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The BIGGA Champion



Oly Browning is victorious at the BIGGA National Championship

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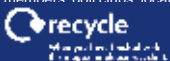
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Oly with the BIGGA Challenge Trophy, in front of the Irvine clubhouse

A champion autumn

Congratulations to Oly Browning of Stocks Golf Club in Hertfordshire on becoming the BIGGA National Champion at Irvine Golf Club recently.

Derek Wilson and his team presented the golf course beautifully for the Championship and we are very grateful to Kubota and Charterhouse for their generous sponsorship of the event.

I really enjoy attending the National Championship and having the chance to spend time with so many members who are passionate about playing the game. Frilford Heath Golf Club in Oxfordshire has kindly agreed to host the event in 2013 and I very much look forward to seeing who will take Oly's crown.

Congratulations also to Curtis Tyrrell MG and his team for preparing the Medinah No. 3 course for what turned out to be one of the most exciting and memorable Ryder Cup Matches ever.

Having coped with fifty straight days of temperatures in the 90s during the Chicago summer, Curtis put in to action a plan to bring the course in to the immaculate condition the players found when they arrived and was maintained throughout the week. Within these pages is a review of the event from the course maintenance standpoint.

As I write this piece the leaves on the trees around BIGGA House have turned beautiful shades of yellow and red.

Autumn is one of my favourite times of year but I know it is far from welcome to those greenkeepers who manage tree lined golf courses.

The various social media forums are already alive with members bemoaning the fall of leaves and of course this comes at a time when many are flat out with important maintenance tasks. This month we feature a range of labour saving devices to make the leaf problem a little easier to deal with.

November traditionally marks the start of the education season for BIGGA with many of our Sections holding a variety of excellent seminars and conferences over the coming months and of course the Continue to Learn programme at BTME in January is the centrepiece of our Learning and Development schedule.

Bookings have been good for Harrogate so don't delay in reserving your place at the Turf Managers Conference or the wide ranging array of workshops and seminars.

Four of our Regions are holding their annual Conferences during November, by the time you read this the Midland and Northern Region events will have taken place and there are details of the South East and South West & South Wales Regional events elsewhere in this magazine.

These Conferences are a great opportunity not just to learn more about the technicalities of golf course management but also to network with your peers and interact with the many supporters from the trade who support the events. I hope you take the time to attend your Region's event. Enjoy the read.



Jim Croxton
Chief Executive

NOVEMBER 2012

FEATURES

16 Golden Browning

A report on a sun-drenched few days at the BIGGA National Championship 2012



21 Modern mix herbicides more than a match for turf weeds

Dr Terry Mabbett looks at the tools available to tackle troublesome turf weeds

26 A day in the life

Steve Castle mucks in at Lymm Golf Club

31 Proactive approach gets greener results

The course manager taking a more proactive approach to winter disease control

34 BTME 2013 – A Ryder Cup flavour

More benefits of attending the show – including past, present and future perspectives on the world's greatest golf tournament

36 Solutions for the autumn fall

Phil Evans with a timely look at various leaf debris solutions

40 Maintenance equipment

James de Haviland's tips

42 Seed and sustainability

Noel MacKenzie on bent grass and sustainability



21



26



31



42



6



6

REGULARS

6 NEWSDESK
EXCLUSIVE – Inside
the Ryder Cup

We bring you all the excitement of Europe's win with Curtis Tyrrell and Lee Strutt's behind the scenes stories

11 Chairman's word

12 Learning &
Development

13 Membership

14 Industry Update

48 Around the Green

55 Diary of Events

56 Greenkeepers
Training Committee

58 Agronomy update

The bi-monthly STRI column

60 Buyers' Guide

63 Recruitment

66 The Back Nine



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



10

GI NEWSDESK

The latest news from around the globe

The 2012 Ryder Cup at the Medinah Country Club will go down as one of the most dramatic in history.



In a GI exclusive, Curtis Tyrrell – Director of Golf Course Operations at the venue – gives us the inside story on an incredible week

NEWS SPECIAL EXCLUSIVE

Inside the Ryder Cup

The dust is starting to settle around Medinah. Not only have the massive crowds, contractors and structures started to disappear, it finally rained a bit to clear all the dust!

I found it funny talking with Jim McKenzie as his Ryder Cup was beyond wet, and ours was a dust bowl! Anyway, everything is different now. For five years I looked at the turf with September 2012 in mind. Now it's different.

Now we're looking back on what was truly the best of week of my career. I would say it was the best week of my life, but my honeymoon and kids will always take that prize. I had many thoughts, ideas, and expectations for the Ryder Cup. They all came true in their own unique way, and all things leading up to, during, and after, exceeded my expectations. I have no regrets.

I wouldn't change a thing. It was simply unbelievable and I still have adrenaline flowing through me as a result.

There were many highlights. Meeting the many volunteers that proceeded to work their butts off all week for us was certainly a part of it all that I will never forget.

I mean guys just simply dropped it all, and gave 100% running flymos, raking bunkers, hand watering, and mowing! I wasn't sure how this volunteer program was going to go. But to see what

happened was humbling and inspiring. We will always be grateful to each of them, and hope we get to repay the favour in the future!

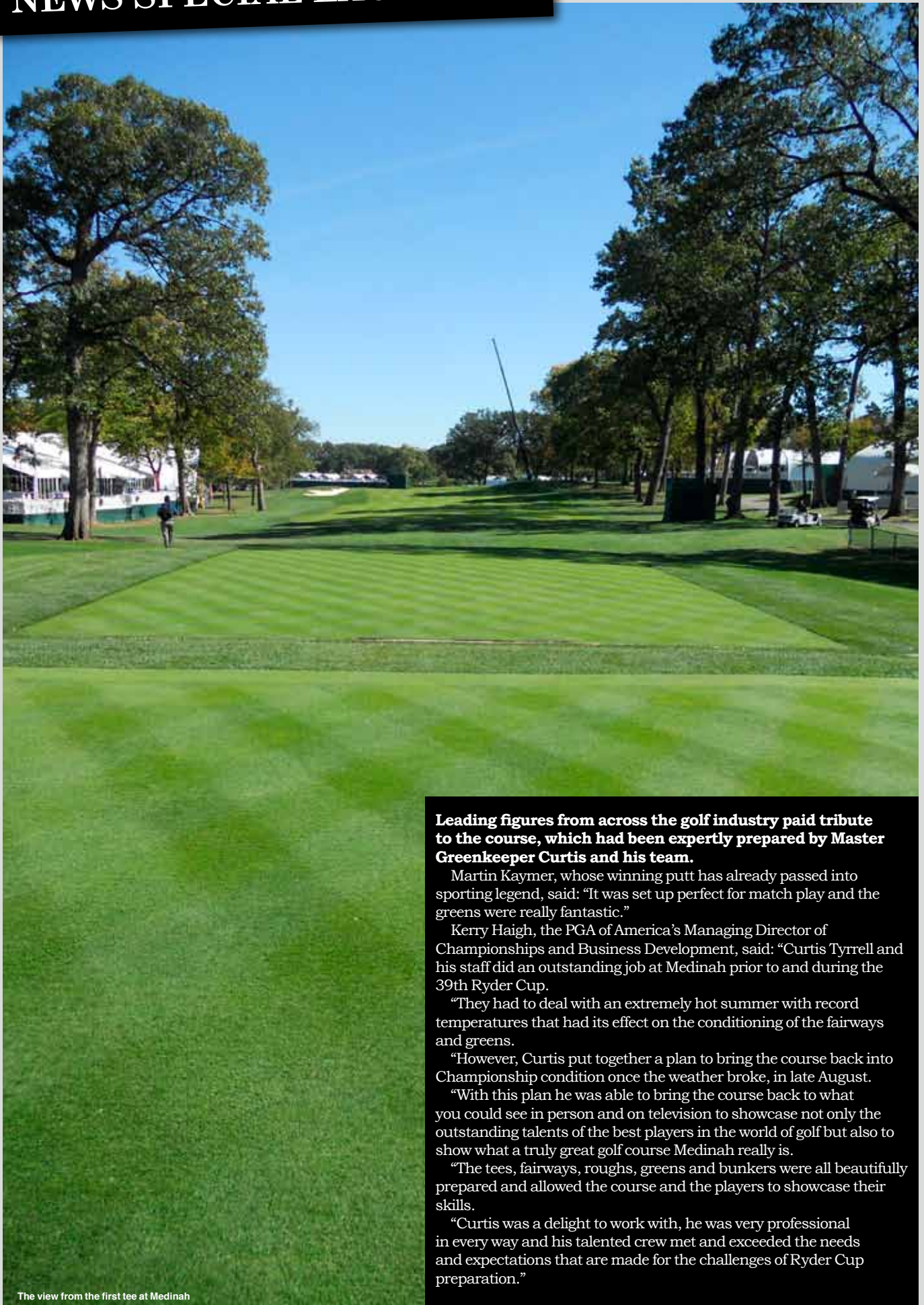
My team blew me away that week. We have been striving for that one moment for so long, and their execution, management, and professionalism stood apart. I couldn't be more proud of them and what they accomplished.

Managing the turf through the week was so much fun. The weather was finally in our favour and we basically did whatever was necessary to provide what was asked of us.

There were no worries - and best of all, the turf is better today than it was that week. Trying to hide from the European contingent of our team (including Steve Chappell and Lee Strutt) when we were stimping greens was a lot of fun - just kidding of course! Green speeds and the general ball roll was something I was really proud of that week. I thought we delivered what Davis Love III asked, and then some. Too bad our guys got skiddish on the greens when your guys were rolling!

Now that it's over I really only have one thing to say...Let's do it again! C'mon we're ready! Rematch! On a serious note, I would do it again, 100 times over. It was beyond the definition of fun. I wish it was starting again tomorrow.





The view from the first tee at Medinah

Leading figures from across the golf industry paid tribute to the course, which had been expertly prepared by Master Greenkeeper Curtis and his team.

Martin Kaymer, whose winning putt has already passed into sporting legend, said: "It was set up perfect for match play and the greens were really fantastic."

Kerry Haigh, the PGA of America's Managing Director of Championships and Business Development, said: "Curtis Tyrrell and his staff did an outstanding job at Medinah prior to and during the 39th Ryder Cup.

"They had to deal with an extremely hot summer with record temperatures that had its effect on the conditioning of the fairways and greens.

"However, Curtis put together a plan to bring the course back into Championship condition once the weather broke, in late August.

"With this plan he was able to bring the course back to what you could see in person and on television to showcase not only the outstanding talents of the best players in the world of golf but also to show what a truly great golf course Medinah really is.

"The tees, fairways, roughs, greens and bunkers were all beautifully prepared and allowed the course and the players to showcase their skills.

"Curtis was a delight to work with, he was very professional in every way and his talented crew met and exceeded the needs and expectations that are made for the challenges of Ryder Cup preparation."

Lee Strutt, Course Manager at G West and a member of the support team for the tournament, gives us a greenkeeper's eye view of his week in Chicago



My Ryder Cup adventure started in 2011 when I got to know Curtis Tyrrell and I applied to join the support team.

During a visit to the GIS show at Las Vegas in February this year, he confirmed I was on the list of support crew along with Steve Chappell from Gleneagles (home of the 2014 Ryder Cup).

So, on Saturday 22 September we left Gleneagles at 4am for Chicago and got to our hotel at around midnight UK time.

Even though we were tired, the lure of Chicago's lights couldn't stop us enjoying a beer or two at the local Irish bars which are at the heart of the city's rich history.

Sunday afternoon we headed to Medinah Country Club for the first time. It was amazing to see the super scale of the event in person.

Curtis took time out to give us a guided tour, explaining how he had dealt with some of the issues they'd had this extremely hot summer.

On Monday we viewed the last minute preparations and received our uniforms and schedule for the week.

There were approximately 90 full time staff as well as 109 volunteers during the week – meaning a lot of organising and scheduling.

We then had an opportunity to get to know the 104 superintendents and assistants from all over the US.

There were just four of us from Europe and one expat - so we knew if Europe won we might be a bit outnumbered on the cheering front!

From Tuesday onwards we carried out many different preparation duties including bunker maintenance, hand watering, flymoing, green stimping, hand blowing...and polishing sprinkler heads!

During Thursday onwards, once morning setup had taken place, we were unable to get back to the maintenance facility due to the large crowds of spectators.

So we were held back for a while until the surrounding highway was shut so that we could drive in convoy back

along the main highway to the maintenance facility.

It was some spectacle - a convoy of 30 to 40 golf vehicles towing blowers, rollers and crew with spectators waving as we went past.

Friday morning, the pressure started to mount, there was less banter and more focus as this was the first day of the actual event.

The first day's play ended with the US 5-3 up.

It was great that things had got off to an exciting start and the course was performing just how Curtis had planned it.

One of the most amazing things was hearing so many people cheering the matches, it is one hell of a thing to hear 65,000 people cheering all at once!

Saturday's preparation followed a similar plan to Friday's, and the US ended the day 10-6 up.

Sunday saw the start of one of the most amazing days in Ryder Cup history, where the European underdogs came back as a team to regain their title!

It was amazing to have been a part of the preparations and maintenance of the course and to be standing there witnessing the penultimate game clinch the Ryder Cup.

It was an amazing gesture by Curtis to ensure that we could celebrate our win for as long as we wanted that evening and he joined us in the celebrations.

That will be one lasting memory of the event, a very hard working man, his team and his family had spent the last five years living the dream and preparing his golf course for the third biggest sporting event in the world.

The Europeans had won, but he stood to the end with us to celebrate the best team winning.

A remarkable man, a true professional, and now a friend.

To those that look at these events and wish to take part - I can only encourage you to take every opportunity to get involved, even though I spent a fair bit of cash!

I can certainly say that I hope it won't be my last Ryder Cup.

GI NEWS FEATURE

Ash Tree Alert

Dr Terry Mabbett reports on an unprecedented potential threat to your course

GI LEADS THE WAY REPORTING CHALARA DIEBACK

Major national newspapers and TV news reported the story about chalara dieback in October – a full month after it appeared in Greenkeeper International.

The Daily Mail, The Telegraph and The Guardian all reported on the threat from the fungus to the nation's ash tree population.

It also appeared on ITV news and became one of the most popular stories on the BBC website – but our readers were ahead of the game after Dr Terry Mabbett's article in our September edition. The warning, entitled 'Native Common Ash Trees Face Surprise Disease Threat', broke the news about the potentially devastating alien plant pathogen which had arrived in the UK. It also featured practical tips on dealing with its "unprecedented threat".

Keep an eye on Greenkeeper International for the exclusives!



BUCK TO BASICS CLINCHES TITLE

The final of the BIGGA Golf Management Competition took place on 15 October at Frilford Heath GC in Oxfordshire.

For the second year TACIT sponsored the whole competition and BIGGA would like to thank them for their support of the Association and its members in sponsoring this competition.

Section qualifying events took place during the summer and eight teams won through to the final.

TACIT had chosen Frilford Heath Golf Club for the final and it proved a superb venue with the course in excellent condition.

The teams of four players which were made up of members of the club management together with their Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager played an 18 hole stableford competition on the Red

Course after which players sat down to a three course dinner.

The winning team won a set of 20 hole cups and 20 flag pins for their course together with the trophy and there were club prizes for the second third and fourth places together with individual team prizes and nearest the pin and longest drive prizes.

Pictured here is the winning team from Buckingham GC who won the competition with 82 points, in second place was Mendip GoC 80 points, third Brockenhurst GC 75 points and fourth Newport GC 72 points.

The nearest the pin prize was won by Tony Thomas from Morrision GC and the Longest Drive prize was won by Steve Rawlings from Mendip Gold Club.

Arnold Phipps-Jones

Opportunities Abroad for Young Greenkeepers – Part 2

IIEPUK Ltd is a not-for-profit educational organisation which co-ordinates international exchange programmes in over 35 countries.

This Autumn IIEPUK has been asked by WISE (Worldwide International Student Exchange) to find 300 young people in the UK to fill internships starting next spring on PGA level golf courses from Florida to New York.

Vanessa Peach, director of IIEPUK, spoke about the benefits of doing an internship overseas as an unbeatable life experience and a potential job clincher.

"Overseas internships are not for everyone but if a young person wants to boost their career prospects gaining international experience will certainly help

them to stand out from the crowd.

"Most importantly, every intern is investing in their future, not only through the work skills they will gain but life skills too.

An internship will suit a young, outgoing and motivated individual, who likes a challenge and works hard but has fun too.

"The important thing is for them to live the dream and come back with enthusiasm, having achieved their goal and done something that many of their peers will not have done – plus they'll have been paid! They will also have made new friends and valuable business contacts."

Accommodation is included plus a monthly stipend of \$1,100 that will more than cover programme, visa and flight



expenses as well as pay for a holiday at the end of the placement before returning home.

The internships will last up to ten months starting in February and March 2013.

The same programme will run in 2014 and so if anyone is interested for 2013 or 2014 contact Emily@iepuke.com

Success for Sussex



Kevin Weller and his team produced a superbly presented golf course with some lively paced greens after heavy overnight rain for the annual triangular match between the Essex, Surrey and Sussex Sections of BIGGA at Lingfield Park Golf Club.

This year after a closely contested match the ten men of Sussex broke the stranglehold held by Surrey over recent years of the event by a winning margin of just three points with Essex finishing a close third.

Nearest the pin winners on the day were Sam Cook and George Barr, with Antony Kirwan hitting the longest drive.

Lingfield Park, like BIGGA, are celebrating 25 years since the formation of their Club.

We are grateful to Ernest Doe for their continued support of this popular event.

REMUNERATION 2013

The Committee for Golf Club Salaries (CGCS) have recommended a 1.5% increase in the level of recommended Salary Scale for Greenkeepers.

This increase is less than the 2.5%+ RPI rate normally adopted as the Committee accepts that the current year has been a very difficult one for Golf Clubs and the continued strain on their finances.

The CGCS recommended rates of pay package are guidelines only and the Committee is aware that they are for negotiation only and that, as in many industries, some staff will earn substantially more, while others will earn less, depending on the standing of the golf club. The CGCS wants to emphasise that these scales are for 'packages' and should be treated as such, whilst taking into account individual and team performance and any increase in responsibility and/or qualification.

The CGCS, once again, wishes to draw the attention of golf clubs to impending changes in pension legislation. Regional variations will be published and downloadable in PDF format from the BIGGA and GCMA websites from December onwards.

SUPPORT 'MOVEMBER' AND WIN A TRIP TO NEW YORK



Greenkeepers are being urged to support the annual 'Movember' charity drive – and put themselves in with the chance of winning a fabulous trip to New York.

British Seed Houses (BSH) has joined forces with movember.com to support men's health charities such as Prostate Cancer UK and the Institute of Cancer Research.

All you have to do is email a clean shaven picture of yourself taken on 1 November to seeds@bshlincoln.co.uk or tweet them to @[aberforage](https://twitter.com/aberforage) or @[bshamenity](https://twitter.com/bshamenity) together with a front page of a daily newspaper to authenticate the date.

Then email or tweet the end result on November 30 – and the winner will scoop flights and accommodation for a weekend in New York for two in either January or February next year, together with £500 spending money.

BSH have shown their grassroots support by growing a giant moustache in support of the men's health charity.

The giant 'Mo', around 120 foot by 40 foot, is a larger-than-life version of the logo used by the charity on its movember.com website.

BSH has also pledged £1,000 towards the cause. The giant moustache was grown by Andrew Cook, the South Wales and South of England Area Sales Manager for the agricultural side of the business, who has a farm in Somerset.

Andrew said: "I began with a scale drawing and then marked the area out with fencing stakes in a field where we were growing grass for silage.

"I then mowed it into shape using an agricultural mower and did the final trimming with a strimmer. I was pleasantly surprised at how well it worked out."



Chairman's Word

BIGGA National Chairman, Tony Smith, writes with his regular update

European support

Firstly, I'm delighted to say the board and I recently enjoyed hosting the Board of the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA) at BIGGA House.

We have many members who work in different countries across Europe and there are many areas that affect greenkeeping that are governed by the European Union.

It is therefore important to BIGGA that FEGGA has our strong support and as the largest association within Europe we do all we can to ensure our members are well represented. As part of our meeting we welcomed the FEGGA board for a joint session which was positive and constructive on both sides.

As the frosts begin to set in it's a sure sign that BTME is getting closer, and I'm urging everyone to get in gear for BIGGA's showpiece event.

After such a successful event last year, we need everyone to be supporting and promoting the trade show, the seminars, the workshops and everything associated with BTME. If you're coming – and if not, why not? – you need to be sorting out your travel plans and booking accommodation, it will come round before you know it.

We want you not only to attend, but to encourage as many other people to attend as possible and bring them along. Everything you could possibly need is on our dedicated website at btme.org.uk

I know everyone thoroughly enjoyed the 2012 BIGGA National Championship. It was an exceptional event on a traditional golf course, immaculately prepared by Derek Wilson and his team. I'd like to thank the captain David Moore and the entire Irvine Golf Club for their hospitality, and also the sponsors Charterhouse and Kubota who once again offered excellent support for the event.

Summer turned up at last,



Many areas that affect greenkeeping are governed by the European Union

although I seemed to spend most of the tournament in a bunker on the 18th. I thought I was going to bury myself in the first one, then managed to escape but landed right in another. My misfortune apart, it was a wonderful couple of days.

During the presentation dinner I took the opportunity to mention one subject that I want to be a recurring theme of my time as Chairman and beyond – communication. We all know that course management can be a lonely business at times and when the weather is inclement as it has been this year it can also be quite a thankless task.

At times like these it is vital that we stick together and also make sure we talk regularly with our peers and friends. It's a cliché to say that a problem shared is a problem halved but there is no doubt that words of support and advice are always welcome.

So I urge all of you to make sure you pick up the phone and give

Tony next to the now infamous bunker on the 18th at Irvine GC

each other a call or a text and share your problems and successes.

On my own course, it's been very hard work this summer as I know it has been for everyone. We're working on improving the drainage as the wet weather has highlighted problems in certain areas of the course. We're also continuing work on the long-term tree management programme.

I was very fortunate to attend the Ryder Cup on behalf of BIGGA – what a fantastic experience. It was a privilege to meet Medinah's Director of Golf Course Management Curtis Tyrrell and see the knowledge Steve Chappell and Lee Strutt were gaining ahead of the next tournament at Gleneagles. BTME offers a unique opportunity to hear their reflections on a stunning event and share their knowledge - don't miss out.

As always, I'd be delighted to hear from BIGGA members. I'm available on 07988 838956 or at tony.smith48@ntlworld.com.

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Learning & Development

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

As we leave our wonderful (!) summer behind us, let our thoughts turn to training and the BTME in January. By now you will have received your Continue to Learn brochures and are thinking about which seminars to attend. Let us whet your appetite with a summary of what to expect.



Continue To Learn

Bookings are coming in thick and fast for the Continue to Learn sessions. The advice is to book early to avoid disappointment! Each month, until BTME, we will focus on a different area of Continue to Learn, providing a brief summary of what is available. This month, it is the turn of the Focus On sessions. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the Focus On seminars are designed to provide 'bite-sized' learning opportunities which delegates can combine with their visit to the trade show.

The sessions last up to two hours and offer a range of subjects from soil and grass science to updating computer skills.

Tuesday 22nd January

Assertiveness - Janet Watling, In Step

What's in a Soil Analysis? - Simon Barnaby

Excel - Essential Calculations for Greenkeepers - Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

Improve Your Powerpoint and Presentation Skills - Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

Managing Difficult Situations - Janet Watling, In Step

Disease identification - Ruth Mann, STRI

Use Microsoft Project to Help Plan and Organise Your Medium and Long Term Project Plans - Jacky Lowe, Training Gem

Participating and Managing Meetings - Janet Watling, In Step

Grass Identification - Andy Newell, STRI



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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Wednesday 23rd January

Ecology in Focus - Bob Taylor, STRI

Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop Stages 1 & 2 - Les Howkins/Kerran Daly/Lee Strutt

Working to Increase Nature Without Compromising Golf - Bob Taylor, STRI

Master Greenkeeper Certificate Workshop Stage 3 - Les Howkins/Kerran Daly/Lee Strutt

So You Want To Be Promoted - Murray Long, Course Manager, Sunningdale GC and Stuart Yarwood, Course Manager, Lymm GC

Ecology and the Business Working Together - Bob Taylor, STRI

For further information and an up-to-date programme for Continue to Learn, visit www.btme.org.uk/education/seminars

Assistants Development Programme

Following on from last month's launch, the 'So You Want To Be Promoted' sessions continue with the South East Regions', to be held at Sunningdale Golf Club on Tuesday 20th November, presented by Murray Long, Sunningdale Golf Club and Matt Plested, Muswell Hill Golf Club. Further details can

be found in the events section of the website. This is an exceptionally worthwhile event to attend for any greenkeepers wanting to progress in their chosen career and are unsure of the skills they will need.

Library

The library has been offline whilst the selection of books has been updated and re-categorised. Thanks should go to John Deere for their generous donation to the library fund.

It has provided the opportunity to remove some of the older books and increase the stock of the more popular ones.

Careers

For those of you who have been using the website recently, you will find the Careers section has changed slightly, with more resources added.

You will find information about apprenticeships, grants, minimum wages, links to colleges and other essential websites. Again, John Deere are kindly providing the sponsorship for this section. If you have any suggestions for the Careers section, please get in touch.



BIGGA Membership

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

We are pleased to be able to repeat the tastecard offer exclusively for BIGGA Members (time limited – Friday 9th – Wednesday 28th November)

BIGGA has once again negotiated an exclusive deal with tastecard, the nation's largest dining club, to give BIGGA members an exclusive discount on annual membership, helping save a fortune when dining out!

A tastecard membership card gives you access to the most incredible deals at over 6,500 dining establishments nationwide. Restaurants range from La Tasca, Pizza Express, Cafe Rouge and GBK to Malmaison and everything in between! Each restaurant featured offers 50% off the total food bill or 2-4-1 across all courses (even for groups of more than two diners in most cases).

BIGGA Members can join for a full year membership at an exclusive BIGGA rate of £29.95 (RRP £79.95). Be quick, as this offer is only available from November 9th to November 28th 2012.

There are no catches, it is just a great deal, and an opportunity for all 'foodies' to save a small fortune on eating out over the next 12 months. Stuck for Christmas present ideas, why not treat someone to tastecard membership, a truly unique gift that will be used all year round, or purchase one for your son/daughter who has gone off to University?

For more information on the tastecard visit www.tastecard.co.uk

How to purchase your tastecard

From November 9th BIGGA Members will be able to purchase a tastecard via the Members Area of the BIGGA Website by paying online or by telephone by contacting BIGGA HQ directly. This exclusive deal is not available directly from the tastecard website.

EXCLUSIVE MEMBER OFFER!

A 12 month tastecard for just £29.95 (RRP £79.95)

50% OFF or 2 FOR 1 across all courses

Are you a BIGGA Member currently studying?

As a BIGGA Member you can access a fantastic study resource in the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) where members can gain access to a vast collection of turfgrass educational material.

This is a great benefit for all members who are currently in study, so whether you are studying at Level 2, 3 or 4 or studying for a diploma or degree this is definitely a resource you will find useful.

To access the TGIF log in to the members area of the BIGGA website, select 'Member Resources' from the options on the left hand side, scroll down to 'Turfgrass Information File (TGIF)' and download the Getting Started Guide or just click on the link which will give you access to the file directly.

BTME 2013 registration is now open – avoid the queues

Visit the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk

Click on the BTME banner at the top of the page and select REGISTER NOW!

Continue to Learn – Discount for BIGGA Members

Continue to Learn offers a host of seminars and workshops, from 20-23 January 2013. Book now to avoid disappointment.

Turf Managers' Conference

Held on Monday 21st January 2013 at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate. Dr Thomas Nikolai – 'The Doctor of Green Speed' from Michigan State University will head up a fantastic programme.

Visit www.btme.org.uk

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For details contact the Tracey or Elaine in the membership department for details on how to claim.

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Bernhard Opens New Factory and Training Facility

Movers and shakers from across the golf industry attended the grand opening of Bernhard and company's new factory and training facility – with a former BIGGA chairman doing the honours in unveiling the plaque.

Peter Todd, from the London Golf Club, joined forces with Pat Finlen from the Olympic Club in San Francisco at the event at the hugely impressive new base in Haverhill, Cambridgeshire.

As well as representatives from BIGGA, FEGGA and AGCOA various leaders from golf associations across the world travelled down for the historic day – joining other industry figures, course owners and members of the press.

Before lunch, Stephen Bernhard outlined the company's fascinating history and added how excited he was at the new development.

He said: "We started our business way back in the early 1800's and it's grown year on year in the same group of ancient Victorian buildings. We really had to expand and upgrade the facilities.

"The training and education

side of our business is growing all the time so we needed a dedicated area for that as well as a demonstration area for user and staff training. It's a massive step for a small British company to make in the global turf industry.

"Despite all the economic challenges that we face as an industry, we move into this building with confidence in the market and we are determined to grow the business."

Bernhard Manufacturing Manager Shaun McCarthy added: "The building was designed to a very high spec. It is efficient and eco-friendly. It was important for us to have flexible space and it can be adapted which will allow us to adapt to the changing needs of the market.

"We also wanted to incorporate something of our heritage so the reception area reflects a hint of the old Victorian sheds. The effect works well."

BIGGA vice chairman Chris Sealey attended and commented: "It's very, very impressive. What strikes me most is how modern and comfortable it is, and the working conditions are first-class."



BLEC show off equipment at Ransomes Jacobsen

Two days of Open House events at Ransomes Jacobsen's European head office at Ipswich gave BLEC Global the chance to show off some of their sportsturf and landscaping equipment while creating a new trials area for tees and greens.

Gary Mumby, managing director of BLEC, and demonstrator Tom Shinkins showed a wide range of machines to visiting greenkeepers, groundsmen, contractors and local authority ground managers.

"We had a tremendous couple of days," says Gary, "and seeing the machinery in action on the new golf site gave visitors a practical demonstration of capabilities."

Using Iseki tractors supplied by Ransomes Jacobsen, Gary and Tom prepared and seeded three trial plots with machinery including the BLEC Laser Grader, the Smithco three-wheel bunker rake, the BLEC Box Scraper and the Cultipack Seeder with Honda ride-on unit.

On the static display they showed the tractor-mounted disc seeder, the 1.5m Multivator, the tractor-mounted Multiseeder and the walk-behind power box rake.

The Ipswich tented village featured industry partners of Ransomes Jacobsen including the AEA, CMAE, IOG, BIGGA, FEGGA, STRI, GEO, Scotts, Syngenta, Bernhard, Rain Bird, Ryan, Turfco and Smithco.

Gary said: "We were delighted to be part of the Ransomes Jacobsen days. Some of the industry's top people were there and we met many old friends and customers."

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DENNIS AND SISIS EXHIBIT

Dennis and Sisis have held an exhibition focusing not only on their machinery but their vision of the future.

Members of the turf press headed to Brailsford Golf Club, close to the company's base in Kirk Langley, Derbyshire, to view their range of natural and synthetic turf maintenance equipment.

This also gave certain members the chance to operate some of the machinery – leading to some erratic results on the club's 18th green!

On the second day of the event, Managing Director Ian Howard led a tour of the impressive factory on site, giving the attendees the benefit of learning the process of building a new machine from the design stage on computer to the construction and delivery.

Customer Manager Roger Moore then explained the ethos behind the firm and their future plans.

RYDER CUP VARIETIES AVAILABLE IN THE UK

British Seed Houses had an extra reason for celebrating Europe's greatest ever comeback in the Ryder Cup.

As holders of exclusive rights in the UK to two grass seed varieties used at Medinah Country Club, BSH is hoping it will prove a 'driver' for sales in this country.

The tournament course greens were seeded with creeping bentgrasses 007 DSB and SR1119 and the fairways were also renovated using both varieties to ensure they were in excellent condition for the world's greatest golfers and the intense media spotlight.

Richard Brown, Amenity Sales Manager at BSH, said: "Europe's Ryder Cup victory against all the odds was amazing. It was fascinating and thrilling to watch but we also took a particular interest in the look and performance of the course as we are the exclusive agents for 007 DSB and SR1119 in the UK, Ireland and Scandinavia."

SR1119 creeping bent has been bred for its dark green colour, exceptional disease resistance and excellent green spread, all qualities required to produce top-performing golf greens.

The versatile 007 DSB creeping bent can be used on greens, tees and fairways, as a complete reseed or for overseeding. One of the 'super bent' varieties, it is widely adaptable to deliver the same results all over the world, from extreme heat to harsh cold conditions.

Offering superior turf quality, it eliminates winter stress discolouration and is highly competitive against poa annua. It has high disease resistance especially to Anthracnose, Fusarium and Snow Mould.

New Holland Network in at New FA Facility

St George's Park, the FA's brand new £105 million training facility, played host to New Holland's dealer network this month.

New Holland used its Groundcare Convention to showcase the popular range of Boomer Compact Tractors that has been further extended and upgraded with the introduction of six new Boomer models. This complete Boomer offering now delivers powers spanning 23–51hp with a range of specifications to suit every need.

The convention included a behind-the-scenes tour of the facilities, a presentation from the FA's award-winning Head Groundsman Alan Ferguson, and a chance to play football on the pitch where the England men's team will be training this week.

The New Holland Groundcare Convention follows on from a recent deal which has seen New Holland supply the FA with a Boomer 2035, Boomer 3045, T4020 and T4050 to assist with the on-going maintenance of the 12 elite pitches at St George's Park.

Alongside the new Boomer Compact range, the entire New Holland Groundcare



product portfolio was on offer, including the TZ series, Rustler 120 Utility Vehicle, T1560 and T1570, T3000, T4000, T4 Powerstar and T5.

Dick Spencer, New Holland Marketing Manager, commented: "Following the

successful launch of our new range of Boomer Compact Tractors, this was the perfect opportunity to show both the New Holland Dealer Network, and groundcare trade press exactly what the new machines can do."

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BIGGA National Championship 2012

Golden Browning

Steve Castle reports from Ayrshire on a glorious **BIGGA National Championship 2012**, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota





BIGGA National Championship 2012



Oly Browning, assistant greenkeeper at Stocks Golf Club in Hertfordshire, blazed round the formidable links at Irvine Golf Club in Ayrshire to claim the title of BIGGA National Champion 2012.

67 players flocked to the extremely challenging course from as far afield as Ireland and the South Coast all dreaming of glory.

Incredibly, after a miserable summer across the UK, Scotland enjoyed what BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton described as “the best two days of weather imaginable” with unbroken sunshine teaming up with the rolling countryside to provide a breathtaking vista for play.

Theoretically, the tremendous weather should have led to perfect conditions for play – but the course still proved difficult throughout with a number of players posting no returns, mainly due to the heather and gorse waiting to gobble up slightly errant drives.

Even triumphant Oly did not enjoy two trouble-free days as he explained while proudly clutching the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

He said: “I four putted on the 17th, but I kept it on the fairways and didn’t take any chances – I only got my driver out three times over the two days.

“I think the key was hitting the

greens – I hit a lot of them which was pleasing. It’s a difficult course but despite that, it can still be forgiving in some places.”

Playing off scratch, the modest 23-year-old explained he has won minor events in the past but this was the proudest moment of his golfing career.

“This is probably the biggest trophy I’ve ever won. It’s the fourth time I’ve entered, I came fourth last year so it feels really good to get my name on the trophy at last.

“I drove up with my brother, it’s been a real pleasure to play here. I’m not going to drink to celebrate because I’m teetotal, but my name on the trophy is enough.

“The golf itself was terrific but it’s also been really good fun, I had a good laugh with all of my playing partners.”

Steve Mason, his Course Manager at Stocks, said: “Oly has won Club Championship four years on the trot, a feat I’m sure will not be repeated.

“He had spoken about turning pro but tried a Europro event and was disheartened by the outcome as he was 24 shots off the lead after 36 holes of qualifying.

“But he has gained strength from this experience and goes out after work every day whether it be practice or playing.

“To win the event is a massive boost for him, we all hope he can

use this to build his confidence and achieve his dream of becoming a star on the big stage.”

Ryan Binns from Roundwood Golf Club in Barnsley had the honour of striking the first tee shot on a bright October morning.

At the end of the first day’s play, Oly led the way with a magnificent par 71, establishing a two-shot lead over Gary Burgess from Grange Park and George Morgan from The Mendip.

The Monday evening saw the competitors, sponsors and BIGGA team enjoy excellent hospitality in the traditional clubhouse, with a three-course meal and speeches from Jim and BIGGA Chairman Tony Smith.

Both made a point of thanking the sponsors Charterhouse and Kubota, who once again offered first-class support for the annual event.

Once again the Scottish sun rose over the course on the second morning, eventually clearing the cool crisp frost from the fairways, paving the way for another spectacular autumn day.

Almost every golfer returned to the BIGGA registration area with tales of woe – including Tony who wrecked a potentially respectable



ABOVE: Head Greenkeeper Derek Wilson tees off

TOP RIGHT: David Nelson, Sam Fuller, Kenneth Mitchell, Oly Browning and Gary Burgess



Breaking barriers to better turf.





round with eight shots in a bunker on the 18th.

But they were delighted by the challenge, and hugely impressed by the quality of the course – indeed Head Greenkeeper Derek Wilson and his team were overwhelmed with congratulations.

Simon Woolley, from Bricken-don Grange Golf Club, said: “The course is absolutely gorgeous, it’s in fantastic condition. Everything about it is superb. The greens are brilliant. If you don’t hole a putt it’s your fault!”

Gavin Robson, from Burton-on-Trent Golf Club, said: “It’s an awe-some course, the greens are beau-tiful and true. It’s a true heathland golf course and a true test of your golf. You can’t stray off line because if you do, you’re in the heather and you’re in trouble.

“But the real highlight for me has been the camaraderie. It’s a great opportunity to catch up with old colleagues and also meet new people from across the industry.”

Derek Wilson himself enjoyed some rare relaxation time with a couple of rounds of golf in the sun-shine.

He commented: “It’s been a very good couple of days, everyone’s thoroughly enjoyed it - not just the golf but the evening do was a great night.

“I played alright on the first day, not so well on the second. I don’t think I had any advantage knowing the course – there are too many bushes on it which I found!”

The excitement grew during the second afternoon as the returning players enjoyed a well-earned drink in the clubhouse.

However it soon became clear that overnight leader Oly was in no mood to relinquish his slot at the top of the leaderboard as his 75 ensured a memorable victory - a gross score of 146 enough to win by three shots.

Carnoustie’s Duncan Cairnie and Cathkin Braes’ Gordon Sang-ster were his nearest challengers on 149 – Duncan claiming the runner-up spot by virtue of a superior second round.

Kenneth Mitchell from St Andrews won the Challenge Cup for best nett score with 141.

As the sun set on a hugely suc-cessful tournament, thoughts turned to next year’s venue - Frilford Heath Golf Club in Oxfordshire. Keep an eye out for how to enter in forthcoming issues – it’s a competition not to be missed.

Thanks to Derek Wilson, his team, everyone at Irvine Golf Club and all the competitors who flew or drove vast distances to play.

BIGGA National Championship 2012

BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY

(Best gross score over 36 holes)

- 1) Oly Browning (Stocks) 146 (71, 75) - £100 prize
- 2) Duncan Cairnie (Carnoustie) 149 (75, 74) - £50 prize
- 3) Gordon Sangster (Cathkin Braes) 149 (74, 75) - £25 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE CUP

(Best nett score over 36 holes)

- 1) Kenneth Mitchell (St Andrews) 141 (70, 71) - £100 prize
- 2) Gary Burgess (Grange Park) 145 (70, 75) - £50 prize
- 3) George Morgan (The Mendip) 151 (73, 78) - £25 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE PLATE (Stableford)

Sam Fuller (Lewes) - £50 prize

BIGGA CHALLENGE BOWL (Affiliate)

David Nelson (Nelson & Vecchio) – £50 prize

DAILY HANDICAP - DAY 1

- +2 - 5 Gary Burgess (Grange Park) 70
- 6 - 12 David Nelson (Nelson & Vecchio) 71
- 13 - 24 John Wilson (Irvine) 73

DAILY HANDICAP - DAY 2

- +2 - 5 Kenneth Mitchell (St Andrews) 71
- 6 - 12 Iain Barr (Largs) 72
- 13 - 24 John Wilson (Irvine) 76



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Modern mix herbicides - a match for turf weeds



Dr Terry Mabbett looks at the different herbicides available to tackle those troublesome weeds

Today's range of herbicides keeps managed turf essentially weed free.

Picture courtesy Everris

Turf weeds are a collection of plants covering broad-leaved species and rough grasses and wider in range than anything found in agricultural grassland or specific arable crops. As such greenkeepers require a sufficiently strong and broad spectrum of herbicide activity to eliminate a wide range of 'easy' and 'difficult' weeds from managed turf in the same strike.

Despite such a spectrum of turf weeds, each with its own characteristics, greenkeepers are keeping their greens, tees and fairways substantially weed free using a relatively restricted range of actives.

This is made possible by the highly sophisticated nature of turf herbicide technology.

Commercial products combining the individual strengths of different active ingredients in a single herbicide formulation continue to underpin this market.

With few exceptions, modern turf herbicide products are no longer single active ingredient formulations, but two and three, or even four way products like Bayer Environmental Science's Longbow (2,4-D, MCPA, MCPP-P and dicamba).

Today's turf herbicide market is dynamic with old actives lost and new ones gained to satisfy the increasing demands of turf weed management.

But this is not the whole story because a series of ongoing European Union (EU) directives continue to hit herbicides both directly and indirectly.

Greenkeepers are keeping their greens, tees and fairways substantially weed free using a relatively restricted range of actives - made possible by the highly sophisticated nature of turf herbicide technology

Some actives have been forced from the marketplace on safety and/or environmental grounds.

Other perfectly sound active ingredients have been voluntarily withdrawn by the manufacturer because the cost involved in producing the extra data does not add up for this relatively small niche market.

Be that as it may, herbicides lost have been more than compensated for by new actives bringing hitherto

undreamed of benefits for weed control in professional sports turf.

Today's turf herbicide market is like a revolving door but not always 'first in first out'.

Actives with pedigrees amounting to fifty years or more are still being used alongside others that were only designed and developed in the last ten years.

Mode of action

Many facets contribute to the success of a turf herbicide but mode of action is at the very core.

Very first selective herbicides used in turf were the synthetic auxin herbicides, chemicals which are similar in structure and activity to the natural plant hormone auxin.

They target the meristems and mimic the effects of natural auxin to cause abnormal plant growth



This article comes to you courtesy of the BIGGA Learning and Development Fund.

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responses that selectively kill broad-leaved weeds in turf.

Old faithful herbicides

This group of long pedigree herbicides, which includes 2,4-D, MCPA, mecoprop-P (MCP-P), dichlorprop-P (DCPP-P) and dicamba, still provides the 'bread and butter' selective control of broad-leaved weeds exactly seventy years after 2,4-D was first described in 1942.

Dicamba (a benzoic acid - the others are phenoxy-carboxylic acids) is the 'newest' of the group and that herbicide was first described over 50 years ago in 1961.

These actives are no longer used

as stand-alone herbicides but as 2, 3, and even 4-way mixtures each complementing the other to control a wide range of turf weeds.

Herbicide products which combine complementary benefits of the actives which make up this long established group of synthetic auxin herbicides include: Estermone (2,4-D, dicamba); Intrepid 2 (MCPA, DCPP-P, dicamba); Re-act (MCPA, MCP-P, dicamba); Relay Turf (MCPA, MCP-P, dicamba); Super Selective Plus (MCPA, MCP-P, dicamba); T2 Green (MCPA, MCP-P, dicamba); Longbow (2,4-D, MCPA, MCP-P, dicamba).

Overall benefit is summed up by Sheriff Amenity when talking about

ABOVE LEFT: Low drift herbicide with Syngenta Turf Nozzles. Picture courtesy Syngenta

ABOVE RIGHT: Weed control on a misty day. Picture courtesy Bayer Environmental Science

RIGHT: Plantains are among the easier weeds to control in managed turf

its T2 Green herbicide product.

"The combination of these three [complementary] active ingredients gives consistently better results than products based on one.

For example, mecoprop-P gives excellent control of [white] clover, while MCPA controls weeds with deeper [tap] roots such as dandelion and cat's ear."

Dicamba the third herbicide active in T2 Green, and the only active ingredient common to every one of the products listed above is there (albeit at a relatively low concentration due to its much higher activity) for very good reason.

That is to knock out more difficult to control weeds like yarrow, self-heal, mouse-ear chickweed, clovers and trefoils.

Greenkeepers get maximum versatility from these 'mix and match' synthetic auxin based products by observing different rates and applications recommended by the manufacturer, depending on the spectrum of weed species presented.

One of the most explicit sets of recommendations is provided by Rigby Taylor for their Super Selective Plus herbicide product:

- Lower application rate, one treatment per season: cat's ear, greater plantain, hoary plantain, lesser plantain, ribwort plantain, sea plantain
- Lower application rate, two

Herbicide products featured

Product (ingredients in the formulation as g/l (gram/litre)) - Source

Cabadex (Fluroxypyr 100, florasulam 2.5) - *Headland Amenity*

Crossbar (2,4-D 285, dicamba 52.5, fluroxypyr 105) - *Rigby Taylor*

Esteem (2,4-D 150, MCPA 175, clopyralid 35) - *Vitax*

Estermone (2,4-D 200, dicamba 35) - *Vitax*

Greenor (MCPA 200, clopyralid 20, fluroxypyr 40) - *Rigby Taylor*

Intrepid 2 (MCPA 166.5, DCPP-P 166.5, dicamba 20.8) - *Everris*

Longbow (2,4-D 70, MCPA 70, MCP-P 42, dicamba 20) - *Bayer Environmental Science*

Praxys (clopyralid 80, fluroxypyr 144, florasulam 2.5) - *Everris and Sheriff Amenity*

Re-act (MCPA 256.25, MCP-P 237.5, dicamba 31.25) - *Everris*

Relay Turf (MCPA 200, MCP-P 200, dicamba 25) - *Headland Amenity*

Rescue (pinoxaden 45, cloquintocet-mexyl 11.25) - *Syngenta and Everris*

Spearhead (MCPA 300, clopyralid 20, diflufenican 15.9) - *Bayer Environmental Science*

Super Selective Plus (MCPA 256.5, MCP-P 237.5, dicamba 31.25) - *Rigby Taylor*

Swiftsure (2,4-D 285, dicamba 52.5, fluroxypyr 105) - *Sheriff Amenity*

Trafalgar (fluroxypyr 100, florasulam 2.5) - *Sheriff Amenity*

T2 Green (MCPA 256.25, MCP-P 237.5, dicamba 31.25) - *Sheriff Amenity*



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treatments per season: those above plus creeping buttercup, common daisy and dandelion

• **Higher application rate, one treatment per season: those above plus bird's foot trefoil, white clover, mouse-ear chickweed, black medick, selfheal, lesser trefoil (for which a repeat application may be necessary)**

• **Higher application rate, two treatments per season: all those listed above plus yarrow and pearlwort.**

Newer herbicide arrivals

The contribution of herbicides, showing a synthetic auxin type mode of action to turf weed management did not stop there.

Two 'new' actives (clopyralid and fluroxypur), more sophisticated and potent and with variations in chemistry on the 'same basic synthetic auxin theme', were added.

These pyridinecarboxylic acids were first described in 1975 (clopyralid) and 1983 (fluroxypur).

Clopyralid is absorbed by the leaves and roots, with translocation both acropetally (in the direction of the shoot's tip) and basipetally (towards the roots) and accumulates in the meristematic tissue.

Fluroxypur is applied as

BOTTOM: Self Heal one of managed turf's die hard weeds

BELOW: Slender speedwell arguably UK turf's worst weed.

Picture courtesy of Everris

fluroxypur-meptyl (an ester), which after predominately foliar uptake is hydrolysed into the parent acid (the herbically active form) for rapid translocation to other parts of the weed plant.

Thus a new generation of turf herbicide products was born by mixing and matching from the expanded range of synthetic auxin actives then available.

Such products include: Esteem (2,4-D, MCPA, clopyralid); Swiftsure (2,4-D, dicamba, fluroxypur); Crossbar (2,4-D, dicamba, fluroxypur); Greenor (MCPA, clopyralid, fluroxypur).

This additional range of products increases the strength of selective hit on broad leaved weeds in general, as well as making it that much easier to kill the most resilient weed species like selfheal, yarrow and the clovers/trefoils.

Most important single benefit was bringing slender speedwell into the 'weed killing arena'.

When Bayer Environmental Science ran their annual 'Worst Turf Weed' survey amongst greenkeepers at Saltex, slender speedwell would invariably come out as 'the worst weed of managed turf'.

At that time few herbicide products would claim unfettered control of *Veronica filiformis*, but today slender speedwell control is claimed by a range of herbicide products based on a mix and match of synthetic auxin actives.

These include Crossbar, Greenor and Swiftsure with the common denominator for slender speedwell control appearing to be the inclusion of fluroxypur in the formulation.

An undisputed quick end for virtually all broad-leaved weeds in turf including the 'die-hards' like slender speedwell came with the introduction of additional actives with completely different modes of action.

Florasulam, a triazolopyrimidine herbicide which inhibits the synthesis of several specific essential amino acids, is twinned with fluroxypur in Cabadex (Headland Amenity) and Trafalgar (Sheriff Amenity), and features in a three way combination (florasulam, fluroxypur, clopyralid) as the herbicide Praxys from Everris and Sheriff Amenity.

Diflufenican, a pyridinecarboximide herbicide which blocks biosynthesis of carotenoid pigment in the cells, is combined with MCPA and clopyralid in Spearhead and similarly fails to 'spare the rod' for 'die hard weeds' like slender speedwell, self-heal, clovers, trefoils and

mouse-ear chickweed (common mouse-ear), providing operators use the higher of two application rates recommended by the manufacturer (Bayer Environmental Science).

Entry and movement

Vast majority of herbicide actives used for selective broad leaf weed control are systemically acting chemicals, entering plants via the foliage and/or roots and subsequently moving in the xylem and/or phloem to the respective sites of action, which in the case of synthetic auxins is the meristematic region (growing point) of the shoot.

Dual entry via roots and foliage and fast translocation within either the xylem or phloem tissue is a distinct advantage, whether via a single active or through the combined effect of two or more actives within a single herbicide product.

The apparent key advantage possessed by products which 'twin' fluroxypur and florasulam is having two potent actives with diverging modes of action.

However, fluroxypur with a predominantly foliar uptake and fast translocation, and combined with dual root and foliar absorption of florasulam, which is translocated in both xylem and phloem tissues, adds extra 'power to a products' elbow'.

'Rescue' from rough grasses

Professional sports turf comprises a select group of fine grasses.

Rough grasses, and even those like ryegrass which is valued in amenity grassland, are as out of place as are broad-leaved plants.

Rough grasses and their control in professional turf can prove difficult.

The offending plants are more difficult to spot and because rough grasses will be competing with fine turf grasses in the same way for the same resources.

Any herbicide used against rough grass species in managed turf must be highly selective to prevent any damage to fine turf grasses.

One herbicide has come to the rescue. Aptly named 'Rescue' from Syngenta which combines pinoxaden and cloquintocet-mexyl is recommended for the selective removal of ryegrass from across the golf course, including greens, tees, fairways and approaches.

The combined active force in Rescue targets specific enzymes responsible for cell division, stopping the growth of susceptible rough grass plants with rapid onset of leaf die back.



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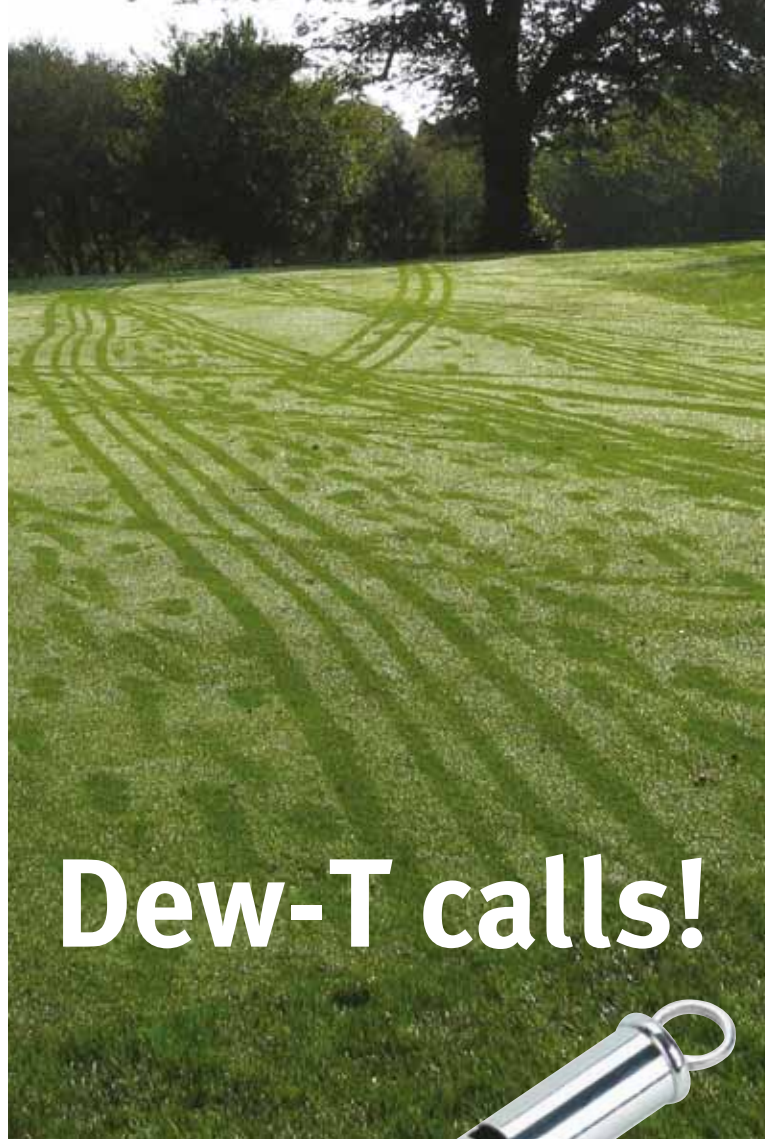
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Dew-T has a twin mode of action. First, it is effective in reducing water tension, thus preventing dew formation and secondly, it bonds strongly to the waxy leaf surface allowing moisture to run off.



- Applying Dew-T
- Prevents dew formation for up to 14 days
 - Allows mowing operations to begin earlier
 - Provides a cleaner leaf cut
 - Assists in cultural disease management
 - Replaces costly, time-consuming switching

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“We have to be ecology, biology and botany experts, mechanics, weather forecasters and more...the list is endless”

A day in the life

Steve Castle heads to Lymm Golf Club for a greenkeeping crash course

Stuart Yarwood looks on with a mixture of pity and vague concern as I struggle with my latest task during a typical day in the life of a greenkeeper.

I've spent my morning haphazardly aerating greens and moving pin positions and now I'm failing to remove the tines from a tining machine. Stuart tells me that he'd appreciate it if I completed this challenge sometime before Christmas.

Perhaps he's already regretting his invitation for me to muck in at the Club – which I eagerly accepted. It's absolutely crucial for me to appreciate the daily difficulties faced by greenkeepers across the UK – particularly as I'm not from a greenkeeping background.

And as the day unfolds we battle torrential rain while investigating problems with drainage on parts of the course – something which hundreds of greenkeepers have had to contend with during the washout summer.

I arrive for my 'shift' woefully underprepared wearing just a polo shirt and thin jacket. Stuart looks at me disapprovingly – not for the last time – and grabs a more suitable coat for the inclement conditions to come before taking me out onto the greens and explaining some of his theories behind greenkeeping.

"One of the things many people, and I daresay many members, don't understand is it's such a wide ranging role. We have to get away from the traditional image of someone just mowing the grass. We have to be public relations experts within our teams and across the golf club.

"We have to be ecology, biology and botany experts, mechanics, weather forecasters and more...the list is endless."

He enthusiastically grabs a handful of soil.

"There are billions of life forms in this, so much activity. They help clean up and aerate the soil, recycle nutrients, and decompose organic matter. "The way I look at it is I've

got billions of greenkeepers here, all helping me out - all I have to do is look after them. It's a little community, an ecosystem and as such needs to be grown, nourished and nurtured."

Stuart is a founder member of the 'Gingerbread men' – a group committed to raising the profile of environmentally sustainable golf course management. They have stimulated intense debate in the industry, which explains their name – they are used to getting their heads bitten off.

He's the first to admit that not everyone agrees with his opinions on greenkeeping, or his methods, but he'll defend them to the hilt. He's incredibly passionate about the industry and undoubtedly has a talent for explaining highly complex matters to the uninitiated such as myself.

Stuart then guides me through solid tine aeration. I mark the greenside sprinklers then attempt to use the Toro Procore 648 pedes-



FACTFILE

*Name: Stuart Yarwood
Born: Knutsford, 15 July 1975
Marital Status: Married to Paula with two children
Handicap: 11
Hobbies: Motor sport, caravanning, performing rubbish magic tricks
Favourite Sport: British Touring Cars*



trian aerator machine, guiding it warily across the green under the watchful eye of greenkeeper Robert Cooper. Stuart and his team aerate the course between 30 and 40 times a year, at different times and at all manner of different depths.

As I survey my questionable handiwork I realise that I'd been more than a little wayward. But despite my complete inability to walk in a straight line while guiding a machine, and needing a couple of attempts at changing the 17th hole, I feel cautiously optimistic. I don't appear to have wrecked the course – or if I have, Stuart's too polite to say.

The afternoon would be spent investigating drainage issues on a specific part of the course, which seemed a reasonable request particularly in the autumn sun which had broken through.

But the weather then reverted to type and I experienced the reality of the outdoor lifestyle of the greenkeeper.

Together with two of Stuart's colleagues I began to dig a drainage ditch on the side of the first fairway – however we were quickly swamped by an absolute deluge.

I soon envied a passing group of golfers who were able to seek shelter while we plugged away, digging the ditch down to the level of the drain underneath the fairway to hopefully dispose of the excess water. Just when it seemed all our efforts were in vain the water began to drain away – a real breakthrough and a reward for a soaking afternoon of hard graft.

As we worked I had a crucial

opportunity to listen to the views of Stuart's colleagues on BIGGA, its communication with its members, the way forward and listen to some of their suggestions.

After a well-earned cuppa, Stuart took me on a tour of the course – which intriguingly, is two diverse courses in one. The top eight holes close to the famous Manchester Ship Canal are heath-like, while the rest are classic parkland.

Indeed, the canal and the course are inextricably linked as Stuart explained. The company in charge of constructing the canal owned the land either side of it, and used part of this area for dumping the soil from the digging of the waterway. This explains why holes three to ten are elevated.

As he gazed out across the canal – a fine view he's become accustomed to since joining Lymm in 2000 - Stuart's thoughts returned to greenkeeping as a whole.

"BIGGA's goal should be to empower the greenkeeper. Training and education are absolutely paramount and while it's improving, even more needs to be done.

"Today's been hugely beneficial for me and my colleagues to show someone from HQ exactly what we do, how we do it and why we do it."

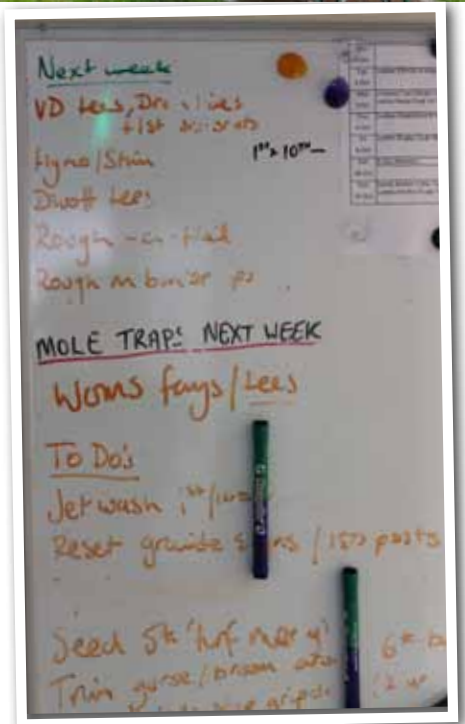
I couldn't agree more. It's been exhausting – and above all, wet – but I've learnt an enormous amount from Stuart and his colleagues, not only about the industry but also their views on BIGGA, and the challenges we all face.

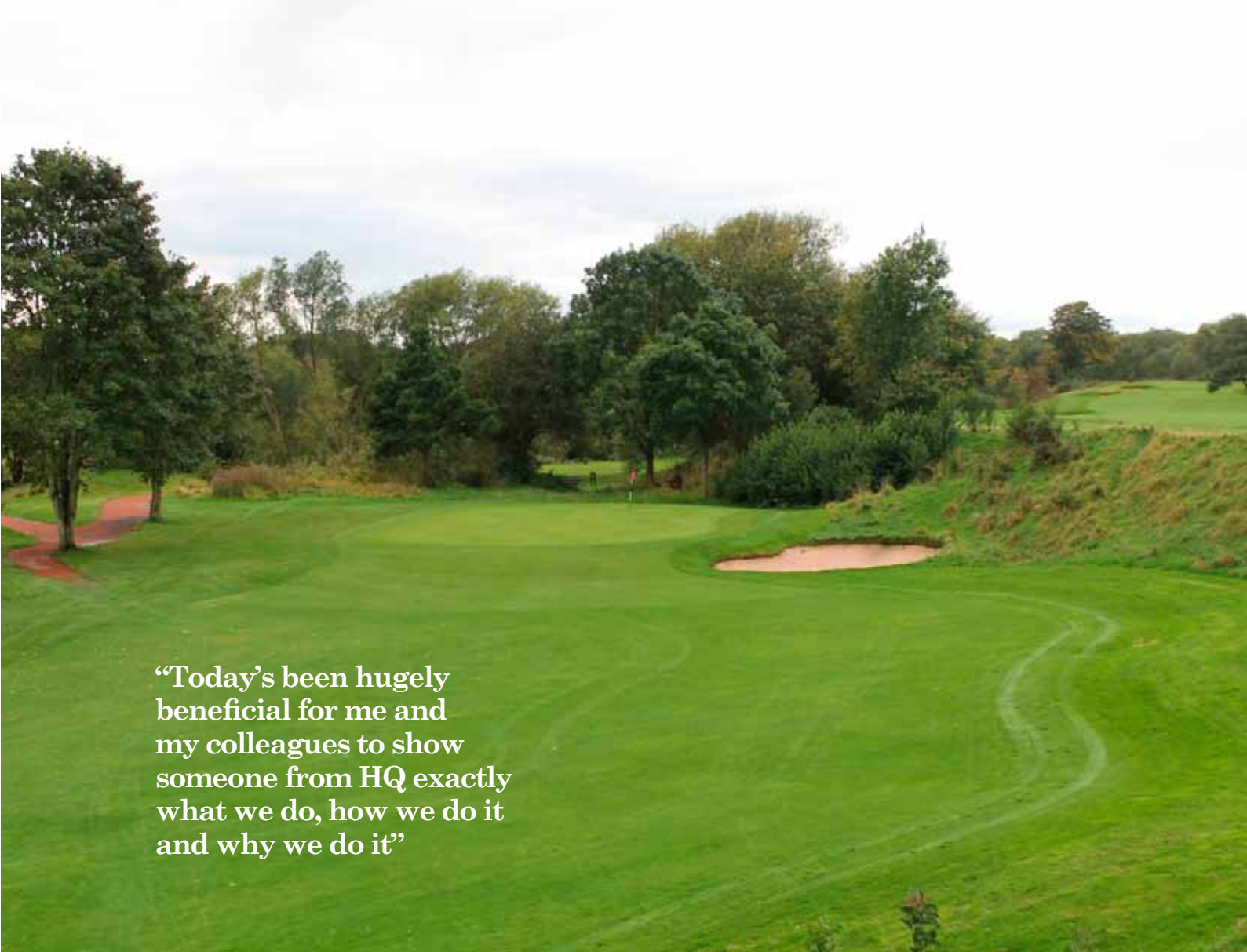
Whether I'll ever be invited back to work on the course again is another story...



INSET ABOVE: Steve Castle digging in!

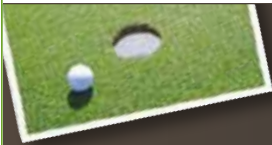
RIGHT PAGE BOTTOM: The team at Lymm: David Whitby, Robert Cooper, Ian Taylor, Stuart Yarwood. Missing is Alan Gerrard (who refused to have his photo taken!)





“Today’s been hugely beneficial for me and my colleagues to show someone from HQ exactly what we do, how we do it and why we do it”





Tee-up in the USA!

A number of paid internships are available with a US sponsor at a range of PGA level courses on the East Coast, from Florida in the south to New York in the north!

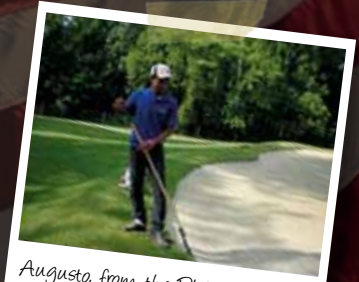
If you have recently graduated from a Turf Management or related course, or have experience in this sector then this could be for you! Start dates commence from the end of February 2013 with placements lasting up to 10 months. Successful candidates will receive a monthly stipend of \$1100 plus insurance while in the US.

Duties will include, but are not limited to: course preparation and maintenance – mowing, raking, planting, irrigation, operating and maintaining machinery – and tournament support. Accommodation will be provided and full support is guaranteed throughout.

If you are aged between 18-30 have a full, clean driving licence and want to know more, call or email today. J1 Visa Programme terms and conditions apply as well as programme fees.

Call Emily Baines today on **01572 823934** for more information or email Emily@iepuk.com

I think the knowledge and experience gained in the exchange program will help me a lot professionally and will help me to be an excellent leader in my future career.



Augusta, from the Philippines, 2011



Roderick, from Moldova, 2011

In the time I have been here, I have learned different irrigation techniques, various soil conservation methods, different methods of fertilizer application, and equipment maintenance and operation. I believe I will be able to get a good job in this field when I return home.



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Proactive approach gets greener results

We speak to a course manager reaping the rewards of taking a more proactive approach to winter disease control

The outstanding playing conditions at Woodhall Spa Golf Club in Lincolnshire, which is the home of England Golf, attract golfers all year round.

But the sandy soils and dry conditions ensure the Hotchkin course remains playable when others are closed.

Maintaining turf cover and quality on the greens over the winter is imperative for Course Manager, Sam Rhodes, to satisfy the early season demand.

Over recent years he has adopted a proactive approach with his fungicide programme, seeking to prevent infection breaking out before damage occurs on the playing surface.

“In the past we had simply reacted to disease attacks; we were fighting to control outbreaks and limit the extent of damage to greens over the winter.

“Then we had to work extra hard in the spring to get them back in good condition as quickly as possible.

“It was the same cycle every year.



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“We wanted to look at preventing disease damage.

“However, we were adamant that we didn’t want to go down a routine prophylactic treatment of spraying a fungicide every five or six weeks.

“We are keen to minimise the use of any inputs, from an ecological and economic standpoint.

“The solution has been to introduce a proactive approach that integrates new developments in fungicide technology and turf disease risk assessment, alongside traditional greenkeeping techniques and experience - with

the aim to maintain clean surfaces right through the winter.

“We recognised that with the potential of the new fungicides, we needed to be smarter in the way that we used them to get the best results.”

Sam believes they now understand better what they are aiming to achieve with each application, and selecting the most appropriate option that best matches the situation.

That means he will pick a systemic when turf is actively growing; a cool weather systemic as it starts to slow in the autumn, and then only switch to a contact when growth has effectively stopped.

He uses soil temperature information as a guide to turf growth and selecting the appropriate fungicide.

“With the changing weather patterns you really can’t apply fungicides by the calendar anymore, which makes weather-based prediction even more important.”

As part of this, Sam now also uses the local five-day disease fore-

casts on the GreenCast website as a key tool to pre-empt and prevent damaging disease attacks.

He stresses that it certainly doesn’t replace his local knowledge and experience of the course, but is a valuable adjunct in supporting his decision making.

“This approach has really made us think about every application, and how we can integrate them with better cultural controls to help improve results.”

Assessing any impending disease risk, Sam will look at what fungicide was last applied and when; how much growth there has been; if the turf is under any particular stress and any other factors that might make the greens more or less susceptible to specific disease infection.

“If we feel there is still sufficient protection in the plant or if it is all looking particularly healthy, for example, the risk assessment helps give us the confidence to leave it a few more days, or possibly apply an iron treatment.

“But where we can see the risk is high, we can be assured that we



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Temperature controlled fungicide selection

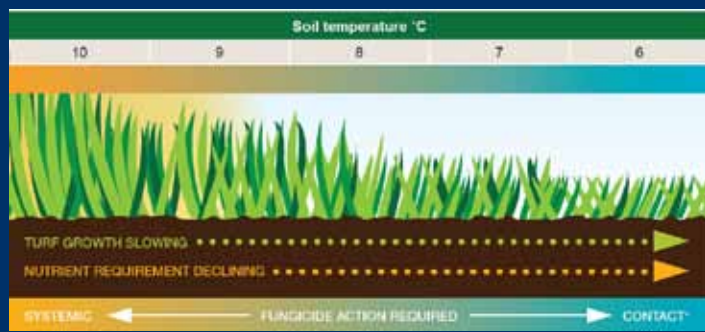
Soil temperatures that dictate turf growth rates give an essential guide to appropriate fungicide selection to avoid damaging disease attacks through autumn and winter conditions, and protect playing surface quality, advises Syngenta Technical Manager, Dr Simon Watson.

Over recent seasons, late autumn and early winter has seen prolonged warm temperatures, or more specifically higher soil temperatures, with continued growth.

When turf is actively growing a systemic fungicide is essential; contact or local penetrant fungicides applied at this time will quickly grow up the leaf and be cut off – leaving new growth at the base of the leaf exposed to infection within hours of application.

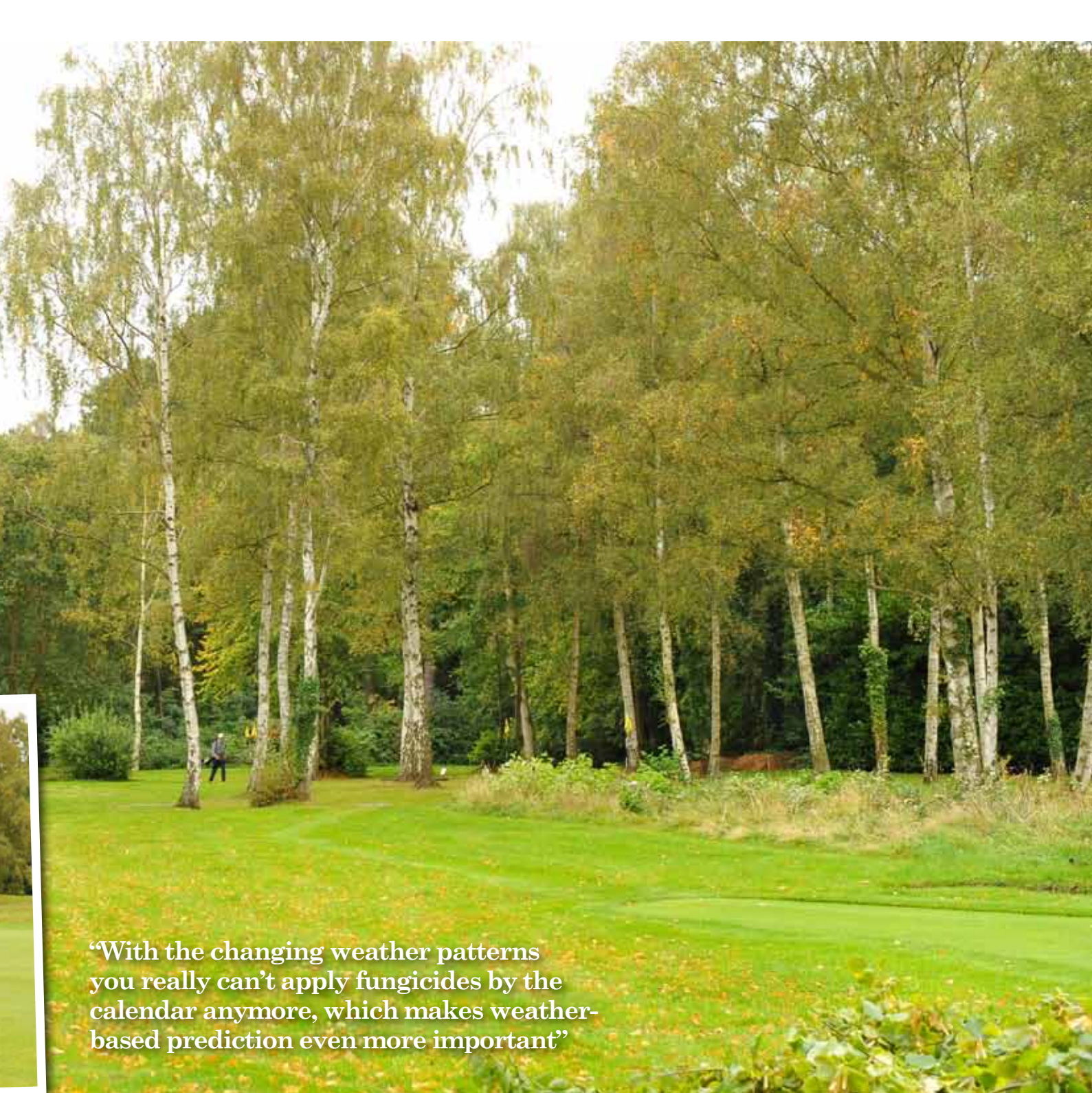
As temperatures cool, but whilst turf is still actively growing, a cool weather systemic will provide fast moving protection, to prevent loss of turf quality.

As growing conditions slow further, the contact+ Medallion TL will be more appropriate to reduce the pathogen presence in the thatch and protect the leaf through the cold weather, when the grass plant is dormant.



Checklist for autumn and winter fungicide selection:

- Track soil temperatures and clipping yield to check turf growth
- Employ ITM practices to reduce risk of disease build-up
- Use a cool weather systemic fungicide whilst turf is still growing
- Switch to contact+ protection with slow or zero turf growth
- Manage nutrition to keep turf healthy, but avoid soft growth
- Use GreenCast local disease forecasts to pro-actively prevent infection



“With the changing weather patterns you really can’t apply fungicides by the calendar anymore, which makes weather-based prediction even more important”

are taking the right action with a fungicide application.”

Sam recalled that last winter GreenCast predicted a high risk of Microdochium Patch (Fusarium) and the looming prospect of cold weather.

He fortuitously took the decision to apply Medallion TL prior to the snow, and when it finally cleared after several weeks the greens surfaces were completely clean.

“We didn’t know the snow cover was going to be so long, but having seen the high risk of snow it did prompt us to get the protection on early.

“We were also confident the protection would stay in place with

zero growth beneath the snow.

“With the combination of improved cultural controls and more targeted fungicides, even the most susceptible greens have stayed completely clean, which has received favourable comments from players.”

Seeing and experiencing the results means the Woodhall Spa members and club management have been convinced that it is the right approach, which Sam believes will make further activities easier to implement.

“We are extremely proud of the ecological credentials of the course, but are also aware that the quality of the greens and the course is essen-

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**ENGLAND
GOLF**

tial to attract members and visitors.

“With the proactive and integrated approach to managing the playing surfaces we are only using treatments where they are required, and we are able to justify every application we make.

“Even with the extremely challenging weather conditions we are increasingly experiencing, we have found that we are able to maintain better turf quality.

“And by using the fungicide treatments more effectively, we have actually made fewer applications over the course of the season.

We certainly feel much more in control and ready for what might happen.”

BTME 20

The BIGGA Turf Management

incorporating:



**BIGGA Seminars
& Workshops**

20-23

January 2013



Register now at www.btme.org.uk

The 24th BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition is officially open for registration at www.btme.org.uk – and this year it features a distinct Ryder Cup flavour.

In the wake of Europe's astonishing triumph at the Medinah Country Club, Curtis Tyrrell MG – the Club's Director of Golf Course Operations – is a guest speaker at one of the 'Continue to Learn' seminars.

He'll be joined by Jim McKenzie, who conquered atrocious conditions at Celtic Manor two years ago to help the Europeans emerge victorious, and Steve Chappell who is now looking forward to welcoming the party to Gleneagles on 2014. Where else will you be able to get the lowdown on the past, present and future Ryder Cups?

BTME 2013, incorporating Continue to Learn, will also host the third annual Turf Managers' Conference featuring Dr Thom Nikolai, one of the world's eminent turf professors, looking at green speed. There will also be dozens of educational seminars and workshops featuring everything from soil analysis to IT.

Turf professionals and buyers cannot afford to miss this annual chance to browse, buy and seek crucial advice from many of the world's top manufacturers and service providers. We've already filled 90% of the available stand space – so don't delay if you're still looking to book a slot.

This is all before you consider the superb networking opportunities available – the event could potentially boost your career or business.

The event kicks off on Sunday 20 January with our Continue to learn seminars and workshops, and the full exhibition opens on Tuesday 22 January until Thursday 24 January.

Make sure you register today at www.btme.org.uk to beat the queues!

The BTME website includes bags of information about the big week including how to book a stand, accommodation, travel tips, lists of exhibitors and a product guide.

Book your place at the ultimate turf management event today. We'll leave the final word to BIGGA Chief Executive Jim Croxton...

"Quite simply a well planned visit to BTME makes you a better turf manager. In this competitive age, this is an opportunity not to be missed."



2013

22-24 January 2013 at the Harrogate International Centre

Exhibition



“Quite simply a well planned visit to BTME makes you a better turf manager. In this competitive age, it’s an opportunity not to be missed”

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO



Register Now

To book early, avoid the queues, and view the full list of educational events, visit www.btme.org.uk and click the **Register Now** icon.

Register now

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IMAGES:
A selection from BTME 2012, courtesy of SiRA Studio
sirastudio.com

IMAGE: Arion 2 hand-held blower from Etesia





Solutions for the autumn fall

As the 'fall' gathers momentum and leaf debris becomes an issue for golf course and amenity managers, Phil Evans takes a look at the various solutions within this critical area of course management

Pellenc manufacturer a choice of options which are available through Etesia UK.

The Airion is a hand-held blower intended for cleaning roads, parks and gardens as well as areas around a clubhouse.

Weighing only 2.6 kg and with a noise level of just 80 db, it is claimed to be the lightest and quietest professional blower on the market.

It is very comfortable to hold owing to the soft touch new generation handgrip and is optimally balanced for natural tilting towards the ground.

Low Emission Levels

Comparing the direct emissions of CO² of the Airion with a petrol blower, the difference is enormous.

A petrol engine blower has a direct emission of over 4 tonnes of CO² per year while the Airion only emits 47 kg.

The Airion prevents almost 99% of the direct emissions of a petrol engine.

If Pellenc batteries are recharged with the recently launched Solerion solar charger, direct CO² emissions are totally eliminated.

Contact Etesia UK on 01295 680120 or visit www.etesia.co.uk

New HPV Vacuum

At Saltex 2012, Little Wonder launched the new HPV vacuum for the Golf and Amenity Professional.

This latest version of the HPV has superior suction and airflow thanks to its 17inch, 5 blade reverse angled impeller and unique scrolled housing design.

In terms of debris management, this vacuum will collect almost any item including leaves, litter, plastic bottles plus sand and grit.

This top loading vacuum is ideal for golf course club and hotel grounds, car parks, sports facilities, parks and grounds maintenance.

Self-Propelled Debris Management

Little Wonder are at the forefront of debris management and have also introduced a new line up of models across their Optimax range of blowers.

The models are available with 270cc or 390cc Honda engines or 400cc Subaru engine.

With the new Remote Chute Deflector Control located at your fingertips, you can control the patented split air-stream discharge with ease.

This removes leaves and debris with unmatched air power more easily and without stopping.

The introduction of the new self-

propelled Blowers with a choice of Honda engines provides a new level of performance in the walk-behind blower market.

Contact Schiller Groundscare (Little Wonder) on 0800 840 0888 or email : info@littlewonder.uk.com

Solo Backpack Blowers

Distributed by Lely UK, the Solo range of Backpack Blowers is ideal for both small and medium-sized debris-clearance jobs around the golf course.

Thanks to its high airflow rate of approximately 1,400m³/h, the Solo 467 Backpack Blower keeps emissions low but output high to make this one of the most effective and environmentally-friendly models on the market.

The new, more powerful 66.5cc engine with magnesium crankcase provides the professional performance you'd expect from the high-quality Solo outdoor equipment range.

The clever design also reduces vibrations to the hands and back, while an ergonomic padded backrest makes for an ultra-comfy working experience.

Another great choice is the 440 hand-held model, which benefits from a 760/630m³/h airflow rate together with a light weight of just 4.1kg that makes it the ideal choice for quick clean-ups around the course.

The 440 and 441 also benefit from Solo's unique anti-vibration technology for a comfortable working experience.

With its product portfolio also spanning brushcutters, hand-held and knapsack sprayers, chainsaws, hedge-trimmers and accessories, the German-manufactured Solo range is the perfect choice for golf course greenkeepers seeking high-performance equipment that is built to last.

To find out more about the Solo range, call distributor Lely UK's Roger Lupton on 01480 226800 or email solo.uk@lely.com

Proforce Debris Blower

Perfect for big clean-up jobs around the golf course, the Toro ProForce Debris Blower delivers unrivalled air power, durability and ease of use for fast and efficient removal of grass clippings, leaves, aeration cores, sand, gravel, rubbish and other debris.

The utility vehicle-mounted ProForce combines a 20.1kW (27hp) Kohler engine with a highly efficient turbine-style fan design to provide greater air-volume-flow than any single nozzle turbine-type debris

blower currently available.

This means that the ProForce has the superior productivity needed to make fast work of those big autumn maintenance jobs, such as clearing paths and other hard-landscaped areas of leaves, and blowing grass clippings, aeration cores or other organic debris off fairways or greens.

Hand-held wireless control

A key feature is the hand-held wireless remote control, which allows the operator to start and stop the engine, adjust the engine throttle up and down to match air power to the job at hand, and rotate the nozzle 360 degrees – all from the driving seat of a Toro Workman MD Series or similar utility vehicle.

This feature increases productivity as, unlike some competitor models, the user doesn't have to walk to the engine to physically start or stop the machine.

For more information on the Toro ProForce debris blower, visit www.toro.com or call distributor Lely UK on 01480 226800 or email toro.info.uk@lely.com

A Sucker for Hard Work

The Trilo S3 vacuum sweeper, from The Grass Group, is the latest product to emerge from a programme of producing equipment for use with sub 30Hp tractors.

The industry has been asking for a smaller vacuum sweeper to work at 1.5 metres wide to work at hard to get to areas where ground pressure and dimensions mattered.

The result is the Trilo S3, a smaller sister to the S4 released last year.



Along with a smaller working width came a reduction in weight to only 1200kg, so that only a mid-range compact tractor of 28 HP is required.

The new design is the result of many years of experience to meet the requirements of councils, contractors, groundsmen and greenkeepers in this economically challenging environment.

A 5 metre long 200mm diameter hand held wander hose makes the S3 suitable for versatile use all year round to clean hard to get areas such as bunkers, shrubberies or refuse bins.

Email : tim@thegrassgroup.com
/ www.thegrassgroup.co.uk

New Backpack Blowers

Available now from specialist STIHL Dealers, three new backpack blowers have joined the STIHL range and simply drive away debris with their hurricane air speed.

Usually the domain of professional users, the new backpack models will put their great power and performance into even more hands with prices and power ratings to suit everyone from the domestic gardener to the hard-working contractor.

Outdoor blowers are handy year-round assistants both in winter, spring and summer there will inevitably be litter or debris to clear and in the autumn they really come into their own.

BR 430 – The hard-working professional

At the top of the new range the BR 430 is built to be extra tough.

Its additional power plus features like an enlarged fuel tank and advanced anti-vibration system make it ideal for hard-working and extended periods of use around golf and amenity areas.

Ensuring total operator comfort over the envisaged longer use, the harness on this model also comes with extra wide shoulder straps and enlarged back padding, so it is perfect for sportsturf managers or landscape contractors, clearing leaves on uneven terrain or litter from leisure stadiums for example.

The new backpack blowers are available now from the network of STIHL Approved Dealers nationwide.

For further details on the full backpack range, plus information on handheld blowers and vacuum shredders from STIHL, visit www.stihl.co.uk or speak to a local Approved Dealer.



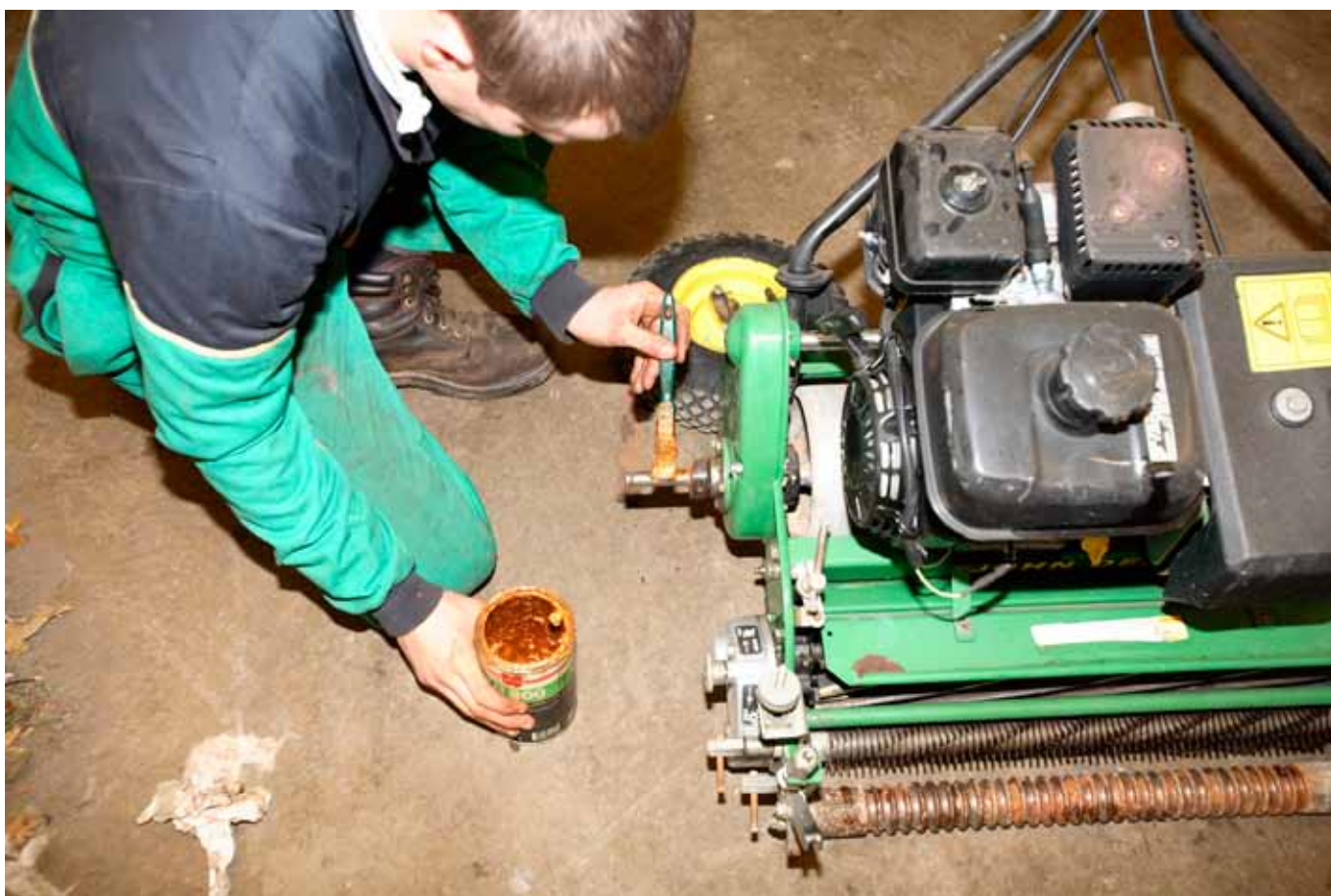
PAGE 38: FROM TOP: The Trilo S3 vacuum sweeper, a Solo Backpack Blower and an Optimax blower

PAGE 39: A STIHL blower (above) and (right) a TORO Workman



How to get the best out of your maintenance equipment

James de Haviland reports on how having a little knowledge can save you money



In many cases, the routine service and daily maintenance demands of modern equipment has been reduced, but that does not also mean a quick wash is all it takes to keep a given item of equipment running efficiently. A little mechanical knowledge and sympathy can go a long way in cutting costs and improving efficiency.

A key management skill is establishing the right balance between those machinery maintenance tasks that can be carried out in-house and knowing when to call in third party skills.

It would be a brave golf club that would forgo its own workshop facili-

ties to rely solely upon a third party for all its equipment maintenance needs.

But whilst a well-equipped workshop remains pretty much as a 'must have', ensuring there are individuals on hand to exploit such facilities is not always a primary consideration.

To get the best from your equipment it pays to firstly establish what can be done in-house to look after it and what is best left to a dealer specialist to sort out.

A modern ride-on mower may still 'look' pretty similar to kit that was in action a decade or more ago but increasingly electronics are in integral part of the design.

These can make operation easier

as switches replace various levers but it can also mean you need to have access to a different set of skills to find any faults and remedy them.

It is here where having some mechanical skills can really pay dividends. It is all too easy to take the wrong action when a given type of equipment develops a fault.

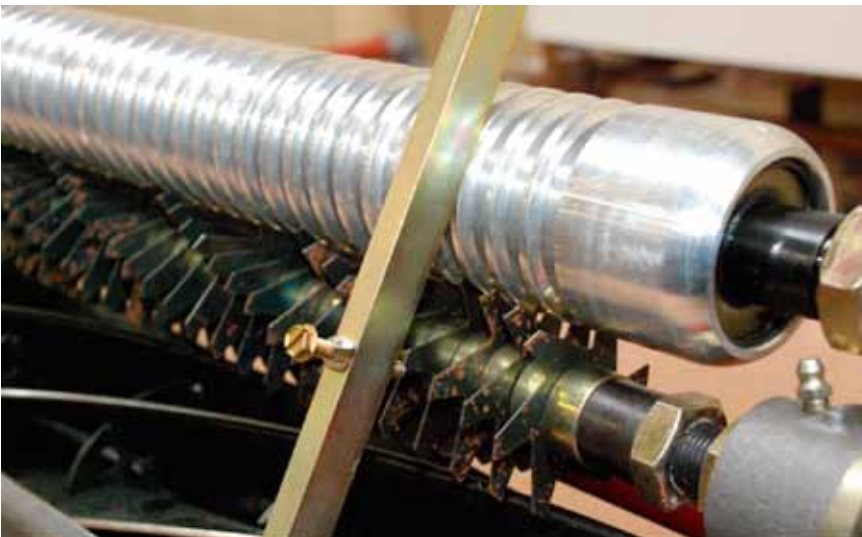
The first is to simply call someone in to fix the issue.

Good call if the problem takes specialist skills to diagnose and fix, less so if a squirt of WD40 to displace some moisture is all that is needed.

The flip side is the error of trying to carry out an in-house repair and to subsequently do more damage.

ABOVE: Setting up the mower

ABOVE RIGHT: setting the bar



Trained fitters typically dislike arriving to find a machine has been taken apart to solve a problem that cannot subsequently be checked as the machine is reduced to a pile of bits.

The key is having enough mechanical knowledge to understand what may help but know when it is best to leave well alone and call in help.

There are other issues too.

Few realise, for example, that hydraulic circuits can be under tremendous pressures.

A tiny leak, when pressurised, can produce a jet of hydraulic fluid that may not be visible but still has the power to penetrate clothing and 'inject' oil into anyone unfortunate enough to probe with an investigating hand.

Those that understand this will

never work on a mower with a leak until they are sure there is no pressure in the system.

Those unaware of the potential dangers could end up with a nasty injury.

So, a little knowledge can save money and help avoid accidents.

But how do you know who has the right level of knowledge and who should be instructed to stick to a pressure washer and a grease gun? The short answer is training.

Those with various 'paper' qualifications may be able to prove they are safe to be let loose on basic mechanical work but a newcomer claiming mechanical skills may need to offer some proof of competence.

Getting it wrong can cause equipment issues and, more importantly, even result in injury.

Warranties and equipment care

Modern equipment should demand less in terms of routine care and not necessarily tax the servicing skills of club personnel who have been working on various types of equipment for years.

On the other hand, manufacturers and supplying dealers are increasingly linking in a maintenance package to various sales initiatives.

For both manufacturers and dealers it makes sound business sense to ensure a given item of kit is serviced to OEM schedules using OEM replacement parts.

Of equal importance, there is a need to ensure equipment is serviced during its warranty period.

It is difficult for warranty claims to be handled sympathetically when there is no record of the machine having been serviced in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

This is of increasing significance with equipment with a long original or extended warranty. In all cases, it pays to talk through how a given item of new equipment will be looked after to ensure you get the best backup. If the dealer / manufacturer offers any training courses as part of a deal try and ensure they are taken up and by as many staff as possible.

Operator training is increasingly valuable and should go well beyond the basic machine installation you may get when a new bit of kit is delivered.

Knowing where an elusive grease point is can make a great deal of difference!

As budgets are squeezed, the cost of maintaining certain items of equipment may come under review. Below are some pointers that may help when thinking ahead

Maintenance contracts and dealer servicing – with in-house routine and simple servicing offers:

- Planned regular maintenance, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, will comply with warranty requirements
- Regular servicing will enhance reliability
- Burden of maintenance responsibility shared with a third party
- Routine maintenance reduces downtime
- Enhanced residual values of kit with a dealer service history
- No need to invest in specialist service tools
- Reduced need to send workshop personnel on factory training courses
- Specialist equipment may be available to reduce service and repair times
- Cost of servicing in demanding season covered

Advantages of ensuring you retain in-house skills can ensure:

- Minor breakdowns can take less time to resolve
- In-house workshops personnel 'know' the levels of use equipment is put to and can develop a maintenance schedule to match
- In-house repairs may be more economic, particularly on equipment out of warranty
- In-house skills can be tapped to develop modifications and adaptations to suit specific requirements
- Operating costs can be spread to cover all items of equipment, reducing overall maintenance bill
- Older equipment can be kept running longer, particularly by skilled personnel not afraid to modify and adapt to suit changing demands

The ability to repair a puncture quickly in-house can save time and money.

Basic workshop skills should be nurtured and encouraged, particularly for those willing to undertake further training to enhance their skills.

Setting the height of cut or verticutter adjustment is a job typically left to one person.

But if another wants to learn what to do then they should be encouraged.

Sharing skills is an asset.



Seed and sustainability

With the imminent launch of Arrowtown bent at BTME 2013, a unique new cultivar from Johnsons Sports Seed, Noel MacKenzie of Sports Turf Consulting Limited has a closer look at bent grass use and asks if this grass has something to offer where sustainability is concerned







Everybody would agree that sustainability is a high priority in the management of golf courses, but is true sustainability actually achievable? For many people the simple answer is “No!” – however it is fair to say that the sustainability of golf course management has been significantly increased but we should perhaps accept that golf is only sustainable as long as it gets inputs.

As I understood it, the R&A and other bodies were promoting the minimal use of resources due to criticism from the press, environmental groups and the public.

I wholeheartedly agree with this approach, and I don't mind having another look at it too.

The focus is on installing fescue into golf greens.

Spurred on by observations in Denmark, where inputs are low and playing numbers generally lighter than UK courses, fescue was found to be performing well and some agronomists pushed this species as part of sustainable development.

It is a grass that does well in many parts of the UK, especially on coastal and colder areas where play and maintenance pressure is less intensive.

While it is fair to say fescue has

a role in sustainable agronomic management, it is worth asking the question whether this approach is the be all and end all of the improved sustainability process.

And what role, if any, can bent grasses play?

On courses in and around big conurbations, they are usually dominated by annual meadow grass due to certain factors such as:

- high wear and trampling levels,
- intensive management to combat those high wear levels,
- poor soil types which in winter work against deeper rooted grasses and favour Poa due to waterlogging,
- compacted soils requiring a lot of relief which opens up the surface to meadow grass germination
- low mowing heights below 4mm
- the combination of high fungicide/fertiliser/water inputs that allow Poa to survive when it might otherwise be affected by disease,
- and finally... a lack of co-ordinated seeding effort together with excessive fungicide use that protects Poa from Fusarium and Anthracnose attack.

In these environments the benefits of fescue can be greatly reduced – it simply does not survive the pressures on it.



But with bent grasses most agronomists and greenkeepers agree that these will get a foothold even when the management regime is not well suited to it.

Quite often it persists in a situation where the management, instead of helping this grass to thrive, is at best ambivalent about its presence and sometimes downright derogatory.

With the right approach bents can fulfil a very useful place and make up a useful proportion of the sward.

Five key issues need to be considered:

1. Ensure you have the backing of the club in pursuing the policy



TOP: Bowood Golf and Country Club, Wiltshire

and be clear why you think this is a good idea.

2. To have any chance of success it's important to ensure the management regime of greens is going to work with your bent grass - if you cut at 2mm expect failure.

Realistically bench set mowing heights need to be about 4mm minimum for success with Colonial bent; Creeping bents may be happier at 2.5-3mm.

Verticutting and scarification requirements may be different both in terms of frequency and aggression - Velvet bent will need plenty as will Creeping bent; Colonial bent will simply need a tickle about every 10-14 days in the growing season).

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3. Not all bents are the same – they will respond to different conditions through the year.

Different species have different requirements for feed.

For example, Creeping bents need plenty, Colonial about half and Velvet about half as much as Colonial, and some are more water dependant than others.

Creeping bent really doesn't like the winter or being allowed to get too long or too hungry, whilst Colonial and Velvet do well all year round but their feed and verticutting requirements were quite different.

4. How you make introductions with seed is as important - get it wrong and there'll be trouble ahead, and don't rely on a single seeding action.

Make sure you determine the right time in the year to seed - the bent seed has limited reserves and can't be too wet, cold or buried if it's to have chance of survival.

Late spring, summer and a very early autumn are best in my opinion.

There are plenty of ways to overseed but the crucial part is to get the seed to soil contact and this requires sarel spiking and/or scarification at the very least.

Some greenkeepers have had good results with overseeding with deep scarifying when the surface is really opened up.

Some of those greenkeepers have also seen that grass disappear

later under a tide of Poa due to failures of the rest of the maintenance programme.

5. Select the right species and cultivars.

You might think it's a bit odd to leave this until last, but I really wanted to make the point that the other issues are essential in getting to this point not vice-versa.

Choosing the right species is the first step in relation to your other maintenance parameters, then you need to look closer at the cultivars.

This may or may not mean choosing from the top listed varieties – a suitably qualified agronomist can help you in this area.

Also look at company trial sites to see what's new - the BSPB Turfgrass Seed Book is a useful source of information.

Sustainability means using less chemicals, and seeking to ensure the course can run effectively under its own steam.

Whilst fescue has its well deserved place in maritime and colder climates in the UK and Ireland (and during winter or dry conditions) bent grasses offer a very good, and in many circumstances, better route, towards sustainable playing surfaces.

Bents require a considered and careful approach, looking at each of the management factors listed previously to get the best from them.

Remember there is no point in seeding into acidic, wet thatch

accumulation so it is essential to get the scene set before undertaking seeding.

If you're tempted to start a bent grass renovation program then DLF Trifolium's Derek Smith says "the new Arrowtown bent is worth a consideration.

It fits into the existing Johnsons Sports Seed line up of bent grasses which include Manor, Villa 1 and Cobra Nova, the latter being the highest rated creeping bent grass for UK conditions".

Greenkeepers can take a first look at the official independent trial results with the publication of the 2013 Turfgrass seed booklet, but it's believed that in the first year seed availability is likely to be limited.

Derek adds: "Arrowtown is bred from exceptionally fine and dense plants collected from greens at Arrowtown Golf Club and in trials, it really stood out being noticeably much denser than the cultivars currently available, like Manor, Barking and Aberroyal.

Arrowtown is an exceptionally fine and dense browntop, ideally suited to closely mown (4mm) greens, tees and fairways.

On greens the tight, dense surface sets new standards for quality & disease tolerance.

It has a natural vigour to recover quickly from renovation and an improved drought stress to retain its green colour for longer in summer."



BIGGA

Regional Conferences

South East	14 November	Thorpeness Golf Club, Thorpeness
S West & S Wales	15 November	Oaktree Arena, Bristol
Scotland	5 March	Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline

SOUTH EAST CONFERENCE

The South East conference is on Wednesday 14 November at Thorpeness Country Club, and we've once again arranged a variety of excellent speakers to participate in what should be a very interesting and informative day.

Registration begins at 8.30am and CPD points will be awarded for attendance.

Thorpeness Golf Club is situated off the A12, then take the B1353 following signs to Thorpeness.

Ian Willett of BIGGA East Anglia and Regional Chairman Tom Smith will welcome attendees before Jim Croxton, BIGGA Chief Executive, speaks.

Other speakers are:

Kate Entwistle – 'New pest and disease issues'

Richard Stuttard – 'STRI environment competition'

Nigel Church – 'Safety equipment improvements'

Ken Moodie – 'Course improvements case study – Thorpeness'

Mark Hunt – 'Planning for the future'

For more information please contact Clive Osgood on 01737 819343 or cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk

BIGGA SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES CONFERENCE

The BIGGA South West & South Wales 2012 conference will take place on Thursday 15 November at Oaktree Arena in Highbridge, Somerset.

The theme is 'Turf Management in all its Glory' and features an exciting range of guest speakers. They include:

Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, "Biology and the Effects of Parasitic Nematodes"; David Cole, Course Manager Loch Lomond Golf Club, "Winter Kill In West Scotland"; Cameron MacMillan, Course Manager Queenwood Golf Club, "Mission Impossible"; Robert Wills First Assistant Remedy Oak Golf Club "Changes in greenkeeping as seen by a First Assistant"; Richard Comely Director of Product and Marketing at Ransomes Jacobsen "Perceptions in Greens Management".

Any further information can be obtained by contacting Jane Jones, BIGGA Regional Administrator on 01454 270850, 07841 948110 or jane@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



Scottish Region



Central

The Section held its autumn outing on one of the better days of the summer on 19 September at Piperdam Golf and Leisure Club.

Over 45 players took part with the numbers boosted considerably by the large contingent of students from Elmwood who came along for the day.

It was great to see so many youngsters attend what would have been their first event and mix with the regulars.

The course was presented beautifully by Shaun Anderson and his staff although the pace of the greens caught many of the players out and our thanks go to them and everyone else at Piperdam for making us so welcome.

The main prize winners on the day were:

Scratch, Allan Patterson, St Andrews, best overall net and also winner of the spring and autumn handicap combined, Shaun Anderson, Piperdam.

Best nett in section 1 handicap, David Gray, Ladybank and in section 2, Gary Douglas, Piperdam.

Allan Wright from Fairways GM won the trade prize and Martin Kerr was the best student.

The full list of prize winners is available on the website www.biggacentralsection.org.uk <<http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk>> along with a brief précis of the Section AGM held on 30 October.

The final of the 2012 pairs tournament was played at Kingsbarns Golf Links on 15 October before this article was written.

The finalists are Paul Armour and Kevin Webster from Leven against Kenny Mitchell and

Scott MacKintosh from St Andrews.

Thanks go to Kingsbarns for allowing us the use of the course for the final.

The irrigation course we are running at Elmwood on 12 December has only 4 places left at the time of going to print and we are also trying to arrange another seminar for an evening around the end of November.

Members will be notified by email in the normal fashion.

If you haven't been getting regular emails about educational or golfing events, then please check we have your correct email address.

Regards,
Gordon



East

We had our Autumn Golf Tournament at Murrayfield Golf Course on Wednesday 19th September.

The weather was dry and sunny and should have reflected some low scoring in our stableford competition, results as follows:

Scratch winner - Stuart Ferguson Dundas Park GC 76 scratch

1st class winner - Phil Butler Murrayfield GC 35 points

Runner up - Sean Cunningham Mortonhall GC 34 points

2nd class - winner Alan Campbell Carrickknowe GC 35 Points

Runner up - Ryan McCulloch, Goswick GC 26 points

Trade winner - Stewart Clayton, Greensman Ltd 31 points

Veterans winner - Alastair Holmes, Seahouses GC 29 points

Apprentice prize - Andrew Terras, Goswick GC 29 points

Bill Lyon (course manager) and his staff had the course

in perfect condition, with Phil Butler (Murrayfield) coming through and winning a trophy, local knowledge eh Phil'.

We would like to thank Stuart Taylor Scottish Chairman, for attending and also David Greenshields for his barrenburg presentation after dinner.

Next year's venues and dates are already set, thanks to our hard working and forward thinking, secretary Stuart Ferguson.

Events 2013:

Spring - Seahouses GC - 23 April

Willie Woods - Mortonhall GC - 21 August

Autumn - Haddington GC - 17 September

On the 6 November this year, we have a presentation by Tour Spec at Turnhouse GC from 9.30am to 1.30pm, please contact Scott Corrigan on 07877098237 or email scottcorrigan4aol.com for further information.

I believe two CPD points will be awarded for attendance.

The AGM this year is on 31 October at Gifford GC sponsored by Aitkens, good luck to you all who play for Jimmy Neilson's claret jug in the afternoon.

This will be my last entry for the East Section as I step down from chairmanship and let vice chairman Scott Corrigan take over.

I would like to thank you all for your support over the last four years.

Your attendance at all events helped to keep the East Section strong.

Thanks to all the committee members with whom I have worked and a special thanks to Stuart Ferguson who has been on the end of the phone for constant help.

Good luck and best wishes to you all in 2013 and beyond.

Stewart Crawford
s.crawford@live.co.uk



West

By the time you get this copy of the magazine the AGM will have been done and dusted the venue being Hags Castle Golf Club, I will report next month on what happened and any feedback for the members' attention.

The outing held at Fereneze Golf Club on 18 September experienced beautiful sunshine and a well groomed, dry golf course which was a joy to play.

Unfortunately I was unable to find form that day, although I struck the ball well some misinformation from the captain Peter Boyd scuppered my efforts.

The course in excellent condition and thanks must go to Sandy Bulloch and his staff for their efforts although none competed we appreciate all their hard work.

The Fereneze committee have to be commended for allowing our presence, this is very much appreciated, and thanks to both the catering and bar staff for attending to our requirements.

The prize winners on the day were

Scratch Alistair Reid gross 74
1st class winner Gerry Bruen; Runner up Craig Littlejohn; Third Derek Duthie; 2nd class winner Sandy Brawley; Runner up Brian Logue; Third Kenny Hunter; 3rd class winner David Reid; Runner up Michael Maxton; Visitors prize and nearest the pin at hole 7; Peter Boyd; Nearest the pin at hole 14; Gerry Bruen

On the day 28 people attended and enjoyed the event which is a wee bit disappointing but maybe the next time we might get a better turn out, but I do understand as this was one of the best days for a while.

The normal annual dinner

last year was not really a dinner but a get together with like-minded individuals and the occasion proved to be very successful with 26 turning up for a few drinks and chat.

This year a similar format is planned and the intended date is Friday 30 November for those who are interested meeting once again at all bar one.

Recently I played in the British Championship at Irvine Bogside which was a joy to walk round experiencing lovely dry surfaces and beautiful firm quick greens, sadly my golf did not live up to the course.

Gordon Sangster from Cathkin Braes did pick up a prize and the Scottish region won the team prize, so congratulations to the team members.

Two brilliant golf days were experienced by all and on the evening of Monday a lovely meal was laid on by the club steward.

Well done to the Irvine Bogside council and committee for allowing us the privilege of playing your wonderful course and thanks to all at head office for their efforts in running an excellent competition.

May I pass on my best wishes to Tony Smith, my playing partner the first day, and wish him well as new Chairman.

The annual match against the club masters has still to be arranged but if anybody is interested in playing, then please call me, please remember to get in touch with any information of births, deaths, marriages etc.

Tel 0141-942-5554, or 07790823914, or e-mail stuart.taylor@glasgowgolfclub.com

Northern Region



North East

On October 10 at Tyneside Golf Club we played our Autumn Competition.

After an early bout of frost the sun was out and what a beautiful day it was too a rare sight this year - compliments to Head Greenkeeper David Simpson and his staff for the great condition of the course a credit to them all and thanks to the club.

The venue must have been a good choice as sixteen people turned up now that's a lot better than recent years my thanks to the greenkeepers who made their debut and look forward

to seeing them in the future events, and thanks also to Sandra Raper the new Regional Administrator for doing the cards and keeping the members informed of forthcoming events.

Finally to the sponsors on the day Rigby Taylor, Rickerbys, T.S.L.

Shorts of Whitburn and Greenlay thank you all once again.

Leading Scores

Best Nett M.Gunn Tyneside GC 65; Best Gross S.Harrison 74 Close House; Greenlay Cup nett J.Moutrie 70 Tyneside; Ransome/Jacobsen Shield J.Grey 68 Middlesbrough Municipal; J.S.Richardson 68; SRPope 72; P.Walton 73; A.Reay 75.

Other news which was actually phoned in is Grant Burton, formerly of Gosforth GC, has landed the job of assistant greenkeeper at The Northumberland GC.

Apparently there were 40 applications for this position, the new man at Gosforth is Paul Wright formerly of T.S.L.

who also used to work at the City of Newcastle GC.

Sadly I received some really bad news that another Head Greenkeeper has been made redundant due to the economic climate - Peter Anderson of Newcastle Utd GC a long serving the member of the section.

I'm sure we all wish him the best of luck and hope he gets fixed up in the near future.

And lastly a piece of news from the Isle of Man where Clive Patterson formerly of Arcot Hall works.

As you know we all have a bit of news about all the rain this year well his secretary has passed it on to me that in June, July and August they had 18ins of rain hence the rough has been thick and lush.

Reckon that's the same all over this year not many golfers played to their handicaps.



North West

Again, a very quiet month.

I am writing these a month before publishing and I hope the weather has improved by now.

I know we all have astory to tell about the weather.

I personally have never seen so much water fall on the course for such a long period.

I do hope you have all managed as best you can and you have my sympathy in what is by far the worst prolonged bout of bad weather that I have ever seen.

Some of you will remember Steve Dunn previously of Dunham forest and Mere Golf and Country Club.

He moved to New Zealand and into a Greenkeeping job.

He has now taken a new job supplying golf course machinery and I believe he is loving it, good luck to him.

Chris Sheehan



Northern

The awful weather again put fowl to our autumn golf day out at Halifax Golf Club which makes me think we are jinxed because it's now three times we have had to cancel it! We now will have the AGM at our Xmas golf day at Bracken Gyll on 12 December, so come on guys good turn out please.

It's a 4 man team event and every team will get a prize! So you can play golf, have a great

meal, loads of laughs, maybe win on the raffle too all for £20... bargain.

I've not got too much for you this month I'm afraid, but I'm working on a few things for next year and will hopefully have next year's fixtures and these events confirmed by the AGM.

Thanks

Andy Slingsby

07506407867

andy.slingsby98@googlemail.com



North Wales

The leaves are well and truly falling now and with Halloween behind us and bonfire night pretty well put to bed, the next big thing is our upcoming Christmas tournament on 21 November at Oswestry golf club, not 7 December as posted on our fixture sheet.

I must apologise as in last month's column I neglected to mention the outstanding achievement of Stu Yarwood, Eddie Ainsworth, Tim Johnson and Gordon Irvine who walked three mowers from Liverpool to

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Around The Green

Hull to raise much needed funds for help for heroes approximately £2000 raised well done lads! The national tournament took place at Irvine golf club and by all accounts the course and competitive spirit where both at exceptionally high standards but even though our entrants, Andy Peel of Bull Bay and Phil Watson of Wallesey put a good show they didn't finish quite in the top tier.

I have to mention the sad news that Chirk golf club has folded and our thoughts go out to Adie, Haydn, George, Richard and also to Roy who although retired still used to go in to help out, we wish them the best for the future.

We are once again 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.

There will be a half-day seminar very possibly on 4 December, speakers and venue yet to be finalised so watch out for information on our Facebook events page.

The annual trip to Harrogate is pencilled in for 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 and with it being free to members and only £10 to non-members it's a steal! I think that just about covers everything so all the best until next month.

Pete Maybury e-mail petemayb66@aol.com phone and text 07756001187 Facebook North Wales B.I.G.G.A

Midland Region



East Midlands

I'm pretty certain that this is a first.

Picture this...I am sitting on my sun lounger, in my budgie smugglers, in the beautiful Turkish town of Kalkan in 37 degrees writing November's Around The Green notes! Those of you that know me will be frantically trying to get that image out of your head, those of you that don't are best advised to

follow those that do!

September and October have been very busy months for the East Midlands Section.

Our AGM tournament was held at Glen Gorse Golf Club on 20th September.

The day produced a number of surprises including Dave Smith (retired) turning up in a pair of trousers straight from the wardrobe of television's Flog It.

However, his highly distracting attire wasn't enough to put off the eventual winners, Nick 'Three-Birdies-in-a-Row' Miles and Mick Marvel with 40 points on count back from Simon Banks and Andy Marsh in second and Nigel Colley and Andy Lane in third place.

Nearest the Pin went to Nigel Colley and the Longest Drive prize was won by Nick 'I've-Just-Hit-It-A-Country-Mile' Miles.

These two prizes were generously sponsored as ever by Tacit, so thanks to Mark Chamberlain for organising that.

The committee would also like to thank Banks Amenity, Countrywide and Farmura for their generous sponsorship of the day in general, enabling us to provide a very appealing prize table.

Thanks also to Frank Kempster and his team for producing a course in tremendous condition along with an extremely hospitable clubhouse for a lovely meal.

Our Regional Administrator Sandra Raper was also there to photograph the event, assist with the AGM and show of her raffle coordination skills.

Overall the day was a great success, although again low numbers attended, it was reassuring for me to play a round of golf with Carl Chamberlain without him rendering any unassuming golfers unconscious with his wayward shots!

The AGM that followed produced a lively session with lots to discuss under AOB.

All members of the committee were voted back on and Andy Marsh from Charnwood Forest GC was voted on for the forthcoming year.

Andy also represented the East Midlands Section along with Garry Thurman at the National Championships on 8th/9th October.

On 11th October the East Midlands Section fielded a team of three, Adi Porter 36 points, Nigel Colley 36 points and Asa

English 33 points in the Whitemoss Inter-Section Golf Day at Greatham Valley GC.

This set of tremendous scores meant that the East Midland Section came second by one point to the Midland Section.

However, Adi Porter, with several years of local knowledge won the Longest Drive and Nigel 'This is becoming a habit' Colley won the Nearest the Pin prize.

Adi and his team are to be congratulated on their presentation of the course, especially the outstanding greens.

Sandra did a sterling job in organising the day along with Whitemoss, the day's sponsors and Greatham Valley GC for their hospitality and quality of food.

As I said earlier it has been a busy month or so for the section and all this typing whilst tanning my cheeks is making me tired and thirsty.

It must be nearly beer o'clock surely....

As Leslie Phillips used to say, probably whilst wearing Dave Smith's cast off trousers

Ding....

Dong....

Greg Skinner

07970 095264



Midland

Well, as I sit here in Stratford Towers pondering what on earth to spew out for this month's notes, I am trying to find inspiration from "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam".

His understanding of the human condition can only be found with the knowledge of experience and the writings of those before.

With this in mind it is quite fitting that our Christmas Tournament is to be held at Sutton Coldfield Golf Club on 3rd December, such is being held in respect to our long serving member Alan Kite, who is retiring.

It will be his last stand.

I hope that you will support this event and give Alan the send off he has earned.

I shall of course report in a little more detail next month.

Get your entries in to Rhys Thomas before the day.

You can contact Rhys on

07774 164173 or download an entry form from the website www.biggamidlandsection.co.uk.

This month's calendar sponsor is Turfmech Machinery Ltd.

Tel: 01889 271 503 or : www.turfmech.co.uk.

Our thanks to Turfmech for their continued support.

Please consider them for your machinery requirements.

The Region Inter-section team event was held on Thursday 11th October at Greatham Valley Golf Club.

The Midland Section won the event with a team score of 106 points.

Well done to Steve Thompson, Clint Woodall and Andy Brougham for bringing the trophy home for the first time since 2007.

Many thanks to Sandra Raper our Regional Administrator for organising the day and Andy Law and Whitemoss Eco for sponsoring the event.



Berks, Bucks & Oxon

This year's BB&O Turkey Trot is returning once more to the Oxfordshire.

The event which is arguably the section's flagship golf day will take place on 12 December 2012 and will follow the same team format as previous years.

The Turkey Trot has been well attended over the last two years with around 100 people turning up on the day, hopefully as many of you as possible will be able to attend especially those who have not played before.

For further details and entry forms please visit the section website.

Sandra Raper our Midlands Regional Administrator has been busy visiting golf courses and members in the BB&O section putting names to faces.

Sandra will be working to update the HQ email system over the winter.

In order to keep up to date with what's happening in the section and BIGGA, plus news and events please email your details to sandra@bigga.co.uk

The Rigby Taylor pairs competition has reached the semi final stage which will be contested between Castle Royal GC and

Sonning GC while Harewood Downs GC v Deanwood Park GC make up the second semi final, good luck to all four teams!

In other news from around the section the Midlands Section Conference is being held at Forest Hill Golf Club in Leicester on 6th November.

Malcolm Peake is still demonstrating the 'Greenstester' if anyone wants to arrange a demonstration he can be contacted on peakes@hotmail.co.uk or mobile tel: 07801 239790.

If anyone has any news, views or ideas they would like to see for the BB&O section then please don't hesitate to get in touch: bboscribe@gmail.com or contact the committee/Matt Nutter: bbosecretary@gmail.com

Alternatively keep up to date with what is happening in the BB&O section by following us on Twitter, Facebook and the web site: www.bbogreenkeepers.co.uk



Mid Anglia

We are well and truly heading into autumn/winter as the temperatures have really dropped off and hopefully most of the leaves will be doing the same as it's always a frustrating time of the year clearing up the continual deluge day in day out.

We will have played our Autumn Golf Day at Verulam GC by the time you get this so let's hope we get lucky with the weather.

Our final Golf event of the season is the Texas Scramble hosted on 4 December at Dunstable Downs GC so please get your entries for your team of four in nice and early as this is always a very popular event and a fantastic golfing test.

Prices are £30 for Members and £40 for any non members.

Lastly we have some good news from one of our boys flying the flag for our section.

Oly Browning (23) of Stocks Golf Club has just won the biggest competition of his life, the Bigga National Championship at Irvine Golf Club on the Ayrshire coast.

He won with a score of 146 over 36 holes medal play.

Playing off of scratch he beat 66 other entrants to the title.

Over the past 4 years he has won the club champs at both Stocks and Ivinghoe golf clubs respectively.

Oly hopes that one day he will make the grade and play on the European tour.

Just a word of warning, don't play this guy for money! Well done Oly! Any chance of giving me and all the other choppers out there a few lessons? That's all from me and hope to hear from some of you soon.

Darren - d.mugford@rigby-taylor.com

SOUTH EAST REGION



Surrey

Monday October 15.

Just had a text from Chris Gosden, course manager at St Georges Hill GC, giving the sad news that his mechanic Steve Bush died suddenly yesterday.

Steve, a keen lawnmower racer and winner of many events over the past years, leaves his wife Sharon and daughters Rachel and Hanna.

I have asked Chris to pass on our condolences to Steve's family.

Richmond GC was the excellent venue on October 11 for the annual contest for the Cresta cup.

Thanks to Les Howkins and Richmond GC for allowing us courtesy and also the chef for providing everyone, except me, with an exceptional curry.

I had a delicious roast beef dinner because I, unlike the rest of the world, hate curry.

Tony Bremer, that much loved bandit from Dorking GC, walked away with the cup, easily beating Ron Christie, the runner up and Gary Ogilvie.

Gary, an infiltrator from Sussex section, remained dry and missed taking a dip in the pond even though I tried to divert his attention by hitting a bad tee shot in his direction.

Fortunately for Gary, my ball went into the pond and unlike at Gatton Manor GC, he did not.

Jason Hunt won nearest the pin.

Should any member like to join the Surrey committee please contact Les or Ron before the AGM, which takes place at Dorking GC, after the Turkey Trot.

My last scribbling for this excellent magazine will be in the December edition as I am retiring from the committee after some 15 years.

I know you will all miss my adventures on the Isle of Wight but I am just a phone call away should any of you feel the need for an update.

I must apologise for the mistake in last month's edition as the match greenkeepers v the reps took place at Hankley Common GC and not at Richmond GC as stated.

I was not chosen to play for the reps and so the result, a draw, could have been averted had I been involved.

I will not comment on the possible outcome had I played, except to say that it is probable that I would have used all my golfing expertise to ensure a greenkeeper's victory.

It is apparent that either the baby carrying stork is dead or that all members are of a certain orange variety that has no pips.

Father of the month, a usual feature of my monthly jottings, has not appeared for some time and needs to be used on a regular basis.

So come on lads, do your best and provide the new writer of around the green with news of your efforts to repopulate the world.

Brian Willmott



Kent

What a day we had at Boughton Golf Club.

Our hardcore group of thirty odd of Kent's finest greenkeepers certainly picked the best day of that particular week to play at Gary Debenham's superbly presented course, especially when you factor in the recent weather.

Indeed, in glorious sunshine, many of us were able to make hay while the sun shone whilst

Assistant Profile

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

Name: Ashley Marshall
Age: 35
Club: Matfen Hall
Position: Assistant Greenkeeper
Nickname: Dish dash



1. How long have you been greenkeeping? 19 years

2. What was it about the career that attracted you? Working outdoors and job satisfaction

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

4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why? Drainage work, correcting something that needs fixing

5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why? Pumping water from flooded areas

6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot? Managers understanding what is needed to run a golf course

7. Hobbies? Football, going on holiday to the Middle East

8. Favourite Band? Black Eyed Peas

9. Which team do you support?)? Newcastle - the Toon Army!

10. What is your claim to fame? Spending four days with Kenny McDowell in Dubai driving him round the golf course after he fell and hurt his knee, also met GMac who is a top man

BIGGA welcomes the following new members

Scotland

Kenneth Niven, Central Section
David Bruce, Central Section

Northern Region

Neil Proudlock, North East Section
Joseph Henderson, North East Section
William Brown, North East Section

Midland Region

Ritchie Nicholls, Midland Section
Anthony Whitehall, Midland Section

South East Region

Glenn Stone, London Section
Su Hodgson, Surrey Section
Jordan Pannone, Surrey Section

South West/South Wales Region

David Gray, South Coast Section
Kevin Arnold, South Coast Section
Alun Hughes, South Wales Section
David Smith, South Coast Section
Michael Littlecott, South Coast Section

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

one member of my playing group just enjoyed a good walk through it!

Boughton was certainly a challenge to anyone not aware of the layout.

There seemed to be a lot of dog-legs and blind shots to tucked away greens.

Then again, maybe it was just the strange lines I was approaching them from! A quality bit of beef (with optional seconds!) and a very hospitable bar ensured the day was finished off perfectly in the company of our friends and peers.

Results as follows: 1st Russ Bain 37 points; 2nd Wayne Syers 37 points (countback); 3rd Dave Bass 36 points and winner of an almighty longest drive down 18th; Nearest Pin-Pete Leeves.

Our section would like to wish the very best of luck to one of our regular attendees, Michael Roberts of Knole Park, who is representing Great Britain in the World Deaf Golf Championships.

Michael is a fantastic player and an all round good guy who I'm sure will do this great nation proud.

The section were very proud to give you some sponsorship to take to Japan where he will compete for the World Championships.

We would like to congratulate Aaron Launchbury of North Foreland Golf Club who recently won the regional final of Toro Student of the Year.

He has just returned from the finals where, unfortunately, he was pipped at the post but has done fantastically well considering he has only been in the industry for sixteen months.

On behalf of Dan McGrath, North Foreland Golf Club and everyone in your section a massive well done to you Aaron. You are a credit to us all. Unfortunately, another one of Dan McGrath's staff at North Foreland has been less fortunate.

Darren Burton, star of the Trilby Tour, has managed to break his thumb whilst playing football. This has rendered him out of action for some time while he gets some internal bionics attached.

Maybe he'll learn that goal-keeping is a job for the professionals!

In a couple of weeks, 29 November to be exact, we shall

be bringing the curtain down on another great year by having our Turkey Trot and AGM at the fantastic venue of Redlibbits Golf Club.

Kev has really raised the bar this year when it comes to presenting a course and I'm sure you will all enjoy this great event.

We shall also have our AGM following the golf so if you have any issues you would like to raise then please let us know.

Also, if you would like to stand for election to our committee then just stick your hand up! You should have got an invitation e-mail by now to this event.

Please let us know if you will be coming so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Finally, we would like to wish our Regional Administrator, Clive Osgood well.

Clive is one of the most genuine guys I have had the pleasure to meet in this great industry and we hope that you are soon up and mobile again.

I would normally sign off here by saying 'Best of British' but after a fantastic Ryder Cup weekend I shall on this one and only occasion say:

Best of European!

Rob Holland
Premier Golf
07545 424880
www.kentgreenkeepers.com



Sussex

Hi all!

Our Autumn Tournament was held at Crowborough Beacon Golf Club with a very poor show of members turning up.

The weather forecast may have been part to blame but the rain didn't really materialise to any significance.

Instead it was fog that nearly stopped play.

However, we all soldiered on and I still haven't seen the fantastic views promised.

Perhaps next time.

The results were: Nearest the Pin at 3rd and 8th- Glynn Pollard; Nearest the Pin at 13th - Pete Smith; Individual best score - 1st to Glynn Pollard with 37 points and 2nd place went to Pete Smith with 33 points.

The team event went to Pete

Smith, Trevor Townsend, Steve Vogells and Eric Green.

But the big news from the trade scores was that Steve beat Jon by 3 points.

We thank all at Crowborough Beacon for a great day and offer many, many thanks to our sponsor for the day, Collier Turf.

We'll get Chris out on the course next time.

Thanks again Chris.

BREAKING NEWS....

Glynn has had his handicap cut by three.

The Turkey Trot at Worthing Golf Club will be on Friday 30 November with details to be sent out shortly.



Essex

This month's report has quite a lot of information for section members, with news of two educational events in the section, the forthcoming AGM, plus results from our Autumn Trophy.

Firstly the section is running two educational events and the region is running their annual conference.

Our first event is a seminar day run by Howard Swan, entitled Golf Course Design.

The first was on 30th October, but if you are quick and numbers allow, there could be a place on the second one, to be held at Colne Valley Golf Club on 6th November.

Contact Ian Wood 07952-470861 for information and availability.

The next event we are running is to be held at Channels Golf Club on Tuesday 20th November.

A machinery day when the three major manufacturers will be showing three similar machines from there range, allowing greenkeepers and committee to see and try the best out there, members will be split into three groups allowing around 45 minutes with each company, then we will have a break for lunch followed by a question and answer session, where you can ask your questions of the Big Three.

Members are encouraged to attend this event, as it will be a good chance for you to have your say in the open forum.

The Regional Conference is

Section Notes

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

being held at Thorpeness Golf & Country Club 14th November if you're interested contact Clive Osgood, ASAP on 07841-948410.

Stock by Nayland was a port of call for our Autumn Trophy and Blind Pairs competition; this was our first visit to this fine club since its inclusion in the Essex Golf Union area and what a day we had.

Most of us started in light rain but this soon passed over to give warm dry conditions.

Our thanks go to the owner of Stock by Nayland and staff for their hospitality.

Also thanks to Course Manager, Kevin King and the Gainsborough Course, Head Greenkeeper, Campbell Murdoch and his staff for the presentation of the course.

The scoring was reasonably low for our first visit, which was not a surprise, as most were unfamiliar with the course.

This made for a challenge in itself.

Scores for the day are as follows:

Cards drawn on the day paired the following players; 1st Campbell Murdock & Michael Fance, 65 Points; 2nd Peter Craig & Antony Kirwan, 65 Points back nine; 3rd Neil Peachey & Nick Spong, 61 Points; Nearest the pins 9th Liam Springet; 18th Neil Peachey; Overall individual winner Antony Kirwan 37 Points.

Our next event is the AGM and Winter team event, to be held at The Essex Golf & Country Club on Thursday 6th December.

Again this year the AGM is before the golf and members are encouraged to attend at 9.00am.

The election of officers this year is for a Chairman, as Mark Stopps has decided to stand down and for one committee member to replace Andy Cracknell.

Also the Trade representative's position is up as Neil Peachey has finished his two year stint and a replacement is sought.

Nominations for the Chairman and Committee positions should be sent to Mark Stopps at mark@bentleygolfclub.com plus nominations from the trade to the same email address please.

If you have anything for inclusion in Greenkeeper International or on the Sections Website www.essexbigga.co.uk please

contact me on 07764-862.337 or at essexbigga@talktalk.net Arnold Phipps-Jones

SOUTH WEST & WALES



South West

Things don't get any easier do they, with this said we recently visited Bristol & Clifton GC for our section AGM.

The week running up to the event was possibly the worst it has been all season.

I think this would a perfect time to thank Matt Hawker and his staff for presenting the course in such a positive way making it a truly brilliant for all that attended.

With 30 playing and 35+ for the AGM, another impressive turn out for the south west section.

The competition winners for the day are as follows; 3rd place Joe Curtis 35pts; 2nd place Paul Garland 36pts; and the over all winner was Steve Cubley 37pts, a little local knowledge can go a long way.

With some slightly disappointing news now, the latest section match had to be cancelled.

We were due to play the south coast at Salisbury G.C but due to lack of numbers this fixture could not take place.

I realise that 2012 has been a very difficult year, however let's try our very best in 2013 to attend at least one section match.

Captain Wayne Vincent works extremely hard to get his team together, very often having to chase people just nights before, please help him out!

BTME is now just around the corner, just recently information packs would have landed on your doormats.

This is one of the most important events that happens in our calendar, your attendance is key to the show being a success.

Some fantastic workshops and talks are taking place this year.

Be sure to get your place booked, don't be that person this misses out!

See you all at Bath G.C on 12 December for our Christmas golf day...you know that this is

the highlight of the calendar, Ill see you there!

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.

See you all very soon,
adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk
07732503855



South Coast

Hi all,

What a week, coring the greens in the rain, well done to all my staff for sticking at it and finally getting the job done.

Just waiting for the members to ask why the holes are not yet filled!

The Autumn tournament was played at Weymouth Golf Club followed by the AGM.

First thing I have to say is it was the poorest turnout we have ever had with only 17 players.

It is a long journey for some but those that didn't get there missed a delight.

The course was in great condition well done to Rob Bayliss and his team for presenting it so well.

Our sponsors were Rigby Taylor, thanks as always to them for their continued support.

Winners; 1 Rob Mabb 37pts and a gross 72; 2 Mike Gulliver 36pts; 3 Pete Corrick 35pts also gross 72; 4 Chris Bitten 31pts (backnine); 5 Kevan Glass 31pts; 6 George Briggs 29pts.

Nearest the pin went to Pete Corrick and the longest drive probably by fluke because everyone else missed the fairway went to Kev Glass!

The AGM was held before the meal and ran smoothly with little feedback from the floor.

Future AGM meetings will not be held after the Autumn golf event, the committee propose to make this a separate event.

More in a later issue.

The section committee last met at the end of September and were unanimous in their decisions.

The cost of postage is now exorbitant and therefore the fliers and entry forms will stop with immediate effect.

All of our fixtures and information will be posted on the website well in advance of a competition or educational event.

The section secretary Alex will email an entry form to all our members prior to the event.

If Alex has not got your email send it to him on southcoastsecretary@gmail.com.

The fixture card will continue to be sponsored and will be available as soon as possible.

Please also note that payment on the day is not acceptable, we need to know exact numbers well in advance of the day as we are charged for the numbers quoted by Kev a week before the golf.

This happens so often, people call to say put me in and don't turn up on the day, then we end up paying for food that no-one had.

The committee were also unanimous in voting for Joe Cooper to be nominated for a trip to BTME.

Joe has given hours of his own time for the committee and the preparation of his place of work for the seminar, a worthy candidate.

The Turkey trot will be at Hayling Golf Club on Tuesday 4th December, format as last year will be a Texas Scramble in 3's.

Contact glassy2003@hotmail.com for more information and to book your place.

If you haven't got a 3 ball we will attempt to put a team together.

Lastly, don't forget the Regional Conference on 15th November, some great speakers, if you want to go or for more information contact jane@bigga.co.uk.

That's it for this month, I better pacify the team with some new waterproofs!

Tony



Around The Green



Devon & Cornwall

Hello all,

Our October meeting was held at East Devon Golf Club on Thursday 11 October.

The day consisted of Golf or a Course walk followed by lunch, a presentation by Paul Newcombe (Head Greenkeeper) and then our AGM.

Unfortunately the weather was not being kind and torrential rain greeted in the morning followed by fog, but nevertheless the golf and the course walk went ahead and all attendees braved the elements.

The course was in fantastic condition and testament to Paul and his team for all their hard work.

In total, 46 members and guests attended the day, with 24 playing golf and the rest on the course walk.

Paul led the course walk and took us to some of the holes that have needed to be moved and redesigned due to the cliff top erosion.

The main aim of the club is to ensure that holes are moved inland sufficiently enough to safeguard the future of the course for another 100 years.

The holes that have been affected have been moved and designed sympathetically to ensure that the unique heathland feel has been kept and the integrity of the course not compromised.

This has certainly been achieved, with a stunning new par 3, 13th hole that with new tees will measure approximately 200 yards.

Indigenous heather turf has been transplanted from the site to achieve heather mounds as standalone hazards and on bunker banks to give a natural feel to the new holes.

Paul's obvious enthusiasm for the game and the course can be seen during the course walk and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the tour.

The golf format for the day was Individual Stableford playing for the "Don Hunt" trophy.

1st place went to Martin Cornish (Launceston) with 30 points, 2nd went to Gary Tuckett (Wrangaton) with 28 points and in 3rd place was Cameron

McMorrin (East Devon) with 26 points.

Nearest the pin on the 10th went to Gavin Moore (Launceston) and Longest Drive on the 12th went to Mark Downing (Launceston).

Congratulations to all those that took part in what were very testing conditions.

Prizes for places were sponsored and presented by Mick Higgins and Jonathan Skelton of Sibelco.

Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive prizes were sponsored and presented by John Palfrey of Avoncrop Amenity.

Huge thanks to our sponsors for the day and for their continued support of the Section.

After a wonderful Carvery lunch, Paul Newcombe gave a short presentation talking through his collection of photos kept during the redevelopment of the course.

This was a great insight into how the decisions in terms of design and construction were made by the club with Paul's influence and guidance.

A huge thank you to Paul, his team of greens staff and all the staff at East Devon GC for their wonderful hospitality throughout the day.

The Section AGM took place after this.

Two changes to the Committee this year, with Tony Gooch (Great Torrington), who is yet to be replaced.

The other change within committee was that Colin Webber (Portmore Park) will be taking over as Treasurer from Steve Harris (Ashbury).

Steve will remain on committee as a Devon representative.

Major topics raised were encouraging members to get involved with CPD and training opportunities and to communicate to the Section and the Association any training needs required.

Also, it was explained to the members how some of the funds that have been building up in the Section had been used to help subsidise training opportunities including travel up to Harrogate.

Thank you to all who attended the AGM.

Minutes are available from the Section Secretary.

Our Christmas meeting this year will be staged at Ashbury Golf Club on Thursday 13th December and will run along the

same lines as last year.

Details will be sent out nearer the time.

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



South Wales

Good Afternoon all, where do I start? The weather! How is it possible to have so much rainfall in one season and we haven't even entered winter yet! It is a frustrating time for all of us both trade and for you guys out there trying your very best to just even get the golf courses open never mind trying to get perfect shades on fairways and greens.

Members turning up with their latest power caddies wanting to take buggies out if many of you have still got hair I'm sure your pulling it out.

But however much it gets us down just think of the American Ryder cup team 10-6 up at home going into the singles and the Sunday and getting beat 14.5-13.5 that must surely put a smile on our faces!

Our Autumn event has just taken place at Clyne Golf Club I say taken place well I managed 3 holes some played 2 holes some even 9 but 1 group played all 18 holes (they must have been mad) the rain was relentless just 10mins after we teed off in all fairness to Tony and his team's efforts in placing pins in high spots we had no chance of getting around without carrying a squeegee with us even then the rain was constant for 5 hours.

For me it was a first look out onto the course at Clyne and I can't wait to come back and play with better weather.

Thank you Tony for all your efforts in setting up the course and fingers crossed we can all come back soon and finish what we started.

The results though are as follows in 3rd place with 29 points Harvey Tribe fantastic to see Harvey back playing golf with us, 2nd place with 34 points Andy "I had to finish" Roach and in 1st place with 35 points Mark "I'm not coming in with a score

like this" Tucker congratulations all winners.

There has to be two more mentions, Emyr Nickels did complete the 4 ball but unfortunately did not get in the prizes but after 2 years without playing due to shoulder injuries a great effort, and finally a welcome to Alan Hughes from Blackwood golf club a new member to BIGGA and hope he enjoyed the company on the snooker table after the golf rather than the 15mins on the golf course welcome Alan.

Before the golf we held our AGM the committee is to stay the same with no changes for the following season the only changes are to be made to the golfing calendar.

With pressures of work we feel that it is only right that we reduce the number of golf tournaments to 3 from 4 and move them to late October, December and the end of February/ early March to coincide with the easier cutting periods.

We will have matches against the South West and North Wales during the season but exact times and dates to follow.

Also the Rigby Taylor Match-play event will have a new look, it will still be a pairs format but will all be played in one day, full rules and dates TBC.

I would like to close on a few thank yous firstly to Clyne Golf Club for being very hospitable hosts with a fantastic meal after golf.

To Gareth Knight for the continued work he has done this year from pulling patrons together to organising the golf matches and our new annual dinner and dance, our Patrons of the section without the support you and effort your companies put in we couldn't run the way we do now and last but not least you guys the greenkeepers.

Without your time and efforts to attend golf and education events it wouldn't be worth doing! Thanks everyone.

Many Thanks for reading any news or views please contact me at any time.

Kind Regards
Peter H





Diary of Events

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

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
NOVEMBER 2012			
November 6th	Golf Course Design Seminar, Essex Section	Colne Valley Golf Club	Ian Wood Tel: 07952 470861
November 6th	Cylinder Maintenance & Grinding Techniques/ Benefits of Enviro Bunker	Turnhouse Golf Club, Training Room, Maintenance Facility	Scott Corrigan Tel: 07877 098237
November 6th	Midland Regional Conference	Forest Hill Golf Club, Leicester	Sandra Raper Tel: 07866 366966 or Email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
November 7th	Devon & Cornwall Section Event Bayer Cup	Bowood Golf & Country Club	George Pitts Tel: 07929 754401 or Email: gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
November 7th	Northern Regional Conference	Phoenix Sports Club, Rotherham	Sandra Raper Tel: 07866 366966 or Email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
November 12th	STRI Regional Training – Pests, Weeds & Diseases	Moor Allerton Golf Club	Rachael Godfrey Tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
November 12th	STRI Regional Training – Technical Turf Management – Part 1	Best Western Gleddoch House Hotel & Golf Spa – West Scotland	Rachael Godfrey Tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
November 13th	STRI Regional Training – Technical Turf Management – Part 1	Moor Allerton Golf Club	Rachael Godfrey Tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
November 13th	STRI Regional Training – Technical Turf Management – Part 1	Castleknock Hotel & Country Club	Rachael Godfrey Tel: 01274 565131 or Email: training@stri.co.uk
November 14th	South East Regional Conference	Thorpeness Golf & Country Club	Ian Willet Tel: 07929 205398 or Email: info@biggaeastanglia.co.uk
November 15th	South West & South Wales Regional Conference	Oaktree Arena, Highbridge, Somerset	Jane Jones Tel: 01454 270850 or Mobile 07841 948110 or Email: jane@bigga.co.uk
November 15th	Midland Region TEAM CHALLENGE	Burton on Trent Golf Club	Sandra Raper Tel: 07866 366966 or Email: sandra@bigga.co.uk
November 15th	North West Section Event	Wilmslow Golf Club	Chris Sheehan at Email: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk
November 20th	Machinery Supplier Day, Essex Section	Channels Golf Club	Arnold Phipps-Jones Email: arnold.phipps-jones@threeriversclub.com
November 21st	North Wales Section Event	Oswestry Golf Club	Jez Hughes Tel: 07876 776265 or email: jezpro69@aol.com

January 22nd – 24th

The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition

register NOW to avoid the queues

visit www.bigga.org.uk



Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director, with a monthly update



Learn while you earn?

David Golding addresses the 'old chestnut' of why clubs looking to save money within budgets do so by first by reducing or withdrawing any staff training

Many readers will be familiar with the phrase "learn while you earn" and I have referred to it before in this column.

However, this is another timely reminder to golf clubs as well as greenkeepers that, whether it be through a Distance Learning Course or an Online course, gone are the days when you would have to leave your workplace in order to gain knowledge relating to your job.

Several of the GTC Quality Assured Centres offer courses and qualifications through a variety of delivery options.

Online learning is clearly becoming increasingly popular as technology has evolved with the internet.

Both vocational and higher education qualifications such as the HNC/D in Scotland and the Foundation Degree are being achieved by greenkeepers and Course Managers whilst they continue to work.

Distance Learning whereby learning packages are mailed out from a college to the student, and returned for marking, is still a great option.

I know for a fact that two of the GTC's Quality Assured Centres are reporting interest from all corners of the globe for their online and Distance Learning courses, which is a great testimony to their programmes and the British qualifications.

More and more of the GTC's QA Centres offer online learning for those registering on work-based qualifications including the apprenticeship.

Some still prefer the off the job/classroom style of acquiring knowledge but, as long as everybody has access to learning, the GTC believes the greenkeeping profession is in safe hands through QA Centres and Training Providers.

To support its Quality Assured Centres, the GTC is updating its Learning Materials which will be launched and available at BTME 2013.

The learning materials, based on best practices, have been reviewed through a special project which has been partly funded by The R&A and GTC and which will be available in hard copy, CD Rom and Pdf formats.

The learning materials are also circulated to all GTC QA Centres, with much of the information being compiled through specialist subject writers including Quality Assured Centre staff and Training Providers.

With so much access to good quality information on greenkeeping being freely available, and Centres and Training Providers offering everything from short courses to an Online Degree, it might be thought strange to hear that some golf clubs have actually stopped any staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget for training.

I find this puzzling but we have seen it all before.

When the economy crashed previously, it was those companies who invested in their staff that came out of the crisis strongest and quickest.

It isn't as if thousands of pounds are required for a greenkeeping staff development programme.

Course Managers now, as the norm, train their staff on the job often with the aim of work-based qualifications supported by their chosen Centre while the more senior staff can apply for a scholarship through BIGGA or a Bursary from The R&A to gain higher Level 4 and above qualifications.

Initiative funding schemes for employers to train staff - including

apprenticeships - all help as the GTC continues to work within the Government framework.

Many courses, offered by Centres, are, indeed, subsidised.

The GTC does not expect all education and training to be free.

"Some golf clubs have actually stopped staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget"



The GTC is funded by:



Employers acknowledge they should contribute but it is a false economy not to encourage any staff development at any level.

It need not cost a fortune.

Training can be a tremendous morale booster for an individual and additional skills and knowledge will always contribute to a team's performance thereby adding productivity to the business.

I still hear the cry, "we train them up and then they leave".

Well, that is not the end of the world.

The message that needs emphasising is that everyone is a valuable member of the team.

So, look after them and, if some move on, there is comfort that they are going because they have been well trained and that their replacements are similarly well qualified.

The opportunity of recruiting a new apprentice is all part of the cycle of greenkeeping.

For all the latest information on greenkeeper training including Distance Learning and Online courses, Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers visit www.greenkeepertraining.com or www.the-gtc.co.uk

Contact Details

David Golding
GTC Education Director

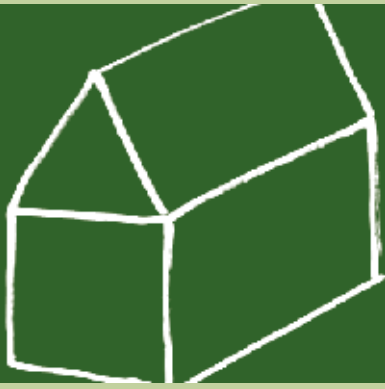
01347 838640
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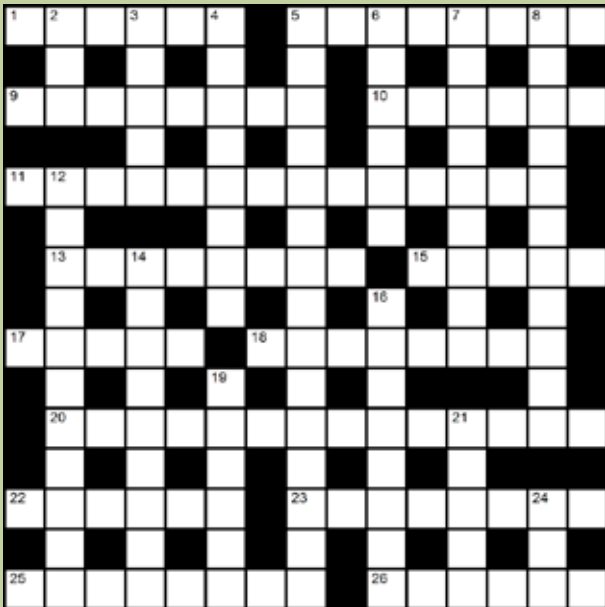


You can follow the GTC on
Twitter @TheOfficialGTC



in the shed

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

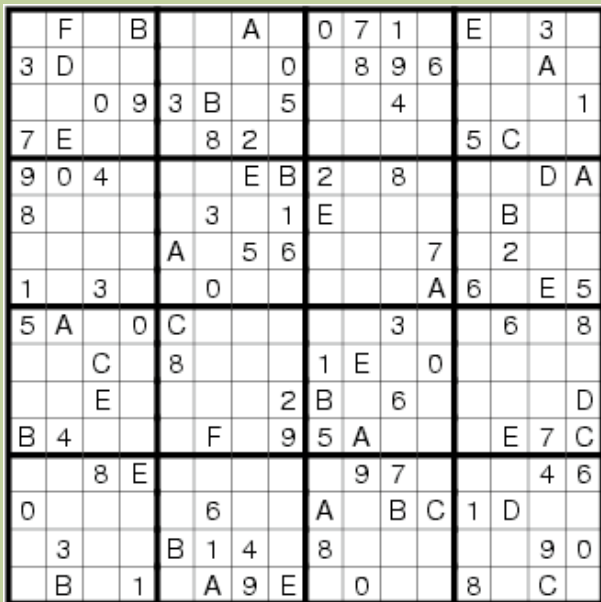


ACROSS

- 1 Location of which Macbeth is thane prior to Cawdor (Shakespeare) (6)
- 5 Plants providing edible roots similar to carrots (8)
- 9 1964 hit by Petula Clark (8)
- 10 British comedy drama starring Dennis Waterman as Terry McCann (6)
- 11 Mainly (3,3,4,4)
- 13 Inappropriate to reality (8)
- 15/17 Church of England envoy held hostage in Lebanon from 1987-91 (5,5)
- 18 Comedy series set in the fictional French town of Nouvion (4,4)
- 20 British newspaper launched in 1986 (3,11)
- 22 Colloquially, anything achieved or made (6)
- 23 Neapolitan song whose title translates to 'My sun' (1,4,3)
- 25 --- boy, the favourite of a group (4-4)
- 26 Capital of Zambia (6)

DOWN

- 2 Fifth sign of the zodiac (3)
- 3 Artist whose painting Impression, Sunrise created the term Impressionism (5)
- 4 Ancient Russian city destroyed in both Napoleonic Wars and WWII (8)
- 5 Light blue Monopoly square worth (traditionally) £120 (11,4)
- 6 Distant (6)
- 7 Model of excellence or perfection (9)
- 8 Legendary Christian king identified with the King of Ethiopia (7,4)
- 12 Famous Yellowstone National Park geyser (3,8)
- 14 Graceful and supple (9)
- 16 1996 UK hit for Swedish pop rock band The Cardigans (8)
- 19 Bigheaded, stuck-up (6)
- 21 Sediment at the bottom of a liquid (5)
- 24 To annoy or exasperate (3)

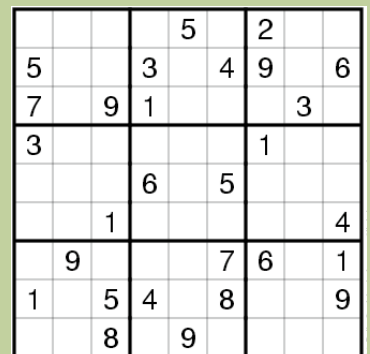


MONSTER SUDOKU

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

SUDOKU

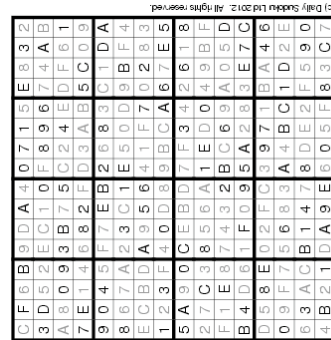
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



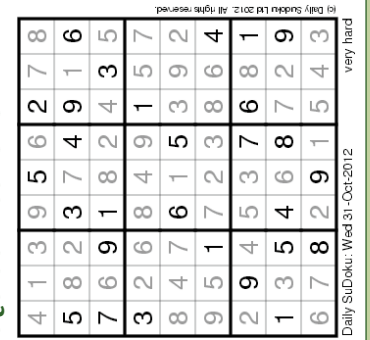
CROSSWORD



MONSTER SUDOKO



SQUIGGLY SUDOKO



Water management

Managing any kind of plant whether it is a food crop, plants in your garden or sports turf, water is critical to sustain plant health.

The objective is to supply the plant with enough water, when it needs it, to ensure healthy growth.

This perhaps becomes more critical in managed turf, as frequent mowing and usage of the surface can lead to increased water loss.

When we consider sports turf, we also have to take into account that the amount of water in the soil or rootzone will directly influence surface performance and playability.

Too much water and we are left with surfaces that are too soft.

Too little water not only results in significant plant stress, but also the risk that the playing surface can become too firm.

Additionally, the excessive softening playing surfaces often leads to playability issues, in terms of increased wear damage as result of play.

This might be in the form of reduced grass cover due to foot traffic and to larger and more damaging pitch marks.

Yet another aspect of getting the water management in golf greens right is the impact that excessive water retention can have on agronomic characteristics.

The relationship between the invasion of annual meadow-grass and rate of soil organic matter accumulation with high levels of water retention has been well documented.

A vast body of research exists that has focussed on the management of water in the soil.

This varies from studies looking at different construction profiles and materials, through to the type and quantity of water retentive amendment mixed with sand to create sand-based rootzones.

All of this data is critical, as we need to understand the relationship between how greens are constructed and how they perform, in terms of water drainage and retention.

Less research exists on water inputs into golf greens.

Irrigation systems exist so that greenkeepers can have some degree of control over water inputs.

To be able to effectively manage playing surfaces, there has to be a balance between water draining through a soil and being able to add water to the turf to ensure optimum playing quality and healthy grass growth.

How the input of water is achieved is open to some debate, with regard to the little and often approach versus more heavy water inputs applied less frequently.

What I have tried to highlight so far is the importance of managing water inputs and output from the playing surfaces around golf courses.

A large portion of what greenkeepers do is to manage the soil water balance.

Of course the other factor that cannot be overlooked is the good old British weather.

This year has been, at least for some parts of the country, one of contrasting conditions.

The start of the year was significantly drier in some areas than usual.

What has then followed has been almost biblical in proportion! Rain, rain and even more rain.

However, what this variable weather has highlighted is the need to build in a degree of resilience into golf courses.

By this I mean creating and maintaining surfaces that can deal with heavy rainfall, whilst on the other hand ensure greenkeepers have the ability to apply water when they need to.

One of the challenges that we all face in the near future is trying to get the water balance right.



The technology is there to help produce better draining greens, but what is more problematic is securing a reliable source of water to be able to irrigate when the grass needs it.

We have to accept that the future regarding climate change is uncertain and that one of the likely outcomes is that our weather may become more unpredictable and extreme.

In this scenario, serious thought needs to be given as to how we can better utilise the resources available to us.

This means looking more closely at how water can be captured and stored on the course ready for use when drier periods occur.

It would also be interesting to look at how we can recycle more water, especially water already captured by drainage systems.

This is where further research could be focussed.

I believe there is a real need to look at how we can provide more water sources on courses themselves.

Of course these options are not cheap, but if we can study the practicalities and the associated costs perhaps we can develop a reasonably efficient and cost effective system for those occasions when you know you want to be applying water but are severely restricted as to how much you can apply.

about the author



Dr Christian Spring BSc (Hons), PhD Soil Scientist

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Scott Graham, Purley Downs Golf Club, 106 Purley Downs Road, Sanderstead, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 0RB

Or to: info@purleydownsgolfclub.co.uk (insert Deputy Head Greenkeeper in the subject box)

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CLOSING DATE 30th November 2012

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The Back Nine

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

Bjarni Hannesson tells us how his trips to BTME triggered the formation of the Icelandic Greenkeeping Association

When one thinks of Iceland, a few things pop into mind; Björk and weird swan dresses, the world's worst bankers and that ash-spewing-airplane-grounding-holiday-ruining volcano that no one can pronounce the name of. But did anyone say golf? Surely not.

But Iceland holds the record for the highest number of golf courses per person in the world! That's right - the country is golf mad despite a population of only 320,000 and 70 golf courses. This is the same population as Hull, and the last time I counted, they didn't have 70 golf courses and even 50,000 golfers there!

The number of courses has led to a growing greenkeeping industry in the country. But the industry is young. In the 80s greenkeeping wasn't much of a profession. School teachers were usually hired as head greenkeepers for three to four months of the year. Machinery was very basic and the standards relatively poor. The 90s saw a change, where keen young guys were hungry for some greenkeeping education so they could raise the standards of Icelandic golf. The first thing they did was look for trade shows and colleges.

The BTME show in Harrogate was an ideal stop. It's safe to say the show has had a major impact on the Icelandic Greenkeeping Industry. The Icelandic Greenkeeping Association was founded soon after, and its main role at the time was to organise trips to BTME every other year.

What the BTME show did was connect Icelandic greenkeepers to colleges which has now led to about 50 Icelanders having gained educa-



“The show has had a major impact on the Icelandic Greenkeeping Industry”

PHOTOGRAPH: An image from Bjarni's former employers, Grindavik Golf Club

about the author



Bjarni Thor Hannesson is currently the Golf Course Superintendent at Kellir Golf Club, Iceland's top rated golf course. He has an M.Sc. Sport Surface Technology from Cranfield University, and HND Golf Course Management from Elmwood College.

Bjarni has worked in both the UK and US, including Sunningdale, The Old Course at St. Andrews and Nashawtuc Country Club, and is vice chairman of the Icelandic Green and Groundskeeper Association.

tion through UK Colleges. The show also made important connections with industry leaders possible. The Icelandic associations then used these connections to import speakers for their own industry shows, to bring the education home. Without shows like BTME, this would have been quite a bit harder.

Fast forward to 2012. The Icelandic Greenkeeping Association is now the Icelandic Green and Groundskeeper Association. It hosts big industry gatherings with respected international speakers, and a number of smaller events all focused on furthering members' education.

With the crash of the banking sector in Iceland in 2008, any budget for trade shows was wiped out in a blink of an eye. Machinery replacements ground to a halt. Domestic dealerships couldn't afford to stock machines, as they were struggling to stay alive. This means that there was no chance to get any machines in for demonstrations. You simply had to read the booklet and make an educated guess... if you get to buy any machines in the first place.

The return to Harrogate in 2012 was thus very important. The Association organised a trip with 30 greenkeepers, keen to see all the machinery up close, meet up with old friends and make some new contacts.

Some had printed out a well thought out plan to make sure no important seminars were missed. Others had scheduled a meeting with companies, to make sure they got the most of the trip. Others had a solid meeting schedule at the bar with old friends.

The week was certainly a big hit for the Icelanders. It showed again how important the show is for the Association. Connections have been made, and plans are in the making for the next group of international speakers that we want to attend our own domestic show.

Machinery has been purchased that was demoed on the trip, and other machines have made an appearance on some of the wish lists, that weren't on the list prior to the show. All in all, a very good trip once again to Harrogate for the Icelanders. Even though we don't attend every year now, since our economy hasn't quite rebounded yet (has anyone's economy rebounded yet?), we will be there every other year to keep up with what's going on in the industry. The show has been, and still is, very important for us.

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