

Peter J Boyd Retires as BIGGA Regional Administrator for the Scottish Region

At the end of April 2012 I retire from the role of Regional Administrator for the Scottish Region.

In September 1997 Elliott Small relinquished his position when I was fortunate enough to be successful in my application for employment with BIGGA. Elliot and Edna Small were extremely helpful as I was settling into the job. The handover period made it much easier for me and I thank them for that.

During my 14 plus years I have had the pleasure of getting to know many fine folk in the greenkeeping industry. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Association and the best part, without a doubt, was meeting *You*, the members, as I travelled around Scotland.

Working at the Open and our own National Tournament also gave me the opportunity to meet members from other parts of the UK and abroad.

I would especially like to thank

the Scottish Chairmen, past and present for their encouragement and support. I worked closely with the Section Committees and want to acknowledge that their role is vitally important.

I value their service to the Association and thank them for their guidance and help during my tenure. At the Scottish Conference this year I was presented with gifts from the Scottish Regions to mark my retiring. I was honoured and delighted to accept them from Stuart Taylor, Chairman.

The Patrons and Trade in Scotland are very encouraging towards the Association and I would also wish to express my gratitude to them for their support, not only practical and financial to the Scottish Region, but to me personally.

The Scottish Regional Administrator does not work in isolation but has the backing of the team at headquarters. I thank them for their time and talents that they have been willing to share.

Although I will miss the daily routine and contact with you, I now go off to a life of leisure, golf and malt whisky as well as the *To Do* list my wife has for me. I wish each and every one of you success for the future.

Best Wishes
Peter J Boyd



BIGGA Scottish National Tournament at Ratho Park

By courtesy of the Captain and Committee of Ratho Park, the BIGGA Scottish National Tournament will be held on Wednesday 20 June 2012.

Entry fee is £25. Apprentice fee is £12 which includes coffee/tea, filled roll on arrival, plus an evening meal and sweep and prizes.

Please send all entries with remittance to Rachael Duffy, Learning & Development, BIGGA House, BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Alne, York YO61 1UF by 7 June 2012.

Cheques made payable to BIGGA HQ.

TORO: THE NATURAL CHOICE FOR NATIONAL GOLF CENTRE

It's all smiles at The National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa as the team renew their five-year exclusive deal with Toro and its distributor Lely UK.

Having used Toro machinery since 1997, Course Manager Sam Rhodes, Director of Golf Operations Richard Latham and Finance Director Craig Wagstaff, didn't hesitate to sign on the dotted line for a further five years with the market-leading turf maintenance machinery manufacturer.

Commenting on the signing, Sam says, "We stick with Toro because we believe it's the best make on the market. We have a nine-year rolling machinery

replacement programme, and find the machines really hold their value and make us a bit of money back at the end of that period. We also have a fantastic dealer in Chris Sellars Groundcare, I can't speak of them highly enough."

The latest machines to arrive at the 'home of English golf' in Lincolnshire are two new Workman MDX-D mid-duty diesel utility vehicles, a Reelmaster 5410-D fairway mower and a Groundsmaster 4300-D rough mower. Sam is also looking forward to the installation of a brand new Toro irrigation system commencing later this year.



BIGGA Member Stan Wins iPod

Congratulations to Stan Shotton, Head Greenkeeper at Durham City Golf Course, who filled in Shelton SDS's greens drainage questionnaire and won himself an iPod.

Sheltons had a great response to the questionnaire. Mick Claxton, General Manager at Sheltons said:

"We have had some really useful information back, which will be used in our research and development."

Stan has been at the Durham club for 28 years and is pleased to be part of their 125th birthday celebrations which are taking place this year and include an anniversary golf competition in August.

Durham City Golf Club has been at the forefront of supporting junior golf for a number of years and has close ties to the local schools and community.

Well done Stan!

A Nice Place to Bee

Dan McGrath MG, Course Manager at North Foreland Golf Club, was this month featured in his local newspaper, The Kent Gazette, as the club joins Syngenta's Operation Pollinator, a national scheme aimed at creating habitats for insects, such as bees, on out-of-play parts of courses.

The hope is to boost the declining bee population and develop valuable ecological resources.

Dan, heading up an eight-strong greenkeeping team, explains how it started back in September, when two out-of-play areas on the course were overseeded with wildflowers:

"This provides pollen and nectar sources for bumblebees and other bee species. We have implemented the project into our ecology and environment plan for the site."

"The Operation Pollinator

Golf club aims to lure swarms of insects to nests in out-of-play areas Site has birdies ... now for bees

By Kathy Bailey

www.thiskent.co.uk

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Boost
The hope is to boost the declining bee population and develop valuable ecological resources. Golf course manager Dan McGrath said: "The scheme is with a company called Syngenta. They have been trying to get it up and going for the past 12 months on golf courses nationwide. We are the only one in Kent to take up the challenge and started last September by choosing two out-of-play areas on the course and over-seeding them with wildflowers. This provides pollen and nectar sources for bumblebees and other bee species. We have implemented the project into our ecology and environment plan for the site."

IN THE HOLE: The Red Mason bee is one that the North Foreland team is hoping to entice to the nesting sites.

Puber of two Mr McGrath said: "The Operation Pollinator initiative and our work with the Kent Wildlife Trust has generated great enthusiasm and interest among players and visitors to the club. Creating a vibrant environment and the ecology that we are aiming to attract really adds to the overall playing experience at North Foreland."

North Foreland
The club is famed for its fabulous sea views from every hole and now we are looking to provide golfers with even more interest and attractions, as well as doing our bit to reverse the plight of the bumblebee and help other pollinating insects that are vital for a healthy ecosystem. Mr McGrath, 55, said: "We are taking it step by step, but if everything comes to fruition, who knows? Maybe we will have our own honey!"

GET INTO GOLF GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS

Get Into Golf (the national campaign to grow the game) got down to business when it teed off a taster day in the heart of London's Canary Wharf.

Businessmen in sharp suits and ties joined tourists and shoppers to take on a putting challenge, or to have a quick lesson with a PGA professional.

The Get Into Golf event, featuring brightly coloured inflatable nets and a putting green, proved a huge draw to passers-by who frequently queued to take part.

The one-day event officially launched the England Golf Partnership's campaign to inspire new golfers and support its plan to make England the world's leading golf nation by 2020.

"It's great," said businessman Anthony Doherty, who devoted a chunk of his lunch break to a refresher golf lesson. His colleague and regular golfer, Ross McKie, looked on approvingly. "This is a really

good idea to get people swinging a club," he said.

Another businessman, Nathanael Conn, was also tempted into the nets and said "this is great fun and it's brilliant to have it here. I'd like to think golf is a much more accessible sport than it was years ago."

Birmingham teachers Kiren Rana and Kamal Nijjar both loved their taste of golf and returned home, planning to check out the many taster opportunities in their area.

"I thought I would be really awful but it was good! We both think we might have a go at golf," said Kamal.

The event attracted all ages, from tiny tots to an 85-year-old enthusiast. Members of England's Golf Youth Panel and volunteers who staffed the stand encouraged them, and PGA professionals John McCartney and Paul McNulty offered them taster lessons from the Golf Lab indoor



academy in Canary Wharf.

"This is a brilliant way to raise awareness," said John.

Visitors to the event were given details of the Get Into Golf website, www.getintogolf.org, which features taster and coaching opportunities across the country.

The Get Into Golf campaign is organised by the England Golf Partnership (EGP), which brings together the amateur governing body, England Golf, and the Professional Golfers' Association to grow the game with the support of the Golf Foundation and Sport England.



PGA Catalunya Resort Seals Deal with RJ

Recently voted the No 1 golf course in Spain, The PGA Catalunya Resort, has signed a five-year preferred supplier agreement with Ransomes Jacobsen.

Pictured above with Rupert Price, Sales Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, Miguel Girbes, Golf Director at PGA Catalunya Resort, added:

“We strive continually to enhance the golfing experience for both elite players and visitors on golfing breaks and have recently upgraded our practice facilities which will make a visit to PGA Catalunya Resort even more memorable. We particularly want PGA Catalunya Resort to become the preferred winter training camp for golf federations and clubs around Europe and the signing of this strategic partnership with Ransomes Jacobsen will be a contributory factor to help us achieve this goal.”

Over the next five years, the entire fleet will become orange as the previous equipment is replaced with a range of modern turf maintenance products manufactured in Charlotte, North Carolina and at the company’s European manufacturing base in Ipswich, Suffolk.

Commenting on the signing of the agreement, David Batalle, Head Greenkeeper responsible for the two 18-hole courses, the Stadium and the Tour said,

“Our current fleet is seven years old and as Spain’s number one golf experience, course presentation is highly important to us. The quality of cut we get from the 405 played a significant role in determining our choice of equipment. We mow the fairways every day as you would expect from a club of our standing and the finish it’s producing is superb.

“I’ve been impressed with the level of service we’ve received from Ransomes Jacobsen’s Spanish distributor, Green Mowers of Burgos, following the purchase of the Fairway 405 and this was also a contributory factor in our decision to go with Ransomes Jacobsen.”

Bataller has worked most of his life in the Catalan region, starting his career when employed during the construction of Golf Girona in 1991 and later being appointed Course Manager. He subsequently worked at Barcelona Golf Club and Club de Golf Peralada before taking up his position at PGA Golf Catalunya.



CATCH THE DRIFT

The Drift has become the very first golf club in the UK to upgrade to Toro’s brand new Lynx irrigation control system software.

The 18-hole woodland course in Surrey was installed with a full fairways, greens, tees and approaches Toro Golf Decoder Controller (GDC) system last summer.

However, the software controlling the irrigation hardware has since been upgraded from Toro’s SitePro system to a state-of-the-art Lynx

system for improved efficiency and usability. The Drift made the investment in Lynx and GDC despite these challenging economic times for golf clubs, with the directors’ commitment to improving course conditions representing their single biggest financial decision since acquiring the club in 2001.

The club’s previous system, which was 30 years old, struggled to cope in the exceptionally dry summer of 2010, prompting the directors’ decision to replace it.



Carnoustie’s John Philp Awarded

The R & A organised a forum for Course Managers, Greens Chairmen and Golf Club Secretaries from all the Open venues.

At the event, Peter Dawson CEO of the R & A took the opportunity to present John Philp of Carnoustie with a silver salver in appreciation of John’s

contribution to the 1999 and 2007 Opens at Carnoustie.

John is pictured with P Dawson, Graeme Duncan, General Manager, Carnoustie Golf Links and John Gilbert Greens Chairman, Carnoustie Golf Links.

Courtesy of Gordon Reid GSR Photographic.

Central Section Spring Outing



L-R: Stuart Taylor, Andy Mellon, Paul Murphy, Gordon Moir, Kenny Mitchell, Shaun Anderson, Bob Meikle, Tracey Maddison and Peter Boyd.

Over 50 players enjoyed the Central Section outing on the Craighhead Course at Craig on 17th April courtesy of Craig Golfing Society.

The course was prepared in fantastic condition by Bob Meikle and his staff despite the atrocious overnight weather and it was great to see how it has matured and developed over the past 14 years.

Attending the outing were Richard Clifford and David Roy, Captain and Manager of Craig

Golfing Society respectively along with BIGGA National Chairman, Andy Mellon, Scottish Chairman Stuart Taylor, CEO Jim Croxton, Head of Membership Tracey Maddison and Regional Administrator Peter Boyd, in one of his last tasks before his retirement.

Our thanks go to Craig Golfing Society and all their staff along with the Trade who always support the section so well on the day. For results in full: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

MIDLAND AND NORTHERN REGION 2012 GOLF MANAGEMENT COMPETITIONS

This year's BIGGA Midland and Northern Region Golf Management events, sponsored by Tacit Golf UK, for the second year, will take place at the following venues:
MIDLAND REGION: North of the Region: Gay Hill Golf Club on Thursday 12th July.

South of the Region: Verulam Golf Club on Thursday 9th August.

NORTHERN REGION: East of the Region: Bingley St Ives Golf Club on Wednesday 25th July.

West of the Region: TBA.
 This 4-man team event must include a member of the Green Staff, who must be a member of BIGGA. The other team members may be chosen from the Golf Club Secretary or Manager, Club Captain or

Vice-Captain, Chairman of Green or Golf Club Committee Member. Entry forms will be sent to golf clubs in the appropriate part of each Region.

If you wish to enter a team please contact the BIGGA Midland/Northern RA, Peter Larter on 01476 550115; 07866 366966 or email petelarter972@aol.com



Andrew Smith of Fraserburgh Golf Club

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Fraserburgh Golf Club greenkeeper, Andrew (Andy) Smith.

Andy passed away on Thursday 29th of March aged just 30 years old, after a courageous battle with illness.

Andy was a very loyal and hardworking member of the greenkeeping team and will be sadly missed.

He was a proud family man and our thoughts go out to his children, Ashton, Thalia, Korbyn and Devlin and his partner Michelle.

Andy was also a keen member of the North Section of the Greenkeepers Association.

The North Section Committee and Members, and his former colleagues, would also like to express its deepest sympathy to the family and the thoughts of all of us are with them during this difficult time.

Successor to John Philp Announced

Carnoustie Golf Links Chairman Gordon Wilson, reports that following an interview process that saw many strong candidates at the interviewing table he is absolutely delighted to announce that Sandy Reid has been appointed successor to John Philp as Links Superintendent for Carnoustie Golf Links.

Sandy (35), who is married

to Catherine and has a 1 year old daughter Harriet, hails originally from Blair Atholl.

After graduating from Elmwood College in Fife he worked at Letham Grange for 3 years before making the move to Carnoustie where he has spent the last 7 years as Championship Course Head Greenkeeper. A keen golfer and curler, last year his curling

team were beaten finalist in the Scottish Championships, Sandy said that

"It is an honour to be following on from John and I will do my best to ensure that the high standards set at Carnoustie continue.

"I'm looking forward to working with a fantastic team and meeting all future challenges."



JSM Challenge Cup: The Quest for Glory

Following tournaments in 2008 and 2010, JSM are once again organising a one day five-a-side football tournament to be held on 23rd May 2012.

Entry is open to all greenkeeping and grounds care staff working for organisations located in the company's general trading area of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, South London and East Berkshire. The tournament will take the form of 10 minute matches played in four pools, which will generate the qualifiers for the knock out stages.

Managing Director, David Cole, says: 'We have enjoyed two great events with Sunningdale GC winning the first on penalties in 2008, and then Pyrford Golf Club (right) coming top of a very keenly fought competition in 2010.

The positive feedback from past participants and the continued support of JSM's supplier partners means this bi-annual event is becoming a firm favourite.

Smaller organisations are encouraged to group together with others to make up a team. The day will feature a complimentary barbecue to take place immediately following the trophy and medal presentations.

Entries must be in by early May 4th and places will be limited to keep to the four pool format and time frame intact. More details and entry forms are available from JSM Limited, 0845 026 0061.



ROYAL NORTH DEVON THROUGH TO SLALEY HALL

Royal North Devon Golf Club at Westward Ho! in Devon has won the first regional qualifying tournament of the 2012 John Deere Team Championship golf competition, organised by south-west John Deere dealership Masons Kings.

A total of 18 teams took part in the tournament, which went ahead at Boringdon Park Golf Club, Plympton, near Plymouth in Devon, despite a day of heavy April showers, with BIGGA's regional administrator Jane Jones acting as the tournament's official scorer.

"It wasn't just the rain," said organiser Roy Key of Masons Kings. "Boringdon Park is up on a hill and the wind across the course made it quite a challenging day."

Royal North Devon's net score of 65 in the modified scramble event secures them a place in the next round. St Austell finished on 64 but knew their team format prevented them from qualifying for the final.

The Royal North Devon team – made up of the club's general manager Mark Evans, committee member Robert Fowler and head greenkeeper Neil Crawley – will be travelling to De Vere Slaley Hall in September to play on the championship Hunting course in the national tournament final, together with John Rowe, the dealership's Cornwall depot manager who joins the team as the fourth member.

"I've played in a few John Deere Team Championship tournaments in the past but this is the first time we've ever got through to the final," says Mark Evans, the club's general manager. "The event



was very well organised and we had a great day."

The John Deere Team Championship celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2012, having started in the US in 1987. This is the sixth time the competition has been run in UK & Ireland since the first tournament in 2002, and around 30 regional dealer tournaments are taking place this year.

Meanwhile, Appleby Golf Club recently took receipt of the new John Deere 8000E sit-on mower (right).

"Turning on the tees without marking makes the job so much quicker," said a delighted Steve Campbell, Course Manager.

Here comes the rain...



Although the Drought Order is still in place in many counties, as we went to print, golf courses all over the nation suffered from torrential rain, and many became unplayable. Aldwark Manor GC, situated by the side of BIGGA HQ, proved a handy resource for these pics!

IRON MAN JOSH TO BIKE TO BARCELONA



BIGGA Member, Joshua Webber, is taking part in the Barcelona 'Half Ironman' Triathlon on 27 May in order to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

This charity is close to the hearts of many at Josh's club, Portmore Golf Park.

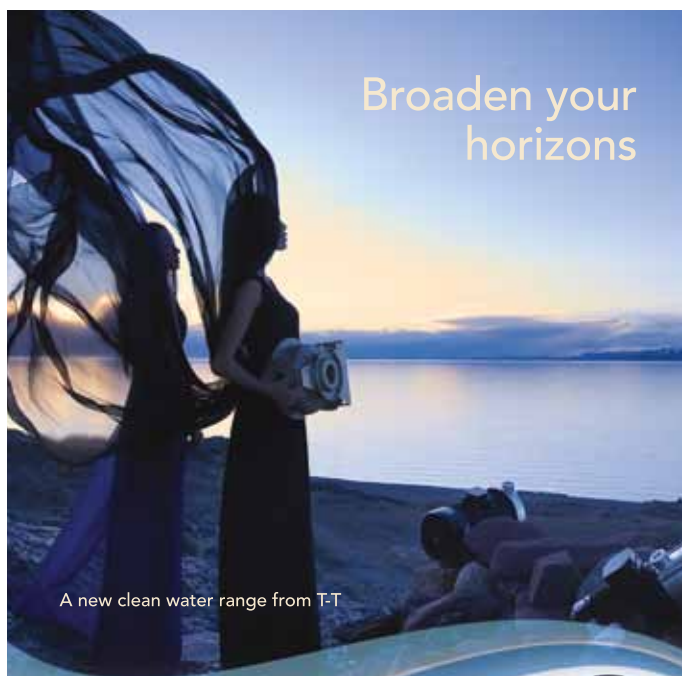
His Half Ironman will consist of a 1.2 mile sea swim, a 56 mile bike ride and a 13.1

mile run. Joshua adds:

"My training has been going well, however the heat is the main thing that worries me, as I'm pretty sure Barcelona has a little more sunshine than the West Country!

"It would be great if anyone could help me out with sponsorship, it really will make a difference to peoples lives."

Broaden your horizons



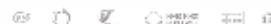
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Playing Consistent, Staying Consistent

Greens smoothness is everything when it comes to giving golfers a better playing experience, according to STRI agronomist, Henry Bechelet when speaking at the 'Playing Consistent - Staying Consistent' spring seminar series, organised by Everris, Ransomes Jacobsen and Syngenta.

He highlighted results of the Syngenta Golf Player Survey that had identified smoothness as the top demand for player satisfaction, with out-and-out speed the least important factor in performance of greens.

The seminars, supported by BIGGA, attracted CPD credits for members who attended the events, which took place at Marriott Dalmahoy Country Club, The Mere Golf Resort and Robin Hood, John O'Gaunt and King's Hill Golf Clubs.

"BIGGA's CPD programme is a valuable, structured process that can maintain and enhance the competence and professionalism of greenkeepers and that's why we - Syngenta, Everris and ourselves - linked this series of seminars to the CPD programme," said Gina Putnam, Marketing Manager at Ransomes Jacobsen.

Speaking at the John O'Gaunt

Golf Club event, Bechelet said that he believes getting it right on the greens can elevate a golf course from simply being good, to being something really special.

"If the focus is on smoothness, it means that we don't have to destroy our greens for the sake of pace. We can work on good agronomy and management that is geared around turf health, and producing surfaces that perform every day, all year round."

The seminars' innovative format consisted of morning presentations and afternoon practical workshops, during which the significant impact of mower set up and adjustment in delivering consistent smoothness of greens was demonstrated as was the importance of balanced turf nutrition, while the problem of dry patch was also addressed.

Using the Jacobsen eclipse delegates were shown that too low a clip rate could lead to a rifling effect that slows ball roll. As the clip rate increases smoothness generally improves, but if it gets too much then the smoothness can begin to decline.

The Ransomes Jacobsen team were able to practically demonstrate and compare the difference in smoothness produced on a single green cut at three different

clip rates by an Eclipse 122 pedestrian all-electric mower.

A green was divided into three sections, each mowed at a different clip rate (3.33mm, 2.71mm and 1.61mm) with each adjustment taking less than a minute.

Physical measurement of the resulting green's smoothness was made using the STRI's Trueness Meter™, which measures and records lateral and vertical deviation.

"BIGGA's CPD programme is a valuable, structured process that can maintain and enhance the competence and professionalism of greenkeepers"

Gina Putnam

tion in the turf's surface by means of a golf ball-sized roller moving across the surface.

The results showed that the 2.71 mm clip rate setting brought the greatest improvement (20 per cent) in smoothness, a result that will translate in practice into putts which bobble and deviate less from the golfer's selected direction.

Dr Simon Watson of Syngenta commented that the company's Golf Player Survey could be instru-

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mental in helping greenkeeping teams secure investment in the course.

“The findings of the independent survey are now freely available on the GreenCast website, in a format that greenkeepers can use with club secretaries and Green Committees to argue their case,” he said. “It can help focus efforts on key areas that really influence golfers’ choice in where they play, and the satisfaction that will keep them coming back.”

He highlighted that the new Syngenta wetting and water conservation agent, Qualibra, will have an important role in maintaining consistent playing surface quality this season.

“As an effective water conservation agent, it holds soil moisture deep and evenly and that enables healthy roots to grow more vigorously and it achieves more efficient irrigation use.”

Watson reported trial results have shown that Qualibra is more effective in getting soils back to optimum soil moisture and with significantly less irrigation than other wetting agents tested. A major additional benefit is that it avoids holding too much water that could adversely affect turf health or playability.

Lewis Blois of Everris reinforced the message that relieving stress on turf plants is key to Integrated Turf Management plans that will help maintain more consistent playing surfaces.

He urged greenkeepers to have soils regularly sampled for their nutrient status and to tailor fertilizer applications accordingly. “The aim is to provide a consistent and even supply of nutrients that matches plant growth and demand. Improving efficiency, with more of the nutrients taken up and utilised by the plants, minimises leaching, run-off, lock-up and waste.”

“Avoiding peaks and troughs in nutrient availability with a balanced slow release of nutrients also encourages healthier turf plants, which are more able to withstand stress, wear or disease and will maintain better playing surfaces, he added.

Blois reported results of Everris trials where a SierraformGT slow release fertilizer programme resulted in a 27% reduction in disease infection, compared to just 8% reduction with a conventional fertilizer programme. Furthermore, when a wetting agent was also added to further reduce stress on the plants, the disease reduction was over 46% better than untreated.

A Worthwhile Experience for a BIGGA Member



“My entire team and I attended the seminar and found the content informative and thought provoking. Each presentation stimulated a lot of discussion amongst the attendees which was great because it gave us the views not only of the presenters but of other course managers/greenkeepers.

“It was great for my team to meet the people behind some of the companies we deal with, to interact and learn from people with industry experience. The trainees especially enjoyed the day as they were not aware of what was involved in bringing out new products and innovative solutions to the industry.”

Andy Wood, Robin Hood GC