

Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director, with a monthly update



This month David Golding, GTC's Education Director, updates readers on his work within the European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU) and why the British greenkeeper training structure seems to be now attractive to more countries...



Whilst Britain has battled for many years to have a Government and employer recognised greenkeeping specific education and training structure, we must never be complacent, even though 'our' system is now much sought after especially in golf developing countries

The message therefore is that employers and greenkeepers must continue to work in harmony to maintain standards for greenkeepers

That is why the GTC, through the Home Unions and BIGGA, are an ideal model for other countries to consider

It is now nearly 20 years since I 'left' BIGGA to front the GTC although many have questioned the reasons for two separate organisations, BIGGA and the GTC

A brief reminder is that, whilst BIGGA admirably represents greenkeepers, it is the Home Unions who represent the golfers and golf clubs - the employers

In the main, the Home Unions have traditionally only represented the private members clubs but, as Golf Course Owners Associations have been established to represent the proprietary clubs, the Unions have become very much aware of the need to ensure that all employers are represented when it comes to such matters as greenkeeper training

Here in the UK, in order to achieve Government recognition and, with it, any funding support for training, the industry has to show employer support

The GTC has certainly punched its weight in meetings to ensure greenkeeping has an education, training and qualification structure developed and maintained by the

industry for the industry

In maintaining the National Occupational Standards (NOS), the GTC has an advisory panel with representatives from BIGGA and the Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers

The NOS ranges from the basic tasks an apprentice would learn on their first day of employment to the knowledge and skills a competent manager should possess

The NOS can be viewed on the GTC website and it is from the NOS that certificates, qualifications and workshops can be developed

It is this British model that, in my role as Standards Director for the European Greenkeeping Education Unit, I am promoting to other countries looking for advice and guidance

I guess, after many years in the sector, I shouldn't be surprised to learn that, in many countries, the employer representative bodies are nowhere to be seen, leaving any greenkeeper training to the Greenkeeping Association, if there is one!

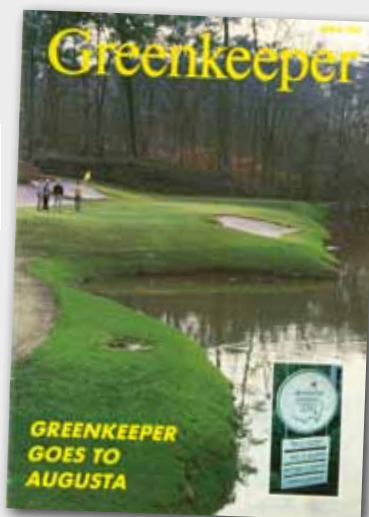
It has to be said that there is still the same commitment from the greenkeepers in many countries to improve the standards of education and training

However, sadly, I have to report that it is a picture all too familiar with the pre-BIGGA days and the restructured GTC in 1993

Prior to the golfer per-capita levy of 2p, introduced by the UK Home Unions and matched by The R&A in 1987, it was through the efforts of many volunteers working tirelessly in the days of the BGGA, SIGGA and EIGGA that thankfully, BIGGA, with professional administration, really came to the fore

Indeed, 1987 was a momentous turning point for greenkeeper training BIGGA was formed and

RIGHT: The 1987 issue of Greenkeeper featured BIGGA's first ever educational event



The GTC is funded by:



the per-capita levy introduced

25 years on, greenkeeper training in Britain still benefits from funding to the GTC by means of annual grants from the three British Home Unions, the PGA, the PGA European Tour, BIGGA, special projects with The R&A and income from the Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers

In recent years, we have seen new organisations established to represent the Golf Course Owners and they too, are very important, as the percentage of proprietary clubs has increased in Britain

The GTC and the EGEU will engage with all organisations that have a stake in the standards of greenkeeper training

The education and training options for both golf club employers and greenkeepers in Britain range from work-based to residential, online, seminars, workshops, and conferences, together with tremendous support from those companies with specialist staff, all committed to quality standards

The outcome is that we are now in a position to help our colleagues in the world of greenkeeping and also learn from those countries where there is a structure that works well

Regrettably, these are very few but we must be willing to share best practice and the GTC and EGEU will be doing just that at every opportunity

Contact Details

David Golding
GTC Education Director

01347 838640
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC
Aldwark Manor
Near York
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk



You can follow the GTC on
Twitter @TheOfficialGTC