand construction. A Hydroway drainage system was installed on 4 greens several years ago which has led to a significant improvement.

James Braithwaite, a previous Toro Student of the Year winner and now 46, has been at Long Ashton since 1996. Following previous work at Hallgarth Golf and Country Hotel in Darlington, James was first employed as Deputy Head Greenkeeper before becoming Course Manager in 2007; following on from past BIGGA Chairman Ivor Scoones. James heads up a team of 6 full time staff plus a part time gardener & handyman. With a good range of modern equipment and a recent upgrade to the Rainbird Nimbus 2 irrigation system, Long Ashton is a progressive club and keen to invest in its main asset in order to continue to be one of the best clubs in the area.

Previous Greens Maintenance

Until 2005, the greens were first fertilised with an 'in-house' mix of traditional fertiliser consisting of dried blood, hoof & horn and sulphate of ammonia, followed by the proprietary SSD brand of 8-0-0. This was applied during April and August with an annual input of around 80kgs N/Ha. Greens which are barely 400m² were cut daily at 5mm, lowered to 4mm for key tournaments with aeration consisting of regular solid and slit tining. Pressure from Fusarium Patch disease was high, requiring up to 8 applications of Chlorothalonil,

Carbendazim or Iprodione each year preventing severe scarring. Surfaces on the Poa/Bent greens tended to be soft with a fibrous mat layer of up to 35mm present. For the following 3 years, a change in fertiliser application was made using another standard granular product but this time supplying equal amounts of Nitrogen and Potassium, giving an average annual input of N79, P6 & K82 Kgs per Ha. A more intensive aeration program was put in place whereby greens were being hollow-cored for the first time in many years along with an increase in top dressing. Fungicide requirements remained much the same. In 2009, greater use was made of foliar fertiliser although the overall Nitrogen amount remained much the same.

However, there was a dramatic increase in Potassium in the attempt to strengthen the plant against disease attack. Increased aeration continued and the level of OM content started to reduce slightly but fungicide use remained high, mostly in preventative mode. This program continued in 2010 but with the addition of Symbio products for thatch reduction such as Thatch eater, Greens circle, Phyto-gro 0-0-18 liquid, Fungi booster and a granular Mycro-gro 5-0-29 at start and end of the summer season.

Key Challenges and Revised Strategy

Having been in charge for 3 years, the improvements in greens performance and playability that James had hoped for were fairly minimal. James takes up the story. 'Although the members were reasonably content, there was still too much OM present and too much dependence on fungicides, which were adding to the cost of maintenance. I was aware that in order to produce healthy turf, the rootzone too needed to be healthier and that meant increasing the microbial activity. Following further discussions with Symbio, I decided that a different approach was needed and that part of the answer lay in the brewing and application of composted tea. At least to start with, the current fertiliser program would continue but with a reduced amount of N and K. In preparation for 2011, a 600 litre brewer was purchased costing £1,800 and a new phase began.'

Compost Tea Program

James continues; 'The program in use since 2011 consists of monthly applications from April to



September of 1 Bacterial followed by 5 fungal brews which cost around £360 each to apply. The former requires 16 hours to brew and is applied through a conventional Gambetti sprayer at the rate of 500 lts per Ha. The Fungal brews which favour thatch degradation take 24hrs to produce and are applied at the same rate. However, this brew contains the following additives of

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: 2. 3rd hole, 6th hole and View over 16th green Long Ashton



MAIN ABOVE: 7.
Par 3 on the 2nd green Long
Ashton
INSET ABOVE: Adding the brew
to the sprayer

Seaweed 3-0-15, Bio Booster 8-7-7 and both Humic and Fulvic Acid amendments, totalling 55 litres. The total cost for the 6 applications is around £2,100. Fertiliser applications have continued largely as before, rising in 2011 but falling back this year with an expected total of N75-P3-K160 being applied.

The greens have been regularly aerified throughout the past 3 years using a mixture of tine sizes and depths. All greens were recently hollow-cored with 13mm tines at 50mm centres and deep tined in March. About 100 tons of sand top dressing are applied each year in monthly applications.

The PGR Primo Maxx is applied every 2 weeks in season, mixed with a small amount of foliar N. After being cored, Bent was over-seeded broadcast style in mid-September. Summer mowing height is usually 3mm, but this season it has remained at 4mm due to the high rainfall and limited use of vibrating rollers. This year, Liquid Air was applied after coring and also on occasions when aeration couldn't take place due to the wetness of greens surfaces: this being a trial otherwise this program has been consistent for the past 2 years.'

Results to date

So after 2 years have the objectives been achieved? James concludes; 'The greatest difference has been the reduction in OM content, falling from around 35mm to 20mm,

this in spite of a very wet summer. Root depth has generally increased, with most greens supporting a root depth of between 60 and 70mm. Disease pressure is still a threat but not as virulent as before and the number of fungicide applications have been reduced to 5, with most now being preventative to ward off Anthracnose and Fusarium as opposed to being curative.

Whether or not this number of applications is still required remains to be seen but with memories of severe scarring in the past, perhaps I'm erring on the side of caution.

There may be no hard evidence to vindicate the use of compost teas, nevertheless the health of the greens have improved and more progress has been made since 2010 than in the previous decade so something must be working.'

James adds, 'the next step is to take measurable data of bacteria counts before and after and to compare greens with fairways and that is on the agenda for my next meeting with Symbio.

I aim to make a few tweaks to the current program by introducing Phosphite into the tank mixes during the latter part of the year and to increase the amount of top dressing by 20 to 40 tons. That apart, I am satisfied that the investment made in applying composted tea has led to a steady improvement and will help Long Ashton to become more sustainable in the future.'

Summary

A healthy living soil with a good microbial population will give the best opportunity for growing and managing fine turf. That is without doubt. What is in doubt is whether adding additional soil microbes in whatever form to a greens root-zone will help to achieve this objective for a sustained period of time. Those who have used a compost tea program for a number of years certainly think so and appear to be seeing a reduction in disease and lower requirements in fertiliser. What needs to be established is a measurable threshold of soil bacteria on a green whereby it can be accurately measured to indicate sufficient numbers or deficiencies. It would also help to compare these numbers on the same greens 1 day and 7 days after compost tea was applied in order to verify that an improvement in numbers had taken place. There are numerous other questions to answer, too many to list in this article but there is an overwhelming need to have greater clarity supported by measurable facts and figures. Only when this is achieved and hopefully vindicated is there likely to be a concerted move away from current greens management and less reliance on plant protectants.

Turf Master One Ltd is grateful to James Braithwaite and Long Ashton GC for their support in producing this article.

BELOW: The green profile



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Open Support Team Volunteers 2013



How you can follow in the footsteps of golfing legends at Muirfield 2013

Ben Scrivener Abridge Golf & Country Club with Luke Donald

Do you fancy the chance to work at The Open Championship 2013...with the once in a lifetime opportunity to walk alongside the world's leading golfers at one of the finest courses in the world?

This was the amazing reward for several days of extremely hard work – and lack of sleep – for BIGGA members from across the UK, America and Australia at the thrilling Open at Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club last July.

In 2013, the legendary links at Muirfield in East Lothian host the tournament which will be eagerly followed by tens of thousands behind the ropes and millions on TV.

But we're giving you the opportunity to get inside the ropes - working alongside the excellent team at Muirfield led by Colin Irvine and with support from the team at BIGGA HQ.

We need 54 volunteers who will all play their part in ensuring a successful tournament. The application process is transparent and we'll then allocate various roles from the selected candidates.



Darren Abbs Royal Norwich GC



Tom Smith Colne Valley GC

As anyone who has previously worked as a member of the Support Team will tell you, it's extremely hard work with early mornings preparing the course for the likes of Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and reigning champion Ernie Els.

There may also be late nights on 'divot duty'.

But, as previous attendees testify, the experience is one to tell the grandchildren about – not to mention a chance to enjoy the superb camaraderie within the team and meet members from across the world.

You will receive accommodation, food, daily transport to the course, a waterproof suit and polo shirts – all you have to do is make your way to Muirfield.

The first tee shot will be struck on Thursday 18 July, with the final putt sunk on Sunday 21 July.

We will need a pre-prep team from Tuesday 16 July, with the remaining team arriving on the Wednesday for a 5pm debrief meeting.

This opportunity is open to all full BIGGA members.

To apply please fill in the application form, together with a photo-

graph and send to: Rachael Duffy, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF.

For further information contact Rachael on 01347 833800 or email Rachael@bigga.co.uk

Closing date for applications is Thursday 31 January 2013 and selected members will be notified soon after this date.



Miles Todd Rhuddlan GC



Robert Bemment Immingham GC

IMPORTANT INFO

<p>Name</p> <p>Golf Club</p> <p>Position</p> <p>Age</p> <p>BIGGA Membership Number</p> <p>Home address</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Email Address</p> <p>Mobile Number</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Passport photo attached?..... <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Waterproof measurements; waist.....leg length.....</p> <p>Polo shirt measurement; chest.....</p> <p>Are you available for the Early Morning Prep team from Tuesday 16th July?..... <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sunday final night (21st July) accommodation required?... <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any specific dietary needs?</p> <p>If so please state</p>	<p>I have applied for/appeared on the team at:</p> <p>Royal Lytham & St Annes, 2012..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/>.....</p> <p>Royal St George's, 2011..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/>.....</p> <p>St Andrews, 2010..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/>.....</p> <p>Turnberry, 2009..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/>.....</p> <p>Royal Birkdale 2008..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/>.....</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes No</p> <p>I have been a BIGGA member for more than three years.... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I serve, or have served in the last three years, on a Section/Region Committee..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am enrolled on BIGGA's CPD Scheme..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have attended three of the last five BTMEs..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am/have been a member of the PGA Championship Support Team..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am willing to be a mini bus driver (You must have held a full driving license for three years and be over 25 years of age.)..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am an overseas Member..... <input type="checkbox"/>.....<input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Note: A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority will be given to the more active members. Subject to the availability of sufficient numbers of experienced team members no regular team member will be selected for more than three teams in succession. A limited number of places will be made available to younger members and overseas members. **Please ensure that you have spoken to your golf club or Course Manager prior to applying and have arranged the time off.** To apply please fill in the application form and enclose a passport photograph and send to Rachael Duffy, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF. **Closing date is 31st January 2013.** You will be notified in February if you have been successful.

An early rise to the top

Craig Boath's Carnoustie shot scoops the BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition 2012

The winner of the seventh BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition is Craig Boath's stunning early morning shot of Carnoustie's Burnside Course.

The Head Greenkeeper on the Championship course took the superb shot at around 5.30am on a morning in July on the 5th hole of the course – a short par three.

One of the judges was golf course photographer Eric Hepworth who

was hugely impressed by Craig's picture.

"The winner really stood out.

His technique is perfect – if the sun had been any further to the right it would have been directly in the lens and caused flare spoiling the image, but the trees on the left shield the sun.

"In photography, and indeed art, we constantly talk about 'the rule of thirds' where an image is divided



BIGGA
2nd
Photo Comp



BIGGA
3rd
Photo Comp

into nine equal parts by two equally spaced horizontal lines and two equally spaced vertical lines.

Anyone can go online and find out more about this.

“He’s used the rule of thirds brilliantly – the flag is right on the convergence of one of the thirds and that’s one more reason why it’s such an appealing picture.”

He also went on to give advice to greenkeepers hoping to emulate Craig and scoop the 2013 award.

“The vast majority of entries were shot in the morning light, and I completely understand why this is as greenkeepers are working on their courses predominantly in the

morning rather than the evening.

“However, I think next year it would be great to see a bit more variety.

“Sunny evenings offer stunning oranges and reds (when the weather is good!) which really bring out the best in a course visually, and I would love to see some evening shots included in the next competition if possible.”

Second place went to Trevor Mitchell, International Greenkeeper at the Diamond Country Club in Vienna, Austria, for his spectacular shot of the course.

Third place was awarded to Course Manager James Bonfield

for his sunny photograph at the Hertfordshire Golf Club.

The entries were chosen by a judging panel at BIGGA House, taking on board advice from photographic experts Alan Birch and Eric Hepworth.

Thanks to everyone who submitted a photograph, and keep an eye out for how to enter the next competition.

This time of the year offers a fantastic opportunity for some great winter photography, so why not get out on the course now and start taking some shots, in time for when the competition re-opens?



Craig Boath's stunning early morning shot of Carnoustie's Burnside Course





January



February



May



June



September



October

The BIGGA Golf Photographic Competition 2012 - Top 12

The top 12 entries in the competition are all featured in the BIGGA Calendar 2013.

January's picture shows Celtic Manor, taken by Rhys Norville, and February features a misty morning on the 4th at Moortown Golf Club, captured by Michael Joyce.

March's photograph is the overall winner – Craig Boath's shot of the 5th at Carnoustie's Burnside course. April's image features the 14th green at Cruden Bay, taken

by Alister Matheson. May shows the 8th green at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, snapped by Robert Patterson.

June is Stuart Hawker's photo of Castle Stuart Golf Links, and July's suitably summery shot shows the 15th green at the Hertfordshire Golf & Country Club.

August shows Trevor Mitchell's image of the Diamond Country Club in Vienna, Austria.

September's shot is by Adam Grieve showing the first green at

The London Club's International course. October's selection shows cutting on the second green at Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club – submitted by Chris Mitchell – while November is a view of Fairhaven Golf Club by James Hutchinson.

December's wintry shot shows the 18th green at Thorpeness Golf Club complete with the windmill and the famous 'House in the Clouds' in the background.

This was taken by Mark Barber.

The BIGGA Calendar 2013 is mailed out to all golf clubs with BIGGA Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers. Contact us at BIGGA House or come see us at BTME 2013 for your own copy - limited stock available



BIGGA
1st
Photo Comp

March



April



BIGGA
3rd
Photo Comp

July



BIGGA
2nd
Photo Comp

August



November



December

BIGGA
Calendar 2013

sponsored by
syngenta

the Top 12 Entries from the BIGGA
Photographic Competition 2012

British and International
Golf Greenkeepers Association

Carnoustie Golf Links by Craig Boath,
the winner of the BIGGA Golf
Photographic Competition 2012

BIGGA
1st
Photo Comp

BIGGA Calendar 2013

List of winning entries appearing in the top 12 of the
BIGGA Calendar 2013 (Number denotes the month)

1. Rhys Norville (Celtic Manor)
2. Michael Joyce (Moortown Golf Club)
3. Craig Boath (Carnoustie Golf Links)
4. Alister Matheson (Cruden Bay Golf Club)
5. Robert Patterson (Royal Aberdeen Golf Club)
6. Stuart Hawker (Castle Stuart Golf Links)
7. James Bonfield (The Hertfordshire Golf & Country Club)
8. Trevor Mitchell (Diamond Country club Austria nr Vienna)
9. Adam Grieve (London Golf Club International)
10. Chris Mitchell (Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club)
11. James Hutchinson (Fairhaven Golf Club)
12. Mark Barber (Thorpeness Golf Club)

BTME 2013

The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition

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& Workshops**

**20-23
January 2013**



Your essential 8-page guide to the ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe

BTME is now just weeks away and over a hundred of the biggest names in the industry are preparing to head to Harrogate to exhibit and launch brand new products after snapping up stand space.

Top manufacturers and service providers are on standby for the event which will officially be opened on Tuesday 22 January.

Almost an A-Z of exhibitors have signed up for the show...for the full list check out www.btme.org.uk

Many are preparing to showcase new items for the very first time – and we've included a glimpse of just some of the products that will make their debut at BTME later in this preview.

Don't forget that BTME offers unparalleled education through our Continue to Learn workshops and seminars.

We're also proud to host the third annual Turf Managers' Conference on Monday 21 January at the Crown Hotel.

Registration opens at 8.15am, and the event gets off to a cracking start at 9am with Dr Thom Nikolai's presentation on the Top 10 Reasons to Lightweight Roll.

Dr Nikolai is the Turfgrass Academic Specialist at Michigan State University and is one of the world's leading turf professors.

This will be followed by Lorna



Sheldon's Professional Presentations advice with guidance on how to present with confidence, competence and credibility.

After lunch David Bancroft-Turner explores How to Manage the Politics in a Golf Club with dozens of tips and suggestions, before Dr Nikolai returns to the stage with a seminar on Surfactants.

This unrivalled educational day will be concluded Dr Kate

Entwistle's New Disease Update with information on the issues facing turf managers of cool season grasses.

Dr Entwistle has been working in this area for over 20 years and is a leading turf pathologist at the Turf Disease Centre.

The bottom line is – a well planned visit to BTME makes you a better turf manager.

Thousands of top turf managers

22-24 January 2013 at the Harrogate International Centre



from across all sports are attending from across the UK and the world, and will return to their workplaces better for the experience.

Can you afford to miss out?

Of course, BTME also offers unrivalled networking opportunities and we've included information on how to get to Harrogate, where to stay, where to eat and where to park.

The park and ride service has been discontinued but the map on page 43 shows locations of several car parks which are close to Harrogate International Centre (HIC).

We're also running the 'hopper' bus service again every half an hour between 8.30am and 6.30pm. This will run between the HIC and Harrogate Railway Station, the Old Swan Hotel, the Majestic Hotel, the Cairn Hotel, the Cedar Court Hotel, the entrance to Hall A and the entrance to Hall Q.

The map also gives the locations of some of the town's best hotels within the vicinity.

If you haven't sorted out the logistics of your visit yet now is the time!

Another key feature of Harrogate – as many previous attendees will confirm – is the number of terrific restaurants within a few moments' walk of each other.

A selection of the best eateries in town is overleaf.

Following the success of last year's BIGGA 25th anniversary celebration evening, we're delighted to announce that the Tuesday evening will feature the 'BIGGA James Bond' evening at the Old Swan Hotel in Harrogate from 7pm.

This not-to-be-missed night will feature fantastic entertainment, a carvery and drink on arrival plus other surprises for just £25.

Dress code for this event is smart casual.

Keep an eye out for more details soon, but in the meantime tickets are sure to sell fast so to snap yours up call Elaine Jones at BIGGA on 01347 833800 (Option 1) or email moneypenny@bigga.co.uk

Entry to the exhibition remains free, and don't forget to pre-register at www.btme.org.uk - this is also the place to visit for yet more on the show plus the full list of superb educational events.

So BTME features education, networking, cutting edge products and services, career and advice and much more all in a few fun-packed days in January.

So don't delay – get prepared for your annual pilgrimage to BTME.



GI NEW PRODUCTS

The latest products on the market reviewed

More BTME
New Products
Next Month

Just a small selection of just some of the new products that are being launched at BTME. For more info on exhibitors – and even more details on the show – visit www.btme.org.uk



WIEDENMANN UK

Wiedenmann UK's six new products will take centre stage at stand C58 at BTME Harrogate. Known for their precision deep fast aerators, Wiedenmann's additions grow their range by a further 20% and shows continued commitment to R&D and customers' feedback.

Sales Manager, Chas Ayres, says: "Increasingly customers who have experienced the efficiency of one of Wiedenmann's Terra Spikes want to see the solutions we have for artificial turf, mowing and collecting. We've just followed customer demand and it's led us to half a dozen top new performers. Each machine shares in our philosophy to have easy-to-operate kit that always delivers on design and robust build quality."

The new machines are:

- Core Recycler, uniquely clears and recycles hollow cores
- Super Pro FXL-H230 out-front mower, with 2.3m cutting width and 'fold on the fly' wings
- Super 600, 4-in-1 collector with 4.5m³ capacity
- Mega Twister, blower with 390m³ air capacity and 230° swivel
- Terra Clean 160, artificial pitch maintenance featuring a cyclone dust extraction system
- Terra Clean 100, entry level artificial pitch cleaner without the need for a PTO.



DENNIS & SISIS

At BTME 2013 Dennis and Sisis will be exhibiting the Sisis Rotorake TM1000, this popular tractor mounted scarifier gives the user a combination of scarification and linear aeration.

Available with either 1mm, 2mm or 3mm tungsten tipped blades and variable spacing options, scarification, verticutting & aeration can be completed while contra rotating reels ensure a clean and consistent groove. The floating unit affords fast ground coverage and working width and depth are 40mm and 50mm respectively.

Also on display, the Sisis Autoslit purpose-built, easy to operate pedestrian slitter is ideally suited to outfield and fine turf work to aid compaction reduction and water percolation.

The Dennis range on show includes the Razor Ultra 560

mower developed for golf greens and tees, cricket pitches and bowling greens. The eleven blade cutting cylinder is relief-ground for improved cut quality and longer inter-grind intervals. The Razor Ultra 560 also incorporates heavy duty independent cutter and roller clutches for smooth take up, an ultra-short wheelbase for undulating greens work, tungsten tipped groomer to cut lateral grasses prior to cutting and quick height adjuster.

Cut width is 560mm (22") and the Honda GX120 easy start, long life engine, with Q9 technology, ensures low noise & vibration levels. The Razor Ultra 560 is also available with a seven bladed cutting cylinder, T-bar or loop handle option and powered transport wheels for fast transit between greens.

CHARTERHOUSE

Charterhouse Turf Machinery will introduce the latest addition to the renowned Verti-Drain range at BTME 2013.

The new Redexim Verti-Drain 1517 is part of the new high speed 15 series featuring lighter weight machines which still offer the market leading Verti-Drain build quality and output.

Suitable for use with a tractor from as little as 28hp and ideal for work on golf greens, the Redexim Verti-Drain 1517 offers a productive 1.76m operating width.

It can work to 150mm (6in) deep,

but weighs in at just 520kg.

Examples from Charterhouse's extensive range of overseeders will also be on display offering a range of options from, pedestrian spiked units to introduce favourable grasses to greens, to high capacity disc seeders which can improve fairways quickly and efficiently.

Charterhouse will also present its Rink topdresser line which uses a highly effective twin disc spreading system to precisely apply a range of dressings to fine turf, all equipped with low ground pressure tyres to minimise marking and suitable for convenient fitting to a utility vehicle.

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BTME: KEY INFO

PARKING

The park and ride service has been discontinued, but the hopper service remains.

Also, there are several public car parks within easy reach of the Harrogate International Centre (HIC) – please see the map.

ACCOMMODATION

The map shows the location of the main hotels within the town.



How to find the HIC

Harrogate is located centrally on the UK map with ready access to London and Edinburgh.

A first-class motorway network, mainline rail, sea and 24-hour air links ensure that Harrogate is able to offer all the benefits expected of a truly global location.

Harrogate has excellent rail and air links with regular train services to and from London King's Cross via York and Leeds

(www.nationalrail.co.uk) and Leeds Bradford International Airport is only 20 minutes from Harrogate with a regular bus service into Harrogate.

For details about travelling to Harrogate by public transport visit www.transportdirect.info

Car

From London:

M1 - A1(M) - J47 signposted Knaresborough and then follow the Harrogate signs.

From the North: A1 - J47 signposted Knaresborough and then follow the Harrogate signs.

From the East: M621 - A1(M) - J47 signposted Knaresborough and then follow the Harrogate signs.

From the West: M56 - M62 - A1(M) - J47 signposted Knaresborough and then follow the Harrogate signs.



Car Parks in Harrogate



300 CAR SPACES
8 BLUE BADGE
HOLDER SPACES

HIC car park

- Pay & Display operation.
- Allocated spaces for Blue Badge Holders.
- Access to HIC.
- CCTV monitored entrance/exit.
- Open as required for events Monday to Sunday.
- Opening times displayed next to ticket machines.



440 CAR SPACES
30 BLUE BADGE
HOLDER SPACES

Jubilee multi-storey car park

(Closest car park for Royal Hall, Hall A and Hall M entrances)

- 'Pay on foot' operation.
- Lifts to all floors.
- Toilets and baby changing facilities.
- Comprehensive CCTV system.
- Open from 7am to 11.59pm (vehicles can be left overnight subject to an appropriate fee on exit).



803 CAR SPACES
24 BLUE BADGE
HOLDER SPACES

Victoria multi-storey car park (5 min. walk)

- 'Pay on foot' operation.
- Lifts to all floors.
- Covered walkway to town centre.
- Toilets and baby changing facilities.
- Comprehensive CCTV system.
- Open from 7am to 7.30pm (Mon-Sat) 10am to 7pm (Sun & Bank Holidays) (vehicles can be left overnight subject to an appropriate fee on exit).



331 CAR SPACES
4 BLUE BADGE
HOLDER SPACES

West Park multi-storey car park (10 min. walk)

- Pay & Display operation.
- Toilets.
- Comprehensive CCTV system.
- Open from 7am to 7pm (Mon-Sat) 10am to 7pm (Sun & Bank Holidays) (vehicles can be left overnight subject to displaying a valid parking ticket).



187 CAR SPACES

Dragon Road Contractors car park (5 min. walk)

- Holding area for exhibitors and contractors visiting HIC.
- Free parking if an official collection/delivery pass is displayed in front windscreen. These passes may be obtained from the event organiser.
- Monitored by CCTV and, during build up/break down, a security and logistics team. At other times, a public pay and display car park.



88 CAR SPACES

Odeon Cinema car park (10 min. walk)

- Pay & Display operation.
- Parking for 88 cars.
- 3 Blue Badge spaces.



78 CAR SPACES

Park View car park (8 min. walk)

- Pay & Display operation.
- Parking for 78 cars.



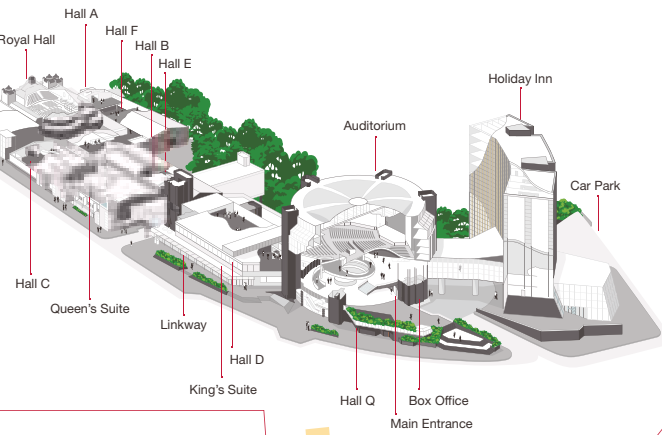
65 CAR SPACES

Montpellier Shoppers car park (5 min. walk)

- Pay & Display operation.
- Parking for 65 cars.



Harrogate International Centre



Hotels in Harrogate

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Kimberley Hotel | 8 Grants Hotel |
| 2 Majestic Hotel | 9 Holiday Inn Hotel |
| 3 Old Swan Hotel | 10 Cairn Hotel |
| 4 St George Hotel | 11 Cedar Court Hotel |
| 5 Crown Hotel | 12 Studley Hotel |
| 6 White Hart Hotel | 13 Yorkshire Hotel |
| 7 Hotel du Vin | |

Harrogate Town Centre



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B.E.D
Tel: 01423 568600
Modern English
Bengal Spice
Tel: 01423 502610
Indian
Betty's
Tel: 01423 814008

Traditional English
Bistro Pierre
Tel: 01423 533070
French
Cattleman's Association
Tel: 01423 516456
Tex Mex

Chez La Vie
Tel: 01423 568018
Traditional English
Drum & Monkey
Tel: 01423 502650

Seafood
Harrogate Brasserie
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English

Joe Rigatoni
Tel: 01423 500071
Italian
La Tasca
Tel: 01423 566333
Tapas
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Thai

William and Victoria
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English

*This list is not a guarantee of quality food or standard of service.



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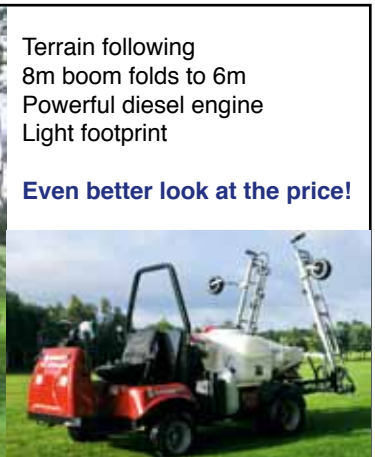
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moneypenny@bigga.co.uk



Section Notes

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

All the latest news from your Section

Around The Green



CENTRAL

Twenty-three members attended the seminar given by Richard Windows of the STRI which preceded the Section AGM at Elmwood on 30 October.

Outgoing Chairman Derek Robson thanked all the members for their support and in particular that of the Trade and the various office bearers on the Committee who had done so much of the organising and had helped him through his two year term of office.

Thanks were also given to Andy Mellon for his contribution to the Section over the years prior to his departure to Qatar.

The Section was in a healthy way financially and the Committee were determined to continue to try and provide educational opportunities.

They were also looking to take on board some of comments provided by the survey carried out earlier in the year.

Bob Meilke of Craig Golfing Society was elected as the new Chairman and Shaun Anderson of Piperdam GC was elected as Vice Chairman.

Gordon Moir continues as Secretary/Treasurer and Derek Robson takes on the role of Past Chairman while the rest of the Committee remains as was.

More details are on the website www.standrews.org.uk.

Kenny Mitchell and Scott Mackintosh of St Andrews won the Pairs competition for 2012 and this will be held again next year.

The two members of the Section who won this year's Scottish Patrons awards are Paul Armour of Lochgelly GC and Stuart Greenshields of Gleneagles.

This year we asked members to write in to the committee and give reasons why they should

be selected to receive this award which is a trip to BTME so well done to Paul and Stuart.

There are still 3 places available on the one day irrigation course on 12 December so if anyone has a change of heart when reading this please get in touch to check if that is still the case.

Finally, our congratulations to Andy O'Hara of Leven Links who has been elected Chairman of the Scottish Region of BIGGA.

Gordon Moir



EAST

Welcome to my first report for our GI Magazine as your new section Chairman.

Sadly I start on a sad note with the news that former Head Greenkeeper of Dunbar Golf Club, Graham Wood, sadly passed away on Friday 9 November, our thoughts are with his family at this time.

The section held its 26th AGM recently at Gifford Golf Club, a big thank you goes to Aitkens Seed-man our sponsor on the day and our thanks also to Jamie Martin (Head Greenkeeper) and the council of Gifford GC for the generous use of their facilities on the day.

The day started off with the unusually relentless rain and wind, it was suggested on the day that the Haddington area could have been twinned with New York at the time of hurricane Sandy!

It was agreed that the golfing part of our day where we contest the Jimmy Neilson Trophy over 9 holes of stableford golf would be postponed until Saturday 24th November, all members are welcome to attend and can confirm their place on the day by contacting the section secretary or myself.

The turnout at our AGM was low but all went well, thanks go

to our outgoing chairman for the past 4 years Stuart Crawford, Stuart has carried out the post over and above the call of duty and we wish him well and thank him for his hard work over his term.

We have a couple of further changes to our section committee, with George Oliver standing down, our thanks go to George for his time and hard work and we wish you well in the future.

We have some young blood added to our section committee in the form of Jamie Martin (Head Greenkeeper, Gifford GC), welcome aboard Jamie, we wish you well and hope you enjoy your time on our committee.

The Section would like to thank all the Patrons for their continued support throughout the year, I can confirm the Patron Award winners are Grant Moran (Mortonhall GC) and Derek McLeod (Braid Hills GC), well done guys, we hope you enjoy your Harrogate Experience and we look forward to reading all about it in your Patrons Award Report.

On 6 November we held an education event at Turnhouse Golf Club kindly sponsored by Tour-Spec Grinding, again the turnout was low, but all who attended felt it well worthwhile and gained valuable insight into grinding techniques and the benefits of Enviro-Bunker, If any members have any suggestions for any education events or are interested in hosting a golf event then all feedback will be welcomed indeed.

A note for your diary guys, our spring meeting will be held at Seahouses Golf Club on 23 April 2013, anyone interested can confirm their place by contacting our secretary and if we can get enough confirmed interest we are looking to put a bus on for the trip down.

Please remember and get in touch if anyone is wanting information posted in next months report.

Take care and Merry Christ-

mas ho ho ho (got to get it in early!).

Scott Corrigan



WEST

The last few weeks have been slightly better than the usual with some cold winds and not quite as much rainy stuff except if you are further down the country, even the east coast appear to be suffering somewhat with more growth and softer conditions, however we are now into December and Christmas will shortly be with us.

What a thought, where does the year seem to have gone? I think most people would like to see the back of this year and a bright new future ahead but sadly they tell me our predictions of wetter summers and milder winters may well be the norm, god forbid.

A few weeks back now I was playing in the National tournament at Irvine Bogside which is a fairly uncharacteristic links course and couldn't believe how good the course was and how dry it was, well done to Derek Wilson and his team for producing a superb test of golf, one which challenges the mind to the extreme.

I had the pleasure of playing with Douglas McIntosh on the final day and Paul from the Liverpool area both good golfers and very good company, well done to Scotland for winning the team event on day one.

The whole event was a great experience and I would encourage anybody to enter next year as the tournament is well worth the money and you meet up with new people from all over the country.

The AGM held at Hags Castle seemed to go well although I did hear a few people raised some very topical questions regarding outings, unfortunately only 22

people turned up on the day, which seems to be the standard number these days.

The attendees were treated to talks from Sherriff Amenity who sponsored the day, supplied food, and those who wished went out for a few holes.

John Brown stepped down as Chairman and Gerry Bruen takes over the helm, so we wish him well for the future and thanks go to John for all his work during his time in charge.

Gavin Jarvis has also stepped down as treasurer and Fraser will resume those duties along with the Secretary's role as Gavin used to do, best wishes to Gavin and thanks for all his time and help over a fairly long period 10 years possibly, well done and I hope all goes well for the future.

One of the main points raised during the proceedings related to people turning up on the day and paying, this will not be possible in future and will not be accepted as payment will be required two weeks in advance of the event to allow a draw to be made.

Payment is now possible through a bank account on line or by cheque as usual.

Committee now consists of Gerry Bruen (chairman), no vice chairman, John Brown (past chairman), David McBride (education), Fraser Ross (secretary/treasurer), Brian Hillan (handicap), Stuart Taylor (magazine), should anyone have any queries about things they can contact those relevant members.

The Association would like to thank Hags Castle golf club for assisting us with a venue and Scott Ballantyne for allowing the guys a few holes later on, cheers.

Recently on visiting Alex McDougal mowers I heard Bob Stevenson had been admitted to hospital with suspected heart attack I hope he is now recovering and in good form, may I also congratulate Jennifer on her recent wedding, best wishes for the future.

On behalf of the west section could I congratulate Graham O'Connor and his wife Jennie on the birth this summer of a fine baby girl Lexi apparently 7lb 6ozs born on the 2nd July at the Royal infirmary, having spoken to Graham the family are doing well, best wishes for the future to them both and hopefully not too many sleepless nights.

Congratulations also to John Clelland on his recent new appointment of Head Greenkeeper at Paisley Bushes, John has moved from Elderslie golf

club where the association had an outing a few years back, we wish him well in his new post.

May I thank all the patrons for their support through the year especially those in the west section, your continued participation in this scheme is extremely valuable and the section thanks you very much for assisting in the years proceedings.

The casual evening out in town is arranged for the 30th November so I will report on this in next month's issue, in the meantime I would like to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and all the best for next season, I look forward to catching up with a few people at Harrogate.

By the time you read this my role as Chairman of Scotland will have finished, but I would like to express my thanks to all those on the Scottish Board for their support and help during my time in office and state how much I enjoyed the challenge of obtaining the standard required to promote the association in the best possible light, I hope I was able to accomplish this over my two years.

I would congratulate Andy O'Hara on becoming the new chairman and wish him the best of luck during his two year tenure.

Finally, if anyone has information to convey to me please contact me on 01419 425554 or 07790 823914, or stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com I will be at your disposal.

Regards
Stuart Taylor



NORTH

After some changes in the committee set up Robert and I have now taken over the section news.

We would like to pass on our sincere thanks to Ross Macrae for doing the report this year.

The committee would like to start by offering an apology to our members for their not being any news for a month or two this was not our fault just a breakdown in communication with head office and some other issues.

Right on with the news we will start with the Autumn outing at Grantown-on-Spey the winners are as follows; Nearest the pin at the 8th Billy Craig (Kirriemuir) , 11th Paul Sharp (Peterculter)

and 16th Mike Keay (Tarbat).

Moving on to the sweep in 4th place was Patrick Wood (Newmachar) 3rd Neil Sadler (Portlethen) 2nd Pat Allan (Symbio) and 1st Steve Macrae (Deeside).

Guest Winner was Donald Urquhart and the Trade winner was Pat Allan from (Symbio) our own committee winner was Paul Sharp (Peterculter).

The Veterans winner was Billy Craig (Kirriemuir) runner up Hugh McLatchie (Peterhead).

Apprentice winner was Jack Craig (Royal Aberdeen).

Moving on to Class 3 and in 3rd Dale Robertson (Newmachar) 2nd Scott Davidson (Newmachar) and 1st Ross Duncan (Hazlehead).

Class 2; in 3rd Billy Craig (Kirriemuir) 2nd Stewart Brown (Royal Aberdeen) and 1st Steve Macrae (Deeside).

Class 1; 3rd Derek Green 2nd Patrick Wood (Newmachar) 1st Neil Sadler (Portlethen).

Scratch; Runner up George Mitchell (Newmachar), winner Neil Sadler (Portlethen).

The Mark Main Trophy which is the best Nett score from both outings was won by Neil Sadler from Portlethen so well done to all the winners.

The Committee would like to pass on their thanks to Kenny Kinnaird and his staff for the great condition of the golf course.

The season is now drawing to a close and everybody will be starting their winter programmes.

The weather has been slightly better through November so that we can get projects started.

We held our AGM at Newburgh GC on 25 October with 24 people attending.

We had mixed weather for a game of golf and some soup and sandwiches for lunch before our AGM.

Our thanks go to Newburgh GC for the use of their facilities and to Jim Peace and his staff for the use of his course which was in very good condition.

Some other backdated section news - we would like to welcome Mark Campbell who is the new Head Greenkeeper at Fortrose and Rosermarkie Golf Club to our section and we hope to catch up with him at some point.

Mark joins us from the Devon and Cornwall section.

The section would also like to pass on best wishes to Stuart Grant who has left Ballater Golf Club after many years service and joined Colin Forbes and the staff at Aboyne so all the best Stuart.

We would also like to pass on best wishes to Richard Pirie of Newmachar Golf Club who had to have an operation on his eye and has been off work for a while so get well soon Richard.

Congratulations to Chris Watson of Peterculter golf club on finishing as a runner up in the Toro student greenkeeper of the year.

Chris wins an all-expenses paid trip to Harrogate for the trade show and I am sure his boss Paul Sharp will look after him.

The two Patron Award winners this year are George Mitchell from Newmachar Golf Club and Paul Sharp from Peterculter Golf Club so well done to them both, their prize is also an all-expenses paid trip to BTME.

Next year our Spring outing is not yet confirmed but hopefully will be at Duff house Royal but I have got the Autumn outing confirmed and it will be at Edzell golf club on Tuesday 24th Sept 2013.

Harrogate is not far off and hopefully there will be a good turnout from the North section and we will all meet up again.

The Chairman and committee of the North section would like to wish all our members a merry xmas and happy new year.

Regards Dale Robertson 07784517534 and Robert Patterson 07931639548.

NORTHERN REGION



NORTH EAST

At this time of the year I always find it difficult to write section news as it's hard to come by at the best of times but I do try and have something in every month.

Firstly I want to welcome all the new members that have joined the section - and there's been quite a lot.

This is mainly due to visits by myself and the new Regional Administrator Sandra Raper to introduce first-hand what's available and the benefits of joining BIGGA to non-members; and of course calling at golf clubs where we have members to ask they had any views to share with us.

The outcome was eight new members at Longhirst Hall, Dunstanburgh Castle, Alnwick and Ponteland plus a couple via the club route at Tynemouth

Around The Green

and Prudhoe. We also recruited some former members, so altogether we have sixteen members extra. It just goes to show what you can achieve by paying a visit. It's hoped that over the coming months that there will be further visits which have to be mapped out carefully as we try and visit five or six clubs at a time.

Other news is the appointment of a new Head Greenkeeper at Whitley Bay who is David Wilkinson formerly of Windermere Golf Club.

We wish him well in his new job.

David and I first met in the late 80s during the The National Greenkeepers Championships and I met him this year at his home course during The John Deere qualifier.

I think he will find that it doesn't rain as much there as it does in the North East on average.

OK, that's it for the time being.

There should be no news in January's edition; I hope most of you will visit BTME and take advantage of the free courses that will be available during your one day trip or to the luckier ones whose club will send them to attend other courses.



NORTHERN

Good afternoon chaps.

It's a very sad note I start with I'm afraid.

Our condolences go to the family of Mark Pearson, Course Manager of the Manor Golf Club who was involved in a fatal accident on the M6.

Nothing more I can say other than our thoughts go to his wife and daughter.

Hard to follow that but I will try.

It is with great pleasure that the northern section team of myself, Dave Collins and Simon Rothwell won the intersection trophy at Bingley St.Ives.

A great day indeed had by all and many thanks to the top man Alan Baxter and his team for setting up a demanding but lovely course, strong winds made life tricky but local knowledge and a bit of luck won us the day.

A big thanks to Bingley for their hospitality, Sandra Raper

and Elaine Jones from HQ for looking after us and the organising of the event

Congratulations go to another top bloke on the birth of his 2nd child, Richard Smith and her indoors have a lovely little lad called Joshua who are both doing well, fantastic.

I made my way back to my old stomping ground of South Yorkshire last month for our regional conference at the Phoenix Golf club in Rotherham.

It was another good day out, very interesting speakers on good subjects.

Great also to meet up with guys I met at The Open and our chairman Tony Smith who is always great to chat with.

Last thing guys, in my last notes I mentioned a trip out to PB Kents was in the pipeline but after a poor response I will try again for you in spring.

Andy Slingsby
07506407867

andy.slingsby98@googlemail.com



NORTH WALES

Well it really is midwinter with cold starts and most of us starting in the dark; we're all looking forward to our Christmas break.

The Christmas tournament took place on 21 November at Oswestry golf club, as normal this month's column has to go to print before the actual day, so a full write-up on the day and any news that needs passing on from the AGM will be in January's issue, pictures of the day will be posted on our section Facebook group.

The intersection day took place at Bingley St Ives GC on 1 November and our team of Jez Hughes, Haydn Jones and Simon Ashford sportingly came in a creditable 6th out of 6 teams! We are still making an appeal for members' e-mail addresses and education requirements if you could all please forward your details to bnwales@hotmail.co.uk please.

The annual trip to Harrogate is hopefully running on Wednesday 23 January but this year we will only run the trip if we have enough seats booked to make the trip viable, so if you think you would like to go please contact myself or Jez to book your

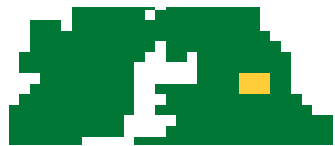
seat as soon as possible.

It's a bargain as it's free to members and only £10 to non-members.

I hope you all have a great Christmas and a prosperous new year.

Pete Maybury

e-mail petemayb66@aol.com 07756001187 phone or text Facebook "North Wales B.I.G.G.A"



SHEFFIELD

It has arrived again.

The end of another year in our wonderful profession.

We will all be preparing ourselves for the festivities which I'm sure will involve lots of alcohol and food consumption (not necessarily in that order).

It is also a time to be thankful for what we have and reflect on what has happened to us over the past 12 months.

I guess it's time for us all to look at ourselves and think if we have given all we can over the year and what we can do to progress in the coming year.

We continue as an industry to strive to be better, to increase our reputation and improve the image of our industry.

If we all look at ourselves and improve on the last year we will all be making a difference.

Sheffield section recently had the pleasure of holding the Northern Region Conference held at Phoenix Sports and Social Club.

I must thank everyone at Phoenix for their first class service on the day and it was a pleasure for everyone who attended. The day was a massive success and all the speakers on the day were very informative and interesting. The day gave many greenkeepers the chance to network and discuss ideas with other greenkeepers from around the area. It was nice to see a few new faces from our section attend but as I have said before it would be nice to see many more in the coming year.

We held our Autumn competition at Rotherham GC - I would like to thank Dave and his staff for the excellent condition of the course apart from the pin places! The day was a fantastic success and everyone who played commented on the quality of the

course and the delicious meal afterwards. Interestingly the winners on the day came from Rotherham but I'm sure they played the best golf on the day.

The Trade prize on the day was won by Mike Brear. I would also like to thank Golf and Turf Machinery for their sponsorship on the day and the excellent prizes they supplied.

I must thank all our sponsors over the year without all their support we would struggle to hold any events and their support is appreciated.

I hope to be able to announce a lecture for the section in early 2013 soon and we will be having a section day out early next year, we have several options for the visit and places will be limited when the event is announced.

Anyway I'm sure you've heard enough - I hope you all have a fantastic Christmas and an even better New Year.

Jim Stevens



EAST MIDLAND

Tuesday 6 November marked the start of the BIGGA Regional Seminars.

This all kicked off at Forest Hill Golf Club in Leicestershire with an entertaining and informative line up of speakers.

The day was kindly sponsored by Richard Japes of Sports Metals who also provided an incredible selection of themed cupcakes which were demolished rather rapidly by the sixty plus attendees. The line-up of speakers through the day, superbly introduced by Rob Welford (Midland Regional Chairman), included Melvyn Taylor from Turfdry, Daniel Lightfoot MG from Bearwood Lakes, Jonathan Knowles and Lee Price from Myerscough College, Dr David Greenshields from Barenbrug and Lewis Blois introduced Everris' latest recruit Henry Bechelet who gave a virtuoso performance.

I'm pretty certain that a role in pantomime awaits Henry at some stage... "Oh no it doesn't...!" The day was well supported and offered members of the region an alternative to golf days and a chance to collect some CPD points too.

I would like to thank everyone for attending and taking the

time to complete feedback forms. This data is invaluable in terms of communication and will enable the line-up for next year's event, which is planned for a similar time in 2013, to be tailored more closely to members' needs. The day was rounded off by Tony Smith, BIGGA Chairman, with a Q&A session, which was an opportunity for people to ask those questions that we all think up between BTME annually.

Thanks should also go to Sandra Raper for coordinating and organising the day and for being the driving force behind the day. She was brilliantly assisted by Stuart Green from HQ and overall the whole event was, I believe, a total success.

I don't know about you but the chocolate in my advent calendar this year seems much smaller? Have Thorntons introduced austerity measures in their production program? This is going to be a difficult Christmas for me as I'm in training for The Brighton Marathon next April and I can't justify starting to 'Carb up' four months prior to the event.

I'm not doing it in fancy dress, my SpongeBob Square Pants outfit has been retired, but I am doing it for The Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research charity to help raise money for an extremely worthy and supportive cause.

If anyone would care to sponsor me then I do have a JustGiving page set up or you could text/email/phone me and pledge your support.

There isn't much more to report this month so I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous 2013.

Greg Skinner
M: 07970 095264
greg.skinner92@btinternet.com



MIDLAND

Well here we are, the end of the year.

And what a year! As the poet Coleridge should have wrote: "Water, water everywhere and not a drop to fish", or indeed do anything outside such as,

perish the thought, work with a little sun on our backs.

Lets all pray for a more clement 2013.

The Autumn Tournament was held at Druids Heath Golf Club on Thursday 25 October, where the weather was cold, breezy but dry.

The course was presented beautifully by Course Manager Jim Lake and his fine team.

Congratulations to you all, and thanks to the Club for allowing us courtesy of the course.

The main prize sponsor on the day was New Holland Tractors, with thanks to Ted Barnet of The Compact Tractor Centre in conjunction with Simon Gumbrell from Campeys who presented the prizes.

The nearest the pin sponsors were Sherriff Amenity and Working Turf, and the hot drinks and chocolate at the halfway house was courtesy of Farols.

Thank you to all our sponsors who contributed to make it such a successful day.

The winners were as follows: 1 Andy Brougham 38pts; 2 Dave Fellows 36pts 3 Ed Stant 34pts. Division Winners were Clint Woodall, Tom Boyd and Howard Middlebrook. Trade Prize was won by John Lewis from Lely UK.

Thanks also to Sandra Raper and Stuart Green from BIGGA who attended and added valuable input to the AGM.

There were no changes with any committee members and as such the following were voted in for next year: President John Hammond; Chairman Ed Stant; Deputy Chairman Rhys Thomas; Secretary Andy Smith; Treasurer Gary Cunningham; Committee Nigel Tyler, Richard Beacham, Leigh Swann, Kev Pugh

What's this I see on this month's calendar page? A photo of our Chair looking rather portly and indeed void of tan.

Ed, rectification requires more time in the field, and Tracy's cakes should be posted to Stratford for the attention of SELM.

This month's calendar is sponsored by Countrywide/Andy Lane MBPR.

Please consider Andy for your Turf and Amenity requirements.

Email: alane@countrywide-

farmers.co.uk or Mob: 07774 416 429.

And finally, our ever gracious, supportive and learned President Mr J Hammond has seen fit to undertake his PA1 and PA2 (whatever they are now) spraying test, and of course passed with flying colours. John is, as many of us remember a man that retired some years ago from sales, and a very respected man he was, and indeed still is as our president. Such is amplified by the fact that John is still wishing to keep in touch with Greenkeeping and its modern ramifications and laws.

Well done John, again you have set the example to follow. Sean McDade.



MID ANGLIA

As I write this in mid November the temperature is 15 degrees and hardly what we expect in late Autumn.

Then again the weather for 2012 has hardly been textbook so nothing surprises me in what has been a very testing season for turf managers.

We had our third outing for the year and had a healthy attendance at Verulam GC for the Autumn Golf Day.

The weather was very testing as it was damp, cold and miserable early but cleared up nicely towards the final holes.

Our thanks go to Chris Carpenter and his team for getting the course in great shape for the event at this awkward time of year.

The Results are as follows: 1 Simon Woolley 38pts; 2 S Parnell 36pts; 3 Oly Browning (BIGGA National Champion!) 33pts; Nearest Pin - John Moorhouse (yes that is correct! Mr Moorhouse's first outing for 8 years?); Nearest Pin - Gerald Bruce; Trade Prize - Rob Catlin

We are all looking forward to the Texas Scramble at Dunstable Downs GC and let's hope Frank has come back down to earth after Celtic's stunning win over the mighty Barcelona! I am sure he won't mention it at all on the 4th..ha ha.

Darren Mugford - d.mugford@rigbytaylor.com

Assistant Profile

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

Name: Gavin Jones
Age: 24
Club: St Andrews Links Trust
Position: Greenkeeper
Nickname: Too many to say!



1. How long have you been greenkeeping?

I have been a full time greenkeeper for one-and-a-half years but have been greenkeeping from the age of 15.

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

I could never be indoors all day, worst nightmare. It's a way of life and I feel it keeps you healthy

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

That's a tough one, Think I might be musician or an artist

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?

Cutting greens, as the greens are massive at the Castle Course and I am proud when I see golfers play on them

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?

I don't really know, it's hard to say depends on the weather!

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?

Good weather every day of the year with the odd day of rain for irrigation

7. Hobbies?

Music, Art, Photography, relaxing

8. Favourite Band?

Coldplay would be at the top

9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?

Ireland and Leinster in the rugby

10. What is your claim to fame?

Hugh Grant robbed my pencil at Kingsbarns (but gave it back).

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Stephen Kelly, SRUC (Elmwood), Central Section
Graeme Ritchie, SRUC (Elmwood), Central Section
Dafydd Davies, SRUC (Elmwood), Central Section

Northern Region

Stuart Imeson, Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club, North East Section
John Chambers, Prudhoe Golf Club, North East Section
James Thorpe, Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club, North East Section
Liam Ord, Sharpley Springs Golf Course, North East Section
Declan Kearney, Southport Golf Links, North West Section
Nicholas Jones, Drax Golf Club, Northern Section

Midland Region

Adam Bucknall, South Staffordshire Golf Club, Midland Section
Steven Alderson, South Staffordshire Golf Club, Midland Section
Chris Bromley, Robin Hood Golf Club, Midland Section
Peter Orbine, Gedney Hill Golf Club, East of England Section
Craig Marshall, St Ives Golf Club, East of England Section
Kieran Shillito, St Ives Golf Club, East of England Section
Andrzej Krupowicz, Bicester Golf & Country Club, Mid Anglia Section

South East Region

Stuart Venn-Dunn, Lister Wilder Ltd, Surrey Section
Peter Crossley, Dyke (The) Golf Club, Sussex Section
Callum Long, Collage of West Anglia (The), East Anglia Section
George Butters, Ufford Park Hotel Golf & Leisure, East Anglia Section

South West/South Wales

David Robertson, Coombe Hill Golf Club, Surrey Section
Samuel Horner, Gloucester Golf Club, South West Section
Anthony Parker, Shrewsbury School, South West Section
Adam Jones, Stinchcombe Hill Golf Club, South West Section
Jordan Carrier, Gosport & Stokes Bay Golf Club, South Coast Section
Tommy Flanders, Hartley Wintney Golf Club, South Coast Section
David Fletcher, M B Wilkes Ltd, South Coast Section

Overseas

Pat Yarbrough, Global Turf Equipment, USA
Rick Tegtmeyer CGCS, Des Moines Golf & Country Club, USA
Michael Murphy, Waterville House & Golf Links, Republic of Ireland

notice to put on an individual event. John Hart and his staff provided an excellent course and the catering staff provided an excellent meal for us.

The results were as follows: 1 S Hopkins; 2 M Davies; 3 J Dair; Trade G Cooper; Longest Drive Jack Fairman; Nearest Pin Geoff Wand. Once again a big thanks to Colliers for rescuing this event.

Due to a decline in turnout for this fixture in the last couple of years it has been decided to play it bi-annually and alternate it with the fixture v the Secretaries. Our annual AGM was held on October 4th at South Kyme Golf Club. The turnout for the meeting was poor with committee members outnumbering other members. Due to the relocation of Chairman Allan Walker, Graeme MacDonald has taken over the role with Adi Kitchenson taking over as Vice Chairman. All other positions remain the same.

The results from the golf were as follows: 1 Mervyn Davies; 2 Bruce Hicks; 3 Robin Portress; Longest Drive Matt Haynes; Nearest Pin; Paul Doherty; Trade Ian Collett. Many thanks to South Kyme Golf Club for providing a course in great condition, followed by a superb meal afterwards. Thanks also to the sponsors for the day F.G.Adamson John Deere dealers.

All that remains is to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. Steve Beverly, Immingham Golf Club

SOUTH EAST REGION



SURREY

Thursday November 15.
I have been writing this article each month for so long now that I forget when I started all those years ago.

One day I will check when I wrote the first one after taking over from Ted Styles back in the good old days.

And now, like Ted, it's time for me to hang up the old quill pen and say goodbye to deadlines forever. I understand my successor will take over from next month and I will leave him to

introduce himself then. All I will say about him is that he is not as good-looking as me, he speaks with a slight lisp and he irons his own shirts. So forget the Isle of Wight, my cruise holidays, Studland Bay and the adventures of Gary Ogilvie and look forward to dedicated and sensible reporting from 2013. Having mentioned Studland Bay, it's only fair to tell you all that I stayed there, with the family, just a few weeks ago and enjoyed a long weekend, golfing on the 9 hole par 3, walking scenic routes and eating excellent food at breakfast, lunch and dinner. I sampled many pints of the local ales, sunk a few bottles of wine and came home a few pounds (sterling) lighter but a few pounds (weight) heavier.

No nudists observed on the naturist beach, for the weather was cool enough to deter any male exhibitionists.

Surrey news includes the England v Scotland match at Hankley Common GC where an all square result meant that England retained the cup.

Two picked players who were unable to attend were Ian Sellars for England and Steve Holmes for Scotland.

Apparently one had a stiff arm due to a flu injection and the other also felt a little stiff, the cause of which we have not been told but we understand his wife was pleased and insisted he had to stay home. Who suffered from what we will leave to your imagination. That's it for now but please phone me on 07879474038, my Tacit number, for a chat at any time.

Brian Willmott
brian.willmott@hotmail.co.uk



KENT

By the time you read this we shall just have played our Turkey Trot and held our AGM at Redlibbits Golf Club.

Hopefully you will all have enjoyed what has become a fantastic event at a great venue.

I know Kev planned to set the course up as well as conditions would allow so thanks to him and the Redlibbits crew for their efforts. I am very pleased to report that we have prepared a full fixture list for 2013 and

that all attendees to the Turkey Trot should have collected their pocket reminders for next year.

One piece of great news is that we have managed to secure Royal St. Georges for our Spring event so when Kev sends out the e-mail booking notice get your names down quick! See website for all 2013 dates.

On the subject of Royal St. Georges, I am pleased to announce that Paul Larsen has been appointed as Course Manager at this most prestigious of venues. We sincerely wish Paul every success and I'm sure that all your friends in the Kent section will relish the chance to play there soon and offer help if needed when major tournaments come around.

Obviously, as I am writing this before our AGM, I am unaware whether the vote for 'Election of Officers' would have sprung up any surprises and found a new secretary but I would like to say a sincere thanks to all our members for supporting our great section and making it such a joy to work for.

The section would like to extend its gratitude to all our host venues this year. They were: North Foreland, West Kent, Boughton and Redlibbits.

We shall be working on a 2014 fixture list in the coming months so please let us know if you are willing to have us at your club.

Thank you too to all our sponsors for supporting us this year and providing not just financial help but also your general company and friendship. I shall be writing to you again soon!

Just like to sign off now by wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and a successful 2013. est of British, Rob Holland
www.kentgreenkeepers.com



SUSSEX

BIGGA Essex, Surrey and Sussex Sections recently played against each other at Lingfield Park Golf Club.

The completion was stableford with all points for each team added together to make the final scores.

The weather held for us, although it was somewhat foggy which made it tricky if you hadn't played there before.

Well, that was Pete Smith's



EAST OF ENGLAND

Hello everyone. Hard to believe that another year has passed by again so quickly. Quite how a year will end that started off with snow, a warm dry March and hosepipe bans; followed by flooding and rampant grass growth; I don't know.

The annual match v Trade in September at Blankney had to be called off due to the trade being unable to field a team. Instead Collier Turf Care and Everris stepped in at short

excuse for his very slight contribution to a great Sussex win!

All thanks to our hosts and organisers. The course was in great condition, in particular the greens. Once again, a great win for Sussex and let's make sure all these events are supported and kept running. Please remember to send any news to me on my email address or give me a call.

Eric Green
TheGreens837@aol.com
Tel: 01424 - 214600



ESSEX

This last month has seen us hold two education events the first was a Golf Course Design Workshop, with Howard Swan.

Although numbers were somewhat disappointing, those who did attend thoroughly enjoyed the day and the experience. Howard ran us through the history of course design and explained the theory behind such things a bunker placement and water run-off, the position of tees and fairway shaping to get the best out your course.

This was followed up with a hands-on design session, members were asked to bring along details of holes on their own courses that they felt needed improvement. We spent an hour or so drawing up our plans and then Howard went through each design and made alterations and explained the reasons behind each one.

As I have already said we all enjoyed the experience and came away a lot wiser.

Our second event was the first of its type we have run. A Machinery Demonstration day held at Channels Golf Club.

We invited the BIG Three machine manufacturers through their distributors, Ernest Doe & Sons (Ransomes Jacobsen), Toro (Lely UK Ltd) and P.

Tuckwell Ltd (John Deere) to bring along a greens mower, a fairway mower and a utility cutting or other machine, for a demonstration and Q&A day. 61 members attended and were split into three groups, each group was assigned to one of the manufacturers for a one hour period to be shown each of the machines, they were

then broken down into smaller groups to make life easier for the demonstrations, members then moved around each of the machines in turn having hands on instruction whenever they wished.

After their hour was up it was off to the next camp for a repeat of the demonstrations.

Our thanks go to the following for their support.

Ernest Doe & Sons, Matt Wise & Steve Bush, Ransomes Jacobsen, Nigel Church and Demonstrator Phil.

Toro, Larry Pearman, Richard Freeman & Dean Rook.

P.Tuckwell Ltd, Neil Peachey, Rob Galley, Nick Ashman (John Deere) and James Dixon (Gambetti UK).

The Essex Section would also like to thank Channels Golf Club and Course Manager Ray Clark for the use of their facilities, the coffee and bacon roll before and the meal we all enjoyed after the demonstrations.

Our thanks also go to our outgoing Chairman, Mark Stopps for all his hard work in putting this event together, for without his idea in the first place this event would not have taken place.

Around ten members from the Essex section attended the Regional Conference held at Thorpeness Country Club this month.

The content was very good with Kate Entwistle as always captivating the audience with a very interesting talk on turf disease issues.

I for one found all the speakers very interesting, Mark Hunt's explanation of the jet stream was a real eye opener, with an interesting overview by course architect Ken Moodie of the re-structuring of Thorpeness Golf Clubs course and the subsequent winning of the Environment award by the STRI's Richard Stuttard, also something to remember.

Thanks to the East Anglian section for putting on such a good show.

The section AGM is nearly with us and as previously stated we are losing three members from the committee hopefully this will be rectified at the meeting and we will be welcoming new blood and new thoughts into the fold.

Next month, news of the AGM and Team golf event.



EAST ANGLIA

A lively bunch arrived at "The Windy City" – AKA Ely City Golf Club.

Still at least it wasn't raining.

Thanks to Andy Baker and his crew for presenting a course in fine fettle.

The wind was probably the winner, but some showed a battling spirit as the scores will show:

0 – 9 Handicap: 1st, Mike Buck (who else?) 34 Points; 2nd, Mike Virley 29 Points

10 – 19 Handicap: 1st, Mat Le Braun (Overall Winner) 36 Points, 2nd Mark Broughton 34 Points

20 – 28 Handicap: 1st Ian Willett, 28 Points, 2nd Martin Brightwell 27 Points

3rd: Trade & Guests: 1st Graham Kemp, 37 Points

2nd: Warren Richards, 34 Points

Nearest The Pin:

2nd Hole: Mike Barney, 6th Hole: Brian Trett, 12th Hole: Craig Spooner, 13th Hole: Michael Buck, Longest Drive: Gavin Morrison, Loo Seat

Mark Broughton (moaned about his golf all the way round, scored 34 points).

I wish I could have a bad round like that!

The prizes were presented by Mike Nash, the club chairman, who made us all very welcome. The main sponsor for the day was Tomlinson Groundcare – lovely hotdogs!

Other VIPs were:- Aitkens, Spearhead, British Sugar (topsoil), Bartram Mowers, Rigby Taylorl Scotts, Sherrif, Evirris, Ben Burgess and Amenity Technology.

Thank you Ely City Golf Club for a good day.

Mick Lathrope

SOUTH WEST & WALES REGION



SOUTH WEST

My my how the weather has changed! The blower is getting all kinds of use blowing these

leaves.

All different types of trees shedding, the big trees, small trees even the hedges.

But on a more serious note, I do hope that this continued weather has not drained you too much.

We at Minchinhampton have just started our winter projects – cutting down all these trees! Just joking, we are continuing with our bunker project, 5 holes, 8+ bunkers, that and tee leveling...could be a very long winter.

What is it you're doing this winter? Share with us by emailing me or uploading your pictures on Facebook.

I always get a little lost this time of year, I never know if this is a little too early for me to say or not...but merry Christmas everyone, I hope that Santa got you everything you wished for.

Remember this Christmas is about having a little rest, you've work hard enough for the last 11 months, take a break, relax and enjoy some time off!

Again people, I would love your involvement with this article, it is yours after all, surely you don't want to hear about what I've been up to all the time, my life really is that boring, share a few things you have going on, just drop me an email an help put a little smile on everyone's face.

We would also like to thanks our patronage partners for 2012, Farmura, Countrywide, Headland, Eco-solve, TH White, Irrtech Ltd, Avoncrop.

We also have a Facebook page for the southwest section, one that will make it much more convenient for you all to use, you don't have to do anything, just enjoy this amazing feature you have at your fingertips.

Adam Matthews



SOUTH COAST

As Christmas approaches it's hard to get a grasp of where the year has gone, it doesn't seem five minutes ago that I left a buoyant and positive BTME week in January and now the 2013 show is approaching fast.

It has been another month of very trying weather and on my travels I can hear the sense of complete frustration from

Around The Green

greenkeepers and groundsmen alike as they continue to battle in trying to manage their turf, the hope is that 2013 will bring a much kinder year, the industry needs it. I have just returned from the excellent South West and Wales Regional Seminar.

It was a great day organised by our hard working regional administrator Jane Jones. Speakers included our very own Rob Wills from Remedy Oak who gave another polished performance and now has to do it all again at BTME in January.

Our own section seminar is taking shape and has been confirmed for Milton Abbey School on Wednesday 20 February.

Confirmed speakers to date are John Lockyer, Course and Grounds Manager at Roehampton Club and Paul Lowe, Technical Sales Manager with Symbio.

We have are waiting to hear from three more speakers and as soon as the final line up is arranged I will be in touch.

Please come along and support the day which is excellent value, provides some quality education, excellent networking opportunities and accrues you some valuable C.P.D. points.

The C.P.D. system is currently being reviewed and is becoming increasingly important in your own development as a greenkeeper. Full details of the seminar and application forms will be sent out very early 2013 along with our fixture cards for 2013 which have almost been completed.

Looks like a good year ahead and we start at Remedy Oak Golf Club for our golf days. As you will know we have changed our method of communicating to you and are embracing email. This is mainly due to spiralling postage costs and as we are trying to be prudent with section funds it was a fairly easy decision to make. If you do not receive emails from us it will be because we don't have your current email address, so please make sure you update your records. You can email me at southcoastsecretary@gmail.com

Merry Christmas and a Happy New year, I hope it brings you and your loved ones all that you and they wish for.

Make an effort in 2013 to attend as many section events as possible, we need your support and collectively as a section are stronger for your presence and that support.

Also BTME is a great week and it needn't cost the earth.

There are scores of free seminars along with some very good value seminars and workshops not forgetting the show.



DEVON AND CORNWALL

Hello all, our November meeting was held at Bowood Park Hotel and Golf Club, near Camelford, Cornwall.

48 attendees enjoyed a rare dry day, for one of our events, at Bowood with 18 playing golf and 30 on the course walk lead by Rob Cook, Head Greenkeeper.

Rob started the course walk by taking us all to the site of a new windmill that is currently being installed behind the clubhouse. The windmill will be used to generate electricity to feed the clubhouse and facilities as well as generating an estimated extra £30,000 of income for the business. The elevated and exposed position along with many other windmills already erected in the area, made it a prime location for the structure. The course was in fantastic condition considering recent rains, very firm in all areas.

Rob and his team have worked hard over the years to improve drainage in key areas and to reduce the thatch content in the upper surface of the USGA greens. Rob has got to the stage now where he is introducing and increasing the population of finer grasses and in particular fescue. The course was a testament to Rob and his young team.

During the course walk, the attendees were given the opportunity to participate in a nearest the pin competition. This was the brainchild of Richard Japes, Sports Metals to give the course-walkers the chance to win a prize. This was won by Mike Ellis from "The Point at Polzeath" and the prize donated and presented by Richard.

The golf format for the day was individual Stableford playing for the "Bayer" Cup. The top three competitors all ended up with 32 points, but the winner on countback was Lee Kirk (MST), in second place was Anthony "Jacko" James (Killiow) and in third was David Daw (Porthpean). Prizes for places were sponsored and presented

by Dave Orchard from Bayer Crop Science. Nearest the pin on the 2nd was won by Lee Kirk and the longest drive on the 18th was won by Adrian West (St Mellion).

Richard Japes, Sports Metals sponsored and presented these prizes. A massive thank you to the two sponsors for the day, Bayer and Sports Metals.

After the fantastic lunch, the members were treated to a presentation by Dave Orchard on "How to get the most from your Fungicides" determining the different modes of action and properties of fungicides, also identifying the stage of the disease you are trying to treat and making sure that the product applied has the capability to deal with task in hand.

A big thank you to Rob and his team and to all at Bowood Park Hotel and Golf Club for their very kind and wonderful hospitality throughout the day.

Our Christmas meeting is to be held at Ashbury GC on Thursday 13 December. The format for the day will be to either play golf (Greensomes) or attend the course walk. This will be followed by Christmas lunch, prizes and raffle. Following this there will be the opportunity to take part in various activities including snooker, indoor bowls and ten-pin bowling. The theme for the day will be "Devon v Cornwall". There will be the opportunity to book accommodation at £25, this includes bed and breakfast and a further round of golf the next day. Please contact me ASAP to secure a place as we expect this to be very popular! Our first meeting of the New Year will be at Perranporth Golf Club on Wednesday 9 January.

I'm sure everyone is aware of Billy Mitchell's tremendous achievement of almost 50 years at the club and of his dedication to the industry.

Billy has been at the forefront of many trials and new initiatives over the years and is held in very high regard throughout the Industry.

That coupled with Perranporth being one of the most natural and unique Links courses in the country, we expect this to be a very popular meeting.

Invites for this meeting will be sent out in early December.

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



SOUTH WALES

I will start with our first ever South Wales Section Dinner and Dance, what an evening it was - fantastic to see so many of us sharing the evening with our beautiful wives and partners.

I know we all spend a lot of our time at work and I do feel it is nice to always give something back to the Wags as they are so often known.

There are so many thank yous we need to give firstly Gareth Knight for arranging the evening at St Pierre the venue, entertainment and food was first class thanks Gareth for such a great event.

The sponsors/patrons; without companies purchasing the tables this dinner would not have been possible a massive thank you to all your companies and please after seeing many of the complimentary emails going around please be sure to book for next year - thanks again.

I would just like to put the rumours to bed regarding myself as many of you have seen the number of photos in circulation of me looking like a very attractive lady? Well this wasn't me trying to be Roxanne (Alex Reid) just the beginning of my stag do.

Thanks to most of you guys for coming it truly was a great night and I'm sure many of us are rather scarred by the evening events and we'll leave it at that!

Our Christmas golf event is taking place at Southerndown Golf Club on Friday 14 December at 10am please contact Gareth Knight or Paul Handy to book your place.

With BTME just around the corner please have a good think about coming even with secretaries or chair of greens I'm sure it would be a huge eye opener for many of them seeing the professionalism of us and what goes on behind the scenes.

For information and great hotel bed and breakfast rates please contact Jane Jones.

I wish all of you and your families a very happy Christmas and a DRY new year.

Peter Holmstrom



Diary of Events

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

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
DECEMBER 2012			
December 2nd	Midland Section Event	Sutton Coldfield Golf Club	Andrew Smith Email: andysmithace@hotmail.co.uk
December 3rd	STRI Regional Training – Technical Turf Management Part 1	Tunbridge Wells Golf Club	Rachael Godfrey, tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
December 4th	South Coast Section Winter Event	Hayling Golf Club	Alex McCombie Email: southcoastsecretary@gmail.com
December 4th	STRI Regional Training – Technical Turf Management Part 2	Tunbridge Wells Golf Club	Rachael Godfrey, tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
December 5th	East of England Section	Rutland Country Golf Club	Bruce Hicks tel: 01205 353925 or 07931 714922 Email: brucehicks1@gmail.com
December 5th	East Anglia AGM & Golf Day	Thorpeness Golf & Country Club	Ian Willett tel: 07929 205398 or Email: info@biggaeastanglia.co.uk
December 6th	STRI Regional Training – Pests, Weeds and Diseases	Tunbridge Wells Golf Club	Rachael Godfrey, tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
December 6th	Essex Section Event and AGM	The Essex Golf & Country Club	Antony Kirway tel: 07887 780065 or Email: antz16@btinternet.com
December 7th	Surrey Section AGM	Guildford Golf Club	Ron Christie tel: 02086 543061 or email: ron-appc@tiscali.co.uk
December 10th	Sussex Section AGM		Dave Allen tel: 01273 596282 or email: d38a@msn.com
December 12th	Northern Section Event	Bracken Ghyll Golf Club	Andrew Slingsby Email: slingsbyfamily@virginmedia
December 12th	South West Section Christmas Golf Day		Adam Matthews tel: 07732 503855 or email: adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk
December 12th	BB&O Section Day	The Oxfordshire	Matthew Nutter
December 13th	Devon & Cornwall Section	Ashbury Manor	George Pitts tel: 07929 754401 or email: Gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
December 13th	London Section AGM	Verulam Golf Club	Adam McColl tel: 07886 513975 or email: adamcoll@hotmail.com
December 14th	South Wales Winter Competition	Southerndown Golf Club	Gareth Knight tel: 01834 842165 or email: gareth@trefoyne.com

BTME 2013



BTME is back for its 24th year at the HIC, 22-24 January 2013

Visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon



Greenkeepers Training Committee

Donald Steel, GTC Chairman, returns with a monthly update



Trust the talents of the greenkeeper

At this time of seasonal goodwill GTC Chairman Donald Steel appeals to all golf course owners, Secretary Managers and Chair of Greens to trust the talents of their Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper

I believe the GTC employer focused workshops are helping to “educate” the golfer on the importance of the employer-Course Manager partnership.

The Prime Minister may not have had greenkeepers in mind when he said in a recent speech “aspiration is the engine of progress”.

However, he might well have done.

One of the virtues of modern greenkeepers that impresses me is their ambition.

Ambition to forge a career on leaving school, ambition for qualifications, ambition to broaden horizons and ambition to seek top jobs.

It is no longer a retreat when all else fails.

In the past, greenkeepers learned largely as they went along.

Most operations had to be carried out by hand and they sweated blood.

Greens were cut with machines that were hard to push and they walked them from green to green, raking a bunker or two on the way.

It is easy to see now that modern greenkeeping has more appeal.

Former generations never complained (well hardly ever!) any more than professional golfers lamented the use of hickory-shafted golf clubs.

It was all they knew.

Even the far-sighted couldn't have envisaged large metal headed woods and driving distances in excess of 350 yards.

Nor could old-time greenkeepers have fast-forwarded their remote controls to contemplate cutting 18 greens in two or three hours or the fleet of sophisticated machinery at their disposal valued perhaps in

excess of half a million pounds.

It is also sobering to look back on the quaint make-up of Green Committees with the Head Greenkeeper nowhere to be seen.

He had to obey committee members' instructions that were often based on the craziest notions.

There were inevitably mutterings under the breath but only the strongest could mount much of a protest.

Education of young greenkeepers has undoubtedly led the surge for knowledge that is impossible to oppose.

At the same time, it has prompted better communications, resulting in Secretaries, committees and members learning as well.

Mutual trust is key.

GTC seminars and roadshows have proved immensely popular in bringing together Green Committee Chairmen, Secretary/Managers and Head Greenkeepers, the prime figures in ensuring the best possible results without interference from golfers themselves.

Nevertheless, the ideal situation would be one, fast approaching, where all golfers are educated enough to appreciate the role of the head greenkeeper.

If a Club has a Green Chairman who is really effective, and works well with the head greenkeeper, he should be kept in his post for as long as he is willing.

The same arrangement should also exist at public and daily-fee courses.

It might even be more important at such courses.

A green fee paying golfer is just as interested in the condition of courses as a private member paying a hefty subscription.

“It always amuses me that golfers rarely offer hints to the chef at their Clubs on how to concoct their culinary delights, but they feel an entitlement to dabble in technical matters as to how greens are cut or bunkers raked”

He plays wherever he likes.

In that case, the owners of courses need to work closely with their greenkeepers if they want to attract and retain business.

If golfers enjoy what they find, they will return; and enjoyment is usually governed by condition.

It is in the greenkeeper's best interests to encourage such a relationship and for the Green Chairman to be knowledgeable enough to understand what may be explained to him.

It always amuses me that golfers rarely offer hints to the chef at their Clubs on how to concoct their culinary delights but they feel an entitlement to dabble in technical matters as to how greens are cut or bunkers raked.

As more and more greenkeepers attain technical excellence, it makes no sense that their every move has to be scrutinised.

They are appointed on account of their experience and technical qualifications and it is their course.

They are perfectly prepared to be judged on results over a reasonable period but, like the members in their own work place, they should be allowed to get on and do their job without somebody constantly looking over their shoulder.



The GTC is funded by:



Contact Details

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GTC Education Director

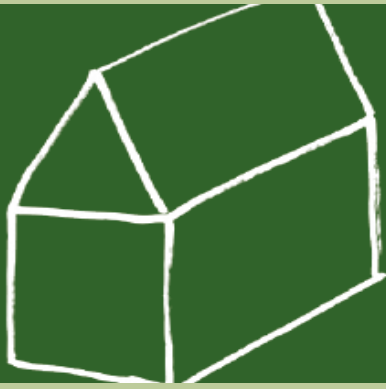
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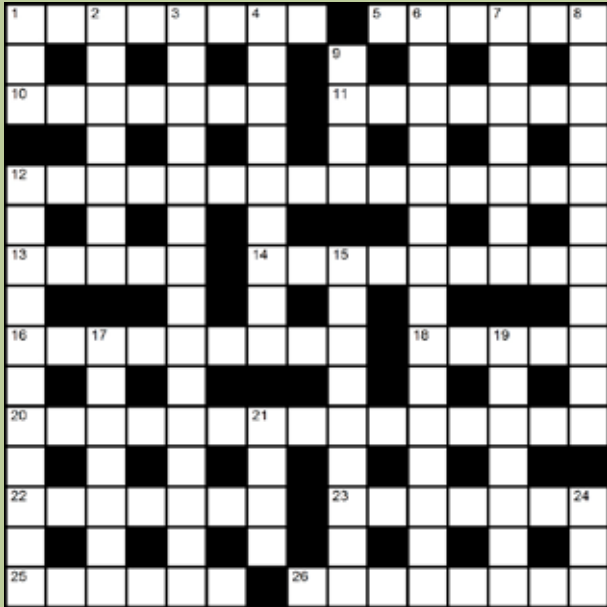
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in the shed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained in the winter months..

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Collectively, the provision of welfare payments (8)
- 5 Symbolic device (6)
- 10 Sacred object revered by some N American Indians (7)
- 11 Act in a customarily accepted way (7)
- 12 In the Mark Twain novels, close friend of Tom Sawyer (11,4)
- 13 The thick of something (5)
- 14 US-Canadian sci-fi series based on Gene Roddenberry's unused Star Trek material (9)
- 16 Strong adhesive - generically, cyanoacrylate (9)
- 18 Mother-in-law of Ruth (Old Testament) (5)
- 20 Sporadic provision of services based on where people live (8,7)
- 22 Old Testament book which follows Lamentations (7)
- 23 Highway robber (7)
- 25 South Pacific attire worn by men and women (6)
- 26 Essex town served by Grange Hill railway station (8)

Down

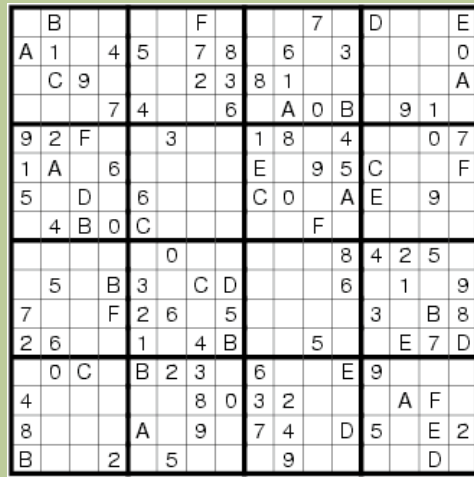
- 1 To sponge or cadge (3)
- 2 Of certain atoms or elements, basic or metallic (7)
- 3 1987 film which added 'bunny boiler' to dictionaries (5,10)
- 4 Small version of larger image (9)
- 6 The first music video aired on MTV (5,3,7)
- 7 Assign great importance to someone (7)
- 8 Very briefly or very soon (11)
- 9 Tree genus which includes maple and sycamore (4)
- 12 Man (4,7)
- 15 Loose Arabian long-sleeved, hooded cloak (9)
- 17 Louis ---, French scientist 1822-95 (7)
- 19 To function (7)
- 21 Old World herb with aromatic, thread-like foliage (4)
- 24 Express mail service based in Bonn, Germany (3)

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

It's been a fabulous year of sport but how closely were you paying attention?

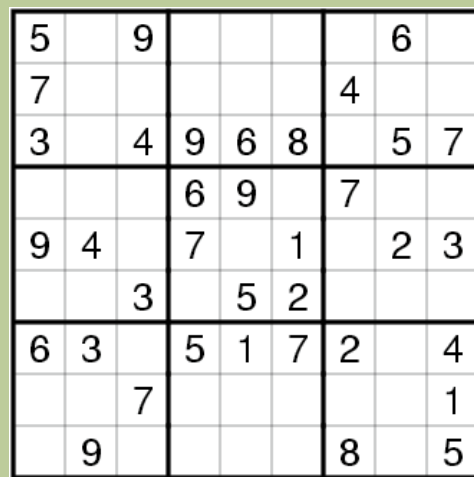
- 1) Which county does England cricket captain Alastair Cook play for?
- 2) Helen Glover and Heather Stanning won Team GB's first gold medal at the 2012 Olympics. Which sport were they competing in?
- 3) Which comedian featured in the Opening Ceremony pretending to play a piano?
- 4) How many gold medals did Usain Bolt win at the 2012 Olympics?
- 5) Who scored the winning penalty

- for Chelsea in the Champions League Final 2012?
- 6) How many Grand Slam finals has Andy Murray competed in?
- 7) What was the final score when Manchester City beat QPR in their final league game to win the Premier League title?
- 8) Who is the bookies' favourite to win The BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2012?
- 9) Which football club won two games in eight days at Wembley in May 2012?



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.

Puzzle Answers on page 65



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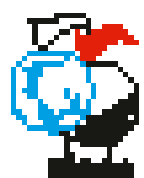
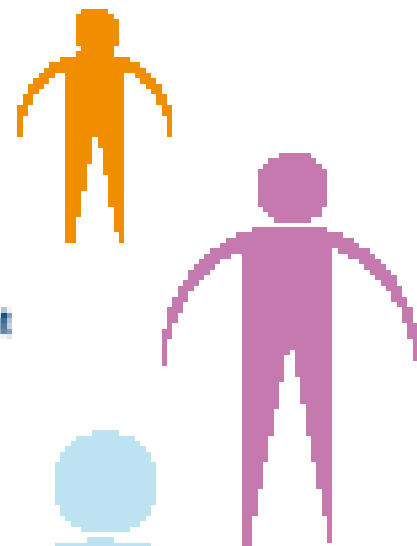
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Greenkeeper Training



A guide to the range of training provided throughout the UK

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the standard of Greenkeeper Training. The Association is a member of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including Section, Regional and National workshops, seminars and conferences.

The range and quality of training now available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper.

This should improve the quality of greenkeeping and help to produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry.

Golf Course Managers should ensure that their staff are trained to the highest standards.

This begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC.

There is a clear link between education, training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff.

There are now a number of GTC Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers identified by the GTC Quality Assured logo



Sami Collins
Head of Learning & Development
BIGGA
01347 833800
sami@bigga.co.uk
www.bigga.org.uk

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Cupar, Fife, KY15 4JB

Contact: Michael.clark@sruc.ac.uk

Full-time National Certificate Greenkeeping, Block Release / Fast Track and Work-based Learning options for SVQ Levels 2 & 3 Sports Turf. SVQ Level 4 Management (block release).

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Contact: Lesley Lowrie 0141-556-3999

Fax: 0141-556-4999 learn@gostatraining.co.uk

SVQ Level 2 and 3 and Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping/ Sportsturf and Landscape. Attendance Day release or Distance Learning. SVQ Level 4 Management is available with flexible learning options. Lantra and NPTC Industry related short courses with certification include Pesticide courses, Chainsaw, full range of Machinery training, First Aid and many more. Candidates may use their Individual Learning Account to fund many of the courses. Training courses are available in Glasgow and Edinburgh areas throughout the year.

ENGLAND

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Askham Bryan, York, North Yorkshire, YO23 3FR

Contact: Central admissions 01904 772211

enquiries@askham-bryan.ac.uk www.askham-bryan.ac.uk

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Block release courses: WBL Diploma Levels 2 & 3 Greenkeeping WBL Diploma Levels 2 & 3 Groundsman Sportsturf Maintenance.

Short courses: FEPA spraying, irrigation, chainsaw and brushcutter courses.



BRIDGWATER

Bridgwater College (Cannington Centre for Land-based Studies), Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2LS

Contact: Helen Goodland; Tel: 07786311429;

Fax: 01278 444363

Email: goodlandh@bridgwater.ac.uk

www.bridgwater.ac.uk

Level 2 and 3 apprenticeship and work-based learning schemes available as well as full time BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sports Turf. Additional short courses include PA1, 2 and 6, Spraying, Chainsaw, First Aid, Manual Handling and PAT Testing.

ENGLAND

GTC QUALITY ASSURED CENTRES AND TRAINING PROVIDERS



A full list of GTC approved training providers can be obtained from the GTC. The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) are continually reviewing the approved status of centres and training providers offering greenkeeper training courses.

For more information contact the GTC on: 01347 838640 or visit: www.the-gtc.co.uk



Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY

Contact: Course Enquiries team on 01995 642211

www.myerscough.ac.uk Email: enquiries@myerscough.ac.uk

Myerscough College is a pioneering centre for Sportsturf Education and Training in Europe. Courses are available at all levels from Introductory Diploma to Honours Degrees in Sportsturf Science and Management. There are options for full-time and part-time study with our FdSc Sportsturf and BSc Sportsturf Science courses uniquely available ONLINE also and having students enrolled throughout the UK, Europe and the USA. A new "Top-Up" BSc Degree in Sportsturf Science and Management is now available for those already holding FdSc or HND qualifications in Sportsturf. Our Work Based learning team offers apprenticeship opportunities throughout the UK.



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Rosewarne, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0AB

Contact: Liz Clarkson 01579 372345/07785105087

liz.clarkson@duchy.ac.uk www.duchy.ac.uk

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OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Smallford Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA

Contact: Andrew Wight 01272 737735

andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk

www.oaklands.ac.uk

Oaklands College offers on demand, on-line learning in City and Guilds levels 2 (Craft), 3 (Supervisory) and 4 (Management) Greenkeeping, Sports Turf Management and Horticulture throughout the South East. In addition we provide on-demand workbased apprenticeships at Levels 2 and 3. Full time courses on offer include Level 2 in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management and Horticulture Entry L3 to Level 3. We also offer short courses for PA1, 2 and 6.

HADLOW COLLEGE

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Tel: 0500 551434

E-mail: enquiries@hadlow.ac.uk

Website: www.hadlow.ac.uk



City & Guilds work-based qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 in Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship and Landscaping for apprenticeships for all ages. We also offer a range of short courses, such as Health & Safety, COSHH, Chainsaw and Pesticide Application.

Additionally full and part-time courses (post GCSE through to degree level) are available in horticulture and a variety of other land-based subjects.



Plumpton College

Plumpton, NR Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3AE

Tel: 01273 890454 enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk

www.plumpton.ac.uk

Foundation Degree: Garden Design. Levels 2 and 3, Diploma in Horticulture. Part time courses: Work based Diploma: Level 1 and Level 2: Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship, Landscaping and Horticulture. Level 3: Greenkeeping, Groundsmanship, Landscaping and Horticulture apprenticeships offered. Level 4: Horticulture, Parks, Gardens and Greenspace. RHS Level 2 and 3 theory and practical. Short courses available. FEPA Spraying and Chainsaw. Bespoke Training, following Training Needs Analysis (TNA).



Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE www.merristwood.ac.uk

Contact: Philip Mayes 07896 67 47 89 pmayes@guildford.ac.uk

or Andrew McEvoy 07896 67 47 86 amcevoy@guildford.ac.uk

Part-time courses: New Sports Turf Management NVQ Level 4 - on-line distance learning course, Sports Turf Diploma Level 3 - on-line distance learning, Sports Turf Apprenticeship Diploma Level 3, Greenkeeping Apprenticeship Diploma Level 2, Groundsmanship Apprenticeship Diploma Level 2, Automatic Turf Irrigation Systems NPTC Certificate, NPTC courses including Safe Use and Operation of Mowers, Tractor Driving, Hedge Trimmers, FEPA Spraying and others. Please contact us for up-to-date listings, qualifications and advice on courses and funding. Open evenings are held regularly at the College.



Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF

Contact: Gareth Phillips 01270 613236

enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk

www.reaseheath.ac.uk

Block release industry tailored courses include Level 2 and 3 Work Based Diploma in Horticulture / Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship.

Also: NVQ Level 4 Sports Turf (distance learning) and apprenticeships plus full-time Level 2 / Level 3 Diplomas in Horticulture.

Short courses include pesticide application, chainsaw operation, safe use of mowers. Bespoke courses and overseas programmes available on request. Campus facilities include a commercial golf course, rugby and football pitches.

ENGLAND

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Contact: Helen Dickson
Call Pershore: 01386 551185 / Moreton Morrell: 01926 318307
Mobile: 07864 933651. Email: hdickson@warkscol.ac.uk

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Your training provider could appear here, as an advert or listing, in our next edition of Greenkeeper Training

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Our key aim is to provide positive learning experiences through working closely with people to meet individual needs and requirements, we offer a comprehensive range of courses at affordable prices we strongly believe training doesn't need to cost the earth and are totally committed to our ethos of providing high quality training.

Our newest member of the team is Demelza she comes from ten years of working in the educational sector although her rural background of living and working in the Yorkshire Dales make her a perfect edition to our team. She comes from a strong farming background but started her career in horticulture which was joked about at the time as being 'the black sheep of the family' (fancy going into gardening when she was a famer!). Once qualified she worked in the horticultural sector for a number of years before trying her hand at teaching in the FE sector with students from local secondary schools mainly unmotivated and disillusioned young people. This went from strength to strength and whilst teaching she qualified in environmental conservation and gained her City & Guilds (NPTC) certificates of competence in pesticides, chainsaw maintenance, tree felling, tree climbing and aerial rescue and use of a chainsaw from a rope and harness. In her time with us so far not only does she carry out training she has developed our website www.low-maintenance.co.uk, our Facebook page Low Maintenance Training and she is currently working on [twitter@lowe_maintenanc](https://twitter.com/lowe_maintenanc) so feel free to keep in touch with us.

Our courses aren't only for those who want or need the certificates we also offer training in the safe use of the equipment or techniques. Access for all is important to us so much so we offer taster sessions to injured military personnel, people who aren't sure what is involved in the industry and those who would like refreshers.

We have run courses at a number of golf clubs and the main attraction is that we are happy to come to you and also whilst we are carrying out the courses we are working on the site (no time away for the greenkeepers though!). We're also now offering the Level 2 Award In the Safe Use of Aluminium Phosphide for Vertebrate Pest Control.

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Get blogging

Robert Laycock looks at how greenkeeper blogs can help communication within golf clubs

It is often said that if golfers knew the reasons why maintenance activities were being carried out by greenkeepers on the golf course, they would be much more tolerant of their activities.

At one golf club where I used to advise, any attempt to improve the course by aerating the greens, for example, was met by the members replacing the Chairman of Green.

Every year a new Chairman was appointed and as a result the course condition was never allowed to improve.

You can guess why I don't visit that club any more!

Greenkeepers use various ways to communicate with golfers - possibly word of mouth as they go about the course or a note posted on the club notice board.

Alternatively, there might be a paragraph in the club's newsletter or in a report from the Green committee, which may be posted on the members section of the club's website.

But is this the best way to get the message across? Information needs to be as up to date as possible.

A number of greenkeepers in the UK now have a blog to let members know what is going on at their course.

Richard Jacques of Malton & Norton Golf Club was encouraged to start blogging by seeing other successful blogs, such as his favourite from the team at Sawgrass.

In the UK, Richard also looked at blogs from this side of the Atlantic, including that produced by Bob Meikle at the Crail Golfing Society.

Another successful blog is Richard Lightfoot's at Bearwood Lakes Golf Club.

Richard Jacques's blog has a direct link from the club website homepage, so that members can easily find it.

He says, "The greenkeeper's blog gets a lot of visitors.

We started getting visitors early on and within a few months

there were many more as the blog became better known within the club and by the time we had been going for seven months we had had 5,000 hits.

"I find that if golfers know why things are being done around their course they are more supportive and tolerant.

If specific problems are being addressed to improve the course, they feel as if they are being listened to."

Even in winter, the blog has to be kept fresh.

If the course is closed or work such as bunker renovation and drainage is being carried out which many of the members don't ordinarily see, the blog emphasises the unseen work which goes on day by day around the course.

Blogs are not for everyone and, if not kept up to date, visitors will lose interest.

However it only takes minutes to download a few pictures which have been taken on the phone during the day and these are easily downloaded onto the blog.

Bob Meikle, Richard Jacques and Richard Lightfoot all use Google Blogger, but there is other software, such as WordPress.

So what are the secrets of success?

Richard says: "If you are going to blog, it is important to do it frequently so that it remains topical and worthwhile for visitors to return to.

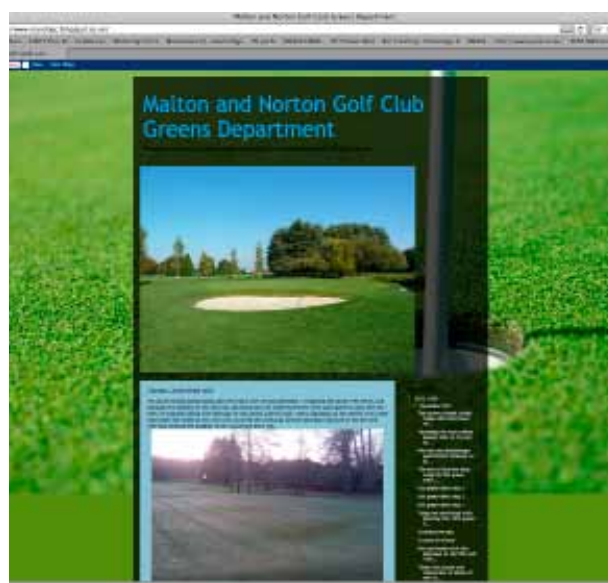
All the greenkeeper bloggers I know have told me that if you can do it several times a week, so much the better.

It is important to keep it interesting and up to date, with lots of pictures.

"If done well, a blog is better than a paragraph in the monthly newsletter provided it is kept up to date and members can easily find it.

The blog also forms a good record - both of jobs that have been done on the course and also the effects of weather on areas of the course.

"Tell the members about it through conventional means or



sending out an email or text.

A link from the club's website homepage so that members can easily access it is also a good idea."

Does the presence of the blog improve the golf club membership's understanding of the greenkeepers' role? Or are the people who read it the usual suspects who show up to trips to the workshop to see the machinery or who attend course walks? Does it draw in the people who are still sitting around in the bar and who would benefit most from this education? Hopefully, by making the information easily accessible, the message will get through to golfers.

The greenkeepers I have spoken to think blogging is a worthwhile thing to do, so I say get signed up to WordPress or Blogger and start blogging

Are you a blogging greenkeeper? Or are you the avid reader of a fascinating blog by another greenkeeper?? If so email steve.castle@bigga.co.uk and you could be featured in an upcoming edition of Greenkeeper International!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Robert Laycock specialises in golf course agronomy and advises at some of the top UK courses. He has worked in turfgrass research and agronomy for the last 35 years and first began working as an independent professional agronomist 20 years ago. He is a Chartered Biologist, a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and a founder member of the Register of Independent Professional Turfgrass Agronomists. www.robertlaycock.co.uk

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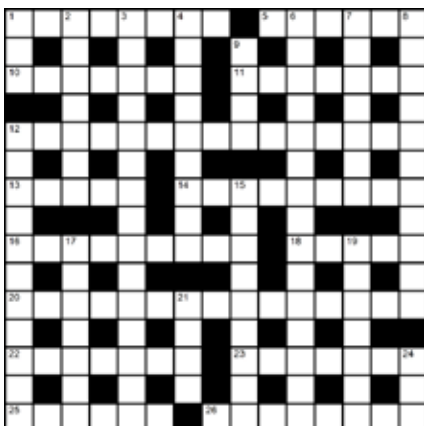


in the shed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

- 1) Essex
- 2) Rowing
- 3) Rowan Atkinson
- 4) Three
- 5) Didier Drogba
- 6) Five – won one, lost four
- 7) 3-2
- 8) Bradley Wiggins
- 9) York City

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3	B	0	5	9	A	F	1	4	C	7	2	D	8	6	E
A	1	2	4	5	E	7	8	9	6	D	3	B	F	C	0
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F	8	E	7	4	C	D	6	5	A	0	B	2	9	1	3
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8	F	6	3	A	1	9	C	7	4	B	D	5	0	E	2
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6	3	8	5	1	7	2	9	4
4	5	7	8	2	9	6	3	1
1	9	2	3	4	6	8	7	5

The Back Nine

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

As a busy year comes to an end, Richard Campey explains why BTME will remain 2013's premier event

Well another year has flown by and despite the misgivings and apprehensions most of us are still here and have kept our jobs. I know that in our immediate vicinity some golf clubs have made rash decisions, and made qualified Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers redundant. Two years down the line they may well will be paying the penalty for this.

Here at Campey Turf Care we have been active throughout the year with shows, seminars and demo tours here in the UK, as well as further afield.

We started the year attending the Sports Turf Managers Associations (STMA) at Long Beach, California.

A week later we were at BTME, and the following month back in the USA for the Golf Industry Show (GIS) in Las Vegas.

We are looking forward to attending BTME in January.

Campeys has always placed a high value on showcasing new and established products and will maximise the potential BTME offers.

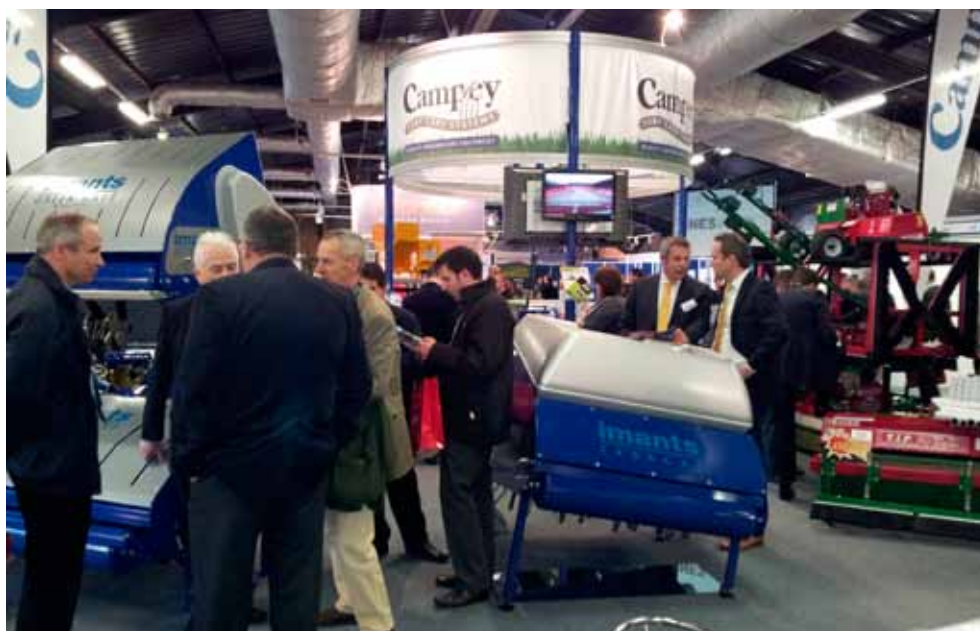
With BIGGA putting 100% effort into promoting and encouraging its members to visit the show, we hope it will be a well-attended, successful platform for everyone concerned.

Our first field day in the UK saw us at Birch Grove Estate; a private enclosed golf club in East Sussex.

We showed and demonstrated our products, carrying out a total renovation on greens and tees in the most atrocious weather conditions I have ever seen in my few years in the industry.

Despite this, our methods worked and greens, tees and fairways are now fit to play on.

This was then followed by our 2012 European Demo Tour to



North Germany, Denmark, Norway, Finland and back on to Jutland, Denmark.

Many hundreds of turf professionals had the opportunity to see our Koro, Imants, Dakota and Vredo machines carrying out actual jobs of work, not just a quick run up and down. This left all absolutely impressed.

It is amazing how far our fellow European counterparts will travel to see machinery working, and how eager they are to see and learn new methods and techniques.

It would be good to see more of this enthusiasm in the UK.

Summer came and went, but we never saw much of it at all as we were busy with demonstrations and seminars in the USA, Japan, and Malaysia.

Then it was home for a disappointing Saltex at which attendance was well down.

Despite being disillusioned with Saltex, a week later this was soon dispelled when we were back in Germany for GaLaBau, where we exhibited with our German distributor, GT Equipment.

Attendance over the three days was over 60,000 visitors.

Successful demos have been carried out this wet autumn, resulting

“It will be time for some of us to have a well earned few days off, ready for The Big One – BTME”

about the author



Richard Campey is the Managing Director of Campey Turf Care Systems. He's spent the past 25 years promoting a strategy of best practice sports ground renovation and maintenance, which has not only enabled him to build a successful company but importantly also help ensure that young people especially have the best possible playing surfaces at their disposal. In addition, Richard's 'natural instinct' for the turf care business has also earned him a reputation as someone who sets industry standards – he was the person who introduced the revolutionary Koro machine to this country in 1997.

in immediate orders from some golf clubs, so it is not all doom and gloom on the golf front.

The present economic climate has certainly made greenkeepers more resourceful.

Instead of going for those large package deals, more are reverting back to how they used to purchase – buying the best individual machines – which smaller companies can offer.

At the end of the day the club will benefit too.

Well here we are now in December.

Regional greenkeeping seminars are nearly over; we have just attended the Slovenia Golf Conference last month.

The IOG Conference and Awards night will soon have come and gone and it will be time for some of us to have a well earned few days off, ready for The Big One – BTME! Campey Turf Care will be exhibiting again this year and hope to see you all there supporting your industry at your show.

Best wishes for the festive season to all.

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

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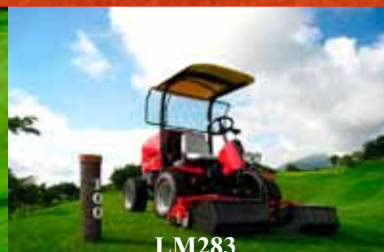
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